



Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE)

Call for proposals

LIFE Clean Energy Transition
(LIFE-2021-CET)

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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 Clean Energy Transition under the **Programme for Environment and Climate Action (LIFE)**.

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

- Regulation 2018/1046 ([EU Financial Regulation](#))
- the basic act (LIFE Regulation [2021/783](#)¹).

The call is launched in accordance with the 2021-2024 Multiannual Work Programme² and will be managed by the **European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA)** ('Agency').

The call covers the following **topics**:

- **LIFE-2021-CET-LOCAL:** Technical support to clean energy transition plans and strategies in municipalities and regions
- **LIFE-2021-CET-POLICY:** Towards an effective implementation of key legislation in the field of sustainable energy
- **LIFE-2021-CET-GOV:** Multilevel climate and energy dialogue to deliver the energy governance
- **LIFE-2021-CET-BUILDRENO:** Large-scale rollout of industrialised deep renovation solutions
- **LIFE-2021-CET-AUDITS:** Uptake of energy audits recommendations for the energy transition of companies
- **LIFE-2021-CET-VALUECHAIN:** Fostering sustainable energy uptake along the whole value chain in industry and services
- **LIFE-2021-CET-BUILDSKILLS:** BUILD UP Skills – rebooting the National Platforms and Roadmaps
- **LIFE-2021-CET-COOLING:** Facing the increase in cooling demand of buildings in the coming years
- **LIFE-2021-CET-SMARTSERV:** Establish innovative business models and contractual schemes for smart and sector-integrating energy services
- **LIFE-2021-CET-SMARTREADY:** Creating the conditions for a global improvement of smart readiness of European buildings
- **LIFE-2021-CET-MAINSTREAM:** Mainstreaming sustainable energy finance and integrating energy performance in EU sustainable finance criteria and standards
- **LIFE-2021-CET-INNOFIN:** Innovative financing schemes for sustainable energy investments
- **LIFE-2021-CET-HOMERENO:** Integrated Home Renovation Services

¹ Regulation (EU) 2021/783 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2021 establishing a Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE) (OJ L 172, 17.5.2021, p. 53).

² Commission Implementing Decision C(2021)4997 final of 9 July 2021 on the financing of the LIFE Programme and the adoption of the work programme for the years 2021 to 2024.

- **LIFE-2021-CET-HOMERECOM:** EU community of "Integrated Home Renovation Services" practitioners
- **LIFE-2021-CET-COALREGIONS:** Community-driven clean energy transition in coal, peat and oil-shale regions
- **LIFE-2021-CET-PDA:** Disruptive PDA – Technical Assistance to advance market boundaries for sustainable energy investments
- **LIFE-2021-CET-ENERPOV:** Addressing building related interventions for vulnerable districts
- **LIFE-2021-CET-ENERCOM:** Developing support mechanisms for energy communities and other citizen-led initiatives in the field of sustainable energy

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

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

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

- the [Call Document](#) outlines the:
 - background, objectives, scope, activities that can be funded and the expected results (sections 1 and 2)
 - timetable and available budget (sections 3 and 4)
 - admissibility and eligibility conditions (including mandatory documents; sections 5 and 6)
 - criteria for financial and operational capacity and exclusion (section 7)
 - evaluation and award procedure (section 8)
 - award criteria (section 9)
 - legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements (section 10)
 - how to submit an application (section 11)
- 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 [LIFE database](#) to consult the list of projects funded previously. For the Clean Energy Transition sub-programme, projects funded

previously (under the Horizon 2020 programme) can be found on the [CORDIS website](#).

1. Background

What is the LIFE Programme?

The LIFE Programme is the EU Programme for Environment and Climate Action.

As such, it is one of the key contributors to the European Green Deal³ which aims to:

- transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050 and where economic growth is decoupled from resource use and
- protect, conserve and enhance the EU's natural capital, and protect the health and well-being of citizens from environment and climate related risks and impacts.

The LIFE Programme will contribute to these priorities through its four sub-programmes in particular by:

- boosting and integrating the implementation of the EU's policy objectives for halting and reversing loss of wildlife habitats and species across all sectors
- supporting the transition to a circular economy and protecting and improving the quality of EU's natural resources, including air, soil and water among others
- supporting implementation of the 2030 energy and climate policy framework, the EU's climate neutrality objective by 2050, and the new EU strategy on adaptation to climate change and
- building capacity, stimulating investments and supporting implementation of policies focused on energy efficiency and small-scale renewables.

The LIFE Programme is structured in two fields and four sub-programmes (described in more detail below):

Environment:

- sub-programme Nature and Biodiversity
- sub-programme Circular Economy and Quality of Life

Climate Action:

- sub-programme Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
- sub-programme Clean Energy Transition.

Nature and Biodiversity

The specific objectives of the sub-programme 'Nature and Biodiversity' are the following:

³ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: The European Green Deal (COM (2019)640 final).

- to develop, demonstrate, promote and stimulate scale up of innovative techniques, methods and approaches (including nature-based solutions and ecosystem approach) for reaching the objectives of the EU legislation and policy on nature and biodiversity, and to contribute to the knowledge base and to the application of best practices, including through the support of the Natura 2000
- to support the development, implementation, monitoring and enforcement of EU legislation and policy on nature and biodiversity, including by improving governance at all levels, in particular through enhancing capacities of public and private actors and the involvement of civil society, also taking into due consideration the possible contributions provided by citizen science
- to catalyse the large-scale deployment of successful solutions/approaches for implementing EU legislation and policy on nature and biodiversity, by replicating results, integrating related objectives into other policies and into public and private sector practices, mobilising investment and improving access to finance.

Circular Economy and Quality of Life

The specific objectives of the sub-programme 'Circular Economy and Quality of Life' are:

- to develop, demonstrate and promote innovative techniques, methods and approaches for reaching the objectives of the EU legislation and policy on environment, and to contribute to the knowledge base and, where relevant, to the application of best practices
- to support the development, implementation, monitoring and enforcement of the EU legislation and policy on environment, including by improving governance at all levels, in particular through enhancing capacities of public and private actors and the involvement of civil society
- to catalyse the large-scale deployment of successful technical and policy-related solutions for implementing the EU legislation and policy on environment, by replicating results, integrating related objectives into other policies and into public and private sector practices, mobilising investment and improving access to finance.

This sub-programme aims at facilitating the transition toward a sustainable, circular, toxic-free, energy-efficient and climate-resilient economy and at protecting, restoring and improving the quality of the environment.

It will contribute to the EU priorities by:

- reducing resource consumption and facilitating the transition toward a sustainable, circular, toxic-free, energy-efficient and climate-resilient economy
- developing circular systems, in line with the new Circular Economy Action Plan and reflecting its focus on sustainable products, material and energy intensive sectors and circular business models for value retention
- bringing down waste generation in line with the Waste Framework Directive [2019/1004](#)⁴ and the reduction of hazardous waste in view of the EU's commitment under the [Basel Convention](#)⁵.

⁴ Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/1004 of 7 June 2019 laying down rules for the calculation, verification and reporting of data on waste in accordance with Directive 2008/98/EC (OJ L 163, 20.6.2019, p. 66).

⁵ Basel Convention on the control of transboundary movements of hazardous wastes and their disposal

- improving waste management with respect to collection and storage of waste, recovery options and end-of-life disposal, including in islands where waste management has to face specific challenges
- reducing emissions of pollutants to air and ensuring clean air for EU citizens in line with the EU legislation and the objectives of the Zero Pollution Action Plan
- achieving and maintaining a good status of the EU water bodies
- ensuring clean surface water and ground-water, in sufficient quantities for human and other species, including by increasing efficiency of water use
- reducing production, use and emissions of hazardous chemicals as well as reducing the exposure of humans and the environment to those chemicals
- promoting the development, commercialisation and uptake of safe and sustainable-by-design substances, materials and products
- diminishing exposure to harmful noise levels
- protecting the quality of EU soil, preventing soil degradation through sustainable practices of soil and land management, remediating from soil pollution and enhancing the capacity to improve water quality through reduced nitrate leakage and to reduce emissions through carbon storage.

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

The specific objectives of the sub-programme 'Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation' are:

- to develop, demonstrate and promote innovative techniques, methods and approaches for reaching the objectives of the EU legislation and policy on climate action and to contribute to the knowledge base and to the application of best practice
- to support the development, implementation, monitoring and enforcement of the EU legislation and policy on climate action, including by improving governance at all levels, in particular through enhancing capacities of public and private actors and the involvement of civil society
- to catalyse the large-scale deployment of successful technical and policy-related solutions for implementing the EU legislation and policy on climate action by replicating results, integrating related objectives into other policies and into public and private sector practices, mobilising investment and improving access to finance.

This sub-programme will contribute to the transformation of the EU into a climate-neutral and -resilient society, by supporting the implementation of the EU's climate policy and preparing the EU for the climate action challenges in the coming years and decades.

Clean Energy Transition

The specific objectives of the sub-programme 'Clean Energy Transition' are the following:

- to develop, demonstrate and promote innovative techniques, methods and approaches for reaching the objectives of the EU legislation and policy on the transition to sustainable renewable energy and increased energy efficiency, and to contribute to the knowledge base and to the application of best practice
- to support the development, implementation, monitoring and enforcement of the EU legislation and policy on the transition to sustainable renewable energy or increased energy efficiency, including by improving governance at all levels,

in particular through enhancing capacities of public and private actors and the involvement of civil society

- to catalyse the large-scale deployment of successful technical and policy-related solutions for implementing the EU legislation on the transition to renewable energy or increased energy efficiency by replicating results, integrating related objectives into other policies and into public and private sector practices, mobilising investment and improving access to finance.

This sub-programme aims at facilitating the transition toward an energy-efficient, renewable energy-based, climate-neutral and -resilient economy by funding coordination and support actions across Europe. These actions, of high EU added-value, aim at breaking market barriers that hamper the socio-economic transition to sustainable energy, typically engaging multiple small and medium-size stakeholders, multiple actors including local and regional public authorities and non-profit organisations, and involving consumers.

The sub-programme will contribute to the implementation of the energy-related actions of the Green Deal, including the 'Renovation wave' initiative for the building sector, and will give due consideration to territories not connected to the European grids such as the EU outermost regions. It will contribute to the Just Transition objectives by accompanying the territories and the groups of citizens negatively affected by the transition from fossil fuels to clean energy, by building capacity of actors and fostering clean energy investments, mainly in energy efficiency and locally available, sustainable, renewable energy sources. Activities related to biofuels will not be included.

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

Type of action

The topics under this call for proposals concern LIFE Other Action Grants (OAGs) – Coordination and Support Actions (CSA).

Other Action Grants (OAGs) include:

- Coordination and Support Actions (CSA) for projects focusing on the transition to renewable energy and increased energy efficiency by breaking market barriers, through activities including capacity building, dissemination of information and knowledge, and awareness raising; they may include directly awarded grants to bodies designated by Member States.
- A Small Grant Facility on Biodiversity (BEST). Small grants (max 100 000 EUR) for projects in the EU Outermost Regions and the Overseas Countries and Territories on biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration and sustainable use of ecosystem services, including ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation
- Projects developed in the framework of the EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), which contribute to the objectives and implementation of the EU Circular Economy Action Plan
- Pilot projects in the framework of the 'New European Bauhaus' to identify and address some key challenges helping Europe's transformation into the first climate-neutral continent in view of having better spaces in which form not only follows function, such as in the historical Bauhaus movement, but also contributes to preserve the resources of the planet.

- Action grants benefitting the organisations mentioned in Annex I of the LIFE Regulation
- Additional projects responding to the EU legislative and policy priorities determined following a consultation with Member States (PLP)
- Other specific projects to identified beneficiaries (Article 195 EU Financial Regulation).

Building a national, regional and local policy framework supporting the clean energy transition

LIFE-2021-CET-LOCAL: Technical support to clean energy transition plans and strategies in municipalities and regions

Objectives

The topic aims to provide local and regional authorities with the necessary capacity to deliver sustainable plans and strategies for the energy transition. To successfully support the achievement of energy and climate targets, transition strategies and plans need to be institutionalised, cross-sectoral and tailored to the level of innovation, ambition and specific geographic context of the involved authorities.

Local and regional authorities are a decisive lever for the EU to achieve its carbon neutrality target by 2050. Policy-makers and administrations at all sub-national levels (regions, provinces, cities, towns, urban districts, rural areas, etc.) need to commit to and effectively plan the clean energy transition of their respective territory, energy systems and infrastructures at an unprecedented level of ambition and pace with a long-term time horizon.

However, local and regional authorities often lack capacities to plan such plans and strategies, in particular in smaller municipalities, rural areas and carbon-intensive regions that are lagging behind in the energy transition. For instance, small municipalities among the Covenant of Mayors signatories still highly need support to design their Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs). Other cities which have already developed such a SECAP or similar plans still need to align their plans to the new targets and deliver more ambitious actions to reach carbon neutrality. Innovative policy features, such as applying carbon budgets, earmarking and tracking resources for climate actions in the municipal budgets⁶, defining energy efficiency and renewable energy targets at district and community levels and social innovations based on transition management, systems thinking or reflexive monitoring, can support the upgrade of the plans.

