JTP Groundwork

Frequently Asked Questions

JTP Groundwork
Frequently Asked Questions

Table of Contents

Disclaimers

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

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

Overview of active calls for applications under the Just Transition Platform

After entering the implementation phase of the Just Transition Fund (JTF), the JTP rolled out a number of support streams in 2023, including the JTP Knowledge Hub, providing knowledge products and case studies on just transition, the JTPeers Exchange programme, the JTPeers Experts database, and JTP Groundwork. The following support services are currently open for applications from the Just Transition Fund regions:

1. **JTP Groundwork – call for application open until 1 March 23:00 CET**. This document covers the frequently asked questions about JTP Groundwork.
2. **JTPeers Exchange – call for application open until 1 March 23:00 CET**.
3. **Working Groups – call for application open until 1 March 23:00 CET**.

Support for JTP Groundwork applicants

As novelty in 2024, the JTP Groundwork team offers a dedicated service, called JTP Groundwork Lab, to support applicants during the application process. This support is free and entails two dedicated training sessions, providing guidance on identifying the needs for the Technical Assistance and submitting a high-quality application, as well as two blocks of JTP Groundwork office hours, to enable the interaction of interested

regions with Technical Assistance experts. *Links to the sessions are available on the website of the call.*

Dates for the training sessions:

1. 8 February 2024, 14:30-16:00: Identifying your concrete needs for JTP Groundwork – short introduction to JTP Groundwork and the type of support provided; expert input on how to identify a concrete need where Technical Assistance can add value. The training session includes up to 1 hour of Q&A with breakout-rooms and will provide an opportunity to ask questions about the additional active calls for JTPeers Exchange and Working Groups.

2. 27 February 2024, 14:30-16:00: Submitting a thorough application – expert input on finalising applications, address aspects such as ensuring political buy-in, involving stakeholders, specifying added value. The training session includes up to 1 hour of Q&A with breakout-rooms and will provide an opportunity to ask questions about the additional active calls for JTPeers Exchange and Working Groups.

Dates for the office hours:

1. **15 February 2024, 14:00-16:00**

2. **22 February 2024, 14:00-16:00**

Opportunity for interested applicants to ask specific questions on the application and JTP Groundwork. The call will include breakout-room sessions with dedicated Technical Assistance experts and provide an opportunity to ask questions about the additional active calls for JTPeers Exchange and Working Groups.

Eligibility of applicants
1. *Is the offered JTP Groundwork Technical Assistance **only applicable to JTF regions**?*
    - Yes. Our programme can only be offered to those specific JTF territories that are identified in Territorial Just Transition Plans (TJTPs) approved by the European Commission (through the adoption of the related JTF programmes) at the time of submitting an application to JTP Groundwork. Activities proposed by applicants must align with approved TJTPs and the scope of JTP Groundwork.
    - This prerequisite also inherently restricts eligibility only to EU Member States, and specifically to certain pre-defined regions within them.
    - Although applicants from all eligible JTF territories are welcome to apply, JTP Groundwork is focused on supporting those regions that face particularly difficult challenges in implementing their TJTP and are most in need of receiving Technical Assistance support.
2. *Do applicant institutions need to be **located within those defined JTF regions**?*
    - Applications are welcome from all actors with a relevant role in the implementation of the TJTPs actively contributing to the just transition process at national, regional, local, or community levels.
    - Given the purpose of JTP Groundwork is to increase capacities of relevant regional stakeholders and local ownership, applicants should generally be located within JTF regions. However, in certain circumstances, other considerations might be made, for example if a relevant national ministry

or similar wishes to apply (from its capital) to lead Technical Assistance for an eligible region outside the capital or a university located in region outside the JTF territory would like to be run Technical Assistance for a JTF region.

- Similarly, applicants are encouraged to name within their application form additional core participants that are located within the targeted region(s).

