



Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)

Call for proposals

Prevention and Preparedness Projects on Civil Protection and Marine
Pollution
(UCPM-2021-PP)

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ECHO.B – Disaster Preparedness and Prevention
ECHO.B.2 – Prevention and Disaster Risk Management

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

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0. Introduction

This is a call for EU **action grants** in the field of prevention and preparedness projects on civil protection and marine pollution under the **Union Civil Protection Mechanism**.

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

- Regulation 2018/1046 ([EU Financial Regulation](#))
- the basic act ([UCPM Decision 1313/2013¹](#)).

The call is launched in accordance with the 2021 Work Programme² and will be managed by the **European Commission, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO)**.

The call covers the following **topics**:

- **UCPM-2021-PP-CBR — Prevention and preparedness for cross-border risks**
- **UCPM-2021-PP-MARIPOL — Prevention and preparedness for marine pollution at-sea and on-shore**

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

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

- the [Call Document](#) outlines the:
 - background, objectives, scope, activities that can be funded and the expected results (sections 1 and 2)
 - available budget and timetable (sections 3 and 4)
 - admissibility and eligibility conditions, criteria for financial and operational capacity and exclusion (sections 5, 6 and 7)
 - evaluation and award procedure (section 8)
 - award criteria (section 9)
 - legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements (section 10)

¹ Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism, as amended by Decision (EU) 2019/420 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 March 2019.

² Commission Implementing Decision C(2021) 935 final of 18.02.2021 concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2021 and the financing decision for the implementation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism.

- how to submit an application (section 11)
- the [Online Manual](#) outlines the:
 - procedures to register and submit proposals online via the EU Funding & Tenders Portal ('Portal')
 - recommendations for the preparation of the application
- the [AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement](#) contains:
 - detailed annotations on all the provisions in the Grant Agreement you will have to sign in order to obtain the grant (*including cost eligibility, payment schedule, accessory obligations, etc*).

You are also encouraged to visit the DG ECHO website (Prevention and Preparedness Programme webpage) to consult the [projects funded previously](#).

1. Background

The biggest disaster to hit Europe in decades, the COVID-19 pandemic, has killed more than 531 869 people³ only in EU/EEA countries and it is still unfolding at the time of writing. The pandemic has quickly overwhelmed national healthcare systems, disrupted public life and generated major shocks to society and the economy. The COVID-19 pandemic is the worst health crisis seen in EU's history, though unfortunately it is not the only extreme event witnessed in recent years. Regions from north to south Europe have experienced life-threatening heatwaves, with historic temperature records broken several years in a row. The past three years have also seen dramatic wildfires blazing throughout the continent, killing more people and burning more land than ever before. Storms, extreme rainfall events and floods continued to cause damage, with washed-away roads and inundated city streets making news headlines. Some of the strongest earthquakes to hit the EU and neighbouring countries in years sent a reminder of ever-present seismic risk.

Against this backdrop, the 2020 "Overview of Natural and Man-made Disaster Risk the European Union may face"⁴ highlights that increasing the cooperation across borders and sectors in all phases of risk management is critical to better address the transboundary nature of disaster risk, the increasing complexity and emergence of new threats. This call for proposal aims to translate such a policy priority into a number of cross-border prevention and preparedness projects that can lead to new knowledge and investments for better managing the risk of disasters.

Europe and its neighbours face a wide range of disaster risks, such as floods, forest fires, earthquakes and various technological, radiological and environmental accidents, resulting in loss of life, destruction of property, environment, critical infrastructure and cultural heritage. These challenges are further exacerbated by climate change which contributes to the increasing frequency and intensity of weather-related disasters across Europe.

No country alone can be fully prepared for all kinds of disasters. The Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) was established to strengthen the cooperation and coordination between the European Union and the Member States in the field of civil protection.

³ Source European Centre for Disease Control (ECDC) as of 21 February, 2021

⁴ European Commission, Commission Staff Working Document, Overview of Natural and Man-made Disaster Risk the European Union may face, SWD(2020) 330 final

The Mechanism supports efforts of Member States and Participating States⁵ to protect primarily people, but also the environment and property, including cultural heritage, against all kinds of natural and man-made disasters, including the consequences of acts of terrorism, technological, radiological or environmental disasters, marine pollution and health emergencies, occurring inside and outside the Union. In the case of the consequences of acts of terrorism or radiological disasters, the Mechanism only focuses on preparedness and response actions.

