



SoilTribes

Rooted in action

Establishing, activating, and empowering glocal ecosystems to restore soil values, roles, and connectivity through science, technology, and creative expression.

LUMP SUM MICRO-GRANTS FOR MEMBERS OF THE SOIL TRIBES COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

GUIDELINES



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SoilTribes

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SOILTRIBES | AN INTRODUCTION

The SoilTribes project aims to increase soil literacy and promote its preservation through a multidisciplinary and collaborative approach. It addresses soil degradation by promoting innovative communication campaigns, creative activities, and citizen engagement in sustainable practices. The project provides financial support for collaborative initiatives involving science, art, and society, aiming to transform behaviors regarding soil protection and restoration.

SoilTribes is rooted in the [European Union mission "A Soil Deal for Europe"](#) and aligns with its goals to restore soil health, engage communities, and increase soil literacy.

The SoilTribes project addresses the pressing issue of soil degradation by fostering soil literacy and promoting sustainable soil management through a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach. The project is driven by a diverse consortium of 25 partners from 11 different countries, including scientific institutions, artists, and civil society groups. Together, they work across borders to raise awareness and encourage action for soil preservation, empowering local communities to engage in soil protection and restoration efforts through creative and innovative solutions.

SoilTribes offers financial support for collaborative initiatives that integrate science, art, and community involvement. The project funds a variety of activities such as creative campaigns, participatory events, and educational workshops that bring together citizens, artists, and experts to co-create knowledge and promote soil-friendly practices. Key outcomes of the project include the development of new resources for public engagement, increased soil awareness, and the promotion of sustainable agricultural techniques. The main practical recommendation is to adopt participatory methodologies that combine scientific research with artistic expression to effectively engage and mobilize local communities. This approach will lead to long-term positive impacts on soil health and sustainability, fostering collective responsibility for the environment.

SOILTRIBES' COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

The SoilTribes Community of Practice (CoP) is a multi-actor, mission-oriented collective formed by individuals and organisations committed to promoting soil literacy and developing innovative, transdisciplinary responses to soil-related challenges.

The CoP is structured around four key pillars: **Academia, Business, Government, and Society**. It is composed of members from across the quintuple helix (Academia, Business, Government, Civil Society, and the Natural Environment), including researchers, educators, and students advancing soil knowledge, companies and entrepreneurs integrating soil-friendly practices, public authorities and policymakers enabling systemic change, artists, communicators, NGOs, and engaged citizens fostering awareness and creativity.

CoP members participate in collaborative design-thinking processes, share expertise and resources, and receive targeted support, including micro-grants, training, and visibility opportunities. They also contribute to co-creating tools, campaigns, events, and policy recommendations that help reconnect people with the soil and promote long-term stewardship. The CoP is the vibrant beating heart of SoilTribes – linking science, creativity, and civic engagement to protect our soils and secure a more sustainable future.

To empower this community, SoilTribes offers Lump Sum Micro-Grants to selected CoP members to support knowledge development and transfer in the field of soil literacy. This is the **second of four open calls** to be launched during the project's two-year timeframe, through which a total of 32 micro-grants of €750 (VAT included) will be awarded. The **third open call** is expected in June 2026, and the fourth and **final call** in December 2026.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE COP



Want to become a member?

Complete the registration form here: [SoilTribes Expression of Interest](#).

ABOUT THE FIRST CALL

The first Open Call for the SoilTribes Community of Practice Micro-Grants **received 34 applications** from 20 countries across Europe and beyond, showing strong international interest in the initiative. After evaluation, eight micro-grants were awarded: three to projects under the Society Pillar, one under the Business Pillar, and four under the Academy Pillar.



Figure 1. Map highlighting the countries of origin of SoilTribes micro-grant applications

1. WHY APPLY?

As a member of the CoP, applying for a micro-grant offers you the opportunity to:

Amplify Your Work

Use the micro-grant to participate in key events—such as conferences, exhibitions, or community gatherings—where you can present your work, share your perspective, and contribute to the growing dialogue on soil literacy, climate action, and sustainability.

Access Tailored Support

Whether you're seeking expert advice, mentoring, or technical guidance, the grant allows you to access services that help you grow professionally and strengthen the impact of your initiatives. Apply the funding to attend training sessions, workshops, or peer-learning exchanges that deepen your knowledge and build your capacity to engage and inspire others.

Contribute to a Collective Mission

Your activity, no matter how small, adds value to the wider SoilTribes mission—elevating the importance of soil through innovative communication, education, art, and civic action.

