



# Single Market Programme (SMP COSME)

## Call for proposals

Support to Ukrainian companies to integrate into  
the Single Market

(SMP-COSME-2023-SMEUA)

Version 2.0  
03 March 2023



<b>HISTORY OF CHANGES</b>			
<b>Version</b>	<b>Publication Date</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Page</b>
1.0	28.02.2023	▪ Initial version	
2.0	03.03.2023	▪ Correction of a clerical error in the submission date (new date: 27 April 2023)	14



**EUROPEAN INNOVATION COUNCIL AND SMEs  
EXECUTIVE AGENCY (EISMEA)**

EISMEA.I – Innovation ecosystems, SMP/Entrepreneurship and Consumers  
**EISMEA.I.02 –SMP/COSME Pillar**

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

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## 0. Introduction

This is a call for proposals for EU **action grants** in the field of improving the competitiveness of enterprises, particularly SMEs, and supporting their access to market under the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs strand of the **Single Market Programme (SMP COSME)**.

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

- Regulation 2018/1046 ([EU Financial Regulation](#))
- the basic act (SMP Regulation (EU) [2021/690](#)<sup>1</sup>).

The call is launched in accordance with the 2023 Work Programme of the Single Market Programme (SMP)<sup>2</sup> and will be managed by the **European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA)** ('Agency').

The call covers the following **topic**:

### **SMP-COSME-2023-SMEUA - Support to Ukrainian companies to integrate the Single Market**

Applicants cannot submit more than one proposal under this call. Applicants may not participate in several proposals.

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:

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/690 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing a programme for the internal market, competitiveness of enterprises, including small and medium-sized enterprises, the area of plants, animals, food and feed, and European statistics (Single Market Programme) (OJ L 153, 3.5.2021, p. 1).

<sup>2</sup> Annex to Commission Implementing Decision C(2023) 1119 final of 22.2.2023 concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2023 and the financing decision for the implementation of the Single Market Programme.

- 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 [EISMEA](#) website to consult the list of projects funded previously.

## 1. Background

In 2020, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) accounted for 99.98% of the total business population of Ukraine, employed almost 81% of the labour force and generated 65% of total sales<sup>3</sup>.

However, the illegal and unprovoked Russian invasion to Ukraine has caused significant disruptions to its economy including displacing businesses and entrepreneurs: many relocating within Ukraine's borders but others fleeing the country and seeking refuge in EU Member States. It is reducing activity, cutting export earnings and reducing fiscal revenues, while public spending needs are growing. Estimates of the lost productive capacity and economic activity that took place in 2022 vary between 30% and 50%. Almost half of businesses have reduced or suspended activities.<sup>4</sup>

SMEs, start-ups and entrepreneurs have been particularly affected. According to the Report from the World Bank, the Government of Ukraine and the European Commission, the recovery and reconstruction needs for the commerce and industry sector amounted to 20.8 billion US\$ as of 1 June 2022 while the total cost of reconstruction and recovery in Ukraine has been estimated at EUR 349 billion<sup>5</sup>. These figures are expected to grow.

This war also led to significant supply and value chain disruptions for SMEs within the EU and severely affected established business interactions between EU companies and their counterparts in Ukraine.<sup>6</sup> These have been described in the "SME Envoy Report on the impacts from Russia's invasion of Ukraine on European SMEs".<sup>7</sup> The European Commission is also analysing, on a monthly basis, the disruptions of supply chains in relation to the Russian aggression.

Ukrainian SMEs are strongly adapting to the new reality. According to the Fifth Monthly Survey of Enterprises conducted by the Ukrainian Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consultancy, the Ukrainian business environment and economic conditions continued to be characterised by a high level of uncertainty in September 2022. The share of enterprises planning to increase production grew, many companies continued to restore production volumes to pre-war levels and the demand situation has also improved<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> [Ukraine | Financing SMEs and Entrepreneurs 2020 : An OECD Scoreboard | OECD iLibrary \(oecd-ilibrary.org\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> Kyiv School of Economics, 2022

<sup>5</sup> [Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment \(RDNA\)\(August 2022\) \[EN/UK\] - Ukraine | ReliefWeb](#)

<sup>6</sup> <https://clustercollaboration.eu/content/publication-report-survey-identification-disruptions-value-and-supply-chains>

<sup>7</sup> [SME Envoys network \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Reports \(ier.com.ua\)](#)

It is in the EU's common interest that the Ukrainian economy continues to function and that it becomes ever more integrated within the EU's Single Market. This is important in its own right, but all the more so because of the perspective of accession to the EU in the medium-term<sup>9</sup>.

