



# Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)

Invitation to submit a proposal

**CEF 2 Transport – Technical Assistance – Cohesion Envelope**

CEF-T-2021-TACOENEA-MS-LS

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## EUROPEAN CLIMATE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT EXECUTIVE AGENCY (CINEA)

CINEA.B.B1 - CEF Transport: Northern Europe, Austria + MoS and ERTMS

### Invitation to submit a proposal

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## 0. Introduction

This is an invitation to submit proposals for EU **action grants** in the field of Transport under the **Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)**.

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

- Regulation 2018/1046 ([EU Financial Regulation](#))
- the basic act (CEF Regulation [2021/1153](#)<sup>1</sup>).

The invitation is launched in accordance with the 2021-2023 Work Programme<sup>2</sup> and will be managed by the **European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA)** ('Agency').

It concerns the direct award to the Member States for the support in the form of lump sums to MS for CEF related activities, participation of MS in the RFC and CNC, and on TEN-Tec for updating and reporting via automated data exchange with TENtec.

The call covers the following **topic**:

- **CEF-T-2021-TACOENEA-MS-LS - Technical Assistance to Member State – Cohesion Envelope**

Each project application under the call must address only one of these topics. Applicants wishing to apply for more than one topic, must submit a separate proposal under each topic.

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)

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/1153 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2021 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility (OJ L 249, 14.7.2021, p. 38).

<sup>2</sup> Commission Implementing Decision C(2021)5763 final of 5.8.2021 concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2021-2023 and the financing decision for the implementation of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).

- 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
- 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*).

### **CEF-T-2021-TACOENEA-MS-LS - Technical Assistance to Member State - Cohesion Envelope**

#### Objectives (expected outcome)

The objectives pursued under this call are defined in section 4 of the multiannual work programme. More specifically, this call aims at support accompanying measures pursuant to Article 9(1) of the CEF Regulation ("technical assistance").

#### Themes and priorities (scope)

The scope of activities supported under this technical assistance will support the Member States to successfully implement and effectively manage the TEN-T related infrastructure investments.

#### Activities that can be funded (scope)

Technical Assistance to Member States projects shall address the following Work Packages and their corresponding tasks and deliverables as defined in the lump sum decision<sup>3</sup>.

- WP1. CEF 21-27: Communication, appraisal of CEF project proposals and technical monitoring of CEF 2021-2024 selected CEF actions
  - a) Communication actions relating to the CEF Programme, its actions and results in national languages, incl. organisation of national "Info days", distribution of newsletters, social media communication and updated information on official websites with links to relevant EU websites;
  - b) Appraisal of CEF project proposals: assessment of the compliance of project proposals with Call requirements and national priorities and signature of Member State agreement before project submission;
  - c) Technical monitoring of the selected ongoing projects to ensure maximum absorption of the national Cohesion allocation.
  
- WP2. CEF 14-20: Legacy management for technical and financial monitoring

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<sup>3</sup> [Decision](#) of 23 July 2021 and [corrigendum](#) of 8 December 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions for technical assistance under the Connecting Europe Facility – Transport Sector.

- a) Technical monitoring and financial control of projects selected under CEF 2014 – 2020 in close cooperation with the Commission;
  - b) Certification that the expenditure incurred in respect of projects or parts thereof has been disbursed and that the disbursement was in conformity with the relevant rules.
- WP3. Cooperation within the Core Network Corridors
    - a) Participation in meetings such as Corridor Fora, working groups and conferences;
    - b) Consultation and approval of the regularly updated Corridor Work Plans;
    - c) Cooperation with the European Coordinators, national stakeholders and other Member States.
  - WP4. Cooperation within the Rail freight Corridors ensuring adequate coordination with the Core Network Corridors
    - a) Preparation of, participation in and follow-up to meetings at corridor level involving stakeholders of the rail freight corridor and of the corresponding core network corridor;
    - b) Preparation of, participation in and follow-up to meetings for coordination between several or all rail freight corridors;
    - c) Coordination activities within the Member State involving in particular the infrastructure manager(s), railway undertakings, terminal owners and managers, regional and local authorities and other relevant stakeholders;
    - d) Preparation of the report pursuant to Article 22 of the Regulation aligned with the guidance of the Commission on the structure and content of the report (Ares(2020)377972).
  - WP5. Updating and reporting via automated data exchange with TENtec.
    - a) Phase 1: Initiating and planning phase to identify appropriate staff internally and externally and to kick-start the analysis. Mapping and analysis of existing systems/databases at national and regional level. Setting up a project implementation plan up to 2024. Drafting of the first report;
    - b) Phase 2: Implementation and coordination with relevant stakeholders at MS and DG MOVE level on the implementation. Preparation of the IT infrastructure and the necessary processes including internal and external testing with DG MOVE TENtec, before deployment of the final solution in production and real-time tests;
    - c) Phase 3: Closing and evaluating the project with the implementation of potential additional modifications and adaptations and drafting of the final report summarising the entire project lifecycle.

Member States may decide not to include all the above Work Packages or years in the scope of their application ensuring smooth transition with CEF 2014 - 2020 "Programme Support Action" (PSA) Grant Agreements.

As the lump sum support will be calculated at the level of the defined work packages, the content of a chosen work package cannot be modified.

Payment of the lump sum is conditional on the completeness of the deliverables

addressing the elements listed above and defined in the lump sum decision.

In case of Member States benefitting from the CEF support in 2021, notably in the form of a Programme Support Action (PSA), there should be no overlap with an application subject to this call. Therefore, the start date in the application can only be after the end of the respective PSA for a given Member State.

### Expected impact (expected results)

The results expected under this Call are defined in section 5 of the multiannual work programme.

### 3. Available budget

The available call budget is **EUR 17,500,000**.

