



BLOCK START

Annex 2: Guidelines for Applicants

July/2020

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 828853.



BlockStart Consortium			
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Funding Scheme: Coordination and Support Action (CSA) • Theme: H2020-INNOSUP-03-2018
Start date of project: 01 September 2019 • Duration: 30 months

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1 Introduction

This document provides a full set of information regarding the Open Call for Proposals for the BlockStart project. The Sub-grant Agreement Template (*Annex 7* and *Annex 7.1*) must be additionally considered for the submission of a Proposal.

BlockStart will organize three open calls to attract, select and fund the best of the best SMEs to generate blockchain-based products, processes and business models with strong market potential in the sectors of fintech, ICT and retail.

2 Background information on BlockStart project

BlockStart is a European partnership programme looking for startups and SMEs – from all over the EU and H2020 associated countries – working with blockchain and other DLTs. The main objective of BlockStart is to facilitate goal-oriented, business-focused, and mutually beneficial partnerships between DLT/blockchain solution providers and end-users SMEs.

To this end, BlockStart is launching its second out of three Open Calls for applications, with the focus being on the following sectors: fintech, ICT and retail. A total of €265,000 will be allocated for the direct benefit of these SMEs (both developers and end-users) through this Open Call.

BlockStart is a 3-stage intensive mentor-led programme. It starts with the Ideation Kick-off, after which the most successful blockchain/DLT solution providers are admitted to a 4-month Prototype phase aimed at supporting the product/market fit. Finally, during the Pilot phase (2 months), startups/SMEs working with blockchain and other DLTs will have a unique opportunity to validate their solutions, pilot their innovations with SME adopters and work toward product/market fit.

The maximum amount of funding that each blockchain/DLT developer may receive is €20,000; while an SME adopter may receive €4,500.

The submission for the Open Call #2 for blockchain/ DLT developers opens on the **28th of July 2020** and closes on the **30th of September 2020** at **5pm CET (Brussels time)**.

The call for SMEs adopters from across fintech, ICT and retail sectors is continuously open, with several cut-off dates throughout the year.

The BlockStart programme is run by a team of 3 partners, Bright Pixel, CIVITTA and F6S, and is funded by the EU H2020 programme for Research and Innovation under Grant Agreement 828853.

3 BlockStart approach

BlockStart will have three Open Calls. Each batch will go through a 6 months program that will start with a match between SMEs with DLT solution providers (*Ideation Kick-off*), followed by a *Prototype* stage where the DLT solution providers will adapt their DLT solution to the needs of the SME, ending with a real life *Pilot* of the product ensuring product/market fit.

The diagram below provides a more detailed look into the key steps of the process:

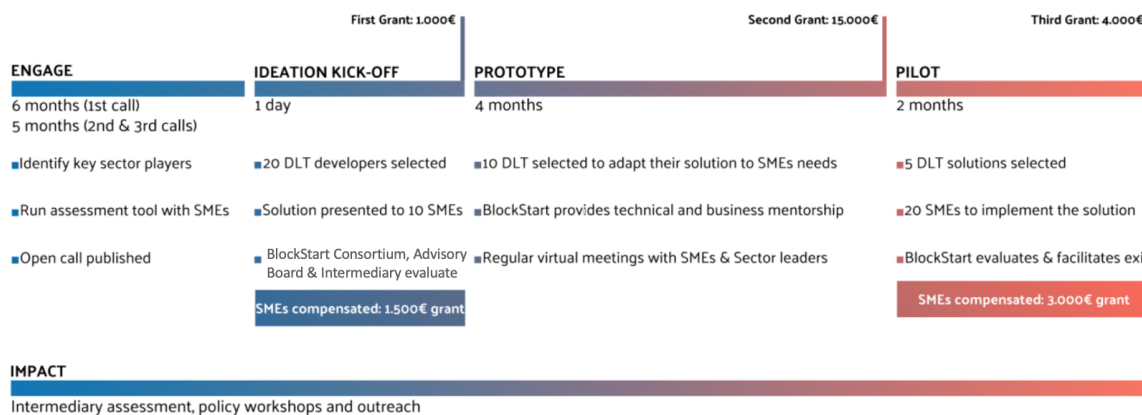


Figure 1 BlockStart open call structure

In the table below, further detail is provided about each dimension of the BlockStart programme:

Table 1 BlockStart programme stages

STAGE	OVERVIEW
ENGAGE	<p>This stage is all about building relationships. We are looking for blockchain and DLT startups/SMEs with ambition, product vision built from original insight and capacity for focused execution.</p> <p>Non-tech SME are invited to complete our DLT assessment tool to learn if they are ready for blockchain, and if they are, what are their next steps with BlockStart.</p>
PROTOTYPE	<p>The development stage of the BlockStart programme starts with the Ideation Kick-off. This is to select which developers will be part of the acceleration programme and develop blockchain/ DLT solutions.</p> <p>The Ideation Kick-off brings developers and SMEs adopters together for the first time to initiate a conversation on available solutions and existing problems. The most promising and innovative developers are selected for a 4 months acceleration where they receive business and technical mentorship to achieve product/ market fit.</p>
PILOT	<p>The final stage of the BlockStart programme makes a match between DLT solutions developed during the Prototype stage and pioneering SMEs adopters that can implement them in real conditions.</p> <p>BlockStart facilitates relationships, provides mentoring for the implementation and assures a successful exit for blockchain/ DLT solutions that is mutually beneficial to developers and SMEs.</p>
IMPACT	<p>To ensure a holistic approach towards creating impact, the BlockStart team will take developers and SMEs on an exciting and ambitious journey. Our team will open its world-class community of founders, investors, experts and access to clients and potential mentors/ advisors to ensure we deliver value at every step of the process.</p>

Funding Scheme

BlockStart funding is results-driven, where the funding is associated with the full achievement of the relevant milestones. Selected blockchain/DLT Solution Providers (Developers) and SMEs will be funded as follows:

Table 2 Funding per beneficiary per stage (in EUR)

	Funding Unlocked			
	Kick-Off	Prototype	Pilot	Total
Developer	1,000	15,000	4,000	20,000
SME	1,500		3,000	4,500

The *Kick-off* funding serves to compensate for the business development costs, that is, putting together a business case (i.e., a pitch deck and a 1-pager summary of their project) and attending the Ideation Kick-off event (physical presence of at least one team member is mandatory - if the event ends up being virtually held, due to some circumstance like a Covid-19 outbreak, the team member may participate remotely). The *Prototype* funding amount is used towards the technical development/adaptation of the blockchain/DLT solution towards the needs of SMEs adopters, as well as business development costs such as doing on-site visits. The *Pilot* funding phase allows the developers to implement the solution within their systems - as well as the costs to the developer to eventually work on-site with the SMEs adopters.

On the other side, SMEs adopters will receive up to €4,500; this is to cover the costs of their participation at the Ideation Kick-off event (€1,500) and compensate for their engagement with developers along the Pilot stage (€3,000).

