



Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE)

Call for proposals

LIFE Preparatory Projects
Projects addressing ad hoc Legislative and Policy Priorities (PLP)

(LIFE-2021-PREP)

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EUROPEAN CLIMATE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT EXECUTIVE AGENCY (CINEA)
CINEA.D – Natural Resources, Climate, Sustainable Blue Economy and Clean Energy
CINEA.D.2 – LIFE Environment (Nature & Circular Economy)

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

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0. Introduction

This is a call for proposals for EU **action grants** 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 2021/783¹).

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 3 following topics:

- **LIFE-2021-PREP-NATURA — Nature and Biodiversity**
- **LIFE-2021-PREP-Environment — Circular Economy and Quality of LIFE**
- **LIFE-2021-PREP-Networking — Fostering the Network of LIFE National Contact Points**

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 on the financing of the LIFE programme and the adoption of the work programme for 2021-2024 (COM(2021) 4997 final).

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*).

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

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).

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:

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:

- 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 2019/1004⁴ and the reduction of hazardous waste in view of the EU's commitment under the Basel Convention⁵.
- 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.

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

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).

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
- 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).

The 3 topics under this call for proposals concerns the **LIFE Projects addressing ad hoc Legislative and Policy Priorities (PLP)**⁶.

Based on article 11 of the LIFE Regulation 2021/783⁷, the LIFE Multi Annual Work Programme 2021-2024⁹, includes the possibility to finance each year a limited number of projects designed to support specific needs for the development and implementation of Union environment policy and legislation.

⁶ The LIFE projects, called in the past Regulation preparatory projects, are now called specific projects addressing ad hoc Legislative and Policy Priorities (PLP).

⁷ 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).

⁹ Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the LIFE programme and the adoption of the work programme for 2021-2024 (COM(2021) 4997 final).

Point 4.1.4 of the Multi Annual Work Programme indicated that under “Other Actions”, additional projects responding to the Union legislative and policy priorities could be determined on annual basis, following a consultation with Member States.

Once a year the Commission makes an inventory of the specific needs regarding the development and implementation of Union environmental or climate policy and legislation that need to be addressed during the following years and identifies among them the needs that could be addressed by specific projects.

Before launching this annual call for proposals, the Member States received a draft list of the identified specific needs that could be addressed by those projects and were asked to comment. Based on these comments, the final list was established.

Under this call, the proposals may be submitted only to address the following specific needs, based on the final list of specific projects established by the Member States, as described in the section below.

LIFE 2021-PREP-NATURA — Nature and Biodiversity

Objectives

The proposed projects under the topic LIFE 2021-PREP-NATURA shall address the following specific needs and Policy Priorities identified by the Member States in the sub-programme Nature and Biodiversity.

Scope — Activities that can be funded

1. Forest Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) schemes

(Maximum available EU co-financing EUR 500 000, EU co-financing rate: 90%)

Specific need addressed

The new EU Forest Strategy (COM(2021)572) calls for complementing the ongoing research work on forest ecosystem services under **Horizon** projects by means of a LIFE preparatory project with stakeholders on how payment for ecosystem services can be incorporated in EU funding programmes and include lessons learned from existing national payment schemes for ecosystem services. Although there is a common understanding that PES schemes are crucial for diversifying income to forest owners and rural communities, while supporting biodiversity and climate mitigation, benefits from the provision of ecosystem services are rarely or never rewarded. Their role in EU Funding schemes should therefore be strengthened.

Specific project

The project should aim to collect national experiences as well as results of relevant EU-funded projects on PES schemes and analyse their strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore there will be an analysis of the current possibilities for PES schemes in all relevant EU programmes and in the state aid framework (guidelines). The project will, based on this analysis, propose a set of guidance/recommendations on how PES schemes can be promoted in the EU funding programmes for the Multiannual Financial Framework post 2027.

Expected impact

It is expected that the project awarded will have a concrete and measurable impact in terms of:

- proposing a set of guidance/recommendations on how PES schemes can be promoted in the EU funding programmes for the Multiannual Financial Framework post 2027.