Keep It Simple and Accessible

The application process is straightforward, designed for busy professionals in mind. With a fixed lump sum of €750 (VAT included), there's no need for complex budgeting or reporting—just a clear idea, commitment, and follow-through.

2. CAN I APPLY?

2.1 Eligibility Criteria

If you're an active member of the SoilTribes CoP and ready to contribute to the mission of strengthening soil literacy across Europe—yes, you can apply!

To be eligible, you must meet the following criteria:

- Be natural persons;
- Be established in one of the Member States of the European Union and its Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) or Associated Countries to Horizon Europe, that, on the date of the publication of the call, participate in the Horizon Programme¹; and,
- Be registered in the SoilTribes CoP

! All CoP members are encouraged to sign the Soil Manifesto, a voluntary commitment by individuals and organisations who pledge to support the transition toward healthy soils by 2030.

[**Sign the Mission Soil Manifesto**](#)

2.2 Eligible Activities

Proposed activities must comply with EU policy interests and priorities. They must ensure the highest ethical standards and compliance with the applicable EU, international and national law.

Applications shall address the topic priority of soil literacy and at least one more of the following [Soil Deal for Europe](#) mission topic priorities:

1. Land degradation relating to desertification;
2. Conservation and increasing of soil organic carbon stocks;
3. No net soil sealing and increase the reuse of urban soils;
4. Reduction of soil pollution and enhance restoration;
5. Soil erosion prevention;
6. Improvement of soil structure to enhance habitat quality for soil biota and crops;
7. Reduction of EU global footprint on soils.

Activities proposed in the applications should contribute to the benefit of the Community, demonstrate relevance to one or more pillars of the SoilTribes CoP (Academy, Business, Government, Society, or Environment), and be related to:

- Participation in conferences, seminars or other events as speaker or equivalent
- Short-training course or equivalent to improve communication skills and/or learn more about soil literacy
- Acquisition of advisory services by experts on soil science and especially on literacy
- Other communication, education or engagement activities necessary for or justified by the activities of the CoP, namely the Meetups and Design Thinking Bootcamps.

¹ Full list of participating countries in the Horizon Programme: [ist-3rd-country-participation_horizon-euratom_en.pdf](#)

3. AVAILABLE BUDGET

The SoilTribes project has allocated a **total budget of €24,000 to support the Lump Sum Micro-Grants** scheme for members of the CoP.

A total of 32 micro-grants will be awarded during the project. These will be distributed across four calls, with approximately 8 grants per call.

The call for proposals defines a fixed lump sum of €750 (VAT included) and the budget requested by applicants in the proposal must be equal to this fixed lump sum. The proposal must describe the resources mobilised for this amount, categorized by the following budget headings:

- **Travel** | Costs related to transportation, accommodation, and subsistence (meals, local transport, etc.)
- **Equipment** | Basic items or tools needed to carry out your proposed activity, such as audio-visual equipment for recording or presenting your work; educational or creative tools for workshops; and/or materials for soil demonstrations (e.g., sensors, display kits)
- **Other goods, works and services** | All other eligible costs related to implementing your activity, including for example, fees for external advisory services or mentoring

Each CoP member may receive a maximum of €1,500 (VAT included) in micro-grants over the course of the SoilTribes project. Since each grant is capped at €750 (VAT included) per call, this means a CoP member can be awarded no more than two micro-grants in total and only one grant per call.

4. HOW TO APPLY?

The [**Application Form, via the EU Survey Platform**](#) is made up of one single document which is to be completed and submitted by each applicant. The application form will request:

- Your **contact information**
- A **brief description** of the proposed activity (max, 2500 characters)
- A **short statement** on how the activity aligns with SOILTRIBES goals and supports your work (max, 2000 characters)
- **Estimated costs** for the activity with brief explanation of the costs
- A **timeline** for activity completion
- Declarations

It is important to note when submitting your application, you must ensure it meets the **admissibility criteria**. Your application must:

