



Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions (PPPA)

Call for proposals

Preparatory action - Upskilling and reskilling the Tourism Ecosystem I
Tourism Knowledge hub and Tourism Data Space
(PPPA-2026-TOURISM-CAPACITY-BUILDING)

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EUROPEAN INNOVATION COUNCIL AND SMEs EXECUTIVE AGENCY (EISMEA)

EISMEA Department I - Innovation Ecosystems, SMP/Entrepreneurship and Consumers
Unit I.02 - SMP/SME Pillar, Internal Market and Support to Standardisation

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

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0. Introduction

This is a call for proposals for EU **action grants** for implementation of the preparatory action in the field of tourism.

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

- Regulation 2024/2509 ([EU Financial Regulation](#))¹

The call is launched in accordance with the Financing Decision² and will be managed by the **European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA)** ('Agency').

The call covers the following **topic**:

- **2026-TOURISM-CAPACITY-BUILDING-Preparatory action – Upskilling and reskilling the Tourism Ecosystem | Tourism Knowledge Hub and Tourism Data Space**

Applicants may NOT submit or participate in several proposals under this call. If they submit or participate in several proposals, only one application will be accepted and evaluated; the applicant will be asked to withdraw from the other applications (or the affected proposals will all be rejected).

We invite you to read the **call documentation** carefully, and in particular this Call Document, the Model Grant Agreement, the [EU Funding & Tenders Portal Online Manual](#) and the [EU Grants AGA – Annotated Grant Agreement](#).

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

- the [Call Document](#) outlines the:
 - background, objectives, scope, activities that can be funded and the expected results (sections 1 and 2)
 - timetable and available budget (sections 3 and 4)
 - admissibility and eligibility conditions (including mandatory documents; sections 5 and 6)
 - criteria for financial and operational capacity and exclusion (section 7)
 - evaluation and award procedure (section 8)
 - award criteria (section 9)
 - legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements (section 10)
 - how to submit an application (section 11)
- the [Online Manual](#) outlines the:

¹ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast) ('EU Financial Regulation') (OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024).

² Commission Decision C(2025) 811 final of 12.2.2025 on the financing of certain pilot projects and preparatory actions relating to the 'Single Market' and on the adoption of the work programme for 2025.

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

You are also encouraged to visit the [EISMEA](#) website and in particular the [webpage dedicated to this call](#).

1. Background

1.1 General policy context

Tourism is crucial to the European economy, driving growth, regional development and employment. However, the sector faces challenges that will shape its future, including the need for resilience, sustainability, digitalisation and innovation. Building resilience involves preparing for crises and diversifying tourism offerings. Emphasizing sustainability addresses environmental concerns and attracts eco-conscious travellers, while digitalisation enhances customer experiences and operational efficiency. Innovation in business models and tourism products can differentiate the market and meet changing consumer preferences. By fostering collaboration among governments, businesses and communities, the EU tourism ecosystem can adapt and thrive amidst these challenges.

The European Commission's initiative to build 'A Europe fit for the digital age'³, one of its six core priorities, is notably focused on digitally transforming Europe by 2030. The strategy builds on the earlier 2015 EU Digital Single Market strategy⁴ and is designed to leverage digital opportunities for individuals and businesses, aligning with the EU's climate-neutral goal by 2050. The roadmap for achieving this, as outlined in the 2021 vision for Europe's 'Digital Decade'⁵, revolves around four key areas: enhancing skills, securing sustainable digital infrastructure, transforming businesses digitally and digitising public services.

A crucial part of this digital transformation is the Transition Pathway for Tourism⁶, introduced in February 2022, which aims to further digitize the tourism sector and ensure it adheres to the sustainability goals established by the European Green Deal⁷. This involves initiatives such as minimising waste, optimising resource use and integrating renewable energy sources, ensuring that the tourism ecosystem aligns with sustainability goals. Recognising the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism sector, the European Union identified tourism as a priority for creating a transition roadmap to help in its recovery, resilience and growth.

The introduction of transition pathways as part of the updated EU Industrial Strategy⁸ in 2021 marked a focused effort by the European Union to drive sustainable growth and resilience across key economic sectors. This strategy identified 14 crucial sectors

³ [A Europe fit for the digital age - European Commission](#)

⁴ [Digital single market for Europe - Consilium](#)

⁵ [Europe's digital decade: 2030 targets | European Commission](#)

⁶ [Transition pathway for tourism published today - European Commission](#)

⁷ [The European Green Deal - European Commission](#)

⁸ [Strategy - European Commission](#)

for the EU economy, recognising their significance in supporting the bloc's overall industrial competitiveness and sustainability goals. Among these sectors, tourism was prioritized for developing a transition roadmap, following the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the sector's recovery, as evidenced by a record 1.3 billion overnight stays in EU tourist accommodations in the first half of 2025⁹, tourism remains precarious due to several factors, including the repercussions of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, inflation, episodes of unbalanced crowding of hotspots, and extreme weather phenomena. Thus, the Transition Pathway focuses on fostering both sustainability and digitalisation to bolster the industry's resilience.

