



Union Anti-Fraud Programme (EUAF)

Call for proposals

Technical Assistance (EUAF-2021-TA)
Training, Conferences, Staff Exchanges and Studies (EUAF-2021-TRAI)

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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 fight against fraud under the **Union Anti-Fraud Programme (EUAF)**.

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

- Regulation 2018/1046 ([EU Financial Regulation](#))
- the basic act (EUAF Regulation [2021/785](#)¹).

The call is launched in accordance with the EUAF Annual Work Programme 2021 (AWP 2021)² and will be managed by the **European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)**.

The call covers **two calls** and the following **topics**:

- **EUAF-2021-TA – Union Anti-Fraud Programme Technical Assistance**
 - EUAF-2021-TA-01 – Investigation and surveillance equipment and methods
 - EUAF-2021-TA-02 – Digital forensic hardware
 - EUAF-2021-TA-03 – Data analytics technologies and data purchases
 - EUAF-2021-TA-04 – Detection of illicit trade
- **EUAF-2021-TRAI – Union Anti-Fraud Programme Training, Conferences, Staff Exchanges and Studies**
 - EUAF-2021-TRAI-01 – Specialised training sessions
 - EUAF-2021-TRAI-02 – Conferences, workshops and seminars
 - EUAF-2021-TRAI-03 – Staff exchanges
 - EUAF-2021-TRAI-04 – Comparative law studies and periodical publications

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

¹ Regulation (EU) 2021/785 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2021 establishing the Union Anti-Fraud Programme (OJ L 172, 17.5.2021, p. 110).

² Commission Implementing Decision C(2021) 5338 of 23 July 2021 concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2021 and the financing decision for the implementation of the Union Anti-fraud Programme.

- 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:
 - 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*).

You are also encouraged to visit the [OLAF website](#) to consult the list of projects funded previously (including under the previous Programme, Hercule III).

1. Background

The Union Anti-Fraud Programme (EUAF) promotes activities against fraud, corruption and any other illegal activities affecting the financial interests of the EU.

Among others, the Programme encourages the reinforcement of investigative capability and capacity of national authorities, including their digitalisation, in view of stepping up the fight against fraud, corruption and any other illegal activity affecting the EU financial interests, on both the revenue and expenditure sides.

The following actions are eligible for funding under the Programme:

- a) providing technical knowledge, specialised and technically advanced equipment and effective IT tools enhancing transnational and multidisciplinary cooperation and cooperation with the European Commission
- b) enhancing staff exchanges for specific projects, ensuring the necessary support and facilitating investigations, in particular the setting up of joint investigation teams and cross-border operations
- c) providing technical and operational support to national investigations, in particular to customs and law enforcement authorities to strengthen the fight against fraud and other illegal activities
- d) building IT capacity in the EU Member States and non-EU countries, increasing data exchange and developing and providing IT tools for the investigation and monitoring of intelligence work
- e) organising specialised training, risk analysis workshops, conferences and studies aimed towards improving cooperation and coordination among services concerned with the protection of the EU financial interests.

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


EUAF-2021-TA – Technical Assistance

Objectives

The EUAF Programme pursues the general objective to protect the EU financial interests. To achieve this general objective, the EUAF sets a specific objective to prevent and combat fraud, corruption and any other illegal activities affecting the EU financial interests.

The EUAF Programme aims to reinforce the investigative capability and capacity of national authorities (including their digitalisation), in view of stepping up the fight against fraud, corruption and any other illegal activity affecting the EU financial interests, on both the revenue and expenditure sides.

The AWP 2021 provides for a technical assistance call for projects having as their main purpose the acquisition of specialised equipment, tools and data technologies, including an accompanying training component on the use of purchased equipment³.

 Please ensure that there is NO overlap with projects submitted for the Customs Control Equipment Programme (CCEI). There is a strict prohibition of double funding from the EU budget.

