

5th UfM Energy and Climate Business Forum

At the margins of the Kuwait Sustainable Energy Week

12 May 2025, Kuwait City, Kuwait

Call for Proposals

Guidelines for Elevator Pitches for Young Entrepreneurs Submissions

Call Launch Date: 7 February 2025

Submission Deadline: 7 March 2025



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Elevator Pitches for Young Entrepreneurs Initiative

The Elevator Pitches for Young Entrepreneurs session is a dynamic component within the UfM Energy & Climate Business Forum, designed to foster and give spotlight to youth-led innovation and entrepreneurship. This initiative gives young entrepreneurs a unique opportunity to present their start-ups and projects to a distinguished audience of investors, industry stakeholders, and business leaders. It is designed to nurture a vibrant ecosystem of innovation, with a particular focus on green energy and climate resilience.

Through short, impactful pitches, young entrepreneurs will have the opportunity to demonstrate the value-added of their projects to a diverse audience, including investors, business leaders, technical experts, and decision-makers. The emphasis is on fostering the entrepreneurial drive, providing an incentive to creativity, building business acumen, and enabling partnerships that contribute to regional growth and sustainable development priorities.

As part of the UfM's commitment to fostering sustainable development, innovation, and regional collaboration, **this Call for Proposals emphasizes the critical importance of aligning such projects with just energy transition and climate priorities.** Applicants are encouraged to present initiatives that contribute to addressing the Mediterranean region's energy and climate challenges through innovative and actionable solutions.

Project Themes:

- Advance **energy transition** by promoting renewable energy technologies, energy efficiency, and low-carbon solutions.
- Foster **climate resilience** by addressing adaptation needs in vulnerable sectors, such as agriculture, water resources, urban development and promoting nature-based solutions.
- Contribute to **regional climate goals** by aligning with UfM's strategies for achieving sustainability, reducing carbon emissions, and enhancing green economic growth.

Proposals that demonstrate a clear connection to these thematic areas will be prioritized.

Examples of eligible project themes include:

- **Deployment** of innovative renewable energy solutions tailored to regional needs.
- **Development** of climate-smart technologies or practices to support sustainable development.
- Projects **addressing** cross-border energy collaboration or climate adaptation in UfM member countries.
- Initiatives aimed at **reducing** energy poverty or improving energy access in underserved communities.
- Initiatives aimed at including **nature-based solutions** for climate adaptation, cooling, among others.



Program Components:

- **Pitch Presentations:** Entrepreneurs will deliver concise, 2–3-minute pitches to a panel of international experts, followed by a brief Q&A session to provide constructive feedback and insights.
- **Capacity Building:** Participants will receive mentorship to refine their pitches and strengthen their business models.
- **Networking Opportunities:** The program facilitates interactions with potential investors, business leaders, representatives from regional organizations, and peer entrepreneurs from both the Mediterranean and the Gulf region, fostering collaboration and partnership-building.

Program Goals:

1. **Enhance** Communication Skills: Help young entrepreneurs refine their ability to present and explain their ideas effectively.
2. Provide valuable feedback to help young entrepreneurs **strengthen** business models and better consolidate their strategies.
3. **Connect** entrepreneurs with investors and business leaders that might provide resources, funding opportunities, and a supportive regional network.
4. **Promote** projects that **align with UfM's** priorities and key focus areas, such as renewable energy transition, climate action, sustainability and inclusive economic growth.

Call for Proposals: Objective, Scope, and Eligibility

Objective

The Call for Proposals (CfP) seeks to mobilize innovative solutions from young entrepreneurs across UfM member countries, focusing on addressing regional challenges in climate resilience, green energy, and economic sustainability. This initiative aims to provide a platform for young entrepreneurs to showcase their ideas, refine their strategies, and meet with sector relevant stakeholders including investors and business leaders to bring their projects to fruition.

Proposals are expected to:

- Highlight innovative and impactful solutions to critical regional challenges.
- Demonstrate feasibility, scalability, and alignment with UfM's mission and strategic priorities.
- Foster cross-border collaboration and contribute to the UfM's goals of regional integration and sustainable development.

Scope

This CfP is tailored to address pressing needs within the Mediterranean region by supporting projects that:



- Focus on innovation and entrepreneurship in critical sectors such as climate action, energy transition, sustainable development, and technology.
- Promote inclusivity, particularly the active involvement of youth and women entrepreneurs.
- Demonstrate readiness for implementation and capacity to achieve measurable results.

The scope of the CfP extends beyond pitch presentations, offering mentorship, capacity-building sessions, and direct interactions with stakeholders.

To ensure alignment with the UfM's strategic goals and to address pressing regional challenges, this Call for Proposals invites applicants to demonstrate an understanding of the Mediterranean region's unique context and present scalable solutions to key challenges.

Solutions for Regional Challenges include:

- **Energy Transition and Decarbonization:** The Mediterranean faces the dual challenge of increasing energy demand and the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Projects addressing renewable energy adoption, energy efficiency, and innovative decarbonization strategies are highly encouraged.
- **Climate Resilience:** The region is particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts, such as rising temperatures, water scarcity, and extreme weather events. Proposals should include strategies for building resilience in sectors such as agriculture, urban planning, and infrastructure. Proposals focusing on the inclusion of nature-based solutions or urban cooling solutions are highly valued.
- **Cross-Border Collaboration:** The interconnected nature of Mediterranean countries requires solutions that promote regional integration and cooperation, particularly those fostering energy interconnections, environmental conservation, and sustainable resource management.

