



European Social Fund+ (ESF+)

Call for proposals

EURES TARGETED MOBILITY SCHEME (TMS)

ESF-2021-EURES-TMS

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION
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EMPL.E – Labour Mobility and International Affairs
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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

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0. Introduction

This is a call for proposals for EU **action grants** in the field of Labour Markets and Labour Mobility under the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)

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

- Regulation 2018/1046 ([EU Financial Regulation](#))
- the basic act (ESF+ Regulation(EU) 2021/1057) ¹.

The call is launched in accordance with the 2021 Work Programme² and will be managed by the **European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL)**.

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

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

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

¹ Regulation (EU) 2021/1057 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 establishing the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2021:231:FULL&from=EN> ² Commission Decision C(2021)3917 final of 7 June 2021 concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2021 and the financing decision for the implementation of the Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) strand of the European Social Fund Plus.

² Commission Decision C(2021)3917 final of 7 June 2021 concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2021 and the financing decision for the implementation of the Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) strand of the European Social Fund Plus.

- 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*).

1. Background

This call for proposals is financed under the **Employment and Social Innovation ("EaSI") strand of the ESF+** which is a European-level financing instrument managed directly by the European Commission. It provides financial support to achieve high employment levels, fair social protection, a skilled and resilient workforce ready for the future world of work, as well as inclusive and cohesive societies aiming to eradicate poverty.

Building on the work done in the past by the previous Commissions, President Ursula von der Leyen stressed in the Communication on "a Strong Social Europe for Just Transitions", "COM(2020) 14 final 14.01.2020"³, that the European Pillar of Social Rights is the European answer to improve equal opportunities and jobs for all, fair working condition, social protection and inclusion. In this light, this Commission promotes professional mobility, sustaining young and old people to have access to timely and tailor-made support, including training, to improve chances of getting a quality job or starting a business.

In accordance with the European Pillar of Social Rights, that sets out key principles and rights essential for fair and well-functioning labour markets, as well as the ESF+ programme as the main EU tool for promoting employment and social inclusion, this call for proposals is part of the purpose to build a more inclusive and sustainable growth model, with a view to stimulating investments, creating jobs, fostering social cohesion and fairer labour mobility; in which everyone has the right to timely and tailor-made assistance to improve employment or self-employment prospects. This includes the right to receive support for job search, training and re-qualification.

The action, as direct expression of the principle "Active support to employment" under the chapter I, "equal opportunities and access to the labour market" of the European Pillar of Social Rights, is aimed to fulfil people's needs, supporting and promoting the implementation of tailor-made employment services and innovative forms of work, that ensure quality working conditions, to foster the placement and integration of mobile workers in the host country(ies), combined with financial incentives.

Intra-EU labour mobility as promoted by this call for proposals can help to address labour market imbalances and improve labour market's efficiency. It can contribute to improving the allocation of resources and serve as an adjustment mechanism for unbalanced labour markets whilst enabling economies to cope better with economic shocks.

EURES⁴ (European Employment Services <https://ec.europa.eu/eures>) is a network formed by public and private employment services and other partner organisations. The objective of the EURES network is to facilitate the free movement of workers within the European Economic Area (EEA) (the 27 members of the European Union, plus Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland) and Switzerland, i.e. giving information and

³ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/fs_20_49

assistance to job seekers and employers on respectively the available job vacancies, job research and living and working conditions in Member States.

The Commission tested the 'Your First EURES Job' (YFEJ)⁵ mobility scheme during three consecutive budget years (2011-2013) as a preparatory action. The scheme aimed to help young EU citizens aged 18-30 to find a job, traineeship or apprenticeship in another Member State (remunerated, minimum 6 months contract). It also supported employers (SMEs with up to 250 employees) to find workers in another EU country for their hard-to-fill vacancies. The scheme combined the provision of information, recruitment, matching and placement services with EU financial support, based on a mix of simplified cost options and reimbursement of actual declared costs. The ex-post evaluation of the YFEJ preparatory action pinpointed the need to upscale the scheme and improve its operational capacity for gaining effectiveness and efficiency. As of 2014, YFEJ is continued as a Targeted Mobility Scheme covering the EU/EFTA countries (EU 28, Norway and Iceland) and the age group 18-35.

