



European Social Fund+ (ESF)

Call for proposals

Structured dialogue with people with lived experience of poverty

(ESF-2027-PEP-ENGAGEMENT)

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION
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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

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0. Introduction

This is a call for proposals for EU **action grants** in the field of EU social policy under the **European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)**.

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

- Regulation 2024/2509 ([EU Financial Regulation](#))¹
- the basic act (ESF+ Regulation [2021/1057](#))².

The call is launched in accordance with the 2027 Work Programme³ and will be managed by the **European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL)**.

 Please note that this call is subject to the final adoption of the 2027 Work Programme. In case there are substantial changes, we may have to modify the call (or even cancel it).

The call covers the following **topics**:

- **ESF-2027-PEP-ENGAGEMENT — Structured dialogue with people with lived experience of poverty**

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)

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 Regulation (EU) 2021/1057 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 establishing the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) (OJ L 231, 30.6.2021, p. 21).

³ A corrigendum of the call text will be published in accordance with the Commission Implementing Decision on the adoption of the work programme for 2027 and the financing decision for the implementation of the EaSI strand of ESF+.

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

1. Background

This call for proposals is financed under the **Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) strand of the ESF+** which is a European-level financing instrument managed directly by the European Commission. It provides financial support to achieve high employment levels, fair social protection, a skilled and resilient workforce ready for the future world of work, as well as inclusive and cohesive societies aiming to eradicate poverty.

On 6 May 2026, the European Commission adopted a [communication on the EU Anti-Poverty Strategy](#)⁴ (APS, hereinafter 'the Strategy'). It sets out objectives and actions that aim to help people to gain access to the essential protections and services and to address the root causes of poverty.

The Strategy sets out a comprehensive path to prevention and protection against poverty in the EU and underpins the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. It provides the direction to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion⁵ by at least 15 million by 2030, including at least 5 million children, and to help eradicate poverty by 2050.

The Strategy aims to address the root causes of poverty and ensure, in a lifecycle perspective, that those experiencing poverty today as well as those at risk of experiencing it tomorrow are supported and equipped to escape poverty and social exclusion. To support this objective, the Strategy puts forward several new key actions, two of which are adopted alongside this Strategy: [strengthening of the European Child Guarantee](#)⁶ and a proposal for a [Council Recommendation on fighting housing exclusion](#)⁷. Moreover, the Strategy builds on existing or announced policy initiatives, tools and legislation, seeking to accelerate their implementation and strengthen their enforcement.

The Strategy also announces that the Commission will scale up its cooperation with people with lived experience of poverty by putting in place a dedicated forum to consult them regularly in a structured way. They will be consulted on the design,

⁴ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the European Union's Anti-Poverty Strategy: addressing and preventing poverty from childhood to old age (COM/2026/538).

⁵ The indicator 'at risk of poverty or social exclusion (AROPE)' corresponds to the sum of persons who are either at risk of poverty, or severely materially and socially deprived or living in a household with a very low work intensity - (quasi-)jobless households. People are included only once even if they are in more than one of the situations mentioned above. The AROPE rate is the share of the total population which is at risk of poverty or social exclusion. It is the main indicator to monitor the EU 2030 target on poverty and social exclusion.

⁶ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Breaking the cycle of child poverty - strengthening the European Child Guarantee (COM/2026/539).

⁷ Proposal for a Council Recommendation on fighting housing exclusion (COM/2026/540).

implementation and monitoring of initiatives aimed at combating poverty or social exclusion, as well as on initiatives in other policy areas that may affect their lives.

The EU institutions have been conducting several forms of dialogue with external stakeholders through different channels. However, to date, the consultations on policy measures aiming to prevent or tackle poverty often focused on collecting input from civil society stakeholders, public authorities, and academics: groups that, albeit well-placed to provide legitimate and valuable input, could not fully represent the complexities of lived experience. Meaningful change requires centring the voices of those directly affected: a change of approach to include individuals in the dialogue is therefore needed.

To date, the Commission has consulted people with lived experience of poverty in an ad hoc manner. For example, a targeted consultation took place in the context of the activities accompanying the process of preparations of the Strategy⁸. To deliver on the Strategy's commitments, the Commission intends to pilot a new participatory approach, for the policy decisions to be made *with* communities, not only *for* them. It will be done by launching a structured dialogue on lived experience of poverty ('structured dialogue'), taking form of two in-person meetings in Brussels per year, each of them engaging 35 people with lived experience of poverty from all over EU. There will be at least one participant to the structured dialogue from each Member State⁹, and additionally two alternates. Both participants and alternates will be selected following an open call for expressions of interests, for a 2-year mandate, with the possibility of extension.