Timeline – Open Call #2 for blockchain/DLT developers

Submission to the 2nd Open Call for blockchain/ DLT developers will be launched on the **28th of July 2020** and will end on the **30th of September 2020 at 5pm CET time (Brussels time)**.

Below are presented the expected dates for the different phases. The opening and closing dates of each phase can be subject to change in case of any modifications in the project’s schedule.

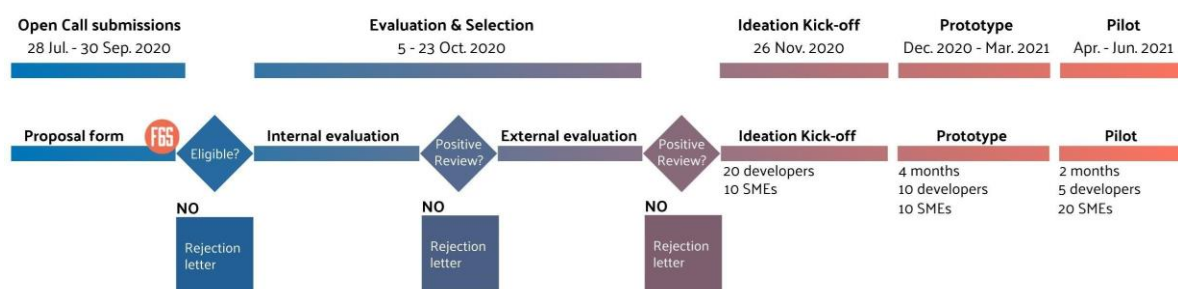


Figure 2 BlockStart timeline – Open Call #2

Timeline – Open Call #2 for end-user SMEs

The Call for end-user SMEs is continuously open with several cut-off dates. The tentative cut-off date for end-user SMEs’ participation in the Ideation Kick-off is the **2nd of November 2020 at 5pm CET (Brussels time)**.

4 General Information

Means of Submission

The F6S platform (www.f6s.com/blockstart) will be the entry point for all proposals' submission to BlockStart Open Calls. Submissions received through any other channel will be automatically discarded.

Documents required in subsequent phases will be submitted via a dedicated channel, which will be indicated by the BlockStart consortium during execution of the sub-grantee projects.

Language

English is the official language for BlockStart open calls. Submissions done in any other language will not be evaluated. English is also the only official language during the whole execution of the BlockStart programme. This means any requested submission of deliverables will be done in English to be eligible.

Documentation formats

Any document requested in any of the phases must be submitted electronically in **PDF format** without restrictions for printing.

Data protection

In order to process and evaluate applications, BlockStart will need to collect Personal and Industrial Data. BRPX, CIVITTA and F6S will act as Data Controllers of the personal data applicants supply throughout BlockStart.

In particular, data submitted for the purposes of the Open Call(s) will be managed through the F6S platform. The F6S platform's system design and operational procedures ensure that data is managed in compliance with The General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR). Each applicant will accept the F6S terms to ensure coverage.

Please note that BlockStart requests the minimum information needed to deliver the evaluation procedures or the acceleration programme. *Annex 6 - Bank Account Information* and *Annex 7 - Sub-grant Agreement Template* are provided for reference and will only be requested if the SME is accepted in the acceleration programme.

Please refer to www.blockstart.eu/data-protection to get informed about the BlockStart data protection policy and security measures.

Origin of the funds

Any selected proposer will sign a dedicated Sub-grant Agreement with the BlockStart consortium.

The funds attached to the Sub-grant Agreement come directly from the funds of the European Project BlockStart funded itself by the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME), and remain therefore, property of the EU until the payment of the balance, whose management rights have been transferred to the project partners in BlockStart via European Commission Grant Agreement Number 828853.

As it can be seen in the Sub-grant Agreement Template (*Annex 7*), this relation between the sub-grantees and the European Commission through the BlockStart project carries a set of obligations to the sub-grantees with the European Commission. It is the task of the sub-grantees to accomplish them, and of the BlockStart consortium partners to inform about them.

5 Proposal Eligibility Criteria

BlockStart invites startups and SMEs to provide innovative blockchain/DLT based solutions in the fintech, ICT and retail sectors.

Definitions of SME and Startup

SME

An SME will be considered as such if complying with the European Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC and the SME user guide. As a summary, the criteria which define an SME are:

- 1) Independent (not linked or owned by another enterprise), in accordance to Recommendation 2003/361/EC.
- 2) Headcount in Annual Work Unit (AWU) less than 250.
- 3) Annual turnover less or equal to €50 million OR annual balance sheet total less or equal to €43 million.

Startup

When there is not a constituted SME the applicants could be an individual or group of individuals legally established in a H2020 eligible country and with a written commitment to set up a legal SME if reaching "Prototype" phase.

SME Eligibility Criteria (phases prototype & pilot)

An SME is considered eligible for BlockStart open call if it complies with ALL of the following rules:

- i. It is a legal entity established and based in one of the EU Member States or an [H2020 Associated Countries](#) as defined in H2020 rules for participation.
- ii. It is a technology provider or technology adopter/user able to develop solutions to the fintech, ICT and/or retail sectors.
- iii. Startups that do not have yet annual turnover or balance sheets are also considered eligible given that they fulfil the criteria (1) and (2) of the previous section ("Definitions of SME and Startup") at submission time.
- iv. In case an SME is awarded a sub-project, it will remain eligible even if, at a certain point during the sub-project execution, it does not fulfil criteria (2) or (3) of the previous section.

For British applicants: British applicants are eligible to all BlockStart Open Calls. Please be aware that this means that the rules of H2020 grants will apply for the entire duration of the grant.

Please note that a signed version of **Annex 4 Declaration of Honour** and **Annex 5 SME Declaration** are mandatory for proposal submission. If there is not yet a registered SME, the applicant should fill in and sign **Annex 5.1 Declaration of Commitment to Establish an SME** (a prerequisite to participate in the Ideation Kick-off). However, if selected to the Ideation Kick-off, the beneficiary will only be able to receive the corresponding €1,000 grant payment after registering an SME and filling and signing the **Annex 5 SME Declaration**.

