



Justice Programme (JUST)

Call for proposals

Call for 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements to support European networks active in the area of facilitating and promoting judicial cooperation in civil and/or criminal matters and in the area of access to justice

JUST-2021-JCOO-JACC-OG-FPA

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Call: JUST-2021-JCOO-JACC-OG-FPA — Call for 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements to support European networks active in the area of facilitating and promoting judicial cooperation in civil and/or criminal matters and in the area of access to justice

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION
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JUST.04 – Programme and financial management

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

0. Introduction	4
1. Background.....	5
2. Objectives — Themes and priorities — Activities that can be funded — Expected impact	5
JUST-2021-JCOO-JACC-OG-FPA — Call for 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements to support European networks active in the area of facilitating and promoting judicial cooperation in civil and/or criminal matters and in the area of access to justice.....	5
Objectives (expected outcome), Themes and priorities (scope).....	6
Judicial cooperation.....	6
Priorities for Judicial cooperation in civil matters:.....	6
Priorities for judicial cooperation in criminal matters	7
Access to justice.....	8
Activities that can be funded (scope).....	9
Expected impact.....	10
Expected results for judicial cooperation	10
Expected results for access to justice	10
3. Available budget	11
4. Timetable and deadlines	11
5. Admissibility.....	12
6. Eligibility.....	13
Eligible participants (eligible countries).....	13
Consortium composition	14
Eligible activities.....	14
Geographic location (target countries).....	14
Duration	15
Project budget.....	15
Ethics and EU values.....	15
7. Financial and operational capacity and exclusion.....	15

Call: JUST-2021-JCOO-JACC-OG-FPA — Call for 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements to support European networks active in the area of facilitating and promoting judicial cooperation in civil and/or criminal matters and in the area of access to justice

Financial capacity	15
Operational capacity	16
Exclusion	16
8. Evaluation and award procedure	17
9. Award criteria.....	18
10. Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements – not applicable.....	19
11. How to submit an application.....	19
12. Help	20
13. Important	21


0. Introduction

This is a call for EU **framework partnerships for grants** in the field of facilitating and promoting judicial cooperation in civil and/or criminal matters and in the area of access to justice under the **Justice Programme (JUST)**.

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

- Regulation 2018/1046 ([EU Financial Regulation](#))
- the basic act: Regulation (EU) [2021/xxxx], new Justice Programme basic act¹).

The call is launched in accordance with the 2021-2022 Work Programme² and will be managed by **the European Commission, Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers (DG JUST)**.

 Please note that this call is subject to the final adoption of the Justice Programme Regulation by the legislative authority and of the Work Programme. In case there are substantial changes, we may have to modify the call (or even cancel it).

Framework partnerships (FPAs) are long-term cooperation instruments that serve as umbrella for regular or recurrent grants in the same field or area and under a common action plan (or work programme of activities). They are a prerequisite for being able to apply for these grants, but don't create any legitimate expectations or entitlement to get them. FPA beneficiaries are normally identified on the basis of a standard evaluation and award procedure and then invited to submit their proposals for grants (closed calls; addressed directly to the framework partners). Grant agreements (SGAs) can only be signed if the FPA has been signed, and before the end date of the FPA.

The call covers the following **topic**:

- **JUST-2021-JCOO-JACC-OG-FPA Call for 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements to support European networks active in the area of facilitating and promoting judicial cooperation in civil and/or criminal matters and in the area of access to justice**

¹ Proposal for a Regulation [COM\(2018\) 384 final](#) – pending adoption by the European Parliament and the Council.

² Commission Implementing Decision C(YYYY) NN final of [date] concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2021-2022 and the financing decision for the implementation of the Justice Programme.

