



Preparatory Actions

Call for proposals

25-08-2022 COORIGENDUM

09-09-2022 Extension of deadline

Call for proposals (2021-2022)

Art and the digital:

Unleashing creativity for European industry, regions, and society





EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology
Directorate Media Policy
Unit Media Convergence and social media

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

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0. Introduction

This is a call for proposals for EU **action grants**.

The regulatory framework for this EU Funding Programme is set out in Regulation [2018/1046 \(EU Financial Regulation\)](#): Preparatory action within the meaning of Article 58(2)(b).

The call is launched in accordance with the 2021 and 2022 Work Programme¹ and will be managed by the **European Commission, Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CONNECT)**. The call covers the following **action: Art and the digital: Unleashing creativity for European industry, regions, and society**.

We invite you to read the **call documentation** carefully, and in particular this Call Document, the Model Grant Agreement and all other published annexes, as well as 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 and scope, objectives, expected impact, activities that can be funded, methodology to be used, (sections 1 and 2)
 - available budget, maximum grant amount, timetable and duration (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): the reimbursement rate for different costs, modalities of third-party funding of artists, etc.
 - how to submit an application (section 11)
- the [AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement](#) contains:
 - detailed annotations on all the provisions in the Grant Agreement you will have to sign in order to obtain the grant (*including cost eligibility, payment schedule, accessory obligations, etc*).

¹ Commission Decisions C/2021/3006 adopted on 04/05/2021 and C(2022)1052 adopted on 25/02/2022 on the financing of pilot projects and preparatory actions in the field of "Communications Networks, Content and Technology" and the adoption of the work programmes for 2021 and 2022

1. Background

The claim of the present call is that combining European creativity in the arts with its lead in science and technology can transform European cities and regions socially, ecologically, and economically. While Europe is strongly pushing innovation based on technological and scientific progress, it has always put social and ecological priorities on the same level as economic growth. Europe emphasizes the need for constructive critical thinking about impact of technology on the environment and on us as individuals and on society. In this context, grounding digital innovation in our cultural and artistic wealth is becoming a key distinguishing characteristic of a European approach to innovation.

The European Commission - DG CONNECT - has already promoted artistic experimentation with technologies as a catalyst of digital innovation in its [S+T+ARTS](#) program -innovation at the nexus of Science, Technology, and the ARTS. For technologies like artificial intelligence, robotics, new digital media, smart cities, high performance computing, data science, or biotechnologies artistic experiments with use cases of these technologies can drive graceful immersion of these technologies in economy and society. Results of such artistic experimentation can include conceiving new ecologically conscious and human compatible uses of technology, pushing limits of technology in artistic installations or reflection on the impact of technology.

The ambition of artistic experimentation for this call two-fold:

- Accelerate the [digital transition](#) by stimulating uptake of digital technologies by regional stakeholders – business/industry end-users, regional governmental bodies and actors and citizens themselves.
- Accelerate the [green transition](#) via art technology collaboration on a local level.

Such artistic experimentation should lead to concrete outcomes that result in follow-up actions on economic/societal and artistic level.

The contention of this call is that in order to enable crossovers between technology and the arts on a regional level, it is necessary to support the creation of local centres across European regions that promote synergies between art and technology. Such '[regional STARTS centres](#)' shall form the core of a movement towards an art-inspired European approach to innovation. They will become catalysts of concrete collaborations of artists with regional stakeholders (industry, regional authorities, SME, NGOs, etc) and of concrete outcomes of these collaborations. As such they will supplement the 'Digital innovation hubs' and the EIT hubs that push for innovation on a regional level. The ambition is to create a Europe-wide network of like-minded cities/regions willing to host such centers.

Remark: This STARTS call contributes to the vision of the '**New European Bauhaus**' by facilitating the green transition at the nexus of science, technology and the arts. The 20th century 'Bauhaus' brought together crafts, arts, architecture, design and industry with the vision to put the newest technologies – electricity, novel materials, novel means of transport - to use for alternative social models and to improve living conditions. How can artists, architects, designers, engineers, scientists, industries, and citizens together promote social and technological innovation towards a sustainable and inclusive society? The New European Bauhaus intends to bring these ideas to the 21st century with a focus on the green transition. Artistic experimentation in STARTS residencies with the currently newest technologies has exactly this goal.

