



# European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

## Call for proposals

### Maritime Spatial Planning – EMFF Work Programme 2019

EMFF-Maritime Spatial Planning-2019<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Call ID in 2019 EMFF Work Programme: EMFF-2019-1.2.1.8



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**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)  
EASME.A – COSME, H2020 SME and EMFF  
**A.3 – EMFF**

**European Maritime and Fisheries Fund**  
**MSP call**  
**EMFF-Maritime Spatial Planning-2019<sup>2</sup>**

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<sup>2</sup> Call ID in 2019 EMFF Work Programme: EMFF-2019-1.2.1.8

## 0. Introduction

This is an EU call for grants in the area of Maritime Spatial Planning under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund.

This call for proposals is launched in accordance with the 2019 Work Programme for the implementation of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) (section 1.2.1.8 of the annex to the Work Programme)<sup>3</sup>.

We invite you to read the call documentation carefully, i.e. this **call for proposals** and the **guide for applicants**. These documents provide clarifications and answers to questions you may have when preparing your application:

- The call for proposals outlines the:
  - objectives, themes and priorities, types of activities that can be financed and the expected results of the call
  - timetable and available budget
  - eligibility, exclusion, selection and award criteria
  - evaluation procedure.
- The guide for applicants outlines the:
  - procedures to register and submit proposals online (via the EU Participant Portal)
  - recommendations for the preparation of the proposal
  - explanation on the application form (Proposal Template (Part A and B)), which describes the project
  - overview of the cost eligibility criteria.

You also are encouraged to visit the [EASME website](#) to consult the list of projects funded previously under the EMFF.

## 1. Background to the Maritime Spatial Planning call

The high and rapidly growing demand for maritime space for different purposes of human activities, and the pressure exerted by those activities on marine and coastal ecosystems, require an integrated planning and management approach of our Oceans and Seas.

At a global scale, Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) has emerged as an important policy tool for delivering efficient marine resource management and sustainable development, which can also be used to strengthen cross-border cooperation, and

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<sup>3</sup> Commission Implementing Decision C(2018) 8395 final of 13 December 2018 concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2019 and the financing decision for the implementation of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund.

therefore support improved ocean governance<sup>4</sup>.

The EU adopted in 2007 the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) to provide a more coherent approach to maritime issues<sup>5</sup>. Shortly after, in 2008, the Communication "Roadmap for Maritime Spatial Planning: Achieving common principles in the EU"<sup>6</sup> was adopted by the Commission. The process culminated in 2014 with the adoption of EU MSP legislation<sup>7</sup> (hereinafter "the MSP Directive").

The MSP Directive entered into force in September 2014 and establishes a set of common minimum requirements. It represents an overarching governance framework for EU Members States, which are required to adopt maritime spatial plans by 2021 in all EU waters<sup>8</sup>.

Among the requirements, Member states are requested to cooperate with bordering countries to ensure coherence plans are set across the marine region concerned and where possible to cooperate with third-country authorities. Furthermore, they are encouraged to make use of existing instruments and tools to organise the use of the best available data<sup>9</sup>, necessary for the setting up of the maritime spatial plans.

The European Commission has co-financed since 2009, a number of MSP cross-border projects<sup>10</sup> to support Members States to comply with the provisions laid down in the MSP Directive. The present call for proposals pursue the same line of action.

## 2. Objectives — Priorities — Activities that can be funded — Expected Results

### **Objectives**

The objective of this call for proposals is to support the establishment and implementation of Maritime Spatial Plans in line with the objectives pursued in the framework of the MSP Directive. More specifically, this action intends to support Member States in **setting up maritime spatial plans** and ensuring **plans are coherent and coordinated across marine regions concerned**.

In order to align the proposals to the objectives of this call and considering that actions co-funded under this call will be finalised at the time that maritime plans have to be adopted in line with the MSP Directive (31.03.2021), applicants are required to address the following priorities in their proposals:

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<sup>4</sup> Joint Roadmap to accelerate Maritime/Marine Spatial Planning processes worldwide (MSP): [https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/content/mapping-priorities-and-actions-maritimemarine-spatial-planning-worldwide-joint-roadmap\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/content/mapping-priorities-and-actions-maritimemarine-spatial-planning-worldwide-joint-roadmap_en)

<sup>5</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52007DC0575>

<sup>6</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1554380125984&uri=CELEX:52008DC0791>

<sup>7</sup> Directive 2014/89/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23.07.2014 establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning

<sup>8</sup> 'marine waters' means the waters, the seabed and subsoil as defined in point (1)(a) of Article 3 of Directive 2008/56/EC and coastal waters as defined in point 7 of Article 2 of Directive 2000/60/EC and their seabed and their subsoil.