Proposal Eligibility Criteria

The following proposals eligibility criteria also apply:

- i. Proposals must have a clear European dimension, facilitate blockchain-based innovation and contribute towards European Union digitization, targeting clear economic and societal impact.
- ii. Each SME blockchain/DLT developer may submit only one (1) proposal at each BlockStart open call. In case an SME submits more than one proposal per open call, only the last one received (timestamp of the system) will be considered, and all the following proposals submitted will be automatically excluded from the evaluation process. If the last submitted proposal is declared then non-eligible or fails to reach the thresholds of the evaluation, the other proposals submitted earlier will not be considered for evaluation in any case.
- iii. SMEs may participate in a maximum one (1) accepted sub-project. SMEs already selected at the Ideation Kick-off (Open Call #1) to move to the Prototype phase are automatically excluded from participating in Open Call #2, even if they submit a different proposal. However, developers participating at the Ideation Kick-off, but not moving to the 4 months Prototype phase, may apply to the following calls. Nevertheless, they must clearly explain the difference made between their submissions, including but not limited to, technical aspects, market strategy and team composition.
- iv. SMEs¹ must demonstrate that there is no risk of double funding. The fundamental principle underpinning the rules for public expenditure in the EU states that no costs for the same activity can be funded twice from the EU budget, as defined in the Article 111 of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation. In the case of proposals submitted by linked SMEs, all must clearly state the differences between them including but not limited to, technical aspects, market strategy and team composition, so that it remains no doubt that there is no risk of double funding. In order to properly assess these concerns BlockStart may assign all proposals to the same set of evaluators and, should any doubt remain, exclude all proposals.
- v. If one user needs to submit applications from multiple SMEs, then he/she needs to create as many F6S profiles as applications that will be submitted.
- vi. SMEs may re-submit at Open Call #2 a proposal submitted to Open Call #1. However, it is mandatory to flag that this is a resubmission and clearly explain the improvements that they have made.
- vii. The maximum amount of direct funding that a startup/SME may receive via BlockStart is €20,000 via any means (€20,000 as the maximum amount for DLT providers, and €4,500 as the sub-grant limit for SMEs implementing the DLT solutions).

6 Open Call submission and selection process

BlockStart will issue three open calls. All open calls will address specific sectors. The following figure summarizes the Open Call #2 process:

¹ Please check the definition of Linked SME at “User guide to the SME definition” available at <https://op.europa.eu/s/n3t1> and include the relevant information in Annex 5

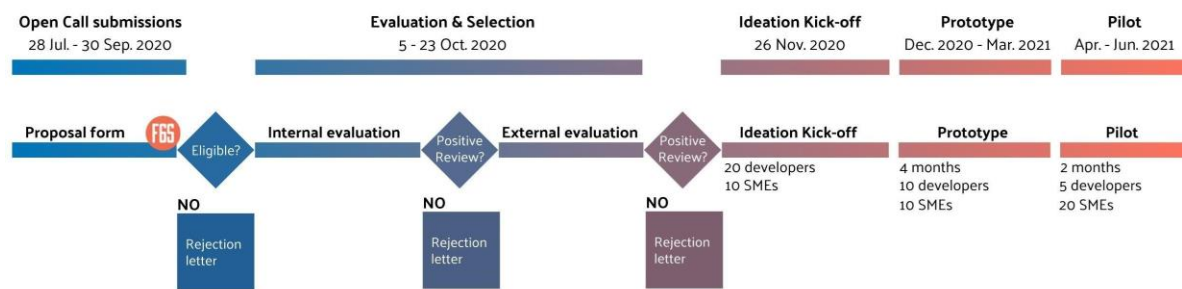


Figure 3 BlockStart submission & selection process

Open Call Submission

The Open Call submission will follow the steps that are listed in this section:

Open Call publication

Each open call will be supported by:

- **Annex 1: Open Call #2 Text**, which provides information regarding the second open call for proposals for the BlockStart project.
- **Annex 2: Guidelines for Applicants**, which sets out the guidelines for participation in the second open call for proposals of the BlockStart project.
- **Annex 3: Application Form for DLT Developers**, application form available at www.f6s.com/blockstart, with questions that need to be addressed by blockchain/ DLT solution providers.
- **Annex 3.1: Proposal Supplement**, a document providing information on proposal schedule, timing, Ethical & Security details. Only for blockchain/ DLT solution providers.
- **Annex 3.2: Application Form for SME Adopters**, application form available at www.f6s.com/blockstart, with questions that need to be addressed by SME adopters.
- **Annex 4: Declaration of Honour**, which declares that all conditions of the open call are accepted by an SME legal representative.
- **Annex 5: SME Declaration**, which evaluates the status of the SMEs participating at the open call.
- **Annex 5.1: Declaration of Commitment to Establish an SME**, in case the applicant hasn't already registered an SME (a prerequisite to participate in the Ideation Kick-off). Only for blockchain/ DLT solution providers.
- **Annex 6: Bank Account Information**, which collects information on the applicant's bank account where the BlockStart payments will be transferred to.
- **Annex 7: Sub-grant Agreement Template for DLT Developers**, which provides a template of the sub-grant agreement that the successful DLT Developers applicants will be requested to sign.
- **Annex 7.1: Sub-grant Agreement Template for SME Adopters**, which provides a template of the sub-grant agreement that the successful SME Adopters applicants will be requested to sign.
- **Annex 8: Template for H2020 Financial Support to Third Parties**, which contains the formal announcement to be published in the EU portal.
- **Frequently asked questions & answers** published at the community feed (www.blockstart.eu/open-calls/faq)

Applicants Registration

Interested applicants should register at the BlockStart F6S page (www.f6s.com/blockstart). This will be the central interface for managing the proposal applications for the remainder of the open calls.

Proposal Preparation

Please follow the steps:

1. For the proposal preparation, the applicants are requested to apply online and answer to all mandatory questions (with no exception) at www.f6s.com/blockstart.
2. Applicants that do not accept the terms and conditions and do not sign and upload to the F6S platform the completed **Annex 4 Declaration of Honour** and **Annex 5 SME Declaration** (both in a PDF format) will not be eligible. Later submissions of these documents will not be accepted. If there is not yet a registered SME, the applicant should fill in and sign **Annex 5.1 Declaration of Commitment to Establish an SME** (a prerequisite to participate in the Ideation Kick-off). However, if selected to the Ideation Kick-off, the beneficiary will only be able to receive the corresponding €1,000 grant payment after registering an SME and filling and signing the **Annex 5 SME Declaration**.
3. Be concrete and concise. Questions have character limitations. Please examine all the open call documents and attend the various online and physical events promoted by the BlockStart project (www.blockstart.eu).
4. It is highly recommended to submit your proposal well before the deadline. If the applicant discovers an error in the proposal, and provided the call deadline has not passed, the applicant may request the BlockStart team to re-submit the proposal (for this purpose please contact us at hello@blockstart.eu). However, BlockStart is not committed that resubmission in time will be feasible in case the request for resubmission is not received by the BlockStart team at least 48 hours before the call deadline.

▲ It is strongly recommended not to wait until the last minute to submit the proposal. Failure of the proposal to arrive in time for any reason, including network communications delays or working from multiple browsers or multiple browser windows, is not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance. The time of receipt of the application as recorded by the submission system will be definitive.

Proposals reception

Submissions will be done ONLY via the F6S platform on www.f6s.com/blockstart. A full list of proposers will be drafted containing their basic information for statistical purposes and clarity (which will be also shared with the EC for transparency).

The application reception will close at **5pm CET (Brussels time) on Wednesday, 30th of September 2020**.

