



Contracting Authority: European Commission

Empowering Kenyan citizens to enjoy political and civic rights

Guidelines for grant applicants

Budget line(s):

Lot 1: NDICI 14.020220 Civil Society Organisations

Lot 2: NDICI 14.020211 Fundamental Rights and Freedoms – Human Rights and Democracy

Reference: EuropeAid/183898/DD/ACT/KE

Deadline for submission¹ of concept notes:

08/04/2026 at 12:00 (Brussels date and time)

(in order to convert to local time click [here](#)²)

¹ Online submission via PROSPECT is mandatory for this call for proposals (see Section 2.2.2). In PROSPECT all dates and times are expressed in Brussels time. Applicants should note that the IT support is open Monday to Friday from 08:30 to 18:30 Brussels time (except during European Commission public holidays in Belgium as published in the Official Journal). Applicants should take note of the weekly maintenance hours mentioned in the PROSPECT user manual.

² An example of a time converter tool available online: <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html>

NOTICE

This is a restricted call for proposals. In the first instance, only concept notes (Annex A.1 – Grant application form - Concept note) must be submitted for evaluation. Thereafter, lead applicants who have been pre-selected will be invited to submit a full application (Annex A.2 – Grant application form – Full application). After the evaluation of the full applications, an eligibility check will be performed for those which have been provisionally selected (including those placed on the reserve list). Eligibility will be checked on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the contracting authority and the signed ‘declaration by the lead applicant’ sent together with the full application.

Online submission via PROSPECT

To apply to this call for proposals organisations must register in PADOR and submit their application in PROSPECT (see section 2.2.2 of the guidelines). The aim of PROSPECT is to increase the efficiency of the management of the call for proposals and to offer a better service to civil society organisations through a new panel of functionalities such as the on-line submission and the possibility to follow up online the status of their application.

Preparation: Online information session **24th March 2026 at 10.00 (Brussels date/time)** and user manuals

To help applicants familiarise themselves with the system before the online submission, an online information session will be organised on **24th March 2026 at 10.00 (Brussels date/time)**.

Should you be interested in this session, please send an email by **19th March 2026 cob** to **DELEGATION-KENYA-TENDERS-AND-CFP@eeas.europa.eu**, indicating: name, surname, nationality and email address of the persons who are going to participate as well as their organisation (max. two participants per organisation). No costs incurred by the applicants for attending this information session are reimbursable.

All organisations may find more information regarding PROSPECT in the [user's manual](#) and the [e-learning videos](#). You may also contact our technical support team via the online support form in PROSPECT³.

³ If PROSPECT is unavailable, the IT support can also be reached via email: ec-external-relations-application-support@ec.europa.eu.

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1. EMPOWERING KENYAN CITIZENS TO ENJOY POLITICAL AND CIVIC RIGHTS

1.1. BACKGROUND

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and independent media are vital to the attainment of rule of law, accountability, democracy, peace and stability. They are also key partners in formulating and implementing policies and programmes that meet people's needs, including basic human needs, reduce inequalities, realise rights and deliver inclusive services and fulfil the central commitment of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind. CSOs and independent media furthermore play a role in boosting domestic accountability through providing free and accessible information, promoting human rights including the rights of children, youth, minority groups and marginalised groups, and by monitoring human rights protection and violations, the respect for the rule of law, corruption and the implementation and impact of policies.

Civil Society, across the spectrum from non-formal groups across independent media to trade unions, seek to ensure that development, investment and growth strategies are efficient and directed to empower, reduce inequalities and create decent work and income, but also that businesses respect human rights as well as the environment. Civil Society is a vital actor for conflict prevention, resilience, peace and security in fragile and/or conflict-affected contexts and are furthermore often the basis of resilience at community level, and vital partners in risk reduction as well as in response to crisis. Finally, yet importantly, CSOs play a key role in voicing issues, in particular when authorities are unable or unwilling to reach some communities, in particular the most marginalised, such as persons with disabilities, indigenous populations, the extremely poor, migrants, refugees and others.