<sup>9</sup> Directive 2007/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 March 2007 establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE) (OJ L 108, 25.4.2007, p. 1).

<sup>10</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/maritime\\_spatial\\_planning\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/maritime_spatial_planning_en)

1. Support the work of MSP competent authorities and/or inter-ministerial bodies in the establishment and adoption of maritime spatial plans;
2. Where relevant, support the development of cross-border cooperation on MSP with bordering Member States and third countries with a view to ensure **that maritime spatial plans are coherent and coordinated across marine regions concerned**;
3. Making use of the best available data and organise the sharing of information, necessary for maritime spatial plans, by using relevant mechanism and tools (e.g. INSPIRE, EMODNet).

### **Activities that can be funded**

Applicants must explain in their proposal how they will implement the targeted activities below, resulting in concrete and measurable results within the project's duration.

#### *Core activities*

Projects must undertake all of the following activities as part of the project implementation:

- Specific activities aimed at implementing provisions set out in articles 6 and 8 of the MSP Directive (notably the setting-up and adoption of maritime spatial plans);
- Specific activities aimed at implementing provisions set out in article 10 of the MSP Directive (Data use and sharing);
- Specific activities aimed at implementing provisions set out in article 11 of the MSP Directive (Cooperation among Member States);
- Specific activities aimed at implementing provisions set out in article 12 of the MSP Directive (Cooperation with third countries)

#### *Complementary activities*

In addition to the core activities, applicants should include in their project the following complementary activities/tasks to support the above core activities:

- Establishment of a Steering Committee (SC) to ensure the overall strategic steering of the project. The SC shall comprise relevant representatives of the Member States where the action takes place (such as MSP competent authorities for the implementation of MSP Directive), as well as the beneficiaries involved. The Commission and EASME may participate in an advisory capacity only.
- Working procedures defining how project and the SC will operate (assigning clear roles and responsibilities, describing the decision-making process, frequency of meetings etc.);
- An opening and closing conference;
- A repository of best practices and lessons learnt from the project and a list of achievements of the projects;
- A project website, including a workspace and regular updates of this website with progress made and intermediate results. The existing website of the

coordinator or one of the involved partner organisations can also be used for this purpose, especially if the beneficiary is the Competent Authority identified to implement the MSP Directive. This website should be online by the end of Month 4;

- Promotional material, including its production and distribution (at relevant events, workshops, etc.).

Applicants are strongly encouraged to assign dedicated staff, whether internal or sub-contracted, to the elaboration and implementation of the proposed communication and dissemination activities. This should be appropriately reflected in the proposed budget.

The list of complementary activities is non-exhaustive. Applicants may propose additional activities, as long as the choice is justified and establishes a coherent link with the project objectives and the objectives of this call.

#### *Networking with other EU projects*

During the lifetime of the projects financed under this action, a number of events (no more than once per year) will be organised at EU level for the grant beneficiaries to facilitate the exchange of experience and good practices across sea basins, to foster mutual learning and to enhance the European dimension of Maritime Spatial Planning. Project beneficiaries are expected to participate in these events, which will be held in Brussels or other relevant locations.

#### **Expected results**

Applicants have to list the main results<sup>11</sup> expected from the project. The expected results to be achieved by the end of the project **must be concrete, realistic and quantified** as far as possible.

Proposals must clearly describe the specific results of the project for each of the following elements:

- Specific results delivered by the project to the elaboration and/or implementation of a maritime spatial plan/s for the area/s identified (in line with article 6 and 8 of MSP Directive);

Some examples of expected results (non-exhaustive list): definition of national MSP objectives, roadmap for the adoption of plans, a preliminary maritime spatial plan for the area identified.

- Specific results delivered by the project that have enhanced the data use, and the information and knowledge sharing necessary for maritime spatial plans (in line with article 10 of MSP Directive on data use and sharing).

Some examples of expected results (non-exhaustive list): set-up of IT platforms/systems aimed to share data and information in the context of MSP implementation, use of existing tools to develop IT systems aimed to share MSP data and information across Member States, mechanism aimed to ensure compatibility of MSP data (in line with INSPIRE).

