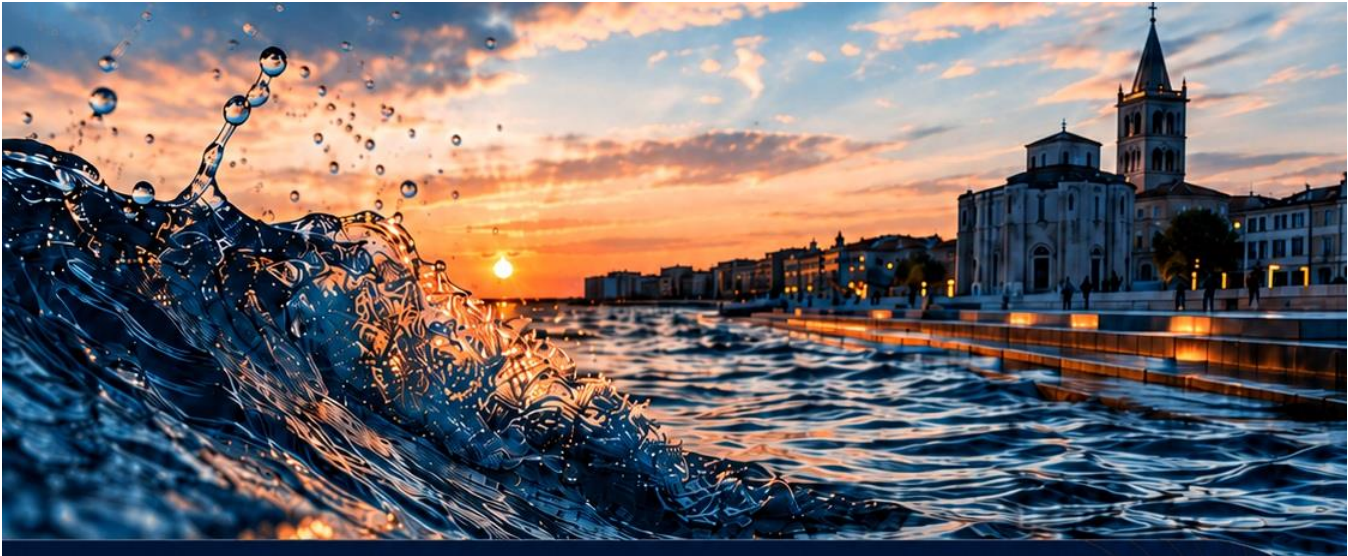




EIT WATER & PDJF REGIONAL HACKATHON 2026 • OPEN CALL

Open Call for Innovative Teams

Ready to turn a real-world water or marine challenge into an innovative solution?

DIH Innovamare and the University of Zadar are inviting young entrepreneurs, innovators, startups, SMEs, researchers and RDI teams to join the EIT Water & PDJF Regional HACKATHON 2026 – a one-day, intensive innovation event bringing together diverse teams to develop solutions for urgent Water, Marine and Maritime (WMM) challenges.

BUILD • VALIDATE • PITCH • WIN

Develop a Proof of Concept, pitch your idea to an expert jury, and compete for €5,250 in cash prizes.

APPLY BY

15 OCTOBER 2026

FINALE

5 NOV 2026 • ZADAR

PRIZES

€5,250 CASH

What will you work on?

The Hackathon focuses on three major EIT Water strategic objectives:

- Healthy, clean, productive and sustainable waters – tackling water pollution, ecosystem degradation and water-quality challenges.
- Water-smart Water, Marine and Maritime sectors – improving water efficiency, reducing losses, recycling and resource circularity.
- Resilient Water, Marine and Maritime sectors – strengthening resilience to climate-related events and external threats.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

What can teams work on?

Challenges may address areas such as:



Leakage detection & non-revenue water reduction



Freshwater monitoring & environmental intelligence



Predictive maintenance & smart infrastructure inspection



Ocean pollution & marine biodiversity



Coastal resilience & climate adaptation



Shipping emissions & sustainable maritime operations



Port efficiency & smart infrastructure

We are looking for novel, practical and scalable solutions with potential for real-world impact.

OPEN CATEGORY: BLUE INNOVATION

Beyond the challenge areas above, the Hackathon is open to startups, spinouts, SMEs and venture teams from the wider blue economy, including marine monitoring, smart maritime operations, marine robotics, environmental intelligence and the circular blue economy.

If your solution serves the Water, Marine and Maritime sectors and fits one of the three EIT Water strategic objectives, you can apply.

Who should apply?

We welcome multidisciplinary and cross-sector teams bringing together different perspectives and expertise, including:

- Young entrepreneurs and innovators
- Startups, spinouts and SMEs
- Researchers and academics
- Engineers, technology developers and RDI teams
- Environmental and sustainability experts
- Business and innovation professionals

Teams should combine technical, environmental and/or business expertise.

You don't need to have a finished product. Early-stage ideas and solution concepts are welcome. Existing ventures with a working prototype or product are welcome too.

REWARDS • NETWORK • NEXT STEPS

What can you win?

Three winning teams will receive cash prizes worth €5,250 in total:

🏆 1ST PLACE	🏆 2ND PLACE	🏆 3RD PLACE
€3,000	€1,500	€750
€1,000 EIT Water €2,000 sponsors	€500 EIT Water €1,000 sponsors	€250 EIT Water €500 sponsors

Beyond the prizes

- Develop your idea into a Proof of Concept (PoC).
- Work with experts, mentors and a multidisciplinary team.
- Validate your solution against real-world challenges.
- Connect with companies, researchers, public authorities and innovation ecosystem actors.
- Explore opportunities for pilots, partnerships, incubation and future funding.
- Gain visibility within the EIT Water innovation ecosystem.

Key dates

25 AUGUST 2026	Open Call launches
15 OCTOBER 2026	23:59 CEST – Application deadline
LATE OCTOBER 2026	Selection results
5 NOVEMBER 2026	Regional Hackathon Finale, Zadar, Croatia

How to apply

Applications are submitted online via the MAIROS platform:

<https://mairos.org/news/eit-water-pdjf-regional-hackathon-2026/>

FREE PARTICIPATION

Participation is free of charge. Catering and essential on-site Hackathon infrastructure will be provided. Travel and accommodation costs are the responsibility of participants.

Need help with the application?

Please contact us directly on info@innvoamare.org

WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO YOUR APPLICATION!

DIH Innovamare & University of Zadar

with the support of EIT Water & Poul Due Jensen Foundation