Kenya has active civil society, human rights and media sectors. The 2010 Constitution includes a prominent Bill of Rights that reflect universal fundamental freedoms and human, social, economic and cultural rights in line with UN Human Rights Conventions. However, some constitutional provisions are not fully implemented. Following the 2024 and 2025 GenZ protests, which were met with heavy-handed violent response and repression by the Kenyan security forces, several assessments and reports indicate that civic space in Kenya is shrinking and that the regression disproportionately affects human rights defenders (HRDs), CSOs, journalists, youth and marginalised communities.

The European Union (EU) is committed to promoting and protecting human rights and democracy worldwide, as well as within its own borders. Advancing human rights, rule of law, and democracy is both a treaty obligation and a strategic priority, ensuring the EU remains a predictable and reliable global partner. Human rights shape our everyday lives and underpin the way we live together in society. They exist to safeguard human dignity at all times. These rights are universal, indivisible, and interdependent—every person is entitled to them without exception. Human rights apply in all circumstances, including during conflict or crisis. Civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights are equally essential to ensure full respect for human dignity. At country level this is often done through active partnerships with partner countries, international and regional organisations, and groups and associations at all levels of society inclusion of human rights clauses in all agreements on trade or cooperation with non-EU countries. The EU engagement also includes deployment of EU election observation missions (EOM) upon invitation from third country governments. The EU has deployed several EU EOMs to Kenya, the latest for the August 2022 elections, for which final report recommendations were presented to Kenyan electoral stakeholders. The EU also deployed a follow-up mission to assess follow-up in February-March 2025 and recommendations from these reports steer EU engagement on deepening democracy, increasing integrity, transparency and accountability of governance processes in Kenya.

The **EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy for 2020-2027** serves as a compass to guide EU efforts to foster these values both within its borders and globally. Developed in response to a growing worldwide pushback against human rights and democratic principles, the Action Plan reflects the EU's proactive stance in tackling today's challenges, including climate change, emerging technologies, and disinformation. In Kenya this translates into supporting democratic governance, ruler of law, gender equality and the fight against sexual and gender-based violence, support to persons in vulnerable situations, human rights defenders and civil society and rights in the context of the climate change, business and human rights agendas.

Civil Society Organisations and human rights defenders are key EU partners in monitoring and reporting on legislative and policy developments as well as engaging citizens and raising their awareness about how economic development and trade agreements will impact Kenya and their communities.

With the adoption of the **Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP) for Kenya 2021-2027**, the EU revised the **EU-Kenya Roadmap of engagement with civil society for the period 2022-2025**, which includes the following objectives:

- (1) Support an enabling legal and institutional environment for Kenyan civil society, at national and county-level;
- (2) Promote participation of Kenyan civil society in policy-making processes, at international, national and county-level, with a focus on Women and Youth;
- (3) Strengthen the capacity of CSOs as independent actors of accountability, governance and development, in the main areas of EU-Kenya partnership;
- (4) Initiate a structured dialogue between the EU and Kenyan civil society, covering main EU priority areas, and involving the EU, its member states, national and local authorities.

As part of the roadmap the EU also committed to provide more funding to local organisations and particularly to Community based Organisations (CBOs). This is in line with the “localisation” approach that many donors and grant-making organisations apply in their work with civil society organisations in order to empower and improve support and partnerships in a manner whereby actions are informed, designed and implemented to address and respond to local population and community needs. Within EU civil society and human rights funding mechanisms this is primarily done through regular consultations with civil society and human rights organisations at country-level and strong Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP) funding streams. The **EU-Kenya Roadmap of engagement with civil society for the period 2022-2025** is currently under review and as such the above priorities will guide this Call for Proposal.

The CSO Thematic Budget under NDICI-Global Europe is the only programme with a clear actor-based mandate, and it has the overall objective to strengthen civil society organisations (CSOs) as independent actors of good governance and development in their own right. The new **EU Strategy for Civil Society**⁴ states that “*The EU will continue to support civic space and an enabling environment for civil society worldwide, and monitor human rights, democracy, and civic space through existing mechanisms*”. The EU also considers its work with civil society organisations and human rights organisations as closely linked to EU fundamental values and the European Democracy Shield: Empowering Strong and Resilient Democracies⁵.