Another challenge faced by public authorities is the holistic energy planning required to deliver the clean energy transition. A successful clean energy transition will require more sectoral integration (energy production, buildings, mobility and transport, land-use, waste, water, health, etc.) when planning the transformation of cities and regions, also with a view of a socially fair transition. The integration of both climate mitigation and adaptation remains complex for many Covenant of Mayors signatories. Integrated energy planning piloted in previous EU-funded projects (e.g. energy and mobility, energy and urban planning, etc.) proved beneficial in mutually reinforcing

⁶ For instance based on the methodology for climate tracking set out in Annex IV of the Regulation (EU) 2021/241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 February 2021 establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

sectoral policies, improving the efficiency of the planning process, activating or reinforcing cooperation between different departments of public authorities.

A stronger political commitment, ownership of the plans by public authorities beyond electoral cycles and appropriate resources need also to be secured to deliver on the required reduction in energy consumption and GHG emissions. Often, the plans and strategies already adopted are not supported by robust governance structures, dedicated competences and available resources within the administrations to implement the required change. Planning processes need to be institutionalised and new participative governance schemes, involving key local stakeholders and citizens, established for the clean energy transition to be truly embedded in the territories and locally supported, also by vulnerable groups affected by the transition.

Moreover, alignment and consistency with other energy and climate frameworks are necessary, in particular with national and EU levels. Energy and climate targets and measures defined in the clean energy transition strategies and plans developed by regional and local authorities need to clearly support and front lead National Energy and Climate Plans, Recovery and Resilience Plans, EU Green Deal and its initiatives such as the Renovation Wave, the transposition of the Clean energy Package into national laws, the national Long-Term Renovation Strategies, the Horizon Europe mission on climate-neutral and smart cities, etc., in order to contribute to a coherent transition of the energy systems in the Member States.

Scope

- Actions should provide technical support to regional and local authorities and build their capacities to develop and monitor ambitious long-term clean energy transition plans/strategies for 2030 and/or 2050 in coherence with EU and national reporting frameworks, through a right mix of activities (tailored-made assistance adapted to territorial circumstances, training programmes for policy-makers/public officers, promoting replication and roll-out of planning best practices and information tools, etc.). Actions should support regional and local authorities in particular in gaining technical, legal and social skills and resources required to deliver holistic, integrated and inclusive energy planning based on stakeholders' engagement and social innovations.
- Actions should seek to institutionalise integrated energy planning in local and regional authorities and implement a cross-sectoral approach to plan the energy transition, by designing and improving planning processes which can facilitate integration of clean energy with other sectors such as mobility and transport, land-use and urban planning, services, infrastructures, etc. The aim is to professionalise and accelerate planning processes, support higher ambition levels, break silos and increase cooperation between different departments of the local (regional) authority, and maximise the impact of local and regional plans. Actions should take into account the regulatory framework conditions, the social impact of plans and investigate new participatory policy models and planning instruments to involve and engage the civil society and a wider spectrum of stakeholders. Actions should support the establishment of new forms of participative governance structures to involve multiple stakeholders and citizens in the planning and implementation of the clean energy transition.
- Specific territorial focus should be put on public authorities willing to establish innovative planning processes through local pilots and/or on geographical areas, municipalities and regions that despite their significant level of ambition

are still lagging behind, affected by the transition and not yet fully engaged in it.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of up to EUR 1.75 million would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

- Number of policies/plans/strategies established through the action
- Political commitment and appropriate resources secured for climate and energy transition plans, expressed through climate budgets (in Euro) and climate tracking (in % of resources supporting climate actions)
- Number of institutionalised collaborations on the energy transition between various departments/administrations in public authorities and between public authorities and stakeholders
- Numbers of stakeholders involved in planning the energy transition
- Number of public officers with improved capacity/skills in planning the energy transition
- Number of public authorities mobilized that are currently not engaged in key EU initiatives
- Primary energy savings, Renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year) to be delivered in clean energy transition plans/strategies developed through the action
- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro)

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

LIFE-2021-CET-POLICY: Towards an effective implementation of key legislation in the field of sustainable energy

Objectives

The EU Clean Energy Package resulted in a comprehensive framework of energy legislation which placed the consumer at the centre of the energy system and which paved the way for a more sustainable way of energy production, distribution and consumption. It included, inter alia, a review of the Energy Efficiency Directive, the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive and the Renewable Energy Directive and, with the Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, put in place a new system of integrated reporting.

With the European Green Deal, the Commission raised the level of ambition further, and a whole set of measures have been proposed, including the revision of energy and climate legislation by June and December 2021 respectively as well as the flagship initiative to steer public and private funding towards renovation projects with the biggest societal gains, the Renovation Wave.

The EU legislative framework sets out requirements that need to be implemented by Member States and thus be adapted to the respective national context; the provisions are by nature very specific and technical, and adequate implementation requires a high level of technical capacity and resources. While the legislative framework offers a good amount of flexibility to Member States to design the policy measures according

to their needs and framework conditions, accurate monitoring, projecting and evaluation are essential elements of implementation. Importantly, the legislation is strongly interrelated and needs to be implemented and reported in an integrated, consistent way.

In addition, energy and non-energy sectors are increasingly interlinked, which has been recognised in the European Green Deal and is reflected in two new initiatives, the EU Strategy for Energy System Integration and the Hydrogen Strategy. This also means that Member States authorities need to build up additional cross-sectoral expertise.

With these challenges in mind, the topic aims to support the implementation of the main pieces of legislation in the field of sustainable energy, notably of the Energy Efficiency Directive (Scope A), the Renewable Energy Directive (Scope B) and the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (Scope C). Moreover, it aims to contribute to the development and use of integrated approaches to effectively implement provisions across Energy Legislation (Scope D). Finally, it aims to support the implementation of the EU Strategy for Energy System Integration (Scope E).

Under the call 2021, proposals are invited for the Scopes A and B, i.e. proposals for actions to support the implementation of:

- the Energy Efficiency Directive (Scope A) and of
- the Renewable Energy Directive (Scope B)

Scope

Actions under this topic are expected to:

- Promote and enable exchange of insights and sharing of best practices within and across Member States
- Provide support, technical advice and tools for contextualisation and specification of requirements, in general and according to the national and regional context
- Scope, assess and model the impact of implementation options to comply with EU legislative requirements, thereby contributing to the design of more effective policies
- Support the monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation
- Develop and apply methodologies to more accurately measure, calculate and account for contributions made under the specific policy measures and programmes
- Collect and analyse energy consumption data across sectors; monitor efficiency trends and show their implications for society, markets and technologies
- Develop and support integrated methodologies for areas and sectors that are addressed by different policies and pieces of legislation, notably approaches for integrated collection of data, calculation/accounting, verification, monitoring, evaluation and reporting
- Monitor and model energy and non-energy impacts of integrated solutions; gather data for the energy and buildings sector.

Scope A - Support for the implementation of the Energy Efficiency Directive

Actions under Scope A are expected to address core provisions and aspects of the Energy Efficiency Directive⁷, such as:

- Energy efficiency targets, notably with regard to data collection across different sectors and more accurate monitoring and better understanding of energy consumption and efficiency trends
- Public Procurement, notably with regard to support central governments to purchase only products, services and buildings with high energy efficiency performance, and to encourage public bodies at regional and local levels to follow the example of their national government
- Energy Efficiency Obligations (EEOs), notably with a view to more accurate and specific calculation of energy savings, better tools for Measurement and Verification (M&V), the setting up and monitoring of EEOs, the planning and verification of alternative measures; moreover with regard to exploring and substantiating the interaction of Article 7 with other policies, such as the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS), State Aid, renewable energy etc. and with regard to potential energy savings from cross-sectorial programmes, such as renewable energy sources and combined heat & power and the extension of Article 7 to other sectors, such as water
- Metering and billing, notably with regard to sub-metering, remote reading and heat cost allocation for thermal energy
- Energy Services, notably with regard to regulatory, non-regulatory and financial barriers and enablers, such as accounting rules within public budgets, approaches to reduce split incentives, administrative burden and transaction costs; approaches to create trust and guarantee quality and performance and to define and acknowledge the roles of Energy Service Companies (ESCOs) and facilitators
- Energy Efficiency National Fund, notably with regard to financing and technical support, for example through financing facilities, such as Energy Efficiency Funds

Scope B - Support for the implementation of the Renewable Energy Directive

Actions under Scope B are expected to address core provisions and aspects of the Renewable Energy Directive, such as:

- Renewables self-consumers, notably with regard to the implementation of rights and enabling frameworks across Member States, and in particular in relation to the provisions on self-consumption and collective self-consumption and the way they create incentives and remove barriers for RES consumer business models

⁷ For Policy Support actions addressing Heating and Cooling, please refer to Scope B. For Policy Support actions addressing energy audits and energy management systems, please refer to call topic LIFE-2021-CET-AUDITS.

- Renewable energy communities (RECs), notably with regard to the implementation of rights and enabling frameworks for RECs across Member States (including policy, regulatory and legislative measures) and their impact on the growth of RECs; this should also take into account relevant aspects linked to the Citizen Energy Communities addressed in Directive (EU) 2019/944 on common rules for the internal market for electricity; moreover, aspects related to the development of Community Energy Strategies
- Mainstreaming renewable energy in heating and cooling, including district energy networks, notably with regard to collecting data on energy consumption in the heating and cooling sector, assessing existing market barriers and simplifying existing authorisation, certification and licensing procedures; developing tools to make available information on the net benefits, cost and energy efficiency of equipment and systems for the use of heating and cooling from renewable sources and waste heat and cold; mapping and analysis of the national renewable and waste energy potential in conjunction with respective requirements under Directive 2012/27/EU; assessing and implementing measures facilitating the integration of innovative renewable energy technologies and waste heat and cold into existing and new district heating and cooling networks
- Renewable energy in the transport sector
- Other related horizontal matters such as support schemes for energy from renewable sources, streamlining authorisation procedures, information and training and Guarantees of Origin

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of up to EUR 2 million would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

- Improved collaboration of implementing bodies within and across Member States
- Increased understanding and knowledge in public administrations in charge of implementing European energy legislation
- More effective implementation of provisions, including better planning, design and evaluation of policy measures
- More consistent implementation of legal provisions across energy legislation, energy policy and energy sectors
- Use of appropriate tools and methods that facilitate availability and access to data; improved quality of data and better monitoring
- Improved understanding of consumption trends
- Use of more accurate calculation and M&V methodologies, including for cross-sector use of energy
- Improved quality of reporting/ National Energy and Climate Plans/ Long-term renovation strategies
- Improved understanding of potentials
- Improved understanding of market barriers
- More effective planning, for example of smart Heating and Cooling networks
- Improved understanding and measurement of the impacts and non-energy benefits, also in view of the circular economy

- Primary energy savings/renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year)
- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro)

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

LIFE-2021-CET-GOV: Multilevel climate and energy dialogue to deliver the energy governance

Objectives

The topic aims at supporting Member States in fostering a multilevel dialogue to deliver the energy governance. Collaboration between governance levels (such as regions, cities and communities, national governments) and stakeholders (e.g. civil society, academia, industry and business, NGOs) is crucial to allow for delivery of the clean energy transition and of the European Green Deal⁸. However, a first analysis of the National Energy and Climate Plans⁹ (NECPs) submitted by Member States, shows that communication among different administrative levels is still unsuited to achieve 2030 and 2050 targets. As stated in the Governance Regulation¹⁰, there is a need to support Member States in creating a multi-level climate and energy dialogue, coordinating different governance layers - both vertically and horizontally - in view of the update of the NECPs (foreseen for 2023) and for their monitoring and reporting, foreseen every other year. Multilevel and consistent measures and goals, stronger political commitment and a shared vision are required.

Scope

In order to support Member States to fulfil their obligations under the Governance Regulation and the European Green Deal, the European Commission is looking for action able to:

- Establish a permanent dialogue and create/strengthen structured synergies between different administrative levels (regions, cities, national governments), stakeholders (e.g. civil society, communities, academia, industry and business, NGOs) and tools to reach ambitious and shared decarbonisation targets and better define the role and contribution of the regional/local level to the national energy and climate targets. The aim is to increase co-definition and coherency of strategies and measures at different governance levels, improve monitoring and reporting schemes at local level (e.g. Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs), European Energy Award (EEA), etc.) and national level (e.g. NECPs, Long-term Renovation Strategies, Recovery plans) to support the Energy Union Governance Regulation, support regional initiatives (e.g. Coal Regions in Transition, Clean Energy for EU Islands, Smart Cities and Communities, the Horizon mission on carbon neutral and smart cities¹¹, etc.), increase sharing of best practices, institutionalise the improved governance

⁸ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:b828d165-1c22-11ea-8c1f-01aa75ed71a1.0002.02/DOC_1&format=PDF

⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/energy/topics/energy-strategy/national-energy-climate-plans_en#final-necps

¹⁰ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018R1999&from=EN>

¹¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/horizon-europe/missions-horizon-europe/climate-neutral-and-smart-cities_en

processes and strengthen political commitment. Harmonisation of different reporting frameworks (e.g. EEA, Territoires à énergie positive, ISO50001, KEM Climate and Energy Model Regions, etc.) should be sought when relevant. The newly created structures are required to demonstrate full sustainability after the end of the European funding.

- Deliver governance or processes models to allow for robust and consistent reporting mechanisms, integrating vertical and horizontal administrative layers and delivering innovative monitoring and verification schemes mixing different approaches (e.g. top-down and bottom-up) and applying such models for the updating of NECPs in appropriate time horizon, taking into account the Energy Efficiency First principle.
- Make links to other ongoing initiatives and existing dialogue fora aimed at enhancing and implementing connected and relevant policies (e.g. Long-term Renovation Strategies, Recovery and Resilience Plans) and / or initiatives (e.g. existing Roundtables on Sustainable Energy, events organised in the framework of the Sustainable Energy Investment Forums¹²).

