



ERDF Interregional Innovation Investments (I3) Instrument

Call for proposals

Capacity Building Strand 2b under the Interregional Innovation
Investments (I3) Instrument
(I3-2022-CAP2b)

Version 1.0
15 December 2022



HISTORY OF CHANGES			
Version	Publication Date	Change	Page
1.0	15.12.2022	▪ Initial version	
		▪	
		▪	
		▪	



EUROPEAN INNOVATION COUNCIL AND SMEs EXECUTIVE AGENCY (EISMEA)

EISMEA.I – Innovation ecosystems, SMP/Entrepreneurship and Consumers
EISMEA.I.01 – EU and place-based Innovation Ecosystems

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

0. Introduction	5
1. Background.....	6
2. Objectives — Themes and priorities — Activities that can be funded — Expected impact	7
Objectives	7
Themes and priorities (scope)	8
Activities that can be funded (scope).....	8
Expected impact.....	11
3. Available budget	12
4. Timetable and deadlines	12
5. Admissibility and documents	12
6. Eligibility.....	14
Eligible participants (eligible countries).....	14
Consortium composition	15
Eligible activities.....	15
Geographic location (target countries).....	16
Duration	16
Project budget.....	16
7. Financial and operational capacity and exclusion	16
Financial capacity	16
Operational capacity	17
Exclusion	17
8. Evaluation and award procedure	18
9. Award criteria.....	19
10. Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements.....	20
Starting date and project duration	20
Milestones and deliverables.....	21
Form of grant, funding rate and maximum grant amount.....	21
Budget categories and cost eligibility rules.....	21
Reporting and payment arrangements.....	22
Prefinancing guarantees	23

Certificates	23
Liability regime for recoveries	23
Provisions concerning the project implementation	24
Other specificities	24
Non-compliance and breach of contract	24
11. How to submit an application.....	24
12. Help	25
13. Important	26

0. Introduction

This is a call for proposals for EU **action grants** in the field of the Interregional Innovation Investments (I3) Instrument under the **ERDF**.

The regulatory framework for this EU Funding Programme is set out in:

- Regulation 2018/1046 ([EU Financial Regulation](#))
- the basic act (ERDF Regulation [2021/1058](#)¹).

The call is launched in accordance with the 2021-2022 I3 Work Programme² and will be managed by the **European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA)** ('Agency').

The call covers the following **topic**:

- **I3-2022-CAP2b — Capacity Building Strand 2b**

We invite you to read the **call documentation** carefully, and in particular this Call Document, the Model Grant Agreement, the [EU Funding & Tenders Portal Online Manual](#) and the [EU Grants AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement](#).

These documents provide clarifications and answers to questions you may have when preparing your application:

- the [Call Document](#) outlines the:
 - background, objectives, scope, activities that can be funded and the expected results (sections 1 and 2)
 - timetable and available budget (sections 3 and 4)
 - admissibility and eligibility conditions (including mandatory documents; sections 5 and 6)
 - criteria for financial and operational capacity and exclusion (section 7)
 - evaluation and award procedure (section 8)
 - award criteria (section 9)
 - legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements (section 10)
 - how to submit an application (section 11)
- the [Online Manual](#) outlines the:
 - procedures to register and submit proposals online via the EU Funding & Tenders Portal ('Portal')
 - recommendations for the preparation of the application

¹ Regulation (EU) 2021/1058 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund (OJ L 231, 30.6.2021, p. 60–93).

² Commission Implementing Decision C(2021)6152 final of 25/08/2021 concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2021-2022 and the financing decision for the implementation of the Interregional Innovation Investments Instrument to be supported under the European Regional Development Fund.

- the [AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement](#) contains:
 - detailed annotations on all the provisions in the Grant Agreement you will have to sign in order to obtain the grant (*including cost eligibility, payment schedule, accessory obligations, etc*).

You are also encouraged to visit the [I3 website](#) and the [Smart Specialisation Platform](#).

1. Background

Europe is facing many challenges on its transition to a healthy planet and a new digital world. The acceleration and the diffusion of innovation are central elements to address Europe's most pressing social, economic and environmental challenges which have particular impacts in the less developed regions.

In this context, on 5 July 2022 the European Commission adopted a [New European Innovation Agenda](#) aimed to boost Europe's position at the forefront of the new wave of cutting-edge innovations. It will reinforce Europe's technological leadership and generate innovative solutions to pressing societal challenges. The New European Innovation Agenda refers to the role of [Smart Specialisation Strategies \(S3\)](#) in strengthening regional innovation ecosystems and highlights the Thematic Smart Specialisation Platforms and strategic partnerships as key tools for addressing the innovation divide in regions with similar or complementary S3 priorities.

The current EU Cohesion Policy encourages regions and Member States to build regional coalitions to support the creation of new European value chains characterised by the identification of strategic areas for the creation of jobs and growth. Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3) are at the centre of this approach: EU Member States and regions have identified priorities to build on their strengths in business, research and innovation in order to move up value chains and improve the competitive advantage of their territories. This approach can be reinforced by interregional collaboration.

The Interregional Innovation Investments (I3) Instrument creates linkages for interregional collaboration bringing together actors from different EU regions investing in joint innovation projects close to the market. This is achieved through helping consortia consisting of innovation actors from the quadruple helix³ to cooperate in investments in shared and/or complementary smart specialisation areas. Hereby, S3 strategies serve as a coordinating principle for the development of I3 projects to interconnect regional innovation ecosystems along S3 priorities and to combine bottom-up S3 priorities with EU strategic priorities.

With this approach, the I3 Instrument aims at boosting local ecosystems and innovation diffusion to increase the innovation capacity, in particular in less developed regions. Engaging in innovation and reinforcing the capacity of regions to join EU value chains will unlock their innovation potential creating opportunities for local economic transformation. This also strengthens the competitiveness and resilience of EU innovation systems overall and their ability to address societal and economic challenges.

