



European Social Fund+ (ESF) Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) strand

Call for proposals

EURES Cross-border partnerships and support to EURES cooperation on
intra-EU mobility for EEA countries and social partners

ESF-2023-EURES-CBC

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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 [2021/1057](#)¹).

The call is launched in accordance with the 2023 Work Programme² and will be managed by the **European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL)**.

The call covers the following **topics**:

- **Topic 1: ESF-2023-EURES-CBC-ECP — EURES Cross-border partnerships**
- **Topic 2: ESF-2023-EURES-CBC-EEA — EURES EEA non-EU countries cooperation**
- **Topic 3: ESF-2023-EURES-CBC-SOCP — EURES Social partners cooperation**

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)
 - how to submit an application (section 11)

¹ Regulation (EU) 2021/1057 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 establishing the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) (OJ L 231, 30.6.2021, p. 21).

² Commission Decision [C\(2022\)9194 final of 14 December 2022](#) on the adoption of 2023 annual work programme within the framework of the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and in particular its Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) strand.

- 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*).

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.

The ESF+ lays down provisions intended to achieve freedom of movement for workers on a non-discriminatory basis by ensuring close cooperation of the public employment services of Member States, the Commission and the social partners. The European network of employment services should promote better functioning of the labour markets by facilitating the cross-border mobility of workers, in particular through cross-border partnerships, and a greater transparency of information on the labour markets.

Intra-EU labour mobility as facilitated by this call for proposals can help to address labour market imbalances and improve the 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.

Building on the work done in the past by the previous Commissions, 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. The Pillar builds upon 20 key principles, structured around three categories: Equal opportunities and access to the labour market, fair working conditions and social protection and inclusion. The [European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan](#) adopted at the 2021 Porto Social Summit turns the principles into concrete actions to benefit citizens. It also proposes headline targets for the EU to reach by 2030.

EURES ([European Employment Services](#)) 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 assistance to job seekers and employers on respectively the available job vacancies, job research and living and working conditions in Member States.

The legal base for EURES consist of:

- EU rules on the freedom to work and look for a job in another EU Member State: [Regulation \(EU\) No 492/2011](#) of the European Parliament and the Council of 15 April 2011 on freedom of movement for workers within the Union (codification OJ L 141 of 27.05.2011, p. 1);
- An EU framework for cooperation in this area: [Regulation \(EU\) No 2016/589](#) of the European Parliament and the Council on a European network of employment services (EURES), workers' access to mobility services and the further integration of labour markets (hereafter the EURES Regulation) and amending Regulations (EU) No 492/2011 and (EU) No 1296/2013.

The EURES Regulation lays down provisions aiming to improve information, guidance and assistance to employers and job seekers including for **frontier workers in cross-border regions**, to increase transparency of labour market information at EU level and to expand the exchange of information between Member States (resulting in better programming of EURES activities).

The Regulation defines that EURES services are delivered through two complementary **channels**: the EURES advisors' network, consisting of EURES staff across the network, and the EURES portal with a number of online service tools available.

The backbone of EURES are its **Members and Partners**, which include Public Employment Services on national and regional level, but also social partners, universities, private employment services as well as other organizations that have undergone an admission procedure. They are tasked with the operational activities and they provide the network of more than 1000 EURES advisers.

- The EURES **members** are service providers in the field of employment admitted by the Member States which provide the three categories of tasks, namely contribution to the pool of job vacancies, contribution to the pool of job applications and CV's and support services to workers and employers involving information, guidance and assistance. The public employment services are appointed by Member States without admission procedure;
- The EURES **partners** are admitted by the Member States, and provide only some of the three tasks mentioned, for instance support services to workers and employers.

At national level, EURES is organised by the **National Coordination Offices** (NCOs). At European level, the **European Coordination Office** (ECO), hosted by the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission, and being transferred to the European Labour Authority (ELA), provides horizontal support to the NCOs.

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

The overall objectives of the call are to facilitate workers' intra-EU labour mobility, to boost employment opportunities as well as to support the implementation of the EURES Regulation.

The call for proposals for projects with a duration of two years consists of three **topics**:

- The **first topic** supports fair mobility for workers in cross-border regions, in particular cross-border partnerships offering comprehensive EURES services;

- The **second topic** targets both EEA countries, that are part of EURES, to offer comprehensive EURES services in EEA countries or specific EURES services for workers or employers. Following the key principle "Equal opportunities and access to the labour market" of the European Pillar of Social Rights, the action aims at reaching jobseekers in EEA countries.
- The **third topic** targets EU-level social partner organisations. It will support the coordination of activities of the European social partners in the EURES network.