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of up to EUR 1.75 million would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

- Newly developed governance structures / dialogue platforms to enhance exchanges between different administrative layers and stakeholders
- Newly developed governance or processes models establishing a solid reporting mechanisms for the NECPs
- Number of institutionalised collaborations on the energy transition between public authorities on different levels (local, regional, national) and different fields (civil society, communities, academia, industry and business, NGOs, etc.)
- Number of updated NECPs¹³
- Number of stakeholders from different administrative levels and stakeholders groups engaged in the process
- Primary energy savings/Renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year)
- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro)

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

¹² https://ec.europa.eu/energy/topics/energy-efficiency/financing-energy-efficiency/sustainable-energy-investment-forums_en

¹³ Member States are expected to provide an updated draft NECP by June 2023 and a final updated NECP by December 2023

Accelerating technology roll-out, digitalisation, new services and business models and enhancement of the related professional skills on the market

LIFE-2021-CET-BUILDRENO: Large-scale rollout of industrialised deep renovation solutions

Objectives

The aim of this topic is to facilitate a greater market uptake and large-scale rollout of holistic, industrialised deep renovation solutions for buildings, thereby supporting the implementation of the EU Renovation Wave strategy.

Industrial approaches to deep renovation have been shown to result in many benefits including faster, higher quality construction; less disruption to building occupants; less waste and fewer mistakes; reduced costs including over the building's life cycle; better integration of design teams, decision makers, end users and other stakeholders. The objective is to accelerate the rate and depth of energy renovation, and to deliver higher quality renovations with enhanced certainty of energy savings, and a reduced performance gap through industrialised solutions.

Scope

In line with the Renovation Wave strategy, proposals should look at how to stimulate the volume and depth of building renovation through industrialised solutions with reduced inconvenience for occupants. Proposals could address different types of buildings, including as part of larger approaches, e.g. at district level. Furthermore, proposals should build on the lessons learnt from previous research and innovation projects that demonstrated innovative industrialised approaches for deep renovation of buildings. Such innovations have included standardised prefabrication and off-site construction, digital tools such as Building Information Modelling and Augmented Reality, compact and high quality plug & play technical building systems suitable for retrofitting. As well as technical solutions, innovations have also taken place in business models, performance guarantees, design and procurement processes, and a focus on the desires and needs of the end user. Proposals should tackle market barriers and stimulate the development of business models to accelerate rollout of industrialised deep renovation solutions. The focus should be on the whole value chain, from efficient design and construction methods with low embodied energy and embodied carbon to on-site works organisation and a commitment to guarantee a high performance, cost effective product for the end user, ensuring high levels of comfort and a high quality of indoor environment. Proposals should address the investment cost of renovation, the time needed on the building site and the consequent disturbance for building occupants. Proposals should make the whole renovation process more attractive for all those involved, from construction stakeholders and investors to building owners and occupants.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of up to EUR 2 million would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

- Cost optimal renovations delivered with a performance guarantee for the end user
- Reduction of time for renovation works on the building site compared with standard practice
- Demonstration of the effectiveness and replicability of the proposed solutions to lead to an increased rate of renovation
- Primary energy savings/Renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year)
- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro)
- Reduction of the greenhouse gases emissions (in tCO₂-eq/year) and/or air pollutants (in kg/year) triggered by the project

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

LIFE-2021-CET-AUDITS: Uptake of energy audits recommendations for the energy transition of companies

Objectives

Engaging, supporting and accelerating the transition of EU companies towards a sustainable growth model is one of the ambitious objectives of the European Green Deal. Businesses represented about 74% of the EU's final energy consumption in 2018¹⁴, mainly in the transport (31%), industry (26%) and services (14%) sectors. Since individual cases vary significantly - depending on the market sector, energy intensity, importance of energy in the production process, energy mix and prices, exposure to competition, country, size of the company, profitability, etc. - support actions for companies to increase energy efficiency and move to renewable energy sources need to be adapted to these specificities in order to deliver results.

Article 8(1) and Article 8(4) of the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) establish the two main obligations for Member States to promote the availability of energy audits and to ensure that large enterprises carry out regular energy audits or have an Energy Management System (EMS) in place. In the last years, energy audits did prove to be a valid instrument to tackle the information gap that is one of the main barriers to energy efficiency, but only a small share of the measures recommended are implemented.

The key objective of this topic is to increase the uptake of such measures in companies using a holistic approach. In fact, several factors can explain why the implementation of audit recommendations remains insufficient, e.g. the unavailability of human resources to work on energy and their lack of knowledge on how to gather energy-related information and introduce new solutions. When considering investments, obstacles include the uncertainty on actual energy savings that will be achieved, long payback times, difficulty to access to finance (internal or external) and

¹⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Energy_statistics_-_an_overview#Final_energy_consumption

limited public incentives. Moreover, the multiple benefits of energy efficiency are often underestimated, especially by smaller and non-energy-intensive companies.

The energy audit process, managed internally or delivered through third parties such as energy auditors, engineers and financial advisors, risks to be fragmented due to the different skills and constraints at each step of the process. This topic aims at enhancing the skills of energy auditors and/or technicians to transform a technical study (boiler room level) into a strategic proposition which can be attractive to the top management (board room level) as well as to improve their know-how to access public incentives and private finance.

Scope

Proposals should implement tailor-made support activities covering the whole process from energy audit to implementation of measures, and potentially beyond, leading to a significant increase in the rate of concrete implementation of audit recommendations.

Depending on the readiness level of the targeted companies, proposals may deliver operational support directly to companies as a service, or tailored capacity building and advisory to company staff (both at management and operational level), provided that activities lead to the actual implementation of the recommended measures.

Support to companies could include:

- Energy scans and detailed energy audits, based on sector-specific benchmarks
- Analysis and evaluation of the multiple benefits of energy efficiency (resource efficiency, comfort, health, productivity, staff satisfaction, reputation, etc.)
- Formulation of the strategic value for management (risk mitigation, link to company core business and to environmental, social and corporate governance)
- Support in managing the engineering phase
- Matchmaking with finance in terms of public grants but also bank loans and potentially private investors

Support to company staff (technical services, top management, financial departments) could include capacity building and advisory, for example on:

- Enhancement of corporate culture at all levels towards greener objectives
- Change management and re-organisation
- Embedding sustainable energy into the corporate communication strategy
- Promoting the use of digital solutions, including EMSs based on ISO 50001), in order to achieve higher efficiency, more precision on data of consumption/savings, and better preparation for the uptake of demand/response services

Other activities at the sector / territory level may include the following, provided they are instrumental to the uptake of energy audit recommendations:

- Surveys and benchmarking to identify target companies
- Aggregation of individual companies / measures to reach a critical size and make them more attractive to Energy Service Companies (ESCOs) and private financiers
- Standardisation of processes and documentation from the technical and financial point of view
- Capacity building for all actors involved internally and/or externally

Proposals should clearly identify and justify the economic sectors (NACE), size of enterprises and/or territories on which they focus and demonstrate the adequacy of their proposed approach. They should also demonstrate the support and active involvement of key stakeholders, such as professional federations, local and regional authorities, chambers of commerce, etc.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of up to EUR 1.75 million would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

Proposals are expected to demonstrate the impacts listed below:

- Increased rate of transformation of energy audits into concrete measure implementation
- Number of companies benefitting from direct support
- Number of energy audits carried out within the project
- Number of company staff with improved skills/knowledge
- Number of energy auditors / other stakeholders with improved skills / knowledge
- Contribution to a better implementation of Art. 8 of the EED
- Primary energy savings triggered by the project (in GWh/year)
- Renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year)
- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro)

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

LIFE-2021-CET-VALUECHAIN: Fostering sustainable energy uptake along the whole value chain in industry and services

Objectives

In 2018, the industry and services sectors made up about 40% of the total EU-27 final energy consumption (respectively accounting for 26% and 14%). As highlighted in the European Green Deal, the achievement of climate-neutrality by 2050 will require a full mobilisation and deeper cooperation among all players operating across the different value chains.

Companies tend to focus their efforts on energy consumptions related to their own activities, which excludes those of their value chain (i.e. all delivery technologies, products and services contributing to the final product). The objective of this topic is to engage companies to embrace a more holistic approach in order to better take into account the risks associated to high energy intensity in the supply chain (e.g. exposure to energy prices, image, litigation, etc.), and to make it more sustainable and resilient.

This paradigm shift can further unlock the market potential for sustainable solutions while enabling to benchmark the entire lifecycle impacts (e.g. water consumption, CO₂ emissions, soil impacts, etc.) of industrial and service processes.

In this regard, large companies can play a crucial role to support SMEs, which operate in their supply chain, to invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions.

Scope

The scope of this topic is to establish collaborations between SMEs and larger companies, operating in the same value chain, in order to ensure that energy efficiency measures and the use of renewable energy sources are maximised at each step of the process, in line with the EU strategy on energy system integration and more in general with the EU Green Deal and the EU industrial strategy.

Proposals are expected to develop, test and validate innovative business models and approaches fostering collaboration among companies within one or several specific value chains in the industry and service sectors. Proposals should clearly describe these models and approaches, their relevance and added value for the targeted value chains. Business cases should be produced based on the real interaction and experiences gained among the relevant actors during the timeframe of the project. A detailed exploitation strategy should be provided in order to effectively roll out the project results to the relevant value chains across the EU.

Additionally, benchmarking mechanisms and monitoring systems focusing on the energy use at value chain level could be developed, in order to avoid shifting carbon emissions from one level to another of the value chain; such benchmarks should focus specifically on energy and not on a broader GHG approach. In this regard, proposals are expected to provide policy recommendations to further improve the collection, transparency and accessibility of companies' energy use data in order to support the development of reporting standards to monitor progress towards the EU's 2030 and 2050 climate and energy objectives.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of up to EUR 2 million would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

Proposals are expected to demonstrate the impacts listed below:

- Development and implementation of economically viable business models at value chain level, ready to be rolled out on the market
- Number of companies and value chains involved in the implementation of the business models and business cases
- Data evidence on value chain energy use made available to relevant market actors
- Development of innovative benchmarking and monitoring systems for whole energy use at value chain level
- Improvement of standards, governance and regulatory frameworks to support the integration of energy efficiency and renewable energy at value chain level
- Replicable use cases demonstrating value chain solutions implementing energy efficiency measures and integrating renewable energy
- Primary energy savings/Renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year)
- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro)

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

LIFE-2021-CET-BUILDSKILLS: BUILD UP Skills – rebooting the National Platforms and Roadmaps

Objectives

Launched in 2011, the BUILD UP Skills initiative¹⁵ is supporting the upskilling of building professionals across Europe, to deliver building renovations offering high-energy performance as well as new Nearly Zero-Energy Buildings. This topic aims to facilitate the rebooting of the National Qualification Platforms, Status Quo Analyses and National Roadmaps developed under the first phase of BUILD UP Skills (2011-2012, 'Pillar I')¹⁶, to ensure alignment with the EU 2030 energy targets.

The first objective is to support the revitalisation of the National Platforms created in the first phase of the BUILD UP Skills initiative (2011-2012), gathering all key national stakeholders. Since the first platforms were established ten years ago, projects should aim at expanding their scope by involving new stakeholders.

As a second objective, the rebooted National Platforms should update the Status Quo Analyses and National Roadmaps to reflect the new realities of the building sector. This should be done by addressing the necessary skills development activities related to e.g. digital technologies, smart buildings including e-mobility, resource efficiency, circularity, integration of renewable energy technologies, heating and cooling, industrialised deep renovation, Life Cycle Carbon Assessments, etc., while taking into account the wider EU recovery context.

Scope

With a view to ensure sufficient traction at national level, the topic is expected to be addressed through applications covering a single country. One action per country is expected (exceptions possible).

While prior involvement in BUILD UP Skills funded projects is not a requirement, applicants should demonstrate a good knowledge of the initiative as well as the ability to mobilise relevant stakeholders and target groups.

Proposals submitted under this topic should be supportive of the work done within the European Construction Blueprint¹⁷, which focuses on vocational education and training primarily for 'blue-collar' professionals (targeting a level up to 5 in the European Qualification Framework). In case an application under this topic focuses on one of the countries covered by the Blueprint initiative¹⁸, applicants should demonstrate complementarity and added-value of the proposed activities with those being developed under the Blueprint.

The focus of this topic is on all relevant skills needed to enable the Clean Energy Transition, in particular the EU Renovation Wave, the mainstreaming of NZEBs, and the inclusion of resource efficiency considerations. The initial BUILD UP Skills Status Quo Analysis and Roadmaps focussed on on-site workers and craftspeople ('blue-collar' professionals). These documents need to be updated as regards 'blue-collar' professionals and upgraded with new content mapping the skills needs for 'white-collar' professions (e.g. architects, designers, engineers, building managers, product manufacturers, etc.), thus reflecting the reality and needs of the entire building value chain.

15 <https://www.buildup.eu/en/skills>

16 <https://www.buildup.eu/en/skills/bus-projects>

17 <https://constructionblueprint.eu/>

18 Spain, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal, Slovenia, Poland.

Proposals should be comprehensive in terms of the professions addressed, covering level 1-8 in the European Qualification Framework.