The meaningful participation of these individuals, however, may be hindered by systemic barriers, such as distrust of institutions, logistical challenges, or the emotional toll of sharing personal struggles, often hinder direct participation. Civil society organisations (CSOs) play a critical role in bridging this gap by leveraging their established trust, grassroots networks, and expertise in trauma-informed engagement. Their contribution helps ensure that dialogues are conducted in accessible, safe and empowering ways, strengthening the participation of marginalised groups while safeguarding participants from exploitation and re-traumatisation. Moreover, CSOs can provide the necessary resources (such as outreach, translation, interpretation, or advocacy training) to enable diverse and representative participation, contributing to enriching the understanding of poverty's intersecting dimensions among policymakers and other stakeholders. Without the engagement of CSOs, the risk of tokenistic consultation or policy blind spots persists, undermining the very principles of equity and co-creation that structured dialogue seeks to uphold.

Therefore, to ensure transparency, fairness, and the selection of organisations best equipped to support such participation, the Commission is launching a call for proposals to identify CSOs capable of empowering people with lived experience of poverty to actively engage in policy discussions at EU level. This approach will allow for the identification of organisations with demonstrable experience in participatory, safeguarding, and community-led work. The Commission aims to select entities that bring innovative, context-specific solutions in this participatory approach. This process will further reinforce the legitimacy of the dialogue, as selected organisations will be responsible for upholding inclusivity, reporting progress, and ensuring that lived-experience insights directly inform policy development.

⁸ More information can be found in the [Commission Staff Working Document: Poverty in the EU - key trends and policies](#).

⁹ Quotas will be established using a population-based allocation method across EU Member States.

The successful applicants (selected consortium members) will be invited to participate in the structured dialogue meetings as observers, to ensure a supportive role for the participants, while persons with lived experience of poverty will be sharing their experiences as main actors of the structured dialogue. The EU funding is intended to co-finance the organisation of introduction meetings in Brussels, one day before people with lived experience of poverty engage with EU policymakers. The objective of the introduction meetings will be to prepare consolidated inputs for the Commission's structured dialogue on lived experience of poverty. The project should also cover the dissemination of the call for expressions of interest to participate in the structured dialogue, accessible communication materials, and targeted support such as workshops, helplines and capacity-building to help candidates prepare applications to participate in the dialogue and to remove practical barriers hindering involvement, while also providing personalised support where needed. The grant will also co-finance travel, accommodation and subsistence for participants in both the introduction and structured dialogue meetings. National and regional participation hubs will strengthen outreach, peer exchange and capacity building through online workshops. The outputs will include a toolkit on meaningful participation, a dedicated communication channel for participants, and awareness-raising actions to counter stigma and hostile narratives on poverty.

The consortium should facilitate the participation of people with lived experience of poverty in 2 structured dialogue meetings per year. The Commission will announce the dates of the structured dialogue meetings well in advance, and the consortium will adjust the schedule of the introduction meetings in line with the schedule of Commission's meetings.

The Commission reserves the right to organise some of the structured dialogue meetings online, in which case the consortium should facilitate the participation of people with lived experience of poverty in the online meetings.

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

Objectives (expected outcome)

The primary aim of this action is to **create the conditions for a sustained dialogue** between policymakers and individuals with lived experience of poverty, ensuring that those directly affected by poverty and/or social exclusion have a real and influential voice in the decisions that shape their lives.

A core objective is to **empower participants by providing them with the tools, confidence, and platforms needed to engage effectively** in discussions on challenges related to combating poverty and social inclusion. This will come together with building trust and breaking down barriers between institutions and marginalised communities. The action will **create a more inclusive and respectful exchange**, where power imbalances are acknowledged and mitigated giving participants a clearer understanding of how policies are formed.

Finally, the action will champion **intersectionality**: efforts will be made to amplify the voices of the most marginalised groups, ensuring that policies account for the diverse and overlapping challenges they face. By doing so, the initiative aims to **create more equitable and inclusive solutions**; ones that reflect the complexities of poverty and social exclusion.