The examples and lessons learnt from YFEJ demonstrated the relevance of the scheme, notably its EU added value and complementarity with EURES. Therefore, built on the features of the YFEJ, a targeted mobility scheme "Reactivate"⁶ to help EU citizens aged at least 35 to find a job, traineeship or apprenticeship opportunity in another EU country, and to help employers find qualified workforce, was implemented.

Both YFEJ and Reactivate were created as inclusive schemes, playing the role of active labour measures aiming at improving access to intra-EU labour markets. The workers and employers have an opportunity to benefit from tailor-made employment support, acquire diversified knowledge and skills, learn new languages and strengthen their EU citizenship values.

In 2019 and 2020 the integrated action EURES Targeted Mobility Scheme (TMS) was implemented to ensure the continuity and further development of two intra-EU job mobility schemes, "Your first EURES job" (YFEJ) and "Reactivate", providing support measures to jobseekers and enhancing EURES potential as a job-matching and job placement tool.

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

Objectives (expected outcome)

The overall objective of this call for proposals is to ensure around 4 000 placements over the duration of the action in economic sectors with hard-to-fill vacancies.

The action being strongly result-oriented, it should contribute to:

- a) enhance the service catalogue of the EURES organisations;
- b) foster public-private partnerships within EURES and,
- c) address labour market needs;

⁵<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en&callId=328&furtherCalls=yes>

⁶<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en&callId=485&furtherCalls=yes>

d) improve the conditions for jobseekers and workers to exercise their right of freedom of movement across the EU and to address labour markets' imbalances and skills shortages.

Themes and priorities (scope)

EURES Targeted Mobility Scheme (TMS), constitutes a European labour market activation measure, combining tailor-made recruitment, matching, training and placement services with financial incentives. The support measures may vary according to labour market needs but must at least include provisions for interviews in another Member State, relocation, linguistic training as well as work and country integration support. The end beneficiaries will be jobseekers and job changers, trainees and apprentices as well recruiting enterprises, including SMEs. Both individuals and enterprises may receive direct financial support in the form of targeted allowances. Placements may, inter alia, take place in the context of regional cross-border initiatives and/or projects dedicated to particular sector(s).

Applicant organisations are free to choose the activities, methods and tools etc. to implement their action, on condition that they indicate separate targets for measures offered for the young (aged from 18 to 35) and for 35+ job seekers as well as comply with the mandatory framework for the provision of assistance and financial support to target groups laid down in Annex "Implementing Guide" . Both age groups (group from 18 to 35 years and group 35+ years) have to be covered in proposals submitted under this call; placement targets need to be indicated.

Activities that can be funded (scope)

The action aims at reaching two different target groups:

1. young people aged 18-35, and
2. the age group above of 35+ years

in order to find a job, traineeship or apprenticeship in another EU/EEA country.

The action targets the relieving of labour market imbalances and the filling of hard-to-fill vacancies as identified in national/EU labour market studies or data sources.

The activities will cover the provision of direct services to jobseekers or job changers and employers notably:

- information, recruitment, matching and placement;
- pre- and post-placement support to customers (e. g. profiling and pre-selection of candidates, language training or other training needs, mentoring support for trainees and apprentices).
- direct financial support to jobseekers (job interview, relocation trip costs, language trainings, recognition of qualifications and diplomas) to contribute to the costs borne by them and financial support to SMEs to implement an integration programme for the newly recruited candidate(s).

The actions which may be funded under this call shall support the implementation of the EURES TMS scheme, i.e. they will ensure the provision of customised employment services and include innovative working methods to foster the placement and integration of mobile workers in the host country(ies), combined with financial incentives.

The EURES TMS scheme shall not support the return mobility of workers returning to their country of origin.