The proposed activities should align with the Pact for Skills as part of the European Skills Agenda.

Proposals should also address the need for reskilling workers and professionals previously or currently active in fossil fuel related sectors and regions.

Proposals are expected to consider measures to make the renovation and construction sectors more attractive for women.

The updated National Status Quo Analysis must be delivered within the first 9 months of activity of the rebooted National Platform. Each Status Quo Analysis should compile all the necessary information on the current situation of the national building sector regarding continuing education and training, energy performance and contribution to the 2030 targets as well as existing barriers and gaps, thus providing a basis for an informed discussion among the stakeholders.

The updated National Roadmap should explain how to overcome barriers and identified skills gaps in the various professions in such a way that the 2030 targets in the building sector can be met. Each National Roadmap should notably provide: a set of priority measures related to the various professions to meet the defined targets; an action plan for the identified measures until 2030; an identification of actors and resources needed to drive the implementation; measures to monitor the progress of the proposed activities.

To ensure long-term sustainability, projects should seek formal endorsement of the updated Roadmap by relevant national stakeholders, including public authorities, and promote these results widely.

Projects are expected to carry out at least the following activities, as far as they are not already addressed through the European Construction Blueprint for the country covered in the application:

- Relaunching of the National Platform, through dedicated communication channels and regular meetings
- Market research and data collection (Status Quo Analysis)
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of the first National Roadmap implementation
- Targeted interviews with relevant national stakeholders and target groups
- Participatory workshops with relevant national stakeholders and target groups
- Updating of the National Roadmap, including measures to 2030 and policy recommendations; endorsement by relevant national stakeholders
- Promotion and communication of the results
- Active participation in European exchange activities

Applications addressing a country represented in the European Construction Blueprint should also focus on further expanding the activities developed in this frame and supporting their long-term implementation, while also covering the areas, skills and professions not being tackled by the Blueprint.

The expected project duration is 18 months, to ensure that results are available sufficiently early to support the next phases of BUILD UP Skills.

Applications may be submitted by a single applicant.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of up to EUR 400,000 would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

- Upgraded National Platform involving key national stakeholders
- Quality of the updated National Status Quo Analysis, identifying current and future skills needs, gaps, barriers and opportunities
- Quality of the measures presented in the updated National Roadmap reflecting the new needs and realities of the national building sector by 2030.
- Number of people directly engaged through the project activities
- Number of relevant national stakeholders endorsing the updated Roadmap
- Primary energy savings/Renewable energy production triggered by the project (in GWh/year)
- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro)

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

LIFE-2021-CET-COOLING: Facing the increase in cooling demand of buildings in the coming years

Objectives

Taking into account that almost 50% of Union's final energy consumption is used for heating and cooling, of which 80% is used in buildings¹⁹ modernising the heating and cooling systems of buildings is essential to decarbonise the EU building stock, to deploy local renewable energy potential and to reduce the EU's dependence on imported fossil fuels²⁰.

Due to the higher temperatures encountered during the last years and changes in lifestyles and expectations with regard to thermal indoor comfort, the cooling needs of buildings have considerably risen and are expected to further rise. According to IEA²¹, cooling is the fastest growing use of energy in buildings and without ambitious action in the field of cooling, the energy demand for space cooling will more than triple by 2050.

The growing demand for cooling needs to be tackled from two angles and in the spirit of the Energy Efficiency First principle, notably by conceptualising and implementing integrated solutions that drive down the cooling need of a building without compromising comfort on the one hand; by matching the demand by best available

¹⁹ DIRECTIVE (EU) 2018/844 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 30 May 2018 amending Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings and Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency

²⁰ A Renovation Wave for Europe -greening our buildings, creating jobs, improving lives, Brussels, 14.10.2020 COM(2020) 662 final

²¹ IEA report on "The Future of Cooling", May 2018

and renewable space cooling technologies on the other hand which are well adapted to the different building types and needs.

This topic thus aims to support actions that complement and inform existing assessments and strategies on cooling, notably through a bottom-up analysis and taking into account local factors. Moreover, the topic aims to support approaches and activities that will contribute to ensuring that integrated cooling solutions are considered in public and private decision-making, planning, design and implementation processes.

Scope

The proposed actions are expected to provide an improved and comprehensive understanding of the cooling demand in buildings and to develop appropriate strategies on how this demand could be most effectively managed and met in a sustainable way, i.e. by reducing demand, improving energy efficiency and increasing the share of renewable energy.

Actions under this topic should, through a bottom-up approach, complement existing assessments, roadmaps and strategies, starting from the local context while deriving meaningful conclusions for the national and European level. For example, it should give insights into the typical potentials, conditions and use patterns for sustainable heating and cooling in a local context, which would be an important aspect for Member States' reporting, notably under the National Climate and Energy Plans (NECPs) and for the Comprehensive assessments under Article 14 of the Energy Efficiency Directive.

More specifically, the actions under this topic should:

- contribute to a better understanding of state-of-the-art cooling technologies in buildings, both as decentralised (or individual) or as part of centralised systems²², including passive cooling solutions,
- contribute to a better understanding of measures to reduce cooling demand, including improving the overall energy performance of the building, inter alia by making use of active building technologies, such as active shading, automation and control systems
- take stock and provide a cost-benefit analysis of the proposed solutions
- cover residential and non-residential buildings while paying particular attention to residential buildings, in particular with regard to thermal comfort and consider aspects such as lifestyle and user behaviour
- make the link to the neighbourhood level and consider aspects of local and urban planning as well as aspects related to the local grids, e.g. distributed electricity networks.
- identify key actors responsible for planning and implementing cooling solutions (municipalities, urban planners, architects, Energy Service Companies (ESCOs)/ engineering companies, energy advisers, installers etc.) and develop methodologies which ensure that these actors consider best available technologies, integrated and holistic solutions and that cooling needs are met in an optimal and integrated way.

Moreover, actions should:

²² COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION (EU) 2019/1659 of 25 September 2019 on the content of the comprehensive assessment of the potential for efficient heating and cooling under Article 14 of Directive 2012/27/EU

- identify a set of tailored solutions and services for cooling, such as services that involve integrated designs and planning, or effective implementation of integrated/ holistic solutions (such as combination of innovative cooling technologies and active building elements) as well as solutions that involve multi-apartment and/or a group of buildings
- develop recommendations for policy makers, regulatory bodies, planners and industry and business representations (e.g. chambers of commerce) at different levels; these recommendations should be in line with existing policy instruments and specifically build on provisions as established under the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, the Smart Readiness Indicator-framework, product legislation and (local) governance
- propose methodologies which facilitate existing financing schemes, notably public funds, e.g. at national level, to take into account cooling needs and measures to reduce cooling demand and deploy best available cooling technologies

Proposals should establish a solid evidence base. The data and the approaches to be developed should be endorsed by relevant market stakeholders across the whole value chain.

The proposed solutions and approaches, both technological (e.g. integration of technologies to reduce cooling demand and provide thermal comfort) and non-technological, should be subject to an element of validation. This can include testing of key aspects of the solutions in a real environment (e.g. existing buildings) and/or simulation. It should take into account factors influencing the effectiveness and suitability of the approach, and in any case consider the neighbourhood dimension and the overall local context.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of up to EUR 2 million would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

- Better understanding of the cooling demand of buildings in the EU including measures to reduce cooling demand and improving the overall energy performance of the building
- Better understanding of the impact of growing cooling demand on the neighbourhood level and local grids
- Increased up-take and use of integrated solutions and services by market actors
- Up-take and consideration of integrated solutions inside renovation schemes and financing instruments, notably at national level
- Improved reporting under the National Climate and Energy Plans (NECPs) and for the Comprehensive assessments under Article 14 of Directive 2012/27/EU
- Improved accuracy and meaningfulness of demand side models
- Primary energy savings/Renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year)
- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro)

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

LIFE-2021-CET-SMARTSERV: Establish innovative business models and contractual schemes for smart and sector-integrating energy services

Objectives

The topic aims to support actions that develop, conceptualise and deploy new business models and concepts which fully tap the economic value and the wider benefits of integrated services. Integrated services in the sense of the topic are services that combine different energy services, such as energy efficiency, distributed generation and flexibility, and/or which integrate energy services with non-energy benefits. Moreover, the topic targets at services that contribute to the integration of energy sectors and carriers, notably electricity, heating and cooling and mobility, thus helping to overcome the fragmentation of markets and segments. Finally, the topic aims to enhance the cooperation and trust among different services providers and market actors, also across segments that so far do not have common business cases.

The focus of the topic is on services involving buildings, i.e. services provided in, for or linked to buildings. These services should include an important element of energy efficiency. Moreover, the use of innovative technologies, as key enablers for the integration of services and sectors, is one important feature of this topic.

Scope

Actions under this topic are expected to:

- establish and implement service models that enhance the business case of energy efficiency services by integrating elements that increase the value and diversify revenue streams, e.g. by integrating
 - distributed generation and self-consumption, demand response/ flexibility, including e-mobility
 - electricity with heating and cooling, including making use of heat storage
 - aspects of comfort, consumer satisfaction, safety, health, convenience etc.
 - maintenance and optimisation
 - aggregation of data and visualisation of energy consumption; technical support, communication and advice to end users
- establish service models that allow energy efficiency to take part in the organised energy markets and/ or in portfolio optimisation of utilities, including as Pay4Performance-schemes
- establish contract models encompassing key aspects, including technical requirements, technical and performance guarantees, Measurement & Verification, fair share of benefits and appropriate remuneration, limited transaction costs etc.
- establish services that are tailored to capacities and needs of customers and that take into account different segments of customers (tailoring of services; load/flexibility type-based segmentation)
- consider new distributed ledger technologies suitable for energy transactions
- develop and integrate tools and methodologies to accurately monitor, verify, report and certify energy savings, energy production and flexibility as well as benefits, e.g. comfort

- design integrated service offers, i.e. beyond traditional energy efficiency projects, that would qualify for and meet the requirements of Energy Efficiency Directive Article 7

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of up to EUR 2 million would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

- Customers benefitting from new and smart service offers
- Reduced energy costs for end-users
- Reduced payback times of investments into sustainable energy
- Increased viability of services
- Up-take of services that facilitate the integration of sectors and energy carriers
- Up-take of contractual schemes that ensure legal and regulatory certainty, an attribution of fair shares of value across parties and a minimum of transaction costs
- Up-take of improved methodologies to measure and monetise primary benefits, such as energy consumption reduction and flexibility
- Up-take of methodologies to measure and valorise co-benefits yielded by services
- Up-take of new and smart energy services that are eligible under EED/ Article 7
- Primary energy savings/renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year)
- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro)

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

LIFE-2021-CET-SMARTREADY: Creating the conditions for a global improvement of smart readiness of European buildings

Objectives

The revised Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) together with the Delegated Act on the Smart Readiness Indicator (SRI) supplementing it as well as the Renovation Wave initiative of the European Green Deal encourages the use of ICT and smart technologies to ensure that buildings operate efficiently and that they can interact with the building occupants and with the buildings' environment. The objectives of this topic are to contribute to:

- The successful implementation of the Smart Readiness Indicator
- The successful market up-take of the Smart Readiness Indicator
- The rollout of ICT and smart-ready technologies (e.g. BMS, smart meters, smart thermostats, sensors, Internet of Things (IoT) devices, smart e-mobility charging infrastructure) in residential, public and commercial buildings
- The protection of privacy and cybersecurity of smart buildings
- The reduction of energy consumption linked to the use of digital technologies

Scope

Actions are expected to:

- Support the implementation of the Smart Readiness Indicator where it is endorsed as a first priority, but also of other relevant EU and national legislation, e.g. through enhancing the consideration of smart readiness aspects in building energy performance regulations e.g.
 - Explore and promote more ambitious implementation paths for the SRI at national level, such as for example through mandatory requirements.
 - Explore the design of smart readiness schemes both following the SRI calculation methodology and taking into consideration national specificities (e.g. applicable catalogue of smart-ready services, different types of buildings, or possible links between the SRI and energy performance certification). Develop approaches for enhancing the smart readiness of buildings in specific national contexts, with a view to maximise synergies with EU regulations and initiatives.
- Explore the role, potential gaps and needs with regard to interoperability as well as cybersecurity in smart readiness of buildings; where relevant, promote and contribute to EU standards.
- Support the market up-take of smart readiness of buildings through initiatives that enhance the visibility of and trust in the SRI, for example through certification and disclosure tools, while ensuring consistency with EU and national legislation – smart readiness indicator at first.
- Explore and develop concepts for the financing of building smartness upgrades through public investment programmes, e.g. by considering the SRI in the definition of eligibility criteria alongside energy efficiency; investigate the role of public procurement.
- Develop approaches and promote the deployment of technological solution packages that combine energy efficiency measures with smartness upgrades in the construction and renovation of buildings.
- Demonstrate the market value of smart readiness of buildings, e.g. by investigating the Rate of Return of smart readiness improvements in buildings and large building portfolios; assess and develop methods to measure and disclose the benefits of smart readiness in building portfolio valuation, notably for non-residential buildings.
- Promote the use of energy-efficient communication technologies, software and protocols in smart buildings and building energy management systems; promote the use of tools to monitor energy consumption of systems and appliances in buildings.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of up to EUR 2 million would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

- More effective and more ambitious implementation of the provisions related to the SRI in national legislations
- Faster and more comprehensive up-take of the SRI in the market, including consideration of the SRI in valorisation of buildings and buildings portfolios

- Increased share of buildings with smart features, including residential buildings, through suitable financial incentives and the deployment of safe and practical technical solutions and packages
- Increased user acceptance of smart devices towards privacy, security and trust
- Improved understanding of the operation and behaviour of buildings, technical building systems and appliances
- Primary energy savings/Renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year)
- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro)

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

Attracting private finance for sustainable energy

LIFE-2021-CET-MAINSTREAM: Mainstreaming sustainable energy finance and integrating energy performance in EU sustainable finance criteria and standards

Objectives

The topic aims to make sustainable energy investments more attractive to private investors and to align them with the EU's sustainable finance policy.

