

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## OBJECTIVE

Briefly present the unit and its role in the areas of green economy, blue economy, and sustainable entrepreneurship in the outermost regions.

## NAME

OSEAN – Outermost Regions Sustainable Ecosystem for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

## REQUEST FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CENTER

Submitted by Prof. Dr. Eduardo Leite on April 6, 2022.

## RECTOR'S APPROVAL

Approved by Rector Prof. Dr. Sílvia Fernandes on May 19, 2022.

## RELEVANCE

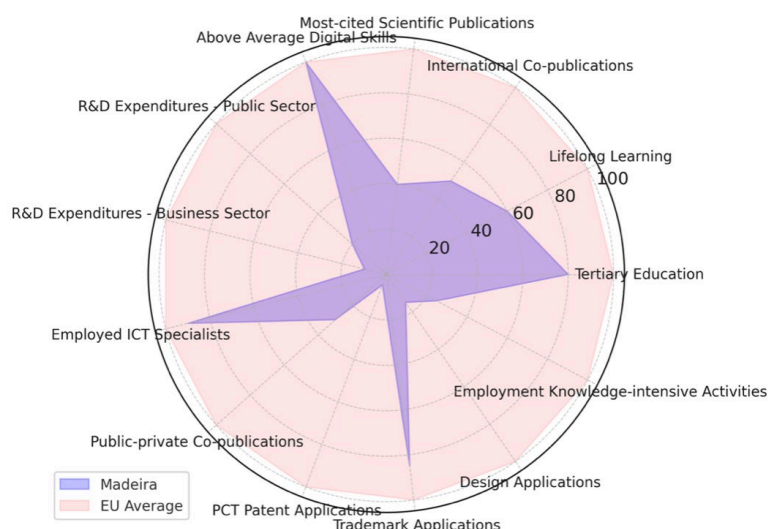
The unit plays a key role in innovation, sustainable entrepreneurship, and socio-economic impact in the outermost regions. It participates in projects like Horizon Europe and actively collaborates with local and international SMEs.

## MISSION

Contribute to sustainable social, economic, and environmental development.

INCORE Diagnostic: The INCORE study revealed that Madeira, like other outermost regions, is 38.5% below the European average in innovation indicators. This diagnosis was represented in the spider chart, highlighting key areas where Madeira performs below the EU average, especially in R&D spending in the business sector and knowledge-intensive activities. OSEAN works to reverse this scenario through projects that promote business innovation and public-private cooperation.

Madeira Regional Innovation Environment vs EU Average



# 2

## QUALITY AND MERIT OF R&D ACTIVITY

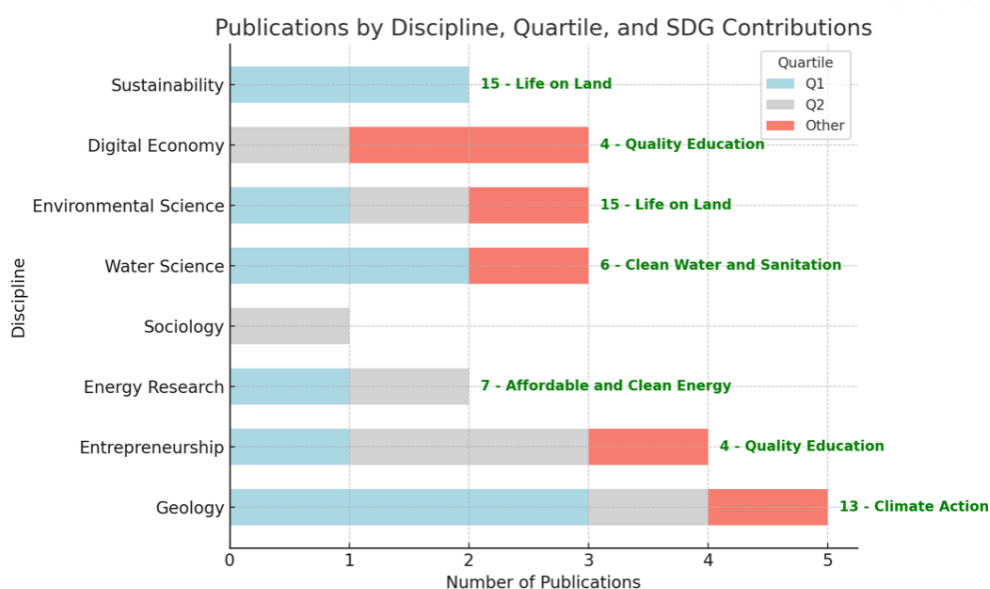
### OBJECTIVE

Demonstrate the quality of scientific activities and the impact of results.