Additional conditions

Not applicable

Funding rate

- Other Action Grants (OAGs) — 90% funding rate of the eligible project costs.
- Projects under the topic LIFE 2021-PREP-NATURA - maximum budget envelopes are established for each specific need. See section above for details.

2. Preparing the basis for EU guidance and standardisation on closing the gap in the biological cycle to enrich soils with high quality compost from collected organic waste

(Maximum available EU co-financing EUR 1 500 000; EU co-financing rate: 90%)

Specific need addressed

The entering into force in 2023 of the obligation for separate collection for organic waste under the EU Waste Framework Directive may lead to a substantial increase of the organic matter available for recycling, including for composting as a nature-based solution. At the same time, while some rules apply for the maximum level of contamination (national rules, and, for EC-labelled fertilisers, the EU Fertilizers Regulation (EU) 2019/1009), it is essential to use all available knowledge to minimize contamination added to soil while closing the biological cycle to the soil, coherently with the zero pollution ambition.

Specific project

Building on existing actors and initiatives, the proposed project should:

- consolidate the existing knowledge;
- setting the reference for closing at EU-level the loop from clean organic matter to soil;
- prepare a comprehensive EU guidance for regional and local administrations.

This guidance should also be used to develop EU standards for bio-waste entering organic recycling processes, for compost and digestate, based on best available techniques.

The overall project's objective is in synergy with the entry into force of the obligation for separate collection of organic waste in 2023, and while complying with thresholds for contaminants set in the EU Fertilizers Regulation, it will:

- consolidate the existing knowledge for closing the biological cycle to soil while minimizing contaminants, using compost from organic waste in soil;
- provide an off-the-shelf reference set of best practices, conceived, tested and validated in cooperation with relevant actors at EU-level for urban areas to boost the transformation and use of high quality compost obtained from the collection of clean organic waste, to enrich soils and replace non-renewable growing media (such as extracted peat), while respecting the waste hierarchy and the regulation on fertilizing products, and acting as locally as possible.
- The set of best practices will be used as basis for EU guidance for regional and local administration to close the gap from clean organic matter to soil, and, eventually, standards for bio-waste entering recycling processes for compost and digestate.

Expected impact

It is expected that the project awarded will have a concrete and measurable impact in terms of:

- proposing a set of best practices to boost the transformation and use of high quality compost obtained from the collection of clean organic waste, to enrich soils and replace non-renewable growing media, while respecting

the waste hierarchy and the regulation on fertilizing products, and acting as locally as possible.

Additional conditions

Not applicable

Funding rate

- Other Action Grants (OAGs) — 90% funding rate of the eligible project costs.
- Projects under the topic LIFE 2021-PREP-NATURA - maximum budget envelopes are established for each specific need. See section above for details.

3. Promoting Natural Capital Accounting synergies across businesses and government applications

(Maximum available EU co-financing EUR 1 000 000, EU co-financing rate: 90%)

Specific need addressed

The European Green Deal' ambitions call for a systems-based approach that acknowledges the strong interconnection of environmental risks and their links with economic prosperity and social wellbeing. The principal objectives of the 2018 Sustainable Finance Action Plan continue to provide valuable guidance for steering the transition.

Many initiatives focus(ed) primarily on ways and means to (credibly) allocate capital to sustainable assets and activities. More is needed, however, to equip a much larger group of economic and financial decision makers with the tools to understand to what extent their activities and assets are exposed to environmental risks comprising both impacts and dependencies. In doing so, it is important to consider that to date, most environmental impact assessments and related datasets tend to concentrate on specific areas such as climate, air, water, land, and biodiversity separately and/or in parallel, rarely offering insights into combined systemic risks at the level of an economic entity. That tends to bias risks assessments and hamper the efficiency of mitigation strategies (as these tend to shift risks from one area that is focused upon that other areas not considered). Most analysis is furthermore backwards oriented whilst risks management requires a forward-looking approach. Furthermore, life-cycle and supply chain considerations are not always present but are essential for correct risk assessment and related foresight studies. Therefore, the Commission wants to support business and stakeholders in developing standardized natural capital accounting practices in the EU and generally.