Topic 1: ESF-2023-EURES-CBC-ECP — EURES Cross-border partnerships

Objectives (expected outcome)

The overall objectives of the call topic are to facilitate workers' intra-EU labour mobility, to boost employment opportunities as well as to support the implementation of the EURES Regulation.

The ultimate goal of the call is to facilitate the job matching, placement and recruitment process on a fair basis.

Themes and priorities (scope)

Measures supported under this call topic need to be concrete, action-oriented and with clear added value.

Applicants must commit to fulfilling the requirements set forth in Regulation (EU) No 492/2011 of the EP and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on freedom of movement for workers within the Union and of Regulation (EU) No 2016/589 of the European Parliament and the Council on a European network of employment services (EURES), workers' access to mobility services and the further integration of labour markets and amending Regulations (EU) No 492/2011 and (EU) No 1296/2013.

Applicants must comply with the rules, standards and procedures established in these documents, such as the principle to provide free services to job seekers, to provide job vacancies and CV's in accordance with the uniform system for the EURES Portal and to provide information to the National Coordination Office for the programming and reporting cycle and to report on their activities through the Performance Measurement System for cross-border partnerships.

Activities that can be funded (scope)

This topic shall support cross-border partnerships in implementing the objectives of the EURES Regulation, improving the functioning, cohesion and integration of the cross-border labour markets and promoting voluntary and fair geographical and occupational mobility in such regions.

The cross-border partnership must be established based on actual needs in terms of mobility flows and economic activity. In particular, it should address skills mismatches in the border region.

While cross-border partnerships are free under the EURES Regulation to define a number of specific tasks [as indicated in Article 27(2)], cross border partnerships co-financed by this call have to provide a minimum number of services.

Cross-border partnerships under this topic must support all these activities:

- (1) To provide recruitment assistance through the staff of the organisations participating in the partnership to frontier jobseekers and employers, such as:
 - o Recruiting workers and attracting employers, for instance organizing recruitment events.

- Identifying suitable job vacancies or CVs.
 - Helping to draft CV's, job applications, and job vacancies.
 - Matching CVs and vacancies.
- (2) To provide guidance and information, relevant for the area covered by the partnership, on:
- living and working conditions, including general information on social security, taxation, labour law and administrative procedures regarding employment.
 - apprenticeships, traineeships and access to vocational education and training.
- (3) To advertise the information and services provided in line with the EURES communications strategy.
- (4) To monitor placement outcomes and customer satisfaction.
- (5) To contribute to the pool of job vacancies and CVs in the EURES portal, in cooperation with the NCO.

In addition, cross-border partnerships under this topic must support at least one of the following activities:

- (6) To provide post-recruitment information and assistance.
- (7) To gather and analyse evidence on cross-border mobility covering the current state of play and potential future developments.
- (8) To develop and implement a catalogue of specific actions for raising the offer of cross-border apprenticeships and traineeships in the participating regions and to provide information, guidance and assistance to candidates interested in applying for such offers across the border.
- (9) To contribute to the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights with specific actions addressing at least one of the principles under the chapter "fair working conditions".
- (10) On a voluntary basis and as stand-alone activity or as cross-cutting issue, cross-border partnerships can **develop activities and measures** supporting the process of the green and digital transitions and the transformation of European industrial ecosystems, in particular job conversion and modification as well as job creation and skills development in their regions within the framework of the transition to a decarbonised/green economy as detailed in the "European Green Deal" and the EU's Digital Strategy.

Expected impact

The application must specify which category is covered by each activity proposed.

The actions should tackle the most relevant issues, as identified in the latest available data analysis.

Each activity must be linked with a results indicator and a specific target to be achieved during the action. Indicators have to be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound.

All actions need to be implemented during the duration of the grant agreement.

Monitoring

The European Commission will monitor the action through the EURES performance measurement system. 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.

Beneficiaries under ESF-2023-EURES-CBC-ECP — EURES Cross-border partnerships 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, applicants must foresee the necessary funding for monitoring and reporting to the Commission.