2. Objectives — Activities that can be funded — Expected impact - Methodology

Two objectives

Following the scope and ambition outlined in section 1, the objectives of the present call for proposals are two-fold:

- Artistic experimentation with key technologies for regional development
- Creation of Regional STARTS centres as hubs for art-driven innovation

(i) Artistic experimentation with key technologies for regional development

A core task of the project will be to fund artistic residencies in technology institutions and other pertinent local stakeholders in line with the [STARTS residencies program](#). These STARTS residencies will facilitate artistic experimentation with key technologies in chosen local hosts institutions (technology institutions or local stakeholders in regional development). Artistic experiments should result in tangible outcomes where art and technology jointly elaborate art-driven solutions to clearly identified challenges that help drive a strong collaboration between the artists and the hosts.

Open calls for artists shall thus refer to concrete challenges -where art could potentially help provide solutions - in technology or in use of technology for green and digital (twin) transition as part of regional development.

Remark: The challenges should cover a broad range of human compatible and ecologically conscious technology uses, including for example challenges for trustworthy or explainable AI, green manufacturing, sustainable urban development, security, recyclable textiles, digital literacy and more.

Mechanisms to identify suitable hosts for such residencies should be developed. Further core tasks of the projects will be mentoring of artists during the STARTS residencies and follow-up on concrete outcomes of residencies (accompany potential exploitation - social, economic, ecological - of outcomes and/or make the artistic outcomes accessible in highly visible exhibitions).

(ii) Creation of Regional STARTS centres as hubs for art-driven innovation

Regional STARTS centres serve as catalysts for art-technology synergies in regional development that bring together all regional players (artists, technology, industry, businesses, creatives from all sectors, policy makers, funders, foundations, regional agencies...). Such centres can be physical infrastructures or local coordinated programs that link art and technology for regional development in a coherent set of activities and funding schemes. The call attempts to strengthen and make sustainable existing centers and to encourage creation of new centers.

The 'regional STARTS centres' should become hubs for art-driven innovation that promote synergies of art, technology and regional development. The centers should organise pertinent events to promote art-driven innovation (including educational workshops, festivals that links digital with art/music, events that mobilise local stakeholders, workshops that allow sharing best practices across regions etc).

The centres should also facilitate artistic experiments in STARTS residencies, either at their premises or at the premises of pertinent local stakeholders. They should help in mentoring artists and follow-up on outcomes of residencies. They will showcase and disseminate results of artistic experimentation, for instance by organising exhibitions of artistic outcomes or by publicising (in highly visible events) the concrete results for local economy resulting from STARTS residencies.

Such centers can supplement [Digital Innovation Hubs](#) (DIH) and [EIT Innovation Hubs](#), both EC initiatives to promote better use/uptake of novel technologies. Some DIH are already using the arts as a means to make digital more accessible.

Expected impact:

- Tangible outcome of artistic experimentation further developed into ventures

Tangible outcomes from STARTS residencies can range from products or services developed jointly by artist and engineers, over novel unexpected uses of technology that help in uptake of technologies by local business, to business creation potential from ideas developed in these residencies. A core task will be to plan follow up on these outcomes.

- Widely visible art works as reflection of art technology synergies

Art works resulting from STARTS residencies that e.g. exemplify ideas of digital, reflect on AI and make it understandable, or installations that reflect on the green transition or urbanism challenges.

A wide dissemination of these results via exhibitions of art works from these residencies will be a core task.

- Sustainable STARTS regional centers as catalysts art-driven innovation

The selected projects shall help in making centers sustainable and expand the idea of STARTS regional centers to not yet included regions and industry sectors. To this end, STARTS regional centers might raise funds or will establish links to regional funding schemes or foundations willing to support such centres.

- A sustainable network of pertinent local actors in art and technology

Projects will bring together local authorities, foundations, businesses, art organisations, technical institutions, investors, etc. willing to promote initiatives for art and technology collaboration as a driver of urban and regional development. They will solicit follow-on activities in the participating cities that bring together artists, business and technology to work on local development projects and they will attract new regions.

Activities that can be funded

Eligible activities must clearly target artistic use of (digital) technologies with a goal to promote regional development and uptake of digital technology via artistic experiments.

Proposals can include the following activities:

- STARTS residencies of artists in companies/institutions from (digital) technology and/or other sectors

Remark: Residencies will be implemented via financial support to third parties (FSTP) and have to be co-funded (see sections 6 and 10 for details including the minimum amount of funding devoted to this objective, the maximum grant amount per artist and co-funding/reimbursement rate).