The Transition Pathway for Tourism identifies 27 areas of action to implement and monitor by 2030. This call for proposals aims at supporting the following topics as detailed in the Transition Pathway document:

- Topic 5: Collaborative governance of tourism destinations
- Topic 9: Data-driven tourism services
- Topic 15: R&I for digital tools and services in tourism
- Topic 16: Support for digitalisation of tourism SMEs and destinations
- Topic 19: Awareness raising on skills needs for twin transition in tourism
- Topic 22: Pact for skills in tourism

The Data Governance Act¹⁰ is a legislative framework introduced by the EU to address these challenges by establishing EU-wide interoperable data spaces across various strategic sectors, including tourism. The Act seeks to facilitate secure and efficient data sharing, ensuring that both personal and non-personal data, along with sensitive business information, are managed responsibly. By doing so, it aims to enhance data accessibility and quality while supporting innovation and minimising the environmental impact associated with data management.

In line with this initiative, the European Commission has established the Data Spaces Support Centre (DSSC)¹¹. The DSSC is responsible for implementing the EU's common data spaces and coordinating the deployment of sector-specific data spaces. This coordination ensures that different sectors can effectively harness data to drive digital transformation.

In 2023, the European Commission outlined a Communication towards creating a Common European Tourism Data Space¹², identifying the essential elements and vision for enhanced data sharing and innovation in tourism. This initiative includes setting up a knowledge hub to aid destinations in developing data-driven management capabilities and strategies, reflecting the EU's overarching goal of creating a more connected, sustainable and robust digital tourism sector for the future.

In 2026, a comprehensive strategy for sustainable tourism is set to be published, highlighting the pivotal role of **Destination Management Organisations (DMOs)** in

⁹ [Tourism statistics - nights spent at tourist accommodation establishments - Statistics Explained - Eurostat](#)

¹⁰ [Regulation - 2022/868 - EN - EUR-Lex](#)

¹¹ [Data Spaces Support Centre](#)

¹² [Communication from the Commission -Towards a Common European Tourism Data Space - European Commission](#)

its implementation. This strategy will serve as a roadmap for enhancing sustainability practices within the tourism sector. **The selected proposal will be expected to align their efforts with the objectives and guidelines outlined in this new strategy, ensuring that their activities support its goals.** By integrating the resources and expertise of DMOs, the strategy aims to foster a cohesive and impactful approach to sustainable tourism development across the EU.

1.2 Specific policy context

The recent initiatives by the European Commission and various agencies mark a concerted effort to enhance data management and digital transformation in the tourism sector, fostering both innovation and sustainability.

D3Hub Project¹³: The European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency's PPPA-2022-TOTOLAB call led to the creation of the D3Hub project. This project focuses on:

1. Providing guidance and intelligence for tourism destinations about data management, sourcing and application for strategic and policy purposes.
2. Aiding destinations in developing data-driven management and data-sharing strategies, aligning with EU policy priorities and in cooperation with regional and national statistical offices and Eurostat.
3. Facilitating cross-border cooperation among organisations to exchange knowledge and best practices in data management and sharing, enhancing the overall tourism ecosystem.

Deploytour Project¹⁴: Implemented by the European Health and Digital Executive Agency through the DIGITAL-2023-CLOUD-DATA-AI-05 call¹⁵, Deploytour aims to develop and implement the infrastructure for a European tourism data space. This effort builds on preparatory actions and follows blueprints and roadmaps to ensure efficient data space deployment.

Skills Development: Recognising the importance of equipping the tourism workforce with necessary digital skills, the European Commission aligns these initiatives with the 2021 European Skills Agenda¹⁶. This agenda includes actions to address the digital skills gap, supported notably by the EU Pact for Skills¹⁷. The large-scale skill partnerships (LSP), particularly for tourism, facilitate skills development and training to upskill 10% of the workforce annually, a collaborative effort bolstered by Erasmus+-funded projects and various stakeholders.

T4T Stakeholders Support Platform¹⁸: To integrate these initiatives and ease stakeholder engagement, the European Commission developed the T4T Stakeholders Support Platform. This platform serves as a centralized resource for accessing relevant knowledge, resources, activities and connections, tailored to user-specific needs within the tourism ecosystem ('Together for EU Tourism' community). The platform helps stakeholders navigate and leverage opportunities for digital, green and resilient transformations by providing integrated access to information from various actors related to funding opportunities, learning resources, project outcomes and policy developments.

¹³ [D3HUB Competence Centre](#)

¹⁴ [EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#)

¹⁵ [call-fiche_digital-2023-cloud-data-ai-05_en.pdf](#)

¹⁶ [European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience](#)

¹⁷ [Tourism](#)

¹⁸ [EU Transition Pathways Platform](#)

European Tourism Portal: As part of these efforts, the European Tourism Portal has been established, offering a comprehensive access point to support tourism SMEs. The portal was created following a service contract implemented through the EISMEA/2022/OP/0018 GRO-SME-22-13034 call¹⁹, aiming to streamline access to essential resources and support for SMEs in the tourism industry.

