



Innovation and Networks Executive Agency

MULTI-SECTORIAL CALL FOR PROPOSALS UNDER THE CONNECTING EUROPE FACILITY ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2016

CEF-Synergy-2016-1

1. SUBJECT

In the context of the Connecting Europe Facility¹ and on the basis of the annual work programme for 2016², a multi-sectorial call for proposals is launched for the allocation of financial assistance to projects of common interest (PCIs) in the fields of energy and transport under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).

2. OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

Proposals submitted under this call shall pursue the general and specific objectives set out in the work programme. The general objective is to support actions contributing to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, in line with the Europe 2020 strategy, as well as enabling the Union to achieve its sustainable development targets through the creation of synergies between the transport and energy sectors, in line with the infrastructure components and requirements as set out in the TEN-T Guidelines (including all maps)³ and TEN-E Guidelines⁴.

Support will be provided to actions contributing to the implementation of at least one project of common interest (PCI) in each of the transport and energy sectors. Such synergy actions should be deployed on the Comprehensive and Core Network for transport with a priority to be given to actions contributing to the implementation of Core Network Corridors, while complying with the definition of PCIs under the energy sector, as well as strategic trans-European energy infrastructure priority corridors and areas, in line with the TEN-E Guidelines.

Synergy actions shall contribute to achieving the following specific objectives:

¹ Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, amending Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulations (EC) No 680/2007 and (EC) No 67/2010, OJ L 348 of 20.12.2013, p.129

² Commission Implementing Decision C(2016) 1778 of 31 March 2016 on the adoption of the annual work programme for 2016 for a multi-sectorial call for proposals under the Connecting Europe Facility

³ Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network and repealing Decision No 661/2010/EU, OJ L 348 of 20.12.2013, p.1.

⁴ Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2013 on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure (OJ L 115, 25.4.2013, p.39).

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i) Transport sector

Ensuring sustainable and efficient transport systems in the long run, with a view to preparing for expected future transport flows, as well as enabling all modes of transport to be decarbonised through supporting a transition to innovative low-carbon and energy-efficient transport technologies and systems, while optimising safety.

ii) Energy sector

Increasing competitiveness by promoting the further integration of the internal energy market and the interoperability of electricity and gas networks across borders; support projects promoting the interconnection of networks; removing internal constraints; decreasing energy isolation; increasing the interconnectivity in electricity and achieving price convergence between the energy markets.

The proposed actions shall contribute to projects exploiting existing and future synergies between the TEN-T and TEN-E networks, in areas such as:

- smart energy grids,
- joint use of facilities for compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG) for energy purposes and for the use of alternative fuels in mobility,
- electricity transmission systems and their components having the potential to facilitate the integration of electromobility,
- electricity storage and gas storage facilities connecting to high-voltage electricity transmission lines or to high-pressure gas transmission pipelines, respectively, having the potential to contribute to the supply of energy for use in transport, including the conversion to alternative fuels,
- intelligent transport systems combined with demand management systems on an electricity smart grid,
- joint rights of way of transport and energy facilities or infrastructure coupling while ensuring a high-level of cybersecurity where appropriate,
- preparation of joint permitting procedures, including environmental impact assessments, for transport and energy combined facilities,
- actions creating benefits in terms of the environmental effects of energy and transport linked to infrastructure facilities,
- systems to recover pressure-let-down energy at natural gas metering and regulating stations for transport uses,
- financial engineering studies, including development of cost benefit analyses taking into account synergies,
- any combination of the above areas particularly with a view of elaborating innovative synergies between transport and energy.

A proposal submitted under this call for proposals must address studies as defined in Article 2(6) of the CEF Regulation. Works proposals will not be funded under this call.

Actions to be selected will concern studies with or without pilot deployment.

Studies without pilot deployment:

These could be feasibility studies, environmental studies, permitting studies, studies for joint rights of way as well as financial engineering studies and cost-benefit analyses.

In terms of financial engineering studies, examples could include actions that aim at constituting a viable partnership and consortia, preparation of documents such as business plans which allow a further evaluation by a bank, such as the European Investment Bank. In this respect, attention should be given to the proper use of the market-sided approach with its drive to move towards viability in order to prepare a possible future roll-out of the innovative idea with private investments (new financial instruments under CEF, EFSI, etc.) at the end of the study with integrated deployment (real-life trial).