- Mentoring activities accompanying the STARTS residencies (e.g., helping in communication between hosts and artists, helping in disseminating results, teaming up with investors, discussing possible support with local foundations).
- Art exhibitions presenting art works from STARTS residencies and other works that contribute to the idea of art-driven technology innovation.
- Events (workshops, networking, talks...) that further collaborations of stakeholders in cities/regions already at the forefront of art-tech synergies (local authorities and business, foundations etc.) and help enlarge the community of players interested in sustaining STARTS regional centers.
- Festivals/Performances/installations that link digital with art/music to reflect on the role of digital in creativity.
- Contributions to the website www.starts.eu open to artists and interested companies that can serve as a gathering point. In particular, call and outcomes of STARTS residencies must be displayed on this website. No dedicated project website will be needed.
- Educational workshops (hosted jointly by engineers and artists) in the spirit of '[STARTS academies](#)' to make (digital) technology more accessible to citizens in particular the young generation (digital skills and critical thinking; digital literacy)

Applicants should propose a list of activities chosen from above list that could credibly achieve the goals outlined in section 1 and best implement the two objectives.

Methodology

The consortium shall take into account below aspects in writing the proposal and establishing its methodological approach.

Consortium and Financing

- **Please note that the project is based on co-funding of all activities including the financial support of artists.** We invite you to carefully read sections 6 and 10 on financial arrangements (including reimbursement rates and details on financial support to third parties -FSTP- for artists, upper limits on personnel costs and subcontracting etc.).
- *Please read carefully section 6 on eligibility of consortia in particular regarding minimal number of **four** participating countries.*

STARTS residencies and artistic experiments:

- *Existing [STARTS residences programs](#) should be taken as inspiration and contacted to achieve synergies regarding implementing STARTS residencies.*
- *The artistic residencies and/or installations shall be implemented by hosting*

artists in pertinent institutions/companies.

- *Plan clear procedures for open calls for STARTS residencies (financial support to third parties-FSTP; see section 6 and section 10 for more detail).*
 - *The open calls must be labelled 'STARTS residencies'.*
 - *Calls to artists must be open to nationals from European Member States and can be made open world-wide.*
 - *The hosts of the artists must be located in Europe and most likely will be chosen locally in the regions of the partners.*
 - *Given the rather short project duration, calls shall be launched as soon as possible in the project.*
 - *The calls should be based on identified challenges that the consortium should elaborate in a first phase.*
 - *A panel of experts has to be convened (of which a minimum 3 experts must be independent from the partnering institutions (project partners and hosts of residencies))*
- *Hosting institutions of STARTS residencies have to provide logistic support to the hosted artist. There must be a clear commitment to accommodate and collaborate with the artist. The hosting institutions must provide access to their premises and equipment for the artist free of charge. Material specific to artistic needs shall be covered by the FSTP grant.*
- *Art works resulting from the residencies must be made available without a fee to EC for at least one year after end of residencies for the purpose of exhibitions (this should be foreseen in the contracts with the artists).*

Dissemination/Communication:

- *Exhibitions of artistic outcomes of STARTS residencies and potentially other works in STARTS spirit shall form an integral part of the dissemination strategy*
- *Leverage the existing [starts.eu website](https://starts.eu) that is open for new consortia. The project should contribute to its promotion and development with a view to dissemination of STARTS ideas to local stakeholders.*
- *Resources should be foreseen to provide content to the starts.eu website. No project specific website is necessary or desirable.*
- *Use of the STARTS label as a means to achieve synergies of similar minded activities across Europe.*

Links to other STARTS actors:

- *The projects should plan cost savings by jointly organising calls for STARTS residencies with other projects funded under this call.*
- *Interaction with other projects funded under this call as well as other STARTS projects should be foreseen, e.g. for activities like dissemination events (exhibitions, networking events etc).*
- *Links to existing initiatives like [Digital Innovation Hubs](#) -DIH- or [European Institute of Technology \(EIT\) hubs](#) will be an asset. Indeed, a number of DIH*

explore already the role of the arts to help them facilitating uptake of digital technology in local businesses.

3. Available budget

The available call budget is **EUR 3.750.000 (three million seven hundred fifty thousand Euros)**. The EU co-financing is limited to a *maximum co-funding rate of the total eligible costs, for details see section 10*.

Project budgets

We expect to fund **three** projects with a maximum grant amount of EUR 1.250.000 (one million two hundred fifty thousand Euros) per project.

We reserve the right not to award all available funds depending on the proposals received and the results of the evaluation. The grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested.

4. Timetable and deadlines

Indicative timetable and deadline for submission	
Call opening:	June 2022
Deadline for submission:	28/09/2022
Evaluation:	September 2022
Information on evaluation results:	November 2022
GA signature:	November/December 2022
Start date of the project	Q1 2023

Duration of projects

Projects should normally range between 16 and 20 months (extensions are possible, if duly justified and through an amendment).

5. Admissibility and documents

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

The mandatory Grant Application Form and other mandatory template documents to be completed are available at <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news-redirect/746455>.

Regarding the submission modality, we refer to section 11.