Themes and priorities (scope)

The call will support the following four topics in 2021:

- EUAF-2021-TA-01 – Investigation and surveillance equipment and methods
- EUAF-2021-TA-02 – Digital forensic hardware
- EUAF-2021-TA-03 – Data analytics technologies and data purchases
- EUAF-2021-TA-04 – Detection of illicit trade

Activities that can be funded (scope)

Within these topics, the following activities can be funded:

- 1) investigation and surveillance equipment and methods
 - purchase and maintenance of investigation and surveillance equipment and methods used by beneficiaries in the fight against irregularities, fraud and corruption detrimental to the EU financial interests; the purchase of adapted transport equipment, IT hard- and soft-ware and audio-visual equipment may be included, provided an applicant clearly demonstrates that the purchase contributes to the achievement of the first specific objective of the UAFP; specialised training to enable staff to operate these tools has to be planned as part of the action
- 2) digital forensic hardware
 - purchase and maintenance of digital forensic equipment and software, mobile forensic tools and computer forensic collaborative systems used in

³ All technical assistance applications should demonstrate a training component on the use of purchased equipment.

the fight against (fraudulent) irregularities, fraud and corruption detrimental to the EU financial interests; cross-border cooperation enabling the exchange of information and best practices, in particular at operational level, is strongly encouraged

3) data analytics technologies and data purchases

- purchase and maintenance of commercial specialised databases, data analysis platforms capable of running analysis in big data environments, risk and predictive analysis and data mining tools, as well as systems supported by artificial intelligence used in the fight against irregularities, fraudulent activities and corruption, detrimental to the EU financial interests; these purchases include capacity building in Member States for developing, using and sharing databases and business intelligence tools; these purchases may also enable the acquisition of integrated packages, comprising for example hardware and software, access and training, including training for the 'Tobacco Tracking & Tracing' database

4) detection of illicit trade

- the purchase and maintenance of equipment to strengthen beneficiaries' operational and technical capacity to detect smuggled and counterfeited goods, including cigarettes and tobacco, imported into the EU with the intention of evading VAT, customs duties and/or excise taxes.

Expected impact

The expected results from the activities, together with the indicators enabling them and the added value and effective use of the co-financed technical equipment to be measured are as follows:

- *expected results for activities 1-3 above*: strengthening and improvement of beneficiaries' investigative and operational capacity, as measured, for example, by the number of successful operations carried out with the purchased products in support of investigations into activities detrimental to the EU financial interests, arrests made, convictions, seizures, confiscations, recoveries, prevented losses to the national and EU budgets, and fraud schemes uncovered
- *expected result for activity 4*: strengthening and improvement of beneficiaries' (in particular, customs authorities') technical capacity to carry out verifications of trucks, containers and (other) vehicles, as measured by the number of verifications and 'hits' following the use of equipment.

EUAF-2021-TRAI – Training, Conferences, Staff Exchanges and Studies

Objectives

The EUAF Programme pursues the general objective to protect the EU financial interests. To achieve this general objective, the EUAF sets a specific objective to prevent and combat fraud, corruption and any other illegal activities affecting the EU financial interests.

The EUAF Programme encourages transnational and multidisciplinary cooperation, exchanges of knowledge and best practices, and the creation of networks between national authorities, as well as between practitioners and academics involved in protecting the EU financial interests. The EUAF also aims at further raising the awareness of the judiciary and other branches of the legal profession to protect the EU financial interests.

The AWP 2021 provides for a specific call for proposals to provide financial support for training, conferences, seminars, studies, webinars and e-learning activities.

Themes and priorities (scope)

The projects must aim at the protection of the EU financial interests by preventing and combatting fraud, corruption and any other illegal activities affecting the EU financial interests.