To this end, the action supported by the projects shall have at least the six following components:

- 1) Creation of a partnership, involving as much as possible different labour market organisations dealing with specific work-integration fields and support to jobseekers (with a special focus on the most vulnerable: unemployed, long-term unemployed and people left behind in the labour market).
- 2) Testing of cooperation arrangements in the partnership between EURES member/partner organisations and other labour market organisations, in particular private employment services, as regards for instance the exchange of labour market information support services to workers or employers, to promote and raise awareness about the opportunities to gradually broaden the network in accordance with Article 11 and 12 of the EURES Regulation ⁷.
- 3) Provision of services comprising at least labour market information and assistance with offers and vacancies, matching these with candidates and the preparation of the placement /recruitment in the Member States covered by the action.
- 4) In the context of the services indicated under 3) above, provision of support measures and direct financial support to both job seekers and employers (in particular SMEs) as laid down in Annex I.
- 5) Development of post-placement support measures (welcome and integration services) and other tailor-made support like coaching packs;
- 6) Development of services and support measures referred to under points 3 to 5 also for placement of candidates in traineeships and/or apprenticeships in another country ⁸ (notably for open-market traineeships) by applying tools at national level in combination with the tools made available by EURES. For those placements, applicant organisations could identify one or more economic sector(s) and/or country(ies) offering such vacancies and provide support services adapted to the specificity and needs of both candidates and employers. The scope of the action in terms of traineeship and apprenticeship placements could represent a small percentage of the overall number of expected placements.

Applicants shall submit proposals including quantitative targets focusing on:

- Job placements
- can define quantitative targets focusing on:

Traineeships⁹

Apprenticeships

The EURES TMS basic requirements applicable to job or work-based placements are

⁷ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.L.2016.107.01.0001.01.ENG>

⁸ The EURES Regulation specifies that "*apprenticeships and traineeships should be covered under this regulation provided that successful applicants are subject to an employment relationship*"

⁹For placements in compliance with the requirements of the Quality Framework for Traineeships http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/141424.pdf

set out in relevant section of Annex I. Applicants involved in the European Alliance for Apprenticeships¹⁰ could also explore the potential of the alliance signatory employer organisations to offer work-based opportunities for mobile candidates¹¹.

Considering that the EURES TMS action shall support mitigation strategies in order to address labour market imbalance (vacancy bottlenecks and shortage of labour supply) the choice of the countries involved in the action as well as the economic sectors and occupations in which will be given priority by the action must be based on the analysis of the labour market situation and on the identification of labour shortages and surpluses in the Member States. The sources of evidence and the basis for this choice must be explained in the proposal ('Description of the action' document).

Role of applicants and other organisations

The coordinator should ensure that the action covers the overall objectives and activities set out in this call of proposal, in compliance with Annex "Implementing guide. Other applicants may be responsible for similar or complementary services only.

Applicant organisations should also be ready to provide information and support to nationals from other EU EFTA/EEA countries with no services or other facilities involved in this action.

Expected impact

The actions will be quality-oriented and outcome-driven, i.e. they must offer quality work opportunities and employment services with a view to enhance the skills and employability of job/traineeship/apprenticeship seekers.

Applicants are free to choose the methods, tools, etc. to implement the action, provided they comply with the EURES TMS Implementing Guide (Annex I). The overall objective of the 2021 call is to grant 3 to 4 projects to ensure around 4000 (indicative)¹² placements¹³ for mobile candidates in the EU EFTA/EEA countries, other than their country of residence, as laid down under chapter 2 Objectives.

Proposals submitted under this call shall clearly indicate the expected outcome in the area of placement (jobs, traineeships and/or apprenticeships), labour market integration services and individual support and/or training measures, with a separate target for the 18-35 and 35+ age groups. This information will be included in the "Description of the action" document. The expected outcome must be quantified according to the relevant economic sectors and type of placement.

Specific Provisions for Monitoring for EURES

¹⁰ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1147>

¹¹ See also CSR Europe and European Pact for Youth <http://www.csreurope.org/benefit-our-eu-expertise>

¹² The cost per placement may vary according to recruitment needs. The average cost was estimated at ca. EUR 3300 per work placement for the 18-35 age group and at ca. EUR 4500 per placement for the 35+.

¹³ Filling of a vacancy (job, traineeship or apprenticeship) from the perspective of the sending country.

The European Commission will monitor the action through the EURES performance measurement system to which the beneficiaries need to make available the following data:

Jobseekers information: total number of jobseekers, gender, age of jobseekers, educational attainment, status of jobseekers (PES registered or not);

Employers information: total number, size of the employers (in terms of number of employees), three most frequent NACE Sectors.

The reporting of the co-financed activities must contribute, wherever appropriate, to the exchange of information between Member States and to the EURES programming cycle in accordance with chapter V of the EURES Regulation.

In setting up the action, beneficiaries must foresee the necessary funding for monitoring and reporting to the Commission.