These initiatives reflect the EU's holistic approach to modernising and fortifying the tourism sector through enhanced data management, skills development and collaborative frameworks, ensuring the industry's long-term sustainability and resilience.

FACILITATE²⁰: this project focuses on the development of guidelines to support the use of the D3Hub and the future European tourism data space for destinations and SMEs, and also supports the transition of tourism SMEs and destinations towards more digital, data-driven, and sustainable practices, and increases access to training and upskilling opportunities for DMOs (Destination Management Organisations) and tourism SMEs.

Pilot Action - Building Capacity for Tourism²¹: The aim of this action is to increase the tourism sector's awareness of funding opportunities and to improve tourism SMEs' knowledge and expertise, enabling them to successfully apply for available EU programmes. This will result in an overall improvement in the social, economic and environmental sustainability of EU tourism actors, an increase in skills, a reinforcement of resilience, and ultimately lead to greater competitiveness and prosperity.

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

- **PPPA-2026-TOURISM-CAPACITY _BUILDING — Preparatory Action — Upskilling and reskilling the Tourism Ecosystem | Tourism Knowledge Hub and Tourism Data Space**

Objectives

This call for proposals aims to advance the EU's policy on data management and sharing by ensuring a broad outreach to Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) within the tourism sector. **The selected proposal** will be required to join the Pact for Skills and engage in the Large-Scale Partnership (LSP) for tourism, with a concentrated effort on boosting digital skills.

The proposal must develop an effective method to reach out to DMOs, especially those ones which have not been previously involved in the following EU initiatives:

- [D3Hub](#)
- [FACILITATE](#)
- [Smart Tourism Destinations](#)
- [European Capital and Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism](#)
- [Sustainable EU Tourism – shaping the tourism of tomorrow](#)

¹⁹ Call for tender 576824-2022 - Competition - TED

²⁰ [Call for Proposals PPPA-2024-Skill-for-tourism - Preparatory action - Upskilling and reskilling the Tourism Ecosystem I Tourism Knowledge hub and Tourism Data Space](#)

²¹ [Call for tender EISMEA/2023/OP/0024 - Pilot Action: Building Capacity for Tourism](#)

The proposal must also establish contact with **at least 200 DMOs**, disseminate the guidelines prepared by the FACILITATE project and involve them in the activities carried out by the D3Hub. This approach aims to cultivate a more digitally proficient and competitive tourism industry across the EU.

Themes and priorities (scope)

The actions of the proposals under this call will advance the following themes (in order of priority):

- **To encourage a better understanding and adoption of existing EU initiatives focused on digitalisation in tourism.**
- **To promote data-driven solutions in tourism management by:**
 - Enhancing upskilling and training efforts for DMOs;
 - Fostering synergies with existing EU-level measures, including policy initiatives, tools and actions.

To achieve the objectives of this call, the proposals must address all of the following **priorities**:

- To provide clear guidance on untapping opportunities for upskilling, reskilling and networking offered by EU initiatives.
- To boost the use and integration of digital tools, platforms, and smart technologies by actively transferring knowledge to DMOs, empowering them to capitalize on available digital resources.
- To promote increased reliance on data, emphasising its generation, collection, use, and re-use.
- To provide strategic advice to DMOs as they transition to more digital and sustainable operations.
- To enhance access to training opportunities, focusing on upskilling and reskilling for DMOs.
- To strengthen the tourism sector's innovation capacity and resilience to adapt to future challenges.

Activities that can be funded (scope)

Proposals must implement the following **mandatory activities**:

a) Coordinate with existing measures. projects must set up a coordination mechanism to liaise with similar EU initiatives, including the D3Hub and with the consortium running the project [FACILITATE](#), project selected under the of the Preparatory action — Upskilling and reskilling the Tourism Ecosystem I Tourism Knowledge hub and Tourism Data Space (PPPA-2024-Skill-for-tourism). The project must include also other relevant initiatives, both at EU and national level. If necessary, EISMEA and DG MOVE will facilitate initial contacts with EU funded initiatives.

In their proposal, the coordination strategy with the above-mentioned initiatives must be clarified. The strategy needs to ensure a systematic flow of information, which shall be maintained systematically and transparently.

The coordination mechanism shall be flexible in order to be adapted/modified in case of need during the implementation of the project and must be agreed with and approved by EISMEA, the granting authority (in consultation with DG MOVE).

- b) Propose and set up a communication and dissemination strategy**, which takes into account the initiatives already ongoing at European level as regards data management and data sharing in tourism, as well as the existing [T4T Stakeholders Support Platform](#), and which aims at reaching DMOs in the tourism sector, and sectors adjacent, across the EU, especially those which have not already been reached.

