Heriot-Watt University

Report on the use of MASTS PEER funding to assist with submission of a proposal for H2020-BG-04-2017 'Multi-Use of Oceans Marine Space - Enabling Technologies'

This award of MASTS PEER Funding was used to help with the writing of the H2020 BG-04-2017 proposal submitted to the European Commission in February 2017. The proposal was submitted by the MARIBE (Marine Investment in the Blue Economy) Consortium which had successfully completed the H2020 BG-05-2014 project in 2016. Heriot-Watt is a leading member of this consortium. BG-04-2017 is a natural successor to BG-05-2014 and the consortium is well placed for an award which will be announced in September 2017. The PEER funding matched similar amounts contributed from the Welsh Government (University of Swansea) and Irish Government (University College Cork). Experts in H2020 funding were engaged to assist with the writing of the proposal. The several SMEs involved in the project include Scottish companies.

This new project will be at the cutting edge of EU plans for multi-use platforms (MUPs) and the multi-use of marine space. It will include the deployment of novel platform designs and several trial activities (multi-trophic aquaculture, wave energy, wind energy, desalination) working in complementary ways to each other. The aims are to raise the TRL levels of the technologies involved and to prove the skills, employment, health and safety, regulatory, management and planning needs of MUPs. The project will develop combinations of innovative, cost-effective technologies and methods including automation and remote monitoring technologies, flexible structures and facilities in order to test concepts of multi-use platforms leading to pilot demonstration phases. It will test the sustainable operability of co-located maritime activities around coastal or deep sea environments. It will also address health and safety issues associated with multi-use marine platforms. Environmental and economic viability as well as societal acceptance will be investigated, especially by involving local communities. Proposals will capitalise on the results of EU and national projects including those testing business models developed for multi-use platforms for their economic feasibility and environmental sustainability.

Dissemination: MARIBE2 will forge links with the existing H2020 MUSES Project coordinated by Marine Scotland. A joint forum of MUSES and MARIBE2 will present results of study into technical and non-technical challenges of MUPs. This forum will be a good opportunity for Scottish companies to gain from the MARIBE2 experience. Meetings or workshops will be hosted at the MASTS ASM to engage MASTS members and Scottish SMEs in the progress and results of MARIBE2.
SME development: The wave energy developer in the project will be a Scottish company chosen because the device is tailored to providing the energy needs of aquaculture as well as macro-algae production. MARIBE2 will provide the facility to test the device in an MUP environment.
Aquaculture and Macro-Algae development: MARIBE2 will test synergies on how a floating platform will assist aquaculture and macro-algae companies to move further offshore. The MARIBE2 pilot platform will assist Scottish development in the potential for offshore aquaculture.

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