In addition to response to disasters, prevention and preparedness are essential building blocks of the EU cooperation in the area of civil protection.

In particular, EU action aims to support, complement and facilitate coordination of Member States' action through this call for proposals in order to:

- a) achieve a high level of protection against disasters with cross-border impacts by preventing or reducing their potential effects, by fostering a culture of prevention and by improving cooperation between the civil protection, marine pollution and other relevant services/stakeholders;
- b) enhance cooperation and coordination in the area of preparedness and response between authorities and stakeholders in Member States, Participating States, IPA beneficiaries⁶ not participating in the Mechanism, and/or European Neighbourhood Policy countries that share a border, based on existing cross-border or macro-regional agreements or strategies, including regional sea conventions;
- c) promote the use of various Union funds (e.g. Interreg, Horizon 2020, ERDF, ENI, IPA, Cohesion Funds, EAFRD, Life Programme) which may support sustainable disaster risk management and encourage Member States to exploit these funding opportunities including for cross-border regions.

To achieve these objectives, prevention and preparedness actions can benefit from EU financial assistance, including via the co-financing of projects.⁷ The purpose of this Call for Proposals is to identify and finance projects aimed at strengthening cooperation among Member States/Participating States on disaster prevention and preparedness⁸. Certain third countries may benefit from UCPM funding⁹, including under this Call for Proposals. A complete list of such countries is provided in section 5 below.

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

For an illustration of general and specific objectives, outcomes, outputs and deliverables of this Call for Proposals please refer to the Logical Framework, which is available [here](#). General objectives, specific objectives (Call Priorities) and outcomes are pre-defined in this Call for Proposals. Each proposal must define work packages, outputs and deliverables that contribute to the Call's outcomes, specific and general

⁵ Participating States of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) include: Iceland, the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia and Turkey.

⁶ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (This designation is without prejudice to positions on the status, and in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence).

⁷ Article 21 of the Decision No 1313/2013/EU

⁸ Actions falling under Regulation (EC) No 1406/2002 establishing a European Maritime Safety Agency are not covered by this call.

⁹ Article 28 of Decision 1313/2013/EU

objectives. Furthermore, specific objectives, outcomes, work packages, outputs and deliverables described in the proposals should be linked through logical, result-driven linkages and should demonstrate how the proposed project will contribute to achieving either priority 1 or 2.

Topic 1: UCPM-2021-PP-CBR — PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS FOR CROSS-BORDER RISKS

Objectives

Disasters know no borders. The risks posed by natural and man-made hazards are cross-border due to their spatial dimension (earthquakes, fires, severe weather, floods and space weather), as well as the volatility and scale of their impacts (pandemics, livestock epidemics, nuclear/industrial accidents). The human, economic and environmental impacts - including the impact on cultural heritage - triggered by these hazards, as well as their likelihood of occurrence exist irrespective of national borders. In fact, the EU can benefit from tackling cross-border risks beyond its borders, particularly in IPA beneficiaries and in the Southern and Eastern Neighbourhoods¹⁰.

The increasing occurrence and inter-dependence of new threats require a strong cross-sectoral and cross-border cooperation in prevention, preparedness and response.

Various EU legislative acts already call for a collaborative approach to disaster risk assessment and disaster management: for example, for flood risks or cross-border threats in the health sector. The revised UCPM legislation also aims at stepping up the collaboration at cross-border level and between Member States and Participating States prone to the same types of disasters.

While cross-border cooperation is relatively well-established in the area of emergency response, cross-border cooperation during the prevention and preparedness phases can be further enhanced. Notwithstanding, the response phase could also benefit from streamlined communication protocols and interoperable systems that overcome language barriers in emergency situations.

By focussing on countries that share a border, this Call for Proposals aims to foster a more sustained cooperation in cross-border regions.