Studies with pilot deployment:

Studies may include pilot activities that will aim:

- to develop, improve or adapt a new technology or an innovative solution and implement it in order to test its feasibility and suitability as well as its added value before deploying it on a larger scale; and/or
- to deploy an existing technology, infrastructure or service (i.e. already in use elsewhere but new to a particular sector, system or geographical area) in order to gain experience and/or create market conditions for deployment on a larger scale.

Pilot activities of such studies may include the deployment of a certain type of infrastructure or technology but on a limited scale and at a reasonable price and with the objective of testing and validating the viability of the innovative actions proposed for future scale up and roll out. Pilot activities of a study should be of an experimental nature and designed to test the feasibility of an innovative action and its usefulness for future large scale implementation. They should not be associated with research activities that are not covered by this call.

Studies with pilot deployment should aim at supporting the initial deployment phases of actions combining transport and energy. This should relate, among others, to synergies for the deployment of alternative fuels. Such studies should incorporate a real-life trial (rather than just a demonstration) aiming at: (1) the optimisation of the technology to bring unit costs down (technology validation), and (2) the optimisation of the business-client relation to better understand the client's needs and address it appropriately. At the end of the trial, as part of the study, an analysis must be made, showing how to scale-up the trial to mass application, in the form of a business plan. This must be presented as a deliverable of the study. In fact, on the basis of the resulting optimal solution, the roll-out of the innovation onto, at least, a significant part of a TEN-T Core Network Corridor in at least 2 EU Member States should be elaborated, if relevant.

Priority will be given to studies with pilot deployment.

3. RESULTS EXPECTED FROM THE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

As indicated in section 3 of the work programme, it is expected that the financial assistance contributes to the realisation of the trans-European transport and energy networks, while promoting growth and job creation, in line with Europe 2020 strategy.

It is also expected that the granting of support on the basis of this programme will contribute to exploit the synergies between TEN-T and TEN-E in particular in the areas described in section 2 above.

4. BUDGET

The indicative amount to be allocated on the basis of this call for proposals to contribute to the realisation of the trans-European transport and energy networks is €40 million.

5. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Date of publication of call for proposals	28 September 2016
Deadline for the submission of proposals	13 December 2016 (17:00 Brussels local time)
Evaluation of proposals	December 2016 – March 2017
Consultation of CEF Coordination Committee; Information of European Parliament	April 2017
Adoption of Selection Decision	April 2017
Preparation and signature of individual grant Agreements	From May 2017

6. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A proposal will not be evaluated if at least one of the following situations occurs:

- It is not submitted electronically in the TENtec Information System eSubmission module⁵. ***In this respect, proposals or part(s) of proposals submitted by email or in hard copy shall not be admissible.***
- It is submitted after the deadline for submission of proposals (see sections 5 'Indicative Timetable' and 14.2 'Submission of proposals')
- The proposal is incomplete, i.e. any form A, B, C or D is missing.
- The proposal is not duly signed by the applicant(s). Advanced electronic signatures based on a qualified certificate as defined by Regulation 910/2014⁶ on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market (eIDAS Regulation) and

⁵ TENtec eSubmission module is part of the TENtec Information System used to manage CEF actions during their entire lifecycle and enables the electronic submission of proposals under the CEF calls. TENtec eSubmission module is accessible at: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/tentec/grant/esubmission/>.

⁶ OJ L 257, 28.8.2014, p. 73 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R0910&from=EN>)

which comply with the signature formats specified in Commission Implementing Decision 2015/1506⁷ shall be accepted.

6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

6.1 Eligible applicants

Pursuant to Article 9 of the CEF Regulation, only those proposals submitted by one of the following types of applicants are eligible:

- One or more Member States;
- With the agreement of the Member States concerned, international organisations, joint undertakings, or public or private undertakings or bodies established in Member States.

Proposals may be submitted by entities which do not have legal personality under the applicable national law, provided that their representatives have the capacity to assume legal obligations on their behalf and offer a guarantee for the protection of the Union's financial interests equivalent to that offered by legal persons.

Project proposals submitted by natural persons are not eligible.

Third countries and entities established in third countries may participate in actions contributing to projects of common interest where necessary in order to achieve the objectives of a given project of common interest. They may not receive financial assistance except where it is indispensable to the achievement of the objectives of a given project of common interest.