### HIGH-IMPACT PUBLICATIONS

Several publications in indexed journals highlight topics on entrepreneurship, sustainability and innovation. Below are a few examples:

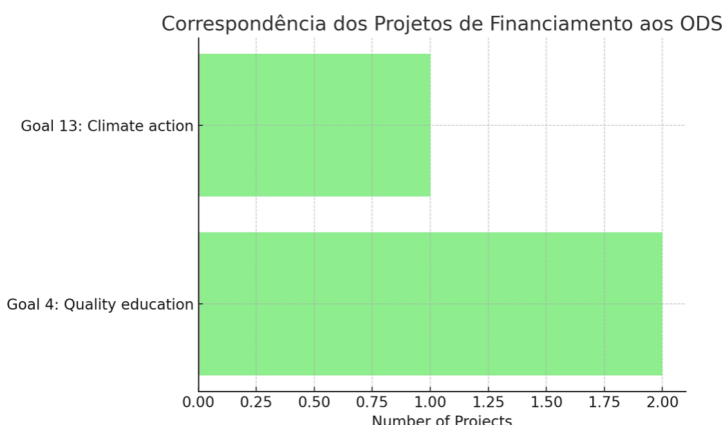
- de Almeida Leite, E.M., Audretsch, D. & Leite, A. Integrating philosophy and psychology to enhance creativity and innovation in entrepreneurship: the W.O.M.B. model. Journal of Technology Transfer (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10961-024-10142-1>, Springer Nature; H-Index 102; Q1, SJR 2023 - 1.5; AJG 2021 - 3\*
- Mota, L., Leite, E. & Ghasemi, V. Exploring the impact of climate change on lodging establishments: a systematic literature review. Qual Quant (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-024-01834-9>, Springer Nature; H-Index 78; Q1, SJR 2023 - 0.74.
- Abu Anbar, M., Abu-Alam, T. S., Ghoneim, M. F., Dong, Y., Li, X.-H., Ramadan, D. H., & Masoud, A. E. (2023). Rodinia to Gondwana evolution record, South Sinai, Egypt: Geological and geochronological constraints. Precambrian Research, 398, 107221. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.precamres.2023.107221>, Elsevier; H-Index 192; Q1, SJR 2023 - 1.59.
- Freitas, C. (2024). The Entrepreneurial Process in a Remote Island Context: The Case of Madeira. Island Studies Journal, 19(1). <https://doi.org/10.24043/001c.90535>, H-Index 29; Q1; SJR 2023 - 0,24



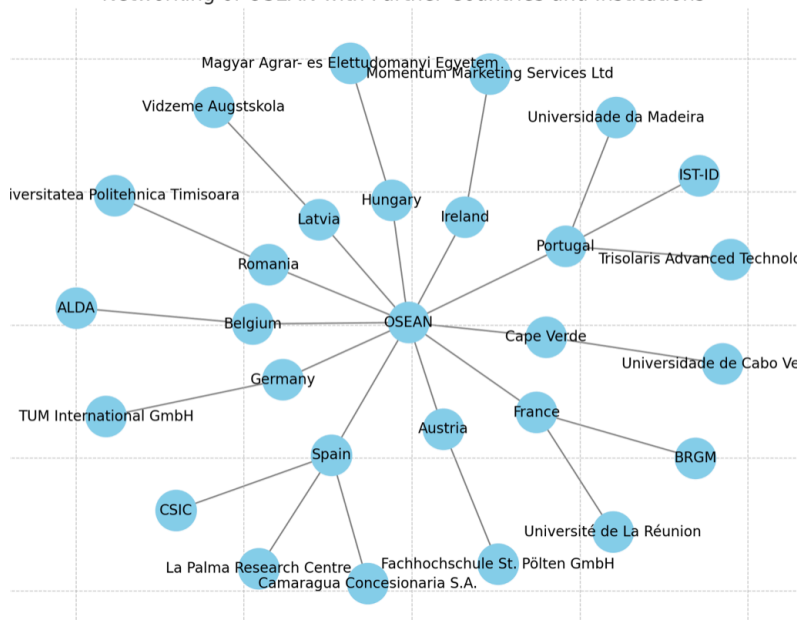
These publications reinforce the direct impact on various Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 4 (Quality Education) through research in Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship, SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) emphasized in Water Science and Environmental Science, SDG 13 (Climate Action) reflected in Geology, and SDG 15 (Life on Land) supported by studies in Sustainability and Environmental Science.