The call will support the following four topics in 2021:

- EUAF-2021-TRAI-01 – Specialised training sessions
- EUAF-2021-TRAI-02 – Conferences, workshops and seminars
- EUAF-2021-TRAI-03 – Staff exchanges
- EUAF-2021-TRAI-04 – Comparative law studies and periodical publications

The applicants are invited to explore the following indicative priority areas:

- EU and national measures to support the new anti-fraud landscape against the background of the establishment of the EPPO and the revision of the OLAF legal framework
- cooperation between EU bodies involved in protecting the EU financial interests (*e.g. OLAF, EPPO, Eurojust, Europol*), and cooperation of these bodies with national and non-EU country authorities
- OLAF's revised framework for investigations, with special reference to the exercise and enforcement of its powers, its cooperation with national partners, the operation of the AFCOS in Member States, the evidential value of OLAF's reports, or the follow-up by relevant national authorities
- the fight against revenue fraud, including customs data analysis and new challenges in the field (*e.g. e-commerce*)
- protection of the EU internal market against counterfeits, tobacco smuggling and goods dangerous for health, security or the environment – border protection, customs cooperation and exchange of information
- research on fraud and irregularities in EU funds in the area of migration and refugees, as well as humanitarian and external aid
- the fight against fraud in EU funds in the areas of environment, climate and food security ('Green Deal'-related actions)
- emerging challenges in the fight against expenditure fraud in the context of the new MFF and new instruments such as the Recovery and Resilience Facility
- assessment of the scale, nature and causes of fraud affecting the EU budget, and methodologies for the assessment
- national and EU anti-fraud strategies and comparisons of the relevant frameworks of different Member States
- effectiveness of controls and the development of cost-effective approaches, including determining fraud risks and comparing control strategies, in selected areas (*e.g. research and innovation, environment, cohesion, agriculture, as well as in the sector of public budget support*)

- the protection of the EU budget in the case of breaches of the principles of the rule of law in the Member States.

The applicants may explore other relevant themes.

Activities that can be funded (scope)

Within the four topics, the following actions can be funded:

- 1) specialised training sessions:
 - developing specialised training sessions to improve investigation and data analysis abilities through the acquisition of new skills and knowledge of specialised methodologies and techniques
- 2) conferences, workshops and seminars:
 - organising conferences, workshops and seminars and creating networks and structural platforms between Member States, candidate countries, other non-EU countries, EU institutions and international organisations in order to:
 - facilitate the exchange of information, experience and best practices, including in the field of data analysis
 - create networks and improve coordination between Member States, candidate countries, other non-EU countries, EU institutions and international organisations
 - facilitate multi-disciplinary cooperation between anti-fraud practitioners and academics on protecting the EU financial interests and raise the awareness of the judiciary and other legal professionals of this matter
- 3) staff exchanges:
 - organising staff exchanges between national and regional administrations (including candidate and neighbouring countries) to help to further develop, improve and update staff's skills and competences in protecting the EU financial interests
- 4) comparative law studies and periodical publications:
 - developing relevant high-profile research activities, including studies in comparative law and dissemination of results and a concluding conference, where applicable
 - raising awareness among the judiciary and other branches of the legal profession as regards protecting the EU financial interests, including the dissemination of relevant scientific knowledge through periodical publications.

Associations for European Criminal Law and for the Protection of EU Financial Interests may apply for activities 2 or 4 in order to develop networks involved in the protection of the EU financial interests (such as the organisation of a conference or the annual meeting of the presidents of the associations).

Expected impact

The applicant shall demonstrate that the results of the project contribute to the achievement of the general and specific objectives of the EUAF Programme (see

above). The applicant should explain how the achievement of the expected results will be measured.

The expected results from the activities, together with the indicators enabling them to be measured, are as follows:

- *expected results for activities 1-3*: improving the ability of professionals to protect the EU financial interests through the acquisition of new skills, knowledge of specialised methodologies and techniques as well as an increased awareness of fraud risk indicators and the EU anti-fraud policy priorities and an increased networking and exchanging of best practices opportunities; these results will be measured for instance by the number of events and number of participants, their origin and professional background, the number of anti-fraud publications distributed to target audiences and the level of participants' overall satisfaction with the events⁴.
- *expected results for activity 4*: development of high-profile research, including comparative law studies, as measured by the number of research activities and comparative law studies co-financed and their quality and originality; raising of awareness of the judiciary and other branches of the legal profession of the issue of protecting the EU financial interests; these results will be measured for instance by the number of scientific publications distributed to stakeholders, the type and number of methods of dissemination of relevant scientific knowledge, the number, origin and professional background of participants in conferences, and the level of participants' overall satisfaction with the event(s)⁵, if applicable.