In such cases and pursuant to Article 8(1) of the TEN-T Guidelines, applications may be presented by neighbouring countries or entities established in neighbouring countries. Such applications must contain the agreement of the Member State concerned by the proposed Action and a declaration on why the participation of the applicant is indispensable. Applicants that are entities established in a neighbouring country⁸ must also provide proof of the support of the neighbouring country authorities concerned.

Any applicant that cannot provide the agreement of the EU Member State concerned will not be eligible.

Applicants may designate affiliated entities within the meaning of Article 122(2)(b) of the Financial Regulation⁹, for the purpose of supporting the implementation of the action submitted for funding. Such affiliated entities must comply with the eligibility criteria for applicants.

For multi-applicant proposals a coordinating applicant must be designated.

⁷ OJ L 235, 9.9.2015, p. 37 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32015D1506&from=EN>)

⁸ The eligibility criteria as specified in this call for proposals are complemented by those specified in Commission notice Nr. 2013/C 205/05 (OJEU C 205 of 19.07.2013, pp.9-11) in the applicable cases as described in the Commission notice.

⁹ Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the European Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002.

6.2 Exclusion criteria

In line with Articles 106 to 108 and 131 of the Financial Regulation and Article 141 of the Rules of Application¹⁰, applicants will be excluded from participating in the call for proposals procedure if they are in any of the following situations:

- i. they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- ii. they or persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of a Member State which has the force of res judicata;
- iii. they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify including by decisions of the EIB and international organisations;
- iv. they are not in compliance with their obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- v. they or persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control over them have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering or any other illegal activity, where such illegal activity is detrimental to the European Union's financial interests;
- vi. they are subject to a financial or administrative penalty referred to in Article 109(1) of the Financial Regulation.

The cases referred to in point (v) above cover:

- i. cases of fraud as referred to in Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the EU financial interests established by the Council Act of 26 July 1995;
- ii. cases of corruption as referred to in Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Union or officials of Member States of the European Union, established by the Council Act of 26 May 1997;
- iii. cases of participation in a criminal organisation, as defined in Article 2(1) of Joint Action 98/733/JHA of the Council;
- iv. cases of money laundering as defined in Article 1 of Council Directive 91/308/EEC.

Applicants will not be granted financial assistance if, in the course of the grant award procedure:

- i. they are subject to a conflict of interests;
- ii. they are guilty of misrepresenting the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the grant award procedure or have failed to supply that information;

¹⁰ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 of 29 October 2012, OJ L 362, 31.12.2012, p. 1.

- iii. find themselves in one of the situations of exclusion, referred to above.

The same exclusion criteria apply to affiliated entities. Applicants and their affiliated entities, if applicable, must certify that they are not in one of the situations listed above.

6.3 Eligible actions

In line with Article 7(5) of the CEF Regulation, only actions contributing to projects of common interest eligible under both the TEN-T Guidelines and TEN-E Guidelines may receive EU financial assistance under this call as referred to in Article 17(7) of the CEF Regulation.

Proposals must comply with the following conditions:

- In line with Article 7(2) of the CEF Regulation and Article 7 of the TEN-T Guidelines, actions shall:
 - a. contribute to the objectives falling within at least two of the four categories set out in Article 4 of the TEN-T Guidelines and
 - b. comply with Chapter II "Comprehensive Network" of the TEN-T Guidelines and, if it concerns the Core Network, with Chapter III of the TEN-T Guidelines.
- In line with Article 7 (3) of the CEF Regulation and Article 3 of the TEN-E Guidelines, actions shall:
 - a. contribute to projects of common interest as identified in the Union list of PCI¹¹ and,
 - b. as per Article 14(1) of the TEN-E Guidelines, actions must contribute to PCI falling under the categories set out in Annex II (1) and (2) of the TEN-E Guidelines to be eligible for EU financial assistance in the form of grants for studies.
- Components and costs of such synergy action must be clearly specified per sector in the application, according to Article 7(5) of the CEF Regulation.

In line with Article 7(2) of the CEF Regulation, actions involving a cross-border section or a part of such a section shall be eligible to receive EU financial assistance only if there is a written agreement between the Member States concerned or between the Member States and third countries concerned relating to the completion of the cross-border section.

7. SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection criteria are detailed in section 6 of the work programme. The operational and financial capacity of applicants will be assessed as specified below.

The requirement to demonstrate operational and financial capacity also applies to affiliated entities only where, according to the proposal, the affiliated entity(ies) will be the only one(s) implementing the proposed Action.