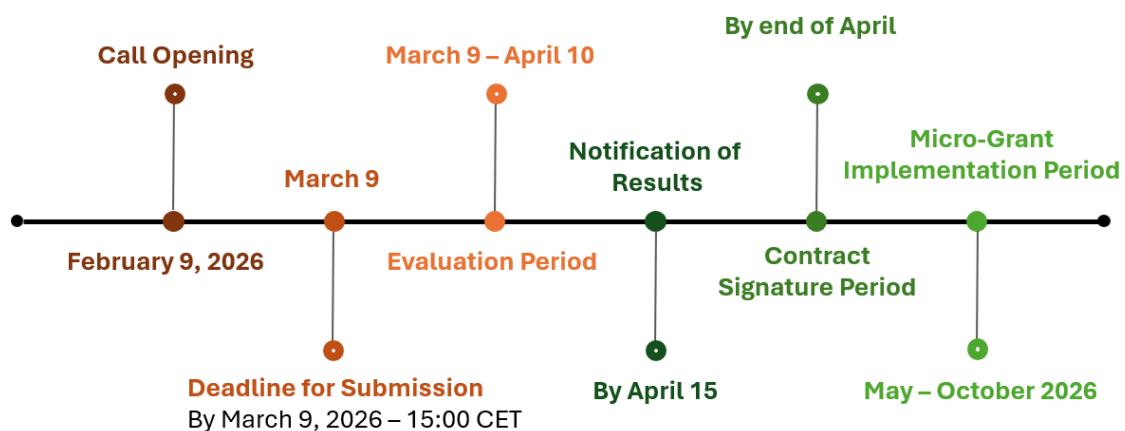
- be submitted by March 9, 2026 at 15:00 CET
- be submitted electronically – paper or emails submissions are not accepted – through the EU Survey Link (hyperlink embedded)
- be submitted in English
- respect the number of characters, as indicated in each section of the Application form
- have a budget equal to the fixed lump sum amount of €750 (VAT included)

- be submitted by an eligible applicant (review section 2.1 of this document).

! **Multiple applications are permitted**, provided that each proposal relates to a distinct and clearly different activity.

CLICK TO APPLY!

5. WHEN TO APPLY?



6. EVALUATION AND SELECTION

All submitted applications will be assessed through a clear, fair, and transparent evaluation process, based on predefined criteria aligned with the objectives of the SoilTribes project. The evaluation and selection process will adhere to EU standards of transparency, equal treatment, conflict of interest and confidentiality.

All applications will go through the following steps:

Step A: Administrative & Eligibility Check

The Administrative & Eligibility Check will be completed by the SoilTribes Consortium. Only those applications that meet all requirements outlined above in section 2.1 and section 4 will pass to Step B.

Step B: Evaluation of Applications

Jurors will review the Full Applications. The evaluation of applications will follow a one-stage process. The Evaluation will be based on a 100-point score considering the following criteria and weighting as per the table below. To be considered for funding, applications must meet the following conditions:

- Score at least 50% on each individual evaluation criterion, and
- Achieve an overall score of at least 50 out of 100 points.

Each application will be evaluated by two jurors, who are internal members of the consortium serving as Pillar Leaders. Jurors will be assigned in pairs according to their expertise and familiarity with the SoilTribes thematic pillars. Jurors will assess proposals independently using a shared evaluation package and scoring template. To ensure the integrity of the process, all jurors are required to declare any potential conflict of interest and to adhere to principles of unbiased assessment, transparency, and impartiality throughout the evaluation. After a dedicated kick-off meeting, the evaluation materials will be distributed, and jurors will begin individual review. Once all assessments are submitted, the project team will compile the results, calculate average scores, and identify significant discrepancies between reviewers. When necessary (when discrepancies in the total score are of 15 or more points), jurors will engage in consolidation meetings to agree on a final, harmonized score. A final ranking list will then be produced.

Main Criterion	Sub-Criterion	Description	Max Points	Min Threshold
1. Relevance	1.1 Alignment with micro-grant goals	The proposal clearly addresses the objectives of the micro-grant call and demonstrates alignment with the EU Soil Mission, the SoilTribes CoP pillars, and the type of activity eligible under this Call.	20	10
	1.2 European added value	The activity demonstrates cross-border significance and/or potential for European-level impact or reach.	20	10
TOTAL - Relevance			40	20
2. Quality	2.1 Work plan and methodology	The action is well-structured, with clearly defined steps, realistic goals, and efficient use of resources.	15	7.5
	2.2 Timeline and feasibility	The timeline is coherent, realistic, and achievable within the proposed timeframe.	15	7.5
TOTAL - Quality			30	15
3. Impact & Sustainability	3.1 Contribution to soil literacy and the CoP	The action demonstrates clear benefits for the applicant, their local context, the SOIL SoilTribes CoP, and contributes meaningfully to the objectives of the EU Soil Mission.	15	7.5
	3.2 Sustainability and multiplier effect	There are clear follow-up actions, dissemination efforts, and plans to extend the impact of the activity.	15	7.5
TOTAL - Impact & Sustainability			30	15
TOTAL SCORE			100	50

Step C: Selection

A Ranking Meeting between the SoilTribes Consortium and Jurors will be scheduled. During this meeting, the numerical ranking will be presented which takes into account the results of Step B. In addition to score-based ranking, the final selection will incorporate the following representation measures:

- **Geographic balance:** A maximum of two selected applicants per country (per call)
- **Gender representation:** Ensure a balanced and diverse selection of applicants based on gender.