Procedures for DLT provider to enter to the BlockStart Programme

Step 1.1: Eligibility

A filtering process carried out to discard non-eligible proposals will follow the shortlist. Eligibility criteria check will verify if:

- a) The proposing entity is a legal entity eligible for EC funding under the rules of H2020 [Y/N]
- b) The proposing entity is an SME/startup as defined in section “Definitions of SME and Startup” [Y/N]

- c) The proposing entity is a DLT startup/SME who provides innovation solutions in the fintech, ICT or retail sectors [Y/N]
- d) Are the participation rules as expressed in section “SME Eligibility Criteria” followed [Y/N]
- e) Is the participation rule as expressed in section “Proposal Eligibility Criteria” followed [Y/N]
- f) Is the proposal written in the English Language [Y/N]?
- g) Are all required documentation: **Annex 4: Declaration of Honour** and **Annex 5: SME Declaration** (or, alternatively, **Annex 5.1 Declaration of Commitment to Establish an SME**) correctly submitted [Y/N]
- h) Proposals being marked as non-eligible will get a rejection letter including the reasons (a to g) for being catalogued as non-eligible. No further feedback on the process will be given.

Step 1.2: Internal Remote Evaluation

Remotely and within the F6S platform, each application will be reviewed by (at least) 2 business and technology experts from the BlockStart consortium.

Applications will be scored based on the following evaluation criteria:

- **Criterion 1: Concept.** Design, reliability, feasibility, novelty of the product or service concept proposed.
- **Criterion 2: Technology.** Technology and business fit to BlockStart scope, innovation, technical capacity to achieve TRL 6-9 at Pilot stage (to cross the valley of death), technical milestones.
- **Criterion 3: Impact.** Expected output should target clear economic and societal impact, market potential, European dimension, cross-sector/-border business scalability, and define a clear exploitation strategy/ business plan and commercial milestones.
- **Criterion 4: SME/Team.** Capacity to perform the task, knowledge, technological and business expertise, commitment.

Each criterion will have a mark between 1 and 10. Half point scores are not given. For each criterion under examination, score values will indicate the following assessments:

- **1-2: Fail.** The proposal fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information.
- **3-4: Very poor.** The criterion is addressed in an unsatisfactory manner.
- **5: Poor.** There are serious inherent weaknesses.
- **6-7: Good.** While the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses that would need correcting.
- **8-9: Very Good.** The proposal addresses the criterion well, although certain improvements are possible.
- **10: Excellent.** The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.

The threshold for each criterion will be six (6), while the overall score threshold will be twenty-five (25). That means if a proposal receives less than 6 in one criterion or less than 25 overall score it is automatically rejected.

Each evaluator will record his/her individual opinion of each proposal on an Individual Evaluation Report. They will then communicate to prepare a single consensus Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) for each proposal.

Step 1.3: Ranking and External Remote Evaluation

At the end of the internal remote evaluation process all proposals will be ranked in a single list, independent of the topic(s) that it targets. The criteria for the ranking of the proposals will be semi-automatic following the rules below:

- **Rule 1:** The proposals will be ranked based on their overall score (summary of the criterion 1 to 4).
- **Rule 2:** In case following Rule 1 there are proposals in the same position, priority will be given to proposals that have higher impact and market potential (Criterion 3).
- **Rule 3:** In case following Rule 2 there are proposals in the same position, priority will be given to proposals where their technology and business fit to BlockStart scope (Criterion 2).
- **Rule 4:** In case following Rule 3 there are proposals in the same position, priority will be given to innovation of the concept (Criterion 1).
- **Rule 5:** In case following Rule 4 there are proposals in the same position, priority will be given to the number of female members participating in the team.

The top 40 proposals (or slightly more in case following Rule 5 there are still proposals in the same position) will then be reviewed by external evaluators with experience in blockchain technologies, the relevant sector (fintech, ICT and retail) and business development. Applications will be evaluated based on the same evaluation process described in step 1.2. and ranked based on the criteria presented above (step 1.3).

Each evaluator will record his/her individual opinion of each proposal on an Individual Evaluation Report. They will then communicate to prepare a single consensus Evaluation Summary Report (ESR), that each of the top 40 proposals will receive.

The remaining proposals will receive the Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) created in Step 1.2, containing the score for each criterion, overall score and brief comments.

The ultimate goal of this step 1.3 of the evaluation process is that the external evaluators select (among the top 40 applications previously selected by the internal experts/consortium members) the top 20 DLT developers that will be invited to participate in the Ideation Kick-off event.

Step 1.4: Final Ranking and Selection

At the end of the remote evaluation process all proposals will be ranked in a single list, independent of the topic(s) that it targets. The criteria for the ranking are the same as those presented in Step 1.3.

At the end of this process, 20 proposals will be selected, and 10 others will remain in a reserve list, in case a selected proposal fails to enter the Prototype phase.

All proposals will receive an acceptance or rejection letter together with an anonymized version of their proposal Evaluation Report containing the score for each criterion, overall score and brief comments.

Step 1.5: Contract Preparation

After the Open Call evaluation conclusion and projects selection, the BlockStart coordinator will start the contract preparation in collaboration with the proposals' coordinator. Contract preparation will go via an administrative and financial checking (and potentially into technical or ethical/security negotiations) based on evaluators' comments. On a case by case approach, a phone call or teleconference may be needed for clarification.

The objective of the contract preparation is fulfilling the legal requirements between BlockStart consortium and every beneficiary of the call. The items covered will be:

- Inclusion of the comments (if any) in the Evaluation Summary Report of the proposals and mapping to the Sub-grant agreement (contract).
- To validate the status information of the SME, the following documents will be required:

- **SMEs declaration:** signed and stamped. In the event the applicant declares being non-autonomous, the balance sheet and profit and loss account (with annexes) for the last period for upstream and downstream organizations should also be provided.
- **Status Information Form:** in case this is not a startup, it includes the headcount (AWU), balance, profit & loss accounts of the latest closed financial year and the relation, upstream and downstream, of any linked or partner company. In case it is a startup, legal document of the official founding date.
- **Legal existence:** Company Register, Official Gazette or other official document per country showing the name of the organisation, the legal address and registration number and a copy of a document proving VAT registration (in case the VAT number does not show on the registration extract or its equivalent).
- In cases where the number of employees and/or the ownership is not clearly identified: any other supporting documents which demonstrate headcount and ownership such as payroll details, annual reports, national regional association records, etc. In case it is a startup, a declaration of intent to create the company up to the Prototype stage. They also agree not to receive any grant until the company creation.
- **SME Bank Account Information:** The account where the funds will be transferred will be indicated via a form signed by the SME legal representative and the bank representative. The account should be a business bank account of the SME.