In its Opinion on the EU membership application, the European Commission considers that Ukraine has continued its strong macro-economic record, demonstrating a noteworthy resilience with macroeconomic and financial stability ensured even after Russia's invasion<sup>10</sup>.

Even before the Russian invasion, the EU had significant engagement with Ukraine to promote economic integration across a wide range of sectors including on industrial and SME cooperation. As part of the 2014 Association Agreement, a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) has been provisionally applied since January 2016. It reduces tariffs that European firms face when exporting to Ukraine. The agreement facilitates trade by making customs procedures more efficient and by gradual approximation of Ukrainian legislation, rules and procedures, including standards, to those of the EU.

As far as SME cooperation is concerned, several Ukrainian organisations participated effectively in the two major SME support networks: the Enterprise Europe Network and the European Clusters network. Some were also strongly involved in the EU's Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme (EYE). This participation is set to continue.

Since February 2022, the European Institutions, the Member States and the European networks have reinforced their efforts towards Ukraine. Team Europe (the EU, its Member States and Financial Institutions) have mobilised over EUR 19 billion in financial, budget support and humanitarian assistance while military assistance measures have been provided under the European Peace Facility, amounting to EUR 2.6 billion by October 2022<sup>11</sup>.

In addition, the EU has made wider efforts to support the continuation of business in Ukraine and its integration within the Single Market. For instance, the EU4Business Initiative is helping SMEs to get a credit or a grant, improve their business development skills and get access to new markets.<sup>12</sup> Within this initiative, the UNIC grant support programme is also helping Ukrainian enterprises to preserve their own business.<sup>13</sup> More specifically, a EUR 20 million call was launched in June 2022 under Horizon Europe to set up a pan-European network of start-up associations to support the integration of Ukrainian tech innovators into European innovation ecosystems and to enhance their operations in Ukraine. This network will help intermediate organisations to provide urgent support to women-led companies and companies working on innovative solutions/services/products for rebuilding and recovery efforts in Ukraine<sup>14</sup>.

Despite these various efforts and considering the size of the country and the enormous support needed, the EU is committed to do even more and be ever more

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<sup>9</sup> European Council meeting (23 and 24 June 2022) – Conclusions, EUCO 24/22.

<sup>10</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council - Commission Opinion on Ukraine's application for membership of the European Union, COM(2022) 407 final, 17.6.2022.

<sup>11</sup> [EU assistance to Ukraine \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu/europa/en/eu4business)

<sup>12</sup> [EU4Business in Ukraine](https://eu4business.eu/)

<sup>13</sup> <https://eu4business.org.ua/en/news/unic-grant-support-program-for-ukrainian-medium-and-small-businesses-smes>

<sup>14</sup> [Funding & tenders \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu/europa/en/eu4business)

effective in the reconstruction of Ukraine. The purpose of this initiative is to contribute to this effort, giving smaller Ukrainian businesses targeted support.

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

### Objectives

The objective of the action is to select a consortium of various business support organisations that will select up to 1 500 growth- and sustainability-oriented Ukrainian SMEs that will benefit from direct financial support of up to EUR 2 500 and to facilitate their access to the EU Single Market.

It will facilitate the integration into the Single Market of:

- SMEs based in regions where Ukrainian authorities exercise effective territorial control<sup>15</sup>; and
- displaced and originally Ukrainian-registered companies currently operating from the EU and maintaining business links/cooperation with Ukraine.

The action will focus on companies that can demonstrate that their business has been affected since the beginning of the war (in terms of business locations, staff, turnover, and export markets).

Rather than leading to a brain drain from Ukraine to Europe, it will facilitate new trade flows and help address supply chain disruptions.