- **Sectoral diversity:** As much as possible, the final selection should reflect a range of profiles across the quintuple helix sectors and CoP pillars.
- **No ethics issues:** The funded project has no ethical issues, or if, they are addressed and safeguards are implemented.

7. CONTRACT SIGNING

All applicants will be formally notified of the results of the evaluation process by email. Notifications will include information about the outcome of their application and the next steps. Following a short period of contestation, the list of final selected CoP Members will be published. Each selected applicant will then be invited to enter into a simplified grant agreement with the SoilTribes project. This contract will outline the general terms and conditions, including:

- The subject and duration of the agreement;
- The grant format (lump sum), its maximum amount (€750), and estimated budget;
- Eligible and ineligible costs, even under a lump sum framework;
- The beneficiary's obligations regarding the implementation of the action;
- Ethical standards, including provisions on conflict of interest, confidentiality, data protection, intellectual property rights, and alignment with EU values;
- Requirements for dissemination, visibility, and reporting;
- Payment terms;
- Agreed modes of communication between the parties;
- Liability and responsibilities of both parties.

The agreement will be supported by annexes, including a brief description of the action, the estimated budget, and a report template. The signing of the contract will take place within the same month as the official notification. Once signed, **selected CoP Members will have a maximum of six months** to implement their proposed activity. In very specific circumstances, an extension may be granted; such a request must be submitted to the consortium for a justified reason at least one month before the end of the contract. Acceptable grounds for extension may include force majeure situations (e.g., natural disasters, serious illness, or unforeseen legal restrictions), cancellation or postponement of key events beyond the control of the CoP Member, or significant delays in external dependencies essential to the activity's completion. The consortium will review each request on a case-by-case basis and decide accordingly.

Within two months of completing the action, they must submit a 2-page final report describing the implementation and explaining the extent to which the proposed objectives were achieved. In this final report, an overview of the CoP activities attended must also be referred. Upon approval by the consortium, the grant payment will be processed and transferred to the beneficiary.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

GDPR compliance: The General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679/EU) guarantees that the processing of data is carried out in compliance with the fundamental rights and freedoms, as well as the dignity of the data subject with particular reference to confidentiality, personal identity and the right to data protection. By applying, the applicant agrees to the storage and use of their personal data for the execution of the SOILTRIBES objectives and work plan. The personal data collected includes the applicants name, gender, address, contact details (such as E-Mail address) and their institution. It will only be used to facilitate the call process and will be

deleted at the end of the project. The SOILTRIBES Consortium commits to handling personal data confidentiality except for the call results, which will contain the following information:

- Information about successful SOILTRIBES funding support applications that will be made publicly available before the end of the project

The processing of personal data that SOILTRIBES Consortium intends to carry out will be based on lawfulness and correctness in the full protection of its rights and its confidentiality pursuant to the general principles of the GDPR and its art.24. Therefore, the applicants are informed that their (personal) data will be used solely for the purposes of the specific procedure to which their application refers. The applicants can exercise their rights towards the data controller, pursuant to article 12 - 22 of the GDPR. For any inquiries regarding the processing of your personal data, please read more about the privacy policy of SOILTRIBES at the following link: [Privacy Policy - SoilTribes](#) or contact us at: hello@soiltribes.eu

9. WHAT SHOULD I KNOW FURTHER?

Before applying, we encourage you to consult the following resources and support channels to ensure a smooth application process:

- **Official Open Call Publication:** The SOILTRIBES micro-grant call is published on the [Funding & Tenders Portal](#) of the European Commission.
- **Contact for Questions and Support:** For any questions related to the application process, eligibility, or technical support, you can reach out to the SOILTRIBES team at hello@soiltribes.eu
- **SoilTribes Community of Practice Guide:** We strongly recommend reviewing the SoilTribes Community of Practice Guide, which provides key information about your role as a CoP member and how the micro-grants support your activities.
- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):** You can also visit the SoilTribes website for details about eligible activities, selection, reporting, and contractual matters.