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) as well as information about the operational capacity of the applicants
- **Application Form Part B** — contains the technical description of the project

- **Mandatory annexes and supporting documents** (*to be submitted together with the application*):
 - Grant Application Form (Part A and Part B) and its annexes:
 - Detailed estimated budget table
 - Legal entity form² (for all applicants)
 - Bank account form³ (only for the coordinator)
 - BS and P&L Financial Capacity Check table and supporting documents (please refer to section 7)
 - Short CVs⁴ of core project team

- **Additional annexes and supporting documents** (*for information of the applicants and/or to be submitted at a later stage in the procedure*):
 - Model Declaration of honour
 - Model grant agreement and its annex 5

All annexes are available at <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news-redirect/746455>.

You are obliged to use all provided templates to prepare your proposal.

Please note that in the Annex 'Detailed Estimated Budget Table' the amounts entered into the consolidated budget table must correspond to the amounts calculated in the detailed budget table per applicant/affiliated entity. In case of discrepancies, the amounts in the consolidated 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)⁵. Before signing the grant, each beneficiary and affiliated entity will have to confirm this again by signing a declaration of honour (**DoH**)⁶. Proposals without full support will be rejected.

Proposals are limited to maximum **35 pages** (for Part B). Evaluators will not consider any additional pages. Shorter proposals are welcome.

² Template in all EU languages for Legal Entity Form available at: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm

³ Template in all EU languages for the BAF available at: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/financial-id_en.cfm

⁴ CVs can be submitted in any format: include the information on each person to name and 1-2 paragraphs describing most relevant work experience. If you are still recruiting, please provide the job profile.

⁵ See declaration in Grant Application Form - part A.

⁶ See Article 196.1 (b) and 137(1) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#)

You may be asked at a later stage for further/more recent documents (*for legal entity validation, financial capacity check, bank account validation, etc*).

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))

Proposals may be submitted by any of the following applicants or combinations of:

- non-profit organisation (private or public)
- public authorities (national, regional, local);
- non-governmental organisations;
- universities and educational institutions;
- foundations;
- technology institutions;
- research/art centres.
- Profit-making entities

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.

International organisations — International organisations are not eligible.

Entities without legal personality — Entities which do not have legal personality under their national law may exceptionally participate, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf, and offer guarantees for the protection of the EU financial interests equivalent to that offered by legal persons⁷.

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

Affiliated entities⁸

⁷ See Article 197(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

⁸ In accordance with Article 187 FR, entities that satisfy the eligibility criteria and that do not fall within one of the situations referred to in Articles 136(1) and 141(1) FR and that have a link with the applicant, in particular a legal or capital link, which is neither limited to the action

Legal entities having a legal or capital link with applicants, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation, may take part in the action as affiliated entities, and may declare eligible costs as specified in section 10.

For that purpose, applicants shall identify such affiliated entities in the Application Form –Part A.

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)⁹ and entities covered by Commission Guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#)¹⁰*). Such entities are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions (for free), subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any).

Consortium composition

Proposals must be submitted **by a consortium** consisting of at least four applicants (beneficiaries; affiliated entities do not count for the minimum number of applicants) which complies with the following conditions:

Minimum **four independent entities from four different eligible countries**.

Eligible activities

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

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

Specific provisions:

Financial support to third parties is foreseen in form of grants and under the following conditions (see section 10 for financial aspects). Your project application must clearly specify **how** the financial support to third parties will be managed and the type of results expected:

- the maximum amount to be granted to each artist ('third party'): **40.000 EUR** (for total amount to be foreseen for STARTS residencies see section 10). Award criteria must ensure that this maximum amount is well justified by the work proposed.
- No co-funding from the ultimate beneficiaries (i.e. the third parties receiving financial support) shall be required.

nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation, will be considered as entities affiliated to the applicant.

⁹ 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](#).

¹⁰ 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).

- Open calls must be launched: the calls must be published widely and conform to EU standards concerning transparency, equal treatment, conflict of interest and confidentiality. In particular, they must be published on the [S+T+ARTS website](#) and be clearly named as STARTS residencies.
- For further requirements: see 'methodology' in section 2.
- the calls must remain open for at least 6 weeks
- only artists may receive financial support
- the outcome of the call must be published on the [S+T+ARTS website](#) , including a description of the selected projects, award dates, project durations, and final recipient legal names and countries
- the call for applications must include¹¹:
 - an exhaustive list of the types of activities for which an artist – the third party - may receive financial support emphasising the need for the recipients to work closely with technology companies or end-users in the spirit of STARTS residencies.
- Art works resulting from the STARTS residencies must be made available without fee for short term exhibitions to the EC for a minimum of 1 year after end of residency.
- the criteria for awarding financial support must be elaborated, at a minimum they must ensure readiness of artist to work with engineers, fitness of the competencies and interest of artist with the planned host institution, and willingness to achieve tangible outcomes.