The above-mentioned list of results is not exhaustive and the applicants may add other results it considers relevant in relation to the objectives of the Programme.

3. Available budget

The available budget for the two calls is **EUR 10 900 000**.

Specific budget information can be found in the table below.

Topic	Topic budget
EUAF-2021-TA — Technical Assistance	EUR 9 300 000
EUAF-2021-TRAI – Training, Conferences, Staff Exchanges and Studies	EUR 1 600 000

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 On the last day of each event, the beneficiary will ensure that each participant carefully fills in an event-evaluation-form, the template of which is available on the [Funding & tender portal](#). Five months after the end date of the project, the recipient will ensure that participants in project events receive and carefully complete the post-event survey forms available on the portal [Funding & tender portal](#).

⁵ Idem, see above.

4. Timetable and deadlines

Timetable and deadlines (indicative)	
Call opening:	22 July 2021
<u>Deadline for submission:</u>	<u>5 October 2021 – 17:00:00 CET</u> <u>(Brussels)</u>
Evaluation:	October 2021- February 2022
Information on evaluation results:	February-March 2022
GA signature:	March-April 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).

Project acronym – Please use the following naming convention: 'Year-Country-Acronym' (ex. 2021-BE-REI).

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 (*template available in the Submission System*)
 - CVs of core project team: not applicable
 - activity reports of last year: not applicable
 - list of previous projects (key projects for the last 3 years)
 - **for the Technical Assistance call:** documents supporting the price estimates for the equipment (*e.g. price quotations and supplier brochures*)
 - **for the Training call:** draft agenda/outline (for the events, study, periodical publication).

⚠ Please note that the amounts entered into the **summarised budget table** (filled in directly **online**) **must correspond to** the amounts calculated in the **detailed**


budget table. In case of discrepancies, the amounts in the online summarised budget table will prevail.

At proposal submission, you will have to confirm that you have the **mandate to act** for all applicants. Moreover, you will have to confirm that the information in the application is correct and complete and that the participants comply with the conditions for receiving EU funding (especially eligibility, financial and operational capacity, exclusion, etc). Before signing the grant, each beneficiary and affiliated entity will have to confirm this again by signing a declaration of honour (DoH). Proposals without full support will be rejected.

Your application must be **readable, accessible and printable.**

Proposals are limited to maximum **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 applicants (beneficiaries and affiliated entities) must:

- be legal entities (public or private bodies) which are:
 - **for the Technical Assistance call:** national or regional public authorities or international organisations whose task is to protect the EU financial interests
 - **for the Training call:**
 - national or regional public authorities or international organisations that can help to achieve a EUAF objective, in particular to protect the EU financial interests or
 - research and educational institutes and non-profit making entities that can help to achieve the objectives of the EUAF Programme, in particular to protect the EU financial interests, and have been established and operating for at least one year
- be from a:
 - EU Member State (including overseas countries and territories (OCTs)) or
 - listed EEA country or country associated to the EUAF Programme or country which is in ongoing negotiations for an association agreement and where the agreement enters into force before grant signature ([list of participating countries](#))

Beneficiaries 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*).

Specific cases

International organisations — International organisations are 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 persons⁶.

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

Associations and interest groupings — Entities composed of members may participate as 'sole beneficiaries' or 'beneficiaries without legal personality'⁷. ⚠ Please note that if the action will be implemented by the members, they should also participate (either as beneficiaries or as affiliated entities, otherwise their costs will NOT be eligible).

Countries currently negotiating association agreements — Beneficiaries from countries with ongoing negotiations (*see 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)*⁸ and entities covered by Commission Guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#)⁹). 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

Only applications by single applicants are allowed (single beneficiaries; affiliated entities and other participants are allowed, if needed).