By supporting the development of the Ukrainian economy and facilitating the integration of Ukrainian SMEs in the Single Market, this action will provide alternative markets to EU companies to compensate for the loss of Russian and Belarussian market opportunities. It will also bring new investment opportunities for EU businesses in Ukraine. The criteria for selecting Ukrainian businesses to be supported will focus on their potential to generate these market access/supply and investment opportunities for EU businesses.

This action is compatible with the following specific objectives of the Single Market Programme (SMP)<sup>16</sup> that aim at strengthening the competitiveness and sustainability of SMEs and achieving additionality, at Union level, through measures that:

- provide various forms of support to SMEs, thereby fostering the growth, scale-up and creation of SMEs;
- facilitate access to markets through the internationalisation of SMEs;
- promote entrepreneurship and the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills”;
- promote a favourable business environment for SMEs, support the digital transformation of SMEs and promote new business opportunities for SMEs,

<sup>15</sup> Throughout this call, the text “based in Ukraine” denotes businesses/entities that are based in territories where Ukrainian authorities exercise effective control. Businesses/entities outside those territories will not be eligible.

<sup>16</sup> Article 3 of Regulation (EU) 2021/690 of 28.04.2021 establishing a programme for the internal market, competitiveness of enterprises, including SMEs, the area of plants, animals, food and feed, and European statistics (SMP).



including those that are social economy enterprises and those with innovative business models;

- support the competitiveness of industrial ecosystems, as well as the development of industrial value chains;
- promote the modernisation of industry, contributing to a green, digital and resilient economy.

This action is also fully in line with the SMP objectives (Article 3(2)(b) of Regulation (EU) 2021/690) for the participation of third countries associated to the Programme (Article 5 of Regulation (EU) 2021/690) and eligible actions (Article 8(4) of Regulation (EU) 2021/690) since it aims at providing effective support for SMEs throughout their lifecycle, providing assistance ranging from helping SMEs to find partners for joint projects to commercialisation and access to the market, capacity-building and encouraging the cooperation among both clusters and business network organisations.

By encouraging and engaging with European Cluster Collaboration Platform members, the Enterprise Europe Network and the intermediary organisations of Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs, both under the previous COSME programme or the current SMP, to work together closely on this action, this project will *de facto* promote synergies within the SMP while avoiding duplication with related Union programmes and actions.

This action will also raise the visibility and increase the impact of three EU platforms to allow matchmaking opportunities for Ukrainian and EU companies. The EEN Supply Chain Resilience Platform<sup>17</sup> facilitates targeted and time-efficient contracts to compensate for lost or disrupted supply chains. It is helping companies retain, re-structure or replace existing supply chains, as well as source raw materials, parts, components and/or (semi-)finished goods or services they need to keep production going. The Solidarity Lanes Platform<sup>18</sup> brings together businesses from the EU and Ukraine to identify new logistics chains for the export and import of products and materials from/to Ukraine; find new partners for logistics and international trade, as well as share insights on solutions and initiatives to rethink logistics and supply chains, adapt infrastructure and get the appropriate equipment and machinery to the appropriate place. The Electric Energy matchmaking Forum brings together Ukrainian public and private sector companies, which need to recover electric systems and buy new power generating equipment or its components, and EU producers/distributors of different types of energy equipment who can sell or donate it.

### Themes and priorities

The main priority of the action is to provide direct financial support to eligible SMEs for the activities listed below.

Given that EU industrial policy is aiming at a green and digital transition and greater resilience, supported enterprises should align with and contribute to these objectives so that they can integrate swiftly into EU value chains.

### Activities that can be funded

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<sup>17</sup> [The Supply Chain Resilience \(SCR\) platform - Welcome \(b2match.io\)](#)

<sup>18</sup> [EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes Business Matchmaking Platform - The Platform \(b2match.io\)](#)

The applicant must describe in the proposal how financial support to third parties will be managed and provide a list of the different types of activities – in line with the specifications of this call - for which a third party may receive financial support.