The general objective for Topic 1 of the 2021 Call for Proposals (Prevention and Preparedness for Cross-Border Risks projects) focuses on: cross-border disaster risk management through prevention and preparedness in Europe, IPA beneficiaries and EU Neighbourhood countries.

Themes and priorities (scope)

In order to contribute to achieving the above general objective, applicants are invited to focus on **one of the following call priorities (specific objectives)**.

Priority 1: Developing cross-border risk assessments

Without an assessment that takes into account cross-border risks, disaster risk management strategies will only partially address the risks a country faces. An analysis of national risk assessments submitted to the European Commission in 2018/2019 revealed that, while cross-sectoral interdependencies of risks are tackled to some extent in risk assessments, a cross-border (ie. regional/international)

¹⁰ 2017 Overview of Risks, SWD (2017) 176 final

dimension is still mostly missing. A few good practices exist: the joint cross-border Benelux risk assessment¹¹, the Baltic Sea Region risk assessment or the Nordic Forum for Risk Analysis and Strategic Foresight.

Priority 2: Enhancing cross-border emergency management

The need for cross-border collaboration in disaster management arises when the response capacity of an affected region is surpassed and assistance from bordering communities is required.

Mutual understanding of civil protection and emergency management structures, work procedures and culture is essential for effective cross-border collaborations. Such cooperation can be of particular value when preparing for risks with a potential high impact but a low likelihood of occurrence (Hi-Lo risks). In these cases a joint preparation with neighbouring regions using one common planning instead of several separate plans is often more efficient.

Some regions have a long tradition of cross-border collaboration in disaster risk management and this has led to a structured exchange of knowledge and good practices over the years. This wealth of knowledge provides a solid base for cross-border collaboration that the UCPM can help disseminate and apply in other regions across Europe and its Neighbours.

Activities that can be funded (scope)

Under **Priority 1**, this Call for Proposals will co-finance activities that aim to assess/quantify risks with cross-border impacts, either building on/expanding existing cross-border risk assessments or developing one through the project. End-users will be civil protection authorities and stakeholders in Member States, Participating States, IPA beneficiaries not participating in the Mechanism, and/or European Neighbourhood Policy countries **that share a border**.

Under **Priority 2**, this Call for Proposals will co-finance activities that aim to enhance cross-border disaster preparedness. End-users will be civil protection authorities and stakeholders in Member States, Participating States, IPA beneficiaries not participating in the Mechanism, and/or European Neighbourhood Policy countries **that share a border**.

Projects may include a broad range of activities, for example:

- Testing, demonstration and / or implementation of innovative practices to enhance prevention of, and preparedness for disasters
- Activities to develop methods and tools to support decision-making in disaster risk management
- Activities to develop methods and tools to measure and/or enhance the understanding of the impact of disasters
- Activities to promote harmonised cross-border approaches for assessing and communicating risks
- Activities to strengthen disaster preparedness protocols and response capacities

¹¹ <http://www.benelux.int/fr/publications/publications/inventaire-benelux-des-risques-transfrontaliers>

Expected impact

For Priority 1: Developing cross-border risk assessments

Project activities and outputs should lead to the achievement of **up to two (2) of the following outcomes**:

- 1.1 Cross-border risk assessments for identified cross-border risks are developed;
- 1.2 Joint data/information-sharing tools or platforms are established;
- 1.3 A network of competent authorities at national and sub-national level for specific risks is established;
- 1.4 Cross-border risk management plans or action plans for one or more risks, (identified in a cross-border risk assessment) are developed.

Examples of project **outputs** to be funded include, among others:

- Risk assessment report including, where appropriate, analytical products preparatory to a risk assessment, such as cross-border hazard assessments, cross-border risk scenarios, cross-border vulnerability analysis, risk mapping, etc., including for risk assessment addressing critical infrastructure or cultural heritage assets;
- Agreements, working procedures, methodologies, etc., required to establish a functioning cross-border network of competent authorities at national and sub-national level for specific risks;
- Open source IT platforms for data/information-sharing, including, where relevant, common methodologies on disaster loss data collection across borders;
- Specific cross-border action plans for the management of cross-border risks identified in joint risk assessments, including risks to critical infrastructure and cultural heritage assets.