It should be emphasized that each SME should provide at contract preparation time a valid VAT. Failure to provide the VAT number will automatically result in proposal rejection (at Prototype stage). The SME should assume full responsibility on the bank account info they provide through Annex 6. For instance, if they provide a wrong IBAN, and BlockStart proceeds with the transfer to that account, they should assume any costs related to the transfer (expenses with the return of the amount from the wrong bank account and/or expenses with the new transfer will be deducted from their grant transfer). Ultimately, in a worst-case scenario, if BlockStart does not manage to recover the amount transferred to the wrong bank account, the beneficiary who provided a wrong IBAN will not be able to claim that payment.

The request, by BlockStart consortium, of the above documentation will be done including deadlines. In general, the sub-project negotiation should be concluded within 2 weeks. An additional week may be provided by the BlockStart coordinator in case of significant reasoning. In case negotiations have not been concluded within the above period, the proposal is automatically rejected and the next proposal in the reserve list is invited.

Step 1.6: Contract Signature

At the end of the negotiation phase, the sub-grant agreement will be signed between the BlockStart Consortium represented by its coordinator (BRPX) and the beneficiary SME.

Please note:

- i. The sub-grant agreement/contract will cover the complete 3 phases: IDEATION KICK-OFF, PROTOTYPE and PILOT. No additional sub-grantee will be signed if an SME enters the next phase.
- ii. The sub-grantee funding agreement will automatically expire at the end of each phase - IDEATION KICK-OFF, PROTOTYPE and PILOT - without any further notice from the BlockStart consortium, in case the project does not enter or qualify for the next phase or if the SME is not considered eligible any more or if the Declaration of Honour has been violated.
- iii. For British applicants: British applicants are eligible to all BlockStart Open Calls. Please be aware that this means that the rules of H2020 grants will apply for the entire duration of the grant.

Redress process

Within 3 working days of the delivery of a rejection letter considering the proposal as non-eligible or an Evaluation Summary Report, a proposer may submit a request for redress if s/he believes the results of the eligibility checks have not been correctly applied, or if s/he feels that there has been a shortcoming in the way his/her proposal has been evaluated that may affect the final decision on whether to enter the IDEATION KICK-OFF phase or not.

In that case, an internal review committee of the BlockStart consortium will examine the request for redress. The committee's role is to ensure a coherent interpretation of such requests, and equal treatment of applicants.

Requests must be:

- Related to the evaluation process or eligibility checks.
- Clearly describe the complaint.
- Received within the time limit (3 working days) from the reception of a rejection letter considering the proposal as non-eligible or the Evaluation Summary Report information letter delivered.
- Sent by the SME legal representative that has also submitted the proposal.

The committee will review the complaint and will recommend an appropriate course of action. If there is clear evidence of a shortcoming that could affect the eventual funding decision, it is possible that all or part of the proposal will be re-evaluated.

Please note:

- This procedure is concerned only with the evaluation and/or eligibility checking process. The committee will not call into question the scientific or technical judgement of appropriately qualified experts.
- A re-evaluation will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming that affects the final decision on whether to fund it or not. This means, for example, that a problem relating to one evaluation criterion will not lead to a re-evaluation if a proposal has failed anyway on other criteria.
- The evaluation score following any re-evaluation will be regarded as definitive. It may be lower than the original score.

Only one request for redress per proposal will be considered by the committee. All requests for redress will be treated in confidence and must be sent to Project Coordinator via the F6S platform.

IDEATION KICK-OFF phase & procedures to enter PROTOTYPE phase

Step 1.1: Preparation

Ideation Kick-off is the bridge between the online selection of DLT developers and the challenges that SMEs face. 20 DLT developers are invited to an on-site session with 10 invited SMEs previously identified - as well as mentors from the consortium and experts in both Blockchain and the target sector. The concept of the event is to get to know existing DLT technologies from their developers, match those with real SME needs and draw a roadmap on how to go from potential to real benefits. Meetings will be facilitated by the consortium, ideally with one representative per table.

The Advisory Board, intermediaries and other relevant parties will be on hand to support individual DLT developers or SMEs on particular issues that require their particular expertise.

Step 2.2: Technical Evaluation

At the end of the day, 10 DLT developers are selected to continue into the next phase of the project. The criteria, as evaluated by 1 member of BlockStart, 1 member of the Advisory Board and 1 intermediary representative, are (1) Quality of the proposed solution, (2) Market-fit, (3) Technological maturity, (4) Technological flexibility/capacity to adapt and (5) Team experience.

Step 2.3: Final Ranking & Selection to the PROTOTYPE Phase

At the end of BlockStart's Ideation Kick-off event the sub-projects will be ranked based on their evaluation scores.

In case two or more sub-projects have equal final scores, the external experts' committee will decide on the final ranking based on each sub-project impact potential and probability to achieve the results.

At the end of the event the project coordinator will announce the top 10 DLT providers sub-projects that have entered the Prototype phase. The remaining 10 sub-projects will be automatically terminated.

Step 2.4: Compensation of the IDEATION KICK-OFF Phase

Just after the IDEATION KICK-OFF event, and within 5 working days, all 20 DLT providers should send to the BlockStart coordinator:

- The set of slides that s/he presented at the IDEATION KICK-OFF event.
- A financial statement of type F1 (template will be provided) requesting the €1,000 voucher of the IDEATION KICK-OFF Phase.
- Payments will be released no later than thirty (30) natural days after the notification by the Contractor.

The BlockStart coordinator and treasurer after receiving the above documents and cross-checking the list of participants, will proceed with the payment of the IDEATION KICK-OFF phase voucher (provided in a lump sum mode).

In case an SME, either does not participate in the IDEATION KICK-OFF event, or does not successfully complete the IDEATION KICK-OFF evaluations or does not submit the above documentation within the foreseen timeframe, their sub-grantee contract will be automatically terminated and no IDEATION KICK-OFF phase compensation will be provided.

After providing the IDEATION KICK-OFF phase funding to the DLT providers beneficiaries, the IDEATION KICK-OFF Phase is complete. As a result:

- The top 10 DLT providers will automatically enter the PROTOTYPE phase, based on their contract;
- The sub-grant contract of the remaining 10 DLT providers will be automatically terminated.

PROTOTYPE phase & procedures to enter PILOT phase

Step 3.1: Prototype phase implementation

The actual prototype activity involves facilitating the relationship between the DLT developer and the SMEs. The prototype will begin by clarifying its scope and the negotiation of the key metrics that will define a successful development. These metrics should include both quantitative and qualitative metrics. DLT developers will be encouraged to use a ticketing system to centralize communication, better understand the product problems, organize customer support and easily gather support KPIs. BlockStart will then receive bi-weekly updates on the collaboration with the current status of the

metrics previously identified, identify business and technical obstacles that come up during implementation and direct both parties to the resources needed to resolve them (in the form of mentorship or subject-matter experts). The Prototype phase will end if the prototype is successfully completed (all the metrics are attained) or after 4 months.

Step 3.2: Prototype phase evaluation

At the end of Prototype phase, a remote review will take place to evaluate the progress of the sub-project. Two weeks before the review, the sub-project coordinator should submit the following deliverable: D1: Prototype report describing the system prototype that they have implemented and the results of the tests.