In October 2022, the EU adopted the **Youth Action Plan in EU external action for 2022-2027** because youth represent a growing share of the population in many countries and are a driving change for a sustainable future and the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. They are increasingly concerned, as their future is at risk due to inequalities, climate change and a conflict-ridden world. They legitimately demand swifter and more courageous solutions to global challenges and want to be heard and involved in decision-making processes. As a major development partner, the EU has a responsibility to address young people's needs and aspirations, providing them with the opportunities and a seat at the decision-making table they deserve. The Youth Action Plan is the EU's operational roadmap for engaging young people, including investing in more youth-led initiatives. Three pillars of action will be strengthened:

- (1) Engage: Increase young people's voices in policy and decision-making at all levels;
- (2) Empower: Fight inequalities and provide young people with the skills and resources they need to prosper and fulfil their potential

⁴https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/8c30975d-bc1c-4415-8dcd-a71cb28f3662_en?filename=JUST_template_comingsoon_standard.pdf

⁵ European Democracy Shield: Empowering Strong and Resilient Democracies: https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/2539eb53-9485-4199-bfdc-97166893ff45_en?filename=JUST_template_comingsoon_standard_1.pdf

(3) Connect: Foster opportunities for young people to network and exchange with their peers.

This could include data collection and production of information and discussion products to support stronger youth engagement in more inclusive communal, county and national policy dialogue.

The **EU's Gender Action Plan III** is a policy framework aiming to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in all its external relations and partner countries. The EU uses GAPIII to guide its support to CSOs operating within various civic spaces, particularly in contexts where those spaces are under threat or shrinking. CSOs play a crucial role in implementing GAP III's objectives by advocating for gender equality and human rights within their respective civic spaces.

The **2023 EU Council conclusions on "Corruption as an obstacle to development"**⁶ highlight the importance of incorporating a strong anti-corruption perspective in all development efforts, underlining that mainstreaming anti-corruption efforts can contribute to improving the everyday lives of citizens by ensuring equal access to vital services, reducing inequality and promoting accountable and inclusive governance. In this spirit, recognising the crucial role of civil society as actors of governance and accountability, this call for proposals will aim to mainstream accountability and the fight against corruption.

The following call is framed by these commitments, experiences from previous engagements and recommendations number of EU policy and programming documents, and funded through two budget lines, which both aim at strengthening human rights for people in Kenya as well as strengthening the capacity of Kenyan civil society in promoting issues of concern to Kenyans and in their role as actors of good governance and development.

1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

The **global objective** of this call for proposals is to strengthen an inclusive, pluralistic and enabling civic space in Kenya by empowering independent civil society organisations, notably grassroots groups, youth led organisations and human rights defenders, to effectively participate in public policy decision making, defend human rights, and contribute to accountable, transparent and people centred democratic governance processes.

This Call for Proposals will also include **mandatory consortia of at least three organisations and mandatory financial support (Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP) to other civil society and human rights organisations**, preferably in both rural and urban areas, and will address issues of inequality, tolerance and democratic apathy. This is in line with the commitment of the EU in Kenya to ensure that EU funding reaches a much wider group of Kenyan civil society organisations and that such funding is reaching a larger number of localities across Kenya. It is also expected that the selected projects will foster better understanding and dialogue between different groups of youth and other age groups in society in all its diversity and bringing together those living in situations with constrained opportunities and those that have access to high-quality education and prospects of higher paying employment with a view to developing platforms to discuss concerns and opportunities that could foster joint and inclusive advocacy and development initiatives.

The **specific objective(s)** of this call for proposals are defined in the following 2 lots:

Lot 1: Enabling environment for civil society and citizens participation in democratic processes

Activities proposed under this Lot should promote an enabling, inclusive and resilient civic space in Kenya by enhancing the capacity, legitimacy and sustainability of CSOs to engage meaningfully in democratic governance processes, with a particular focus on electoral processes and consolidating democratic governance including meaningful participation of citizens and access to reliable and trusted media and information sources.

Activities funded under this Lot should complement (and not duplicate) actions funded under Lot 2 to address urgent human rights challenges. Actions under this Lot should strengthen civic space, citizens participation, accountable and democratic governance while contributing to the enabling conditions for sustainable investment, inclusive growth that benefits youth and women and public trust as promoted under the EU Global Gateway.