Specific project

A partnership pilot programme for enhancing synergies between corporate and national environmental or natural capital serving a dual purpose of direct relevance to the European Green Deal:

- Provide a comprehensive dashboard comprising a coherent set of environmental performance indicators that allow measuring and managing the total impact and dependency (footprint) of a national or regional economy or sector for a given period and across the supply chain including all relevant key environmental areas (e.g. air, water, land and biodiversity).

(Note: the ultimate selection of the geographical scope, national and/or regional, will be made after consideration of the required granularity for supporting corporate natural accounting).

- Develop synergies between the system of environmental economic accounts and corporate standardized natural capital management accounting practices being developed through the parallel LIFE funded (Transparent)¹⁰ programme responding to the European Green Deal call and promoted through the EU Business and Biodiversity.

Resulting dashboards inspired by the pioneering corporate environmental impact score cards (cf. supra) should help economic and financial decision makers in understanding the extent to which the national or sectoral economy or a business is exposed to current and future environmental risks along the supply or value chain. It should also serve as basis for taking informed decisions on measures that decrease the risk exposure and increase the resilience to those risks (i.e. green investments) and monitor their progress.

The partnership pilot programme will encourage the active involvement of interested partners in the Member States (national statistical offices, central banks, ministries of finance and economics) as well as other interested Commission Services¹¹, EU institutions¹² and international organisations¹³. Importantly, it will encourage the engagement of specialized private sector sustainability consultancies and financial service companies that can help develop management information systems supporting both public and private economic and financial decision makers. The project will build on available methods and datasets, whilst fully accounting for the SEEA¹⁴ experience and recommendations for the future UNSD¹⁵ mid-term report and recommendations from NCAVES¹⁶, WAVES¹⁷, KIP-INCA¹⁸, MAIA¹⁹, We Value

¹⁰ Transparent is an EU LIFE funded project

¹¹ e.g. DG ECFIN, DG GROW, DG REFORM, etc.

¹² e.g. ECB, EIB, etc.

¹³ e.g. UNSD, OECD, World Bank, IMF, etc.

¹⁴ SEEA – System of Environmental Economic Accounting

¹⁵ UNSD – United Nations Statistics Division

¹⁶ NCAVES – Natural Capital Accounting and Validation of Ecosystem Services

¹⁷ WAVES - Wealth Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services Global Partnership Program, is a World Bank-led global partnership that aims to promote sustainable development by ensuring that accounting for natural resources is mainstreamed into development planning.

¹⁸ KIP-INCA - An EU integrated natural accounting system for ecosystems and their services and associated data sets being developed by the Knowledge Innovation Project.

¹⁹ MAIA - Mapping and Assessment for Integrated ecosystem Accounting, a project aiming to promote the mainstreaming of natural capital accounting in EU Member States and Norway.

Nature²⁰, etc. It will avoid duplicating existing or new platforms engaging with the scientific communities, instead focusing on the untapped potential for building on the expertise of financial and sustainability service companies that are used to develop database interfaces and dashboard suitable for supporting executive level decision making in economic and financial companies and other private and public entities.

Expected impact

It is expected that the project awarded in the framework of the call will have a concrete and measurable impact in terms of:

- Providing a comprehensive dashboard comprising a coherent set of environmental performance indicators that allow measuring and managing the total impact and dependency (footprint) of a national or regional economy or sector for a given period and across the supply chain including all relevant key environmental areas (e.g. air, water, land and biodiversity).
- Develop synergies between the system of environmental economic accounts and corporate standardized natural capital management accounting practices being developed through the parallel LIFE funded (Transparent) programme responding to the European Green Deal call and promoted through the EU Business and Biodiversity.

Additional conditions

Not Applicable

Funding rate

- Other Action Grants (OAGs) — 90% funding rate of the eligible project costs.
- Projects under the topic LIFE 2021-PREP-NATURA - maximum budget envelopes are established for each specific need. See section above for details.

LIFE-2021-PREP-Environment — Circular Economy and Quality of LIFE

Objectives

The proposed project under the topic LIFE 2021-PREP-Environment shall aim to address the following specific need identified by the Member States in the sub-programme Circular Economy and Quality of LIFE.