Significant additional investment needs to be mobilised to achieve the ambition set by the European Green Deal²³ and EU policy in the area of energy and climate. The magnitude of the investment requires mobilising both public and private sector, and sustaining the flow of investment over time.

While significant public sector expenditure leverages private finance for sustainable energy (e.g. through the InvestEU facility), many private investors still lack sufficient incentives and methods to overcome the perceived complexity and risks associated with this kind of projects. Sustainable energy investments, understood primarily as investments in energy efficiency and small-scale renewable energy sources, need further de-risking and mainstreaming into the operational and strategic approaches of market actors, in particular private finance institutions.

Growing evidence of multiple benefits triggered by sustainable energy projects (e.g. increased comfort, better health, higher value of real estate assets, resilience to extreme weather) impacts financial returns of private investors. This influence is not yet fully taken into account however and should be accelerated so that all costs and benefits of sustainable energy investment are duly reflected in private finance strategies at scale.

The EU's sustainable finance strategy²⁴ and the associated regulations, in particular the EU taxonomy regulation²⁵ aim to embed sustainability into the corporate governance frameworks, as many companies still focus too much on short-term financial performance compared to their long-term development and sustainability

23 COM(2019) 640 final

24 https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/banking-and-finance/sustainable-finance/overview-sustainable-finance_en#action-plan

25 Regulation (EU) 2020/852

aspects. Changing this focus can significantly impact the scale and ambition of sustainable energy investments, especially in the buildings sector.

The uptake of the approaches enshrined in the EU taxonomy regulation by private and public actors, is key to accelerate and upscale sustainable energy investments. A proper implementation of the auxiliary policy and legislation, such as the proposal for a Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive²⁶, the EU green bond standard²⁷ and labels for retail investment products, are also important building blocks of this process.

All of the above challenges are risk management related and rely on the availability and adequate uses of high-quality, interoperable data, in line with the vision of the European data space²⁸. Digital and financial technologies offer catalytic opportunities to harness data to accelerate sustainable investment and involve citizens by connecting retail and capital ends of the market.

In this context, adequate tools and methodologies are needed to attract private finance to sustainable energy investment, with a particular focus on the energy efficiency segment. Some of them exist already and need to be fine-tuned and expanded. There is also a need to encourage alignment with the regulatory requirements and policies both on the finance supply and demand side. Such alignment could in turn foster a massive upscale of retail investment in sustainable energy and securitisation of sustainable energy assets needed to close the investment gap and meet the EU policy targets in the area of climate action and sustainable development.

Scope

Proposals should address at least one of the two scopes detailed below.

Scope A

Proposals should mainstream and de-risk sustainable energy investments with a particular focus on private finance stakeholders, through actions including but not limited to:

- support to securitisation of assets linked to sustainable energy with a particular focus on energy efficiency, e.g. through Green Bonds issuance
- integration of long-termism and sustainability risks, including transition risks, and multiple benefits of sustainable energy into decision-making tools (e.g. internal risk models) of private investors in line with the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals
- exploring the impact of revised risk ratings and requirements for energy efficiency on financial regulations including the current banking and insurance prudential frameworks
- harmonisation, aggregation, and mainstreaming of existing market practices through de-risking private investments in sustainable energy as well as simplification of the investment process for investors
- activities focusing on data such as data collected through the Energy Performance Certificates, energy audits, smart meters, contracts with finance

26 COM(2021) 189 final

27 https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/banking-and-finance/sustainable-finance/eu-green-bond-standard_en

28 European strategy for data, COM(2020) 66 final

and/or energy service providers, as well as ex ante and ex post energy and financial performance data of investment, connected wherever possible to the De-risking Energy Efficiency Platform (DEEP)²⁹:

- high quality data collection and/or analysis leading to refinement of investor risk models or access to specific financing schemes
- improvement of quality and interoperability of data including through standardisation of measurement units
- facilitation of high quality data collection and reporting for project developers
- creation of data governance frameworks leading to improvement of availability of relevant data including open access solutions
- incorporation of energy related sustainability preferences and/or increasing access to financial markets by retail investors
- development and application of digital solutions including financial technology and algorithms facilitating energy-performance-based financing schemes

Scope B

The proposed actions should focus on alignment or overachievement of the EU sustainable finance requirements in the field of sustainable energy investment through actions including but not limited to:

- development and support to implementation of labelling and certification schemes including methodologies and tools for any one or more of the following: benchmarking, tagging, monitoring of investment performance, and disclosure of investment data set out in the EU sustainable finance legislation
- measures accelerating compliance or overachievement of the EU sustainable finance requirements by private investors and/or companies including support to sustainable energy project developers' response to private investors' needs and practices with a focus on technical and regulatory considerations (e.g. development of closer connections between technical standards and accounting and disclosure reporting)
- enhancement of transparent and regular integration of sustainable energy-related metrics in the market for sustainability assessment tools in view of the variety of ratings, research, scenario-analysis and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) benchmarks that are offered by specialized agencies
- targeted support to sustainable energy finance related activities by regulatory bodies and the supervisory authorities
- support to sustainable investment portfolio analysis based on granular and reliable data in order to increase transparency of sustainable energy investment strategies and markets.

²⁹ <https://deep.eefig.eu/>

For both scopes A and B:

The proposed actions should:

- involve private finance stakeholders, with a focus on institutional investors with a clear benefit to retail investors
- have strong potential for being taken up by market actors and avoid risks of unnecessary multiplication of already existing tools and practices
- contribute to the already existing practices or fill potential identified gaps with new approaches, e.g. in line with the EEFIG recommendations and findings
- be embedded in the most up-to-date contexts relevant to private finance investment. Notably, the proposed actions should demonstrate how they contribute to the implementation of the EU sustainable finance policy and legislation
- ensure that all sustainable energy investment triggered by the project is aligned or goes beyond the latest technical screening criteria developed in the frames of the EU Taxonomy regulation
- for actions focusing on data and digital solutions, demonstrate how they build on the existing relevant initiatives such De-risking Energy Efficiency Platform (DEEP)³⁰.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of up to EUR 1.75 million would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

Proposals are expected to demonstrate, depending on the scope addressed, the impacts listed below.

For scope A:

- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro)
- Evolution of investment practices of private financial institutions leading to improved financing of energy efficiency and renewable energy investments
- Improved access to data supporting increased investments in energy efficiency
- Number of institutional investors reflecting multiple-benefits of energy efficiency investment in their market strategies
- Number of companies or financial institutions who embedded the minimum technical criteria for sustainable investment set out in EU taxonomy or went beyond them in their activities
- Number of stakeholders using new or harmonised schemes, methods or data leading to increased flows of private finance to sustainable energy
- Number of market actors, in particular financial institutions, who integrated energy efficiency and sustainable energy specificities into their usual practices
- Primary energy savings/renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year), particularly in the building sector

³⁰ <https://deep.eefig.eu/>

For scope B:

- Improved integration of the specificities of energy efficiency and small-scale renewables within the sustainable finance strategies and investment practices of financial institutions
- Number of entities who embedded the minimum technical criteria for sustainable energy investment set out in EU taxonomy or went beyond them in their activities
- Number of stakeholders using new or harmonised schemes or methods leading to increased flows of private finance to sustainable energy
- Number of market actors, in particular financial institutions, who integrated sustainable energy specificities into their usual practices
- Number of retail investors benefiting from new market practices
- Support to financial regulatory bodies and the supervisory authorities on energy efficiency and renewable energy specific policies
- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro)
- Primary energy savings/Renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year), particularly in the building sector

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

LIFE-2021-CET-INNOFIN: Innovative financing schemes for sustainable energy investments

Objectives

The topic aims to set up innovative financing schemes for sustainable energy investments.

In view of the ambitious EU climate and energy policy, including dedicated targets for the years 2030 and 2050, significantly enhanced investments will be needed. This is also clearly reflected in the European Green Deal Investment Plan³¹, which aims at mobilising at least €1 trillion of sustainable investments over the course of 10 years for Europe to become the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. This requires significant investment from both the public and the private sector. Public finance needs to lead the way, private actors need to provide the scale.

In this context, also the level of sustainable energy and, in particular, energy efficiency investments needs to be ramped up significantly. This requires the mobilisation of both public and private funding sources, with a specific emphasis on progressively maximising the leverage ratio of private to public finance. This is in line with the Smart Finance for Smart Buildings initiative³², which aims at using public funds more effectively, and the “Renovation Wave”, which is envisaged by the

³¹ COM(2020) 21 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0021&from=EN>

³² COM(2016) 860 final, ANNEX 1 (ANNEX - Accelerating clean energy in buildings), https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/1_en_annexe_autre_acte_part1_v9.pdf

European Green Deal³³ to address the particular need to substantially enhance building energy efficiency.

In order to create the conditions for adequate supply of private finance for sustainable energy investments and enhanced engagement of private investors, there is a need to set up and roll out innovative financing schemes at regional or national level, which can be expanded and/or replicated at scale. These schemes have to be adapted to the specificities of sustainable energy investments and, in particular, to the particularities of energy efficiency investment profiles, and aligned with or go beyond the relevant EU Sustainable Finance policy and legislation³⁴ and specifically the related EU Taxonomy³⁵.

Scope

Proposals should address the set-up of innovative financing schemes leveraging private finance for sustainable energy investments, with a dedicated focus on energy efficiency. The financial solution should be operational by the end of the action, whereas the related investments may be implemented after project completion. Therefore, proposals should foresee necessary testing and exploitation activities during the action.

The financing schemes can involve various types of organisations and ownership structures, as well as diverse financing structures, including, but not limited to:

- Models applying different financing instruments such as tailored grants, equity, debt, mezzanine financing, refinancing mechanisms, guarantees or other de-risking instruments
- Specific finance models for the energy retrofit of buildings in line with the “Renovation Wave”, addressing property or rental markets and, in particular, deep energy renovation
- Specialised securitization vehicles and green bond schemes
- Local investment structures, including citizen financing (e.g. crowdfunding) for energy efficiency and other forms focusing on the role of prosumers or applying complementary local “currencies” at community scale to reinforce short circuits and local supply chains, including smart contracts
- Tailored financing solutions integrating existing market-based instruments relevant for energy efficiency (e.g. tradable certificate schemes, carbon finance instruments, including those under the European Emissions Trading System, CO₂/energy taxes, energy efficiency obligations e.g. under Art. 7 of EED or energy service/performance contracts); or
- Dedicated schemes based on aggregators or clearing houses (at regional or national level), which facilitate blending of different public and/or private funding sources, matching of demand and supply of energy efficiency finance and/or project development.

Proposals should take into account all the following elements, namely:

- Address the establishment of innovative, operational financing schemes for sustainable energy investments. In this context, they can draw on and/or

33 COM(2019) 640 final, https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/european-green-deal-communication_en.pdf

34 See https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/banking-and-finance/sustainable-finance/overview-sustainable-finance_en

35 See https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/banking-and-finance/sustainable-finance/eu-taxonomy-sustainable-activities_en

upscale other innovative financing schemes for sustainable energy investments which have demonstrated to be effective³⁶

- Address the provision of finance as well as the structuring of demand, in particular at regional and national level
- Define the target region(s) and sector(s) (e.g. buildings, energy-intensive industries, insurance sector etc.)
- Clarify how the proposed scheme is tailored and innovative for the targeted region(s) and market segment(s)
- Justify how the proposed scheme complements and is additional to already available funding
- Clearly demonstrate the market potential, as well as business case and financial viability of the proposed scheme (including e.g. investment sizes targeted, expected energy/cost savings, transaction and management costs, expected returns etc.); and
- Ensure and explain alignment with the relevant EU Sustainable Finance policy and legislation and, in particular, the related EU Taxonomy, or clarify how they go beyond.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of up to EUR 1.75 million would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

Proposals are expected to demonstrate the impacts listed below, using quantified indicators and targets wherever possible:

- Delivery of adequately tailored innovative financing schemes that are operational and ready to finance sustainable energy and, in particular, energy efficiency investments
- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro)
- Contribution to wide-spread implementation of the relevant EU Sustainable Finance policy and legislation and, in particular, the related EU Taxonomy, and the achievement of the underlying objectives
- Primary energy savings/renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year)
- Reduction of greenhouse gases emissions (in tCO₂-eq/year) and, if applicable, air pollutants (in kg/year)

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

³⁶ Such schemes may originate outside or inside the European Union, including, for example, those developed and implemented under project development assistance (PDA) facilities under the Horizon 2020 and Intelligent Energy Europe programmes (including H2020/MLEI PDA or ELENA-EIB).

Supporting the development of local and regional investment projects

LIFE-2021-CET-HOMERENO: Integrated Home Renovation Services

Objectives

This topic aims at creating or replicating innovative local or regional "integrated home renovation services".