The review will be remote via a teleconference platform (e.g., Google Meet). The review committee will consist of experts from the BlockStart consortium.

The DLT developer will make a short presentation of the sub-project, analyse the design considerations and answer questions from the experts.

After the review, the sub-project coordinator will receive a review report, including comments and potential recommendations. The report will also state if the Prototype deliverable was accepted or not.

Step 3.5: Selection to the Pilot phase

A committee of experts from the BlockStart consortium will score each DLT provider sub-project (the scoring will be done remotely). The value of the score of each evaluator will be equal and the final evaluation score will be the average of the experts' individual scores. Evaluation should be mainly based on deliverable D1.

The sub-projects will be ranked based on the final evaluation score. In case two or more sub-projects have equal final scores, the experts' committee will decide on the final ranking based on each sub-project impact potential and probability to achieve the results.

At the end of the evaluation process the project coordinator will announce the top 5 sub-projects that have entered the Pilot phase. The remaining 5 sub-projects will be automatically terminated.

Step 3.6: Compensation of the Prototype phase

Just after the Prototype selection to the Pilot phase, and within 5 working days, all sub-project coordinators that have successfully complete the Prototype phase should send to the BlockStart coordinator the financial statement F2 (template will be provided) requesting the €15,000 voucher of the Prototype.

The BlockStart coordinator and treasurer, after receiving the above-mentioned financial statements and cross-checking the list of participants, will proceed with the payment (provided in a lump sum mode). Payments will be released no later than thirty (30) natural days after the notification by the Contractor.

In case a DLT provider has not successfully completed Prototype phase or has not submitted the financial statements within the foreseen timeframe, their sub-grantee contract will be automatically terminated, and no compensation will be provided.

After providing the Prototype phase funding to the DLT providers beneficiaries, the Pilot phase is complete. As a result:

- The top 5 sub-projects will automatically enter the Pilot phase, based on their contract;
- The sub-grantee contract of the remaining 5 sub-projects will be automatically terminated.

PILOT phase

Step 4.1: Pilot phase implementation

After BlockStart's PROTOTYPE phase, the top 5 sub-projects will enter the PILOT phase. The duration of this stage will be approximately 2 months. Prior to the Pilot implementation, KPIs will be defined and agreed upon between DLT developer, SME and BlockStart consortium.

During this phase, the selected DLT provider will be matched with pioneering SMEs. BlockStart will be facilitating the relationship and developing a mutually beneficial agreement for after the end of the PILOT phase. Selected DLT solutions that successfully conclude the pilot stage will have the opportunity to present their solution in an exclusive 1-day event open to sector industry companies and investors: the Demo Day.

Step 4.2: Pilot phase evaluation

At the end of the Pilot, a BlockStart Demo Day event will take place (the place will be defined at least 1 month before).

Two weeks before the event, the sub-project coordinator should submit the following deliverable: D2: Pilot report detailing the scope of the activities, key metrics and if they were met, main obstacles and how they were surpassed/lessons learned, next steps.

It is mandatory that at least one participant per DLT provider is present at the event, signs the participants list and actively participates in the activities. However, it is strongly suggested that two DLT provider representatives participate.

During the PILOT event, each DLT developer will have the opportunity to demonstrate their product to an evaluation committee and broader audience, either in pitching sessions or one-to-one meetings.

Successful presentation and demonstration of the product at TRL 7-8 will result in successful completion of the PILOT Phase.

Step 4.3: Compensation of the PILOT Phase

Just after the PILOT event, and within 5 working days, all sub-project coordinators that have successfully complete the PILOT phase should send to the BlockStart coordinator a filled-in a signed financial statement F3 (template will be provided) requesting the €4,000 voucher of the PILOT Phase.

The BlockStart coordinator and treasurer will proceed with the payment (provided in a lump sum mode) no later than thirty (30) natural days after the notification by the Contractor.

In case a DLT provider, either has not participated in the PILOT Demo Day event, or has not successfully completed the PILOT evaluation or has not submitted the financial statements with the foreseen timeframe, their sub-grantee contract will be automatically terminated, and no compensation will be provided.

7 DLT projects Execution Summary

Mentor

Each sub-project will be assigned at least one mentor. The mentor will communicate with the sub-project on a bi-weekly basis and in order to overview the progress and provide technical or business advice.

Evaluations Summary

Each project will go through 4 evaluations, each one highlighting the end of a phase.

Table 3 Evaluations summary

Evaluation 1			
When	Open Call deadline	Estimated project month	September 2020
Mean	Proposal submission		
If successful (top 20)	The DLT provider signs the contract and enters the IDEATION KICK-OFF phase		
Evaluation 2			
When	IDEATION KICK-OFF Event	Estimated project month	November 2020
Mean	Set of slides & pitching proposal idea		
If successful	The DLT provider receives €1,000 as lump sum for covering the preparation and participation in the event. The SME adopter receives €1,500 as lump sum for covering the preparation and participation in the event.		
If distinction (top 10)	The DLT provider enters the PROTOTYPE phase		
Evaluation 3			
When	Remote Review	Estimated project month	March 2021
Mean	Deliverable D1: Report (implementation, describing the system prototype that they have implemented and the results of the tests) & Business and Exploitation Plan		
If successful	The DLT provider receives €15,000 as lump sum		
If distinction (top 5)	The proposal enters the PILOT phase		
Evaluation 4			
When	PILOT Demo Day Event	Estimated project month	June 2021
Mean	Deliverable D2: Report, demonstration of the product (TRL 7-8) & pitching		
If successful	The DLT provider receives €4,000 as lump sum. The SME adopter receives €3,000 as lump sum.		

The sub-grantees should deliver at least two (2) weeks in advance all relevant deliverables, so that the reviewers will be able to be prepared. During the review, the sub-project members should present their work, answer questions and demonstrate their experiment.

After each successful evaluation and within 5 working days, the sub-project coordinator should send the relevant Financial Statement to the coordinator. Additional conditions and eligibility criteria have already been described in the previous sections.

8 Responsibilities of beneficiaries

The selected blockchain/DLT developer SMEs are indirectly beneficiaries of European Commission funding. As such, they are responsible for the proper use of the funding and ensure that the recipients comply with obligations under H2020 specific requirements as described in Horizon 2020 - the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020 Digital Innovation Initiatives based on European Networks of Competence Centres in H2020). The obligations that are applicable to the recipients include:

Conflict of Interest

The beneficiary blockchain/DLT Developers must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the sub-project is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests').

They must formally notify the BlockStart coordinator without delay any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation. The BlockStart coordinator may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

If the sub-contract consortium member breaches any of its obligations, the sub-contract may be automatically terminated. Moreover, costs may be rejected.

Data Protection & Confidentiality

During implementation of the sub-project and for four years after the end of the sub-project, the parties must keep confidential any data, documents or other material (in any form) that is identified as confidential at sub-contract signing time ('confidential information').