Themes and priorities (scope)

This call for proposals aims at selecting and financially supporting a consortium consisting of organisations with proven and relevant competence and experience, including at European and/or international level, in facilitating the engagement of

people with lived experience of poverty in policy discussions on challenges related to combating poverty and social inclusion.

The consortium should consist of applicants capable of developing active participatory approach for people who have lived experience of poverty and actively contributing to their involvement in the Commission's structured dialogue.

Activities that can be funded (scope)

To meet the above-mentioned objectives, the activities funded and carried out by a limited number of beneficiaries, must cover all of the following:

1. Dissemination of the Commission's calls for expressions of interest for participation of people with lived experience of poverty in the structured dialogue and development of accessible communication materials; in particular, but not only, by:
 - Adaptation of the documents to ensure accessibility, and translation of the essential parts of their content into relevant local languages or dialects (at least into 24 official EU languages);
 - Targeted outreach via community networks, social media platforms and any other channels used by groups in vulnerable situations, including beyond the membership base of the consortium.
2. Facilitating the participation of people with lived experience of poverty in the structured dialogue meetings by:
 - Providing direct assistance/individual guidance to potential candidates to participate in the structured dialogue, for example by organising workshops/individual guidance sessions on how to prepare a high-quality application or setting up a helpline;
 - Preparing people with lived experience of poverty before they engage with policymakers, using a structured methodology that fosters direct dialogue between individuals with lived experience of poverty and policymakers (organisation of 'introduction meetings'), covering the full cost of organising these introduction meetings (costs of catering, interpretation, facilitators, reasonable accommodation in function of the participants' needs and other miscellaneous costs, as needed);
 - Online training to facilitate online participation in the structured dialogue meetings (in case any of the meetings is organised by the Commission remotely);
 - Providing any necessary assistance to the participants to the structured dialogue meetings (e.g. covering costs of bringing along a personal assistant) as well as administrative support (preparing the meeting reports).
3. Organising (and covering the costs of) travel, accommodation and subsistence costs (per diem) for all participants of the introduction and structured dialogue meetings.

The travel, accommodation and subsistence should be organised and covered for all the participants of the structured dialogue. The introduction meeting should take place one day before a structured dialogue meeting, so that there is one single travel organised for the participants to attend both an introduction and a structured dialogue meeting one day after the other.

4. Setting up national and regional participation hubs to support the meaningful involvement of people with lived experience of poverty in the Commission's structured dialogue. The hubs will support outreach, preparation, facilitation, and transmission of participants' perspectives, thereby strengthening decentralised and inclusive participation. The national and regional participation hubs aim to create communities at national and regional level for people with lived experience of poverty, enabling them to engage more effectively in the structured dialogue at EU level as well as in potential dialogue initiatives at national levels. This should be done particularly, but not only, by:
 - Organising online thematic meetings (at least two per year) to increase the general knowledge of people with lived experience of poverty on the topics on the agenda of the structural dialogue meetings;
 - Organising online (at least two per year) workshops on horizontal topics aiming to increase the civic engagement skills of people with lived experience of poverty, such as basic knowledge of the EU, public speaking, advocacy training, communication, confidence building etc;
 - Dissemination of the structured dialogue meeting minutes in the Member States, at national, regional and local levels.
5. Summarising and translating the documentation ahead of the structured dialogue meetings.
6. Preparing a toolkit/guidance material on the participation of people with lived experience of poverty in policymaking at different levels (EU, national, regional, local), including on how to ensure their meaningful participation.
7. Setting up a channel (mailbox, and/or interactive platform, or any tool that is the most suitable) for:
 - Day to day communication with the participants (and their alternates) to the structured dialogue on topics related to their participation in the introduction meetings and structured dialogue meetings (e.g. travel arrangements);
 - Sharing the translated documentation linked to the meetings.
8. Implementing a communication campaign to combat stigma and hostile narratives on poverty.

The applicants shall include already in their proposal a methodology to undertake the tasks. More specifically, the applicants shall include:

1. A general description of the proposed methodology of facilitating the direct participation of people with lived experience of poverty in EU policymaking. As part of this, the proposal should also provide an illustration/example of a panel of persons with lived experience of poverty, so as to illustrate what would be the results of applying the aforementioned methodology (including how the consortium will ensure that the consultation panel reflects the full diversity of people living in poverty).
2. A general description of the methodology of preparing the people with lived experience of poverty to engage in a structured dialogue, with the core idea and key methodological pillars outlined.
3. A proposed work plan and time schedule.