Building refurbishment can be particularly cumbersome in private housing and there are many barriers discouraging homeowners from taking the investment decision. Based on good practices and successful models across the EU and in line with the "Renovation Wave" initiative of the "European Green Deal", there is pressing need and value in coordinating actions and make home renovation as simple as possible for homeowners.

Scope

Projects funded under this topic are expected to address, but are not be limited to, the following aspects:

(1) Improve market conditions and develop integrated home renovation services offers to:

- Reduce complexity, simplify decision making for homeowners to stimulate demand for building renovation and energy performance improvements
- Create, coordinate and/or optimise the services required along building energy performance investment processes
- Connect all actors in the value chain (e.g. construction companies, architects, engineers, urban planners, financiers, etc.)
- Streamline access to various support measures, especially where there is support for specific target groups (e.g. energy poor households)
- Improve awareness and trust towards such integrated services, through clear accountability, quality assurance and dedicated consumer protection policies.

(2) Develop a self-sustained business model:

- Integration of services can be developed through dedicated operators (new public or public/private entity or mandated private operators) and/or through an improved co-ordination between existing local actors
- The prospect of economically viable business models is expected, targeting self-sustainability in the medium to long term, i.e. ultimately running without subsidies to cover running costs.

(3) Provide methods and support:

- Build expertise and organisational innovations needed for project development
- Reduce costs and time on-site through standardised approaches (e.g. optimized business processes, standardised contractual arrangements, branding of the proposed services etc.)
- Ensure cost effectiveness and price transparency of services provided to homeowners
- Support the streamlining of standards and practices into consistent and transparent processes investors can rely on, and overall improve financing conditions.

(4) Communicate results:

- Mainstream innovative technical and organisational solutions, adapted to local context
- Help improve legal and regulatory environments

- Demonstrate a high degree of replicability and include a clear action plan to communicate experiences and results towards potential replicators across the EU.

Actions should clearly focus on the energy performance improvement of existing single or multi-family buildings in the private residential sector. However, actions in "complex buildings" (e.g. coexistence of private and social housing; coexistence of housing and business premises, typically on the ground floor) can also be considered, as long as the main focus is on private non-professional decision makers.

The developed services should cover the whole "customer journey" from technical and social diagnosis, technical offer, obtaining permits, finding qualified professionals, contracting of works, structuring and provision of finance (e.g. loans), facilitating access to available subsidies or other support schemes, to the monitoring of works and quality assurance.

The meaning of the word "integrated" is twofold:

- The approach should combine various services in a packaged offer to homeowners, in order to create confidence and simplify their renovation process
- The approach should also be well integrated in its context, making best use of what is locally available, notably in terms of public support schemes and local market players.

Proposals should foresee to cooperate with the emerging community of integrated home renovation services, notably those funded by H2020 and LIFE CET for analysis, exchange and communication efforts associated to cross-cutting elements.

Applications may be submitted by a single applicant.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of a range of EUR 1 million to EUR 1.5 million would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

- Integrated Home Renovation Services implemented, operational and tested at the end of the action, although upscale may happen after project completion
- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro, during the action (pilot phase) and within the first 5 years of operation of the services)
- Strong and trustworthy partnerships with local actors (e.g. SMEs, architects, engineers, ESCOs, financial institutions, energy agencies, NGOs)
- Implementation of economically viable business models, ultimately running without the need for public subsidies to cover running costs
- Availability of adequate financing offers to support investment in home energy performance improvement
- Data and guidance made publically available in order to facilitate replication of the approach by other market actors. Evidence that the value of the services offered is recognised by the market
- Primary energy savings/renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year)
- Reduction of greenhouse gases emissions (in tCO₂eq/year) and/or air pollutants

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

LIFE-2021-CET-HOMERECOM: EU community of "Integrated Home Renovation Services" practitioners

Objectives

This topic aims at developing an EU community of skilled practitioners actively involved in the local/regional implementation of "integrated home renovation services" in order to pool efforts, generate economies of scale and encourage convergence towards best practices.

Indeed, the market offer for building renovation in the private residential sector is fragmented, composed of a myriad of micro and small companies, and mostly uncoordinated. Coordinating and simplifying this offer can incentivise homeowners, nurture trust in renovation and ensure that minimum quality requirements are met, thereby increasing the rate of energy renovations across the EU, in line with objectives of the "Renovation Wave" strategy. The EU provides direct support to local implementation of "integrated home renovation services" through the Horizon 2020 and the LIFE Clean Energy Transition programmes, and the ELENA facility.

In addition, the present topic is intended to provide additional support to build bridges between existing and emerging local/regional initiatives. By fostering international collaboration and incremental innovation among "integrated home renovation services" providers, the objectives are to facilitate acceleration and quality uptake of home renovation services across Europe, support convergence towards minimum quality levels and streamlined standards, consolidate findings, debate and present coordinated proposals to policy makers, increase market recognition and strengthen trust of end-users.

Scope

The community of practice to be established must be transnational and actively involve a variety of representatives of the most relevant implementations of "integrated home renovation services" throughout Europe.

Building on best practices, this community should support collective productions, incremental innovations and joint efforts to promote "integrated home renovation services". It should facilitate dialogue and insight sharing, fostering the emergence of a common culture among participants and beyond. Particular efforts and results are expected on, but not limited to:

- Strategic positioning and business model: assessing local market gaps, attractive offer development to homeowners (in terms of quality and price of services), possible sources of revenue, associated business models, most appropriate combinations of public and private interventions, potential and conditions for dissemination across Europe, etc.
- Methodologies and tools: how to streamline and optimise the processes to deliver "integrated home renovation services"? Which tools exist and which ones could be developed? Etc.
- Skills and training needs: which new skills or new professions are needed for the implementation and effective operation of "integrated home renovation services"? Conversely, how to motivate and secure career opportunities for skilled professionals in that field? Etc.

- Partnerships with market actors: what types of partnerships could be developed? How to secure partners' commitment to deliver quality and competitive services? etc.
- Quality assurance and consumer protection policies: what quality guarantees could be offered to homeowners? How to ensure consumer protection? How should disputes be handled? Etc.

This community of practice should consolidate findings from the various experiences across Europe and propose guidance and support to emerging initiatives. It should foster dialogue within the community and beyond on cross-cutting issues. It should support the development of coordinated proposals to policy makers and actively contribute to regulatory and legislative processes at local, national and European levels, in particular by highlighting concrete situations and difficulties faced when implementing "integrated home renovation services", practical challenges and best practices.

While being specifically focused on "integrated home renovation services" aspects, proposals shall demonstrate knowledge of relevant wider initiatives (e.g. Sustainable Energy Investment Forums, ManagEnergy, BUILD UP Skills, the Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills in the Construction sector) and leverage on their results.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of up to EUR 2 million would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

- Establishment of a European community of practice gathering relevant stakeholders, deeply rooted in their ecosystem and actively involved in ongoing local implementation of "integrated home renovation services"
- Number, diversity and quality of stakeholders actively involved in the community. This could include, but not be limited to, public authorities, consultants, architects associations, craftsmen associations, homeowners associations, citizens associations, universities, training centres, financial institutions, etc.
- Number, nature and quality of planned collective outputs, distributed between the main categories outlined in the scope section above. In particular, guidance and support proposed to emerging initiatives
- Number, nature and target audience of communication materials
- Data and guidance made publically available in order to facilitate the uptake of "integrated home renovation services" across Europe. Evidence that the value of such integrated services is recognised by the market
- Number and nature of planned contributions to legislative and regulatory processes at local, national and European levels
- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro)
- Primary energy savings/renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year)
- Reduction of greenhouse gases emissions (in tCO₂eq/year) and/or air pollutants

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

LIFE-2021-CET-COALREGIONS: Community-driven clean energy transition in coal, peat and oil-shale regions

Objectives

Coal infrastructure is present in 108 European regions and close to 237 000 people are employed in coal-related activities, whereas almost 10 000 people are employed in peat extraction activities and around 6 000 are employed in the oil shale industry.

The shift to a low-carbon economy presents many opportunities to carbon intensive regions. However, the economic and social impacts of such a transition need to be carefully taken into account and an inclusive and bottom-up approach engaging with local stakeholders and citizens is essential to make this transition a success.

The European Union's Just Transition Mechanism – comprising the Just Transition Fund, a dedicated InvestEU scheme and the Public Sector Loan Facility – aims to mobilise up to €75 billion to support coal, peat and oil shale regions in their efforts to decarbonise and become climate neutral.

It is important to ensure that investments triggered by the Just Transition Mechanism support the transition towards an energy-efficient, renewable energy-based economy, which is based on an inclusive, consumer-and community-centred approach.

This topic aims to empower coal, peat and oil-shale regions to advance the clean energy transition in their territories by developing and implementing the sustainable energy-related elements of their territorial just transition plans and effectively combining the support provided by the Just Transition Mechanism and/or and other sources of available funding.

Scope

Proposals should build capacity amongst communities in coal, peat and oil-shale regions to maximise spending of the Just Transition Mechanism in the area of the clean energy transition leading to increased uptake of energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions. Proposals should support local/regional bottom-up activities, that are in line with territorial just transition plans and aim to use effectively the resources of the Just Transition Mechanism and/or and other sources of public and/or private funding. The proposed activities should have a strong focus on engaging local communities and citizens in the clean energy transition.

Proposals could focus on the following areas (non-exhaustive):

- alignment of local/regional strategies with the clean energy transition and strengthening the implementation by deploying support from the Just Transition Mechanism, which should also include strong citizens' engagement in the governance structures and decision making processes
- building capacity and understanding amongst key stakeholders, local communities and citizens for the clean energy transition, in particular, with an emphasis on the economic and social opportunities and environmental and health benefits
- alleviating energy poverty including demonstration of the wider benefits including improved health
- developing sustainable energy project pipelines such as the energy-efficient renovation of buildings, energy-efficient district heating and cooling systems or low carbon transport solutions.

Proposals should put emphasis on skills development and job creation effects as well as revitalisation and regeneration of economy in the area of clean energy transition, for example, skills and jobs in energy efficiency and renewable energy fields and in line with the European Green Deal and particularly the Renovation Wave.

Proposals should involve at least three different target regions in three different Member States in order to disseminate good practices and experiences across borders and strengthening the EU added value. In addition, proposals should build upon the activities of the Just Transition Platform³⁷.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of up to EUR 1 million would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

- Investments into sustainable energy triggered by the project through public and/or private funding (cumulative, in million Euro)
- Number of citizens with increased level of awareness for the clean energy transition
- Increased economic activity in the area of energy efficiency and renewable energy including jobs created and skills developed
- Number of strategies developed/adapted and aligned with the objectives of the clean energy transition
- Number of households taken out of energy poverty
- Primary energy savings/renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year)
- Reduction in greenhouse gases emissions (tCO₂eq/year)

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

LIFE-2021-CET-PDA: Disruptive PDA – Technical Assistance to advance market boundaries for sustainable energy investments

Objectives

Project Development Assistance (PDA) offers technical assistance to project developers to undertake energy efficiency and renewable energy investments of ambition and scale.

The topic aims to support innovators across Europe to develop innovative solutions that are mobilising private capital, blending public with private financing, setting up long-term and scalable financial instruments and at the same time overcoming legal and structural barriers whilst delivering a highly ambitious sustainable energy project pipeline. Projects are expected to demonstrate innovative approaches in mobilising investments, advancing market boundaries or changing organisational and regulatory structures. In doing so they disrupt existing markets and existing processes.

³⁷ Just Transition Platform: https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/actions-being-taken-eu/just-transition-mechanism/just-transition-platform_en

These solutions should contribute significantly to paving the way towards the 2050 decarbonisation targets for Europe. The European Green Deal's Renovation Wave is a key driver for a refurbished and improved building stock in the EU that will help pave the way for a decarbonised and clean energy system.

A range of very innovative solutions with regard to the financing and mobilisation of investments were demonstrated in past H2020 PDA projects, which helped to shift market boundaries and demonstrate practical application of ingenious, disruptive solutions. For example, a forfailing fund using private investments, which is scalable across Europe has been set up to foster deep retrofitting of hard-to-treat multi-family buildings³⁸. Another example is the development of a revolving loan fund combining ERDF funding, low interest-loans and Third Party Financing through ESCOs to deeply refurbish hospitals in the region³⁹.

Scope

Project Development Assistance (PDA) will be provided to public and private project promoters such as public authorities or their groupings, public/private infrastructure operators and bodies, energy service companies, retail chains, large property owners and services/industry. The action will support building technical, economic and legal expertise needed for project development. The launch of concrete investments is the final aim and deliverable of the project.

Proposals should demonstrate a clear showcase dimension in delivering innovative solutions accelerating sustainable energy investments across Europe:

- in the development of scalable schemes with a particular focus on leveraging enhanced levels of private investment such as EPC, blended funds, financial instruments or innovative on-bill and on-tax payment schemes; and/or
- in the organisational innovation for the mobilisation of the investment programmes such as setting up project development units, large-scale bundling and pooling of (mixed) assets, for example, at district, city or wider geographical level; and
- in the ambition levels for energy savings and decarbonisation, such as deep renovation, NZEB standards, positive energy buildings or districts and/or highly energy efficient infrastructure.