⁶ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9015-2023-INIT/en/pdf>

Proposals under this Lot must include a at least three of the priorities mentioned below:

- **Strengthen the enabling legal, regulatory and policy environment for civil society engagement in democratic and electoral processes at national and county levels;**
- **Support collaboration between CSOs and independent media that strengthen capacities to fight disinformation, manipulation of information and hate-speech that undermine civic space;**
- **Enhance the capacity, coordination and credibility of citizens and CSOs to access information, monitor and engage constructively in electoral processes and related democratic reforms;**
- **Promote inclusive and meaningful participation of citizens, particularly youth, woman and marginalised groups, through civil society engagement in elections and democratic governance.**
- **Actions under this Lot should focus on structural, systemic and process-oriented aspects of civic space including media and information aspects that strengthens democratic governance understanding, respect and participation, rather than on individual human rights violations.**

The proposal should include specific attention to equal representation of women, people with disabilities, youth in marginalised and vulnerable situations, to balanced geographic representation, diversity of organisations and themes covered across all activities, and to the mainstreaming of gender, youth, diversity and inclusion issues in topics of debate and discussion.

All proposals submitted under this lot will have to include two mandatory elements:

i) Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP) i.e. to other civil society organisations:

The FSTP element is an important part of the project and should have a total value of at least 25% of the requested EU contribution⁷. The FSTP element should be described in a few lines in the Concept Note, confirming the minimum amount of the budget allocated to FSTP, for the proposal to be eligible. If FSTP is not explicitly mentioned in the Concept Note, the Evaluation Committee will assume that FSTP is not included and will reject the proposal. The FSTP element will have to be further developed in the Full Proposal.

ii) Provisions for a contingency of EUR 100,000 (respecting the applicable provision of point 2.1.4 below)

A contingency would allow the project consortia to respond quickly to an urgent evolving situation; however, the contract will stipulate that any use of the contingency will require a prior written request and a prior written approval by the Contracting Authority.

Applicants are highly encouraged to explore the use of art and culture as means of awareness raising, access to information and advocacy tools and use innovative means during implementation and to identify how the results will have a sustainable impact.

Lot 2: Urgent human rights challenges

According to several reports, Kenya has experienced a deterioration in the human rights situation in recent years. In response to nationwide protests in June and July 2024 and 2025, governmental duty bearers were accused of not adequately protecting right-holders and to have failed to prevent larger-scale abuses, including loss of life, physical violence, and arbitrary arrests and detentions. Significant human rights violations have been reported incl. credible reports of deaths, disappearances, arbitrary arrest or detention, torture and/or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, transnational repression against individuals in another country as well as restrictions on freedom of expression and media freedom.

In light of this, proposals submitted under Lot 2 should seek to address **urgent human rights challenges, promote and advocate for human rights protection**, document and report on duty-bearer and rights-holder relations including constitutional rights of Kenyans, persons seeking protection in Kenya as well as ensuring

⁷ In other words, 25% of EUR 2,000,000 is EUR 500,000 hence the proposed FSTP element for concept notes and full proposals submitted under Lot 1 should be at least this amount.

that human rights education is available to and supports persons at risk, youth, children and women as well as to vulnerable and marginalised groups. Activities can also support training and mentoring of human rights organisations across the country and increase their capacity to monitor, analyse and document human rights violations and abuses in urban centres, informal settlements and rural areas. The focus of proposed actions should be on political and civic rights and less on social, economic and cultural rights, although these in some cases facilitate the realisation of the former group of rights.

Lot 2 will therefore support activities to address the following priorities:

- **Preventing and combatting human rights violations and ill-treatment, documenting abuses and violations of rights and provision of legal aid, psycho-social support and rehabilitation to victims and their family members.**
- **Support to human rights defenders, persons at risk and wider activities of human rights defenders that are either originating from Kenya or seeking protection in Kenya;**
- **Strengthen access to information, collaboration with independent media on activities to increase human rights awareness and foster human rights activism, building a culture of respect for human dignity, equality, diversity, access to justice and fight against impunity.**

Proposals submitted under this lot must include at least three of the priorities mentioned above.