4. Risk assessment, including the list of potential risks, probability, impact, and mitigating measures.

The project activities must be organised in the following work packages:

WP (work package) 1 – Project coordination

WP2 - Dissemination of the calls for expressions of interest to participate in the Commission's structured dialogue, and support to interested potential applicants (mandatory)

WP3 - Facilitation of participation of people with lived experience of poverty in the structured dialogue meetings (mandatory)¹⁰

WP4 – Building the capacity of people with lived experience of poverty to engage meaningfully with policymakers (mandatory)

WP5 – Implementing a communication campaign to combat stigma and hostile narratives on poverty (mandatory)

Additional work packages may be added.

Accessibility for persons with disabilities should be ensured during the implementation of the project. The delivered outputs shall comply with the online accessibility requirements¹¹ and include various means to accommodate the needs of persons with different kinds of disabilities.

Accessibility also needs to be taken into account when arranging travel, accommodation and local transport for participants. Participants must for instance be able to bring along a personal assistant and the room must be accessible for any participant using a wheelchair. The costs related to the travel of the personal assistant will be eligible under the grant.

Expected impact

To address the challenges and systemic barriers outlined in the *Background*, projects are expected to contribute to the following results and impact:

1. More inclusive and effective EU policies, in particular by contributing to:

- Better-targeted interventions: Policies shaped by those directly affected are more likely to address real needs, gaps, and barriers, rather than assumptions.
- Innovative solutions: People with lived experience may propose practical, low-cost, or community-based approaches that policymakers might overlook.

2. Strengthened public trust and legitimacy, in particular by ensuring:

- Greater transparency and accountability: Involving affected communities in decision-making can increase trust in the EU and reduce perceptions of top-down, detached policymaking.
- Reduced stigma: Formal recognition of lived experience in policymaking can help challenge negative stereotypes about people in poverty.

¹⁰ It is suggested to consider that 10% of the whole project budget is dedicated for contingency for unexpected expenses under WP3.

¹¹ WCAG 2.1, level AA is the recommended standard.

3. Empowerment and capacity building of people with lived experience of poverty, in particular by ensuring:

- Skill development: participants gain confidence, advocacy skills, and policy literacy, which can improve their employability and civic engagement.
- Amplified voices of marginalised groups and groups in vulnerable situations, who will gain platforms to influence decisions affecting their lives.

4. A cultural shift in governance, in particular by contributing to:

- Normalisation of participatory policymaking: the project could set a precedent for EU Member States authorities to adopt similar approaches.
- Challenging institutional biases.
- Stronger cross-sector collaboration in EU policymaking.

5. Countering misinformation and hostile narratives on poverty, in particular by dissemination of firsthand accounts which can correct misleading narratives with evidence-based storytelling.Monitoring

Applicants shall include a description of evaluation methods and indicators (quantitative and/or qualitative) to monitor and verify the achievement of the main expected results. These indicators shall be realistic, measurable and relevant. Their level of achievement or deviations thereof must be detailed and justified in the final report.

3. Available budget

The estimated available call budget is **EUR 900 000**.

We expect to fund 1 (one) project.

The availability of the call budget still depends on the final adoption of the 2027 Work Programme.

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:	<u>1 September 2026</u>
<u>Deadline for submission:</u>	<u>29 October 2026 – 17:00:00 CET</u> <u>(Brussels)</u>
Evaluation:	<u>November–December 2026</u>
Information on evaluation results:	December 2026/January 2027
GA signature:	January 2027

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: not applicable
 - CVs (standard) of core project team
 - activity reports of last year
 - list of previous projects (key projects relating to the subject of the call in the last 3 years) (*template available in Part B*)
 - an annex with the description of each of the consortium members' experience in facilitating the direct participation of people with lived experience of/experiencing poverty in EU policymaking by organising dialogues between them and EU policymakers at EU level (see section *Consortium composition*)
 - an annex demonstrating the combined coverage of all 27 EU Member States by the consortium (see section *Consortium composition*)
 - description of the methodology of preparing the people with lived experience of poverty to engage with EU policymakers, with the core idea and key methodological pillars outlined.

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 (DOHC). 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.

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
 - non-EU countries:
 - listed EEA countries and countries associated to the ESF+ ([list of participating countries](#))
- be non-profit organisations (private or public).

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 countries mentioned in the work programme (if any) are only 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 intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) are NOT eligible. International non-governmental organisations (INGOs) are eligible.