If a beneficiary DLT provider SME requests, the Commission and the BlockStart consortium may agree to keep such information confidential for an additional period beyond the initial four years. This will be explicitly stated at the sub-contract.

If information has been identified as confidential during the sub-project execution or only orally, it will be considered confidential only if this is accepted by the BlockStart coordinator and confirmed in writing within 15 days of the oral disclosure. Unless otherwise agreed between the parties, they may use confidential information only to implement the Agreement.

The sub-project consortium may disclose confidential information to the BlockStart consortium and to the selected reviewers, who will be bounded by a specific Non-Disclosure Agreement.

Promoting the action and give visibility to the EU funding

The beneficiary SMEs must promote the sub-project, the BlockStart project and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public) in a strategic and effective manner and to highlight the financial support of the EC.

Unless the European Commission or the BlockStart coordinator requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible, any communication activity related to the action (including in electronic form, via social media, etc.), any publicity, including at a conference or seminar or any type of information or promotional material (brochure, leaflet, poster, presentation etc.), and any infrastructure, equipment and major results funded by the grant must:

- a) display the EU emblem;
- b) display the BlockStart logo and
- c) include the following text:

For communication activities: *“This project has indirectly received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, via an Open Call issued and executed under project BlockStart (grant agreement No. 8228853)”*.

For infrastructure, equipment and major results: *“This [infrastructure][equipment][insert type of result] is part of a sub-project that has indirectly received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme via an Open Call issued and executed under project BlockStart (grant agreement No. 8228853)”*.

When displayed in association with a logo, the European emblem should be given appropriate prominence. This obligation to use the European emblem in respect of projects to which the EC contributes implies no right of exclusive use. It is subject to general third-party use restrictions which do not permit the appropriation of the emblem, or of any similar trademark or logo, whether by registration or by any other means. Under these conditions, the Beneficiary is exempted from the obligation to obtain prior permission from the EC to use the emblem. Further detailed information on the EU emblem can be found on the Europa web page.

Any publicity made by the beneficiary SME in respect of the project, in whatever form and on or by whatever medium, must specify that it reflects only the author’s views and that the EC or BlockStart project is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

The EC and the BlockStart consortium shall be authorized to publish, in whatever form and on or by whatever medium, the following information:

- the name of the beneficiary SME;
- contact address of the beneficiary SME;
- the general purpose of the project;
- the amount of the financial contribution foreseen for the project; after the final payment, and the amount of the financial contribution actually received;
- the geographic location of the activities carried out;
- the list of dissemination activities and/or of patent (applications) relating to foreground;
- the details/references and the abstracts of scientific publications relating to foreground and, if funded within the sub-project, the published version or the final manuscript accepted for publication;
- the publishable reports submitted to BlockStart;
- any picture or any audio-visual or web material provided to the EC and BlockStart in the framework of the project.

The beneficiary SME shall ensure that all necessary authorizations for such publication have been obtained and that the publication of the information by the EC and BlockStart does not infringe any rights of third parties.

Upon a duly substantiated request by the sub-project coordinator on behalf of any sub-project member, the BlockStart, if such permission is provided by the EC, may agree to forego such publicity if disclosure of the information indicated above would risk compromising the beneficiary's security, academic or commercial interests.

Financial audits and controls

The European Commission (EC) will monitor that BlockStart beneficiaries and the beneficiary SME comply with the conditions for financial support to third parties such as set out in Annex 1 of the BlockStart grant agreement and may take any action foreseen by the grant agreement in case of non-compliance vis à vis the beneficiary concerned.

Moreover, the EC may at any time during the implementation of the BlockStart project and up to 5 (five) years after the end of the BlockStart project, arrange for financial audits to be carried out, by external auditors, or by the EC services themselves including the European Anti-Fraud office (OLAF). The audit procedure shall be deemed to be initiated on the date of receipt of the relevant letter sent by the EC. Such audits may cover financial, systemic and other aspects (such as accounting and management principles) relating to the proper execution of the grant agreement. They shall be carried out on a confidential basis.

The beneficiary SME shall make available directly to the EC all detailed information and data that may be requested by the EC or any representative authorised by it, with a view to verifying that the grant agreement is properly managed and performed in accordance with its provisions and that costs have been charged in compliance with it. This information and data must be precise, complete and effective.

The beneficiary SME shall keep all sub-project deliverables and the originals or, in exceptional cases, duly authenticated copies – including electronic copies – of all documents relating to the sub-project contract for up to five years from the end of the project. These shall be made available to the EC where requested during any audit under the grant agreement.

In order to carry out these audits, the beneficiary SME shall ensure that the EC's services and any external body(ies) authorised by it have on-the-spot access at all reasonable times, notably to the sub-project applicant offices, to its computer data, to its accounting data and to all the information needed to carry out those audits, including information on individual salaries of persons involved in the project. They shall ensure that the information is readily available on the spot at the moment of the audit and, if so requested, that data be handed over in an appropriate form.

On the basis of the findings made during the financial audit, a provisional report shall be drawn up. It shall be sent by the EC or its authorised representative to the beneficiary concerned, which may make observations thereon within 1 month of receiving it. The Commission may decide not to take into account observations conveyed or documents sent after that deadline. The final report shall be sent to the beneficiary concerned within 2 months of expiry of the aforesaid deadline.

On the basis of the conclusions of the audit, the EC shall take all appropriate measures which it considers necessary, including the issuing of recovery orders regarding all or part of the payments made by it and the application of any applicable sanction.

The European Court of Auditors shall have the same rights as the EC, notably right of access, for the purpose of checks and audits, without prejudice to its own rules.

In addition, the EC may carry out on-the-spot checks and inspections in accordance with Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96 of 11 November 1996 concerning on-the-spot checks and inspections carried out by the Commission in order to protect the European Communities' financial interests against fraud and other irregularities.

Sub-project Communication

The sub-project official representative should:

- Provide any notice be in writing to the BlockStart project coordinator;
- Notify immediately any change of persons or contact details to the BlockStart coordinator. The address list shall be accessible to all concerned.

9 BlockStart - Call for end-user SMEs

SME and Proposal Eligibility Criteria

Only SMEs eligible for EU funding can apply. Please check [if your country is eligible](#). The definition of SME is the one by the Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC. Only one proposal per applicant will be accepted for evaluation (the last proposal submitted through F6S will be evaluated). Others will be discarded. Resubmission to the SME adopters open call is allowed only if they did not participate in the Pilot stage (they may, however, have participated in a previous Ideation Kick-off). No double funding is allowed. The total grant limit for SMEs adopters is €4,500.

Procedures for SME adopter to enter to the BlockStart Programme

Proposals reception

Submissions will be done ONLY via the F6S platform on www.f6s.com/blockstart. A full list of proposers will be drafted containing their basic information for statistical purposes and clarity (which will be also shared with EC for transparency).

Furthermore, each SME is requested to complete the Do You Need Blockchain? Tool form available at: <https://blockstart.eu/dlt>.