1- How will the direct **financial support to third parties**, the eligible SMEs, be organised:

(a) the **companies eligible** for direct financial support -the third parties- must:

- be SMEs according to the European Definition of SMEs<sup>19</sup> and able to demonstrate their SME status with the SME Self-Assessment tool of the European Commission;<sup>20</sup>
- be established in a region where Ukrainian authorities exercise effective control on the date of application or be an Ukrainian-registered company that has been displaced as a result of the ongoing war in Ukraine and is now operating from within the territory of the EU while maintaining business links/cooperation with Ukraine;
- agree to be referred to in a future central database of Ukrainian SMEs receiving financial support from EU and internationally-funded schemes, in order to ensure transparency and avoid double-funding;
- not receive funding from any other entity for the activities supported by this action;
- demonstrate an ability to grow and to implement sustainable business models.

While there is no specific limitation on the type of companies that can be supported, support to women entrepreneurs and social economy enterprises should be among the priority groups.<sup>21</sup>

(b) the **type of business support services** which can be covered by financial support to the selected Ukrainian SMEs, can be, but is not limited to:

- market research to identify European partners as suppliers or clients;
- legal, organisational or financial advice for setting up a new company or adapting an existing one;
- entering international markets by participating or traveling to trade fairs in the EU (visa or other arrangements needed to comply with legal requirements to enter the country of the event are not eligible under this action);

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<sup>19</sup> Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC of 6 May 2003 concerning the definition of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, OJ L 124, 20.5.2003, p. 36

<sup>20</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/SMEWizard/smeg.do;SME\\_SESSION\\_ID=RWGnQ8mQzN1nrMTIWvbpKnO\\_EoxUJUwhtMqg3XZ\\_TMy\\_sJwx6FKt!-1379699194?execution=e1s1](https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/SMEWizard/smeg.do;SME_SESSION_ID=RWGnQ8mQzN1nrMTIWvbpKnO_EoxUJUwhtMqg3XZ_TMy_sJwx6FKt!-1379699194?execution=e1s1)

<sup>21</sup> Social economy enterprises in the Union include different types of enterprises and entities falling within the social economy, such as cooperatives, mutual societies, non-profit associations, foundations, social enterprises and other forms of enterprises. Since their primary focus is on creating shared value and social impact for people rather than on realising profits, they are able to act as an engine of social innovation, transparent governance and solidarity, by reinvesting the majority of their profits or surpluses in their objectives. Attention should also be paid to the particular needs of potential new entrepreneurs, such as young and female entrepreneurs, older people and persons with disabilities.

- promotional campaign attracting foreign investments;
- legal advice on Intellectual Property Rights;
- adaptation of products to EU standards and norms;
- technological audit and/or provision of technical support;
- patenting and licencing costs.

A complete list of business support services that can be covered by the direct financial support must be submitted in the proposal-

- (c) The method of **selecting the eligible SMEs** -the third parties- must be clearly explained in the proposals and be transparent, open and in line with applicable legislation for public support of economic operators. Applicants must describe their methodology for the launch, publication and dissemination of their calls.

The selection, via dedicated open, competitive calls, of eligible Ukrainian SMEs that will receive the direct financial support, focusing on those with good potential to facilitate market access to Ukraine and/or bring value to the EU supply chains. The consortium will furthermore ensure that all selected companies meet the eligibility criteria for direct financial support, which are:

- SMEs based in Ukraine must, when applying, be located in territories that are under the effective control of the Ukrainian authorities. The Support Office (common secretariat) shall take account of this information and ensure that no SMEs from not eligible territories benefit from funding.
- Displaced Ukrainian SMEs currently operating from within the territory of the European Union/EEA may apply regardless of their region of origin within Ukraine but must be able to prove their registration as Ukrainian enterprises.
- When applying, SMEs will need to describe how their business has been affected since the beginning of the war (in terms of business locations, staff, turnover, export markets).
- Calls issued by the consortium must include an obligation for selected SMEs to advertise/communicate about the EU-supported funding they receive.

- (d) The **maximum amount of direct financial support** to each individual third party is **EUR 2 500**.

SMEs benefiting from this financial support will need to justify all expenses by providing to the consortium supporting documents for each expense. They will be reimbursed up to a maximum of EUR 2 500 based on proof of activities carried out.

2- In order to select companies and manage the implementation of the direct financial support scheme, the consortium will set up a **common secretariat** (Support Office) managing this action.