Strand 1 calls launched under the I3 Instrument work programme 2021-2022 target mature partnerships to help them accelerate market uptake and scale-up of innovative solutions in shared smart specialisation priority areas, as well as to

³ A well performing quadruple-helix ecosystem usually implies a network model with an exchange of skills, knowledge, business ideas and money between companies, public research, institutions, financial institutions, government bodies (at different levels) and final users.

develop a portfolio of investment projects at high technology readiness levels (TRL 6-9). Strand 2a focuses on increasing the capacity of regional innovation ecosystems in less developed regions to participate in global value chains, as well as the capacity to engage in partnerships with other regions.⁴

The present call “Capacity Building - Strand 2b” aims to test new approaches for increasing the capacity of regional innovation ecosystems in less developed regions to collaborate in EU value chains. Actions under this call shall facilitate therefore the interregional cooperation between regional innovation ecosystem actors which want to develop and increase their capacity to participate in calls under the Interregional Innovation Investments (I3) Instrument, e.g. for the submission of proposals under the I3 Instrument Strands 1 and 2a.

The I3 Instrument **will not support activities that do significant harm to environment objectives** within the meaning of Art.17 of the EU Taxonomy regulation. I3 funding therefore cannot be awarded to projects that do not comply with this principle (e.g. any proposal dedicated to increase the efficiency of fossil fuel technologies or of fossil fuels). Applicants will need to verify that their proposal complies with this requirement (see section 5 of mandatory documents).

2. Objectives — Themes and priorities — Activities that can be funded — Expected impact

- I3-2022-CAP2b — Capacity Building Strand 2b

Objectives

General objective

Less developed regions⁵ and other categories of regions (such as EU outermost regions or regions with specific challenges⁶) are facing different challenges and obstacles linked to innovation building and diffusion and often experience difficulties in building institutional and legal environments conducive to innovation.

In this respect, less developed regions need support in building and reinforcing innovative and resilient ecosystems and advice in the identification of investment projects. This includes support in strengthening links and structures among the stakeholders of quadruple-helix ecosystems and the optimisation of the relevant local administrative structures and processes. Accordingly, the core activities under this call shall complement support⁷ to the capacity building of less developed regions to enable interregional ecosystems to deliver concrete interregional innovation investments along the S3 priorities within the framework of the EU value chains, as well as the capacity to participate in partnerships with other regions.

This activity has a strong cohesion dimension creating linkages between all EU regions. The purpose of this activity is hence to build capacities for a successful participation in Strand 1 or Strand 2a calls, enhancing interregional cooperation with a view to identifying and sharing good practices, and experimenting new approaches. This will also help public authorities and agencies to design evidence-based and targeted policy interventions in the long-term.

⁴ Calls for Strand 1 and Strand 2a have been launched under the I3 work programme 2021-22 for the three main topics: green transition, digital transition and smart manufacturing.

⁵ Less developed regions are defined as regions whose GDP per capita is less than 75 % of the average GDP per capita of the EU-27 (Article 108(2) of the Regulation 2021/1060).

⁶ Specific challenges are not pre-defined. Specific challenges can vary from demographic, geographic, green, digital or being stuck in a development trap. Regions considering that they face such specific and possibly unique challenges are thus encouraged to outline these challenges in their I3 application.

⁷ Available e.g. from ERDF programmes (technical assistance).

Projects can offer an added value when promoting the participation of EU outermost regions⁸. Due consideration will be given to such added value during the evaluation of I3 project proposals. Projects can also offer an added value when supporting regions with specific challenges⁹, such as difficulties in retaining and attracting talents.

Specific objectives

Proposals shall present projects for the creation of the preconditions for successful interregional cooperation and investments in shared smart specialisation areas and shall aim to facilitate the validation process of investment ideas through improved knowledge of business and investment planning. Actions shall experiment new approaches and deliver validated solutions, good practice examples and increase the capacity to engage in interregional innovation processes, involving actors of the quadruple-helix ecosystem, in particular SMEs.

Partners can be from all EU Member States. However, the impact of the project should focus on less developed regions.

Themes and priorities (scope)

Priorities must be given to actions for capacity building and investment project piloting related to the green and the digital transition and to smart manufacturing including deep tech innovation, such as (not exhaustive list):

- Company engagement and identification of a pipeline of investment projects;
- Increasing investment readiness and capacity to build interregional business and investment plans;
- Exploring the use of technical assistance from the mainstream programmes¹⁰ to structure and reinforce the local ecosystems internally (identification of specific challenges to address fragmentation, identification of the innovation potential, ecosystem building and animation, company involvement, putting in place the right framework conditions based on best practices identified) in order to develop the capacities to connect the local ecosystems at interregional level;
- Connecting the less developed regions with other ecosystems (reinforcing connections with relevant platforms and EU networks, mobilising the ecosystem in the framework of S3 partnerships) and integration them in EU value chains;
- Building capacities to understand value chains articulation and implementation.

Activities that can be funded (scope)

Under this call for proposals eligible actions have to provide coordination and support to regional actors (small and medium-sized enterprises, research infrastructures, clusters, innovation agencies, managing authorities and other organisations operating in fields like business development, territorial cooperation and innovation) in view of reinforcing their regional innovation ecosystems and the ability to apply under the I3 Instrument (strand 1 and 2a calls) or other relevant EU funding schemes. Funding for research and innovation per se are not eligible. Actions shall be primarily capacity

⁸ Article 349 TFEU highlights that the structural social and economic situation of the Outermost Regions is compounded by their remoteness, insularity, small size, difficult topography and climate, economic dependence on a few products, the permanence and combination of which severely restrain their development.

⁹ Specific challenges are not pre-defined. Specific challenges can vary from demographic, geographic, green, digital or being stuck in a development trap. Regions considering that they face such specific and possibly unique challenges are thus encouraged to outline these challenges in their I3 application.

¹⁰ e.g. from ERDF programmes.

building measures including ecosystem building, coordination and networking of projects, programmes and policies. Therefore, proposals must include one or more of the core actions below.