(i) Development of the communication strategy

Proposals must detail a comprehensive communication strategy ensuring broad dissemination of the guidelines developed by the [FACILITATE](#) project. Specifically, they must explain:

1. How the outreach to DMOs across the EU will be structured and maximised, also taking into account existing instruments at EU level, in particular the T4T Stakeholders Support Platform;
2. How the guidelines developed by the project FACILITATE shall be made known and understood by largest possible number of DMOs across the EU.

The communication and dissemination strategy shall be approved by the granting authority (in consultation with DG MOVE) and, if necessary, adapted during the implementation of the project.

(ii) Implementation of the communication strategy (dissemination)

Proposals must explain how they will raise awareness of the opportunities available to tourism DMOs at national, regional and local level within each Member States, reaching out to both the public and the private sector, with the goal of informing DMOs in the tourism ecosystem, taking into consideration the barriers that DMOs face in accessing and understanding the available information. Dissemination may include the organisation of (the list is indicative and not exhaustive):

- marketing or a dedicated communication campaigns;
- networking events;
- dissemination through user-friendly material.

A report of the dissemination shall be submitted two months before the end of the project.

- c) Envisage capacity building measures aimed at DMOs** in the tourism sector across the EU. These include online and onsite trainings, workshops, study visits, awareness raising activities; production of training and educational materials; webinars.

(i) Development of the capacity building strategy

Proposals need to detail a comprehensive capacity building strategy on how they intend to provide expertise, training and capacity-building activities to ensure that key information is picked up and understood by stakeholders. The target audience of these activities must be DMOs, defined as public sector bodies tasked with tourism management, such as regional and local administrations, or other relevant collaborating stakeholders in tourism destinations.

This may be done through the organisation of (the list is indicative and not exhaustive):

- Awareness raising activities;
- Mapping of required competences (knowledge, expertise, skills);
- Collaborative workshops, webinars, study visits, onsite and online training courses or e-learning tracks;
- Tailored coaching for DMOs based on destinations' needs;
- Peer-to-peer learning (e.g. mentoring, study visits) by matching needs and solutions;
- Boot camps and hackathons;
- Production of training and educational material.

(ii) Implementation of the capacity building

Projects must organise **minimum 15 capacity building opportunities which must represent a balanced distribution of tourism DMOs per eligible country**, and represent as a minimum:

- **all different geographical areas,**
- **at least three training opportunities in each geographical area,**
- **at least twenty different EU member states**

The geographical areas are defined as follows:

- Area 1: Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain;
- Area 2: Austria, Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Ireland;
- Area 3: Bulgaria, Czechia, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Poland, Romania;
- Area 4: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden;

Proposals must explain in detail how they will reach different levels of governance (national, regional, local) as well as a variety of tourism destinations (urban, maritime, mountainous, etc).

Each capacity building activity must be accompanied by a monitoring and reporting mechanism to assess the satisfaction of users and the understanding of the guidelines presented.

Applicants must demonstrate links of capacity building activities with local, regional and/or national tourism strategies, as well as the 27 key topics identified by the Transition Pathway for Tourism²². **Proposals without plans to develop transnational and cross-sectoral support schemes are not eligible and will be rejected.**

²² <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/404a8144-8892-11ec-8c40-01aa75ed71a1>

All activities must be implemented in compliance with the relevant legal requirements to protect personal data under the GDPR²³ and applicable national legislation.

Activities that cannot be funded

Development or improvement of physical infrastructures cannot be funded under this call for proposals.

Expected impact

- Increased awareness by DMOs about policy work at EU level and existing supporting measures for the tourism sector;
- Enhanced reliance on high-quality data: its generation, collection, use and re-use;
- Increased capacity of DMOs to successfully integrate and implement integrated data-driven solutions in their offer and strategy;
- Setting the ground for the development of new business models in tourism building on digitalisation, data and new technologies;
- Improved DMOs usage of available tools and management strategies to increase their competitiveness and promote growth;
- Boosted quality and efficiency along the tourism value chain;
- Enhanced cooperation among existing measures at EU level as regards digitalisation of tourism.

Description of the mandatory deliverables

The proposal must include, **among others**, an outline of the following mandatory deliverables and how the deliverables will be achieved during the implementation of the project by the indicative due date:

1. **A coordination strategy** to ensure synergies with similar EU initiatives including the D3Hub and with the FACILITATE project.
2. A **technical progress report** (not linked to a payment) – due in Month 12, with a summary of the activities undertaken until month 12.
3. A **capacity building strategy, building on the material prepared by FACILITATE and on the activities carried out by D3Hub** (see activity (c) under 2.3. Activities that can be funded) - due in Month 12.
4. A **communication and dissemination strategy** (see activity (b) under 2.3. Activities that can be funded) – due in Month 12.
5. At least **20 dissemination and networking initiatives** which must represent a balanced distribution of tourism DMOs (see activity (c) under 2.3. Activities that can be funded) - due by Month 22.
6. **An impact report** (not linked to a payment) by month 22 detailing the implementation and impact of all deliverables on the tourism ecosystem in

²³ [Regulation - 2016/679 - EN - GDPR - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

general, and on the users and participants to the activities in particular, which will include:

- a. an analysis of the **users** reached through the outreach activities foreseen;
- b. an analysis of the **Q&A** generated as a result of the outreach activities to users;
- c. an impact report of the **dissemination and networking initiatives**, accompanied by the collected feedback by participants and the material prepared and used for capacity building, or a link to it if published online;
- d. an analysis of the **challenges encountered by DMOs** in accessing the above-mentioned tools, and recommendations on how to address them.