For Priority 2: Enhancing cross-border emergency management

Project activities and outputs should lead to the achievement of **up to two (2) of the following outcomes**:

- 2.1 The understanding of the institutional and legislative context of emergency management in neighbouring country/ies is enhanced;
- 2.2 Existing gaps to cross-border emergency response are identified;
- 2.3 Cross-border interoperability (e.g. of civil protection modules or other response capacities) is strengthened;
- 2.4 Cross-border response plans are developed/improved, taking into account host nation support;
- 2.5 Cross-border operational collaboration in disaster response is tested and strengthened.

Examples of project **outputs** to be funded include, among others:

- Analysis of legal/institutional aspects of cross-border cooperation and mutual assistance;
- Gap and needs analyses for cross-border preparedness, including for select critical infrastructure and cultural heritage assets;
- Host nation support guidelines with specific cross-border aspects;
- Risk management capability assessments for cross-border areas, including for specific critical infrastructure and cultural heritage assets;
- Cross-border training programmes tailored to local/regional needs;
- Agreements and memoranda of understanding regarding cooperation and mutual assistance in emergency management;
- Technical specifications for development or enhancement of cross-border communication tools (e.g. radio communication).

Topic 2: UCPM-2021-PP-MARIPOL - PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS FOR MARINE POLLUTION AT-SEA AND ON SHORE

Objectives

Over the past decades, regional, EU and international regulatory framework, preventive measures and technical cooperation helped to decrease the rates of marine and coastal pollution. However, such environmental risks from shipping or offshore accidents and from illegal discharges, cannot be completely eliminated. Moreover, as experienced in the past years, those risks have become more complex in terms of variety of pollutants and uncertainties about their impact, behaviour, as well as effectiveness of available recovery measures. They call for an increased operational knowledge and capability and for a more coordinated and holistic approach to marine pollution incident management at sea and on shore among different sectors involved.

The general objective for Topic 2 of the 2021 Call for Proposals (Prevention and Preparedness for marine pollution at-sea and on-shore) focuses on enhancing prevention of and protection from the effects of maritime disasters.

Themes and priorities (scope)

In order to contribute to achieving the above general objective, proposals are invited to focus on **one of the following call priorities (specific objectives)**.

Priority 1: Developing response capacity for marine pollution incidents

Increasing complexity of maritime risks due to changes in maritime transport, fuels and hazardous cargos, requires a review and step-up of the capacity of responders as well as improved monitoring, detection and response tools to different pollutants. It is important that such capacity development takes into account a variety of pressures for marine environment and their current management, and aims towards more flexible and versatile capabilities that can serve across multiple areas.

Priority 2: Enhancing regional and cross-sectoral coordination

European regional coordination in the area of marine pollution disaster risk management is mainly built and undertaken in the Regional Sea Conventions, to most of which EU is a Contracting Party. Therefore, this call particularly supports strategic

prevention and preparedness goals and actions endorsed or initiated under these Conventions, when regional resources are not sufficient for their implementation. Furthermore, the ongoing regional work does not always sufficiently involve other relevant sectors, leaving room for fragmentation or lack of coordination. The call aims to address these gaps.

Activities that can be funded (scope)

Under **Priority 1**, this Call for Proposals will co-finance activities that aim to increase capacity of responders, including development of advanced methodologies supporting training and exercises as well as improving technology and tools for better monitoring, detection and response to at-sea and coastal pollution. Such tools and methodologies should take into account different response functions and their interactions, integrate lessons identified in incidents and exercises and support recent or new strategic initiatives undertaken at European or regional level.

Under **Priority 2**, this Call will co-finance activities that aim to strengthen joint prevention and preparedness actions within the European regional sea areas as well as inter-regional initiatives when more efficiency or effectiveness can be achieved. The call will also co-finance activities aiming to strengthen operational links between at-sea and shoreline pollution responders as well as other relevant sectors for a more integrated and coordinated approach.