Eligible activities

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

Projects should take into account the results of projects supported by other EU funding programmes. The complementarities must be described in the project proposals (Part B of the Application Form).

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

Financial support to third parties is not allowed.

⁶ See Article 197(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

⁷ For the definitions, see Articles 187(2) and 197(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

⁸ 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](#).

⁹ 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).

Geographic location (target countries)

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

Duration

Projects should normally range between 12 months and 24 months (extensions are possible, if duly justified and through an amendment).

Project budget

Project budgets (total estimated project costs) are expected to be:

- for the **Technical Assistance call**: not lower than EUR 100 000.
- for the **Training call**: not lower than EUR 40 000 (except for staff exchanges).

7. Financial and operational capacity and exclusion

Financial capacity

Applicants must have **stable and sufficient resources** to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share. Organisations participating in several projects must have sufficient capacity to implement all these projects.

The financial capacity check will be carried out on the basis of the documents you will be requested to upload in the [Participant Register](#) during grant preparation (*e.g. profit and loss account and balance sheet, business plan, audit report produced by an approved external auditor, certifying the accounts for the last closed financial year, etc*). The analysis will be based on neutral financial indicators, but will also take into account other aspects, such as dependency on EU funding and deficit and revenue in previous years.

The check will normally be done for all beneficiaries, except:

- public bodies (entities established as public body under national law, including local, regional or national authorities) or international organisations
- if the individual requested grant amount is not more than EUR 60 000.

If needed, it may also be done for affiliated entities.

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

- further information
 - an enhanced financial responsibility regime, i.e. joint and several responsibility for all beneficiaries or joint and several liability of affiliated entities (*see below, section 10*)
 - prefinancing paid in instalments
 - (one or more) prefinancing guarantees (*see below, section 10*)
- or
- propose no prefinancing
 - request that you are replaced or, if needed, reject the entire proposal.

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

Operational capacity

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

This capacity will be assessed together with the 'Quality' award criterion, 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.

If the evaluation of the award criterion is positive, the applicants are considered to have sufficient operational capacity.

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

- short description in the Application Form (Part B) of:
 - the applicant's main activities including an organisation chart
 - the team that will implement the project, the allocation of tasks within the team and a description of the relevant competences of the team members
- list of previous projects (key projects for the last 3 years).

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

Public bodies, Member State organisations and international 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 participate¹⁰:

- 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 misconduct¹¹ (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

¹⁰ See Articles 136 and 141 of EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

¹¹ 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.

- (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No [2988/95](#) (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
 - created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin or created another entity with this purpose (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant).

Applicants will also be refused if it turns out that¹²:

- 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** 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.

For proposals with the same score (within a call) a **priority order** will be determined according to the following approach:


Successively for every group of *ex aequo* proposals, starting with the highest scored group, and continuing in descending order:

- 1) Projects focusing on a theme that is not otherwise covered by higher ranked projects will be considered to have the highest priority.
- 2) The *ex aequo* proposals within the same topic will be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the award criterion 'Added Value'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Conformity'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Quality'.
- 3) If this does not allow to determine the priority, a further prioritisation can be done by considering the overall project portfolio and the creation of positive synergies between projects, or other factors related to the objectives of the call. These factors will be documented in the panel report.
- 4) After that, the remainder of the available call budget will be used to fund projects across the different topics in order to ensure a balanced spread of the geographical and thematic coverage and while respecting to the maximum

¹² See Article 141 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

possible extent the order of merit based on the evaluation of the award criteria.