3. Available budget

The estimated available call budget is **EUR 1 600 000**.

We expect to fund 1 project.

We reserve the right not to award all available funds or to redistribute them between the call priorities, depending on the proposals received and the results of the evaluation.

4. Timetable and deadlines

| Timetable and deadlines (indicative) | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Call opening: | 9 December 2025 |
| <u>Deadline for submission:</u> | <u>4 March 2026 – 17:00:00 CET (Brussels)</u> |
| Evaluation: | April-July 2026 |
| Information on evaluation results: | August-September 2026 |
| GA signature: | October-November 2026 |

5. Admissibility and documents

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

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

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

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

- Application Form Part A — contains administrative information about the participants (future coordinator, beneficiaries and affiliated entities) and the summarised budget for the project (*to be filled in directly online*)
- Application Form Part B — contains the technical description of the project (*template to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed, assembled and re-uploaded*)
- **mandatory annexes and supporting documents** (*templates to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed, assembled and re-uploaded*):
 - detailed budget table/calculator
 - CVs (qualifications and experiences) of all the staff responsible for managing and implementing the project
 - activity reports of last year: *not applicable*
 - list of previous projects (key projects for the last 4 years) (*template available in Part B*)

Please note that the amounts entered into the summarised budget table (filled in directly online) must correspond to the amounts calculated in the detailed budget table. In case of discrepancies, the amounts in the online summarised budget table will prevail.

At proposal submission, you will have to confirm that you have the **mandate to act** for all applicants. Moreover, you will have to confirm that the information in the application is correct and complete and that all participants comply with the conditions for receiving EU funding (*especially eligibility, financial and operational capacity, exclusion, etc*). Before signing the grant, each beneficiary and affiliated entity will have to confirm this again by signing a declaration of honour (DoH). Proposals without full support will be rejected.

Your application must be **readable, accessible and printable** (please check carefully the layout of the documents uploaded).

Proposals are limited to maximum **50 pages** (Part B). Evaluators will not consider any additional pages. Shorter proposals are welcome.

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

 For more information about the submission process (including IT aspects), consult the [Online Manual](#).

6. Eligibility

Eligible participants (eligible countries)

In order to be eligible, the applicants (beneficiaries and affiliated entities) must:

- be legal entities (public or private bodies)
- be established in one of the eligible countries, i.e.:
 - EU Member States (including overseas countries and territories (OCTs))

Beneficiaries and affiliated entities must register in the [Participant Register](#) — before submitting the proposal — and will have to be validated by the Central Validation Service (REA Validation). For the validation, they will be requested to upload documents showing legal status and origin.

Other entities may participate in other consortium roles, such as associated partners, subcontractors, third parties giving in-kind contributions, etc (see section 13).

Specific cases and definitions

Exceptional funding — Entities from other countries (not listed above) are exceptionally eligible, if the granting authority considers their participation essential for the implementation of the action.

Natural persons — Natural persons are NOT eligible (with the exception of self-employed persons, i.e. sole traders, where the company does not have legal personality separate from that of the natural person).

International organisations — International organisations are eligible. The rules on eligible countries do not apply to them.

Entities without legal personality — Entities which do not have legal personality under their national law may exceptionally participate, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf, and offer guarantees for the protection of the EU financial interests equivalent to that offered by legal persons²⁴.

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

Associations and interest groupings — Entities composed of members may participate as 'sole beneficiaries' or 'beneficiaries without legal personality'²⁵. ⚠ Please note that if the action will be implemented by the members, they should also participate (either as beneficiaries or as affiliated entities, otherwise their costs will NOT be eligible).

EU restrictive measures — Special rules apply for 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)²⁶. Such entities are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any).

EU conditionality measures — Special rules apply for entities subject to measures adopted on the basis of EU Regulation 2020/2092²⁷. Such entities are not eligible to participate in any funded role (beneficiaries, affiliated entities, subcontractors, recipients of financial support to third parties, etc). Currently such measures are in place for Hungarian public interest trusts established under the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity they maintain (see [Council Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2022/2506](#), as of 16 December 2022).

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

Consortium composition

Proposals must be submitted by a consortium, which complies with all of the following conditions:

²⁴ See Article 200(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2024/2509](#).

²⁵ For the definitions, see Articles 190(2) and 200(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2024/2509](#).

²⁶ 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](#).

²⁷ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2092 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2020 on a general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget (OJ L 325, 20.12.2022, p. 94).