The common secretariat will ensure that the support awarded to an SME under this action does not cover an activity for which the SME has already secured funding from other sources, and will focus on those companies needing most this type of support. The Support Office will be responsible for launching calls, selecting entrepreneurs and SMEs that will receive the direct financial support on the basis of pre-defined selection

criteria, checking the eligibility of costs of the selected SMEs and reporting back to the Agency/European Commission on the different phases of implementation of this action.

In order to implement the action, the common secretariat is expected to carry out at least the following dedicated activities:

- The selection, via dedicated open, competitive calls, of Ukrainian SMEs that will receive the direct financial support as outlined in "Activities that can be funded (point c) above.
- The **selection of fairs** organised in the EU which SMEs selected under the call could take part in. The consortium will also negotiate to encourage fair organisers to offer reduced participation fees or free space to these enterprises.
- The provision to selected SMES of **accompanying additional services** linked to the presence at fairs, such as linking them to partnering activities.
- Provide for the possibility of selected Ukrainian SMEs to exchange with **fellow entrepreneurs** and pool services (e.g. logistics).
- Provide to selected SMEs **networking opportunities** with former EYE participants, EEN members and clusters organisations in the EU that are used to organising or participating in matchmaking events.
- The coordination of **follow-up services** to selected SMEs upon return from a trade mission, such as holding debrief or lessons-learned session and support in drafting an action plan.
- The provision to selected MEs of **additional services** that may be considered as appropriate and complementary to the services already listed above like training to increase digital skills or sustainability, or specific legal and advisory services to engage in a cooperation agreement with an EU company that will promote their products or services.
- The common secretariat will engage in **regular exchanges** (for example monthly meetings) with the Agency and the European Commission to discuss progress of the implementation of the action. To facilitate communication flows interactions between the common secretariat, the Agency and the Commission will mostly happen in English.

The common secretariat will furthermore monitor the achievements of the action through a feedback mechanism that will systematically gather data from all companies participating selected in the call(s) for third-party financing. It will also produce 24 success stories during the implementation period of the action. The consortium is encouraged to work closely with various Ukrainian business support organisations as well as export and investment promotion offices beyond the consortium members and seek synergies with relevant EU initiatives such as those undertaken under the EU4business Initiative mentioned above.

*Activities that cannot be funded:*

Costs incurred by other parties, on behalf of the eligible selected Ukrainian companies (for example representation of a company at a trade fair by an intermediary organisation) or costs for equipment and permanent (IT and other) infrastructure can never be covered by the direct financial support.

### Expected impact

By helping companies currently based in Ukraine or the displaced ones currently operating within the EU, this action can contribute to keep Ukrainian economic operators afloat, facilitate the integration of their companies into EU markets and offer new opportunities to European companies and consumers while supporting the creation of new value chains for the European economy (or strengthening existing ones).

The action is expected to deliver at least the following results:

- At least 1 500 Ukrainian SMEs benefit from direct financial support to identify European market needs, enter the Single Market, participate in EU trade fairs and develop their business and/or online services;
- Greater opportunities for companies run by women entrepreneurs and social economy entrepreneurs;
- Higher participation and diversity on the three matchmaking tools: Supply Chain Resilience, Solidarity Lanes and Electric Energy Platforms;
- Contribution to a green, digital and resilient economy in the EU and Ukraine;
- Improved cooperation with European businesses interested to work with Ukrainian companies;
- Further economic growth and trade flows between the EU and Ukraine;
- Increased cooperation between EU and UA companies.

The results of the consortium will be evaluated based on the following indicators:

- Number of Ukrainian SMEs benefiting from direct EU financial support;
- Number of new companies registered on the Supply Chain Resilience or Solidarity Lane platforms via the Support Office;
- Number of companies taking part in physical business fairs;
- Number of companies taking part in online matchmaking events;
- Number of joint ventures as a result of participating in physical or online matchmaking events facilitated by this action;
- Number of new companies joining the Ukrainian Cluster Alliance via the Support Office.
- Calls issued by the consortium must include an obligation for selected SMEs to clearly display the EU funding received and advertise/communicate. The action should therefore have a positive impact on the visibility of EU funding to a vulnerable group of economic operators.