Encouraging Scalable Solutions

Applicants are strongly encouraged to propose solutions that are adaptable and scalable across the region. Proposals should clearly outline how the project can be implemented at a broader scale, leveraging regional partnerships and resources to maximize impact. By addressing these regional challenges with innovative and practical solutions, applicants will contribute to advancing UfM's mission of fostering sustainable development and resilience in the Mediterranean region.

Eligibility

The CfP is open to:

- Young entrepreneurs aged 18-35 years who are citizens of UfM member countries.
- Projects or start-ups that align with UfM's strategic priorities, focusing on energy transition, climate action, sustainability, innovation, and inclusive economic growth.



- Young entrepreneurs from the **43 UfM member countries** are eligible to participate in the initiative: Albania, Algeria, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mauritania, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Palestine, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey.

Proposal Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

Applicants must submit a comprehensive proposal structured into the following sections, which will be evaluated based on the project's potential, alignment with program objectives, and readiness for implementation.

- Section 1: Applicant Details
- Section 2: Project Concept and Innovation
- Section 3: Regional Relevance and Alignment
- Section 4: Integration of Cross-Cutting Themes
- Section 5: Readiness, Implementation Strategy, and Feasibility

Each section will be evaluated based on its clarity, relevance, and potential for impact. Proposals will be scored on a scale of 1-10, with the highest-scoring applications selected for participation in the UfM Energy and Climate Business Forum.

Application Process for the Elevator Pitches for Young Entrepreneurs Program

Proposal Preparation

Applicants are required to prepare a comprehensive and strong proposal using the designated online template. The template ensures that all critical aspects of the project, such as objectives, innovation, alignment with UfM priorities, and anticipated impact, are clearly outlined. Proposals must also include a well-defined value proposition and a market gap that the project is addressing; a well-defined implementation strategy, addressing risks and their mitigation measures, an analysis of customer segments, foreseen costs and revenue stream. Selected applicants may be invited to participate in pre-event refinement workshops, offering guidance on improving their pitches and aligning ideas with the program's goals.

Participation in the Business Forum

Selected applicants will be invited to present their projects at a Elevator Pitches session during the UfM Energy and Climate Business Forum and will have their costs covered. Each participant will deliver a concise 2–3 minutes pitch to an audience of investors, international experts, and peer entrepreneurs, followed by a brief Q&A session. In addition to the pitching session, participants will have opportunities to engage in networking activities, build connections with



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potential partners, and participate in workshops and discussions that align with the forum's themes.

Follow-Up Support

Promising projects may be offered incubation opportunities through UfM or its partners. This support includes mentorship and access to technical expertise, enabling participants to further develop and implement their projects successfully. The program prioritizes projects that demonstrate long-term sustainability and align with UfM's strategic goals for the Mediterranean region.

Proposal Submission and Review Process

Proposal Submission

The Call for Proposals will officially be launched on **7 February 2025**, and applicants must submit their completed proposals by the **submission deadline of 7 March 2025**. Submissions must be made through the designated online platform, ensuring all sections of the proposal are complete and comply with the program's guidelines. Proposals should be clear, concise, and aligned with the objectives of the Elevator Pitches for Young Entrepreneurs Program. Late submissions or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Review Process

Once submitted, proposals will be reviewed by a panel of experts. The evaluation process will assess proposals based on their alignment with program objectives, innovation, feasibility, scalability and potential for impact. Each proposal will be scored against predefined criteria, and feedback will be provided to successful applicants. The review process emphasizes fairness, transparency, and alignment with UfM's strategic priorities. Selected applicants will be notified by mid-March 2025.

Project Preparation (for Successful Applicants)

Successful applicants will be invited to participate in the Business Forum and will have their costs covered. Participants are expected to prepare thoroughly for the event. This preparation includes refining their pitches, understanding the forum's objectives, and engaging effectively with investors, business leaders and stakeholders. UfM will provide logistical support, including travel, accommodation, and event schedules, to ensure a smooth participation experience. Applicants must confirm their availability and finalize arrangements promptly to meet event timelines.

Mentorship and Post-Event Support

As part of the Elevator Pitches for Young Entrepreneurs Program, selected projects may benefit from a structured mentorship program designed to enhance their capacity for success. The mentorship sessions will cover a range of critical topics tailored to the needs of young entrepreneurs, including financial modelling, business scaling strategies, sustainability planning, and effective communication with investors and stakeholders. Mentors will include regional and



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international experts, providing participants with personalized guidance to refine their projects and maximize their potential for impact.

In addition to mentorship, projects selected through this program will gain access to exclusive post-event support opportunities. These may include:

- **Partnership Building:** Facilitated connections with investors, business leaders, and strategic partners to create opportunities for collaboration and funding.
- **Incubation:** Access to tailored incubation programs offering technical support, resources, and expertise to further develop and scale their projects.
- **Networking with Exclusive Partners:** Invitations to high-level networking events with UfM-associated entities and regional stakeholders, creating unique opportunities to engage with decision-makers and amplify the project's reach.
- **Engagement with upcoming meetings of the UfM Mediterranean Youth Gathering** in an advisory role to foster the perspectives and insights of youth entrepreneurs in climate and energy international and regional decision-making processes.



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