Proposals could target sectors including:

- existing residential buildings including large social housing operators
- existing non-residential buildings of public or commercial owners
- existing public infrastructure such as district heating/cooling networks, water/wastewater services
- clean and energy efficient urban transport infrastructure and low emission mobility solutions including conversion of urban areas for soft mobility or non-motorised transport
- industry and services, including SMEs
- RES energy communities and other citizen led initiatives.

Applications may be submitted by a single applicant.

³⁸ <https://sharex.lv/>

³⁹ <http://www.marteproject.eu/en>

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of a range of EUR 0.5 million to EUR 2 million would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

- Delivery of a scalable financing solution for sustainable energy investment projects
- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro of investments). Every million Euro of EU support should trigger at least 15 million Euro of investments in sustainable energy, with a particular emphasis on private sector funds, and, hence, ensure a significant leverage effect. In case projects address exclusively investments in residential buildings, the triggered investments should be at least 10 million Euro for every million Euro of EU support
- Primary energy savings/renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year)
- Reduction of GHG emissions triggered by the project (in tCO₂eq/year)
- Increased skills and capacity in project aggregators to deliver further sustainable energy investment
- Jobs created through the sustainable energy investments
- Where relevant, improved health-related indicators such as improved indoor air quality or physical activity

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

Involving and empowering citizens in the clean energy transition

LIFE-2021-CET-ENERPOV: Addressing building related interventions for vulnerable districts

Objectives

The topic aims to alleviate energy poverty by addressing the poor energy efficiency of dwellings, as a key risk factor causing energy poverty (the other two being low incomes and high energy expenditure). Buildings are still responsible for 40% of Europe's total energy consumption, and too many Europeans struggle to afford the energy bills for their poorly insulated dwellings with polluting heating/cooling systems. In accordance with the Clean Energy for All Europeans package, Member States, through their National Energy and Climate Plans and Long-Term Renovation Strategies (LTRS), must identify dwellings of people at risk of energy poverty and develop effective strategies for renovating these as a matter of priority. The Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU) (EED), as amended by Directive 2018/2002/EU, requires Member States to take into account the need to reduce energy poverty in the context of their energy efficiency obligations. In addition, the revised EPBD requires Member States to target the least efficient building stock first ("worst first" principle), and address split-incentive dilemmas and market failures as part of the national LTSRS. At the same time, the European Green Deal sets out to ensure an energy

transition that is socially just and inclusive, with the Renovation Wave⁴⁰ as its centrepiece. This is also supported by e.g. the Commission Recommendation on Energy Poverty⁴¹.

In addition to tackling high bills and energy use, this topic aims to address the many negative impacts low quality building stock has on residents, including poorer health and lower levels of social inclusion. Transforming inefficient housing stock addresses a root cause of energy poverty, however, the topic also has as an objective to tackle the related high upfront costs, lack of information and trust, uncertainty about benefits of the measures, split incentives, and discomfort caused by renovation works, including the potential need to relocate, as barriers to household uptake.

Scope

Proposed actions should facilitate the market uptake of renovation approaches for the large-scale rollout of building-related interventions for vulnerable districts, clusters of buildings, or groups of such buildings managed through common building management or housing/home-owners associations (e.g. social housing), in line with the Renovation Wave and the Commission Recommendation on Energy Poverty.

Approaches can involve traditional public mechanisms, and/or alternative models with blended financing and can focus on the private rented sector, social housing, multifamily buildings, or owner-occupied housing. To maximise energy savings, occupant behaviour and residents' buy-in should be considered from early stages of the process and all actions should be coupled by accompanying measures to adapt residents' post-intervention energy use behaviour, through e.g. community engagement campaigns, advice, or trainings.

Proposed actions should focus on lowering the cost of renovation (including over the building lifecycle), reducing delivery time, and minimising disturbance for building occupants. In case of rental properties, actions should help ensure that tenants' rent levels are maintained after renovation works are completed and relocation of tenants and district gentrification after works is avoided.

The solutions should include already proven measures for deep renovation, such as building envelope insulation, replacement/improvement of the technical building systems, and window replacement, etc.

The approaches should be one or a combination of the following, and could also include renewable energy solutions, where appropriate:

- Roll out holistic, industrialised deep renovation solutions, including also approaches based on pre-fabricated modules, where appropriate
- Develop and implement roadmaps of energy efficiency measures that can be conducted step by step, starting with those with the shortest payback period to act as a further incentive (e.g. starting by replacing the heating/cooling systems, or by insulating the envelope, etc.). Roadmaps can be prepared by e.g. local authorities, or social/societal actors and should involve regular communication and engagement with all relevant stakeholders. Low-cost measures that can be quickly applied can also form a small, complementary part of such roadmaps (e.g. draught proofing, introducing shading elements, radiator reflective foils). These roadmaps should prevent lock-in effects and

⁴⁰ European Commission Communication 'A Renovation Wave for Europe - greening our buildings, creating jobs, improving lives', 14 October 2020 (COM(2020) 662 final).

⁴¹ Commission Recommendation (EU) 2020/1563 of 14 October 2020 on energy poverty (C(2020) 9600 final)

can be e.g. based on the renovation recommendations included in Energy Performance Certificates. At a minimum, the actions are expected to put in place the framework for implementation before the end of the proposed action, including securing sufficient financing and commitment of all relevant actors

- Develop and implement roadmaps of energy efficiency measures that can be conducted step by step for social housing organisations to address the specific needs of their own building stock and residents. These should involve regular communication and engagement with all relevant stakeholders. Low-cost measures that can be quickly applied can also form a small, complementary part of such roadmaps (e.g. draught proofing, introducing shading elements, radiator reflective foils). At a minimum, the actions are expected to put in place the framework for implementation before the end of the proposed action, including securing sufficient financing and commitment of all relevant actors.

Proposed actions should highlight the multiple benefits from renovation for different vulnerable target groups, such as improved health, comfort, air quality, better social inclusion etc. The actions should also take into account Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) approaches, in order to minimise carbon emissions.

The proposed actions should build on existing initiatives⁴² and involve local authorities and intermediaries such as tenants/homeowners/landlord/housing associations, social and societal actors, or renewable energy communities or citizen energy communities, as relevant.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of up to EUR 1.75 million would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

Impacts under this topic are expected to be demonstrated for energy poor households specifically.

- Number of buildings renovated
- Demonstration of the effectiveness and replicability of the proposed solutions among energy poor households
- Number of roadmaps created
- Number of energy poor consumers impacted
- Multiple benefits, such as improved mental and physical health, comfort and indoor environment, better indoor air quality, improved social inclusion, reduced public health expenditure
- Primary energy savings/renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year).
- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro)
- Indicators for measuring energy poverty⁴³

⁴² For example, the EU Energy Poverty Observatory and its successor, the EU Covenant of Mayors, EU Building Stock Observatory, the Affordable Housing Initiative, and relevant EU-funded projects

⁴³ Commission Recommendation (EU) 2020/1563 of 14 October 2020 on energy poverty (C(2020) 9600 final) and Commission SWD 'EU Guidance on Energy poverty', 14.10.2020 (SWD(2020) 960 final)

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

LIFE-2021-CET-ENERCOM: Developing support mechanisms for energy communities and other citizen-led initiatives in the field of sustainable energy

Objectives

This topic aims to support actions that foster the collaboration between local and regional authorities and energy communities and/or actions that develop integrated services to facilitate the emergence and growth of community energy projects.

Energy communities can help citizens and local authorities invest in renewables and energy efficiency. The participation of citizens in renewable energy projects may also overcome social acceptance at the local level. Community-owned projects allow citizens to finance sustainable energy investments that deliver local economic benefits, social cohesion, and other priorities such as improving the energy efficiency of housing or reducing energy poverty.

An increasing number of local authorities wish to make sure that more citizens and local communities benefit from the energy transition and play an active role in it. In fact, local government is uniquely well-placed to support, partner and invest, and to provide a positive planning and policy environment to help drive community energy.

Designing adequate public interventions at the local level is key but there is no one-size-fits-all solution to trigger the creation of energy communities locally. The level of public participation and the type of actions required vary significantly depending on the specific context of each city and town. Building on initiatives such as the Covenant of Mayors, there is also a need to strengthen the technical and financial capacities of local actors to support citizen-led initiatives in the field of energy (particularly in Member States with low levels of community energy activity).

Taking sustainable energy projects off the ground can be complex due to the regulatory and policy context (changing national support schemes for renewables, burdensome licensing, heavy administrative procedures, difficulties in coordinating project implementation in atomized markets, etc.). For relatively small and citizen-led actors like energy communities, there are some additional practical challenges such as lack of information, limited access to finance, difficulties aggregating small interventions, difficulties in managing the public participation and engagement, and establishing effective governance and decision-making structures. These hurdles prevent energy communities around Europe from developing their potential. An effective way of tackling this complexity, is by supplying integrated services for the set-up of sustainable energy projects through energy communities.

Scope

This topic will support actions covering at least ONE of the scopes below:

Scope A - Local authorities collaborating with citizen-led-initiatives

Under this scope, proposals should foster the collaboration between local and regional authorities (including energy agencies) and energy communities. This could be done in many ways but all proposals should include at least three of the actions below:

- Participation in and/or set up of municipal energy initiatives and energy communities including diverse and hybrid forms of collective ownership with

participation from municipal authorities and citizens aimed at supporting the achievement of local and regional energy policy objectives.

- Support to the emergence of citizen energy initiatives that empower local actors to collectively address energy transition targets through use of public resources, funds and capacity. The role of local and regional authorities could include helping community projects access citizen finance and bank loans (e.g. through guarantees, seed funding for revolving funds, technical support for the early stages of project development) and facilitating procurement of locally generated renewable energy from community energy projects.
- Creation of a supportive local policy framework for the development of community energy projects (e.g. through community participation or investment quotas, more streamlined and simplified environmental permit procedures) and facilitation of a dialogue among different actors involved in community projects (e.g. community members, relevant economic players, national regulators, the local authority and other societal, environmental or energy actors in the area).
- Training and capacity building on community energy development (for local and regional authority officials, local communities and other relevant local actors) and promotion of citizen participation in energy communities.

These activities should make use of existing initiatives, networks and platforms as relevant (e.g. Covenant of Mayors, Smart Cities Marketplace).

Scope B - Developing integrated services to support community energy

Under this scope, proposals should support actions that improve market conditions and develop integrated services aimed at reducing complexity, simplifying decision making and stimulating the creation of community energy projects. These services may be implemented by public or private actors in close coordination with local and/or regional authorities in targeted territories. The integrated services designed should lead to local community energy investment pipelines and could cover:

- Capacity building and facilitating access of local energy communities and cooperatives to information and guidance about setting up, financing and operating community projects (e.g. licencing, public procurement of community energy, business models, legal aspects).
- Connecting different actors in the value chain (e.g. technology providers, financiers, public actors in charge of licensing, aggregators).
- Aggregation of small sustainable energy projects including (where relevant) support for energy commercialisation and participation in flexibility markets.
- Development of financial tools to facilitate the emergence of community energy projects and their access to citizen finance and bank loans (e.g. through guarantees, seed funding for revolving funds, technical support for the early stages of project development).

For scopes A and B (where relevant):

Proposals should justify how selected pilots fit either the definition of “renewable energy community” according to the revised Renewable energy directive ((EU) 2018/2001) and/or the definition of “citizen energy community” according to the Directive on common rules for the internal electricity market ((EU) 2019/944).

Proposals could cover any area related to sustainable energy (renewable energy generation, transmission, distribution, citizen-led renovation, energy efficiency, e-

mobility, etc.). Proposed activities can also promote (if they wish to) inter-consumers and/or inter-communities trading/sharing of sustainable energy virtual-net-metering, (collective) energy storage solutions, or peer to peer trading.

Proposals should demonstrate the support of the stakeholders which are necessary to ensure the success of the action (in particular, local or regional authorities).

Projects should provide policy feedback to improve public policies, legal and regulatory environments in the field of community energy across Europe.

Proposals replicating existing innovative organisational solutions should justify their choice and show how they will adapt solutions to their local context.

Proposals should demonstrate a high degree of replicability and include a clear action plan to communicate experiences and results towards potential replicators across the EU.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of up to EUR 1.75 million would allow the specific objectives to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact

- Number of citizen-led initiatives supported and/or created as a result of the project
- Number of citizens taking part in energy communities as a result of the project
- Number of actors with increased skills in the area of community energy (local and regional authority officials or other relevant actors)
- Number of local and regional authorities committed to replicate best practice experiences
- Investments in sustainable energy triggered by the project (cumulative, in million Euro)
- Primary energy savings/renewable energy generation triggered by the project (in GWh/year)
- Number of operational integrated service hubs at the end of the project, although investment and upscale may happen after project completion (scope B)
- Development of local community energy investment pipelines (in million Euro of investments within the first 5 years) (scope B)

Funding rate

Other Actions (Coordination and Support Actions) — 95%

3. Available budget

The indicative available call budget is **EUR 94.500.000**.

Specific budget information per topic can be found in the table below.