3. Available budget

The available call budget is **EUR 13.871.656,84**.

This budget might be increased by maximum 20%.

The Commission expects to fund 3 - 4 proposals.

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

4. Timetable and deadlines

Timetable and deadlines (indicative)	
Call opening:	15 July 2021
<u>Deadline for submission:</u>	<u>28 September 2021 – 17:00:00 CET</u>
Evaluation:	October 2021
Information on evaluation results:	November 2021
GA signature:	December 2021-January 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 Topic page in the [Search Funding & Tenders](#) section Paper submissions are NOT possible.

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

Proposals must be **complete** and contain all the requested information. Application Form Part A — contains administrative information about the participants (future coordinator, beneficiaries and affiliated entities - for definition refer to section 13.) 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 as PDF in the system*)
- **Mandatory annexes and supporting documents** (*to be included in Part B*):
 - CVs of core project team: Not applicable¹⁴
 - list of previous projects (annex 4 to Part B): key projects relating to free movement of workers or EURES in the last 3 years

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 **70 pages** (Part B). Evaluators will not consider any additional pages.

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

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

6. Eligibility

Eligible participants (eligible countries)

In order to be eligible, the coordinators (lead applicants) must:

- be legal entities (public or private bodies)

¹⁴Please note that when submitting your application the system will ask for CVs to be uploaded under section 11,b). As long as the section 2.3 of the Application form, Part B "Project teams, staff and experts" is duly completed, it is not necessary to upload CVs. A blank page can be uploaded, replacing CVs.

- be established in one of the eligible countries, i.e.:
 - EU Member States
- be EURES National Coordination Offices, EURES members or EURES partners which are placed in organisations whose main mission is to ensure the provision of employment and placement services to jobseekers, job changers, trainee/apprentice candidates and employers covering jobs and/or work-based trainings. Those services must include information, recruitment, matching and pre- and post-placement support.

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

- be legal entities (public or private bodies)
- be established in one of the eligible countries, i.e.:
 - EU Member States
 - non-EU countries:
 - EEA countries in accordance with Article 29 of the ESF+ Regulation.
- be EURES member organisations (i.e. National Coordination Offices, EURES Members and Partners),
- be public or private labour market actors (including the third sector) providing the same services as lead applicants and/or complementary customer-oriented services in other expertise fields, such as information, training, education, career guidance, mentoring, legal advice, integration support or other equivalent. Affiliated entities can take part in the consortium, and they must satisfy the eligibility criteria as all applicants.

When necessary for the achievement of the action's objectives, legal entities established in non-associated countries may exceptionally participate, in principle without being financed by the Union. Therefore legal entities established in Switzerland can take part on a no cost basis in accordance with Article 27(1)(a)(iii) of the ESF+ Regulation

Only consortia are eligible. They must be composed of a minimum of two EURES Member/Partner organisations established in at least two different EU Member States. The consortium must demonstrate that the proposed activities are fully carried out in at least five EU Member States or EEA countries, in accordance with art 29 of the ESF+ Regulation.

Applicants and affiliated entities¹⁵ must register in the [Participant Register](#) — before submitting the proposal — and will have to be validated by the Central Validation Service (REA Validation). For the validation, they will be requested to upload documents showing legal status and origin.

¹⁵ Affiliated entities do not appear on the Application Form part A. However they can be added as participants to the form, with the explanation on consortium set-up in Part B (meaning applicants should use the standard denominators in E-grant - "depends on" etc. - and explain in part B.

Other entities may participate in other consortium roles, such as associated partners¹⁶, (see section 13).

Specific cases

Exceptional funding — Entities from ESF+ countries mentioned in the work programme (if any) are only exceptionally eligible, if the granting authority considers their participation essential for the implementation of the action. Natural persons are NOT eligible (with the exception of self-employed persons, i.e. sole traders, where the company does not have legal personality separate from that of the natural person).

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

Entities without legal personality — Entities which do not have legal personality under their national law may exceptionally participate, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf, and offer guarantees for the protection of the EU financial interests equivalent to that offered by legal persons¹⁷.

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

Eligible countries as defined above in the present section currently negotiating association agreements — Applicants from the aforementioned countries with ongoing negotiations (*see list above*) may participate in the call and can sign grants if the negotiations are concluded before grant signature (with retroactive effect, if provided in the agreement).