Core actions

- Ecosystem Building and Connection
 - Creation and reinforcement of an interregional innovative and resilient ecosystem;
 - Development of new cooperation with industry associations and other key players;
 - Design of tools and instruments to develop relevant know-how and develop international expert networks;
 - Support to alliances for regions to focus on specific innovation topics and to find suitable partners for them;
 - Elaboration of a policy mix to support companies, particularly SMEs, in innovation and internationalisation dynamics and to foster their successful participation in the quadruple-helix ecosystems;
 - Development of local/regional roadmaps connecting the companies to EU/global value chains.
- Supporting the identification of investment projects
 - Reinforce the capacity of the quadruple-helix ecosystem actors to develop business ideas. This might include the assessment of the maturity of the partnerships, the maturity of the business cases and the maturity of the investments (market analysis and feasibility studies as a step towards validating the initial business idea and towards draft business planning);
 - Design of industry driven value chain initiatives;
 - Pre-piloting of the investment ideas under development and validation of the assumptions with the implementing actors and the ecosystem;
 - Addressing specific issues related to projects feasibility, market maturity and bankability;
 - Improving projects in terms of legal and financial aspects;
 - Identification of a possible funding mix.

The self-assessment tool available under S3 Community of Practice ([S3 CoP](#)) might be used to support this exercise.

Proposals are expected to include the following support activities linked to the selected core activities:

- Mapping & Benchmarking
 - Benchmarking the performance of local innovation actors against those in other regions and the EU Member States to assess the local strengths and to contribute to the development of European value chains, including the comparative assessment of performance of innovation systems across regions, see [Community Innovation Survey \(CIS\)](#), [Regional Innovation Scoreboard \(RIS\)](#), [European Innovation Scoreboard \(EIS\)](#) etc.;
 - Interregional value chain analysis and segmentation of sub-value chains to identify challenges, opportunities, and barriers to the participation of the regional ecosystems to identified niches. This might include the analysis of potential growth markets (domestically and abroad) and linkages with other regions etc.);
 - Mapping supply-side competencies and matching them with demand-driven business opportunities for interregional investments;
 - Activate innovation support system intermediaries (regional development agencies, clusters, private sector organisations belonging to the regional innovation ecosystem) to engage the ecosystems in interregional investments.

- Networking and staff exchange schemes
 - Building experiences in EU networks and relevant platforms;
 - Supporting the participation of the region/country into the [S3 Thematic Platforms](#), [European Technology Platforms](#) and [EU Cluster Collaboration Platform](#);
 - Clusters' or companies' prospection visits in other regions and / or EU Member States (Including companies' visits to demonstration infrastructures);
 - Connecting ecosystem activities (twinning), including the business sector;
 - Building interregional investment capacities of business developers or innovation managers.

Consortia are encouraged to create opportunities for further funding under the [European Regional Development Fund \(ERDF\)](#) and to explore synergies with the ERDF and other Union funding programmes and instruments (particularly with the [Interreg](#) programmes).

Projects are also expected to facilitate collaboration with the [Enterprise Europe Network](#) (EEN Sector groups), [European Innovation Ecosystem stakeholders](#), [Horizon Europe](#) partnerships, S3 Community of Practice ([S3 CoP](#)) and other relevant networks or partnerships. All proposed actions shall capitalise on already available information and should not be limited to duplicating what already exists.

Measuring & Monitoring

Key Performance indicators (KPIs) examples for the Strand 2b

All KPIs relate to the situation at the end of the project. Proposals must indicate targets that consortia plan to reach. KPIs must be measured at the beginning and at the end of the project.

- Interregional dimension
 - Number of less and more developed regions involved in the project/ Location and geographical coverage.
- Policy
 - Number of S3 based roadmaps developed contributing to European Strategic Innovation agendas;
 - Number of S3 Partnerships (or other relevant interregional working groups in networks and platforms) in which regions are actively participating;
 - Number of policy measures conceived to engage the ecosystems externally.
- Socio-economic benefits
 - Number of value chain analyses based on mapping and benchmarking activities;
 - Number of business cases identified in the framework of the given value chain developed;
 - Number of companies involved in the business cases;
 - Number of intermediaries engaged in interregional activities;
 - Number of interregional alliances established or in preparation.
- Gender dimension/persons reached

For benchmarking activities, consortia are invited and encouraged to identify and measure other KPIs in addition to the previous ones

Expected impact

The outcome of Strand 2b projects is expected to be reflected in an increase of the capacities of less developed regions. In particular, regional innovation ecosystems are expected to be engaged at European level building on the commitment of regional innovation stakeholders to deliver concrete interregional innovation investments within EU value chains.

Output

The Strand 2b outputs refer to the concrete experimentation of new approaches, solutions and good practices to engage in interregional innovation processes mobilising ecosystems and in particular SMEs. Projects are expected to deliver a pipeline of potential interregional investments as well as business and investment plans.

- *Concrete output at the closure of each project:*
 - New specific policy measures -in place or ready for adoption- to increase innovation capacity of the ecosystems to participate in interregional innovation projects;
 - Improved business climate for competitive ecosystems to encourage investment: local presence of supporting industries with corporate strategies in central thematic areas (such as innovation investments, internationalisation, European customer orientation including personnel policy, training, new cooperation with industry associations and other key players and instruments to develop relevant know-how and develop international expert networks, development of alliances in structurally weak regions to focus on specific innovation topics and to find suitable partners for them);
 - Updated action plans of the involved regions, based on S3 strategies;
 - Developed innovation infrastructure with identified areas and topics for innovation diffusion policy measures for investments, open markets, value chain participation;
 - Improved innovation environment: Identification of ecosystems with European market potential and developed connections within the quadruple-helix between the general innovation infrastructure, and the respective industrial clusters;
 - Identified and integrated active innovation support intermediaries (e.g. innovation development agencies, industrial associations etc.);
 - Tested tools for mapping supply-side competencies and matching them with demand-driven business opportunities for interregional investments;
 - Identified I3 Instrument related value chains & investment pipelines based on mapping and benchmarking activities;
 - Identification of competitive regional products and services for interregional and European level value chains;
 - Developed business cases ready to apply for the I3 Instrument calls;
 - Increased capacities of companies to participate in I3 Instrument projects (through learning and exchange activities);
 - Increased innovation capacity of the ecosystems to participate in interregional innovation projects based on trainings, missions, exchanges, study visits, partner search etc. related to the core project activities;
 - Preparation and dissemination of best practice examples, showcases, up taking, replication.

- *Longer term impact*
 - Reinforced capacity of quadruple-helix innovation ecosystem actors, in particular SMEs to join forces around shared S3 investment priorities (interregional investments);
 - Improved connection of innovation infrastructure in the frame of interregional quadruple-helix ecosystems;
 - Implemented support measures for innovation diffusion and investment identification, value chain participation;
 - Increased maturity of I3 Instrument projects consortia to cooperate in the framework of EU globally competitive value chains;
 - S3 based roadmaps in place contributing to European Strategic Innovation agendas, including implementation timelines.

