

Open Call 3 Info Day

CYSSDE Penetration Test and Vulnerability Assessment



Webinar Date:
April 8



Webinar Time:
10:00

Rosa Villaronga
FundingBox



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Open Call Overview

€200,000

Grants up to per project

50% 12

Minimum co-funding
applicants

Projects will
be selected
up to

Target:

Essential Service Operators
and SMEs

Goal:

Support penetration testing
and vulnerability assessments

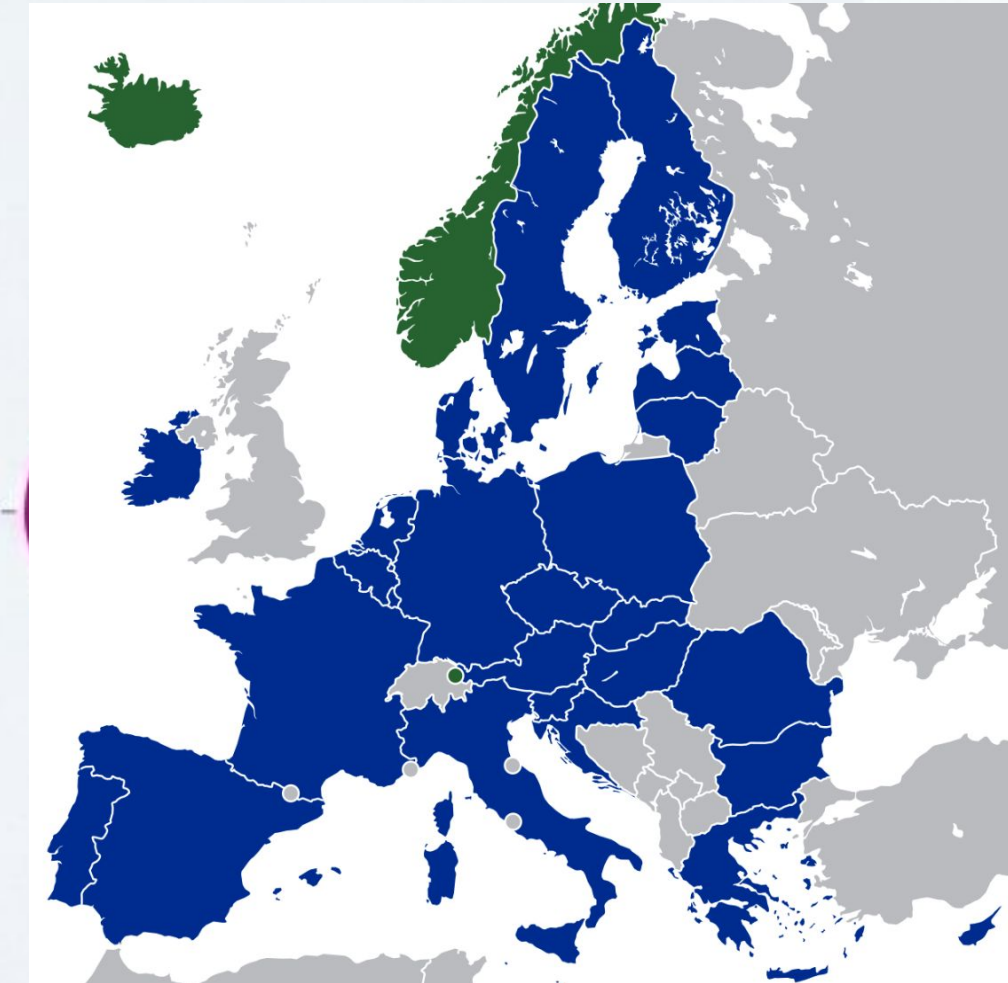
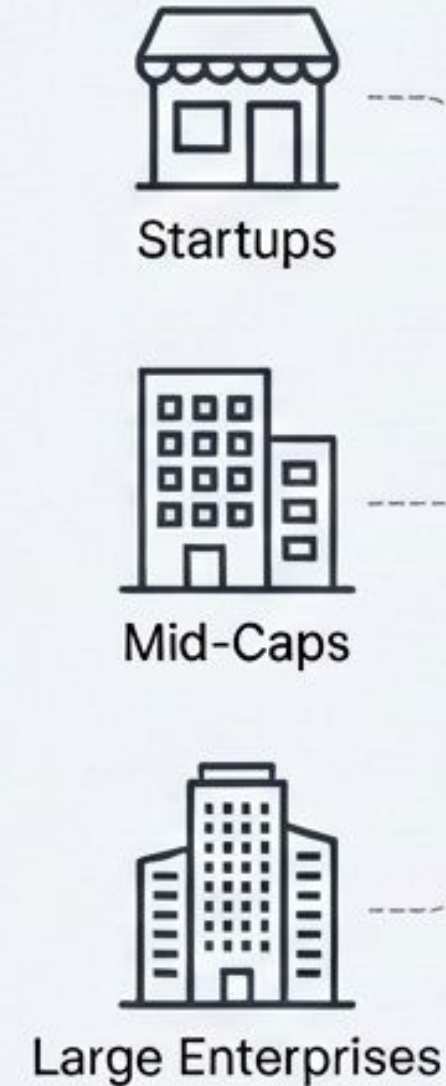
Requirement:

At least 10 external
assessments per beneficiary

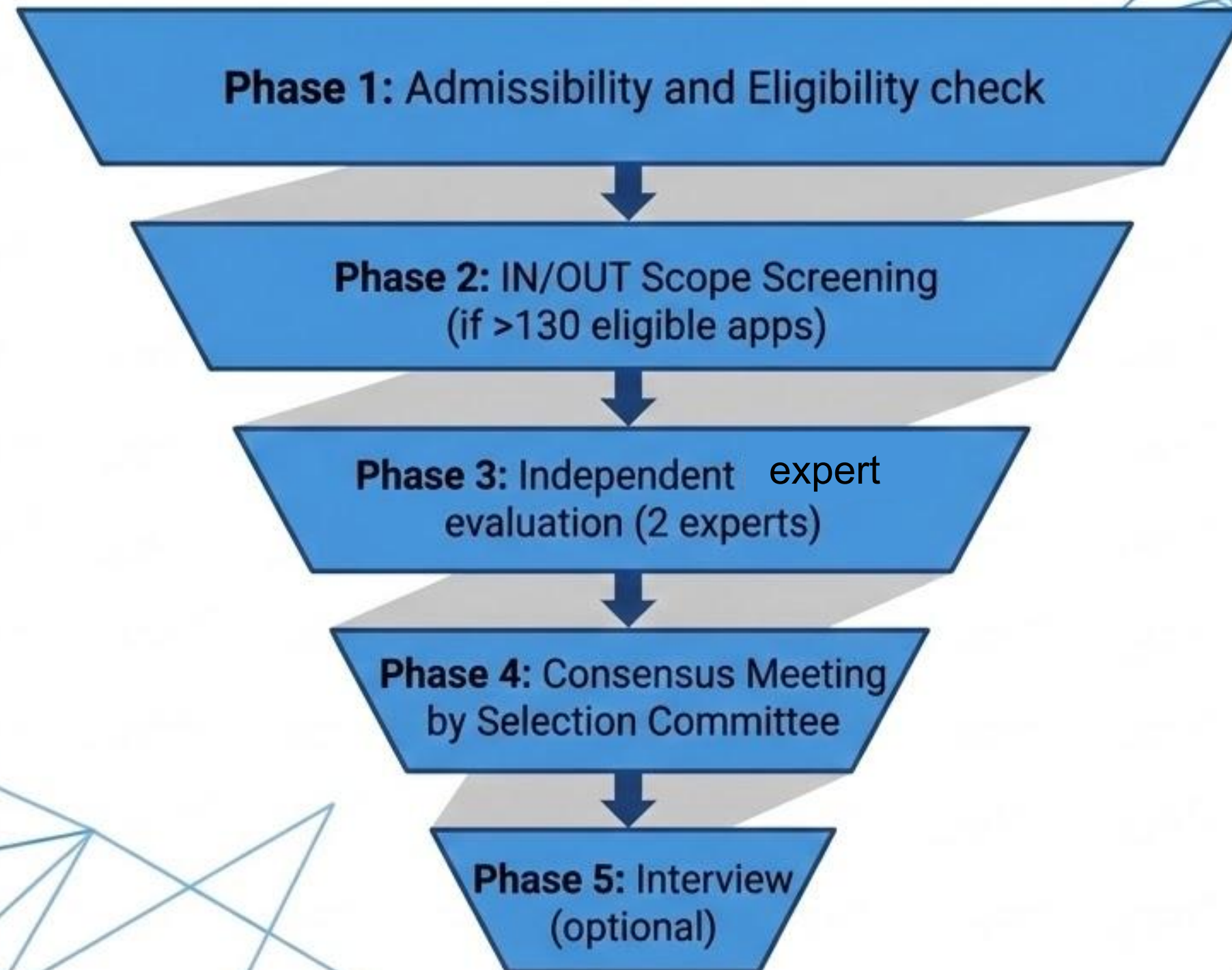


Who Can Apply

- SMEs, mid-caps, and large companies
- Research centers and public bodies
- Must be registered in EU Member States + EEA countries
- Individual entities or consortia allowed
- Consortia limited to maximum 2 entities



Evaluation Process



Evaluation calendar*:



IN/ OUT Scope Phase

Only if more than 130 submitted applications

how?