Expected impact

For Priority 1: Developing response capacity for marine pollution incidents

Project activities and outputs should lead to the development of **up to two (2) of the following outcomes**:

- 1.1. Advanced training and/or exercising capacities are developed;
- 1.2. System(s) or methods for detection of and response to various pollutants are developed or improved;
- 1.3. Innovative response capacities are tested through exercises.

Examples of project **outputs** to be funded include, among others:

- Advanced training technologies or methodologies for a sound assessment and recovery of various pollutants at-sea and on shore;
- Interactive pollutant simulation tool enabling comparison of different response strategies at-sea and on-shore taking into account relevant parameters;
- Innovative systems and tools for detecting and recovering oil or other harmful substances;
- Trainings and small-scale exercises aimed at testing innovative disaster preparedness approaches, methodologies and tools.

For Priority 2: Enhancing regional and cross-sectorial coordination

Project activities and outputs should lead to the development of **up to two (2) of the following outcomes:**

- 2.1. Coordination within or between European regional sea conventions is enhanced;
- 2.2. Communication and operational coordination between at-sea and shoreline preparedness and response is enhanced;
- 2.3. A (sub-)regional approach to significant acute pollution, in particular with regard to spill impact/effect monitoring and assessment is established.

Examples of project **outputs** to be funded include, among others:

- Development or upgrade of regional/inter-regional anti-pollution manuals, guidelines, approaches or procedures, closely linked with the European policies and crises management systems and tools;
- Joint at-sea/on-shore response plans, taking into account European and international good practice and experience;
- Joint at-sea/on-shore trainings and small scale exercises;
- Integration of at-sea/on-shore operational and communication systems;
- Data collection/analysis, sensitivity maps, feasibility studies and other science-based tools in support of regional and cross-sectorial coordination;
- Common operational approaches, strategies or procedures for monitoring, assessment and reporting of pollution or its impact.

3. Available budget

The available call budget is **EUR 3 500 000**.

Indicative allocation of funds by topic/geographical distribution:

Topic 1: Prevention and Preparedness for Cross Border Risks

A) Internal action: **EUR 1 200 000** for projects targeting Member States and Participating States.

B) External action: **EUR 550 000** for projects targeting IPA¹² beneficiaries not participating in the Mechanism, European Neighbourhood Policy¹³ countries, Member States and Participating States.

¹² Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey and Kosovo (this designation is without prejudice to positions on the status, and in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence). Serbia, Montenegro, Turkey and the Republic of North Macedonia are participating in the UCPM.

¹³ Eastern Neighbourhood countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine; Southern Neighbourhood countries: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine (this designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without

Topic 2: Prevention and Preparedness for Marine Pollution at-sea and on shore

A) Internal action: **EUR 1 200 000** for projects targeting Member States and Participating States.

B) External action: **EUR 550 000** for projects targeting IPA beneficiaries not participating in the Mechanism, European Neighbourhood Policy countries, Member States and Participating States.

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:	11 March 2021
Deadline for submission:	<u>08 June 2021 – 17:00 CET (Brussels)</u>
Evaluation:	June-August 2021
Information on evaluation results:	September 2021
GA signature:	November 2021

5. Admissibility

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

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

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

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

- Application Form Part A — contains administrative information about the participants (future coordinator, beneficiaries and affiliated entities) and the summarised budget for the project (*to be filled in directly online*)

prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue), Syria and Tunisia. The participation of Syria is currently suspended.

- Application Form Part B — contains the technical description of the project (*to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed and then assembled and re-uploaded as PDF in the system*)
- mandatory annexes and supporting documents (*to be uploaded as PDF files/included in Part B*):
 - detailed budget table (*mandatory excel template available in the Submission System*)
 - CVs (standard) of core project team
 - activity reports of last year (all participants) (not applicable to public authorities)
 - list of previous projects (key projects for the last 4 years)
 - letter of support from the competent national civil protection authority (for Topic 1) or from the competent national maritime authority (for Topic 2) of each country that will benefit from the action (except for participants which themselves are the national authority) (*specific word form available in the Submission System*).


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 **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))
 - Participating States in the UCPM, including: Iceland, Montenegro, The Republic of North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia and Turkey

- Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) beneficiaries not participating in the UCPM: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo
- European Neighbourhood Policy countries: East (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine) and South (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia)

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

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 persons¹⁴.