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<sup>11</sup> **Results:** capture more direct, short to medium term changes in a situation, which are achieved by the end of the project. E.g. Development of a vision and definition of a set of common and coherent objectives for Maritime Spatial Planning in the marine region selected or Common approaches adopted for the management of maritime activities in cross-border areas.

- Specific results delivered by the project to ensure that maritime spatial plans are coherent and coordinated across the marine region (in line with article 11 and 12 of MSP Directive);

Some examples of expected results (non-exhaustive list): If relevant, agreement on common objectives with bordering Member States, consultation process of maritime spatial plans with bordering Member States, established mechanisms that have strengthen and fostered cross-border cooperation in the field of MSP.

The list of expected results above is non-exhaustive and applicants may add other expected results if relevant.

#### *Monitoring and evaluation of the project activities and project results*

Beneficiaries will have to monitor and evaluate the progress of the project, notably in terms of realising the project objectives and reporting on the results of their project.

Applicants should select and explain which quantitative and qualitative indicators they will use for monitoring and evaluation:

- For each project result, they must define appropriate indicators for measuring achievement (including a unit of measurement, baseline value and target value).
- Beneficiaries will have to report on the project results achieved by the end of the project taking into account the EMFF project indicators provided in the Project Indicators table (annex 3 to the Proposal Template (Part B<sup>12</sup>)). These indicators will contribute to evaluating the results of the proposed project.

Proposals have to include a specific activity/task to monitor and measure the project activities and the project results with a defined budget. Information on monitoring and assessing project results has to be submitted at the time of the periodic reports.

### **3. Timetable & available call budget**

#### **Time-table**

<b>Timing (planned)</b>	
Call publication:	7 May 2019
Opening of submissions:	21 May 2019
Deadline for applications:	4 Sep 2019 – 17:00 CET
Evaluation:	September 2019
Information on evaluation result:	November 2019
Grant agreement signature:	December 2019 / January 2020
Starting date:	January 2020 / February 2020

#### **Call budget**

The available call budget is **EUR 3,000,000**.

This budget might be increased by maximum 20%.

<sup>12</sup> Annex 3 to the Proposal Template (part B)



EASME considers that proposals requesting a contribution in the ranges between 750.000 and 1.250.00 would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

The EU reserves the right not to award all available funds or to redistribute them between the proposals, depending on the applications received and the evaluation results.

#### **4. Admissibility conditions**

##### **Admissibility**

Applications must be submitted before the call deadline (*see time-table section 3*).

Applications must be submitted electronically via the Participant Portal Electronic Submission System (accessible via the Call Topic page in the [Funding Opportunities](#) section). Paper submissions are no longer possible.

Applications (including annexes and supporting documents) must be submitted using the forms provided inside the Electronic Submission System (not the documents available on the Call Topic page — these are only for information).

Applications must be drafted in one of the EU official languages. Submission in English is strongly encouraged and will facilitate the evaluation process.

Your application must be readable, accessible and printable and contain all the requested information and all required annexes and supporting documents (*see section 10*).

#### **5. Eligibility conditions**

##### **Participants**

1. In order to be eligible for a grant, the applicants must:

- Applicants must be legal entities. Natural persons are not eligible as applicants for the purpose of the present call.
- The following types of entities are eligible to participate in the Call as applicants:
  - a) Competent authorities<sup>13</sup> in charge of maritime spatial planning of those coastal EU Member States which are responsible for MSP in the selected area;
  - b) International, regional or intergovernmental organisations, including relevant regional sea conventions (e.g. Union for the Mediterranean, UNEP MAP);
  - c) Other entities shall be considered eligible applicants provided that:
    - (1) they are endorsed by Competent Authorities referred as specified in point a) above.

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<sup>13</sup> For the purpose of this call Competent Authorities are defined as the authority or authorities referred to in Article 13 (1) of the Directive 2014/89/EU. In case Member States have not designated yet this authority, then it is defined as the public authority or body in charge of MSP.

(2) for projects with activities extending to neighbouring waters outside the territory of the EU<sup>14</sup>: be established in one of the following eligible non-EU countries:

- Algeria, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Mauritania, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Palestine<sup>15</sup>, Tunisia and Turkey;

and

(3) be necessary for the implementation of the project (in view of its nature and its objectives).