EU restrictive measures — Special rules apply for certain entities (*e.g. entities subject to [EU restrictive measures](#) under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)*¹⁸ and entities covered by Commission Guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#)¹⁹). Such entities are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any).

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

Consortium composition

Only consortia are eligible. They must be composed of a minimum of two EURES Member/Partner organisations established in at least two different EU Member States. The consortium must demonstrate that the proposed activities are fully carried out in

¹⁶ Associated partners do not appear on the Application Form part A. However they can be added as participants to the form, with the explanation on consortium set-up in Part B (meaning applicants should use the standard denominators in E-grant - “depends on” etc. - and explain in part B.

¹⁷ See Article 197(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

¹⁸ Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the [EU Sanctions Map](#).

¹⁹ 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).

at least five EU Member States or EEA countries, in accordance with art 29 of the ESF+ Regulation.

Eligible activities

Eligible activities are the ones set out in section 2 above "Activities that can be funded (scope)".

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 allowed for grants under the following conditions:

- the calls must be open, published widely and conform to EU standards concerning transparency, equal treatment, conflict of interest and confidentiality
- the outcome of the call must be published on the participants' websites, including a description of the selected projects, award dates, project durations, and final recipient legal names and countries
- Financial support to third parties as defined in art. 204 of the [EU Financial Regulation](#) is eligible under this call provided that the overall amount allocated to this type of support does not exceed EUR 30 000 per third party.
- In such cases, the applications must include an exhaustive list of the types of activities for which a third party may receive financial support

For further details on the rules and ceilings governing financial support to third parties (i.e. job/traineeship/apprenticeship seekers and employers), please refer to Annex I "Implementing Guide".

Geographic location (target countries)

The Consortia shall demonstrate that the proposed activities are fully carried out in at least five EU Member States or EEA participating countries and ensure the implementation of the action in at least five different eligible countries (see section above "6. Eligibility").

Duration

The duration of the project shall normally be 24 months (extensions will be possible only exceptionally, for duly justified reasons and through an amendment).

The EU grant requested should indicatively be between EUR 2,000,000 and 4,000,000. This does not preclude the submission/selection of proposal requesting other amounts.

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)
- if the individual requested grant amount is not more than EUR 60 000.

It may also be done for affiliated entities.

If we consider that one or more participants' financial capacity is not satisfactory, the Commission 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*)
- pre-financing paid in instalments
- (one or more) pre-financing guarantees (*see below, section 10*)

or

- propose no pre-financing
- request that the participants are replaced or, if needed, reject the entire proposal.

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

Operational capacity

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

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

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

- general profiles (qualifications and experiences) of the staff responsible for managing and implementing the project. The project manager of the coordinating entity should have C1 level of English.

- description of the consortium participants
- list of previous projects (key projects relating to free movement of workers or EURES in the last 3 years)
- At least 3-years' experience of international team management for the coordinator.

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

Public bodies and Member State organisations may be exempted from the operational capacity check.

Exclusion

Applicants which are subject to an **EU exclusion decision** or in one of the following **exclusion situations** that bar them from receiving EU funding can NOT participate²⁰:

- 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 misconduct²¹ (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, decisionmaking- 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, decisionmaking- 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,

²⁰ See Articles 136 and 141 of EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

²¹ 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.

decisionmaking- 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 that²²:


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

8. Evaluation and award procedure

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

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

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

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

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

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

9. Award criteria

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

Relevance:

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

- The degree to which the proposal meets the six components to the action identified in section 2 "Activities that can be funded" of the call, and the consistency of the planned timetable for activities.
- The degree to which the proposal meets the minimum requirements for ensuring compliance with the Implementing Guide set out in Annex I.
- The extent to which the proposal provides an explanation how specific economic sectors and categories of vacancies will be given priority, how the equal coverage of several identified sectors will be ensured, as well as the strategy to make adjustments over the life cycle of the project in light of the evolution of labour market needs and target audiences.
- The compliance of the package of services for target groups (jobseekers 18-35, 35+ and priority vulnerable sub-groups), combining activation measures and items of direct financial support, in light of the objectives of the call.

