

INNOVATION COMPETITION

Thursday, 26th February 2026

Dear All,

Unioncamere del Veneto, within the framework of the Interreg Italy-Croatia 2021-2027 project – **DIH InnovaMare**, is pleased to invite you to the "**DIH InnovaMare Innovation Competition**".

This is a high-profile initiative dedicated to innovators, start-ups, researchers, and young graduates committed to developing innovative solutions for the **Blue Economy**. The event represents an important opportunity for discussion and visibility for projects with highly competitive and sustainable impact.

Details of the event:

- **Date:** Thursday, February 26th, 2026
- **Time:** 09:00 – 17:00 CET
- **Location:** Business Center of Marghera (Venice) and Online (Hybrid Format)
- **Target:** SMEs, Start-ups, Researchers, Graduates
- **Prize:** €1.000 to the winning team

The competition is addressed **to teams of 3 to 5 people** who will have the opportunity to develop their solutions by responding to one or more of the identified challenges. The complete list of the **20 challenges** is available in Article 3 of the attached "Rules and Regulations" document.

***Cross-border team bonus:** we remind you that teams receive **+2 extra points** if composed of at least 1 person of a different nationality compared to the rest of the team (e.g., a Croatian member in an Italian team).



The Phases

The Innovation Competition is structured to provide deep and intensive exposure to knowledge, **guiding the teams** through the 7 essential elements of project maturity necessary for the success of a Blue Economy project.

Phase 1: Preparation and Pitch (9:00 – 13:00)

Teams must connect to the project link at 9:00 AM on February 26th, 2026, and will be tasked with completing a Business Model Canvas. During this first phase, each group must present a concise **10-minute pitch** to the Jury. A stable internet connection is essential for those connecting remotely.

***In-Person Bonus:** teams will receive **+2 points** on the final score if at least one person participates in presence at the Business Center in Marghera.

Phase 2: The Blue Economy Contest (from 14:30) This is the core of the competition, focused on the rapid formulation of ideas based on project maturity elements. The process is intense: an expert will provide a 5-minute explanation on a specific topic, after which teams will have 10 minutes to complete a structured digital format on Padlet.

This fast-paced challenge will cover **7 fundamental topics:**

1. Market Description
2. Innovation in the Blue Economy
3. Communication and Reputation
4. TRL (Technology Readiness Level) and Legal Framework
5. Business Plan
6. Relevant Partners (Industrial, Technical, Institutional, Market)
7. Team Competencies



The Jury

Projects will be evaluated by industry experts:

- *Mateo Ivanac* – DIH InnovaMare
- *Francesco Stocco* – Alma LED and My Restartup
- *Prof. Eleonora Di Maria* – University of Padua
- *Prof. Luca Martinelli* – University of Padua
- *Filippo Mazzariol* – Unioncamere del Veneto

Structure and Prizes

The event involves the development of a Business Model Canvas and a pitch session in front of a qualified jury. At the end, a **prize of €1,000 will be awarded to the winning team**, in addition to promotion through the DIH InnovaMare network and access to future European workshops.

Registration

To participate, please register your team at the following link by **February 16, 2026, at 12:00 p.m.**: <https://forms.gle/zH6rQx1N8c4cL9yh7>.

Attached to this communication, you will find the **Rules and Regulations** of the event.

Following registration, you will receive via email:

- Logistic information on how to reach the meeting location
- A more detailed description of the challenges
- Further instructions on the pitch, the work to be done and, more in general, on the competition.



For further information, please consult the official website of [DIH InnovaMare Project](#) and, if necessary, contact:

- Dott.ssa Roberta Lazzari: roberta.lazzari@eurosportelloveneto.it
- Dott.ssa Giada Bagattin: giada.bagattin@ven.camcom.it

We look forward to seeing you there,

The DIH InnovaMare project team