In addition to this, activities can support collaborative efforts between human rights organisations, CSOs, media and government entities to improve the human rights situation; however, this should not be a significant element of the overall action. The proposal should include specific attention to upholding the rights of children, youth (15-29 years), people in vulnerable situations including minority groups and marginalised communities.

All proposals submitted under this lot will have to include two mandatory elements:

i. Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP) i.e. to other civil society organisations:

The FSTP element is an important part of the project and should have **a total value of at least 25% of the requested EU contribution**⁸. The FSTP element should be described in a few lines in the Concept Note, confirming the minimum amount of the budget allocated to FSTP, in order for the proposal to be eligible. If FSTP is not explicitly mentioned in the Concept Note, the Evaluation Committee will assume that FSTP is not included and will reject the proposal. The FSTP element will have to be further developed in the Full Proposal.

ii. Provisions for a contingency reserve (respecting the applicable provision of point 2.1.4 below)

A contingency would allow the project consortia to respond quickly to an urgent evolving situation; however, the contract will stipulate that any use of the contingency will require a prior written request and a prior written approval by the Contracting Authority.

Applicants should make an effort to explore and create synergy with ongoing, recent or future relevant EU projects in Kenya. An example of this is the EU SEE: [Kenya – Eu SEE](#) project.

Applicants are highly encouraged to explore the use of art and culture as means of awareness raising, access to information and advocacy tools and use innovative means during implementation and to identify how the results will have a sustainable impact⁹.

As indicated, all proposed actions should be gender sensitive and rights-based. The actions should address crosscutting issues related to gender-equality, sound environmental practices and ensure inclusion as well as empowerment of people with disabilities and minority groups.

⁸ In other words, 25% of EUR 1,350,000 is EUR 337,500 hence the proposed FSTP element for concept notes and full proposals submitted under Lot 2 should be at least this amount.

⁹ DG INTPA has developed an online tool to assist CSOs in preparing funding applications for EU thematic budgets. This is available on INTPA Academy: [Decoding EU Calls of CSO Thematic Programme: A step-by-step guide for CSOs on grant applications](#) | [EU International Partnerships Academy](#)

➤ **Rights-based approach (RBA)**

Proposals under this call for proposals shall be designed according to the human rights-based approach (HRBA)¹⁰. Please note that this aspect will be assessed at both the concept note (evaluation grid, section relevance 1.1) and full application phase (evaluation grid section relevance 2.1).

The rights-based approach implies that target groups are considered as ‘rights-holders’ with legal entitlements, and government institutions are not mere service providers but ‘duty-bearers,’ who are under an obligation to deliver on people’s human rights. In line with a Rights-Based Approach, development cooperation should contribute to the development of the capacities of ‘rights-holders’ to claim their rights and ‘duty-bearers’ to meet their obligations. Programmes and projects therefore need to assess the capacities of rights-holders and duty-bearers and develop the appropriate strategies to build these capacities. At the heart of the approach is the recognition that unequal power relations and social exclusion deny people their human rights and often keep them in poverty. The approach therefore puts strong emphasis on marginalised, disadvantaged, and excluded groups.

The HRBA methodology also reminds us that development projects can have unintended negative impact in terms of human rights such as disadvantaging certain groups, interfering with participation rights and labour rights or contributing to forced displacement. It is therefore important to abide by the 'do no harm' principle and carry out adequate analysis and mitigation. Moreover, the working methodology recognises that pursuing desired human rights outcomes is not, in itself, enough. The way these outcomes are achieved is equally important. Programmes therefore monitor and evaluate both outcomes and processes.

The five working principles of the human rights-based approach (applying all human rights for all, meaningful and inclusive participation and access to decision-making, non-discrimination and accountability and rule of law for all and transparency and access to information), should be implemented as appropriate and possible in relation to any proposed project.

➤ **Gender Mainstreaming**

Gender should be mainstreamed in all proposals. Gender mainstreaming remains the primary means to achieve gender equality. Its purpose is to ensure that all policies and programmes maximise their benefits for all and contribute to stop the perpetuation of inequality. The EU Gender Action Plan III for 2021-2025 (GAP III) calls on making gender equality a crosscutting priority in EU external action. Whenever possible, GAP III gender-sensitive and sex-disaggregated indicators and gender-analyses to inform the design of future actions shall be developed for all target groups. Gender equality constitutes a fundamental human rights principle and a common value of the European Union (EU Treaties, EU Gender Action Plan 2021-2025)¹¹.

