

SPADE'S FIRST OPEN CALL HAS BEEN LAUNCHED, GRANTING UP TO 6 INNOVATIVE PROJECTS

SPADE is a project supported by the European Union under the Horizon Europe programme aiming to create an intelligent ecosystem using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs alias drones) to promote sustainable digital services for a wide range of end users in the agricultural, forestry, and livestock sectors. Our first Open Call aims to foster innovative concepts that have the potential to transform the fields of forestry, cattle and agriculture, offering winning applicants a unique chance to improve the use of drone technology in agriculture.

During the first Open Call, launched on February 9th, universities, research centres, NGOs, foundations, SMEs and startups are welcome to propose groundbreaking solutions that can reshape the agriculture industry. All applications must be connected to the fields of forestry, cattle and agriculture. The total budget is 360,000 euros, and each winning project may win 60K. The deadline for candidates to submit their proposals is April 10th, 17:00 (Brussels time). To foster a dynamic and thriving ecosystem in the agriculture drone technology sector, SPADE will identify and finance six of the most promising and ambitious projects (each selected project will have a duration of 6 months), which will augment the capabilities of agriculture drone technology. To be eligible for funding through the SPADE Open Call, applicants must align their solutions with one of three distinct SPADE Case Study groups:

- **Open-Field Case Study Integration (Spain):** The open-field case study in Spain primarily focuses on distinct use cases in potato crops and terraced crops.
- **Forestry Case Study integration (Norway):** In Southern Norway, SPADE will implement three forestry-based use cases: (1) a drone swarm for forest inventory, (2) a tethered drone for operational support of a wheeled forest harvester, and (3) a heavy-lift drone for implementing forest operations.
- **Live-stock Case Study integration (Greece):** The primary objective is to enhance and promote sheep breeding through grazing and health monitoring on the Greek island of Lesvos. It will utilise multi-purpose UAVs in various configurations, synchronised with SPADE platform digital twin services.

Furthermore, two overarching issues are present in all of SPADE's pilot programmes, in addition to the pilot-specific challenges. SPADE seeks to select and finance one project for each challenge, ensuring that the selected solutions align with our mission to enhance and promote sustainable and efficient practices in agriculture. In addition, the Open Call for evaluators to assess the quality of the received applications is open from February 19th to March 19th.

All the details about SPADE's first Open Call are available on the Open Call website's dedicated section (spade-horizon.eu/open-call-1-applicants) and social media channels ([X](#) and [LinkedIn](#)).

For further information, you may also contact us by email: spade@sploro.eu



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