The need to demonstrate financial and operational capacity does not apply to applicants which are:

¹¹ Commission Delegated Regulation No 2016/89 of 18 November 2015.

- a Member State,
- a third country,
- a public sector body established in a Member State (i.e. regional or local authority, body governed by public law or association formed by one or several such authorities or one or several such bodies governed by public law, in particular Joint Undertaking in line with eligibility criteria established under Article 187 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (ex. Article 171 TCE)),
- international organisation¹²,
- a European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG) established in line with Council Regulation (EEC) N° 2137/85 of 25 July 1985 and 100% owned by public bodies, or
- transmission system operators certified following the procedures laid down in Articles 10 or 11 of Directive 2009/72/EC or Articles 10 or 11 of Directive 2009/73/EC.

7.1 Financial capacity

The applicants must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out and to participate in its funding.

Together with the application, the applicants shall provide their financial statements certified by an external auditor for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed.

If an applicant has been operating for less than one financial year, the financial statements must be replaced by a letter of support obtained from a third party (e.g. the applicant's parent company) or by another applicant of the proposed Action, accompanied by the financial statements of the party providing the support.

7.2 Operational capacity

The applicant(s) must have the operational and technical capacity to complete the action for which the grant is sought and must provide appropriate documents attesting to that capacity.

Information submitted by applicants who benefited from CEF support since 2014 and TEN-T support as from 2004 may be taken into account in the evaluation of these applicants' operational capacity.

8. AWARD CRITERIA

Only admissible proposals compliant with the eligibility criteria will be evaluated against the award criteria. The award criteria are specified in section 7 of the work programme.

For the purpose of the evaluation, these criteria will be grouped in the following four blocks and specified as follows:

¹² According to article 43 (2) of the Rules of Application, international organisations are:
 (a) international public sector organisations set up by intergovernmental agreements, and specialised agencies set up by such organisations;
 (b) the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC);
 (c) the International Federation of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies;
 (d) other non-profit organisations assimilated to international organisations by a Commission decision.

- **Relevance:** This criterion refers to the contribution of the proposed Action to the TEN-T and TEN-E priorities as laid out in the TEN-T and TEN-E Guidelines, the specific general and sectorial objectives for transport and energy as laid down in Articles 3 and 4 of the CEF Regulation, notably by appropriately exploiting synergies across the sectors, as well as objectives described in the work programme and the call. The EU added value of the proposed Action will be considered in light of the definition included in Article 3(d) of the TEN-T Guidelines. In that respect, the highest EU added value is demonstrated when addressing major missing cross-border links, alleviating major bottlenecks and, where applicable, multimodal integration and interoperability. This criterion should also refer to the extent of the cross-border dimension of the action, taking into consideration the area, the number of Member States positively impacted by the action (as seen in relation to the geographical location of the action) and the level of cooperation between the involved countries.
- **Maturity:** This criterion refers to the state of preparation of the proposed Action and the readiness to start the implementation of the proposed activities. This will be determined by the degree of completion of preparatory steps and conditions required for the start of the proposed Action and the low uncertainty/risks about its commencement within 18 months after the call deadline. The readiness of the technology for deployment will be considered under this criterion, where appropriate. Furthermore, the appropriateness of the proposed Action as the next step in the development of the project will also be assessed under this criterion.
- **Impact:**
 - *Impact of the Action:* This criterion refers to the nature, degree and effect of the (existing and future) synergies of the action. In this respect, the impact of the proposed activities to enable costs or results to be optimised through the pooling of financial, technical or human resources will be evaluated. Where pilot deployment is part of the proposal, impact on the likelihood to reach commercial viability and future roll-out onto at least part of the TEN-T network on a wider level will be evaluated. If relevant, the innovative processes to improve the business-model and the business-client relationship will also be considered under this criterion. Where applicable, the use of a study as a decision-making tool for future steps of the project development will be considered.
 - *Impact of the CEF funding:* The impact of the EU support on public and private investment and how CEF funding will ensure or accelerate the implementation of the proposed Action (when applicable) will also be assessed.
- **Quality:** This criterion refers to the soundness of the implementation plan proposed in terms of coherence between the proposed Action's objectives and planned activities/resources and objectives, capacity to be completed within the proposed timeline, project management, quality management and risk management processes; as well as plans for monitoring and dissemination. Additionally, the completeness and clarity of the information provided will be taken into account.