## **FUNDED PROJECTS**

OSEAN participates in two Horizon Europe projects with significant funding, including HORIZON-WIDERA, with a total budget of €12,726,118.75, of which €725,562.50 is allocated to the University of Madeira (OSEAN). European funding is in OSEAN's DNA, having been founded with support from the EIT (European Institute of Innovation & Technology) with over €250,000 through the INCORE project, reinforcing its international scope and commitment to innovation and sustainable development.



Networking of OSEAN with Partner Countries and Institutions



## **KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER INITIATIVES**

Direct relationship with industry and regional startups, facilitating the practical application of research: Poliempreende and SEAS-UP Conference.

## **INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS**

Participation in global networks and partnerships impacting outermost regions.

# 3

## SCIENTIFIC MERIT OF THE TEAM

### OBJECTIVE

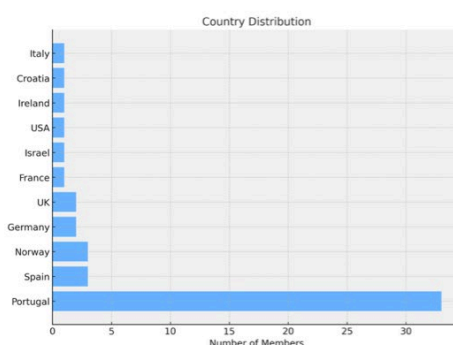
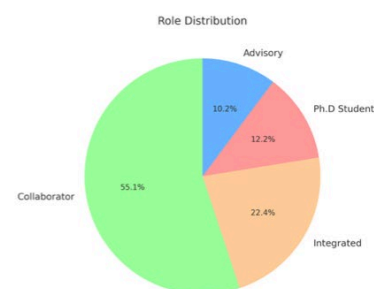
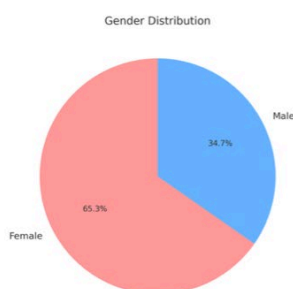
Highlight the scientific capability of the research team.

### KEY POINTS

- **EXCELLENT TEAM:** Led by Prof. Dr. Eduardo Leite, the team consists of experts in areas like innovation, sustainability, and economy, with internationally funded projects.

- **DIVERSE PROFILES:** The team is continuously growing, with 49 members, including 11 integrated researchers and 33 collaborators. The gender diversity is notable, with 17 men and 32 women. The team includes members from different countries, such as Portugal, Spain, Germany, and the UK.

- **IMPACT OF TRAINING:** With 6 integrated PhD students, the center promotes excellence in training by combining young researchers with senior PhDs who have extensive experience. The balance between senior and emerging members strengthens the center's capacity for innovation and scientific development.





# 4

## OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGY OF THE UNIT

### OBJECTIVE

Present the unit's strategic vision and short-to medium-term objectives.

### KEY POINTS

- **INCREASE IN PUBLICATIONS:**  
Expand scientific output in high-impact journals, focusing on Q1 and Q2 journals, and strengthen international collaborations to enhance the unit's presence in global networks.

- **NEW INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS:**

OSEAN already has partnerships with institutions across Europe through projects like Horizon Europe. For the upcoming period, OSEAN plans to establish new collaborations with leading centers in countries like the United States, Japan, and Canada, aiming to lead global consortia in areas such as green innovation and the circular economy. We are negotiating new

strategic partnerships with prestigious universities, including Stanford University, MIT, Cambridge, and ETH Zurich, to expand OSEAN's international presence.