3. Are there certain **restrictions on types of institutions or sectors** *that may apply (or be named as participants within their application form)?*
   - JTP Groundwork is open to all types of applicants from public authorities to civil society to private sector to academia. Any stakeholders relevant to the implementation of approved TJTP commitments and priorities are welcome to apply.
   - Nonetheless, such relevant decision-making public authorities and relevant socio-economic partners in the regions are particularly encouraged to be the main applicants – the former typically have an inherent role within JTF implementation and are seen as crucial for ensuring the longevity of measures and governance, while the latter are seen as key, competent actors valuable to include within strong partnerships.
   - At the least, any other types of applicants are strongly recommended to include at least some representatives from these groups amongst their proposed partners, and/or to explain that they enjoy support from relevant decision-making institutions to apply the results of the assistance to the JTF process.

4. Which kinds of **criteria** *are being used to evaluate applicants?*
   - JTP Groundwork programme will support up to 20 recipients in 2024 and target the regions that need the assistance most.
   - The Commission will assess the applications based on how they will contribute to a better implementation of the TJTP in the relevant territory, having regard to the various types of regions that benefit from the JTF. Applications should therefore 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 demonstrate their strong commitment to the ambitions set in the TJTP(s), their ability to deliver the results and their plans for applying a partnership approach.

5. Can **former beneficiaries of JTP Groundwork** *apply to later editions of the programme?*
   - Former participation or application to JTP Groundwork is not disqualifying neither the region nor the benefitting institution from potential selection for subsequent editions of JTP Groundwork.
   - In case of the same region or institution applying we highly recommend choosing a different challenge that should be supported within the Technical Assistance.

Delivery of Technical Assistance – practical information

1. *How does a* ***JTP Groundwork Technical Assistance*** *look like?*
   a. **Technical Assistance Experts:** A dedicated team of experts will be assigned to each Technical Assistance. The Technical Assistance expert team will vary depending on topic and region, as well as the scope of the Technical Assistance to ensure the highest-quality of provided service and best tailoring to the beneficiaries' needs. The Technical Assistance will be

coordinated by one Technical Assistance Lead, who is going to be supported by additional experts if relevant.

b. **Final Technical Assistance scope:** The beneficiary will scope the Technical Assistance jointly with the Technical Assistance lead in the 3 weeks following the reception of the acceptance letter. The scope of the Technical Assistance will be captured in a scoping document, which needs to be signed off by the beneficiary and the JTP Groundwork team.

c. **Duration of the Technical Assistance:** The length of the provided support will depend on the type of activities included and the topic of the Technical Assistance. The expected length of the engagement can range between 4 and 12 months.

d. **Capacity needed from the beneficiary:** Each beneficiary needs to identify a coordinator for the duration of the Technical Assistance. The coordinator needs to devote her/his capacity to regular (weekly or bi-weekly) project meetings during the duration of the Technical Assistance, contact and engagement with relevant stakeholders and participate in the co-creation of events associated with the results of the Technical Assistance. The primary contact person is expected to regularly engage with Technical Assistance implementors, and the REGIO Geographical Unit as needed to implement the Technical Assistance.

e. **Technical Assistance activities included:** The Technical Assistance format will vary depending on the topic to be addressed with the expert support. Each Technical Assistance will include an in-person capacity-building workshop with up to 40 participants, and a series of online meetings. Additional formats and meetings will be identified during the scoping phase. Upon the completion of the Technical Assistance, the beneficiary might be proposed to host a JTP 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 JTF regions to exchange on the implementation specific Technical Assistance topic.

Content within the application form

2. *Does JTP Groundwork define **who should be involved** in the Technical Assistance?*

- No, it is up to the applicants to define, in alignment with their approved TJTP, who is most appropriate for the chosen topic(s) and type of Technical Assistance proposed.
- Preferably applicants represent a suitable variety of partners within a given region and include decision-making public authorities and socio-economic partners relevant to the implementation of approved TJTP commitments and priorities in the region.
- Furthermore, there is a preference for applicants to be gender-balanced in a truly meaningful manner, including both decision-makers and technical staff.
- The applicants are encouraged to involve vulnerable groups in the Technical Assistance (incl. youth, women, elderly people etc.)
- Finally, the list of proposed applicants within the submitted application may be revised at later stages of delivery of Technical Assistance.