Relevant information for assessing the above blocks of award criteria must be clearly described in the application form. Each block of award criteria will be given a score between 0 and 5 points. A proposal must obtain at least 3 points for each block of award criteria to be recommended for funding.

9. FINAL SELECTION PROCESS

During the final selection process, the Commission will in particular take into account the following aspects, as appropriate:

- complementarity of the proposed Action with other EU funded projects, in view of optimising the impact of investments already made in the region/country/global project,
- comparative EU added value (high, medium, low) of the proposed Action in relation to other proposed Actions,
- potential synergies with other EU funding programmes, notably Horizon 2020, and
- budgetary constraints.

In exceptional and duly justified cases, and on the basis of the above-mentioned aspects, the Commission may recommend for funding a proposal that has obtained less than 3 points in one or more blocks of award criteria. In the same way, it may decide to not recommend for funding a proposal that has obtained at least 3 points for each block of award criteria.

10. COMPLIANCE WITH EU LAW

In accordance with Article 23 of the CEF Regulation, only actions in conformity with EU law and which are in line with the relevant EU policies shall be financed, in particular those relating to interoperability, competition, the protection of the environment, state aid and public procurement.

11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

11.1 General principles

11.1.1 Other sources of financing

Pursuant to Article 129 of the Financial Regulation, no EU financial aid shall be awarded to actions receiving funds from other sources of EU financing. In no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice by the EU budget.

In that respect any actions or part thereof that receive or have received EU funding under other EU Programmes (i.e. TEN-E, TEN-T, Marco Polo II, EEPR, EIPA, IPA, ESIF, FP7, Horizon 2020, etc.) will not be funded under this call.

11.1.2 Non-profit principle

In accordance with Article 125 of the Financial Regulation, grants shall not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the action. Where a profit is made, the Commission shall be entitled to recover the percentage of the profit corresponding to the EU contribution to the eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiary to carry out the proposed Action.¹³

¹³ In the meaning of Article 125 of the Financial Regulation, profit shall be defined as a surplus of the receipts over the eligible costs incurred by the beneficiary, when the request is made for payment of the balance.

11.1.3 Non-retroactivity

Pursuant to Article 130 of the Financial Regulation, no grants may be awarded retrospectively for actions already completed. A grant may be awarded for an action which has already begun provided that the applicant(s) can demonstrate the need for starting the action prior to the signature of the grant agreement.

11.2 Funding form

Grants to be awarded further to this call for proposals will take the form of reimbursement of a specified proportion of eligible costs actually incurred.

11.2.1 Funding rates

In line with Articles 10.2, 10.3 and 10.5 of the CEF Regulation, the amount of EU financial assistance in the form of grants for studies shall not exceed 60% of the eligible costs.

To achieve the desired European dimension, proposals requesting CEF contribution of at least €600,000 (total eligible costs of €1,000,000) are expected. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposal requesting other amounts considered by the applicants as appropriate to the contents of their proposal.

The Commission reserves the right to award a grant of less than the amount requested by the applicant(s).

11.2.2 Eligible costs

Eligible costs are costs actually incurred by the beneficiary of a grant which meet all the criteria laid down in Article 126(2) of the Financial Regulation. The same criteria apply to the costs incurred by affiliated entities and implementing bodies designated by the beneficiary.

The applicants' attention is drawn to points (3) to (8) of Article 8 of the CEF Regulation concerning the eligibility of costs. The full costs of purchase of equipment and infrastructure which are treated as capital expenditure are eligible under this call.

For the energy part of the proposed Action, only costs related to energy infrastructure categories set out in Annex II (1) and (2) of the TEN-E Guidelines will be considered as eligible.

Costs may be eligible at the earliest from the date on which an application is submitted and up to the date of completion of the Action, which should be 31 December 2019 at the latest.

Indirect costs, i.e. costs which are not identifiable as direct cost, but which have nevertheless been incurred in connection with the implementation of the action, are not eligible.

In line with the first subparagraph of Article 8(7) of the CEF Regulation and Article 126(3)(c) of the Financial Regulation, VAT paid by beneficiaries of grants awarded following this call for proposals is eligible except:

- deductible VAT (VAT paid by the beneficiary for the implementation of taxed activities or exempt activities with right of deduction);
- VAT paid for the implementation of activities engaged in as a public authority by the beneficiary where it is a Member State, regional or local government authority of a Member State or another body governed by public law of a Member State. Considering that beneficiaries that are public bodies of Member States are expected to carry out activities as public authorities (to exercise prerogatives of public powers), VAT paid by beneficiaries that are public bodies established in Member States is, in principle, ineligible.