Scope — Activities that can be funded

- 4. Improving traceability of exports of used textiles/textile waste and Improving recycling of textile waste within the EU**
(foreseen EU contribution EUR 1 000 000, EU co-financing rate: 90%)

²⁰ We Value Nature - an EU Horizon 2020-funded three-year campaign (November 2018 – October 2021) supporting businesses and the natural capital community to make valuing nature the new normal for businesses across Europe.

Specific need addressed

The project should provide better understanding and knowledge of the current export of used textile/textile waste from the EU, as well as to provide suggestions/recommendations on how to improve the transparency and sustainability of such trade flows. Furthermore, increased amounts of separately collected textile waste are expected because of the Waste Framework Directive's obligation to separately collect textiles as of 2025.

Some recycling technologies already exist but these are currently not developed in a scale sufficient to deal with the large amounts and variety of textiles waste expected. A stronger collaboration and interaction between actors involved in collection, sorting and recycling will be critical at local level (hubs). Moreover, coordination activities at EU level would provide further support in order to streamline capacity building and ensure effective complementarity of specialised competences in recycling.

Furthermore, increased amounts of separately collected textile waste are expected because of the Waste Framework Directive's obligation to separately collect textiles as of 2025.

Specific project

The project should look at two aspects: exports and recycling.

Exports

The project should develop technical criteria to better distinguish textile waste from non-waste used textiles:

- at the stage of discarding textiles by their holder in order to facilitate a separate collection system that ensures as a priority separate collection for re-use and repurposing and secondly separate collection for preparation for re-use and recycling.
- at the stage of sorting of collected textiles waste to facilitate re-use and repurposing;
- at the stage of shipments, including exports of textiles.
- The project should provide a detailed mapping of ongoing shipments of used textiles and textile waste from the EU.
- The project will provide a detailed analysis of the impacts of such shipments on third countries (economic, social, environmental)
- The project will propose suggestions/recommendations on how to improve the tracing of such flows.
- The project will propose suggestions/recommendations on how to limit the impact of such shipments on third countries

Recycling

- The pilot project should aim to facilitate the development and consolidation of separate collection and recycling capacities for a wide range of textile waste and the establishment of coordination framework in order to ensure cross-border synergies between textile recycling centres and benefit several Member States.
- The pilot project should aim at (a) running tests of technical feasibility of specific recycling technologies, and (b) testing feasibility of organizational structures (business interactions between textile collectors, recyclers and users/marketers of recycled content fibres).
- The project shall assess the (environmental, economic, social) impact of the proposed pilot project.
- The project should identify which combination of treatment technologies could be used.

- The project will provide recommendations for the transferability of the pilot project, identifying main barriers and opportunities identified during the pilot project of setting up of sorting and recycling.

Expected impacts

Not applicable.

Additional conditions

Not applicable.

Funding rate

- Other Action Grants (OAGs) — 90% funding rate of the eligible project costs.
- Projects under the topic LIFE 2021-PREP- Environment - maximum budget envelopes are established for each specific need. See section above for details.

LIFE-2021-PREP-Network — Fostering the Network of LIFE National Contact Points

Objectives

The LIFE Regulation²¹ makes reference to the cooperation between the National Contact Points - NCP and recognizes their importance as a key actors of the LIFE programme to contribute to supporting applicants in the preparation phase of proposals; and during implementation of projects. This project aims to support the network of LIFE Programme's National Contact Points and facilitate their trans-national cooperation, mutual learning activities and events to share experience.

Scope — Activities that can be funded

5. Fostering the network of LIFE National Contact Points
(foreseen EU contribution EUR 800 000, EU co-financing rate: 95%)

Specific need addressed

The LIFE Regulation defines the importance of a collaboration between the Commission and the *LIFE* Programme's National Contact Points (*NCP*) network in order to stimulate cooperation aiming to improve and make NCP services across the EU more effective. It also aims at increasing the overall quality of proposals submitted, organising seminars and workshops, publishing lists of projects funded under the *LIFE* Programme or undertaking other activities, such as media campaigns, in order to better disseminate project results and to facilitate exchanges of experience, knowledge and best practices and the replication of project results across the Union, thus promoting cooperation and communication.