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 the two calls are as follows:

- **Conformity with the objectives of the EUAF Programme (30 points):**
 - Coherence — the action's objectives are based on a "needs" analysis (in response to an identified existing problem); they are clearly defined, realistic and address issues which are relevant for this specific call
 - Relevance — clarity and consistency of project, objectives and planning; extent to which they match the themes and priorities and objectives of the call; contribution to the EU strategic and legislative context; trans-national dimension; potential to develop mutual trust/cross-border cooperation
- **Quality (20 points):**
 - Project team and cooperation arrangements: quality and appropriate competences of the project teams; appropriate procedures and problem-solving mechanisms
 - Project design and implementation: technical quality; methodology for implementing the project (concept and methodology, management, procedures, timetable, risks and risk management, monitoring and evaluation); feasibility of the project within the proposed time frame
- **Value for money (20 points):** sufficient and appropriate budget for proper implementation in the context of the expected long-term impact and results; clear and detailed budget
- **Added value for the protection of the EU financial interests (30 points):**

- Impact — expected medium and long-term impact of results on target groups/general public, EU-level impact, impact/interest for a number of countries, sustainability of results after EU funding ends
- Dissemination — appropriate dissemination strategy for ensuring sustainability and highest outreach, potential multiplier effects

Award criteria	Minimum pass score	Maximum score
Conformity with EUAF Programme objectives	18	30
Quality	12	20
Value for money	12	20
Added value	18	30
Overall (pass) scores	60	100

Maximum points: 100 points.

Individual thresholds per criterion: 18/30, 12/20, 12/20 and 18/30 points.

Overall threshold: 60 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](#).

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: project duration should normally range between 12 and 24 months (extensions are possible, if duly justified and through an amendment).

Milestones and deliverables

The milestones and deliverables for each project will be managed through the Portal Grant Management System and will be reflected in Annex 1 of the Grant Agreement.

The following deliverables will be mandatory for all projects:

- for the Technical Assistance call:

- ex post implementation questionnaire – *to be submitted one year after the end of the action*
- **for the Training call:**
 - final agenda of each event
 - signed list of participants/attendance lists for each event
 - event evaluation forms filled-in by the participants on the last day of an event
 - event feedback form with the summary of scores from participants' feedback
 - post-event survey form and post-event feedback form to evaluate the medium-term impact of the project on the participants – *to be submitted 6 months after the end of the action*

Please use the templates available on the EUAF Programme section of the [Funding & Tenders Portal Reference Documents](#).

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 (total estimated project costs): *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 costs 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 (**80%**). You can apply for a higher project funding rate (**90%**) if your project is a 'priority action', i.e.:

- **for the Technical Assistance call:**
 - reflect the findings of the annual reports on implementation of Article 325 TFEU on combating fraud, in particular the identification of the situations that are vulnerable and most exposed to threats in protecting the EU financial interests
 - reflect the findings of the European Court of Auditors' Special Report 19/2017 on import procedures
 - relate to the implementation of the Commission communication of 6 June 2013 entitled 'Stepping up the fight against cigarette smuggling and other forms of illicit trade in tobacco products - A comprehensive EU Strategy'¹³ or
 - relate to the implementation of the Commission communication of 29 April 2019 entitled 'Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy: enhanced action to

¹³ COM(2013) 324 final.

protect the EU budget¹⁴ and implementation of its accompanying action plan¹⁵

- for the Training call:
 - projects undertaken by an applicant which fulfills at least two of the following criteria:
 - is a scientific, or research organisation or non-profit making entity
 - and
 - has been specifically created to promote studies in European criminal law
 - supports the creation of networks in the area of promotion of studies in European criminal law
 - is geared towards protecting the EU financial interests
- or
- projects that cover one of the areas listed above for the Technical Assistance call.

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
- E. Indirect costs

Specific cost eligibility conditions for this call:

- personnel costs:

¹⁴ COM(2019) 196 final.

¹⁵ SWD(2019) 170 final.