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

Special rules may apply for entities from certain countries (e.g. *countries covered by [Council sanctions](#), entities covered by Commission Guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#)*<sup>16</sup>).

To prove eligibility, all applicants must register in the [Participant Register](#) — before the call deadline — and upload the necessary documents showing legal status and origin.

Linked third parties (i.e. affiliated entities<sup>17</sup> that participate in the project with funding, but do not become beneficiaries) are allowed.

*For UK applicants:* Please note that until the United Kingdom leaves the EU, nothing changes with regard to the participation in EU programmes. Please be aware however that the eligibility criteria must be complied with for the *entire* duration of our framework partnerships/grants. If the United Kingdom withdraws from the EU during that period (without an agreement ensuring eligibility for UK beneficiaries), you will cease to receive EU funding or be required to leave the project on the basis of the contractual provisions on termination.

### **Eligibility conditions for consortia**

1. The consortium coordinator has to be established in an EU Member State.
2. Proposals must be submitted by a consortium of applicants. One of these applicants must act as the consortium coordinator, while the others will act as partners (members of the consortium).
3. Applicants from at least two Member States bordering the targeted sea basin/marine region must be involved in each proposal.

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<sup>14</sup> 'Neighbouring waters' is to be understood in the geographical sense, e.g. countries with a common border of their territorial waters, contiguous zones or EEZ. They must be neighbouring waters to EU territory (i.e. not neighbouring waters to OCTs or other territories which are not part of the EU territory).

<sup>15</sup> This designation does not entail any recognition of Palestine as a state and is without prejudice to positions on the recognition of Palestine as a state.

<sup>16</sup> 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).  
Note that these guidelines extend to third parties receiving financial support within the meaning of Article 204 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

<sup>17</sup> See Article 187 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

### **Geographical scope**

The geographical area covered by the action is the Mediterranean. Proposals can focus on a part or sub-region of this sea basin (the Western Mediterranean Sea, the Ionian Sea and the Central Mediterranean Sea, the Aegean-Levantine Sea, the Adriatic Sea). For each area, at least two coastal EU Member States shall be involved.

Activities should normally relate to the EU waters, but may extend into neighbouring waters, if this is necessary for the implementation of the project (in view of its nature and its objectives).

### **Activities**

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

Projects should take into account the results of projects supported by other EU funding programmes, particularly those funded in the area of Maritime Spatial Planning.

The complementarities must be described in the project proposal (Part B of the Proposal Template).

Financial support to third parties is not allowed.

### **Duration**

For each of the individual topics, depending on the scope of the project, EASME expects projects to run for a duration of 24 months.

## 6. Award criteria

Admissible and eligible applications will be evaluated and ranked against of the following award criteria:

<b>Award Criteria</b>
<p><b>1. Relevance and added value (max. 5 points)</b></p> <p>The relevance and added value of the proposals will be assessed on the following basis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the added value that the project and proposed activities could bring to the implementation of MSP Directive in the selected sea basin/marine region;</li> <li>• the extent to which activities and expected results will enable to meet the objectives of the call defined in section 2.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Project methodology and implementation (max. 10 points)</b></p> <p>The methodology and added value of the proposals will be assessed on the following basis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the extent to which expected results, outputs and impacts (short- and long-term) of the project are clearly described and identified;</li> <li>• the extent to which it provides clear, measurable and realistic objectives, activities and results which are achievable within the duration of the project;</li> <li>• the extent to which appropriate qualitative and/or quantitative indicators have been provided to assess and monitor the expected results, outputs and impacts (short- and long-term) of the project;</li> <li>• the extent to which the description of planned activities is clear and the allocation of tasks and resources for the project is appropriate. This includes an appropriate balance of tasks and workload between partners to ensure an active commitment towards the successful implementation of the project;</li> <li>• whether the proposed budget is consistent with the actions proposed, sufficiently detailed and whether the project is cost-efficient and represents value for money.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Impact (sustainability and long-term impact) (max. 15 points)</b></p> <p>The impact of the proposals will be assessed on the following basis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the extent to which the results expected at the end of the project have a concrete contribution to the elaboration and adoption of Maritime Spatial Plans by 2021;</li> <li>• the extent to which the project results have the capacity to achieve a long-lasting impact on sharing data and information, necessary for maritime spatial plans;</li> <li>• the extent to which the project results might contribute to obtain that maritime plans are coherent and coordinated across the marine region</li> </ul>



concerned.

