Green Spec - A sector solution for inland navigation

Innovation Fund application update

Danube Commission
November 2026

Overview of our EIF applications

New Build



Status: Pending Resubmission

Scope: 18 vessels

Tech: Dual-fuel, battery hybrid, new hull design

Retrofit



Status: Pending Resubmission

Scope: 7 vessels

Tech: Dual-fuel & battery hybrid

Coastal Cruiser



Status: Pending Resubmission

Scope: event vessel

Tech: fully electric event ships

Critical mass can unlock fuel infrastructure

To our knowledge, ours is the only application bringing the fleet scale needed to tackle the alternative fuel infrastructure gap across the sector.

The chicken-and-egg barrier

Operators need reliable fuel access before investing. Fuel suppliers need credible demand before building infrastructure. Prototypes are no longer sufficient!

Coordinated fleet

Aggregate demand across participating vessels.

→

Credible fuel demand

Give suppliers a basis for supply and bunkering investment.

→

Shared infrastructure

Enable wider adoption across inland navigation.

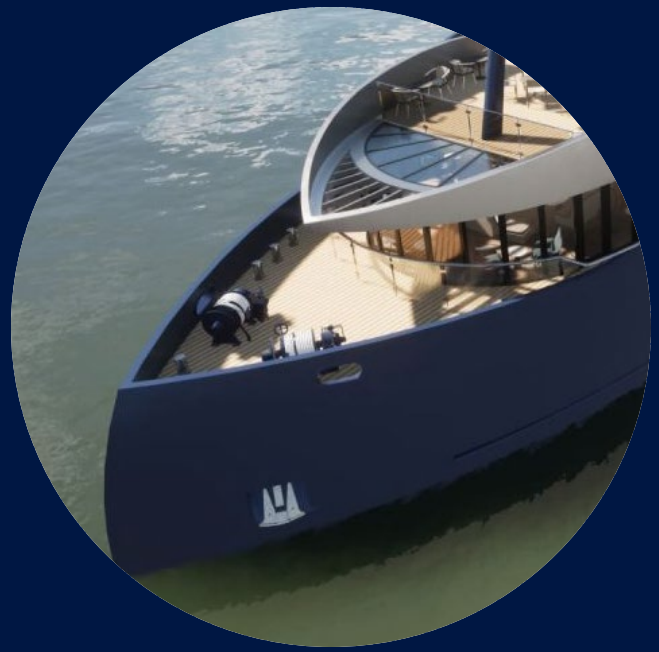
New Build: preparing for resubmission

Status: Preparing for resubmission

A coordinated fleet programme for lower-emission inland passenger vessels.

Dual-fuel propulsion and battery hybrid systems, supported by more efficient hull design.

United Waterways is spearheading a sector solution that links fleet renewal with alternative fuel supply.



New Build concept

Positive European Commission feedback

The New Build evaluation recognised key strengths

Innovation

"The innovation is strong."

Technical feasibility

"The technical feasibility is credible."

Emissions avoidance

Positive assessment of relative GHG avoidance and calculation quality.

Operational maturity

The evaluation recognised the operational approach, with scope for further development.

A dedicated maritime call in the next round

The IF26 Maritime Call will target innovative low- and zero-carbon technologies for the maritime sector.

Although its details are not yet fully known, its published scope includes alternative fuels, energy efficiency, electrification and innovative port infrastructure.

Planned opening

December 2026

Planned closure

April 2027

We are advancing for the next round, subject to the final call conditions and confirmation of eligibility.

Moving forward with a sector solution

United Waterways is moving forward with its application for the next Innovation Fund round.

Application development	Build on the positive evaluation and strengthen the supporting evidence.
Fuel infrastructure	Translate fleet demand into coordinated fuel supply and bunkering plans.
Danube relevance	Connect vessel deployment with ports and fuel providers along the corridor.

Our aim: create the critical mass for a sector-wide transition.