Call: JUST-2021-JCOO-JACC-OG-FPA — Call for 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements to support European networks active in the area of facilitating and promoting judicial cooperation in civil and/or criminal matters and in the area of access to justice

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

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

- the [Call Document](#) outlines the:
 - background, objectives, scope, activities that can be funded and the expected results (sections 1 and 2)
 - timetable and available budget (sections 3 and 4)
 - admissibility and eligibility conditions, criteria for financial and operational capacity and exclusion (sections 5, 6 and 7)
 - evaluation and award procedure (section 8)
 - award criteria (section 9)
 - legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements (section 10) – not applicable for FPA
 - 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 [Justice and Consumers](#) page on Europa and the [Justice Programme Project Results](#) website to consult the list of projects funded previously.

1. Background

This call aims to establish 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements with European networks whose statutory aims are to facilitate and support judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters and/or access to justice for all. The annual operating grants to be signed on the basis of these Framework Partnership Agreements will enhance the capacities of these networks to contribute actively to the development and implementation of the EU policies in these areas.

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

JUST-2021-JCOO-JACC-OG-FPA — Call for 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements to support European networks active in the area of facilitating and promoting judicial cooperation in civil and/or criminal matters and in the area of access to justice

Call: JUST-2021-JCOO-JACC-OG-FPA — Call for 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements to support European networks active in the area of facilitating and promoting judicial cooperation in civil and/or criminal matters and in the area of access to justice

Objectives (expected outcome), Themes and priorities (scope)

Judicial cooperation

The objective of the Call is to facilitate and support judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters, and promote the rule of law, independence and impartiality of the judiciary, including by supporting the efforts to improve the effectiveness of national justice systems, and the effective enforcement of decisions.

Furthermore, in the digital age and against the background of the challenges highlighted by the COVID-19 crisis, judicial cooperation needs to make full use of electronic tools and channels to ensure the effective, swift, secure and resilient communication between the competent authorities and with the relevant actors.

Priorities for Judicial cooperation in civil matters:

In the area of civil matters, priority is given to activities in the areas of cross-border family law and successions, mediation, recognition of civil status, protection of vulnerable adults, cross-border enforcement of claims, insolvency, company law, minimum common standards of procedural law (including service of documents) and application of foreign law.

Priority will be also given to activities aimed at ensuring the correct implementation of the EU acquis in judicial cooperation in civil matters and the exchange of information and networking between legal, judicial and administrative authorities and the legal professions, aimed at promoting judicial cooperation across Europe, including through electronic channels of communication.

The main legislative measures concerned include in particular:

- Regulation (EU) No 1215/2012 on jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial matters (recast), (OJ L 351 of 20 December 2012, p. 1);
- Regulation (EU) No 650/2012 on jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition and enforcement of decisions and acceptance and enforcement of authentic instruments in matters of successions and on the creation of a European Certificate of Succession (OJ L 201 of 27 July 2012, p. 107);
- Regulation (EC) No 805/2004 creating a European Enforcement Order for uncontested claims (OJ L 143 of 30 April 2004, p. 15);
- Regulation (EC) No 1896/2006 creating a European order for payment procedure and - Regulation (EC) No 861/2007 establishing a European Small Claims Procedure as amended by Regulation (EU) 2015/2421 of 16 December 2015 ,(OJ L 341 of 24 December 2015, p. 1);
- Regulation (EU) No 2015/848 on insolvency proceedings (recast),(OJ L 141 of 5 June 2015, p. 19.);
- Regulation (EU) No 655/2014 establishing a European Account Preservation Order procedure to facilitate cross-border debt recovery in civil and commercial matters, (OJ L 189 of 27 June 2014, p. 59);
- Council Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003 of 27 November 2003 concerning jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in matrimonial matters and the matters of parental responsibility, repealing Regulation (EC) No 1347/2000, OJ L 338, 23.12.2003;

Call: JUST-2021-JCOO-JACC-OG-FPA — Call for 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements to support European networks active in the area of facilitating and promoting judicial cooperation in civil and/or criminal matters and in the area of access to justice