Geographic location (target countries)

Proposals must relate to activities taking place in the eligible countries (*see above*). Artists can be from locations world-wide, but institutions hosting artists must be located in the eligible countries.

Ethics

Projects must comply with:

- highest ethical standards and
- applicable EU, international and national law.

Security

No specific rules. Please refer to the general provisions in the MGA (Art. 13).

¹¹ See Article 204 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#)

7. Financial and operational capacity and exclusion

Financial capacity¹²

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 submit together with your application *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, except for single applicant or coordinator.

In the event of an application grouping several applicants (consortium), **the below thresholds apply to each applicant.**

The financial capacity of the coordinator will always be assessed based on documents to be provided under point 7.b).

The individual applicants' financial capacity will be assessed based on the following supporting documents to be submitted with the application:

- a) Low value grants (\leq EUR 60 000):
 - a declaration on their honour¹³
- b) Grants $>$ EUR 60 000:
 - a declaration on their honour¹⁴

AND

- the profit and loss account as well as the balance sheet for the last 2 (two) financial years for which the accounts were closed;
- for newly created entities: the business plan might replace the above documents;
- the table with the financial figures provided for in Annex to the application form (BS and P&L Financial Capacity Check table) , filled in with the relevant statutory accounting figures.

- c) Grants for an action $>$ EUR 750 000:

¹² See Articles 196(1) (c)(d) and 198(2), (4) and (5) of EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#)

¹³ To be declared via the coordinator at proposal submission stage, and to be confirmed via the signed DoH at grant signature stage. Please refer to section 5.

¹⁴ See above footnote.

- (i) the information and supporting documents mentioned in point b) above, and
- (ii) **an audit report** produced by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the last 2 (two) financial years available, where such an audit report is available or whenever a statutory report is required by law.

If the audit report is not available AND a statutory report is not required by law, a self-declaration signed by the applicant's authorised representative certifying the validity of its accounts for the last 2 (two) financial years available must be provided.

On the basis of an analysis of the documents submitted, if we consider that the financial capacity of an applicant is **weak or insufficient** we may:

- request further information;
- impose 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*);
- decide to give pre-financing paid in instalments;
- request (one or more) pre-financing guarantees (*see below, section 10*);
- propose no pre-financing or reduce the pre-financing;
- decide to reject the participation of the applicant in the proposal and request reallocation of the tasks to another applicant of the consortium or his replacement without compromising the quality of the proposal.

If the financial capacity of the consortium as a whole or of the coordinator is considered **insufficient**, the Authorised Representative Officer of the Commission may reject the application.

Operational capacity¹⁵

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, which is to be submitted together with the application:

- general profiles (qualifications and experiences) of the staff responsible for managing and implementing the project
- description of the consortium participants

¹⁵ See Article 198(3) and (6) of EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#)

- list of previous projects pertinent in context of STARTS

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

In the event of an application grouping several applicants (consortium), the above requirements shall apply to the combined capacity of all members of the consortium. Combined capacity means that individually, each member of the consortium should comply with the criteria corresponding to its task in the project.

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 participate¹⁶:

- 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 misconduct¹⁷ (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 EU Regulation [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 that¹⁸:

¹⁶ See Articles 136 and 141 of EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

¹⁷ Professional misconduct includes: violation of ethical standards of the profession, wrongful conduct with impact on professional credibility, false declarations/misrepresentation of information, participation in a cartel or other agreement distorting competition, violation of IPR, attempting to influence decision-making processes or obtain confidential information from public authorities to gain advantage.

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

8. Evaluation and award procedure

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

An **evaluation committee** will assess all applications. Proposals will first be checked for formal requirements (admissibility, and eligibility, *see sections 5 and 6*). Proposals found admissible and eligible will be evaluated 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 a **priority order** will be determined according to the following approach:

- 1) The ex aequo proposals 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'.
- 2) 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.

The verification of the financial capacity will be done only for the highest ranked proposals.

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, 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).

¹⁸ See Article 141 of EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

9. Award criteria

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

– **1. Relevance (30 points):**

- Are the described ongoing and the proposed new activities credible in terms of furthering the idea of art and technology collaboration as a driver of urban/regional development?
- Are the plans for STARTS residencies credible and ambitious? (e.g. well thought out plan for artistic experiments, clear ideas for type and scope of artistic residencies, level of integration of artists in activities of the hosts, well thought plan to define the content (the 'challenges'))?
- Is the willingness and rational to setup regional STARTS centers clear? What is current status and what is future plans? What activities are planned?