3. Available budget

The available call budget is **EUR 7 155 858.00**.

We reserve the right not to award all available funds or to redistribute them between the call priorities, depending on the proposals received and the results of the evaluation.

4. Timetable and deadlines

Timetable and deadlines (indicative)	
Call opening:	15 December 2022
Deadline for submission:	<u>16 March 2023 – 17:00:00 CET</u> (Brussels)
Evaluation:	March - May 2023
Information on evaluation results:	July 2023
GA signature:	September 2023

5. Admissibility and documents

Proposals must be submitted before the **call deadline** (see *timetable section 4*).

Proposals must be submitted **electronically** via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System (accessible via the Topic page in the [Search Funding & Tenders](#) section). Paper submissions are NOT possible.

Proposals (including annexes and supporting documents) must be submitted using the forms provided *inside* the Submission System (⚠ NOT the documents available on the Topic page — they are only for information).

Proposals must be **complete** and contain all the requested information and all required annexes and supporting documents:

- Application Form Part A — contains administrative information about the participants (future coordinator, beneficiaries and affiliated entities) and the summarised budget for the project (*to be filled in directly online*)

- Application Form Part B — contains the technical description of the project (*to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed and then assembled and re-uploaded*)
- Part C (*to be filled in directly online*) containing additional project data
- **mandatory annexes and supporting documents** (*to be uploaded*):
 - detailed budget table (*template available in the Submission System*)
 - CVs (short outlines) of core project team
 - list of previous projects (key projects for the last 4 years) (*template available in Part B*)
 - letter of support (endorsement letter from the MS authority responsible for the regional smart specialisation strategy (S3)).

The endorsement letter is required for each regional innovation ecosystem at appropriate NUTS level (NUTS level I, II or III) depending on the context of each Member State and/or region) and it is a requirement for all members of an I3 project consortium.

Since the update of the S3 strategies for several Member States or regions for the period 2021 - 2027 is still ongoing, only the timely (before the deadline of the relevant cut-off date) submission of the support letter from the MS authority responsible for the smart specialization strategy of the regional innovation ecosystem in which the project coordinator is established is mandatory.

The endorsement letters of the members of an I3 Instrument project consortium must be submitted in any case before the end of the evaluation procedure at the latest.

Please note that the amounts entered into the summarised budget table (filled in directly online) must correspond to the amounts calculated in the detailed budget table. In case of discrepancies, the amounts in the online summarised budget table will prevail.

At proposal submission, you will have to confirm that you have the **mandate to act** for all applicants. Moreover, you will have to confirm that the information in the application is correct and complete and that the participants comply with the conditions for receiving EU funding (especially eligibility, financial and operational capacity, exclusion, etc). Before signing the grant, each beneficiary and affiliated entity will have to confirm this again by signing a declaration of honour (DoH). Proposals without full support will be rejected.

Your application must be **readable, accessible and printable**.

Proposals are limited to maximum **60 pages** (Part B). Evaluators will not consider any additional pages.

You may be asked at a later stage for further documents (*for legal entity validation, financial capacity check, bank account validation, etc*).



For more information about the submission process (including IT aspects), consult the [Online Manual](#).

6. Eligibility

Eligible participants (eligible countries)

In order to be eligible, the applicants (beneficiaries and affiliated entities) must:

- be legal entities (public or private bodies)
- be established in one of the eligible countries, i.e.:
 - EU Member States (including overseas countries and territories (OCTs))
 - non-EU countries:
 - listed EEA countries and countries associated to the I3 Instrument or countries which are in ongoing negotiations for an association agreement and where the agreement enters into force before grant signature ([list of participating countries](#))

Beneficiaries and affiliated entities must register in the [Participant Register](#) — before submitting the proposal — and will have to be validated by the Central Validation Service (REA Validation)¹¹. For the validation, they will be requested to upload documents showing legal status and origin.

Other entities may participate in other consortium roles, such as associated partners, subcontractors, third parties giving in-kind contributions, etc (*see section 13*).

Specific cases


Exceptional funding — Entities from other countries (not listed above) are exceptionally eligible, if the granting authority considers their participation essential for the implementation of the action.

Natural persons — Natural persons are NOT eligible (with the exception of self-employed persons, i.e. sole traders, where the company does not have legal personality separate from that of the natural person).

International organisations — International organisations are eligible. The rules on eligible countries do not apply to them.

Entities without legal personality — Entities which do not have legal personality under their national law may exceptionally participate, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf, and offer guarantees for the protection of the EU financial interests equivalent to that offered by legal persons¹².

EU bodies — EU bodies (with the exception of the European Commission Joint Research Centre) can NOT be part of the consortium.

Associations and interest groupings — Entities composed of members may participate as 'sole beneficiaries' or 'beneficiaries without legal personality'¹³.  Please note that if the action will be implemented by the members, they should also participate (either as beneficiaries or as affiliated entities, otherwise their costs will NOT be eligible).

Countries currently negotiating association agreements — Beneficiaries from countries with ongoing negotiations (*see above*) may participate in the call and can sign grants

¹¹ At the latest before grant signature in case of invitation to grant agreement preparation.

¹² See Article 197(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

¹³ For the definitions, see Articles 187(2) and 197(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

if the negotiations are concluded before grant signature (with retroactive effect, if provided in the agreement).

EU restrictive measures — Special rules apply for certain entities (*e.g. entities subject to [EU restrictive measures](#) under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)*¹⁴ and entities covered by Commission Guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#)¹⁵). Such entities are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any).



For more information, see [Rules for Legal Entity Validation, LEAR Appointment and Financial Capacity Assessment](#).

Consortium composition

Proposals **must** be submitted by a consortium of applicants (beneficiaries; not affiliated entities), which complies with the following conditions:

- The coordinator must be established in an EU Member State from a “less developed region”¹⁶ and be either a public body, private non-profit organisation or international organisation.
- Minimum 2 independent legal entities representing 2 different regional ecosystems from 2 different EU Member States.
- The consortium must represent at least 1 “more developed region” of an EU Member State.
- Includes innovation actors such as public administrations, research and academia, industry, end users.

