

# C4T

Community  
of Practice



**FREQUENTLY ASKED  
QUESTIONS FOR APPLYING  
TO C4T GROUNDWORK**



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## ***Disclaimers***

The information provided in the application form will be considered as sensitive and confidential. Personal data will be processed in line with the applicable law on data protection in the European Union.

The Cohesion for Transitions (C4T) GROUNDWORK team reserves the right to adjust the timing of the delivery of support to selected beneficiaries to facilitate the workflow and the allocation of resources.

The C4T GROUNDWORK team reserves the right to follow-up with applicants to request specific clarifications on the application content.

## ***Guidance for C4T GROUNDWORK applicants***

The C4T team will host an application information session for the active calls, which you can read more about [here](#), to help applicants understand the application process. The session will provide guidance on how to submit a high-quality application for calls and will facilitate the interaction between interested beneficiaries with Technical Assistance (TA) experts.

## **I. Eligibility of applicants**

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- Is the offered C4T GROUNDWORK Technical Assistance only applicable to ERDF/CF regions with an allocation for Policy Objective 2 (PO2)?<sup>1</sup>
  - Yes; C4T GROUNDWORK assistance is offered to territories that are eligible for ERDF/CF funding and described in an active operational programme. Activities proposed by applicants must align with approved operational programmes and priorities as well as the scope of C4T GROUNDWORK.
  - Although applicants from all eligible ERDF/CF territories are welcome to apply, the C4T GROUNDWORK is focused on supporting those regions that face particularly difficult challenges in implementing their PO2 investments and those that are most in need of receiving support.
- Do applicant institutions need to be located within those defined ERDF/CF regions?
  - Applications are welcome from actors (e.g. Managing authorities, intermediate bodies, regional and local authorities) with a relevant role in the implementation of the ERDF/CF PO2 actively contributing to the sustainable transition at national, regional, local, or community levels.
  - Given that the purpose of the C4T GROUNDWORK is to increase the capacities of relevant regional stakeholders and local ownership, applicants should generally be located within ERDF/CF regions.
  - Relevant national ministries or similar can apply to lead Technical Assistance for a national ERDF/CF programme or a regional programme covering one or several regions.
- Are there restrictions on types of institutions or sectors that may apply (or be named as participants within their application form)?
  - The C4T GROUNDWORK is open to applicants from public authorities (see above) having a role within ERDF/CF implementation.
  - Other stakeholders relevant to the implementation of approved ERDF/CF allocations for PO2 are also welcome to apply if their role in implementation can be proved.

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<sup>1</sup> Under the Policy Objective 2 “A greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe” Cohesion policy supports investments in sustainable energy, environment, resource efficiency and climate.

- European Territorial Cooperation/Interreg programmes are not eligible under C4T GROUNDWORK.
  - C4T GROUNDWORK support is restricted to the themes listed in the application form under Thematic Areas.<sup>2</sup>
  - Private actors are not eligible for receiving C4T GROUNDWORK support.
- What criteria are being used to evaluate applicants?
    - C4T GROUNDWORK aims to support the regions that need the assistance most in the successful implementation of their PO2 investments.
    - The applications will be assessed based on their contribution to a better and faster implementation of the ERDF/CF PO2 in the relevant territory.
    - Applications should demonstrate a clear need for support or capacity and show how it will lead to concrete results within a realistic timeframe.
    - In addition, it is recommended that applicants describe the expected effects and impact of the support on the implementation of the investments under ERDF/CF PO2.
  - Can former beneficiaries of C4T GROUNDWORK apply to new calls?
    - Yes, former beneficiaries of C4T GROUNDWORK can apply again.
    - If the same region or institution reapplies, it is necessary that a different challenge/area/stage of implementation is proposed for support within the Technical Assistance is chosen.
    - Furthermore, the beneficiaries that have previously received support should also explain how a new round of support will complement or build on support already provided.

## II. Delivery of Technical Assistance – practical information

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- What does C4T GROUNDWORK Technical Assistance (TA) look like?
  - **Technical Assistance Experts:** A dedicated team of experts will be assigned to each TA. The team composition will vary depending on topic, region and language, as well as the scope of the TA to ensure the best tailoring to the beneficiaries' needs. The TA will be coordinated by a Lead expert supported by additional experts where relevant. Please note that only to the extent that the expertise is available will it be possible to have the TA provided in the national language.
  - **Final Technical Assistance scope:** The TA will be scoped jointly by the beneficiary and the TA lead in the weeks following the selection and the kick-off meeting. The scope of the TA will be included in a scoping document, to be signed off by the beneficiary.
  - **Duration of the Technical Assistance:** The length of the TA will depend on the type of activities included and the topic of the Technical Assistance. The expected length of the engagement can range between 6 and 10 months.<sup>3</sup>
  - **Start of TA:** The TA assignments are expected to commence approximately four months after the deadline for submission of applications.
  - **Resources needed from the beneficiary:** Each beneficiary needs to identify a primary contact person/coordinator (see applicant form A6) for the duration of the TA. The coordinator needs to devote his/her capacity to regular (weekly or bi-weekly) project meetings for the duration of the TA,

<sup>2</sup> The scope of this call includes all specific objectives (SOs) under PO2 (SO 2.1-2.7) with the exception of SO 2.8 on the promotion of sustainable multimodal urban mobility.