Maximum points: 30.

Individual thresholds (per award criterion): 3/5, 6/10, 8/15. Half points can be given. The EASME may call upon external experts in support of the evaluation of the proposals.

Overall threshold: 21 points.

Highest scored proposals that pass the individual threshold AND the overall threshold will be considered for funding — within the limits of the available indicative budget.

Other applications will be rejected.

The evaluation procedure is explained further in section 8.

## 7. Other conditions

### Financial capacity

All project participants must have stable and sufficient resources to successfully implement the project and contribute their share. Organisations participating in several projects must have sufficient capacity to implement several projects.

The financial capacity check will be done by us on the basis of the documents you will be requested to upload in the Participant Register (profit and loss account and balance sheet for the last two closed financial years, or for newly created entities possibly the business plan; for applicants requesting more than EUR 750 000: audit report produced by an approved external auditor, certifying the accounts for the last closed financial year).

The analysis will take into account elements such as dependency on EU funding and deficit and revenue in previous years.

It will normally be done for all applicants, 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 (low-value grant).

If needed, it may also be done for linked third parties.

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

- further information
- an enhanced financial responsibility regime, i.e. full joint and several responsibility for all applicants (*see below, section 9*)
- pre-financing paid in instalments
- (one or more) pre-financing guarantees (*see below, section 9*)

or

- propose no pre-financing
- reject your participation or, if needed, the entire application.

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

### Operational capacity

All participants must have the know-how and qualifications to successfully implement the project. This capacity will be assessed on the basis of the experience of the applicants.

Applicants will have to show this via the following information in the Proposal Template (Part B)<sup>18</sup>:

- For each applicant, a list of 2 or 3 activities (i.e. projects, publications, products, services and/or other achievements) relevant to the topic content and connected to the subject of the proposal
- Where appropriate, a description of the technical equipment, tools or facilities and patents at the disposal of the applicants.

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<sup>18</sup> By filling in the operational capacity fiche (Annex 2 to the Proposal Template (Part B))



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

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

### Exclusion

Applicants that are subject to an EU administrative sanction (i.e. exclusion or financial penalty decision)<sup>19</sup> or in one of the following situations<sup>20</sup> are excluded from receiving EU grants and will automatically be rejected:

- 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 misconduct<sup>21</sup> (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or natural 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 natural persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement or grant decision (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or natural 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 natural 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 natural persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant).

Applicants will also be rejected if it turns out during the grant award procedure that they<sup>22</sup>:

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

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<sup>19</sup> See Article 136(1) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

<sup>20</sup> See Articles 136(1) and 141(1) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

<sup>21</sup> 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.

<sup>22</sup> See Article 141(1) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

 **IMPORTANT**

- **Coordinator & consortium** — The coordinator represents the consortium towards the EU. You must have agreement of the other members and their mandate to act on their behalf and will have to confirm this in your application. Moreover you will have to declare that the information in the proposal is correct and complete and that all participants comply with the conditions for receiving funding (especially, eligibility, financial and operational capacity, no exclusion, etc.) and have agreed to participate. Before signing the grant agreement, each participant will have to confirm this again by signing a declaration of honour (DoH). Proposals without full support will be rejected.
- **Linked third parties** — Applicants may participate with linked third parties (i.e. affiliated entities) that receive funding. Linked third parties must comply with all the conditions set out in this call (just like applicants), but they do not sign the grant agreement and do not count towards the minimum eligibility criteria for consortium composition.
- **Subcontractors** — Subcontracting is allowed, but subject to strict limits (see *section 9*).
- **Registration** — All applicants must register in the [Participant Register](#) — before the call deadline — and upload the necessary documents showing legal status and origin. Linked third parties can register later (during grant preparation).
- **Completed/ongoing projects** — Applications for projects that have already been completed will be rejected; applications 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 proposal submission).
- **Balanced project budget** — Applicants 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*). You may be requested to lower the estimated costs in the detailed budget table, if they are ineligible or excessive.
- **No profit rule** — Grants may NOT give a profit (i.e. surplus of receipts + EU grant over costs). This will be checked by us at the end of the projects.
- **No double funding** — Any given action may receive only one grant from the EU budget. The project must therefore NOT receive any financial support under any other EU funding programme (including EU funding managed by authorities in EU Member States or other funding bodies, *e.g. Regional Funds, Agricultural Funds, EIB loans, etc.*). Cost items may NOT be declared twice under different EU actions.
- **Combination with EU operating grants** — Combination with EU operating grants is possible if the SGA project is remains outside the operating grant work programme and you make sure that cost items are clearly separated in your accounting and NOT declared twice.
- **Multiple applications** — Applicants may submit more than one application for *different* projects under the same call (and be awarded a grant for them).