Partners from non-EU Member States need to bear their own costs.

Eligible activities

Eligible activities are the ones set out in section 2 above.

The following activities are not considered as eligible for funding under this call:

- activities that are excluded from the scope of the ERDF according to Article 7 of the ERDF Regulation
- activities that do not comply with the do no significant harm principle

Projects should take into account the results of projects supported by other EU funding programmes. The complementarities must be described in the project proposals (Part B of the Application Form).

¹⁴ Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the [EU Sanctions Map](#).

¹⁵ Commission guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#) on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the EU from 2014 onwards (OJEU C 205 of 19.07.2013, pp. 9-11).

¹⁶ Please check the category of your region/country here: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/how/is-my-region-covered/. The EU reserves the right to get in touch with the applicants to verify their status (in case of doubt).

Projects must comply with EU policy interests and priorities (*such as environment, social, security, industrial and trade policy, etc*).

Geographic location (target countries)

Proposals must relate to activities taking place in the eligible countries (*see above*) and S3 participating regions covered by the consortium.

Duration

Projects are expected to range between 18 and 24 months (extensions are possible, if duly justified in the proposal or through an amendment).

Project budget

Project budgets (maximum grant amount) are expected to be around EUR 500 000 – EUR 1 500 000 per project, but this does not preclude the submission/selection of proposals requesting other amounts, if duly justified in the proposal.

7. Financial and operational capacity and exclusion

Financial capacity

Applicants must have **stable and sufficient resources** to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share. Organisations participating in several projects must have sufficient capacity to implement all these projects.

The financial capacity check will be carried out on the basis of the documents you will be requested to upload in the [Participant Register](#) during grant preparation (*e.g. profit and loss account and balance sheet, business plan, audit report produced by an approved external auditor, certifying the accounts for the last closed financial year, etc*). The analysis will be based on neutral financial indicators, but will also take into account other aspects, such as dependency on EU funding and deficit and revenue in previous years.

The check will normally be done for all beneficiaries, except:

- public bodies (entities established as public body under national law, including local, regional or national authorities) or international organisations
- if the individual requested grant amount is not more than EUR 60 000.

If needed, it may also be done for affiliated entities.

If we consider that your financial capacity is not satisfactory, we may require:

- further information
 - an enhanced financial responsibility regime, i.e. joint and several responsibility for all beneficiaries or joint and several liability of affiliated entities (*see below, section 10*)
 - prefinancing paid in instalments
 - (one or more) prefinancing guarantees (*see below, section 10*)
- or
- propose no prefinancing
 - request that you are replaced or, if needed, reject the entire proposal.



For more information, see [Rules for Legal Entity Validation, LEAR Appointment and Financial Capacity Assessment](#).

Operational capacity

Applicants must have the **know-how, qualifications** and **resources** to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share (including sufficient experience in projects of comparable size and nature).

This capacity will be assessed together with the 'Quality' award criterion, on the basis of the competence and experience of the applicants and their project teams, including operational resources (human, technical and other) or, exceptionally, the measures proposed to obtain it by the time the task implementation starts.

If the evaluation of the award criterion is positive, the applicants are considered to have sufficient operational capacity.

Applicants will have to show their capacity via the following information:

- general profiles (qualifications and experiences) of the staff responsible for managing and implementing the project
- description of the consortium participants
- list of previous projects (key projects for the last 4 years).

Additional supporting documents may be requested, if needed to confirm the operational capacity of any applicant.

Public bodies, Member State organisations and international organisations are exempted from the operational capacity check.

Exclusion

Applicants which are subject to an **EU exclusion decision** or in one of the following **exclusion situations** that bar them from receiving EU funding can NOT participate¹⁷:

- bankruptcy, winding up, affairs administered by the courts, arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or other similar procedures (including procedures for persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts)
- in breach of social security or tax obligations (including if done by persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts)
- guilty of grave professional misconduct¹⁸ (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- committed fraud, corruption, links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)

¹⁷ See Articles 136 and 141 of EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

¹⁸ Professional misconduct includes: violation of ethical standards of the profession, wrongful conduct with impact on professional credibility, false declarations/misrepresentation of information, participation in a cartel or other agreement distorting competition, violation of IPR, attempting to influence decision-making processes or obtain confidential information from public authorities to gain advantage.

- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement, prize, expert contract, or similar (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No [2988/95](#) (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin or created another entity with this purpose (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant).

Applicants will also be refused if it turns out that¹⁹:

- during the award procedure they misrepresented information required as a condition for participating or failed to supply that information
- they were previously involved in the preparation of the call and this entails a distortion of competition that cannot be remedied otherwise (conflict of interest).

8. Evaluation and award procedure

The proposals will have to follow the standard submission and evaluation procedure (one-stage submission + one-step evaluation).

An **evaluation committee** assisted by independent outside experts will assess all applications. Proposals will first be checked for formal requirements (admissibility, and eligibility, *see sections 5 and 6*). Proposals found admissible and eligible will be evaluated against the operational capacity and award criteria (*see sections 7 and 9*) and then ranked according to their scores.

For proposals with the same score a **priority order** will be determined according to the following approach:


Successively for every group of *ex aequo* proposals, starting with the highest scored group, and continuing in descending order:

- 1) Proposals focusing on a theme that is not otherwise covered by higher ranked projects will be considered to have the highest priority.
- 2) The *ex aequo* proposals within the same topic will be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the award criterion 'Impact'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Relevance'.
- 3) If this does not allow to determine the priority, a further prioritisation can be done by considering the gender balance among the personnel named in the proposal who will be primarily responsible for carrying out the innovation activities, and who are included in the proposal, will be used as a factor for prioritisation. The mention to gender equality plans in participating organisations can also be considered.

¹⁹ See Article 141 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

- 4) Any further prioritisation will be based on geographical diversity, defined as the number of Member States represented in the proposal, not otherwise receiving funds from projects higher up the ranking list.
- 5) If a distinction still cannot be made, further prioritisation can be done by considering the overall project portfolio, and the creation of positive synergies between projects and involvement of SMEs or other factors related to the objectives of the call. These factors will be documented in the panel report.