– **2. Quality (30 points):**

Implementation:

- Is the work plan realistic and in line with the ambition of project?
- Is there a clear operational plan how to implement the open calls, mentoring, and follow-up of STARTS residencies?

Consortium:

- Is the consortium knowledgeable in the links of art and technology?
- Are the institutions individually and as a whole credible as promoting creation of STARTS centers and as producers of STARTS residencies?
- Are links to potential funders credible?

– **3. Impact (30 points):**

Impact:

- Will the proposed activities – e.g. the artistic experiments – open concrete long-term perspectives for the regions and companies involved?
- Will the activities lead to the lasting emergence of local art-technology - centres, e.g. in terms of ensuring sustainable funding?
- Will the proposed activities help in establishing a lasting community at the nexus of art-digital-regional development? Do consortium partners show commitment to promote links of technology with artists beyond the project lifetime?

Dissemination:

- Is dissemination of outcomes credible and ambitious (e.g. in terms of follow up on results of artistic experiments)?
- Are the planned exhibitions ambitious and highly visible in both art world and technology?

– **4. Budget-cost effectiveness (10 points):**

Is there a realistic and well described allocation of financial and human resources per partner, per objective, and per work package?

Do personnel costs of consortium respond to the needs of the call? Is the ceiling on maximum amount of personnel costs respected?

Are there sufficient resources for dissemination of results and follow-up on STARTS residencies?

Award criteria	Minimum pass score	Maximum score
Relevance	18	30
Quality	18	30
Impact	18	30
Budget-cost effectiveness	6	10
Overall (pass) scores	70	100

Maximum points: 100 points.

Individual thresholds per criterion: 60%.

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 (i.e. up to the budget threshold) and the number of projects to be funded, as announced in section 3. Other proposals will be rejected.

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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 <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news-redirect/746455>

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 date¹⁹ will be after grant signature. Retroactive application can be granted exceptionally for duly justified reasons.

Form of grant, funding (reimbursement rate, FSTP amount for STARTS residencies 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*).

Remark:

- The grant will be a budget-based–mixed actual cost grant (actual costs, with unit cost²⁰ 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*).

- Grant applications must ensure a balanced project budget and sufficient other resources to implement the project successfully.

The following conditions apply:

- The costs will be reimbursed at the funding rate fixed in the Grant Agreement:
 - The **reimbursement rate for financial support to third parties** (STARTS residencies) will be *at a maximum 60%*.
 - For **all other categories**, the reimbursement rate will be at a **maximum 75%**.
- Between 400.000 and 500.000 EUR should be foreseen for STARTS residencies (that is for financial support to third parties -FSTP). For example, 12 residences for 40.000 EUR each.

¹⁹ The project start date must normally be the first day of a month and later than the entry into force of the agreement. The Commission can decide on another date, if justified by the applicants. However, the starting date may not be earlier than the submission date of the grant application – except if provided for by the basic act or in cases of extreme urgency and conflict prevention (Article 193 EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046).

²⁰ This applies only to category A.4 of the Estimated budget, which is SME owners or natural person beneficiaries (i.e. beneficiaries that are natural persons not receiving a salary).

- **Personnel costs shall not exceed 35% of the total eligible costs of the action.**
- **Subcontracting shall not exceed 15% of the total eligible costs of the action.**

Remark:

-Grants may NOT produce a profit²¹ (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*).

-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 cost²² : Yes

²¹ This is a standard obligation for all EU grants. It may be unselected only under the following condition of Article 192(3) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#)):

- actions implemented only by non-profit organisations (i.e. all beneficiaries and affiliated entities are non-profit organisations)

- subcontracting costs:
 - additional subcontracting rules: Yes
 - o subcontracting may not cover core tasks of the action
 - o subcontracting shall not exceed 15% of total eligible costs of the action
- travel and subsistence unit cost²³: No (only actual costs)
- equipment costs: not allowed
- other cost categories:
 - costs for financial support to third parties: allowed for grants; maximum amount per third party **40.000 EUR**
 - fees for experts evaluating the proposals to the open calls (250 EUR/day maximum)
- indirect cost flat-rate: 7% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D).

 Applicants' attention is drawn to the fact that if they are receiving an operating grant financed by the EU or Euratom budget, they may not declare indirect costs for the period(s) covered by the operating grant, unless they can demonstrate that the operating grant does not cover any costs of the action. If you intend to also apply for action grants while receiving an operating grant, please make sure that you either have the accounting tools in place to combine them (or that the operating grants pays off — meaning that it covers enough of your general running costs and overheads to compensate the loss of the indirect costs in the action grants).