Detailed information on eligible and ineligible costs is included in the model grant agreement, which is available on the call webpage.

11.2.3 Payment arrangements

A single pre-financing payment corresponding to 40% of the maximum grant amount awarded will be made within 30 days after the last party signs the grant agreement. No interim payment will be made.

In the event that the beneficiary's financial capacity is not satisfactory, the payment of pre-financing may be subject to the receipt of a financial guarantee for up to the same amount as the pre-financing payment to be made.

The financial guarantee, in euro, shall be provided by an approved bank or financial institution established in one of the EU Member States. When the beneficiary is established in a third country, INEA may agree that a bank or financial institution established in that third country may provide the guarantee if it is considered that the bank or financial institution offers equivalent security and characteristics as those offered by a bank or financial institution established in a Member State. Amounts blocked in bank accounts shall not be accepted as financial guarantees.

The guarantee may be replaced by a joint or several guarantees provided by third parties or by a joint guarantee of the beneficiaries that are parties to the same grant agreement. The guarantee will be released as the pre-financing is cleared against the balance payment(s) made, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the grant agreement.

In the event that the beneficiary's financial capacity is not satisfactory, a limited joint and several financial liability for recoveries may be applied in accordance with the terms and conditions of the model grant agreement.

The final amount of the grant to be paid to the beneficiary is established after completion of the action, upon approval of the request for payment including, where applicable, the supporting documents as described in the model grant agreement.

For multi-beneficiary actions, a coordinator must be designated. The coordinator will be the contact point for INEA and will have, inter alia, the responsibility for receiving the payment(s) and coordinating the reporting exercise(s). It is strongly recommended that beneficiaries sign an internal cooperation agreement regarding their operation and coordination, including all internal aspects related to the management of the beneficiaries and the implementation of the proposed

Action. Such internal cooperation agreements shall not undermine, under any circumstances, the terms and conditions of the model grant agreement.

12. MODEL GRANT AGREEMENT

Applicant(s) will be invited to sign the grant agreement if their proposal is selected for funding. The standard model grant agreement is not negotiable and shall be signed in English.

Submitting an application implies the acceptance of the terms and conditions of the model grant agreement, available on the call page. Applicants are invited to carefully read this document and its annexes before submitting an application.

13. PROCEDURE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

All practical information on this call for proposals and the evaluation process is detailed in the Guide for Applicants. It is available, together with the application forms, model grant agreement, the annual work programme, the CEF Regulation, the TEN-T Guidelines and TEN-E Guidelines, as well as other relevant documents, on the call page, accessible via the following link: <https://ec.europa.eu/inea/en/connecting-europe-facility/2016-cef-synergy-call>

Applicants are requested to carefully read all call-related documents, including the instructions given in the Guide for Applicants and other guidance documents and information, in particular the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).

13.1 Application forms

Proposals must be submitted using the application forms provided on the call page at the link above.

Proposals must be signed by the applicant(s) or his duly authorized representative and must be perfectly legible so that there can be no doubt as to words and figures. Advanced electronic signatures based on a qualified certificate as defined by Regulation 910/2014¹⁴ on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market (eIDAS Regulation) and which comply with the signature formats specified in Commission Implementing Decision 2015/1506¹⁵ shall be accepted.

The applicant(s) specified in the application form part A will automatically be considered as the beneficiary(ies) if the proposal is selected for funding. If applicants designate affiliated entities within the meaning of Article 122 of the Financial Regulation¹⁶ to support the implementation of the submitted action, the information on these affiliated entities must be encoded in the application form part A, and any relevant supporting documents must be provided.

13.2 Submission of proposals

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their applications in English.

¹⁴ OJ L 257, 28.8.2014, p. 73 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R0910&from=EN>)

¹⁵ OJ L 235, 9.9.2015, p. 37 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32015D1506&from=EN>)

¹⁶ Regulation (EU, EURATOM) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2013 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the European Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002, OJ L 298 of 26.10.2012, p.1

Proposals must be submitted electronically using the TENtec eSubmission module at the following link: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/tentec/grant/esubmission/>.

The electronic submission of proposals must be completed at the latest on **13 December 2016 at 17:00.00 Brussels time** (see also section 6 '*Admissibility requirements*').