- composed of minimum three (3) and maximum seven (7) applicants (beneficiaries, not affiliated entities);
- from minimum three (3) and maximum five (5) different EU Member States;
- minimum one (1) research, tertiary education institution, or training institution specialising in the tourism sector – to be clearly indicated in the proposal;
- minimum one (1) destination management organisation (DMO) – to be clearly indicated in the proposal;
- minimum one (1) public relations (PR) agency with expertise in EU-wide campaigns – to be clearly indicated in the proposal.

Applicants may NOT submit or participate in several proposals under this call. If they submit or participate in several proposals, only one application will be accepted and evaluated; the applicant will be asked to withdraw from the other applications (or the affected proposals will all be rejected).

Eligible activities

Applications will only be considered eligible if their content corresponds wholly (or at least in part) to the topic description for which they are submitted.

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

Projects should take into account the results of past and current projects supported by other EU funding programmes. The complementarities must be described in the project proposals (Part B of the Application Form).

Projects must comply with EU policy interests and priorities (*such as environment, social, security, industrial and trade policy, etc.*). Projects must also respect EU values and European Commission policy regarding reputational matters (*e.g. activities involving capacity building, policy support, awareness raising, communication, dissemination, etc.*).

Financial support to third parties is not allowed.

Geographic location (target countries)

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

Duration

Project should have a duration of 24 months.

Extensions are possible, only if duly justified and through an amendment.

Project budget

Project budget (requested grant amount) is expected to be around EUR 1 600 000 per project.

However, this does not preclude the submission/selection of proposals requesting other amounts. The grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested.

7. Financial and operational capacity and exclusion

Financial capacity

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

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

The check will normally be done for all beneficiaries except:

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

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

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

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

or

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

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

Operational capacity

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

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

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

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

- list of previous projects (key projects for the last 4 years) (template available in Part B)
- CVs (qualifications and experiences) of the staff responsible for managing and implementing the project
- description of the consortium participants

Profiles of the staff responsible for managing and implementing the project (qualification and experience):

- a) a project manager/coordinator with at least five (5) years of experience in transnational project management (CV);**
- b) a deputy project manager/coordinator with at least three (3) years of experience in transnational project management (CV);**
- c) two experts with at least three (3) years of experience in communication and PR (CV);**
- d) one expert with at least three (3) years of experience in capacity building activities;**
- e) an expert with at least three (3) years of experience in tourism management at destination level.**

The applicants have to clearly indicate in the CV of the project team and in the application form Part B (where appropriate) that the above required operational capacity requirements are appropriately met.

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

Exclusion

Applicants which are subject to an **EU exclusion decision** or in one of the following **exclusion situations** that bar them from receiving EU funding can NOT participate²⁸:

- 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 misconduct²⁹ (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

²⁸ See Articles 138 and 143 of EU Financial Regulation [2024/2509](#).

²⁹ 'Professional misconduct' includes, in particular, the following: violation of ethical standards of the profession; wrongful conduct with impact on professional credibility; breach of generally accepted professional ethical standards; false declarations/misrepresentation of information; participation in a cartel or other agreement distorting competition; violation of IPR; attempting to influence decision-making processes by taking advantage, through misrepresentation, of a conflict of interests, or to obtain confidential information from public authorities to gain an advantage; incitement to discrimination, hatred or violence or similar activities contrary to the EU values where negatively affecting or risking to affect the performance of a legal commitment.

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)
- intentionally and without proper justification resisted³⁰ an investigation, check or audit carried out by an EU authorising officer (or their representative or auditor), OLAF, the EPPO, or the European Court of Auditors.

Applicants will also be rejected if it turns out that³¹:

- 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:

Successively for every group of *ex aequo* proposals, starting with the highest scored group, and continuing in descending order:


- 1) Projects focusing on a theme that is not otherwise covered by higher ranked projects will be considered to have the highest priority.

³⁰ 'Resisting an investigation, check or audit' means carrying out actions with the goal or effect of preventing, hindering or delaying the conduct of any of the activities needed to perform the investigation, check or audit, such as refusing to grant the necessary access to its premises or any other areas used for business purposes, concealing or refusing to disclose information or providing false information.

³¹ See Article 143 EU Financial Regulation [2024/2509](#).

- 2) The ex aequo proposals within the same topic will be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the award criterion 'Relevance'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Impact'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Quality'.
- 3) If this does not allow to determine the priority, a further prioritisation can be done by considering the overall project portfolio and the creation of positive synergies between projects, or other factors related to the objectives of the call. These factors will be documented in the panel report.
- 4) After that, the remainder of the available call budget will be used to fund projects across the different topics in order to ensure a balanced spread of the geographical and thematic coverage and while respecting to the maximum possible extent the order of merit based on the evaluation of the award criteria.