Consortium Partners will review the proposal's fit with the project scope and goals

A 'Yes/No' approach will be used...



Relevance to the Scope of the Open Call

- Proposals must clearly focus on penetration testing and/or vulnerability assessment activities and demonstrate the ability to deliver a minimum of 10 assessments for end users, including entities covered by the NIS2 Directive.



Alignment with NIS2 Target Sectors

- Projects must aim to engage with end users such as essential or important entities, operators of essential services, digital service providers, public-sector organisations, or SMEs supporting NIS2-relevant sectors.



Basic Technical Capability

- Applicants must show sufficient technical competence in penetration testing and vulnerability assessment. They should possess — or clearly plan to establish — the necessary skills, tools, methods, and testing environments required to carry out the proposed activities.

Evaluation Criteria

Minimum threshold 10 of the Sum of 3 criteria

Scored 0 to 5 per criterion



Minimum threshold:
3 out of 5

Total
maximum
final score:
15



Criteria 1:
Excellence
(Ambition,
Methodologies)



Criteria 2:
Impact

Same weight. It will be
used for solving ties



Criteria 3:
Implementation
(Resources,
Budget)

Update from OC2 to OC3:
Impact criterion now has the same weight
as others.

Total maximum final score: 15



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Questions from the CYSSDE Helpdesk:



Eligibility & Control

Only companies **directly or indirectly controlled by a person or entity established in EU or EEA country** are eligible to apply.

The CYSSDE project is funded under the Digital Europe Programme (Specific Objective 3: Cybersecurity and Trust), which imposes security restrictions under Article 12(s) of the Digital Europe Regulation.



Funding & Contributions

CYSSDE funds up to 50% of project costs. Applicants must cover the remaining 50% (e.g., €200k grant = €400k total budget) by:

- their own resources
- Other compatible grant verifying (under their national regulations).
- Client contributions.

Double funding is not permitted.



Application Scope

Can a Critical Infrastructure Operator apply individually, even if their IT team conducts their own penetration testing?

A Critical Infrastructure Operator can apply individually if they meet all eligibility criteria. However, to strengthen your application, you should consider multiple penetration tests, broader vulnerability assessments, or capacity building efforts. Collaboration with external partners may also enhance their proposal's competitiveness.

Do we need to focus the tests on a single organisation or multiple end users?

There is no strict requirement to focus on multiple end-users. You can choose to conduct your assessments on a single entity or across several. However, engaging a diverse range of end users is highly recommended. Testing multiple entities demonstrates broader market impact, which can lead to a higher evaluation score and provide a crucial advantage in the event of a tie during the selection process.



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CONTROL



Questions from the CYSSDE Helpdesk (II):

1

- How are the different budget categories calculated, and how must they be calculated?

The application form includes the main categories, and some calculations (like overheads and total budget) are automated.

When estimating costs, use these guidelines:

-  **Personnel:** Internal hourly rate multiplied by hours worked, estimated for the project.
-  **Purchase Costs:** Covers essential project expenses (Travel, Equipment depreciation, and other Goods/Services). You must ensure the best value for money and avoid conflicts of interest.
-  **Subcontracting:** For non-core tasks. You must ensure the best value for money and avoid conflicts of interest. (Note: Subcontractors execute tasks, whereas suppliers only provide resources).
-  **Overheads:** Automatically calculated as a 7% flat-rate of eligible direct costs (Personnel + Purchase + Travels), excluding Subcontracting.
- General Eligibility:** Governed by FINANCIAL REGULATION 2018/1046. Costs are eligible if they match the budget lump sum and the tasks have been properly implemented.

Do we need to submit financial reports to receive payments? What does reporting look like?

No financial documents (e.g. invoices, receipts, final financial reports, or timesheets) are required. The grant is granted as a lump sum, with payments tied to the successful and timely completion of the milestones defined in the Execution Plan.

3

Do we need to submit financial reports to receive payments? What does reporting look like?

NO

No financial documents required (invoices, receipts, final reports, timesheets).

Grant is a lump sum tied to successful and timely completion of milestones defined in the Execution Plan.

1. How are payments structured, and when are they released?

Payments are released based on the positive completion of each stage, approximately one month after the end of each stage:

- Up to €10,000 - M2
- Up to €60,000 - M6
- Up to €80,000 - M16
- Up to €50,000 - M19



20% withheld payment tranche will be withheld and paid after the completion of the CYSSDE project, approximately 9 months after the project's conclusion. CYSSDE project ends May 2028.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

Questions



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