Topic 2 : ESF-2023-EURES-CBC-EEA — EURES EEA non-EU countries cooperation

Objectives (expected outcome)

The overall objectives of the call topic are to facilitate workers' intra-EU labour mobility, to boost employment opportunities as well as to support the implementation of the EURES Regulation, in particular in EEA countries.

The ultimate goal of the call is to facilitate the job matching, placement and recruitment process on a fair basis.

Themes and priorities (scope)

Measures supported under this call need to be concrete, action-oriented and with clear added value.

Applicants must commit to fulfilling the requirements set forth in Regulation (EU) No 492/2011 of the EP and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on freedom of movement for workers within the Union and of Regulation (EU) No 2016/589 of the European Parliament and the Council on a European network of employment services (EURES), workers' access to mobility services and the further integration of labour markets and amending Regulations (EU) No 492/2011 and (EU) No 1296/2013.

Applicants must comply with the rules, standards and procedures established in these documents, such as the principle to provide free services to job seekers, to provide job vacancies and CV's in accordance with the uniform system for the EURES portal and to provide information to the National Coordination Office (NCO) for the programming and reporting cycle and to report on their activities through the complementary Performance Measurement System for cross-border partnerships.

Activities that can be funded (scope)

This topic shall support the implementation of Union law on facilitating intra-EU labour mobility and the work of the EURES network in the EEA countries.

Proposals under this topic must support all these activities:

- (1) To provide recruitment assistance through the EURES advisers and other staff of the EEA employment services to jobseekers and employers, such as:
 - Recruiting workers and attracting employers.
 - Identifying suitable job vacancies or CVs.
 - Helping to draft CV's, job applications, and job vacancies.
 - Matching CVs and vacancies.
- (2) To provide guidance and information, to potential mobile jobseekers and their employers, on:
 - living and working conditions, including general information on social security, taxation, labour law and administrative procedures regarding employment.
 - apprenticeships, traineeships and access to vocational education and training.
- (3) To improve the visibility and awareness of EURES in the EEA countries and to advertise the information and services provided, in line with the EURES communications strategy.
- (4) To monitor placement outcomes and customer satisfaction.
- (5) To contribute to the pool of job vacancies and CVs in the EURES portal, in cooperation with the NCO.
- (6) To cooperate with other EURES countries in joint projects such as recruitment events.

In addition, proposals under this topic must support at least one of the following activities:

- (7) To provide new and specialised services that are not or only partially available so far, thus contributing to filling the possible gaps of services provided in the region (e.g. post-recruitment support, cross-border projects, combination of training and placement, specific services for the placement of long-term unemployed, etc.);
- (8) To support the implementation of the EURES regulation and, in particular, to contribute to the EURES programming cycle and the exchange of information between Member States; to coordinate EURES activities at national level and participate in the coordination meetings of the EURES network;

Expected impact

The application must specify which category is covered by each activity proposed.

The actions should tackle the most relevant issues, as identified in the latest available data analysis.

Each activity must be linked with a results indicator and a specific target to be achieved during the action. Indicators have to be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound.

All actions need to be implemented during the duration of the grant agreement.

Monitoring

The European Commission will monitor the action through the EURES performance measurement system. 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.

Beneficiaries under ESF-2023-EURES-CBC-EEA — EURES EEA non-EU countries cooperation, 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, applicants must foresee the necessary funding for monitoring and reporting to the Commission.

Topic 3: ESF-2023-EURES-CBC-SOCP — EURES Social partners cooperation

Objectives (expected outcome)

The overall objectives of the call topic are to facilitate workers' intra-EU labour mobility, to boost employment opportunities as well as to support the implementation of the EURES Regulation.

The ultimate goal of the call is to facilitate the job matching, placement and recruitment process on a fair basis.

Themes and priorities (scope)

Measures supported under this call need to be concrete, action-oriented and with clear added value.

Applicants must commit to fulfilling the requirements set forth in Regulation (EU) No 492/2011 of the EP and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on freedom of movement for workers within the Union and of Regulation (EU) No 2016/589 of the European Parliament and the Council on a European network of employment services (EURES), workers' access to mobility services and the further integration of labour markets and amending Regulations (EU) No 492/2011 and (EU) No 1296/2013.

Applicants must comply with the rules, standards and procedures established in these documents, such as the principle to provide free services to job seekers, to provide job vacancies and CV's in accordance with the uniform system for the EURES portal and to provide information to the National Coordination Office for the programming and reporting cycle and to report on their activities through the Performance Measurement System for cross-border partnerships.