Organisations may participate in several applications.

BUT: if are several applications for the *same/very similar* project, only one application will be accepted and evaluated; the applicants will be asked to withdraw one of them (or it will be rejected).

- **Language** — You can submit your proposal in any official EU language. However, for reasons of efficiency, we strongly advise you to use English. If you need the call document in another official EU language, please submit a request within 10 days after call publication (for the contact information, see *section 10*).
- Applications/applicants that do not comply with these criteria will be **rejected**.



## 8. Evaluation & award procedure

### ***Evaluation procedure***

This call is subject to the standard submission and evaluation procedure (one-stage submission + one-step evaluation).

Applications will be checked by EASME against the formal requirements (admissibility and eligibility) and evaluated by an evaluation committee against the operational capacity and award criteria and then listed in a ranked list according to their quality score.

Proposals that are outside the scope of the topics under which they were submitted will be marked '0' for the "Relevance and added value" criterion — with the comment 'out of scope of the call'; they will not be further evaluated.

At the end of the evaluation, all the proposals will be ranked, according to the scores obtained for each of the award criteria as indicated in section 6 above.

Unsuccessful applications will be informed about their evaluation result (*see timetable section 4*).

Successful applications will be invited for grant agreement preparation.



#### **IMPORTANT**

- **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.

## 9. Legal & financial set-up of the grants

If your project is selected for funding, you will be asked to sign a grant agreement with EASME.

This grant agreement will set the framework for your grant and its terms and conditions, in particular provisions on deliverables, reporting and payments.

### Starting date & project duration

The project **starting date and duration** will be fixed in your grant agreement (art. 3). Normally the starting date will be after grant agreement signature. Retroactive application can be granted exceptionally only for duly justified reasons; in such case, the earliest possible starting date is the proposal submission date.

**Project duration:** 24 (extensions may be granted only exceptionally, for duly justified reasons and following formal EASME agreement).

### Maximum grant amount, reimbursement of eligible costs & funding rate

All grant parameters (maximum grant amount, funding rate, total eligible costs etc.) will be fixed in your grant agreement (art. 5).

**Project budget:** See section 3 above. The grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested.

The grant will be a reimbursement of actual costs grant. This means that it will reimburse **ONLY** certain types of costs (eligible costs) and **ONLY** those costs you *actually* incurred for your project (NOT the *budgeted* costs).

The costs will be reimbursed at the funding rate fixed in the grant agreement (maximum 80%).

EU grants may NOT produce a profit. If there is a profit (i.e. surplus of receipts + EU grant over costs), we will deduct it from your final grant amount.

The final grant amount you will receive will therefore depend on a variety of criteria (*actual costs incurred and project income; eligibility; compliance with all the rules under the grant agreement, etc.*).

### Cost eligibility rules

For the **cost eligibility rules**, see the model grant agreement (art. 6) and the Guide for applicants.

Specific cost eligibility rules for this call:

- 7% fixed flat-rate for indirect costs
- depreciation costs for equipment
- project activities must take place in one of the eligible countries
- financial support to third parties is not allowed
- subcontracting of action tasks is subject to special rules and must be approved by EASME (either as part of your proposal or in a periodic/final report)
- in-kind contributions against payment are allowed (in-kind contributions for free are not prohibited, but they are cost-neutral, i.e. cannot be declared as cost and will not be counted as receipts)
- VAT — please note that there are new rules in place since 2013 for public entities (VAT paid by beneficiaries that are public bodies acting as public authority is NOT eligible)
- costs for the introductory meeting (*see section 11*) will be eligible as travel costs (2 persons, return ticket to Brussels, accommodation for one night)

### Reporting & payment arrangements

The **reporting and payment** arrangements will be fixed in the grant agreement (art. 15 and 16).

After grant signature, EASME will provide you with a float to start working on the project (pre-financing of 40% of the maximum grant amount).

There will be 1 interim payment linked to a periodic report. The interim payment of maximum 50 % of the grant amount will be made within 90 days of receipt and approval by the EASME of an interim report on the project implementation including a financial statement and payment claim.