After the analysis of different options, the idea of a network run by one or more NCPs was retained. This should allow NCPs to develop the ownership of the network activities.

Specific project

²¹ 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)

The proposed project should:

- aim to facilitate trans-national co-operation between LIFE National Contact Points (NCPs) with a view to identifying and sharing good practices and improving the support to LIFE programme applicants, thus increasing their successful participation;
- give special attention to enhancing the competence of NCPs, including helping less experienced NCPs to rapidly acquire the know-how built up in other countries;
- build, as far as possible, on the existing knowledge and tools generated by one or more the NCP, avoiding duplication and establishing synergies;
- open up to the participation of all NCPs, including the ones from OCTs and non-EU countries (newly) associated to the LIFE Programme, and encourage the active involvement of each NCP;
- organize yearly NCP Trainings;
- cover the period of 2.5 years.

Expected impact

It is expected that the project awarded in the framework of the call will have a concrete results in terms of:

- An improved and professionalized NCP service across Europe, thereby helping simplify access to LIFE programme calls for proposals, lowering the entry barriers for newcomers, and raising the average quality of proposals submitted;
- A more consistent level of NCP support services across Europe.

Additional conditions

- Only NCPs from EU Member States, OCTs and Associated Countries are eligible to participate in and receive funding for this action.
- The consortium should involve a good representation of experienced and less experienced NCPs.
- A close coordination and cooperation will be essential to achieve the objectives and impact of the NCPs network.
- NCPs from EU Member States or Associated Countries choosing not to participate as a member of the consortium should be invited and encouraged to participate in the project activities (e.g. workshops).
- The activities carried out by the network shall remain open to NCPs not participating as direct beneficiaries of the project. The costs incurred for such participation (e.g. reimbursement of travel costs) are eligible for funding by the Commission and need to be included in the estimated budget.
- This project provides for a Commission's support for the establishment and running of the network for a period of 2.5 year.
- Submission of a single proposal is encouraged.
-

Funding rate

- Other Action Grants (OAGs) — 95% funding rate of the eligible project costs.
- Projects under the topic LIFE-2021-PREP-Network - maximum budget envelopes are established for each specific need. See section above for details.

3. Available budget

The total available call budget is EUR 4 800 000.

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

Topic	Topic budget	Estimated number of projects to be funded	Expected project duration
LIFE 2021-PREP-NATURA	EUR 3 000 000	3 Projects	Maximum 36/48 months
LIFE-2021-PREP-Environment	EUR 1 000 000	1 Project	Maximum 36/48 months
LIFE-2021-PREP-Network	EUR 800 000	1 Project	Maximum 30 months

The availability of the call budget still depends on the adoption of the budget 2021 by the EU budgetary authority.

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:	16 December 2021
<u>Deadline for submission:</u>	10 March 2022 17:00 CET (Brussels)
Information on evaluation results:	April/May 2022
Grant Agreement signature:	June/July 2022

5. Admissibility and documents

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

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

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

Project acronym — Your project acronym must include the word LIFE.

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*):
 - for single stage:
 - detailed budget table (*mandatory excel template available in the Submission System*)
 - CVs of core project team: *not applicable*
 - activity reports of last year: *not applicable*
 - list of previous projects: *not applicable*
 - participant information
 - letters of support from competent authorities, if available
 - other annexes, if available.


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 **50 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 (associated countries) or countries which are in ongoing negotiations for an association agreement and where the agreement enters into force before grant signature (list of participating countries)
- the coordinator must be established in an EU Member State
- other eligibility conditions for project Fostering the network of LIFE National Contact Points: only NCPs from EU Member States and Associated Countries are eligible to participate in and receive funding for this action.

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 persons²².

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'²³. ⚠️ Please note that

²² See Article 197(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

²³ For the definitions, see Articles 187(2) and 197(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

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)*²⁴ and entities covered by Commission Guidelines No 2013/C 205/05²⁵). Such entities are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any).