Activities that can be funded (scope)

This topic covers activities of European social partner organisations which are observers in the Advisory Committee on Free Movement of Workers to inform about, coordinate and to facilitate intra-EU labour mobility among their member organisations and to ensure that those member organisations, which are also part of the EURES network, are well aligned to the objectives of EURES and/or become EURES members or partners admitted by the national EURES Coordination Offices.

Proposals under this topic must support at least one of these activities:

- (1) To improve the visibility and awareness of EURES targeted at their members, in line with the EURES communications strategy. The campaign should have the clear goal to increase the use of the services offered by the EURES portal and network
- (2) To cooperate with other organisations in EURES-related activities such as recruitment events.
- (3) To improve client services provided by social partner organisations to mobile and cross-border workers, bearing in mind good practices and the developments relating to admission systems for EURES Members and Partners

In addition, proposals under this topic can support any of the following activities:

- (4) To organise stakeholder events relating to intra-EU labour mobility, EURES, cross-border partnerships and cooperation in this area, bringing together representatives of employers' organisations, trade unions, public and private employment services and public authorities, with a view to reporting to the Commission on data, findings and recommendations.
- (5) To support exchange of best practices and mutual learning on the development of new or better services for jobseekers and employers, to be provided by social partners or other organisations in the context of chapter V of the EURES Regulation.
- (6) To provide recruitment assistance through their staff to jobseekers and employers, such as:
 - Recruiting workers and attracting employers.
 - Identifying suitable job vacancies or CVs.
 - Helping to draft CV's, job applications, and job vacancies.
 - Matching CVs and vacancies.
- (7) To provide guidance and information, to potential mobile jobseekers and their employers, on:
 - living and working conditions, including general information on social security, taxation, labour law and administrative procedures regarding employment.
 - apprenticeships, traineeships and access to vocational education and training.
- (8) Participate in the coordination meetings of the of EURES cross-border partnerships.

Not eligible under this topic are training activities for EURES advisers and other staff of social partners, which can be covered by the EURES training programme.

Expected impact

The application must specify which category is covered by each activity proposed.

The actions should tackle the most relevant issues, as identified in the latest available data analysis.

Each activity must be linked with a results indicator and a specific target to be achieved during the action. Indicators have to be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound.

All actions need to be implemented during the duration of the grant agreement.

3. Available budget

The available call budget is **EUR 12 000 000**. This budget might be increased by maximum 20%.

We expect to fund between 10 and 15 proposals, .

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

4. Timetable and deadlines

Timetable and deadlines (<u>indicative</u>)	
Call opening:	21 February 2023
<u>Deadline for submission:</u>	<u>03 May 2023 – 17:00:00 CET</u> (Brussels)
Evaluation:	May-June 2023
Information on evaluation results:	15 September 2023
GA signature:	October 2023/January 2024

5. Admissibility and documents

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

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

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

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

- Application Form Part A — contains administrative information about the participants (future coordinator, beneficiaries and affiliated entities) and the summarised budget for the project (*to be filled in directly online*)
- Application Form Part B — contains the technical description of the project (*to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed and then assembled and re-uploaded*)

- **Mandatory annexes and supporting documents** (*to be uploaded*):
 - detailed budget table/calculator: not applicable
 - CVs of the core project team: not applicable³
 - activity reports of last year: not applicable
 - list of previous projects (key projects relating to free movement of workers and/or EURES in the last 3 years) (*template available in Part B*)

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 **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, 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

For topics 1 and 3, social partner organisations without legal personality under the applicable national law of above-mentioned countries are also eligible, provided that the conditions of the Financial Regulation related thereto are met (Article 197(2)(c) of the Financial Regulation).

In addition, in order to be eligible, the applicants (beneficiaries and affiliated entities) must fulfil the conditions of the relevant topic:

Eligible participants – Topic 1: Cross-border partnerships

To be eligible, the **lead applicant of the consortium** must be:

³ Please 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.