### **3. Available budget**

The available call budget is **EUR 4 500 000**. This budget might be increased by a maximum 20%. The Agency expects to fund one project under this call.

Of this amount:

- Up to EUR 750 000 may be allocated to the costs of the consortium members to implement the action.
- A minimum of EUR 3,75M must be dedicated to providing direct financial support to eligible SMEs. The method of selecting the SMEs must be

transparent, open and in line with applicable legislation for public support of economic operators.

- The maximum amount of direct financial support to each individual third party is EUR 2 500.

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:	28 February 2023
Deadline for submission:	<b>27 April 2023</b> – 17:00:00 CET (Brussels)
Evaluation:	May 2023
Information on evaluation results:	June 2023
GA signature:	July/August 2023

#### 5. Admissibility and documents

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

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

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

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

- Application Form Part A — contains administrative information about the participants (future coordinator, beneficiaries and affiliated entities) and the summarised budget for the project (*to be filled in directly online*)
- Application Form Part B — contains the technical description of the project (*to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed and then assembled and re-uploaded*)
- **mandatory annexes and supporting documents** (*to be uploaded*):
  - detailed budget table/calculator (*template available in the Submission System*)
  - CVs (short outlines) of core project team
  - Proof of membership of the consortium participants in EEN, EYE or ECCP: (former) members of the Enterprise Europe Network or EYE intermediary organisations must provide the reference number of the corresponding EU project. ECCP members must provide proof of their

ECCP membership (*to be uploaded as separate document in the submission tool / attached to Part B*).

- reports of last year: not applicable
- list of previous projects (key projects for the last 4 years) (*template available in Part B*)

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 associated to the Single Market Programme 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](#))
  - Ukraine, established in territories that are under the effective control of the Ukrainian authorities at the submission deadline.
- be formally recognised as:
  - A current (under the SMP programme) or former (under the COSME programme) Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) member; or
  - European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP) member which is profiled as a "national cluster associations" or "metaclusters and cluster networks"; or
  - Ukrainian Cluster Alliance members; or



- Current (under the SMP programme) or former (under the COSME programme) Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs (EYE) Intermediary Organisations.

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.

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 persons<sup>22</sup>.

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'<sup>23</sup>.  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).

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)*<sup>24</sup> and entities covered by Commission Guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#)<sup>25</sup>). 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 a consortium of **at least three applicants**

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

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

<sup>24</sup> 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](#).

<sup>25</sup> 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).



(beneficiaries; not affiliated entities), which complies with the following conditions:

- minimum three independent entities from three different eligible countries;
- minimum one applicant must be established in Ukraine, located in territories that are under the effective control of the Ukrainian authorities.
- The consortium coordinator must be established in a Member State of the European Union/EEA.
- The consortium must include **at least one member** (under the current SMP or the former COSME programme) **of each** of the following networks/initiatives:
  - o one Enterprise Europe Network member and
  - o one Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs intermediary organisation, and
  - o one member registered on the European Cluster Collaboration Platform at the time of the submission deadline and throughout the implementation phase of the project.

### Eligible activities

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

Projects should take into account the results of projects supported by other EU funding programmes, in particular the Enterprise Europe Network, Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs and the European Cluster Collaboration Platform. The complementarities must be described in the project proposals (Part B of the Application Form).

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

**Financial support to third parties** is allowed under the following conditions:

- the calls must be open, published widely and conform to EU standards concerning transparency, equal treatment, conflict of interest and confidentiality;
- the calls must remain open for at least two months on a continuous basis;
- the outcome of the call must be published on the participants' websites, including a description of the selected projects, award dates, project durations, and final recipient legal names and countries;
- the calls must have a clear European dimension, i.e. facilitate the integration of Ukrainian companies into the Single Market, support business cooperation between Ukrainian and European companies, and support European companies affected by the war in Ukraine and the economic sanctions linked to it in finding alternatives to interruptions in their usual supply chains.

Financial support to third parties has to comply with the conditions defined in section 2.

Your project application must clearly specify how financial support to third parties will be managed and provide a list of the different types of activities for which a third party may receive financial support. The proposal must also clearly describe the results to be obtained.