All proposals will be informed about the evaluation result (**evaluation result letter**). Successful proposals will be invited for grant preparation; the other ones will be put on the reserve list or rejected.

 No commitment for funding — Invitation to grant preparation does NOT constitute a formal commitment for funding. We will still need to make various legal checks before grant award: *legal entity validation, financial capacity, exclusion check, etc.*

Grant preparation will involve a dialogue in order to fine-tune technical or financial aspects of the project and may require extra information from your side. It may also include adjustments to the proposal to address recommendations of the evaluation committee or other concerns. Compliance will be a pre-condition for signing the grant.

If you believe that the evaluation procedure was flawed, you can submit a **complaint** (following the deadlines and procedures set out in the evaluation result letter). Please note that notifications which have not been opened within 10 days after sending are considered to have been accessed and that deadlines will be counted from opening/access (see also [Funding & Tenders Portal Terms and Conditions](#)). Please also be aware that for complaints submitted electronically, there may be character limitations.

9. Award criteria

The **award criteria** for this call are as follows:

- **Relevance (5 points):** clarity and consistency of project, objectives and planning; extent to which the project matches the themes and priorities and specific objectives of the call; relevance and effectiveness of the proposed capacity building action in terms of its ambition; contribution to the EU strategic and legislative context; extent to which the project promotes the participation of EU outermost regions; extent to which projects offers an added value in regions with specific challenges, such as difficulties in retaining and attracting talents; European/interregional dimension; potential to develop mutual trust/cross-border cooperation; extent to which it fits the detailed expectations/needs of the identified target groups; involvement of stakeholders from the relevant innovation ecosystems.
- **Quality (5 points):** technical quality; logical links between the identified problems, needs and solutions proposed (logical frame concept); methodology for implementing the project (concept and methodology, management, procedures, timetable, risks and risk management, monitoring and evaluation); feasibility of the project within the proposed time frame; quality of the consortium and project teams; appropriate procedures and problem-solving mechanisms for cooperating within the project teams and consortium;
- **Cost effectiveness (5 points):** cost effectiveness; sufficient/appropriate budget for proper implementation; best value for money

- **Impact (10 points):** ambition and expected long-term impact of results on target groups/general public; extent to which the project address specific needs and challenges of outermost regions or challenges that are specific and unique for regions involved in the project; appropriate dissemination strategy for ensuring sustainability and long-term impact; sustainability of results after EU funding ends; extent to which the action will foster organisational capacity to participate in future interregional innovation investment projects (e.g. value chain analysis, identification of cooperating regions, business cases, companies, intermediaries etc.); credibility on the long term policy impact in the relevant regions (e.g. roadmaps, policy measures).

Award criteria	Minimum pass score	Maximum score
Relevance	2,5	5
Quality	2,5	5
Cost effectiveness	2,5	5
Impact	5	10
Overall (pass) scores	17,5	25

Maximum points: 25 points.

Individual thresholds per criterion: 2,5/5, 2,5/5, 2,5/5, 5/10 points.

Overall threshold: 17,5 points.

Proposals that pass the individual thresholds AND the overall threshold will be considered for funding — within the limits of the available budget (i.e. up to the budget ceiling). Other proposals will be rejected.

10. Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements

If you pass evaluation, your project will be invited for grant preparation, where you will be asked to prepare the Grant Agreement together with the EU Project Officer.

This Grant Agreement will set the framework for your grant and its terms and conditions, in particular concerning deliverables, reporting and payments.

The Model Grant Agreement that will be used (and all other relevant templates and guidance documents) can be found on [Portal Reference Documents](#).

Starting date and project duration

The project starting date and duration will be fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 1*). Normally the starting date will be after grant signature. Retroactive application can be granted exceptionally for duly justified reasons — but never earlier than the proposal submission date.

Project duration: between 18 and 24 months (extensions are possible, if duly justified in the proposal or through an amendment).

Milestones and deliverables

The milestones and deliverables for each project will be managed through the Portal Grant Management System and will be reflected in Annex 1 of the Grant Agreement.

The following deliverables will be mandatory for all projects:

- action plan (for the improvement of the regional innovation ecosystem)
- report on internal reforms implemented during the project
- outlook on possible future investment plans building on the new connections with EU/global value chains.

Form of grant, funding rate and maximum grant amount

The grant parameters (*maximum grant amount, funding rate, total eligible costs, etc*) will be fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 3 and art 5*).

Project budget (maximum grant amount): *see section 6 above*. The grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested.

The grant will be a budget-based mixed actual cost grant (actual costs, with and flat-rate elements). This means that it will reimburse ONLY certain types of costs (eligible costs) and costs that were *actually* incurred for your project (NOT the *budgeted* costs). For flat-rates, you can charge the amounts calculated as explained in the Grant Agreement (*see art 6 and Annex 2 and 2a*).

The costs will be reimbursed at the funding rate fixed in the Grant Agreement (up to **100%**).

Grants may NOT produce a profit (i.e. surplus of revenues + EU grant over costs). For-profit organisations must declare their revenues and, if there is a profit, we will deduct it from the final grant amount (*see art 22.3*).

Moreover, please be aware that the final grant amount may be reduced in case of non-compliance with the Grant Agreement (*e.g. improper implementation, breach of obligations, etc*).

Budget categories and cost eligibility rules

The budget categories and cost eligibility rules are fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 3, art 6 and Annex 2*).

Budget categories for this call:

- A. Personnel costs
 - A.1 Employees, A.2 Natural persons under direct contract, A.3 Seconded persons
 - A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries
- B. Subcontracting costs
- C. Purchase costs
 - C.1 Travel and subsistence
 - C.2 Equipment
 - C.3 Other goods, works and services
- D. Other cost categories

- E. Indirect costs

Specific cost eligibility conditions for this call:

- personnel costs:
 - SME owner/natural person unit cost²⁰: Yes
- travel and subsistence unit cost²¹: Yes
- equipment costs: depreciation
- other cost categories: No
- indirect cost flat-rate: 7% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs and exempted specific cost categories, if any)
- VAT: non-deductible VAT is eligible (but please note that since 2013 VAT paid by beneficiaries that are public bodies acting as public authority is NOT eligible)
- other:
 - in-kind contributions for free are allowed, but cost-neutral, i.e. they cannot be declared as cost
 - kick off meeting: costs for kick off meeting organised by the granting authority are eligible (travel costs for maximum 2 persons, return ticket to Brussels and accommodation for one night) only if the meeting takes place after the project starting date set out in the Grant Agreement; the starting date can be changed through an amendment, if needed
 - project websites: communication costs for presenting the project on the participants' websites or social media accounts are eligible; costs for *separate* project websites are not eligible

Reporting and payment arrangements

The reporting and payment arrangements are fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4 and art 21 and 22*).