The call for SME adopters is continuously open with several cut off dates.

The next cut off will close on the **2nd of November 2020 at 5pm CET** (Brussels time).

Procedures for SME adopter to enter to the BlockStart Programme

Step 1.1: Eligibility

A filtering process will be carried out to discard non-eligible proposals. Eligibility criteria check will verify:

- a) The proposing entity is a legal entity eligible for EC funding under the rules of H2020 [Y/N]
- b) The proposing entity is an SME/startup as defined in section "Definitions of SME and Startup" [Y/N]

- c) The proposing entity is an SME working in the fields of fintech, ICT or retail sectors [Y/N]
- d) Are the participation rules as expressed in section “SME and Proposal Eligibility Criteria” followed [Y/N]
- e) Is the proposal written in the English Language [Y/N]
- f) Is the Do You Need Blockchain? / DLT Assessment Tool form completed [Y/N]
- g) Are all required documentation: **Annex 4: Declaration of Honour** and **Annex 5: SME Declaration** submitted correctly [Y/N]
- h) Proposals being marked as non-eligible will get a rejection letter including the reasons (a to g) for being catalogued as non-eligible. No further feedback on the process will be given.

Step 1.2: Do You Need Blockchain? Tool

BlockStart project has created and published a Do You Need Blockchain? Tool (or DLT Assessment Tool), which aims to evaluate SMEs/startups capacity and potential to start using DLT/blockchain technology. To assess the potential of implementing DLT/blockchain we evaluate the type of company, innovation readiness level and DLT/ blockchain potential in company’s processes.

Type of company. First, we aim to find out if a company is an SME/startup, as our goal is to determine the potential of DLT technology only for SMEs/startups. We achieve this by asking the companies to confirm if they meet SME conditions as to EC’s description (less than 250 employees, annual turnover less or equal to €50M and annual balance sheet less or equal to €43M). In addition, participants are asked to provide information about their company type, to double check if the respondent actually represents an SME/startup.

Innovation readiness assessment. We measure the innovation capacity of the company in order to find out if the company is ready to implement new solutions into their processes. Innovation readiness is determined by gathering information on level of innovation in the company, experience in implementing the innovations, capacity of IT department and know-how about the DLT/blockchain technology.

DLT/ blockchain potential assessment. The goal here is to identify the main challenges that motivates SMEs/ startups to adopt blockchain.

At the end of the Do You Need Blockchain? Tool submission, SMEs/startups receive feedback, based on their answers, if DLT/blockchain could have a high impact in the company's processes. High impact result is provided if the company provides positive answers to any of the identified challenges that could be overcome by implementing DLT/blockchain solutions and low impact if the technology would not solve any challenges.

Step 1.3: Ranking and Selection

Each proposal will be rated by the BlockStart consortium (1 member per partner), based on the following criteria:

- **Criterion 1 (score 1-10, 50% weight):** potential of being matched with selected blockchain/ DLT solution developers, based on the description of their current challenges/needs (info provided through the answers to the F6S form).
- **Criterion 2 (score 1-10, 25% weight):** innovation level of the possible use cases for blockchain/ DLT in the company (info provided through the answers to the F6S form).
- **Criterion 3 (score 1-10, 25% weight):** overall score from the Do You Need Blockchain? Tool.

In case following the criteria above there are proposals in the same position, priority will be given to the applicants with the highest number of female members participating in the team (info provided through the answers to the F6S form).

Following the ranking, all SMEs that have applied to the BlockStart - Call for end-user SMEs will receive either an invitation letter, or a brief explanation on why they have not been selected.

For Contract preparation, signature and redress procedure, please refer to Chapter 6 of the BlockStart Annex 2 (this document).

10 BlockStart Events

BlockStart will organise physical and/ or online events for the teams involved. It will be compulsory to attend those events. At least one representative per team will be required on each event.

Failing to attend any of the mandatory events defined at the beginning of each phase by BlockStart will automatically disqualify the team from the BlockStart program.

The foreseen events are:

Table 4 events

<i>Event</i>	<i>Scope</i>	<i>Where</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Mandatory</i>
Ideation Kick-off	Selection of the projects to enter the Prototype stage	Online event	26 November 2020	1 day	Yes
Demo Day	Completion of the Pilot stage	To be defined	June 2021	1 day	Yes

Please note that the locations and dates at the above table are indicative and not binding. They may be modified during the execution of the program.

All the teams will be informed in advance to prepare the logistics and reservations for their team members.

11 Checklist

- 1) **Does your planned work fit with the call for proposals?** Check that your proposed work does indeed address one of the topics open in this call.
- 2) **Does your proposal address blockchain technology?** Check that your proposed work does indeed address the blockchain technologies in one of the target sectors.
- 3) **Is your proposal eligible?** The eligibility criteria are given in sections “SME Eligibility Criteria” and “Proposal Eligibility Criteria”. In particular, make sure that you satisfy the minimum participation requirements (entity from eligible countries).
- 4) **Is your proposal complete?** Have you completed all the mandatory questions?
- 5) **Does your proposal fulfil all questions requests/comments?** Proposals should be precise, concise and must answer to requested questions, which are designed to correspond to the applied evaluation. Omitting requested information will almost certainly lead to lower scores and possible rejection.
- 6) **Have you maximized your chances?** There will be strong competition. Therefore, edit your proposal tightly, strengthen or eliminate weak points.

- 7) **Have you submitted your proposal before the deadline?** It is strongly recommended not to wait until the last minute to submit the proposal. Failure of the proposal to arrive in time for any reason, including network communications delays, is not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance. The time of receipt of the message as recorded by the submission system will be definitive.
- 8) **Have you provided the necessary annexes?**
- 9) **Do you need further advice and support?** You are strongly advised to communicate with the BlockStart team via the BlockStart profile at F6S platform (www.f6s.com/blockstart).

Do not forget that the applicant SME must have a valid VAT number during contract preparation.

12 Contacts

For the application form and detailed guidance for applicants, please download the files available at the www.blockstart.eu website. The BlockStart consortium will organise webinars and be present at events (most probably, virtual ones, due to Covid-19) from July 2020 until September 2020, to connect with interested applicants. Please check BlockStart F6S page & follow our social accounts² if you want to stay tuned with this programme.

The BlockStart consortium will provide information to the applicants only via www.f6s.com/blockstart, so that all information (questions and answers) will be accessible to all potential applicants.

No binding information will be provided via any other means (e.g., telephone or email).

More info at: www.blockstart.eu/open-calls

Apply via: www.f6s.com/blockstart

FAQ: www.blockstart.eu/open-calls/faq

Online Q&A: www.f6s.com/blockstart/discuss

Support team: hello@blockstart.eu

Personal Data Protection Policy available at: www.blockstart.eu/data-protection/

² Follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/BlockStartEU, LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/blockstarteu and Twitter: twitter.com/BlockStartEU.