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

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

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

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

9. Award criteria

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

1. Relevance (40 points):

- Clarity and consistency of the action
- Objectives and extent to which they match the themes and priorities and objectives of the call
- Contribution to the EU strategic and legislative context
- European/trans-national dimension
- Impact/interest for a number of countries (EU or eligible non-EU countries); possibility to use the results in other countries; potential to develop mutual trust/cross-border cooperation

2. Quality (40 points):

- Logical links between the identified problems, needs and solutions proposed (logical frame concept)
- Quality of the consortium and project teams
- Appropriate procedures and problem-solving mechanisms for cooperating within the project teams and consortium
- Methodology for implementing the project (concept and methodology, organisation of the work (procedures and allocation of resources), management, involvement of subcontractors, timetable, risks and risk management, monitoring and evaluation)
- Cost effectiveness (sufficient/appropriate budget for proper implementation; best value for money)

3. Impact (20 points):

- Ambition and expected long-term impact of results on target groups/general public
- Appropriate dissemination strategy
- Possibility to use the results in other countries
- Sustainability of results after EU funding ends.

| Award criteria | Minimum pass score | Maximum score |
|------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Relevance | 21 | 40 |
| Quality | 21 | 40 |
| Impact | 11 | 20 |
| Overall (pass) scores | 60 | 100 |

Maximum points: 100 points.

Individual thresholds per criterion: 21/40, 21/40 and 11/20 points.

Overall threshold: 60 points.

Proposals that pass the individual thresholds AND the overall threshold will be considered for funding — within the limits of the available budget (i.e. up to the budget ceiling). Other proposals will be rejected.

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

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

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

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

Starting date and project duration

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

Project duration: *see section 6 above*.

Milestones and deliverables

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

A list of mandatory deliverables is provided above in *Section 2 - 'Deliverables'*.

Form of grant, funding rate and maximum grant amount

The grant parameters (*maximum grant amount, funding rate, total eligible costs, etc*) will be fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 3 and art 5*).

Project budget (requested grant amount): *see section 6 above*.

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

The costs will be reimbursed at the funding rate fixed in the Grant Agreement (**90%**).

Grants may NOT produce a profit (i.e. surplus of revenues + EU grant over costs). For-profit organisations must declare their revenues and, if there is a profit, we will deduct it from the final grant amount (*see art 22.3*).

Moreover, please be aware that the final grant amount may be reduced in case of non-compliance with the Grant Agreement (*e.g. improper implementation, breach of obligations, etc*).

Budget categories and cost eligibility rules

The budget categories and cost eligibility rules are fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 3, art 6 and Annex 2*).

Budget categories for this call:

- A. Personnel costs
 - A.1 Employees, A.2 Natural persons under direct contract, A.3 Seconded persons
 - A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries
- B. Subcontracting costs
- C. Purchase costs
 - C.1 Travel and subsistence
 - C.2 Equipment
 - C.3 Other goods, works and services
- D. Other cost categories : not applicable

- E. Indirect costs

Specific cost eligibility conditions for this call:

- personnel costs:
 - SME owner/natural person unit cost³²: Yes
- travel and subsistence unit cost³³: -Yes³⁴
- equipment costs: depreciation
- other cost categories:
 - costs for financial support to third parties: not allowed
- indirect cost flat-rate: 7% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs and exempted specific cost categories, if any)
- VAT: non-deductible/non-refundable VAT is eligible (but please note that since 2013 VAT paid by beneficiaries that are public bodies acting as public authority is NOT eligible)
- other:
 - in-kind contributions for free are allowed, but cost-neutral, i.e. they cannot be declared as cost
 - kick-off meeting: costs for kick-off meeting organised by the granting authority are eligible (travel costs for maximum 2 persons, return ticket to Brussels and accommodation for one night) only if the meeting takes place after the project starting date set out in the Grant Agreement; the starting date can be changed through an amendment, if needed
 - project websites: communication costs for presenting the project on the participants' websites or social media accounts are eligible; costs for *separate* project websites are not eligible
 - other ineligible costs: No

Reporting and payment arrangements

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

After grant signature, you will normally receive a **prefinancing** to start working on the project (float of normally **50%** of the maximum grant amount; exceptionally less or no prefinancing). The prefinancing will be paid 30 days from entry into force/financial guarantee (if required) — whichever is the latest.

There will be no interim payments.


³² 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)7115).

³³ Commission [Decision](#) of 31.7.2024 amending Commission Decision C(2021)35 authorising the use of unit costs for travel, accommodation and subsistence costs under an action or work programme under the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework

³⁴ See [EU Grants AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement](#), art 6 on eligible costs: travel and subsistence costs must be declared using the unit cost according to Annex 2a of the grant agreement. If a particular instance of travel, accommodation or subsistence in the action is not covered by one of the unit costs mentioned in Decision C(2021)35 the actual costs may be used.

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

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

Prefinancing guarantees

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

The guarantee should be in euro and issued by an approved bank/financial institution established in an EU Member State. If you are established in a non-EU country and would like to provide a guarantee from a bank/financial institution in your country, please contact us (this may be exceptionally accepted, if it offers equivalent security).

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

Prefinancing guarantees are normally requested from the coordinator, for the consortium. They must be provided during grant preparation, in time to make the prefinancing (scanned copy via Portal AND original by post).

If agreed with us, the bank guarantee may be replaced by a guarantee from a third party.