➤ **Monitoring system and OPSYS/corporate indicators¹²**

Applications need to integrate corporate indicators as much as possible, in order to contribute to the aggregation at programme level. Links below give reference to the systematic use of EU indicators that can be used when preparing logical framework of proposals, mainly:

- i) Global Europe Results Framework indicators¹³ and
- ii) Results chain indicators for Partnerships for Human Development, Peace and Governance, and Gender equality.

Each applicant should propose a robust monitoring system that tracks indicators, allows for communication of data, and that can inform the steering of the action (see section 2.1 - implementation approach of the application template). In addition, this element is evaluated in the **full proposal evaluation grid (question 4.2)**.

¹⁰ https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/document/download/54c77670-4179-49f0-9af3-d1b18ff2d41f_en

¹¹ EU Gender Action Plan III (GAP III) for 2021–2025, extended to 2027, remains the EU's core framework for driving gender equality in external actions. Read more here: [GAP III Objectives and Indicators](#)

¹² https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/resources/results-indicators/core-indicators-design-and-monitoring-eu-funded-interventions_en

¹³ [Global Europe Results Framework](#) & https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/resources/results-indicators/global-europe-results-framework_en

1.3. FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is **EUR 3,350,000**. The contracting authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

Indicative allocation of funds by lots:

Lot 1: Promotion and protection of an enabling environment for civil society: EUR 2,000,000.00

This Lot is funded through the NDICI Thematic Budget for Civil Society Organisations.

Lot 2: Urgent human rights challenges: EUR 1,350,000.00

This Lot is funded through the NDICI Thematic Budget for Human Rights and Democracy.

If the allocation indicated for a specific lot cannot be used due to insufficient quality or number of proposals received, the contracting authority reserves the right to reallocate the remaining funds to another lot.

Size of grants

Any grant requested under this call for proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

Lot 1:

- minimum amount: EUR 2,000,000.00
- maximum amount: EUR 2,000,000.00

Lot 2:

- minimum amount: EUR 1,350,000.00
- maximum amount: EUR 1,350,000.00

Any grant requested under this call for proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum percentages of total eligible costs of the action:

- Minimum percentage: 50% of the total eligible costs of the action.
- Maximum percentage: 95% of the total eligible costs of the action (see also Section 2.1.4).

The balance (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the contracting authority) must be financed from sources other than the general budget of the Union or the European Development Fund¹⁴.

¹⁴ Where a grant is financed by the European Development Fund, any mention of European Union financing must be understood as referring to European Development Fund financing.

2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of the actions financed under this call, in conformity with the practical guide (PRAG), which is applicable to the present call (available on the internet at this address <https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/ExactExternalWiki/ePRAG>).¹⁵

2.1. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

- (1) the actors (2.1.1.):
 - The **‘lead applicant’**, i.e. the entity submitting the application form;
 - if any, its **co-applicant(s) (where it is not specified otherwise the lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) are hereinafter jointly referred as ‘applicant(s)’)**;
 - and, if any, **affiliated entity(ies)** to the lead applicant and/or to a co-applicant(s);
- (2) the actions (2.1.3.):
 - actions for which a grant may be awarded;
- (3) the eligible costs or results/conditions (2.1.4.):
 - where the grant takes the form of reimbursement of costs (totally or partially): the eligible costs, the types of cost that may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant.
 - where the grant takes the form of financing not linked to costs (totally or partially): the eligibility conditions for the results/conditions.

2.1.1. Eligibility of applicants (i.e. lead applicant and co-applicant(s))

Lead applicant

In order to be eligible for a grant, the lead applicant must:

- be a legal person **and**
- be non-profit-making **and**
- be a non-governmental organisation as defined by Article 159(1) of the EU Financial Regulation¹⁶ **and**
- be effectively established in¹⁷ a Member State of the European Union or Kenya. Due to the legal status of international organisations, the obligation of effective establishment in the referred countries does not apply to international organisations, where the latter are eligible, **and**

¹⁵ Note that a lead applicant (i.e. a coordinator) whose pillars have been positively assessed by the European Commission and who is awarded a grant will not sign the standard grant contract published with these guidelines but a contribution agreement based on the contribution agreement template. All references in these guidelines and other documents related to this call to the standard grant contract shall in this case be understood as referring to the relevant provisions of the contribution agreement template.