After grant signature, you will normally receive a **prefinancing** to start working on the project (float of normally **70%** of the maximum grant amount; exceptionally less or no prefinancing). The prefinancing will be paid 30 days from entry into force/financial guarantee (if required) — whichever is the latest.

There will be no **interim payments**.

In addition, you will be expected to submit one or more progress reports not linked to payments.

Payment of the balance: At the end of the project, we will calculate your final grant amount. If the total of earlier payments is higher than the final grant amount, we will ask you (your coordinator) to pay back the difference (recovery).

All payments will be made to the coordinator.

²⁰ Commission [Decision](#) of 20 October 2020 authorising the use of unit costs for the personnel costs of the owners of small and medium-sized enterprises and beneficiaries that are natural persons not receiving a salary for the work carried out by themselves under an action or work programme (C(2020)7715).

²¹ Commission [Decision](#) of 12 January 2021 authorising the use of unit costs for travel, accommodation and subsistence costs under an action or work programme under the 2021-2027 multi-annual financial framework (C(2021)35).

⚠ Please be aware that payments will be automatically lowered if one of your consortium members has outstanding debts towards the EU (granting authority or other EU bodies). Such debts will be offset by us — in line with the conditions set out in the Grant Agreement (*see art 22*).

Please also note that you are responsible for keeping records on all the work done and the costs declared.

Prefinancing guarantees

If a prefinancing guarantee is required, it will be fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4*). The amount will be set during grant preparation and it will normally be equal or lower than the prefinancing for your grant.

The guarantee should be in euro and issued by an approved bank/financial institution established in an EU Member State. If you are established in a non-EU country and would like to provide a guarantee from a bank/financial institution in your country, please contact us (this may be exceptionally accepted, if it offers equivalent security).

Amounts blocked in bank accounts will NOT be accepted as financial guarantees.

Prefinancing guarantees are formally NOT linked to individual consortium members, which means that you are free to organise how to provide the guarantee amount (*by one or several beneficiaries, for the overall amount or several guarantees for partial amounts, by the beneficiary concerned or by another beneficiary, etc*). It is however important that the requested amount is covered and that the guarantee(s) are sent to us in time to make the prefinancing (scanned copy via Portal AND original by post).

If agreed with us, the bank guarantee may be replaced by a guarantee from a third party.

The guarantee will be released at the end of the grant, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Grant Agreement.

Certificates

Depending on the type of action, size of grant amount and type of beneficiaries, you may be requested to submit different certificates. The types, schedules and thresholds for each certificate are fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4 and art 24*).

Liability regime for recoveries

The liability regime for recoveries will be fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet point 4.4 and art 22*).

For beneficiaries, it is one of the following:

- limited joint and several liability with individual ceilings — *each beneficiary up to their maximum grant amount*
 - unconditional joint and several liability — *each beneficiary up to the maximum grant amount for the action*
- or
- individual financial responsibility — *each beneficiary only for their own debts*.

In addition, the granting authority may require joint and several liability of affiliated entities (with their beneficiary).

Provisions concerning the project implementation

IPR rules: see *Model Grant Agreement (art 16 and Annex 5)*:

- rights of use on results: Yes

Communication, dissemination and visibility of funding: see *Model Grant Agreement (art 17 and Annex 5)*:

- communication and dissemination plan: Yes
- additional communication and dissemination activities: Yes

Specific rules for carrying out the action: see *Model Grant Agreement (art 18 and Annex 5)*:

- specific rules for blending operations: No

Other specificities

n/a

Non-compliance and breach of contract

The Grant Agreement (chapter 5) provides for the measures we may take in case of breach of contract (and other non-compliance issues).



For more information, see [AGA – Annotated Grant Agreement](#).

11. How to submit an application

All proposals must be submitted directly online via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System. Paper applications are NOT accepted.

Submission is a **2-step process**:

a) create a user account and register your organisation

To use the Submission System (the only way to apply), all participants need to [create an EU Login user account](#).

Once you have an EU Login account, you can [register your organisation](#) in the Participant Register. When your registration is finalised, you will receive a 9-digit participant identification code (PIC).

b) submit the proposal

Access the Electronic Submission System via the Topic page in the [Search Funding & Tenders](#) section (or, for calls sent by invitation to submit a proposal, through the link provided in the invitation letter).

Submit your proposal in 4 parts, as follows:

- Part A includes administrative information about the applicant organisations (future coordinator, beneficiaries, affiliated entities and associated partners) and the summarised budget for the proposal. Fill it in directly online
- Part B (description of the action) covers the technical content of the proposal. Download the mandatory word template from the Submission System, fill it in and upload it as a PDF file

- Part C containing additional project data. To be filled in directly online.
- Annexes (see section 5). Upload them as PDF file (single or multiple depending on the slots). Excel upload is sometimes possible, depending on the file type.

The proposal must keep to the **page limits** (see section 5); excess pages will be disregarded.

Documents must be uploaded to the **right category** in the Submission System otherwise the proposal might be considered incomplete and thus inadmissible.

The proposal must be submitted **before the call deadline** (see section 4). After this deadline, the system is closed and proposals can no longer be submitted.

Once the proposal is submitted, you will receive a **confirmation e-mail** (with date and time of your application). If you do not receive this confirmation e-mail, it means your proposal has NOT been submitted. If you believe this is due to a fault in the Submission System, you should immediately file a complaint via the [IT Helpdesk webform](#), explaining the circumstances and attaching a copy of the proposal (and, if possible, screenshots to show what happened).

Details on processes and procedures are described in the [Online Manual](#). The Online Manual also contains the links to FAQs and detailed instructions regarding the Portal Electronic Exchange System.

