



## Crowdfunding for Blue Economy Projects

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**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020**  
**CET 13:00 – 14:30hrs**

Webinar organised by INSULEUR (Insular Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the European Union) assisted by the Gozo Business Chamber and Rethymno Development Agency, as part of the project entitled 'Capacity Building of Blue Economy Stakeholders to Effectively use Crowdfunding'

The webinar will tackle crowdfunding in blue economy projects. Dr Samuel Azzopardi and Matthew Caruana will be the main speakers during this free event. Dr Samuel Azzopardi, representative on the Blue Economy for the European Committee of the Regions, and Matthew Caruana, business innovator, coach and mentor, who is presently manager of ZAAR, Malta's leading crowdfunding platform will be the main speakers for the event.

The main scope of this webinar is to highlight the importance of the Blue Economy and to provide participants with the basic elements of crowdfunding as an important financing tool.

### AGENDA

<b>13:00 – 13:10</b>	<b>Opening remarks</b> President of INSULEUR – Joseph Borg
<b>13:10 – 13:25</b>	<b>The importance of the Blue Economy in the European Union</b> Dr Samuel Azzopardi, Committee of the Regions
<b>13:25 – 13:55</b>	<b>Crowdfunding: An Introduction</b> Matthew Caruana, ZAAR
<b>13:55 – 14:30</b>	Q&A session moderated by Daniel Borg, CEO GBC

## Biography of the Speakers

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### Dr Samuel Azzopardi

**EPP Coordinator NAT Commission, Member CIVEX and COTER Commissions / European Committee of the Regions**



Samuel Azzopardi is at present the President of the Gozo Region, the Vice-president of the Local Councils Association, the President of the Gozo Football Association and a full member of the European Committee of the Regions. He is a lawyer by profession, specialised in financial services and regulatory compliance. He also sits on boards of licensed financial services related companies. He studied at the University of Malta and Università degli Studi di Verona where he obtained various academic achievements including a Doctorate of Laws and Masters of Arts in Financial Services.

As member of the European Committee of the Regions (ECOR) he sits on three of its Commissions, where he fielded reports ranging from the EU's €10.5 billion budget on irregular migration, terrorism and the EU's borders to Consumer Rights and the Blue Economy. The report on irregular migration earned him praise by the then Commissioner for Internal Affairs Cecilia Malmström which thanked him for the balanced views expressed in the report. The report on the Blue Economy led to the first ever ECOR conference in Gozo at the end of March 2019 attended by Maritime Commissioner Karmenu Vella and the then President of Malta Marie Louise Coleiro Preca. He was also elected as the European People's

Party Political Coordinator for the NAT Commission of the ECOR.

### Matthew Caruana

**Manager ZAAR Crowdfunding Platform**



Matthew Caruana is a business innovator, coach and mentor with a proven track record for driving project success from the grassroots up. Passionate about start-ups and entrepreneurship, Matthew's involvement has been integral to the successful launch of countless projects across various economic and social spheres.

His extensive career so far has seen Matthew's role extend from project management and e-business analysis, to the management of entire operations. Since 2016, he has driven ZAAR – Malta's leading crowdfunding platform – and has grown it into a nationally-recognised brand. In this position, he has excelled at taking numerous start-up projects through their critical early days and helped them to become successful. His recent achievements include coaching and mentoring students in the Climate KIC accelerator programme, JAYE and in the international Masters programme SMARTUP, as well as judging several start-up competitions, and speaking at numerous conferences about crowdfunding, entrepreneurship and alternative finance both locally and internationally. Beyond that, he has also made his mark as the country expert at the European Commission workshop, DG GROW Workshop on

Alternative Finance and FinTech, for the last three consecutive years.

Today, Matthew continues to strive to positively transform Malta's start-up scene, whether through lobbying, collaboration, mentoring, and even policy making. He sits at the forefront of this important sector of the Maltese business landscape and continues to be one of its most passionate drivers and advocates, believing it to be essential for the future of local economic success.