- Council Regulation (EC) No 4/2009 of 18 December 2008 on jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition and enforcement of decisions and cooperation in matters relating to maintenance obligations (OJ L 149 of 12 June 2009, p. 73);
- Council Regulation (EU) No 1259/2010 of 20 December 2010 implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the law applicable to divorce and legal separation, (OJ L 343 of 29 December 2010, p. 10);
- Council Regulation (EU) 2016/1103 of 24 June 2016 implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of jurisdiction, applicable law and the recognition and enforcement of decisions in matters of matrimonial property regimes (OJ L 183 of 8 July 2016, p. 1);
- Council Regulation (EU) 2016/1104 of 24 June 2016 implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of jurisdiction, applicable law and the recognition and enforcement of decisions in matters of the property consequences of registered partnerships, (OJ L 183 of 8 July 2016, p. 30);
- Regulation (EU) 2016/1191 of 6 July 2016 on promoting the free movement of citizens by simplifying the requirements for presenting certain public documents in the European Union and amending Regulation (EU) No 1024/2012, (OJ L 200 of 26 July 2016, p. 1);
- Directive 2008/52/EC on certain aspects of mediation in civil and commercial proceedings, OJ L 136, 24.5.2008;
- Regulation (EC) No 593/2008 on the law applicable to contractual obligations (Rome I), OJ L177, 4.7.2008, p.6;
- Regulation (EC) No 864/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the law applicable to non-contractual obligations (Rome II); OJ L 199, 31.7.2007, p.40;
- Council Regulation (EC) No 1206/2001, of 28 May 2001 on cooperation between the courts of the Member States in the taking of evidence in civil or commercial matters (OJ L 174 of 27 June 2001, p. 1);
- Regulation (EC) No 1393/2007 on the service in the Member states of judicial and extrajudicial documents in civil or commercial matters (service of documents, OJ L324, 10.12.2007, p.79;
- Council Directive 2003/8/EC to improve access to justice in cross-border disputes by establishing minimum common rules relating to legal aid for such disputes, OJ L 26, 31.1.2003, p.41.

Priorities for judicial cooperation in criminal matters

In the area of criminal matters, the activities to be implemented by these networks must contribute to furthering the understanding and the implementation of EU legislation in this area. Of particular importance for the given period are activities supporting knowledge-sharing and providing guidance on the practical aspects of the implementation of the EU acquis. As regards detention, the activities to be carried out must relate to the practical application of the EU Framework Decisions in the field of detention, to alternatives to imprisonment both in the pre-trial and post-trial stage, to the issue of radicalisation in prisons and activities aiming to improve detention conditions in the Member States in order to enhance the efficient operation of EU mutual recognition instruments.

The main legislative measures concerned include in particular:

Call: JUST-2021-JCOO-JACC-OG-FPA — Call for 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements to support European networks active in the area of facilitating and promoting judicial cooperation in civil and/or criminal matters and in the area of access to justice

- Council Framework Decision of 13 June 2002 on the European arrest warrant and the surrender procedures between Member States (2002/584/JHA);
- Council Framework Decision 2005/214/JHA of 24 February 2005 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to financial penalties;
- Council Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA of 27 November 2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition for judgments imposing custodial sentences or measures involving deprivation of liberty;
- Council Framework Decision 2008/947/JHA of 27 November 2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments and probation decisions with a view to the supervision of probation measures and alternative sanctions;
- Council Framework Decision 2009/829/JHA of 23 October 2009 on the application, between Member States of the European Union, of the principle of mutual recognition to decisions on supervision measures as an alternative to provisional detention;
- Directive 2011/99/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the European protection order;
- Directive 2014/41/EU on the European Investigation Order in criminal matters;
- Regulation (EU) 2018/1805 on the mutual recognition of freezing orders and confiscation orders;
- Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA of 27 November (Transfer of Prisoners) OJ 5.12.2008, L 327/27, Framework Decision 2008/947/JHA of 27 November 2008 (Probation and Alternative Sanctions), OJ 16.12.2008, L 337/102, and Framework Decision 2009/829/JHA of 23 October 2009 (European Supervision Order), OJ 11.11.2009, L 294/20.