- VAT: non-deductible VAT is eligible (but please note that since 2013 VAT paid by beneficiaries that are public bodies acting as public authority is NOT eligible)
- other:
 - in-kind contributions for free are allowed, but cost-neutral, i.e. they cannot be declared as cost
 - project websites: communication costs for presenting the project on the participants' websites or social media accounts are eligible; costs for *separate* project websites are not eligible.

Reporting and payment arrangements

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

²² 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).

²³ 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).

After grant signature, you will normally receive a **pre-financing** to start working on the project (**40%** of the maximum grant amount; exceptionally less or no pre-financing). The pre-financing will be paid 30 days from entry into force/starting date/financial guarantee (if required) — whichever is the latest.

One interim payment can be foreseen²⁴ in which case pre-financing and interim payment may not exceed 80% of the maximum grant amount.

In case no interim payment will be foreseen in the Grant Agreement, you will be expected to submit one progress report not linked to payments at mid-term.

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/units declared. The Grant Agreement contains additional record-keeping rules (*Data Sheet, point 6 and art 20*).

Pre-financing guarantees

If a pre-financing 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 pre-financing for your grant.

The guarantee should be in euro and issued by an approved bank/financial institution established in an EU Member State.

Amounts blocked in bank accounts will NOT be accepted as financial guarantees.

Pre-financing 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 pre-financing (scanned copy via e-Mail 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 certificates²⁵. The types, schedules and

²⁴To foresee an interim payment or not will be decided during grant preparation.

²⁵ See Article 203.4 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#)

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

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

Ethics rules: *see Model Grant Agreement (art 14 and Annex 5)*

IPR rules: *see Model Grant Agreement (art 16 and Annex 5)*

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

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

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 **by the deadline set out under section 4**.

No modification to the application is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. However, if there is a need to clarify certain aspects or to correct clerical mistakes, the Commission may contact the applicant during the evaluation process²⁶.

Applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the selection process.²⁷

The mandatory Grant Application Form and other mandatory template documents to be completed are available at <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news-redirect/746455>.

Applications **must** be submitted in the correct form, duly completed and dated.

The following application documents:

- **GAF Part A and B and the 'Estimated Budget Table'** must be submitted in **one original paper copy** (no additional paper copies required) signed²⁸ by the person authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant organisation.

- **An electronic version of the Application Form Part A and B, Estimated Budget and all other annexes and documents must be provided on USB stick together with the original signed paper copy requested.** The electronic version (pdf) of the Grant Application Form Part A and B must not be a scan of the paper version but must be searchable.

Where applicable, additional information considered necessary by the applicant may be included as an annex on the USB stick (brochures, etc.), but assessment will be based on information included in the application form (therefore please limit the number and size of additional documents and attachments).

Please structure the information on the USB key by type of documents and applicants as follows:

- 1-GAF-Grant Application Form –Part A
- 2-GAF-Grant Application Form –Part B
- 3-Estimated Budget Table
- 4-LEF-Legal Entity Form + supporting documents (all applicants with one subfolder per applicant)
- 5-BAF-Bank Account Form + supporting documents (coordinator only)
- 6-*Financial capacity*_(when relevant) including B/S-P&L excel + 2 years annual accounts with **one subfolder per applicant**
- 7-*Other documents* (CV, annual activity reports ...) with **one subfolder per applicant** when relevant.

Folders and documents title should clearly refer to its content and name of related applicant.

²⁶ Articles 151 and 200(3) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#)

²⁷ Article 200 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#)

²⁸ Blue ink" handwritten signature or "Qualified Electronic Signature (QES) within the meaning of Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 (eIDAS Regulation).

Applications **must** be sent to the following address:

European Commission

Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content & Technology (DG CNECT)

Unit CNECT.I4 – Media Convergence and Social Media

For the attention of the Head of Unit (BRU-L51)

Reference: Call CNECT/2022/3482066

B-1049 BRUSSELS

Belgium

- **by post**²⁹ (evidence will be constituted by the postmark), or
- **by courier service** (evidence will be constituted by date of deposit slip), or
- **by hand-delivery**. It is compulsory for security reasons to address it to **the central mail department of the Commission** as follows:

European Commission

Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content & Technology

Unit CNECT.I4 – Media Convergence and Social Media

Reference: Call CNECT/2022/3482066

Avenue du Bourget, 1

B-1140 BRUSSELS (Evere),

Belgium

In this case, proof of submission of the proposal will take the form of a receipt signed and dated by the official of the Commission's central mail department who takes delivery of the documents. The department is open from 08.00 to 17.00 on Mondays to Thursdays and from 08.00 to 16.00 on Fridays. It is closed on Saturdays, Sundays and Commission holidays.