The total amount of pre-financing and interim payment will not exceed 90% of the grant amount.

At the end of the project, you will be invited to submit a report and EASME will calculate your final grant amount. If the total of earlier payments is higher than the final grant amount, EASME will ask you (your coordinator) to pay back the difference (recovery).

### Deliverables

Standard **deliverables** will be listed the grant agreement (art. 14). The project-specific deliverables will be listed in Annex 1.

In addition, you will be expected to submit several progress reports not linked to payments (also considered as deliverables):

- 2 progress reports at month 6 (covering months 1 to 6) and month 18 (covering months 13 to 18)

#### Special provisions

**IPR rules:** see model grant agreement (art. 19)

**Promotion & visibility of EU funding:** see model grant agreement (art. 22)

#### Cost rejection, grant reduction, recovery, suspension & termination

The grant agreement (chapter 6) provides for the measures EASME may take in case of **breach of contract** (and other violations of law).

#### Liability regime for recoveries

The liability regime for recoveries will be set out in your grant agreement (art. 28), i.e. either:

- limited joint and several liability with individual ceilings — each beneficiary up to *its* 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 its debt.

## **10. How to submit an application?**

All applications must be submitted electronically via the Participant Portal Electronic Submission System (accessible via the Call Topic page in the [Funding Opportunities](#) section). Paper submissions are no longer possible.

The **submission process** is explained in the [Participant Portal Online Manual](#) (together with detailed instructions for the IT tool).

Mandatory **annexes & supporting documents** (directly available in the Submission System) for this call:

- Operational capacity fiche (annex 1 to the Proposal Template (Part B))
- EMFF Project Indicators table (annex 2 to the Proposal Template (Part B))

### **Other annexes & supporting documents**

- Applicants are encouraged to take into account the principles of [EASME Environmental Policy Charter](#).
- A detailed budget table is available on the Call page. You are not required to use this template to prepare your proposal, nor upload it with your application, but you will be requested to provide it if you are selected for funding.
- For applicants specified in section 5.c), an endorsement letter signed by the relevant MSP competent authority must be submitted, if you are selected for

funding; You are therefore not required to upload it with your application. The letters will be requested from successful applicants only.

## Contact

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

Non-IT related questions should be sent to the following email address: [EASME-EMFF-calls@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EASME-EMFF-calls@ec.europa.eu).

Please indicate clearly the reference of the call for proposals and the topic to which your question relates to in the subject line (*see call document cover page*).

### IMPORTANT

- **Consult** the Participant Portal Call Topic page regularly. We will use it to publish updates and additional information on the call.
- **Don't wait** until the end.

Questions received later than 7 days before the call deadline cannot be answered.

We strongly advise you to complete your proposal sufficiently in advance of the deadline, to avoid any last minute technical problems. Any problems due to last minute submissions (*e.g. congestion, etc.*) will be at your risk. The call deadline will NOT be extended.

- Before submitting a proposal, all applicants must be **registered** in the [Participant Register](#) and obtain a participant identification code (PIC) (one for each applicant).
- By submitting their proposal, all applicants **accept**:
  - the terms and conditions of this call (as described in this call document and the documents it refers to)
  - to use the electronic exchange system in accordance with the [Participant Portal Terms & Conditions](#).
- After the call deadline, the proposal is locked and can no longer be changed.
- You may be contacted later on if there is a need to **clarify** certain aspects of your **proposal** or for the correction of clerical mistakes.
- You may be asked to submit **additional documents** later on (*e.g. for the legal entity validation, LEAR appointment and financial capacity check*).
- We intend to organise an **introductory meeting** for successful applicants to discuss project management, administrative and financial aspects and reporting obligations. Participation by the coordinator (persons in charge of project coordination and financial matters) will be mandatory.
- We are committed to **transparency**. Each year, information about EU grants awarded is published on the [Europa website](#). This includes:
  - the beneficiaries' names
  - the beneficiaries' addresses
  - the purpose for which the grant was awarded

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

- **Data privacy** — The submission of an application under this call involves the collection, use and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CV). This data will be processed in accordance with Regulation No 45/2001. It will be processed solely for the purpose of evaluating your proposal (and subsequent management of your grant and, if needed, programme monitoring, evaluation and communication). Details are available in the [Participant Portal Privacy Statement](#).