Access to justice

The objective of the Call is to facilitate effective and non-discriminatory access to justice for all, and effective redress, including by promoting the use of electronic means of communication (e-justice), by promoting efficient civil, and criminal procedures, and by promoting and supporting the rights of all victims of crime as well as the procedural rights of suspects and accused persons in criminal proceedings.

The activities to be carried out by these networks in the given period must contribute to the understanding and the implementation of victims' rights [1] and on procedural rights of suspected and accused persons [2].

In the field of victims' rights, the activities to be carried out include, practical application of the relevant EU rules, notably the Victims' Rights Directive, but also application of the EU rules related to compensation to victims and to increased protection of victims in cross-border cases (including victims of terrorism). The activities should focus on exchanging of best practice, including best methods of implementation of the EU rules and on mutual learning. The overall objective should be to foster the cooperation among the Member State and among the responsible national authorities (national experts) and the relevant practitioners who come into contact with victims (including police, prosecution, judicial authorities, lawyers and support services). The activities should take into account the recent developments in

the EU policy on victims' rights and notably follow the recommendations set up in the EU Strategy on Victims' Rights (2020-2025)³.

In the field of procedural rights of suspected and accused persons activities of particular importance are those supporting the correct implementation of the Directive on the right of access to a lawyer and the Directives adopted in 2016. Activities could cover practical aspects of the implementation process of all procedural rights directives and the two Commission recommendations of 2013⁴. They should provide guidance and outline best practices, and they should foster the cooperation between Member States to improve the rights of defence. Activities could also cover pre-trial detention (in particular the use of alternatives to detention) and other areas in the field of procedural rights, such as the protection of vulnerable persons, the collection, transfer and use of evidence in cross-border proceedings, and remedies.

The objective of the Call is also to increase capacity of national practitioners to secure access to justice and to respect the fundamental rights with networks' support to the implementation of the Communication from the Commission on 'Ensuring justice in the EU — a European judicial training strategy for 2021-2024'⁵ and Communication from the Commission setting strategy to strengthen the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the EU⁶.

[1]Directive 2012/29/EU of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, OJ L 315 of 14.11.2012, p. 57-73; Council Directive 2004/80/EC of 29 April 2004 relating to compensation to crime victims, OJ L 261, 6.8.2004, p. 15-18; Directive 2011/99/EU of 13 December 2011 on the European protection order OJ L 338, 21.12.2011, p. 2-18 and Regulation (EU) No 606/2013 of 12 June 2013 on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters, OJ L 338, 21.12.2011, p. 2-18.

[2]Directive 2010/64/EU of 20 October 2010 on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings, OJ L 280 of 26.10.2010, p. 1-7; Directive 2012/13/EU of 22 May 2012 on the right to information in criminal proceedings, OJ L 142 of 1.6.2012, p. 1-10.; Directive 2013/48/EU of 22 October 2013 on the right of access to a lawyer in criminal proceedings and in EAW proceedings, OJ L 294, 6.11.2013, p. 1-12; Directive (EU) 2016/343 of 9 March 2019 on presumption of innocence, OJ L 64, 11.3.2016, p.1-11; Directive (EU) 2016/800 of 11 May 2016 on procedural safeguards for children, OJ L 132, 21.5.2016, p.1-20; Directive (EU) 2016/1919 of 26 October 2016 on legal aid for suspect and accused persons in criminal proceedings, OJ L 297, p.1-8.

Activities that can be funded (scope)

This call will support networks whose activities contribute to the implementation of the objectives of the Programme and which will implement among others: analytical

³ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the EU Strategy on victims' rights (2020-2025).

⁴ Commission Recommendation of 27 November 2013 on procedural safeguards for vulnerable persons suspected or accused in criminal proceedings, OJ C 378 of 24.12.2013, p.8; Commission Recommendation of 27 November 2013 on the right to legal aid for suspects or accused persons in criminal proceedings, OJ C 378 of 24.12.2013, p.11.

⁵ COM(2020) 713 final.

⁶ COM(2020) 711 final

activities, training activities, mutual learning, cooperation, awareness-raising and dissemination activities with EU added value.