¹⁶ International organisations are international public-sector organisations set up by intergovernmental agreements as well as specialised agencies set up by them; the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are also recognised as international organisations. While the European Commission may assimilate other non-profit organisations to international organisations, this is not relevant for this call for proposals. Thus, a non-profit organisation assimilated by the European Commission under Article 159(3) is not regarded as an international organisation under this call for proposals.

¹⁷ To be determined on the basis of the organisation’s statutes, which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned and that its head office is located in an eligible country. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ has been concluded.

- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary, **and**
- not being in any of the situations listed in Section 2.4. of the practical guide.
- The lead applicant must act with co-applicant(s) as specified hereafter.

If awarded the grant contract, the lead applicant will become the beneficiary identified as the coordinator in Annex G (special conditions). The coordinator is the sole interlocutor of the contracting authority. It represents and acts on behalf of any other co-beneficiary (if any) and coordinate the design and implementation of the action.

Co-applicant(s)

For both lots, the lead applicant must act with at least two co-applicants. If the lead applicant is established in Kenya, at least one of the co-applicants should be established in¹⁸ a Member State of the European Union. If the lead applicant is established in¹⁹ a Member State of the European Union, at least one of the co-applicants should be established in²⁰ Kenya;

Co-applicants participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the lead applicant.

Co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant himself.

In addition to the categories referred to in Section 2.1.1, the following are however also eligible: National Human Rights Institutions.

Co-applicants must sign the mandate in Annex A.2 Section 5.

If awarded the grant contract, the co-applicant(s) (if any) will become beneficiary(ies) in the action (together with the coordinator)

Affiliated entities

The lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) may act with affiliated entity(ies).

Only the following entities may be considered as affiliated entities to the lead applicant and/or to co-applicant(s):

Only entities having a structural link with the applicants (i.e. the lead applicant or a co-applicant), in particular a legal or capital link.

This structural link encompasses mainly two notions:

- (i) Control, as defined in Directive 2013/34/EU on the annual financial statements, consolidated financial statements and related reports of certain types of undertakings:

Entities affiliated to an applicant may hence be:

- Entities directly or indirectly controlled by the applicant (daughter companies or first-tier subsidiaries). They may also be entities controlled by an entity controlled by the applicant (granddaughter companies or second-tier subsidiaries) and the same applies to further tiers of control;

¹⁸ To be determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes, which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned and that its head office is located in an eligible country. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has been concluded.

¹⁹ To be determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes, which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned and that its head office is located in an eligible country. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has been concluded.

²⁰ To be determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes, which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned and that its head office is located in an eligible country. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has been concluded.

- Entities directly or indirectly controlling the applicant (parent companies). Likewise, they may be entities controlling an entity controlling the applicant;
 - Entities under the same direct or indirect control as the applicant (sister companies).
- (ii) Membership, i.e. the applicant is legally defined as a e.g. network, federation, association in which the proposed affiliated entities also participate or the applicant participates in the same entity (e.g. network, federation, association...) as the proposed affiliated entities.

The structural link shall as a general rule be neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation. This means that the link would exist independently of the award of the grant; it should exist before the call for proposals and remain valid after the end of the action.

By way of exception, an entity may be considered as affiliated to an applicant even if it has a structural link specifically established for the sole purpose of the implementation of the action in the case of so-called ‘sole applicants’ or ‘sole beneficiaries’. A sole applicant or a sole beneficiary is a legal entity formed by several entities (a group of entities) which together comply with the criteria for being awarded the grant. For example, an association is formed by its members.

What is not an affiliated entity?