Entities without legal personality — Entities which do not have legal personality under their national law may exceptionally participate, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf, and offer guarantees for the protection of the EU financial interests equivalent to that offered by legal persons¹².

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'¹³.  Please note that

¹² See Article 200(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2024/2509](#).

¹³ For the definitions, see Articles 190(2) and 200(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2024/2509](#).

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).

Social partner organisations — These include notably the European social partner organisations that are consulted in accordance with Article 154 TFEU (for the list, see [List of consulted organisations](#)) as well as other European-level social partner organisations that are not included in this list, but who are for example involved in the preparation and launch of European social dialogue at sector level. Social partner organisations without legal personality are eligible provided that the conditions for entities without legal personality (see *above*) are met.

Countries currently negotiating association agreements — Beneficiaries from countries with ongoing negotiations for participation in the programme (see *list of participating countries above*) may participate in the call and can sign grants if the negotiations are concluded before grant signature and if the association covers the call (i.e. is retroactive and covers both the part of the programme and the year when the call was launched).

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)¹⁴. 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 2020/2092¹⁵. 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 of at least 2 applicants (beneficiaries; not affiliated entities):

Each of the applying consortium members must comply with the following requirement:

- It must be an EU-level network of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or an international non-governmental organisation (INGO) with headquarters in an EU Member State.

At least 2 applying consortium members must comply with the following requirement:

- It must demonstrate experience in facilitating direct participation of people with lived experience of/experiencing poverty in EU policymaking by organising

¹⁴ 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](#).

¹⁵ 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).

dialogues between them and EU policymakers at EU level¹⁶, and

- It must have national member organisations or branches in at least seven (7) EU Member States.

The consortium must ensure geographical coverage in all 27 Member States by demonstrating that the consortium members **collectively** have national members or branches in all 27 EU Member States. This does not mean that **all** the consortium members must **each** have national members or branches in **all** 27 EU Member States. For example, the requirement is met if one organisation covers 20 Member States, and the second covers 7 others, provided that **together** they cover **all** 27 Member States¹⁷.

An applicant (to be distinguished with an individual 9-digit Participant Identification Code (PIC) number) cannot submit more than one proposal as coordinator. In case an applicant submits more than one proposal as coordinator, only the one submitted the earliest will be considered for evaluation (provided it complies with all the eligibility and admissibility criteria) while the subsequent ones will be rejected due to ineligibility.

Applications submitted by applicants/consortia not complying with the requirements outlined in this section will be considered ineligible.

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 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

Projects should normally range between 30 and 36 months.

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

Project budget

The requested grant amount is expected to amount up to 900 000 EUR per project.

¹⁶ To be proven by providing the mandatory annex with the description of each of the consortium members' experience in facilitating the direct participation of people with lived experience of/experiencing poverty in EU policymaking by organising dialogues with EU policymakers at EU level, see section 5.

¹⁷ To be proven by providing the mandatory annex with the demonstration of the combined coverage of all 27 EU Member States by the consortium.

This does not however 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 one or more participants' 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 the participants 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, 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.

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

- CVs (standard) of core project team
- description of the consortium participants
- applicants' activity reports of last year
- list of previous projects (key projects relating to the subject of the call in the last 3 years) (*template available in Part B*)

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 participate¹⁸:

- 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 misconduct¹⁹ (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- committed fraud, corruption, links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement, prize, expert contract, or similar (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of EU Regulation [2988/95](#) (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin or created another entity with this purpose (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)

¹⁸ See Articles 138 and 143 of EU Financial Regulation [2024/2509](#).

¹⁹ '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.

- intentionally and without proper justification resisted²⁰ 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 that²¹:

- 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

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.

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:

- **Relevance (Max. 35 points):**
 - Extent to which the applying consortium's activities and mission:
 - match the objectives and priorities of this call;
 - are relevant to the fight against poverty in the EU.

²⁰ '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.

²¹ See Article 143 EU Financial Regulation [2024/2509](#).