All activities shall, both at design and implementation stage, incorporate a gender equality perspective. This entails to apply due diligence to gender specific issues in all aspects of the call for proposals, including but not limited to the identification of best practices, data collection, including sex-disaggregated statistics, information dissemination to forestall discrimination, victimisation and stereotyping of women and men.

Expected impact

Expected results for judicial cooperation

- Increased capacity of national practitioners, authorities to address issues related to judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters, and to the application of the Union instruments on civil law, procedural civil law and procedural criminal law;
- Strengthened cooperation and exchange of information between competent national authorities in relation to judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters, including taking into account the relevant case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU);
- Increased resilience of the judicial systems to conduct cross-border judicial cooperation procedures in times of crisis and facilitation of the conduct of the proceedings through the use of digital tools;
- Improved knowledge on the legislation and administrative practices related to judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters;
- Harmonisation of the administrative practices in relation to the relevant legislation in different Member States;
- Improved cooperation between judicial authorities in civil, commercial and criminal matters;
- The legal framework and regulations linked to judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters are in line with EU acquis and relevant case-law of the CJEU;
- National authorities responsible for judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters operate in cooperation and coordination with other responsible agencies and institutions across the EU;
- Prosecutors and judges for the proceedings related to judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters have further specialised knowledge and experience in respective fields;
- Acceleration of proceedings in relation to judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters, and decrease in breaches of time-limits;
- Improved situation of persons subject to measures in the field of judicial cooperation in criminal matters; enhancement of their social rehabilitation and re-integration of detained persons;
- Increased awareness of policy makers related to judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters.

Expected results for access to justice

Call: JUST-2021-JCOO-JACC-OG-FPA — Call for 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements to support European networks active in the area of facilitating and promoting judicial cooperation in civil and/or criminal matters and in the area of access to justice

- Improved knowledge of European judicial systems;
- Increased capacity of national justice professionals;
- Improved access to justice through the use of digital tools for all types of civil and criminal proceedings;
- Strengthened cooperation and exchange of information between competent national authorities and European networks in relation to the rights of persons suspected or accused of crime and of victims of crime;
- Improved knowledge on the legislation and administrative practices related to specific provisions of the EU acquis regulating the rights of suspects and accused in criminal proceedings and of victims of crime;
- Reduced risks of breaches of fair trial rights;
- Improved cooperation of NGOs and professional organisations in the field of the rights of persons suspected or accused of crime and of victims of crime;
- Increased awareness of the relevant policy makers on the rights of persons suspected or accused of crime and of victims of crime;
- Improved public awareness and knowledge about procedural rights of suspected and accused persons and victims' rights at both EU and national level;
- Increased awareness and knowledge on the use of digital tools in criminal proceedings and its impact (chances and risks) on the procedural rights of suspected and accused persons and victims' rights at both EU and national level;
- Improved knowledge about specific provisions of the EU acquis regulating the issues such as referring victims to the relevant support services, victims' access to information in the area of victims' rights, individual assessment of victims' needs;
- Increased number of victims' support organisations providing general and specialist support services to victims of crimes and their family members, in particular in those Member States who currently do not provide such services or provide them in insufficient manner;
- Increased quality of the services provided by victims support organisations;
- Improved knowledge about national compensation schemes and increased support for victims claiming compensation.

3. Available budget

The total budget earmarked for grants calls under this framework partnership call is EUR 4,2 million / year, to be granted following annual Specific Grant Agreement (SGA) calls.

Depending on the number and quality of proposals, we expect to sign between 13 and 15 framework partnerships.