Topic	Topic budget
LIFE-2021-CET-LOCAL	EUR 7 000 000
LIFE-2021-CET-POLICY	EUR 6 000 000
LIFE-2021-CET-GOV	EUR 5 500 000
LIFE-2021-CET-BUILDRENO	EUR 6 000 000
LIFE-2021-CET-AUDITS	EUR 5 500 000
LIFE-2021-CET-VALUECHAIN	EUR 4 000 000
LIFE-2021-CET-BUILDSKILLS	EUR 6 000 000
LIFE-2021-CET-COOLING	EUR 4 000 000
LIFE-2021-CET-SMARTSERV	EUR 4 000 000
LIFE-2021-CET-SMARTREADY	EUR 6 000 000
LIFE-2021-CET-MAINSTREAM	EUR 5 500 000
LIFE-2021-CET-INNOFIN	EUR 5 500 000
LIFE-2021-CET-HOMERENO	EUR 6 000 000
LIFE-2021-CET-HOMERECOM	EUR 2 000 000
LIFE-2021-CET-COALREGIONS	EUR 3 000 000
LIFE-2021-CET-PDA	EUR 6 000 000
LIFE-2021-CET-ENERPOV	EUR 5 500 000
LIFE-2021-CET-ENERCOM	EUR 7 000 000

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. Timetable and deadlines

Timetable and deadlines (indicative)	
Call opening:	13 July 2021
<u>Deadline for submission:</u>	<u>12 January 2022 – 17:00:00 CET</u> (Brussels)
Information on evaluation results:	May - June 2022
GA signature:	September 2022

5. Admissibility and documents

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

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

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

Proposals must be **complete** and contain all the requested information 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*)
- Part C (*to be filled in directly online*) containing additional project data
- **mandatory annexes and supporting documents** (*to be uploaded*):
 - detailed budget table (*mandatory excel template available in the Submission System*)
 - participant information (*mandatory template available in the Submission System*)
 - for topic LIFE-2021-CET-PDA: table of investments (*mandatory template available in the Submission System*)
- **optional annexes:** letters of support


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)
- be established in one of the eligible countries, i.e.:
 - EU Member States (including overseas countries and territories (OCTs))
 - non-EU countries: listed EEA countries and countries associated to the LIFE Programme ([participating countries](#)) or countries which are in ongoing negotiations for an association agreement and where the agreement enters into force before grant signature
- the coordinator must be established in an eligible country

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

Exceptional funding — Entities from other countries (not listed above) are exceptionally eligible, if the granting authority considers their participation essential for the implementation of the action (*see work programme*).

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

International organisations — International organisations are 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 persons⁴⁴.

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'⁴⁵. ⚠ 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)⁴⁶ and entities covered by Commission Guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#)⁴⁷). 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

Proposals must be submitted by:

for topics **LIFE-2021-CET-BUILDSKILLS**, **LIFE-2021-CET-PDA** and **LIFE-2021-CET-HOMERENO**:

- a single applicant is allowed from an eligible country;

for topics **LIFE-2021-CET-LOCAL**, **LIFE-2021-CET-POLICY**, **LIFE-2021-CET-GOV**, **LIFE-2021-CET-BUILDRENO**, **LIFE-2021-CET-AUDITS**, **LIFE-2021-CET-VALUECHAIN**, **LIFE-2021-CET-COOLING**, **LIFE-2021-CET-SMARTSERV**, **LIFE-2021-CET-SMARTREADY**, **LIFE-2021-CET-MAINSTREAM**, **LIFE-2021-CET-INNOFIN**, **LIFE-2021-CET-HOMERECOM**, **LIFE-2021-CET-COALREGIONS**, **LIFE-2021-CET-ENERPOV** and **LIFE-2021-CET-ENERCOM**:

- proposals must be submitted by at least 3 applicants (beneficiaries; not affiliated entities) from 3 different eligible countries.

Eligible activities

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

⁴⁴ See Article 197(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

⁴⁵ For the definitions, see Articles 187(2) and 197(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

⁴⁶ 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](#).

⁴⁷ 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).

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

Financial support to third parties is not allowed.

Geographic location (target countries)

Proposals must relate to activities taking place in the eligible countries (*see above*). Activities outside the eligible countries must be necessary to reach the project objectives within the eligible countries.

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 coordinators except:

- public bodies (entities established as public body under national law, including local, regional or national authorities) or international organisations
- if the project 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 'Resources' 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:

- general profiles (qualifications and experiences) of the staff responsible for managing and implementing the project
- description of the consortium participants (and previous projects, if any)

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

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 participate⁴⁸:

- 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 misconduct⁴⁹ (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- committed fraud, corruption, links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement, prize, expert contract, or similar (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No [2988/95](#) (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)

⁴⁸ See Articles 136 and 141 of EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

⁴⁹ 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.

- 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 that⁵⁰:

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

8. Evaluation and award procedure


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

An **evaluation committee** (assisted by independent outside experts) will assess all applications. Proposals will first be checked for formal requirements (admissibility, and eligibility, *see sections 5 and 6*). Proposals found admissible and eligible will be evaluated (for each topic) 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 topic or budget envelope) 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, the *ex aequo* proposals will be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the award criterion 'Impact'. If these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Relevance', then 'Quality', then 'Resources'.

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

⁵⁰ See Article 141 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

be aware that for complaints submitted electronically, there may be character limitations.

9. Award criteria

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

1. Relevance (0-20 points)

- Relevance of the contribution to one or several of the specific objectives of the LIFE Programme and the targeted sub-programme
- Extent to which the proposal is in line with the description included in the call for proposals, including, where relevant, its specific priorities
- Concept and methodology: soundness of the overall intervention logic
- Extent to which the proposal offers co-benefits and promotes synergies with other policy areas relevant for achieving environment and climate policy objectives

2. Impact (0-20 points)

- Ambition and credibility of impacts expected during and/or after the project due to the activities, including ensuring that no substantial harm is done to the other specific objectives of the LIFE Programme
- Sustainability of the project results after the end of the project
- Quality of the measures for the exploitation of project results
- Potential for the project results to be replicated in the same or other sectors or places, or to be up-scaled by public or private actors or through mobilising larger investments or financial resources (catalytic potential).

3. Quality (0-20 points)

- Clarity, relevance and feasibility of the work plan
- Identification and mobilisation of the relevant stakeholders
- Appropriate geographic focus of the activities
- Quality of the plan to monitor and report impacts
- Appropriateness and quality of the measures to communicate and disseminate the project and its results to different target groups

4. Resources (0-20 points)

- Composition of the project team - in terms of expertise, skills and responsibilities and appropriateness of the management structure
- Appropriateness of the budget and resources and their consistency with the work plan
- Transparency of the budget, i.e. the cost items should be sufficiently described
- Extent to which the project environmental impact is considered and mitigated, including through the use of green procurement. The use of recognised methods for the calculation of the project environmental footprint (*e.g. PEF or OEF methods or similar ones such as PEFCRs/OEFSRs*) or environmental management systems (*e.g. EMAS*) would be an asset
- Value for money of the proposal

Award criteria	Minimum pass score	Maximum score	Weighting
Relevance	10	20	1
Impact	10	20	1.5
Quality	10	20	1
Resources	10	20	1
Overall weighted (pass) score	55	90	N/A

Maximum points (single stage): 90 points.

Individual thresholds per criterion (single stage): 10 points.

Overall threshold (single stage): 55 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.

Milestones and deliverables

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

Form of grant, funding rate and maximum grant amount

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

Project budget (maximum grant amount). The grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested.

The grant will be a budget-based mixed actual cost grant (actual costs, with unit cost and flat-rate elements). This means that it will reimburse ONLY certain types of costs (eligible costs) and costs that were *actually* incurred for your project (NOT the

budgeted costs). For unit costs and flat-rates, you can charge the amounts calculated as explained in the Grant Agreement (*see art 6 and Annex 2 and 2a*).

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

Grants may NOT produce a profit (i.e. surplus of 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
 - A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries
 - A.5 Volunteers
- B. Subcontracting costs
- C. Purchase costs
 - C.1 Travel and subsistence
 - C.2 Equipment
 - C.3 Other goods, works and services
- E. Indirect costs

Specific cost eligibility conditions for this call:


- personnel costs:
 - SME owner/natural person unit cost⁵¹: Yes
 - volunteers unit cost⁵²: Yes (without indirect costs)
- travel and subsistence unit cost⁵³: No (only actual costs)
- equipment costs: depreciation
- other cost categories:
 - costs for financial support to third parties: not allowed;
 - land purchase costs: not applicable

⁵¹ Commission [Decision](#) of 20 October 2020 authorising the use of unit costs for the personnel costs of the owners of small and medium-sized enterprises and beneficiaries that are natural persons not receiving a salary for the work carried out by themselves under an action or work programme (C(2020)7715).

⁵² Commission [Decision](#) of 10 April 2019 authorising the use of unit costs for declaring personnel costs for the work carried out by volunteers under an action or a work programme (C(2019)2646).

⁵³ 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).

- indirect cost flat-rate: 7% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs and exempted specific cost categories (land purchase), if any)
- VAT: non-deductible VAT is eligible (but please note that since 2013 VAT paid by beneficiaries that are public bodies acting as public authority is NOT eligible)
- other:
 - in-kind contributions for free are allowed, but cost-neutral, i.e. they cannot be declared as cost
 - project websites: communication costs for presenting the project on the participants' websites or social media accounts are eligible; costs for *separate* project websites are in principle not eligible unless duly justified by the project objectives
 - common information and dissemination activities: foresee resources to increase synergies between, and the visibility of LIFE and EU supported actions (for example 1 travel/year, 5 days)
 - other ineligible costs:
 - land purchase costs are not eligible
 - Large infrastructure costs are not eligible
 - Indirect costs for volunteers are not eligible

 **Volunteers costs** — Volunteers costs are not a classic cost category. There are no costs because volunteers work for free, but they may nonetheless be added to the budget in the form of a prefixed unit cost (per volunteer) and thus allow you to benefit from the volunteers' work for the grant (by increasing the amount of reimbursement up to 100% of the normal costs, i.e. cost categories other than volunteers). More information is available in the [AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement, art 6.2.A.5](#).

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 **30%** 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 one or more **additional prefinancing payments** linked to a prefinancing report.

In addition, for longer or more complex projects, you may be expected to submit one or more progress reports not linked to payments.

Payment of the balance: At the end of the project, we will calculate your final grant amount. If the total of earlier payments is higher than the final grant amount, we will ask you (your coordinator) to pay back the difference (recovery).

All payments will be made to the coordinator.

 Please be aware that payments will be automatically lowered if one of your consortium members has outstanding debts towards the EU (granting authority or

other EU bodies). Such debts will be offset by us — in line with the conditions set out in the Grant Agreement (*see art 22*).

Please also note that you are responsible for keeping records on all the work done and the costs declared. The Grant Agreement contains additional record-keeping rules (*Data Sheet, point 3 and art 20*).

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*).

For beneficiaries, it is one of the following:

- limited joint and several liability with individual ceilings — *each beneficiary up to their maximum grant amount*
 - unconditional joint and several liability — *each beneficiary up to the maximum grant amount for the action*
- or
- individual financial responsibility — *each beneficiary only for their own debts*.

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

Provisions concerning the project implementation

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
- special logos: Yes

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

- durability: No
- specific rules for blending operations: No

Other specificities

n/a

Non-compliance and breach of contract

The Grant Agreement (chapter 5) provides for the measures we may take in case of breach of contract (and other non-compliance issues).



For more information, see [AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement](#).

11. How to submit an application

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

Submission is a **2-step process**:

a) create a user account and register your organisation

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

Once you have an 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 4 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
- Part C containing additional project data. To be filled in directly online.
- 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 (for call-specific questions in open calls; not applicable for actions by invitation)
- [Portal FAQ](#) (for general questions).
- [LIFE Info Days](#)

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

Contact

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

Non-IT related questions should be sent to the following email address: CINEA-LIFE-CET@ec.europa.eu.

 Please:

- send your questions at the latest 7 days before the submission deadline (*see section 4*)

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

13. Important



IMPORTANT

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

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

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

- **No-profit rule**— Grants may NOT give a profit (i.e. surplus of revenues + EU grant over costs). This will be checked by us at the end of the project.
- **No double funding**— There is a strict prohibition of double funding from the EU budget (except under EU Synergies actions). Outside such Synergies actions, any given action may receive only ONE grant from the EU budget and cost items may under NO circumstances declared to two different EU actions.
- **Completed/ongoing projects** — Proposals for projects that have already been completed will be rejected; proposals for projects that have already started will be assessed on a case-by-case basis (in this case, no costs can be reimbursed for activities that took place before the project starting date/proposal submission).
- **Combination with EU operating grants**— Combination with EU operating grants is possible, if the project remains outside the operating grant work programme and you make sure that cost items are clearly separated in your accounting and NOT declared twice (see [AGA — Annotated Model Grant Agreement, art 6.2.E](#)).
- **Multiple proposals** — Applicants may submit more than one proposal for *different* projects under the same call (and be awarded a funding for them).

Organisations may participate in several proposals.

BUT: if there are several proposals for *very similar* projects, only one application will be accepted and evaluated; the applicants will be asked to withdraw one of them (or it will be rejected).

- **Resubmission** — Proposals may be changed and re-submitted until the deadline for submission.
- **Rejection** — By submitting the application, all applicants accept the call conditions set out in this Call Document (and the documents it refers to). Proposals that do not comply with all the call conditions will be **rejected**. This applies also to applicants: All applicants need to fulfil the criteria; if any one of them doesn't, they must be replaced or the entire proposal will be rejected.
- **Cancellation** — There may be circumstances which may require the cancellation of the call. In this case, you will be informed via a call or topic update. Please note that cancellations are without entitlement to compensation.
- **Language** — You can submit your proposal in any official EU language (project abstract/summary should however always be in English). For reasons of efficiency, we strongly advise you to use English for the entire application.
- **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](#).