### Geographic location (target countries)

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

### Duration

Projects should normally range between 18 and 24 months (extensions are possible, if duly justified and through an amendment).

### Project budget

Project budget (maximum grant amount) are expected to reach up to EUR 4,5 million per project, but this does not preclude the submission/selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

## **7. Financial and operational capacity and exclusion**

### Financial capacity

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

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

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

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

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

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

- further information;
- an enhanced financial responsibility regime, i.e. joint and several responsibility for all beneficiaries or joint and several liability of affiliated entities (*see below, section 10*);
- prefinancing paid in instalments;
- (one or more) prefinancing guarantees (*see below, section 10*)

or

- propose no prefinancing;
- request that you are replaced or, if needed, reject the entire proposal.

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

### Operational capacity

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

This capacity will be assessed together with the 'Quality' award criterion, on the basis of the competence and experience of the applicants and their project teams, including operational resources (human, technical and other) or, exceptionally, the measures proposed to obtain it by the time the task implementation starts.

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

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

- short CV (qualifications and experience) of the staff responsible for managing and implementing the project;
- description of the consortium participants: Applicants who are (former) members of the Enterprise Europe Network or EYE intermediary organisations must include the reference number of the corresponding EU project. ECCP members must provide proof of their ECCP membership;
- list of previous projects (key projects for the last 4 years).

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 participate<sup>26</sup>:

- 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 misconduct<sup>27</sup> (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,

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

<sup>27</sup> 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.

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 that<sup>28</sup>:

- 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 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:

- 1) Projects focusing on a theme that is not otherwise covered by higher ranked projects will be considered to have the highest priority.
- 2) The *ex aequo* proposals within the same topic will be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the award criterion 'Impact'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Relevance'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Quality'.

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.

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

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

## 9. Award criteria

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

- **Relevance:** clarity and consistency of project, objectives and planning; extent to which they match the themes and priorities and objectives of the call; contribution to the EU strategic and legislative context; European/trans-national dimension; impact/interest for a number of countries (EU or eligible non-EU countries); possibility to use the results in other countries; potential to develop mutual trust/cross-border cooperation (**30 points**).
- **Quality:**
  - **Project design and implementation:** technical quality; logical links between the identified problems, needs and solutions proposed (logical frame concept); methodology for implementing the project (concept and methodology, management, procedures, timetable, risks and risk management, monitoring and evaluation); feasibility of the project within the proposed time frame; cost effectiveness (sufficient/appropriate budget for proper implementation; best value for money) (**30 points**)
  - **Project team and cooperation arrangements:** quality of the consortium and project teams; appropriate procedures and problem-solving mechanisms for cooperating within the project teams and consortium (**30 points**).
- **Impact:** ambition and expected impact of results on target groups/general public; appropriate dissemination strategy for ensuring awareness and adequate participation of the target audience, sustainability and long-term impact (**10 points**).

Award criteria	Minimum pass score	Maximum score
Relevance	16	30
Quality – Project design and implementation	16	30
Quality – Project team and cooperation arrangements	16	30
Impact	6	10
<b>Overall (pass) scores</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100</b>

Maximum points: 100 points.

Individual thresholds per criterion: 16/30, 16/30, 16/30 and 6/10 points.

Overall threshold: 70 points.

Proposals that pass the individual thresholds AND the overall threshold will be considered for funding — within the limits of the available call budget. Other proposals will be rejected.

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

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

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

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

### Starting date and project duration

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

Project duration: between 18 and 24 months (extensions are possible, if duly justified and through an amendment).

### Milestones and deliverables

The milestones and deliverables for the 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 6 above*. The grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested.

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

The costs will be reimbursed at the funding rates fixed in the Grant Agreement (**100%** for the costs for providing financial support to third parties and **90%** for all other costs categories).

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
- B. Subcontracting costs
- C. Purchase costs
  - C.1 Travel and subsistence
  - C.2 Equipment
  - C.3 Other goods, works and services
- D. Other cost categories
  - D.1 Financial support to third parties
- E. Indirect costs

*Specific cost eligibility conditions for this call:*

- personnel costs:
  - SME owner/natural person unit cost<sup>29</sup>: Yes
- travel and subsistence unit cost<sup>30</sup>: Yes
- equipment costs: depreciation
- other cost categories:
  - costs for financial support to third parties: allowed; a maximum amount per third party of EUR 2 500, unless a higher amount is required because the objective of the action would otherwise be impossible or overly difficult to achieve and this is duly justified in the Application Form
  - indirect cost flat-rate: 7% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except exempted specific cost categories, 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
    - 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

<sup>29</sup> 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).