12. Help

As far as possible, ***please try to find the answers you need yourself***, in this and the other documentation (we have limited resources for handling direct enquiries):

- [Online Manual](#)
- FAQs on the [Topic page](#) (for call-specific questions in open calls; not applicable for actions by invitation)
- [Portal FAQ](#) (for general questions).

Please also consult the Topic page regularly, since we will use it to publish call updates. (For invitations, we will contact you directly in case of a call update).

Contact

For individual questions on the Portal Submission System, please contact the [IT Helpdesk](#).

Non-IT related questions should be sent 3 working days before the submission deadline to the following email address: EISMEA-I3-INSTRUMENT@ec.europa.eu.

Please indicate clearly the reference of the call and topic to which your question relates (see cover page).

13. Important



IMPORTANT

- **Don't wait until the end** — Complete your application sufficiently in advance of the deadline to avoid any last minute **technical problems**. Problems due to last minute submissions (*e.g. congestion, etc*) will be entirely at your risk. Call deadlines can NOT be extended.
- **Consult** the Portal Topic page regularly. We will use it to publish updates and additional information on the call (call and topic updates).
- **Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Exchange System** — By submitting the application, all participants **accept** to use the electronic exchange system in accordance with the [Portal Terms & Conditions](#).
- **Registration** — Before submitting the application, all beneficiaries, affiliated entities and associated partners must be registered in the [Participant Register](#). The participant identification code (PIC) (one per participant) is mandatory for the Application Form.
- **Consortium roles** — When setting up your consortium, you should think of organisations that help you reach objectives and solve problems.

The roles should be attributed according to the level of participation in the project. Main participants should participate as **beneficiaries** or **affiliated entities**; other entities can participate as associated partners, subcontractors, third parties giving in-kind contributions. **Associated partners** and third parties giving in-kind contributions should bear their own costs (they will not become formal recipients of EU funding). **Subcontracting** should normally constitute a limited part and must be performed by third parties (not by one of the beneficiaries/affiliated entities). Subcontracting going beyond 30% of the total eligible costs must be justified in the application.

- **Coordinator** — In multi-beneficiary grants, the beneficiaries participate as consortium (group of beneficiaries). They will have to choose a coordinator, who will take care of the project management and coordination and will represent the consortium towards the granting authority. In mono-beneficiary grants, the single beneficiary will automatically be coordinator.
- **Affiliated entities** — Applicants may participate with affiliated entities (i.e. entities linked to a beneficiary which participate in the action with similar rights and obligations as the beneficiaries, but do not sign the grant and therefore do not become beneficiaries themselves). They will get a part of the grant money and must therefore comply with all the call conditions and be validated (just like beneficiaries); but they do not count towards the minimum eligibility criteria for consortium composition (if any).
- **Associated partners** — Applicants may participate with associated partners (i.e. partner organisations which participate in the action but without the right to get grant money). They participate without funding and therefore do not need to be validated.
- **Consortium agreement** — For practical and legal reasons it is recommended to set up internal arrangements that allow you to deal with exceptional or unforeseen circumstances (in all cases, even if not mandatory under the Grant Agreement). The consortium agreement also gives you the possibility to redistribute the grant money according to your own consortium-internal principles and parameters (for instance, one beneficiary can reattribute its grant money to another beneficiary). The consortium agreement thus allows you to customise the EU grant to the needs inside your consortium and can also help to protect you in case of disputes.

- **Balanced project budget** — Grant applications must ensure a balanced project budget and sufficient other resources to implement the project successfully (*e.g. own contributions, income generated by the action, financial contributions from third parties, etc.*). You may be requested to lower your estimated costs, if they are ineligible (including excessive).
- **No-profit rule** — Grants may NOT give a profit (i.e. surplus of revenues + EU grant over costs). This will be checked by us at the end of the project.
- **No double funding** — There is a strict prohibition of double funding from the EU budget (except under EU Synergies actions). Outside such Synergies actions, any given action may receive only ONE grant from the EU budget and cost items may under NO circumstances declared to two different EU actions.
- **Completed/ongoing projects** — Proposals for projects that have already been completed will be rejected; proposals for projects that have already started will be assessed on a case-by-case basis (in this case, no costs can be reimbursed for activities that took place before the project starting date/proposal submission).
- **Combination with EU operating grants** — Combination with EU operating grants is possible, if the project remains outside the operating grant work programme and you make sure that cost items are clearly separated in your accounting and NOT declared twice (*see [AGA — Annotated Model Grant Agreement, art 6.2.E](#)*).
- **Multiple proposals** — Applicants may submit more than one proposal for *different* projects under the same call (and be awarded a funding for them).
Organisations may participate in several proposals.
BUT: if there are several proposals for *very similar* projects, only one application will be accepted and evaluated; the applicants will be asked to withdraw one of them (or it will be rejected).
- **Resubmission** — Proposals may be changed and re-submitted until the deadline for submission.
- **Rejection** — By submitting the application, all applicants accept the call conditions set out in this Call Document (and the documents it refers to). Proposals that do not comply with all the call conditions will be **rejected**. This applies also to applicants: All applicants need to fulfil the criteria; if any one of them doesn't, they must be replaced or the entire proposal will be rejected.
- **Cancellation** — There may be circumstances which may require the cancellation of the call. In this case, you will be informed via a call or topic update. Please note that cancellations are without entitlement to compensation.
- **Language** — You can submit your proposal in any official EU language (project abstract/summary should however always be in English). For reasons of efficiency, we strongly advise you to use English for the entire application. If you need the call documentation in another official EU language, please submit a request within 10 days after call publication (for the contact information, *see section 12*).

- **Transparency** — In accordance with Article 38 of the [EU Financial Regulation](#), information about EU grants awarded is published each year on the [Europa website](#).

This includes:

- beneficiary names
- beneficiary addresses
- the purpose for which the grant was awarded
- the maximum amount awarded.

The publication can exceptionally be waived (on reasoned and duly substantiated request), if there is a risk that the disclosure could jeopardise your rights and freedoms under the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights or harm your commercial interests.

- **Data protection** — The submission of a proposal under this call involves the collection, use and processing of personal data. This data will be processed in accordance with the applicable legal framework. It will be processed solely for the purpose of evaluating your proposal, subsequent management of your grant and, if needed, programme monitoring, evaluation and communication. Details are explained in the [Funding & Tenders Portal Privacy Statement](#).