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

### 4. Timetable and deadlines

Timetable and deadlines (indicative)	
Call opening:	16 / 12 / 2021
<u>Deadline for submission:</u>	<u>17 / 02 /2022 – 17:00:00 CET</u> (Brussels)
Evaluation:	March - April 2022
Information on evaluation results:	May 2022
GA signature:	July 2022

### 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 link in the invitation letter). 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*)
- **mandatory annexes and supporting documents** (*to be uploaded*):

- detailed budget table per WP/calculator (*template available in the Submission System*)
- timetable/Gantt chart


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 **120 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)*

According to section 9 of the Work Programme for 2021-2023 the grant is to be awarded to the Member States.

### *Consortium composition*

n/a

### *Eligible 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. The complementarities must be described in the project proposals (Part B of the Application Form).

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

Financial support to third parties is not allowed.

### *Geographic location (target countries)*

Proposals must relate to activities taking place in the eligible countries (*see above*).

### *Duration*

Projects should normally be up to 31/12/2024 (extensions are possible, if duly justified and through an amendment).



## 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).

Entities that have been identified as named beneficiary(ies) in the Work Programme in accordance with Article 195 of the Financial Regulation are in principle considered to have sufficient operational capacity to carry out the action. In case of doubt, the granting authority will however undertake an 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 participate<sup>4</sup>:

- 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>5</sup> (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)
- 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 that<sup>6</sup>:

- 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

Invited proposals will be checked against the formal requirements (admissibility and eligibility) and then evaluated by an evaluation committee for operational capacity and award criteria (*see sections 7 and 9*). If it is successful, it will be invited for grant agreement preparation.

<sup>4</sup> See Articles 136 and 141 of EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

<sup>5</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>6</sup> See Article 141 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

 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:

- **Priority and urgency:** evaluating correspondence of the proposal with the sectoral policy objectives and priorities, measuring its EU added-value and where applicable assessing the possible synergies with other sectors. For military mobility under CEF Transport, the criterion will also serve to assess the potential of dual-use (civil-military) (5 points)
- **Maturity:** assessing the maturity of the action in the project development. The criterion will measure, among others: the readiness/ability of the project to start by the proposed start date and to complete by the proposed end date, the status of the contracting procedures and of the necessary permits, and information on the financial availability needed to complement the CEF investment (5 points)
- **Quality:** evaluating the soundness of the implementation plan proposed, both from the technical and financial point of view, the architecture and design approach, the organisational structures put in place (or foreseen) for the implementation, the risk analysis, the control procedures and quality management and the communication strategy. Moreover, when applicable, it will also assess the information related to the maintenance strategy for the completed project (5 points)
- **Impact:** assessing, when applicable, the economic, social and environmental impact, including the climate impact, and other relevant externalities. In addition, assessing the need to overcome financial obstacles such as those generated by insufficient commercial viability, high upfront costs or the lack of market finance . This criterion may be substantiated by a Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA or CEA) or, in the absence of such tool, other forecast of end-user take-up, in which case the evaluation will look at the soundness, comprehensiveness, and transparency of the analysis as well as proposed means to monitor its impact. Moreover, when applicable, the criterion will assess, among others, the innovation and digitalisation, safety and interoperability and accessibility aspects of the proposal, as well as its cross-border dimension, effect/contribution to the network territorial accessibility (5 points)
- **Catalytic effect:** evaluating the financial gap, the capacity to mobilise differentiated investments sources, the capacity to trigger important overall

investments with limited EU support and when appropriate the extent to which externalities justify the CEF financial assistance. It also assesses the catalytic effect of the EU financial assistance (5 points).

Award criteria	Minimum pass score	Maximum score
Priority and urgency	3	5
Maturity	3	5
Quality	3	5
Impact	3	5
Catalytic effect	3	5
<b>Overall (pass) scores</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>25</b>

Maximum points: 25 points.

Individual thresholds per criterion: 3/5, 3/5, 3/5, 3/5 and 3/5 points.

Overall threshold: 15 points.

## 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 even before proposal submission date back to 1 January 2021.

Project duration: up to 31.12.2024 (extensions are possible, if duly justified and 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.

### 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): projects of any budget are admitted provided they are above EUR 500,000 per project. The grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested.

 Please be aware that you may be asked to request an amendment to reduce the grant awarded if your project encounters major delays during the project implementation. If you do not comply with this request, we may have to terminate the grant (see art 32).

The grant will be a lump sum grant. This means that it will reimburse a fixed amount, based on a lump sum or financing not linked to costs. The amount will be fixed by the granting authority on the basis of the variable amounts it has prefixed and the estimates indicated by the beneficiaries in their project budget.

#### 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:*

- Lump sum contributions<sup>7</sup>

*Specific cost eligibility rules for this call:*

- eligible cost country restrictions: Yes, only costs/contributions for activities carried out in eligible countries or target countries are 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. The amount will be established based on the grant type or estimated project duration at the time of grant signature and will vary between 25% and 50%. 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.

 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.

#### Prefinancing guarantees

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<sup>7</sup> [Decision](#) of 23 July 2021 and [corrigendum](#) of 8 December 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions for technical assistance under the Connecting Europe Facility – Transport Sector.

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

Security rules: *see Model Grant Agreement (art 13 and Annex 5)*

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: No
- additional communication and dissemination activities: Yes
- special logos: No

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

- Member State information: Yes
- specific rules for digital infrastructure projects: [No
- specific rules for ATM common projects: [No
- durability: Yes
- 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 EULogin 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 3 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
- 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](#)
- [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 to the following email address: [CINEA-CEF-TRANSPORT-CALLS@ec.europa.eu](mailto:CINEA-CEF-TRANSPORT-CALLS@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).

- **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 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](#).