- travel and subsistence unit cost¹⁶: Yes
- equipment costs:
 - **for the Technical Assistance call**: full cost (*— equipment and maintenance; delivery and installation costs may be included*)
 - **for the Training call**: depreciation
- other cost categories:
 - costs for financial support to third parties: not allowed
- indirect cost flat-rate:
 - **for the Technical Assistance call**: 0% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs and exempted specific cost categories, if any)
 - **for the Training call**: 7% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs and exempted specific cost categories, if any)
- VAT: VAT is NOT eligible
- other:
 - in-kind contributions for free are allowed, but cost-neutral, i.e. they cannot be declared as cost
 - project websites: communication costs for presenting the project on the participants' websites or social media accounts are eligible; costs for *separate* project websites are not eligible
 - other ineligible costs:
 - **for the Technical Assistance call**: Yes, costs for infrastructure, land purchase
 - **for the Training call**: 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*).

After grant signature, you will normally receive a **prefinancing** to start working on the project (float of normally **50%** of the maximum grant amount; exceptionally less or no prefinancing). The prefinancing will be paid 30 days from entry into force/financial guarantee (if required) — whichever is the latest.

There will be no **interim payments**

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 to pay back the difference (recovery).

 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*).

¹⁶ 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).

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 or lower than the prefinancing for your grant.

The guarantee should be in euro and issued by an approved bank/financial institution established in an EU Member State. If you are established in a non-EU country and would like to provide a guarantee from a bank/financial institution in your country, please contact us (this may be exceptionally accepted, if it offers equivalent security).

Amounts blocked in bank accounts will NOT be accepted as financial guarantees.

Prefinancing guarantees are formally NOT linked to individual consortium members, which means that you are free to organise how to provide the guarantee amount (*by one or several beneficiaries, for the overall amount or several guarantees for partial amounts, by the beneficiary concerned or by another beneficiary, etc*). It is however important that the requested amount is covered and that the guarantee(s) are sent to us in time to make the prefinancing (scanned copy via Portal AND original by post).

If agreed with us, the bank guarantee may be replaced by a guarantee from a third party.

The guarantee will be released at the end of the grant, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Grant Agreement.

Certificates

Depending on the type of action, size of grant amount and type of beneficiaries, you may be requested to submit different certificates. The types, schedules and thresholds for each certificate are fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4 and art 24*).

Liability regime for recoveries

The liability regime for recoveries will be fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet point 4.4 and art 22*).

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)*:

- communication and dissemination plan: Yes
- additional communication and dissemination activities: Yes

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

- **for the Technical Assistance call**: durability: 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 EU Login user account](#).

Once you have an EU Login account, you can [register your organisation](#) in the Participant Register. When your registration is finalised, you will receive a 9-digit participant identification code (PIC).

b) submit the proposal

Access the Electronic Submission System via the Topic page in the [Search Funding & Tenders](#) section (or, for calls sent by invitation to submit a proposal, through the link provided in the invitation letter).

Submit your proposal in 3 parts, as follows:

- Part A includes administrative information about the applicant organisations (future coordinator, beneficiaries, affiliated entities and associated partners) and the summarised budget for the proposal. Fill it in directly online
- Part B (description of the action) covers the technical content of the proposal. Download the mandatory word template from the Submission System, fill it in and upload it as a PDF file
- Annexes (*see section 5*). Upload them as PDF file (single or multiple depending on the slots). Excel upload is sometimes possible, depending on the file type.

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

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

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

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

[webform](#), explaining the circumstances and attaching a copy of the proposal (and, if possible, screenshots to show what happened).

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

12. Help

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

- [Online Manual](#)
- FAQs on the Topic page
- [Portal FAQ](#) (for general questions).

Please also consult the Topic page regularly, since we will use it to publish call updates.

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:

- **for the Technical Assistance call:** OLAF-FMB-HERCULE-TA@ec.europa.eu
- **for the Training call:** OLAF-ANTI-FRAUD-TRAINING@ec.europa.eu.

Please indicate clearly the reference of the call and topic to which your question relates (*see cover page*).

13. Important



IMPORTANT

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

The roles should be attributed according to the level of participation in the project. Main participants should participate as **beneficiaries** or **affiliated entities**; other entities can participate as associated partners, subcontractors, third parties giving in-kind contributions. **Associated partners** and third parties giving in-kind contributions should bear their own costs (they will not become formal recipients of EU funding). **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.

- **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](#).