- Extent to which the proposal:
 - matches the objectives and priorities of this call;
 - has clear and consistent objectives and planning;
 - presents a high-quality overview and analysis of the situation of people experiencing poverty in the EU, including the identification of their key challenges and needs;
 - has a European/trans-national dimension.
 - Extent to which the applying consortium's experience in facilitating the direct participation of people with lived experience of/experiencing poverty in EU policymaking is relevant to the objectives and priorities of this call, and the extent to which the applying consortium demonstrates this experience;
 - Extent to which the proposed methodology of facilitating the direct participation of people with lived experience of poverty in EU policymaking is relevant to the objectives and priorities of this call.
- **Quality:**
- **Project design and implementation (Max. 30 points):**
 - technical quality of the proposal;
 - logical links between the identified problems, needs and solutions proposed (logical frame concept);
 - methodology for implementing the project (concept and methodology, management, procedures, timetable, risks and risk management, monitoring and evaluation);
 - the quality of the risk mitigation strategy of the consortium;
 - feasibility of the project within the proposed time frame;
 - cost effectiveness (sufficient/appropriate budget for proper implementation);
 - approach to evaluation and selection of third parties to be funded (including how to ensure absence of conflict of interest) (if applicable);
 - strategy to ensure that ethical issues are addressed;
 - best value for money.
 - **Project team and cooperation arrangements (Max. 15 points):**
 - quality of the consortium and project teams;
 - appropriate procedures and problem-solving mechanisms for cooperating within the project teams and within the consortium.

– **Impact (Max. 20 points):**

- extent to which the proposal explains how the applying consortium will achieve the results and impact described in the section 'Expected impact';
- ambition and expected long-term impact of results on target groups/general public;
- appropriate dissemination strategy for ensuring sustainability and long-term impact;
- targets, quality and methodology of the strategy to attract people with lived experience of poverty to participate in the Commission's structured dialogue on lived experience of poverty;
- extent to which the proposal demonstrates how the proposed methodology can be replicated and adapted to be potentially used by EU Member States at national levels.

Award criteria	Minimum pass score	Maximum score
Relevance	25	35
Quality — Project design and implementation	20	30
Quality — Project team and cooperation arrangements	10	15
Impact	15	20
Overall (pass) scores	70	100

Maximum points: 100 points.

Individual thresholds per criterion: 25/35, 20/30, 10/15 and 15/20 points.

Overall threshold: 70 points.

Proposals that pass the individual thresholds AND the overall threshold will be considered for funding — within the limits of the available 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](#).

Milestones and deliverables

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

The following deliverables must be included in the proposal:

- all the introduction meetings (agendas, participants list, meeting reports)
- meeting reports from the structured dialogue meetings (see section *Activities that can be funded*)
- online thematic trainings and online trainings on horizontal topics (see section *Activities that can be funded*)
- a toolkit/guidance material on the participation of people with lived experience of poverty in policymaking at different levels (EU, national, regional, local), including on how to ensure their meaningful participation
- communication channel/platform for communication with the structured dialogue participants and alternates (see section *Activities that can be funded*)
- communication campaign to combat stigma and hostile narratives on poverty (see section *Activities that can be funded*).

Beneficiaries in ESF+ EaSI projects will have to ask attendees in activities/events to participate in an EU survey to provide policy feedback. This survey allows the granting authority to closely monitor training, mutual learning and awareness-raising events. The beneficiaries will receive a weblink to the survey, to be forwarded to the attendees.

There are 3 available options for the dissemination level of your deliverables:

- **Public** — fully open (automatically posted online in the Projects & Results section of the Funding & Tenders portal)
- **Sensitive** — limited (not public) under the conditions of the Grant Agreement
- **EU classified** (EUCI) – pursuant to Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444 of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information.

EU classified is not necessary under ESF+ EaSI programme, therefore you should only use Public and Sensitive. All main deliverables demonstrating progress in the implementation of the project as well as all results generated from it must be public. In few exceptional cases, some deliverables (for example, those that contain personal data or that originate from the internal management systems of the beneficiary) might remain sensitive. If a deliverable is marked as public, please double check if it is indeed suitable for publication (for instance, a signed attendance list should not be public) and modify the dissemination level if necessary.

 After the end of your project, you will moreover be contacted to participate in the EaSI Stakeholder Survey. Please take the time to complete this form since it allows us to collect feedback and measure the impact of EaSI projects, and thus to ensure continued EU funding for these types of actions.

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.

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 (**95%**).

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
 - A.5 Volunteers
- B. Subcontracting costs
- C. Purchase costs
 - C.1 Travel and subsistence
 - C.2 Equipment
 - C.3 Other goods, works and services
- E. Indirect costs

Specific cost eligibility conditions for this call:

- personnel costs:
 - SME owner/natural person unit cost²² : Yes
 - volunteers unit cost²³: Yes (without indirect costs)
- travel and subsistence unit cost²⁴: Yes²⁵

²² Commission [Decision](#) of 30 July 2024 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(2024)5328).