Max. 40 points

Quality:

Project design and implementation:

- The extent to which the methodology and proposed activities are adequate, with a view to ensuring an efficient delivery of services to the target groups.
- The methods and procedures for securing effective and prompt direct financial support for identified target groups, for monitoring expenditure and ensuring sound financial management.
- The measures to ensure adequate quality control of job vacancies and activities in general as well as the measures to ensure the adequate monitoring of activities.
- Indication and explanation of the risks that can be encountered and the corresponding mitigation measures.
- Clarity and consistency of the estimated budget, and the measures adopted to ensure that the proposed results and objectives will be achieved in the most cost-effective way.

Max. 20 points

Project team and cooperation arrangements:

- the detailed description of the tasks, responsibilities, resources and management tools of the consortium (lead and other applicants, and affiliated entities).
- quality of the consortium and project teams.

- The degree to which organisations which are not part of the EURES network provide an added value in their role and contribution to the action
- appropriate procedures and problem-solving mechanisms for cooperating within the project teams and consortium

Max. 20 points

Impact:

- The added value, geographical coverage, transnational dimension and expected impact of the action at both national and EU level.
- The extent to which the proposal is likely to contribute to the overall expected number of work placements in other Member States, in the light of the composition of the consortia and the resources allocated to the action. The estimate should be justified.
- The degree to which applicant organisations (lead and other applicants) managing other European actions e.g. EURES or other EU programmes can capitalise on existing resources to boost the success of the action.
- The suitability of the communication and dissemination activities planned to promote the activities/results and maximise the impact, with a view to reaching the target groups.
- sustainability of results after EU funding ends

Max. 20 points

Award criteria	Minimum pass score	Maximum score
Relevance	28	40
Quality — Project design and implementation	14	20
Quality — Project team and cooperation arrangements	14	20
Impact	14	20
Overall (pass) scores	70	100

Maximum points: 100 points.

Individual thresholds per criterion: 28/40, 14/20, 14/20 and 14/20 points.

Overall threshold: 70/100 points.

Proposals that pass the individual thresholds AND the overall threshold will be considered for funding — within the limits of the available call budget. Other proposals will be rejected.

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

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

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

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

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.

Beneficiaries will have to ask attendees in events to participate in the EU Survey on EaSI. This survey allows the granting authority to closely monitor training, mutual learning and awareness-raising events. The beneficiaries will receive a weblink to the survey, to be forwarded to the attendees. They will have access to the survey results for their project and can use it for their project evaluation. The granting authority will aggregate the results of all the projects financed under the ESF+ EaSI strand.

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 of the action will be after the signature of the grant agreement. Retroactive starting date can be granted exceptionally, for duly justified reasons, but never earlier than the proposal submission date.

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: *see section 6 above*. The grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested.

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

The costs will be reimbursed at the funding rate fixed in the Grant Agreement (**95%**).

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

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

Budget categories and cost eligibility rules

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

Budget categories for this call:

- A. Personnel costs
 - A.1 Employees
 - A.2 Natural persons under direct contract
 - A.3 Seconded persons
- B. Subcontracting costs
- C. Purchase costs
 - C.1 Travel and subsistence
 - C.2 Equipment
 - C.3 Other goods, works and services
- D. Other cost categories
 - D.1 Financial support to third parties
- E. Indirect costs

Specific cost eligibility conditions for this call:

- personnel costs: Yes
 - SME owner/natural person unit cost²³: No
 - volunteers unit cost²⁴: No
- travel and subsistence unit cost²⁵: Yes
- equipment costs: depreciation
- other cost categories:
 - costs for financial support to third parties: maximum amount per third party EUR 30 000
 - indirect cost flat-rate 7% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs, if any)

²³ Commission [Decision](#) of 20 October 2020 authorising the use of unit costs for the personnel costs of the owners of small and medium-sized enterprises and beneficiaries that are natural persons not receiving a salary for the work carried out by themselves under an action or work programme (C(2020)7715).

²⁴ Commission [Decision](#) of 10 April 2019 authorising the use of unit costs for declaring personnel costs for the work carried out by volunteers under an action or a work programme (C(2019)2646).

²⁵ Commission [Decision](#) of 12 January 2021 authorising the use of unit costs for travel, accommodation and subsistence costs under an action or work programme under the 2021-2027 multi-annual financial framework (C(2021)35).