In addition to the above:

applicants **must** send an **E-mail** before the deadline set out under section 3 to the following E-mail address CNECT-I4@ec.europa.eu **to inform us about your submission on paper.**

Applications sent only by E-mail will not be accepted.

The proposal must keep to the **page limits** (see section 5).

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):

- FAQs on the Call page (for call-specific questions in open calls).

²⁹ Applicants are advised to keep the payment receipt with date and time from the post office in order to be able to prove that the proposal has been sent within the deadline.

Please also consult the Call page regularly, since we might use it to publish addendums to the call documents, if needed (e.g. extension of call deadline, or other).

Contact

Questions and requests for clarifications should be sent to the following email address: CNECT-I4@ec.europa.eu.

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

The Commission is not bound to reply to requests for additional information received less than six working days before the deadline for submitting applications set in section 3.

The answers will also be published in the FAQs section on: <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news-redirect/746455>.

- **Mandatory annexes and supporting documents** (*to be submitted together with the application on specific support*):
 - **Paper and USB stick**
 - Grant Application Form Part A and Part B (in pdf on the USB)
 - Detailed 'Estimated Budget Table' (which becomes Annex 2 to Grant agreement) (signed scan in pdf and original excel file on the USB)
 - **USB Stick only**
 - Legal entity form (for all applicants) (in pdf scans)
 - Bank account form (only for the coordinator) (in pdf scan)
 - BS and P&L Financial Capacity Check table and supporting documents (please refer to section 7) (Financial capacity check table: original excel file. Supporting documents: pdf)
 - Short CVs of core project team (please refer to section 7) (in pdf)
- **Other documents** (*for information of the applicants and/or to be submitted at a later stage in the procedure*):
 - Model Declaration of honour
 - Model grant agreement and its annex 5

(e-signed)
Ingrid Mariën-Dusak
Authorising Officer by sub-delegation
Directorate I

13. Important

IMPORTANT

- **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).

- **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 (just like beneficiaries); but they do not count towards the minimum eligibility criteria for consortium composition (if any). Entities that satisfy the eligibility criteria and that do not fall within one of the situations referred to in Articles 136(1) and 141(1) FR and that have a link with the applicant, in particular a legal or capital link, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation, will be considered as entities affiliated to the applicant (See Article 187.1 (b) EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046).
- **Sole beneficiaries** - Associations and interest groupings (EEIG): Entities composed of members may participate as 'sole beneficiaries¹' (see Article 187.1 (a) EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046). Please note that if the action will be implemented by the members, they should also participate (either as beneficiaries or as affiliated entities (if foreseen in the call), otherwise their costs will NOT be eligible). A "sole" beneficiary is a legal entity, whether established specifically or not for the action, and which is:
 - formed of several legal entities complying with the eligibility, non-exclusion and selection criteria set out in this call for proposals, and implementing together the proposed action;
 - and whose participating members are identified in the grant application (Part A and B)
- **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 may implement action tasks but in contrast to affiliated entities they do not need to have a capital or legal link to a beneficiary and cost incurred by Associated Partners can NOT be declared as eligible cost. In contrast to third parties giving in-kind contributions, the associated partners are fully named in the grant agreement and may implement important tasks by themselves. Entities that do not request funding or are not eligible for funding may participate in an action as Associated Partners, for example out of interest in contributing to the objectives of the action, gaining visibility, or participating due to ongoing (scientific) cooperation with a beneficiary. As with any other participant that does not sign the grant agreement, the beneficiaries need to ensure (e.g. through the consortium agreement) that Associated Partners implement their assigned action tasks in accordance with the grant agreement. The tasks must be set out in Annex 1.

- **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** — By default, 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. An exception to this rule is foreseen in **Article 192(3) EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046**).
- **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 only where the applicant can demonstrate in the grant application the need to start the action before the grant agreement is signed (in this case, no costs can be reimbursed for activities that took place before the 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](#)). In order to demonstrate that the operating grant does not cover any costs of the action, the beneficiary should:
 - a. use *analytical cost accounting that allows to separate all costs (including overheads)* attributable to the operating grant and the action grant. For that purpose the beneficiary should use *reliable accounting codes and allocation keys* ensuring that *the allocation* of the costs is done in a *fair, objective and realistic way*.
 - b. *record separately*:
 - all costs incurred for the operating grants (i.e. personnel, general running costs and other operating costs linked to the part of its usual annual activities), and
 - all costs incurred for the action grants (including the actual indirect costs linked to the action)

If the operating grant covers the entire usual annual activity and budget of the beneficiary, the latter is not entitled to receive any indirect costs under the action grant.

- **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. In this case, please clearly indicate that the re-submitted proposal is the one to be evaluated.
- **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. 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](#).