3. *Is it allowed to **apply jointly on behalf of several regions** within a single application form?*

- Yes, it is allowed though all included regions must still be from eligible JTF territories (please refer to the earlier question related to this).
- Nonetheless, aiming for the best possible outcomes from offered Technical Assistance, it should be ensured that applications involving more than one region are particularly clear in their top priority topic, the scope of assistance and consideration of suitable roles and benefits for each proposed region. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that any application wishing to cover multiple regions:
  - limit themselves to only a few eligible regions with something distinctly in common in terms of context and/or challenge(s) to be addressed (e.g., a few within a single EU Member State or across borders between two neighbouring EU Member States),
  - makes it clear how each region is represented within the proposed list of participants,
  - justifies well through answers within the form why such a joint Technical Assistance is suitable and beneficial to all regions, and
  - ideally coordinates amongst themselves well before submission to ensure a common direction, mutually acceptable content and clarity about the chosen roles/involvement foreseen for all regions.

4. *Do the applicants themselves get to **define their own topics and activities**?*
  - Yes, JTP Groundwork is first and foremost a needs-based facility seeking to provide a service for the JTF regions most in need. The services will be defined within the scope of available resources for the facility in dialogue with the European Commission and beneficiaries.
  - Within the application form, applicants are asked to outline their own JTF-aligned goals and priorities, which our team can then use to try to assess its suitability for joining the programme.
  - Nonetheless, once submitted applications have been selected for launch, there will still be opportunities later to further refine or even revise these topics/formats in cooperation between recipients and the JTP Groundwork team. If selected, the initial phases of the Technical Assistance itself include a review about core topics and exact services to be provided.
  - However, applicants would do well to remember that the activities/project(s) they propose for Technical Assistance must remain always aligned with the region's TJTP.

5. *Which advice do you have for **answering questions** in the form?*
  - Answers should be clear, demonstrate a strong logic and provide us those details which are needed to understand your context.
  - If there are any questions that you think do not really apply to your own situation, in principle, "not applicable" or similar can still be considered a valid response.
  - Please be aware that the application form is only the beginning of the process. If your application is selected, then there will be many opportunities to discuss further your situation and even to revise some of its details – that is a crucial part of Technical Assistance services.

Procedures for submitting an application

6. *How do I **submit an eligible application** form to JTP Groundwork?*
  - The only valid way to apply for the JTP Groundwork programme is via this EU-Survey link.
  - The PDF version available here is available as reference document only.

- For any technical difficulties, please contact us directly and in a timely manner: jtpgroundwork@justtransitionplatform.eu.

7. When is the **deadline for submitting** an eligible application form?
   - All JTP Groundwork submissions must be made by Friday 1 March 2024 at 23:00 CET, after which they will not be considered as acceptable.
   - It is highly recommended to submit your application form well ahead of the deadline to ensure no technical problems arise in the process.
   - It is also recommended that after submitting your final application form, to download your own copy of it as a PDF for personal reference – 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.

8. Is it possible to **save my work in progress** 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.

Download PDF version

Save as Draft

   - Saving your form via EU-Survey's feature is not the same as submitting it, and your application will not be automatically transferred to our servers nor be considered an eligible application until it has been properly submitted. It is still highly recommended to save your own text answers within a separate file of your own as a precaution.

9. Are **letters of support** required as part of this application process?
   - None is required but you are asked within the application form to describe the level of political support and commitment behind your application, which might also be demonstrated by those stakeholders you propose to involve. Together such information can help our team assess the level of commitment shown within a given application.

10. Can a particular applicant **submit more than one application**?
    - No, JTP 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 instructed otherwise by the applicant.
    - In any case, our experience is that a single, well thought-out, and to-the-point application has much greater chances of being selected. We also strongly encourage that interested stakeholders within any given region first coordinate internally and then apply together jointly.
    - JTP Groundwork reserves the right to join multiple applications from actors within the same region.

Next steps after submissions
11. 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 JTP Groundwork team. In relevant cases, applicants might be contacted to clarify items.

- Final evaluations will be conducted by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy. The JTP Groundwork team will reach out to all applicants, selected or otherwise, when appropriate. For the selected recipients, the initial phases of our Technical Assistance services will launch directly after completion of the evaluation.