<sup>30</sup> Commission [Decision](#) of 12 January 2021 authorising the use of unit costs for travel, accommodation and subsistence costs under an action or work programme under the 2021-2027 multi-annual financial framework (C(2021)35).



- project websites: communication costs for presenting the project on the participants' websites or social media accounts are eligible; costs for *separate* project websites are not eligible
- EU Synergies call: No
- other ineligible costs: No

### Reporting and payment arrangements


The reporting and payment arrangements are fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4 and art 21 and 22*).

After grant signature, you will normally receive a **prefinancing** to start working on the project (float of normally **70%** of the maximum grant amount; exceptionally less or no prefinancing). The prefinancing will be paid 30 days from entry into force/10 days before starting date/financial guarantee (if required) — whichever is the latest.

There will be one or more **interim payments** (with detailed cost reporting).

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

All payments will be made to the coordinator.

 Please be aware that payments will be automatically lowered if one of your consortium members has outstanding debts towards the EU (granting authority or other EU bodies). Such debts will be offset by us — in line with the conditions set out in the Grant Agreement (*see art 22*).

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

### Prefinancing guarantees

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

- list of background: No
- rights of use on results: Yes
- access rights to ensure continuity and interoperability obligations: No

Communication, dissemination and visibility of funding: *see Model Grant Agreement (art 17 and Annex 5)*:

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

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

- specific rules for PPI Grants for Procurement: 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 3 parts, as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 12. Help

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

- [Online Manual](#)
- FAQs on the Topic page (for call-specific questions in open calls; not applicable for actions by invitation)
- [Portal FAQ](#) (for general questions).

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

#### *Contact*

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

Non-IT related questions should be sent by **20 April 2023 – 23:59:00 CET (Brussels time)** to the following email address: [EISMEA-SMP-COSME-ENQUIRIES@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EISMEA-SMP-COSME-ENQUIRIES@ec.europa.eu).

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

## 13. Important



### IMPORTANT

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

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

- **Coordinator** — In multi-beneficiary grants, the beneficiaries participate as consortium (group of beneficiaries). They will have to choose a coordinator, who will take care of the project management and coordination and will represent the consortium towards the granting authority. In mono-beneficiary grants, the single beneficiary will automatically be coordinator.
- **Affiliated entities** — Applicants may participate with affiliated entities (i.e. entities linked to a beneficiary which participate in the action with similar rights and obligations as the beneficiaries, but do not sign the grant and therefore do not become beneficiaries themselves). They will get a part of the grant money and must therefore comply with all the call conditions and be validated (just like beneficiaries); but they do not count towards the minimum eligibility criteria for consortium composition (if any).
- **Associated partners** — Applicants may participate with associated partners (i.e. partner organisations which participate in the action but without the right to get grant money). They participate without funding and therefore do not need to be validated.
- **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 cannot submit more than one proposal under this call. Multiple proposals will be rejected.  
Organisations may not participate in several proposals.
- **Resubmission** — Proposals may be changed and re-submitted until the deadline for submission.
- **Rejection** — By submitting the application, all applicants accept the call conditions set out in this this Call Document (and the documents it refers to). Proposals that do not comply with all the call conditions will be **rejected**. This applies also to applicants: All applicants need to fulfil the criteria; if any one of them doesn't, they must be replaced or the entire proposal will be rejected.
- **Cancellation** — There may be circumstances which may require the cancellation of the call. In this case, you will be informed via a call or topic update. Please note that cancellations are without entitlement to compensation.
- **Language** — You can submit your proposal in any official EU language (project abstract/summary should however always be in English). For reasons of efficiency, we strongly advise you to use English for the entire application. If you need the call documentation in another official EU language, please submit a request within 10 days after call publication (for the contact information, see *section 12*).

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

This includes:

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

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

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