<sup>3</sup> A total of 35-45 expert days will be allocated to each TA assignment.

contact and engagement with relevant stakeholders and participate in events associated with the results.

- **Technical Assistance activities included:** The types and delivery modalities will vary depending on the topic to be addressed with the expert support. Each TA can include e.g. capacity-building workshop/training, analysis, benchmarking, support for calls for projects, and a series of online meetings (please refer to the C4T GROUNDWORK inspiration catalogue for examples of assistance already provided).<sup>4</sup>
- **Technical regional fora:** Upon completion of the TA, the beneficiary might be invited to host a C4T GROUNDWORK event in their region, which would serve to disseminate the outcomes of the Technical Assistance and would offer a forum for experts from relevant ERDF/CF regions to exchange on the topic of the technical assistance.
- **Participation in forums:** Please note that active beneficiaries are invited and encouraged to participate in the regional forums organised by the C4T Secretariat. Travel and accommodation costs for these are covered.

### III. Content within the application form

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- Is applying jointly on behalf of several regions within a single application form allowed?
  - Yes, it is allowed although all included regions must still be from eligible ERDF/CF territories (please refer to the earlier question related to this).
  - Nonetheless, aiming for the best possible outcomes from offered TA, it should be ensured that applications involving more than one region have a clear common scope of assistance and consideration of suitable roles and benefits for each proposed region.
  - It is recommended that any application covering multiple regions properly justify why such a joint TA is suitable and beneficial to all regions.
- Do the applicants themselves get to define their own topics and activities?
  - Yes, the C4T GROUNDWORK is first and foremost a needs-based facility seeking to provide a service for the ERDF/CF regions most in need. The services will be defined within the scope of available resources in dialogue with the European Commission and beneficiaries.
  - Within the application form, applicants are asked to outline their own ERDF/CF-aligned goals and priorities, which our team can then use to try to assess its suitability for joining the programme.
  - Once the submitted applications have been selected, there will be opportunities to further refine the topics/formats in cooperation between recipients and the C4T GROUNDWORK team.
- What advice do you have for answering questions in the form?
  - Answers should be clear, demonstrate a strong logic and provide any relevant details needed to understand your context.
  - If there are any questions that you think do not really apply to your own situation, “not applicable” or similar can still, in principle, be considered a valid response.

### IV. Procedures for submitting an application

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- How do I submit an eligible application form to C4T GROUNDWORK?

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<sup>4</sup> The TA budget only covers the expert support for the activities listed. Additional costs such as venues, catering, transport, accommodation has to be covered by the beneficiary.

- The only valid way to apply for the C4T GROUNDWORK programme is via this [EU-Survey link](#). The application form can be completed in English or in any of the languages of the Member States. For any technical difficulties, please contact us directly and in a timely manner: [secretariat@cohesion4transitions.eu](mailto:secretariat@cohesion4transitions.eu).
- When is the deadline for submitting an eligible application form?
  - For information on deadlines for the current calls, please consult the InfoRegio C4T webpage which you can access [here](#).
  - An information session will be held, for which you will need to register via [this link](#) to take part, in which representatives of the Commission and the C4T Secretariat will answer questions and provide guidance regarding C4T GROUNDWORK and this call.
  - It is highly recommended that submission of the application take place well ahead of the deadline to ensure that no technical problems arise in the process.
  - It is also recommended that you download your own copy of it as a PDF for personal reference after submission of the final application form. This option should become available after your formal submission. However, there is no need for you to send us this file as submitting it online automatically transfers it to our servers as complete.
- Is saving my work in progress possible within EU-Survey?
  - Yes, there should be a button on the right side of the screen that should save your submitted answers up to that point. Instructions should then follow about how to re-access your provided content.
  - Saving your form via EU-Survey's feature is not the same as submitting it, and your application will not automatically be transferred to our servers, nor will it be considered an eligible application until it has been properly submitted. It is still highly recommended that you save your text answers in your own separate file as a precaution.
- Are letters of support required as part of this application process?
  - None are required, but you may demonstrate support by including additional stakeholders. Together such information can help our team assess the level of commitment shown within a given application.
- Can a particular applicant submit more than one application?
  - No, C4T GROUNDWORK can only accept a single submitted application from each applicant. In the event that we have multiple submissions in our system, we will only evaluate the final one, unless we are otherwise instructed by the applicant.
  - Our experience is that a single, well thought-out, and to-the-point application has a much greater chance of being selected. We also strongly encourage interested stakeholders within any given region to first coordinate internally and then apply together jointly.
  - C4T GROUNDWORK reserves the right to join multiple applications from actors within the same region.

## V. Next steps after submission

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- What are the next steps after submitting the application?

- Once the final deadline has passed, all submissions will be pre-assessed for eligibility and quality by the C4T GROUNDWORK team. If necessary, applicants might be contacted to clarify items.
- Final evaluations will be conducted by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy.
- All applicants, selected or otherwise, will be informed about the outcome after end of the selection process.
- For the selected recipients, the initial phases of our TA services will be launched approximately two months after the deadline for submission of applications.