4. Timetable and deadlines

Timetable and deadlines (indicative)	
FPA	
Call opening:	9 March 2021
<u>Deadline for submission:</u>	<u>6 May 2021 – 17:00:00 CET (Brussels)</u>

Call: JUST-2021-JCOO-JACC-OG-FPA — Call for 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements to support European networks active in the area of facilitating and promoting judicial cooperation in civil and/or criminal matters and in the area of access to justice

Evaluation:	May - June 2021
Information on evaluation results:	July-August 2021
FPA signature:	August-September 2021
First SGA calls	
Invitations to submit proposals:	July 2021
Opening for submission:	July 2021
<u>Deadline for submission:</u>	<u>22 September 2021 – 17:00:00 CET</u> (Brussels)
Evaluation:	October - November 2021
Information on evaluation results:	November 2021
GA signature:	December 2021

5. Admissibility


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 as PDF in the system*)
- **mandatory annexes and supporting documents** (*to be uploaded as PDF files/included in Part B*):
 - detailed budget table: not applicable
 - CVs (standard) of core project team (or, where the key personnel is not yet known, a job profile description)
 - activity report of last year of the coordinator
 - list of previous projects (key projects for the last 4 years)
 - for participants with activities involving children: their child protection policy covering the four areas described in the [Keeping Children Safe Child Safeguarding Standards](#)

 Please note that an annual activity report is NOT a financial audit report or balance sheet, but a report highlighting the activities and projects of your organisation.

The child protection policies must be available online and transparent to everyone who comes in contact with the organisation. They must include clear information about the recruitment of staff (including trainees and volunteers) and include background checks (vetting). They must also include clear procedures and rules to staff, including reporting rules, and continuous training.

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 framework partnership, 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 **45 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 must:

- be legal entities, private non-profit-oriented organisations (private bodies)
- be established in one of the eligible countries, i.e.:
 - EU Member State (including overseas countries and territories (OCTs), excluding Denmark)
 - non-EU countries:
 - countries associated to the Justice Programme (associated countries) or countries which are in ongoing negotiations for an association agreement and where the agreement enters into force before grant signature
- be an established formal network (either with own legal personality or without legal personality but represented by a joint secretariat or officially appointed coordinator), organised at European level and with members from at least 14 EU Member States or associated countries)
- the network's statutory aims must fall under the objective of the Programme to facilitate and support judicial cooperation in civil and/or in criminal matters and/or access to justice for all.

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.

Call: JUST-2021-JCOO-JACC-OG-FPA — Call for 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements to support European networks active in the area of facilitating and promoting judicial cooperation in civil and/or criminal matters and in the area of access to justice

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

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).

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 persons⁷.

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

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)*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](#).

The identity of the applicant will be verified through the documents provided in the [Participant Register](#) during legal entity validation (copy of the resolution, decision or other official document establishing the entity).

Consortium composition

Only applications by single applicants are allowed.

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.

⁷ See Article 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

The foreseen duration of activities under the FPA is 48 months (extensions are possible, if duly justified and through an amendment).

Project budget

N/A

Ethics and EU values

Projects must comply with:

- ethical principles (including the [General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679](#))
- EU values based on Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union and Article 21 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights
- other applicable EU, international and national law.

Projects must seek to promote gender equality and non-discrimination mainstreaming in accordance with the [Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit](#). Project activities should contribute to the equal empowerment of women and men in all their diversity, ensuring that they achieve their full potential and enjoy the same rights (*see [Non-discrimination mainstreaming instruments, case studies and ways forward](#)*). They should also seek to reduce levels of discrimination suffered by particular groups (as well as those at risk of multiple discrimination) and to improve equality outcomes for individuals¹⁰. Proposals should integrate gender and non-discrimination considerations in proposals and target a gender-balanced representation in project teams and activities. It is also important that individual data collected by the beneficiaries are broken down by sex ([sex-disaggregated data](#)), disability or age whenever possible.

Applicants must show in their application that they respect ethical principles and EU values based on Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union and Article of the 21 EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

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:

¹⁰ [Non-discrimination mainstreaming- instruments, case studies and way forwards](#)

Call: JUST-2021-JCOO-JACC-OG-FPA — Call for 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements to support European networks active in the area of facilitating and promoting judicial cooperation in civil and/or criminal matters and in the area of access to justice

- 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 on the basis of the competence and experience of the applicants and their project teams, including operational resources (human, technical and other) or, exceptionally, the measures proposed to obtain it by the time the task implementation starts. Applicants will have to show their capacity via the following information:

- general profiles (qualifications and experiences) of the staff responsible for managing and implementing the project
- description of the consortium participants
- applicants' activity reports of last year (if applicable) (not required from public bodies)
- list of previous projects (key projects for the last 4 years)
- for participants with activities involving children: their child protection policy covering the four areas described in the [Keeping Children Safe Child Safeguarding Standards](#).