- VAT: non-deductible VAT is eligible (but please note that since 2013 VAT paid by beneficiaries that are public bodies acting as public authority is NOT eligible)
- other:
 - in-kind contributions for free are allowed, but cost-neutral, i.e. they cannot be declared as cost;
 - kick off meeting: costs for kick-off meeting organised by the granting authority are eligible (travel costs for maximum 2 persons, return ticket to Brussels and accommodation for one night) only if the meeting takes place after the project starting date set out in the Grant Agreement; the starting date can be changed through an amendment, if needed;
- other meetings: The Commission will follow the implementation of the EURES TMS scheme as whole and promote networking among the project beneficiaries. To that end, a maximum of four meetings may be held with the Commission in Brussels or another Member State (one meeting every six months). The purpose is to provide guidance and take stock of progress made. The lead applicant must nominate the project coordinator and will participate in the networking meetings with the Commission. Lead applicants may also be invited to other ad hoc meetings or events during the lifetime of the action. These venues can be an opportunity for raising awareness to the action and disseminating information. The estimated budget should include provisions for participation in the monitoring and reporting activities and meetings above as well as in, at least, two EU level events. In setting up the action, beneficiaries must foresee the necessary funding for monitoring and reporting to the Commission..
- project websites: communication costs for presenting the project on the participants' websites or social media accounts are eligible. Costs for existing project websites are eligible, costs for new separate project websites are not eligible.
- other ineligible costs: No.

Reporting and payment arrangements

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

Payment of the grant is generally made in **pre-financing** instalments and a final payment (the balance). The aim of the pre-financing is to provide the beneficiaries with a float. The pre-financing remains the property of the EU until the payment of the balance. The frequency and size of pre-financing will depend upon the project duration but may be adjusted in case of risk:

- **actions of 12 months** : one prefinancing payment of 70% paid within 30 days from the entry into force of the grant agreement or after receiving the financial guarantee (if required), whichever is the latest.
- **actions between 13 and 24 months**: pre-financing payments linked to annual reporting periods will be made as follows:
 - 40% from the entry into force of the grant agreement or after receiving the financial guarantee (if required), whichever is the latest
 - 40% after receiving a additional pre-financing report. Where the consumption of the previous pre-financing is less than 70%, the amount

of the new pre-financing payment will be reduced by the difference between the 70% ceiling and the amount used

- **actions between 25 and 36 months:** pre-financing payments linked to annual reporting periods will be made as follows:
 - 30% from the entry into force of the grant agreement or after receiving the financial guarantee (if required), whichever is the latest
 - a second and third pre-financing of 40% and 20% after receiving additional pre-financing reports. Where the consumption of the previous pre-financing is less than 70%, the amount of the new pre-financing payment will be reduced by the difference between the 70% ceiling and the amount used.

There will be no **interim 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 note that you are responsible for keeping records on all the work done and the costs declared.

Pre-financing guarantees

If a pre-financing 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 to the pre-financing for your grant.

The guarantee must 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.

Pre-financing 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 pre-financing (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 limited joint and several liability with individual ceilings — *each beneficiary up to their maximum grant amount*.

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

Provisions concerning the project implementation

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

- rights of use on results: Yes

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

- additional communication and dissemination activities: Yes

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

- specific rules for ESF+ actions: Yes
- specific rules for financial support to third parties: Yes

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 EULogin 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 files.

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

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

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

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

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

12. Help

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

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

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

Contact

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

Non-IT related questions should be sent to the following email address:

- general questions on ESF+: EMPL-EaSI@ec.europa.eu
- call-specific questions: EMPL-VP-2021-010@ec.europa.eu

Questions on submission must:

- be sent at the latest 7 days before the submission deadline (*see section 3*).
- 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 applicants, affiliated entities and associated partners must be registered in the [Participant Register](#). The participant identification code (PIC) (one per participant) is mandatory for the Application Form.
- **Consortium roles**— When setting up your consortium, you should think of organisations that help you reach objectives and solve problems.

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

- **Coordinator** — In multi-beneficiary grants, the beneficiaries participate as consortium (group of beneficiaries). They will have to choose a coordinator, who will take care of the project management and coordination and will represent the consortium towards the granting authority. In mono-beneficiary grants, the single beneficiary will automatically be coordinator.
- **Affiliated entities** — Applicants may participate with affiliated entities (i.e. entities linked to an applicant 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](#).