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'¹⁵. ⚠ Please note that if the action will be implemented by the members, they should also participate (either as beneficiaries or as affiliated entities, otherwise their costs will NOT be eligible).

Countries currently negotiating association agreements — Beneficiaries from countries with ongoing negotiations (see *list above*) may participate in the call and can sign grants if the negotiations are concluded before grant signature (with retroactive effect, if provided in the agreement).

EU restrictive measures — Special rules apply for certain entities (e.g. entities subject to [EU restrictive measures](#) under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)¹⁶ and entities covered by Commission Guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#)¹⁷). 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).

¹⁴ See Article 197(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

¹⁵ For the definitions, see Articles 187(2) and 197(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

¹⁶ 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](#).

¹⁷ 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).

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

Internal action

Proposals financed under the internal action are submitted and implemented by a consortium involving a minimum of two entities from two different Member States or Participating States¹⁸. International organisations may work in cooperation with entities from Member States and Participating States but cannot act as lead consortium partner nor does their participation count for the “minimum number of entities” above-mentioned.

This means that as a minimum the partnership should include one of the following combinations:

- a) 2 or more entities from Member States/Participating States, one as lead consortium partner,
- b) 2 or more entities from Member States/Participating States, one as lead consortium partner, + 1 or more International Organisations

Reminder: Only entities from Member States, Participating States and International Organisations¹⁹ are eligible under the internal action budget.

External action

Proposals financed under the external action are submitted and implemented by a consortium involving a minimum of two entities from two different eligible countries, including **at least one entity from IPA beneficiaries not participating in the Mechanism and/or a European Neighbourhood Policy country** as primary beneficiary of the action. International organisations may work in cooperation with entities from the aforementioned countries, Member States, Participating States but cannot act as lead consortium partner.

In order to be the **lead consortium partner**, an entity from IPA beneficiaries not participating in the Mechanism and/or a European Neighbourhood Policy country must be a **national public authority**.

The partnership should include one of the following combinations:

- a) 1 or more entity from Member States/Participating States (one as lead consortium partner) + 1 or more entity from IPA beneficiaries not participating in the Mechanism and/or a European Neighbourhood Policy country
- b) 2 or more entities from IPA beneficiaries not participating in the Mechanism and/or a European Neighbourhood Policy country, including 1 national public authority acting as lead consortium partner

¹⁸ Iceland, the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia and Turkey.

¹⁹ International Organisations are invited to pay attention to the general conditions of the Model Grant Agreement (MGA), in particular Article 43.1 on applicable law. The clause that will appear in the grant agreement is generated automatically by the system based on the option selected by the beneficiary under the Beneficiary-Specific Legal Information Tab ('do not accept any applicable law', OR 'would accept an applicable law clause but not the standard clause').

- c) 1 or more entity from Member States/Participating States (one as lead consortium partner) + 1 or more entity from IPA beneficiaries not participating in the Mechanism and/or a European Neighbourhood Policy country + 1 or more International Organisation
- d) 2 or more entities from IPA beneficiaries not participating in the Mechanism and/or a European Neighbourhood Policy country, including 1 national public authority acting as lead consortium partner + 1 or more International Organisation.

Reminder: Each Partnership must include at least one entity from IPA beneficiaries not participating in the Mechanism and/or a European Neighbourhood Policy country.

The lead consortium partner can either be an entity from a Member State/Participating State or a national public authority from IPA beneficiaries not participating in the Mechanism or from a European Neighbourhood Policy country.

Proposals submitted under the external action need to generate results that primarily benefit an IPA beneficiary country not participating in the Mechanism and/or a European Neighbourhood Policy country. The results must also be relevant for the UCPM.

For proposals under Topic 1:

Actions financed under Topic 1 are submitted and implemented by trans-national partnerships involving a minimum of two entities from **two different eligible countries sharing a border**

For both internal and external actions: in order to ensure a strong focus on the results it is strongly recommended that the composition of the consortium be very targeted and that the number of consortium members does not exceed 5 entities.