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.

For framework partnerships, the operational capacity check will be done generally at FPA-level and then again for each grant application in the grants calls).

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 participate¹¹:

- 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 misconduct¹² (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 framework partnership)
- 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 framework partnership)
- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement, prize, expert contract, or similar (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the framework partnership)
- 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 framework partnership)
- 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 framework partnership).

Applicants will also be refused if it turns out that¹³:

- 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).

For framework partnerships, exclusion will be checked before FPA signature and then again before signature of each grant).

8. Evaluation and award procedure

¹¹ See Article 136 of EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

¹² 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.

¹³ See Article 141 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

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


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

For proposals with the same score 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) The *ex aequo* proposals within the same topic will be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the award criterion 'Relevance'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Quality'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Impact'.

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 framework partnership.

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:** extent to which the proposal matches the priorities and objectives of the call; clearly defined needs and robust needs assessment; clearly defined target group, with gender perspective being appropriately taken into account; contribution to the EU strategic and legislative context; European/trans-national dimension; impact/interest for a number of countries (EU or eligible non-EU countries); possibility to use the results in other countries (potential for transfer of good practices); potential to develop mutual trust/cross-border cooperation (40 points)
- **Quality:** clarity and consistency of project; logical links between the identified problems, needs and solutions proposed (logical frame concept); methodology for implementing the project with gender perspective being appropriately

taken into account (organisation of work, timetable, allocation of resources and distribution of tasks between partners, risks & risk management, monitoring and evaluation); ethical issues are addressed; feasibility of the project within the proposed time frame; financial feasibility (sufficient/appropriate budget for proper implementation; cost-effectiveness (best value for money) (40 points)

- **Impact:** ambition and expected long-term impact of results on target groups/general public; appropriate dissemination strategy for ensuring sustainability and long-term impact; potential for a positive multiplier effect; sustainability of results after EU funding ends (20 points).

Award criteria	Minimum pass score	Maximum score
Relevance	25	40
Quality	n/a	40
Impact	n/a	20
Overall (pass) scores	70	100

Maximum points: 100 points.

Individual threshold for the criterion 'Relevance': 25/40.

Overall threshold: 70 points.

Proposals that pass the individual threshold for the criterion 'Relevance' 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 – not applicable

11. How to submit an application

All proposals must be submitted directly online via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System. Paper applications are NOT accepted.

Submission is a 2-step process:

a) create a user account and register your organisation

To use the Submission System (the only way to apply), all participants need to [create an EULogin user account](#).

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

b) submit the proposal

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

Submit your proposal in 3 parts, as follows:

Call: JUST-2021-JCOO-JACC-OG-FPA — Call for 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements to support European networks active in the area of facilitating and promoting judicial cooperation in civil and/or criminal matters and in the area of access to justice

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

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

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

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

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

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

12. Help

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

- [Online Manual](#)
- FAQs on the Topic page (for call-specific questions in open calls)
- [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: EC-JUSTICE-CALLS@ec.europa.eu.

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

13. Important



IMPORTANT

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

For EU framework partnerships, the consortium must be formed at FPA level. Only entities which are part of the FPA can become beneficiaries in the grants awarded under the framework partnership.

- **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** (*n/a for FPAs*)— 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** (*n/a for FPAs*) — 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** (*n/a for FPAs*) — 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** (*n/a for OG and FPAs*) — 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*).

Call: JUST-2021-JCOO-JACC-OG-FPA — Call for 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements to support European networks active in the area of facilitating and promoting judicial cooperation in civil and/or criminal matters and in the area of access to justice

- **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 Regulation [2018/1725](#). 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](#).