 For more information, *see Rules for Legal Entity Validation, LEAR Appointment and Financial Capacity Assessment.*

The identity of the applicant (and compliance with general eligibility conditions) will be verified through the documents provided in the Participant Register during legal entity validation (copy of the resolution, decision or other official document establishing the entity, etc).

Consortium composition- please see section 2 above for additional conditions for projects under the topic LIFE 2021-PREP-NATURA

- n/a for the project under the topic LIFE 2021-PREP-Environment

- *please see section 2 above for additional conditions* on LIFE-2021-PREP-Network — Fostering the Network of LIFE National Contact Points

Eligible activities

Eligible activities are the ones set out in section 2 above (Type of action — Objectives — Themes and priorities — Activities that can be funded).

The following activities are not considered as eligible for funding under this call:

- land purchase
- volunteer work.

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*). Projects with activities outside the EU must be necessary to achieve EU environmental and climate objectives and ensure the effectiveness of interventions carried within the EU (e.g. actions aimed at the conservation of migratory birds in wintering areas, actions implemented on a trans boundary river, or projects aimed to address

²⁴ 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](#).

²⁵ 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).

environmental problems that cannot be solved successfully or efficiently unless actions are carried out also in non-EU 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 participate²⁶:

- 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 misconduct²⁷ (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)
- 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 that²⁸:

²⁶ See Articles 136 and 141 of EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

²⁷ 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.

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

8. Evaluation and award procedure


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

An **evaluation committee** will assess all applications. Proposals will first be checked for formal requirements (admissibility, and eligibility, *see sections 5 and 6*). Proposals found admissible and eligible will be evaluated (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 be aware that for complaints submitted electronically, there may be character limitations.

²⁸ See Article 141 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

9. Award criteria

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

single stage:

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 its specific priorities
- Concept and methodology: soundness of the overall intervention logic

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

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
- 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 (without bonus)	55	90	N/A

Maximum points 90 points.

Individual thresholds per criterion: 10 points.

Overall threshold: 55 points.

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

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

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

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

Starting date and project duration

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

Project duration: the duration of the project between 24 and 48 months (extensions are possible, if duly justified and through an amendment). Since the exact submission date is not known in advance, it is suggested to add two or three months as a safety margin to the expected project duration.

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): *see section 3 above*. The grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested.

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

The costs will be reimbursed at the funding rate fixed in the Grant Agreement (90% for the topic LIFE-2021-PREP-NATURA — Nature and Biodiversity; 90% for the topic LIFE-2021-PREP-Environment — Circular Economy and Quality of LIFE; and 95% for and LIFE-2021-PREP-Networking — Fostering the Network of LIFE National Contact Point. *See section 2 above for further details*).

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 cost²⁹: Yes
 - volunteers unit cost³⁰: No
- travel and subsistence unit cost³¹: No (only actual costs)
- equipment costs: depreciation
- other cost categories:
 - costs for financial support to third parties: not allowed ;
 - land purchase costs: n/a
- indirect cost flat-rate: 7% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, 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)

²⁹ 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).

³¹ 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).

- other:
 - in-kind contributions for free are allowed, but cost-neutral, i.e. they cannot be declared as cost
 - kick off meeting: costs for kick-off meeting organised by the granting authority are eligible (travel costs for maximum 2 persons, return ticket to Brussels and accommodation for one night) only if the meeting takes place after the project starting date set out in the Grant Agreement; the starting date can be changed through an amendment, if needed
 - 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) n/a
 - other ineligible costs: Yes:
 - land purchase costs are not eligible
 - Infrastructure cost are not eligible
- Volunteers costs 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 no **interim payments**. There will be one or more **additional prefinancing payments** linked to a prefinancing report.

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: Yes
- specific rules for blending operations: No other specificities

Non-compliance and breach of contract

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



For more information, see *AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement*.

11. How to submit an application

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

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

a) create a user account and register your organisation

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

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

b) submit the proposal

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

Submit your proposal in 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
- 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-ENQUIRIES@ec.europa.eu.

 Please:

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

– 13. Important



IMPORTANT

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

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

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

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

- **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](#).