Eligible activities

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

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)

The cross-border areas/countries targeted by an action submitted under Topic 1 must be clearly identified in the application form under section 1.3 *European added value & impact on non-EU countries* of Part B *Description of the action*.

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:

- general profiles (qualifications and experiences) of the staff responsible for managing and implementing the project
- description of the consortium participants
- applicants' activity reports of last year
- 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.

Public bodies, Member State organisations and international organisations are exempted from the operational capacity check.

Exclusion

Applicants which are subject to an **EU exclusion decision** or in one of the following **exclusion situations** that bar them from receiving EU funding can NOT participate²⁰:

- 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 misconduct²¹ (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 that²²:

- 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).

²⁰ See Articles 136 and 141 of EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

²¹ 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.

²² See Article 141 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).


An **evaluation committee** will assess all applications. Proposals will first be checked for formal requirements (admissibility and eligibility, *see sections 5 and 6*). Proposals found admissible and eligible will be evaluated against the operational capacity and award criteria (*see sections 7 and 9*) and then ranked according to their total 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 'Relevance'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Impact'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Quality'.
- 3) If this does not allow to determine the priority, a further prioritisation can be done by considering the overall project portfolio and the creation of positive synergies between projects, or other factors related to the objectives of the call. These factors will be documented in the panel report.
- 4) After that, the remainder of the available call budget will be used to fund projects across the different topics in order to ensure a balanced spread of the geographical and thematic coverage and while respecting to the maximum possible extent the order of merit based on the evaluation of the award criteria.

All proposals will be informed about the evaluation result (**evaluation result letter**). Successful proposals will be invited for grant preparation; the other ones will be put on the reserve list or rejected.

 No commitment for funding — Invitation to grant preparation does NOT constitute a formal commitment for funding. We will still need to make various legal checks before grant award: *legal entity validation, financial capacity, exclusion check, etc.*

Grant preparation will involve a dialogue in order to fine-tune technical or financial aspects of the project and may require extra information from your side. It may also include adjustments to the proposal to address recommendations of the evaluation committee or other concerns. Compliance will be a pre-condition for signing the grant.

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

9. Award criteria

The award criteria facilitate the evaluation of proposals in relation to the set objectives and priorities. They enable the selection of proposals which the Contracting Authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities.

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

Relevance (max 30 points):

Purpose and objectives

- How relevant is the proposal to the general and specific objectives of the call for proposals?
- How does the action contribute to the specific outcomes selected of the call document (section 2)?
- To what extent does the project description demonstrate a need for the proposed action?
- To what extent is the action relevant for the UCPM and/or Participating States and/or eligible third countries?

Geographic focus

- To what extent are the end-users from targeted countries involved in the proposed action?
- How well are the geographic focus and the European/trans-national dimension of the proposed action defined?

Clarity, consistency, technical soundness

- How coherent is the design of the action?
- To what extent are the expected project results clear, appropriate and realistic?
- To what extent is the sequencing of the activities consistent with the expected results?
- To what extent does the proposal include a sufficient background analysis, credible baseline, targets and sources of verification?

Replicability of results

- To what extent are the results replicable in other geographical areas and/or sectors?
- To what extent does the project description envisage such replicability?

Development of mutual trust and cross-border cooperation

- To what extent does the proposed action have potential to develop/strengthen mutual trust among the consortium partners? If yes, how?
- To what extent does the proposed action have potential to develop/strengthen cross-border cooperation?

EU added value

- To what extent do the expected results help eligible countries achieve the objective of the UCPM?

Quality (max 40 points):

Implementation and management of the project

- To what extent is the action plan for implementing the action clear and feasible?
- To what extent is the timeframe realistic, given the resources available?
- To what extent is the proposed action feasible within the proposed timeframe?
- To what extent does the intervention logic explain the rationale to achieve the expected results?
- To what extent are linkages between identified problems, needs, input, outputs, outcomes and objectives logically presented?
- To what extent are the activities and their result framework clearly described and consistent?
- To what extent are the indicators chosen to monitor the activities clearly described and consistent with the expected results?
- To what extent does the project description identify and assess potential risks to the implementation of the proposed action? How appropriate are the mitigation measures?