The guarantee will be released at the end of the grant, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Grant Agreement (*art 23*).

Certificates

Depending on the type of action, size of grant amount and type of beneficiaries, you may be requested to submit different certificates. The types, schedules and thresholds for each certificate are fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4 and art 24*).

Liability regime for recoveries

The liability regime for recoveries will be fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4.4 and art 22*).

For beneficiaries, it is one of the following:

- limited joint and several liability with individual ceilings — *each beneficiary up to their maximum grant amount*
 - unconditional joint and several liability — *each beneficiary up to the maximum grant amount for the action*
- or
- individual financial responsibility — *each beneficiary only for their own debts*.

In addition, the granting authority may require joint and several liability of affiliated entities (with their beneficiary).

Provisions concerning the project implementation

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

- rights of use on results: Yes
- access rights to ensure continuity and interoperability obligations: Yes

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

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

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

- durability: No

Other specificities

Consortium agreement: Yes

Non-compliance and breach of contract

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



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

11. How to submit an application

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

Submission is a **2-step process**:

a) create a user account and register your organisation

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

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

b) submit the proposal

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

Submit your proposal in 3 parts, as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

12. Help

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

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

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

Contact

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

Non-IT related questions should be sent at the latest 5 working days before the call submission deadline to the following email address: EISMEA-SMP-COSME-ENQUIRIES@ec.europa.eu.

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

13. Important



IMPORTANT

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

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

- **Coordinator** — In multi-beneficiary grants, the beneficiaries participate as consortium (group of beneficiaries). They will have to choose a coordinator, who will take care of the project management and coordination and will represent the consortium towards the granting authority. In mono-beneficiary grants, the single beneficiary will automatically be coordinator.
- **Affiliated entities** — Applicants may participate with affiliated entities (i.e. entities linked to a beneficiary which participate in the action with similar rights and obligations as the beneficiaries, but do not sign the grant and therefore do not become beneficiaries themselves). They will get a part of the grant money and must therefore comply with all the call conditions and be validated (just like beneficiaries); but they do not count towards the minimum eligibility criteria for consortium composition (if any). If affiliated entities participate in your project, please do not forget to provide documents demonstrating their affiliation link to your organisation as part of your application.
- **Associated partners** — Applicants may participate with associated partners (i.e. partner organisations which participate in the action but without the right to get grant money). They participate without funding and therefore do not need to be validated.
- **Consortium agreement** — For practical and legal reasons it is recommended to set up internal arrangements that allow you to deal with exceptional or unforeseen circumstances (in all cases, even if not mandatory under the Grant Agreement). The consortium agreement also gives you the possibility to redistribute the grant money according to your own consortium-internal principles and parameters (for instance, one beneficiary can reattribute its grant money to another beneficiary). The consortium agreement thus allows you to customise the EU grant to the needs inside your consortium and can also help to protect you in case of disputes.

- **Balanced project budget** — Grant applications must ensure a balanced project budget and sufficient other resources to implement the project successfully (*e.g. own contributions, income generated by the action, financial contributions from third parties, etc*). You may be requested to lower your estimated costs, if they are ineligible (including excessive).
- **Completed/ongoing projects** — Proposals for projects that have already been completed will be rejected; proposals for projects that have already started will be assessed on a case-by-case basis (in this case, no costs can be reimbursed for activities that took place before the project starting date/proposal submission).
- **No-profit rule** — Grants may NOT give a profit (i.e. surplus of revenues + EU grant over costs). This will be checked by us at the end of the project.
- **No cumulation of funding/no double funding** — It is strictly prohibited to cumulate funding from the EU budget (except under 'EU Synergies actions'). Outside such Synergies actions, any given action may receive only ONE grant from the EU budget and cost items may under NO circumstances be declared under two EU grants; projects must be designed as different actions, clearly delineated and separated for each grant (without overlaps).
- **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 Grant Agreement, art 6.2.E](#)).
- **Multiple proposals** — Applicants may NOT submit or participate in several proposals under this call. If they submit or participate in several proposals, only one application will be accepted and evaluated; the applicant will be asked to withdraw from the other applications (or the other affected proposals will all be rejected).
- **Resubmission** — Proposals may be changed and re-submitted until the deadline for submission.
- **Rejection** — By submitting the application, all applicants accept the call conditions set out in this Call document (and the documents it refers to). Proposals that do not comply with all the call conditions will be rejected. This applies also to applicants: All applicants need to fulfil the criteria; if any one of them doesn't, they must be replaced or the entire proposal will be rejected.
- **Cancellation** — There may be circumstances which may require the cancellation of the call. In this case, you will be informed via a call or topic update. Please note that cancellations are without entitlement to compensation.
- **Language** — You can submit your proposal in any official EU language (project abstract/summary should however always be in English). For reasons of efficiency, we strongly advise you to use English for the entire application. If you need the call documentation in another official EU language, please submit a request within 10 days after call publication (for the contact information, see *section 12*).

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

This includes:

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

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

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