- the relevant National EURES Coordination Office(s) as designated in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/589 or
- the EURES member(s) or partner(s) of the regions involved with the endorsement of its National Coordination Office

To be eligible, other applicants must fall into one of the categories listed below:

- EURES members or partners
- Social partner organisations at European, national or regional level
- Public or private employment services
- Third sector organisations
- Other relevant actors active on the EU/EEA labour market, including European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation

When necessary for the achievement of the action's objectives, legal entities established in a third country which is not associated to the Easi strand pursuant to article 29 of ESF+ regulation may exceptionally participate, as associated partner without being financed by the Union.

*Eligible participants – **Topic 2:** Support to cooperation on intra-EU mobility in the EEA countries*

To be eligible, single applicants must be the National EURES Coordination Offices of EEA-non EU countries, in accordance with Article 29(a) of ESF+ Regulation.

*Eligible participants – **Topic 3:** Support to cooperation in intra-EU mobility for social partners*

Applicants (single applicant or lead and co-applicants) must be social partners, established at European level and represented in the Advisory Committee on Free Movement of Workers, i.e.:

- The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)
- The Confederation of European Business (BUSINESSEUROPE)
- European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEUnited)
- European Centre of Employers and Enterprises providing Public Services and Services of general interest (CEEP)

In topic 1 and 3, affiliated entities⁴ can take part in the consortium, but must satisfy the eligibility criteria as all applicants.

All topics

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

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

⁴ 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.

Specific cases

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

International organisations — International organisations are **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 persons⁵.

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

Social partner organisations — These include notably the European social partner organisations that are consulted in accordance with Article 154 TFEU (for the list, see [List of consulted organisations](#)) as well as other European-level social partner organisations that are not included in this list, but who are for example involved in the preparation and launch of European social dialogue at sector level. Social partner organisations without legal personality are eligible provided that the conditions for entities without legal personality (*see above*) are met.

Countries currently negotiating association agreements — Beneficiaries from 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)*⁶ and entities covered by Commission Guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#)⁷). Such entities are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any).

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

Consortium composition

Topic 1 (cross-border partnerships):

Only consortia are eligible. Proposals must be submitted by a consortium which includes employment services on regional, local and, where appropriate, national level; social partner organisations; and, where relevant, other stakeholders of at least two neighbouring Member States.

Topic 2 (support to cooperation on intra-EU mobility in the EEA countries):

⁵ See Article 197(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

⁶ 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](#).

⁷ 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).

Consortia are not eligible. Only applications by single applicants are allowed (mono-beneficiary).

Topic 3 (support to cooperation on intra-EU mobility for social partners):

Actions may involve consortia. Proposals may be submitted by a consortium whilst applications by single applicants (mono-beneficiary) are allowed.

Topics 1 and 3: (Support to cooperation in intra-EU mobility for social partners):

Any consortium member must be actively involved in the implementation of the action and financially engaged, (by incurring costs). The way they are financially engaged must be detailed in the budget of the proposal.

Eligible activities

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

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 have a duration of 24 months (extensions are possible, if duly justified and through an amendment).

Project budget

Project budgets (maximum grant amount) are expected to range between EUR 300 000 and EUR 1 500 000 per project for topic 1 and between EUR 50 000 and EUR 150 000 per project for topics 2 and 3 respectively, but this does not preclude the submission/selection of proposals 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) 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 one or more participants' 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 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 operational capacity via the following information:

- general profiles (qualifications and experiences) of the staff responsible for managing and implementing the project
- description of the consortium participants
- list of previous projects (key projects relating to the subject of the call in the last 3 years, i.e. free movement of workers or EURES)
- The project manager of the coordinator must have at least 3 years of experience in international team management and should have an adequate level of English (at least C1).

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

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

Exclusion

Applicants which are subject to an **EU exclusion decision** or in one of the following **exclusion situations** that bar them from receiving EU funding can NOT participate⁸:

- 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 misconduct⁹ (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, 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 that¹⁰:

- 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** (which may be 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


⁸ See Articles 136 and 141 of EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ See Article 141 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

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. We will still need to make various legal checks before grant award: *legal entity validation, financial capacity, exclusion check, etc.*

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

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

9. Award criteria

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

- **Relevance (max. 40 points):**
 - Depth of coverage of compulsory activities that can be funded
 - Number and depth of coverage of optional activities that can be funded.
 - Clarity and consistency of project, tasks supporting the activities, objectives and planning.
 - Complementarity with other initiatives by the same organization(s).
 - Complementarity with other existing similar initiatives.
- **Quality:**
 - **Project design and implementation (max. 20 points):**
 - Extent to which the methodology is adequate to implement the project.
 - Adequacy and completeness of the procedures for monitoring and reporting of the action.
 - Feasibility of the project within the proposed time frame.
 - Cost/effectiveness of the proposal and adequacy of the proposed allocation of resources.
 - **Project team and cooperation arrangements (max. 20 points):**