Application form part A is automatically generated by the TENtec eSubmission module. Application forms parts B, C and D must be downloaded from the call page at the link above and have to be duly filled in. Once final they must be uploaded into the TENtec eSubmission module. The same applies to any annexes or supporting documents accompanying the proposal. Application form part D may not exceed 40 pages.

Any parts of the application form that require signatures of applicants or relevant authorities must be scanned and uploaded into the TENtec eSubmission module. Advanced electronic signatures based on a qualified certificate as defined by Regulation 910/2014¹⁷ on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market (eIDAS Regulation) and which comply with the signature formats specified in Commission Implementing Decision 2015/1506¹⁸ shall be accepted.

Applicants must be able to provide the original documents and send them to the Commission/ Agency services upon request.

14. COMMUNICATION ON THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Further information or clarifications concerning this call for proposals will be published on the call page at the following link: <https://ec.europa.eu/inea/en/connecting-europe-facility/2016-cef-synergy-call>

Applicants are invited to regularly consult the call page and the INEA website/Twitter feed (@inea_eu) until the deadline for submission of proposals.

Any additional specific questions related to this call may be addressed to the email of the call helpdesk: INEA-CEF-SYNERGY-CALLS@ec.europa.eu

The answers to questions submitted will be published in the FAQ list on the call website, in order to ensure equal treatment of all potential applicants. Questions related to the call should be submitted at the latest by 30 November 2016 to ensure sufficient time for the last update of the FAQs by 6 December 2016.

Questions which are specific to a particular proposal and where the answer would provide a comparative advantage to the applicant will not be answered.

However, individual technical questions related to TENtec eSubmission module will be treated until the call deadline.

¹⁷ OJ L 257, 28.8.2014, p. 73 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R0910&from=EN>)

¹⁸ OJ L 235, 9.9.2015, p. 37 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32015D1506&from=EN>)

15. PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA

An applicant's reply to the grant application involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CV), which will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. Unless indicated otherwise, applicant's replies to the questions in the application form and any personal data requested are required to assess an applicant's grant application in accordance with the specifications of the call for proposals and will be processed solely for that purpose by INEA as data controller for this purpose. An applicant may, upon request, have his/her personal data sent to him/her and rectify any inaccurate or incomplete particulars. Should an applicant have any queries concerning the processing of his/her personal data, please address them to the entity acting as data controller within INEA.

The data subjects have the right of recourse at any time to INEA's Data Protection Officer (INEA-DPO@ec.europa.eu) or in case of conflict with the Controller or data protection officer concerning the processing of his/her personal data, an applicant has the right to submit a complaint at any time directly to the European Data Protection Supervisor (www.edps.europa.eu). Details concerning the processing of an applicant's personal data are available in the privacy statement on the call page:

Personal data included in the application (name, title, organisation, contact information) may be shared with the concerned Member States' representatives in the CEF Coordination Committee on a need to know basis in view of their role in the approval of proposals selected for funding as well as responsibilities under the CEF Regulation.

An applicant personal data (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form, registration number and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered by the Accounting Officer of the Commission in the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) established by the Commission pursuant to Article 108(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, as amended by Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2015/1929 (OJ L 286, 30.10.2015, p. 1).

For more information on EDES (including the grounds for being registered in the database), please see http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm , and the privacy statement at http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/explained/management/protecting/privacy_statement_edes_en.pdf

Applicants are informed that, to ensure that the EU's financial interests are protected, their personal data may be communicated to internal audit services, the European Commission, the European Court of Auditors, the body specialising in financial irregularities (Financial Irregularities Panel) or the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF).

The data of applicants in any of the situations referred to in Articles 106(1), 107 and 109(2)(a) of the Financial Regulation may be included in a central exclusion database and communicated to designated persons in the Commission, the other institutions, agencies, authorities and bodies

referred to in Article 108(1) and (2) of the Financial Regulation. This also applies to those with powers of representation, decision-making power or powers of control in respect of such applicants. Following a request to the Commission's Accounting Officer, anyone registered in the database is entitled to be informed of the data recorded about them.

16. IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

In preparing an application, please ensure that all of the following documents, which are available on the call page, are referred to:

- Annual work programme 2016
- CEF Regulation
- TEN-T Guidelines
- TEN-E Guidelines
- PCI list for energy (November 2015)
- Application form (parts A, B, C and D)
- Guide for Applicants
- FAQs published on the call page
- Application checklist
- Model grant agreement
- EU Financial Regulation and Rules of application