Cost effectiveness

- How well are the activities reflected in the budget?
- How well is the subcontracting of activities justified?
- How satisfactory is the ratio between the estimated costs and the results?

Project team and cooperation

- To what extent does the consortium have the necessary resources, including human resources (project team) to ensure the implementation of the proposed action?
- To what extent has the consortium adequate organisational structure and procedures to ensure decision-making, coordination among consortium members and problem-solving for the proposed action?

Impact (max 30 points):

Impact and scalability

- To what extent is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?
- To what extent does the proposal envisage building upon outputs of the action to generate a deeper, broader impact on investments and/or policies? (e.g. through national, EU and other multilateral programmes)

Sustainability of outcomes

- To what extent will the expected outcomes last beyond the implementation period of the action?
- To what extent does the project description include a strategy to make achieved results accessible and usable after the action has ended?

Dissemination of results

- To what extent is the dissemination strategy clear, targeted and adequate to reach the target groups ensuring a long-term impact?
- To what extent are the channels planned for dissemination adequate to ensure a long-term impact?

Award criteria	Minimum pass score	Maximum score
Relevance	15	30
Quality	20	40
Impact	15	30
Overall (pass) scores	65	100

Maximum points: 100 points.

Individual thresholds per criterion: 15/30 and 20/40 points.

Overall threshold: 65 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: the initial duration of the project cannot exceed 24 months (extensions will be possible only exceptionally, for duly justified reasons and through an amendment).

Milestones and deliverables

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

The following deliverables are mandatory for all projects:

- Progress reports at months 9 and 17

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: Up to EUR 1 000 000 per project co-financed under the internal action and EUR 500 000 per project co-financed under the external action. 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 described 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 (85%).

The no-profit rule applies to for-profit organisations applying under this call. The grant may NOT produce a profit. If there is a profit (i.e. surplus of revenues + EU grant over costs), we will deduct it from your final grant amount. The types of revenues counted are set out in the Grant Agreement (*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
- E. Indirect costs

Specific cost eligibility conditions for this call:

- personnel costs:
 - SME owner/natural person unit cost: Yes
 - volunteers unit cost: No
- travel and subsistence unit cost: Yes
- equipment costs: depreciation
- other cost categories:
 - costs for financial support to third parties: not allowed
- indirect cost flat-rate: 7% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-C, except volunteers costs, if any)
- VAT: VAT is NOT eligible
- other:
 - in-kind contributions for free are allowed, but cost-neutral, i.e. they cannot be declared as cost
 - Kick off meeting: the costs incurred to attend the kick-off meeting (introductory meeting) organised by the granting authority are eligible as travel and subsistence 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
 - project websites: communication costs for presenting the project on the participants' websites or social media accounts are eligible; costs for *separate* project websites are not eligible
 - other ineligible costs: 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** corresponding to **70% of the maximum grant amount** to start working on the project (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 additional **prefinancing payments** linked to a periodic report.

In addition, you will be expected to submit two progress reports not linked to payments.

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

All payments will be made to the coordinator.

Please 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*).

A CFS must be provided for each beneficiary and affiliated entity when the requested EU contribution at interim or final payment is EUR 325 000 or more.

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

Security rules: *see Model Grant Agreement (art 13 and Annex 5)*

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)*:

- additional communication and dissemination activities: Yes
- limited communication and visibility to protect persons involved: No
- visibility in field operations outside the EU: Yes

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

- zero tolerance: Yes
- transfer of assets at the end of the action: No
- EU restrictive measures: Yes

Other specificities

n/a

Non-compliance and breach of contract

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

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

11. How to submit an application

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

Submission is a 2-step process:

a) create a user account and register your organisation

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

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

b) submit the proposal

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

Submit your proposal in 3 parts, as follows:

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

- Annexes (*see section 5*). Upload them as PDF files.

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

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

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

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

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

12. Help

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

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

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

Contact

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

Non-IT related questions should be sent to the following email address:

ECHO-CP-P&P@ec.europa.eu.

Questions on submission must:

- be sent at the latest 7 days before the submission deadline (*see section 3*).
- 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 be 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. 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](#).