²³ Commission [Decision](#) of 10 April 2019 authorising the use of unit costs for declaring personnel costs for the work carried out by volunteers under an action or a work programme (C(2019)2646).

- 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
 - 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

 **Volunteers costs** — Volunteers costs are not a classic cost category. There are no costs because volunteers work for free, but they may nonetheless be added to the budget in the form of a pre-fixed unit cost (per volunteer) and thus allow you to benefit from the volunteers' work for the grant (by increasing the amount of reimbursement up to 100% of the normal costs, i.e. cost categories other than volunteers). More information is available in the [AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement, art 6.2.A.5](#).

Reporting and payment arrangements

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

Payment of the grant is generally made in **prefinancing** instalments and a **final payment** (the balance).

The aim of the prefinancing is to provide the beneficiaries with a float. The prefinancing remains the property of the EU until the payment of the balance. The frequency and size of prefinancing will depend on the project duration but may be adjusted in case of risk.

The payment schedule is normally as follows:

- **actions of 12 months:** one prefinancing payment of 70% paid within 30 days from the entry into force of the grant agreement or after receiving the financial guarantee (if required), whichever is the latest
- **actions between 12 and 24 months:** prefinancing payments linked to annual reporting periods will be made as follows:

²⁴ Commission [Decision](#) of 31 July 2024 authorising the use of unit costs for travel, accommodation and subsistence costs under an action or work programme under the 2021-2027 multi-annual financial framework (C(2024)5405).

²⁵ 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.

- an initial prefinancing payment of 40% paid within 30 days from the entry into force of the grant agreement or after receiving the financial guarantee (if required), whichever is the latest
- a second prefinancing of 40% after receiving an additional prefinancing report. Where the consumption of the previous prefinancing is less than 70%, the amount of the new prefinancing payment will be reduced by the difference between the 70% ceiling and the amount used
- **actions between 24 and 36 months:** prefinancing payments linked to annual reporting periods will be made as follows:
 - an initial prefinancing payment of 30% paid within 30 days from the entry into force of the grant agreement or after receiving the financial guarantee (if required), whichever is the latest
 - a second and third prefinancing of 40% and 20% after receiving additional prefinancing reports. Where the consumption of the previous prefinancing is less than 70%, the amount of the new prefinancing payment will be reduced by the difference between the 70% ceiling and the amount used.

There will be no interim payments.

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

All payments will be made to the coordinator.

 Please 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 to 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 limited joint and several liability with individual ceilings — *each beneficiary up to their maximum grant amount*.

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

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

- additional communication and dissemination activities: Yes

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

- specific rules for ESF+ actions: Yes

specific rules for financial support to third parties: 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 keep to the **page limits** (*see section 5*); excess pages will be disregarded.

Documents must be uploaded to the **right category** in the Submission System, otherwise the proposal 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](#)
- Topic Q&A 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 to the following email address:

- general questions on ESF+: EMPL-EaSI@ec.europa.eu
- call-specific questions: EMPL-ANTI-POVERTY@ec.europa.eu.

 Please:

- send your questions at the latest 7 days before the submission deadline (*see section 4*)
- 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 submit more than one proposal for *different* projects under the same call (and be awarded funding for them).
Organisations may participate in several proposals.
BUT: if there are several proposals for *very similar* projects, only one application will be accepted and evaluated; the applicants will be asked to withdraw the others (or they will be rejected).
- **Resubmission** — Proposals may be changed and re-submitted until the deadline for submission.
- **Rejection** — By submitting the application, all applicants accept the call conditions set out in this Call document (and the documents it refers to). Proposals that do not comply with all the call conditions will be rejected. This applies also to applicants: All applicants need to fulfil the criteria; if any one of them doesn't, they must be replaced or the entire proposal will be rejected.
- **Cancellation** — There may be circumstances which may require the cancellation of the call. In this case, you will be informed via a call or topic update. Please note that cancellations are without entitlement to compensation.
- **Language** — You can submit your proposal in any official EU language (project abstract/summary should however always be in English). For reasons of efficiency, we strongly advise you to use English for the entire application. If you need the call documentation in another official EU language, please submit a request within 10 days after call publication (for the contact information, see *section 12*).

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

This includes:

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

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

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