- **DIVERSIFYING FUNDING SOURCES:**

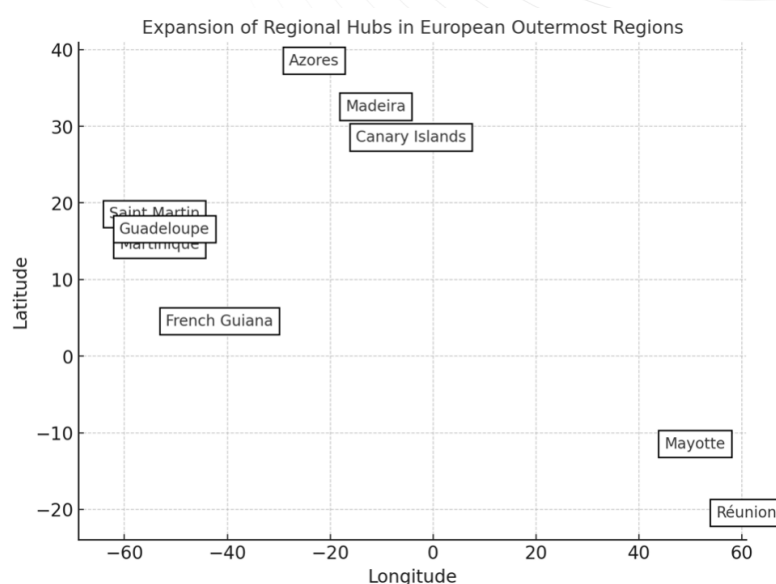
In addition to the funds already obtained through European programs like Horizon Europe, OSEAN is committed to diversifying its funding sources. The unit aims to secure new resources through ERC grants and private sector partnerships, particularly in projects involving technological innovation for sustainable development. We plan to participate in new funding programs, such as the Green Deal and EIT, to increase our budget by at least 30% by 2027.

- **FOCUS ON GREEN INNOVATION AND DIGITALIZATION:**

Align research activities with global trends in green innovation and digitalization, with special attention to applying sustainable solutions in outermost regions.

## ● ESTABLISHING CENTER HUBS IN THE 9 EUROPEAN OUTERMOST REGIONS:

Expand the unit's physical presence to reinforce local and regional impact, contributing to the scientific and economic development of the outermost regions.



## ● PROMISING FUTURE:

Join new doctoral consortia and create partnerships with international universities and institutions, boosting the training of new PhDs and promoting the integration of young researchers into networks of excellence.

● OSEAN's strategic plan for the next five years includes clear quantitative goals, such as increasing the number of publications by 50% and securing more than €5 million in new international funding projects. The center also plans to expand its research team by 30%, hiring new specialists in green economy and digitalization, as well as others with interdisciplinary profiles. Additionally, we will expand our presence across all Outermost Regions, creating at least three innovation hubs by 2027, with the goal of promoting socioeconomic transformation in these areas.

# 5

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND COLLABORATION CAPACITY

### OBJECTIVE

Demonstrate that the unit has the appropriate infrastructure for excellence in R&D.

### KEY POINTS:

- **MODERN FACILITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MADEIRA:**

OSEAN is headquartered at the University of Madeira, integrating into the regional innovation ecosystem with partners such as Startup Madeira and other science and technology organizations. The infrastructure is equipped for interdisciplinary research in blue economy, sustainable innovation, and digital entrepreneurship. The center is continually modernizing, with plans to acquire new equipment focused on environmental data analysis, renewable energies, and business digitalization. Additionally, prototyping labs are included to support the incubation and acceleration of start-ups in the university's new building by 2026.

- **INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION:**

The unit promotes interaction across various fields of knowledge, facilitating integration with regional and international innovation hubs, contributing to knowledge transfer and the development of innovative solutions.

- **INTERNATIONAL INTEGRATION CAPACITY:**

The infrastructure supports international collaborations with universities and research centers around the world, strengthening the unit's global reach.



# 6

## SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

### OBJECTIVE

Demonstrate the unit's impact on society.

### KEY POINTS:

#### CONCRETE RESULTS IN KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER:

The unit has directly contributed to the development of the Outermost Regions by applying innovative solutions in areas such as sustainability, entrepreneurship, and innovation, generating positive socioeconomic impact.

#### STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS:

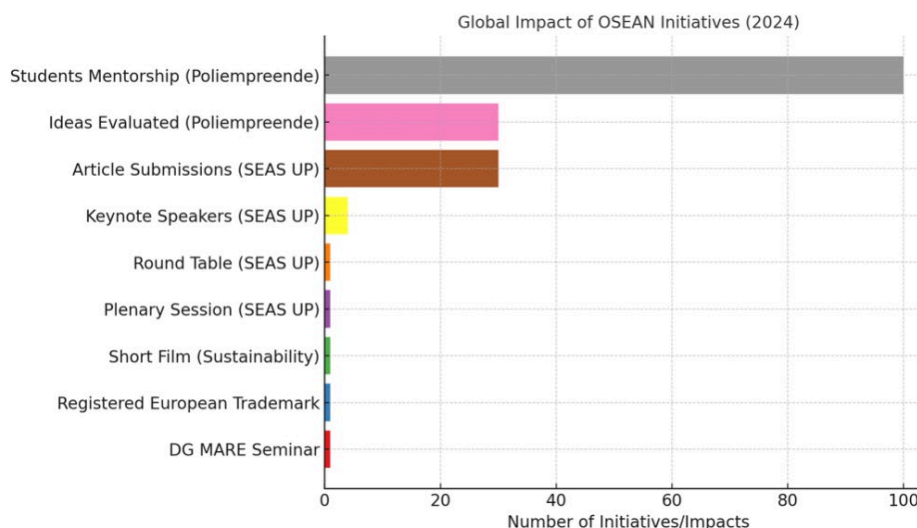
Collaborations with local governments, NGOs, and other relevant entities have enabled the implementation of sustainable projects aimed at addressing specific challenges

in these regions, such as the development of renewable energies, water resource management, and the promotion of the circular economy.

#### CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABILITY:

The unit promotes sustainability in its activities, integrating eco-friendly practices into innovation and training projects, ensuring a lasting and positive impact on both the environment and society.

#### 2024 WAS A PARTICULARLY PRODUCTIVE YEAR, demonstrating the unit's ability to generate impact in a short period, aligning with its growth objectives.



# 7

## CONCLUSION AND FUTURE VISION

### OBJECTIVE

Summarize the unit's strengths and present an optimistic vision for the future.

### KEY POINTS:

- **PROMINENT POSITION:**  
OSEAN is in a privileged position to lead sustainable innovation initiatives in the outermost regions, thanks to its track record of strategic collaborations, its ability to attract investments, and its production of high-impact scientific knowledge. In 2024, significant contributions were made to the fields of sustainable entrepreneurship and the circular economy.

- **COMMITMENT TO SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE:**

The unit is focused on achieving scientific excellence by strengthening its international presence and expanding its global collaborations. The creation of doctoral consortia in partnership with European and international institutions reinforces OSEAN's commitment to high-level human capital development, attracting talent and

preparing future leaders to tackle global challenges.

- **POSTGRADUATE EXPANSION AS A FUTURE VISION:**

OSEAN plans to launch master's and doctoral programs in the areas of sustainable innovation, entrepreneurship, and digital technologies, enabling the training of specialists who will contribute directly to the socioeconomic development of the outermost regions. These programs are aligned with global trends and will promote both regional and international transformation.

- **OPTIMISTIC VISION FOR THE FUTURE:** Building on the success of 2024, OSEAN will continue to grow, consolidating its role as a leader in sustainability and digital innovation. Expansion into new partnerships and participation in international projects strengthens its strategic position in regional and global development, promoting socioeconomic transformation in the regions where it operates.

## ● COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION:

OSEAN is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion in all its activities. In 2024, we will launch a scholarship program aimed at supporting young researchers from underrepresented minorities in the fields of innovation and sustainability. Additionally, we will implement an affirmative action plan to ensure gender equity in all research teams, with a goal of achieving 50% female leadership by 2027.

Funchal, University of Madeira  
November 15, 2024

**Eduardo Leite**  
Coordinator, OSEAN

To learn more about our projects and initiatives, visit:  
<https://osean.uma.pt>