- Adequacy and consistency of the project team and (where applicable) consortium. Complementarity of the members' expertise.
 - Adequacy and completeness of the procedures for coordination and risk-management.
- **Impact (max. 20 points):**
- Adequacy of the indicators to measure the achievement of the activities that can be funded.
 - Justification of the targets for the indicators.
 - Degree to which the likely level of output and impact of the project is proportional to the amount of the requested grant.
 - Appropriateness of the dissemination activities to ensure that beneficiaries and other European actions can profit from the action.
 - Sustainability of results after EU funding ends.

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 for Relevance and 14/20 points for any other criterion.

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 it passes 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

'Deliverables' — Outputs to be submitted to the EU (publication, leaflet, progress report, brochure, list, etc.) that must be produced at a given moment during the action (normally not at the same time as the periodic/final reports).

'Milestones'— Control points in the project that help to chart progress (*kick-off meetings, steering committees, first-draft of a survey, prototype, etc.*). They may correspond to the completion of a key deliverable, which allows the next phase of the work to begin or is needed at intermediary.

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 in ESF EaSI projects will have to ask attendees in activities/events to participate in an EU survey to provide policy feedback. 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.

Starting date and project duration

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

Project duration: 24 months (extensions are possible, if duly justified and through an amendment).

Form of grant, funding rate and maximum grant amount

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

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

The grant will be a budget-based mixed actual cost grant (actual costs, with unit cost and flat-rate elements). This means that it will reimburse ONLY certain types of costs (eligible costs) and costs that were *actually* incurred for your project (NOT the *budgeted* costs). For 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 project related revenues + EU grant over costs). For-profit organisations must declare their project related 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
- E. Indirect costs

Specific cost eligibility conditions for this call:

- personnel costs:
 - SME owner/natural person unit cost¹¹: No
 - volunteers unit cost¹²: No
- travel and subsistence unit cost¹³: Yes
- equipment costs: depreciation
- other cost categories:
 - costs for financial support to third parties: not allowed.
- indirect cost flat-rate: 7% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-C)
- 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 kickoff 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.
 - meetings: after the signature of the Grant Agreements the project coordinators of the beneficiaries may be invited to an information meeting either in Brussels or at the premises of a beneficiary. Applicants willing to host such a meeting must indicate it in the description of the action and include the relevant costs (venue, catering) in the budget of the action. A second meeting may be scheduled at the end of the activity in preparation of the final reports. Applicants should include the travel expenses for these two meetings in their budget for the action.

¹¹ 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).

¹² 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).

¹³ 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).

- 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 **prefinancing** instalments and a final payment (the balance). The aim of the prefinancing is to provide the beneficiaries with a float. The prefinancing remains the property of the EU until the payment of the balance. The frequency and size of prefinancing 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 12 and 24 months**: prefinancing 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 prefinancing report. Where the consumption of the previous prefinancing is less than 70%, the amount of the new prefinancing 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 be aware that payments will be automatically lowered if one of your consortium members has outstanding debts towards the EU (granting authority or other EU bodies). Such debts will be offset by us — in line with the conditions set out in the Grant Agreement (*see art 22*).

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

Prefinancing guarantees

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

Additional useful sources of information for proposal preparation:

[Participant Register — Register your organisation - Online Manual - Funding Tenders Opportunities \(europa.eu\)](#)

[Rules for Legal Entity Validation, LEAR Appointment and Financial Capacity Assessment](#)

[Submit a proposal — Electronic Submission System - Online Manual - Funding Tenders Opportunities \(europa.eu\)](#)

[Proposal forms - IT How To - Funding Tenders Opportunities \(europa.eu\)](#)

[Planning of the work \(work packages, deliverables, milestones\)](#)

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-ESF-2023-EURES-CBC@ec.europa.eu



Please:

- send your questions at the latest 7 days before the submission deadline (see *section 4*)
- indicate clearly the reference of the call and topic to which your question relates (see *cover page*).

13. Important



IMPORTANT

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

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

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

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

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

This includes:

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

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

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