The following are not considered entities affiliated to an applicant:

- Entities that have entered into a (procurement) contract or subcontract with an applicant, act as concessionaires or delegates for public services for an applicant,
- Entities that receive financial support from the applicant,
- Entities that cooperate on a regular basis with an applicant on the basis of a memorandum of understanding or share some assets,
- Entities that have signed a consortium agreement under the grant contract (unless this consortium agreement leads to the creation of a ‘sole applicant’ as described above).

How to verify the existence of the required link with an applicant?

The affiliation resulting from control may in particular be proved on the basis of the consolidated accounts of the group of entities the applicant and its proposed affiliates belong to.

The affiliation resulting from membership may in particular be proved on the basis of the statutes or equivalent act establishing the entity (network, federation, association) which the applicant constitutes or in which the applicant participates.

If the applicants are awarded a grant contract, their affiliated entity(ies) will not become beneficiary(ies) of the action and signatory(ies) of the grant contract. However, they will participate in the design and in the implementation of the action and the costs they incur (including those incurred for implementation contracts and financial support to third parties and subcontractors) may be accepted as eligible costs, provided they comply with all the relevant rules already applicable to the beneficiary(ies) under the grant contract.

Affiliated entity(ies) must satisfy the same eligibility criteria as the lead applicant and the co-applicant(s). They must sign the affiliated entity(ies) statement in Annex A.2 Section 5.

2.1.2. Associates, contractors, recipients of financial support

The following entities are not applicants nor affiliated entities and do not have to sign the ‘mandate for co-applicant(s)’ or ‘affiliated entities’ statement:

- Associates

Other organisations or individuals may be involved in the action. Such associates play a real role in the action but may not receive funding from the grant, with the exception of per diem or travel costs. Associates do not have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in Section 2.1.1. Associates must be mentioned in Annex A.2 Section 4 — ‘Associates participating in the action’.

- Contractors

The beneficiaries and their affiliated entities are permitted to award contracts (subcontracting or implementation contracts). Beneficiaries, affiliated entity(ies), recipients of financial support or associates

cannot be also contractors in the project. Contractors are subject to the procurement rules set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

- Recipients of financial support

If allowed by the call for proposals, and under the conditions laid herein and in the grant contract, the beneficiaries and their affiliated are permitted to provide financial support to other third parties. These third parties are neither beneficiaries, affiliated entity(ies) nor associates nor contractors.

Each actor should only participate in a single role in an action. This is to avoid any potential conflicts of interest and ensure clear allocation of rights and obligations as well as certainty on cost eligibility.

2.1.3. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made

Definition:

An action is composed of a set of activities.

Duration

The initial planned duration of an action may **not be lower than 30 months nor exceed 48 months**.

Sectors or themes

Actions that address the objectives and priorities listed in section 1.2 above.

Location

In principle, all proposed activities must take place in Kenya. When duly justified and directly linked to the priorities for the specific lot under which the proposal is submitted, limited activities outside Kenya can be included in the Description of the Action.

Types of action

The types of actions which are eligible and may be financed under this call are those directly contributing to the achievement of the objectives as per section 1.2 above. All actions should be designed to produce specific, measurable results in response to identified problems.

The following types of action are ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- actions supporting political parties or related foundations.
- actions concerning one-off conferences. Conferences may be funded only if they form part of a wider range of activities to be implemented in the project timeframe but these activities should be limited and justified at Full Application stage.
- actions which consist exclusively or primarily in capital expenditure and infrastructure expenditure, e.g. land, buildings, equipment and vehicles, except in special circumstances;
- actions and measures that may result in violation of human rights in partner countries or causing significant adverse effects on the environment or the climate²¹.

In view of the size of the grants a project steering committee with the participation by the EU as an observers should be foreseen. Similarly, the project should foresee coordination with other ongoing or future EU initiatives and projects in order to avoid overlaps and unclear messaging on EU policies.

Types of activity

Examples of activities (indicative and non-exhaustive list) which may be financed under this call are described for each lot under section 1.2 above.

Financial support to third parties

Applicants shall propose financial support to third parties.

Applicants shall propose financial support to third parties in order to help achieving the objectives of the action.

The maximum amount of financial support per third party is EUR 60 000 except where achieving the objectives of the actions would otherwise be impossible or overly difficult, in which case this threshold can be exceeded. A threshold below EUR 60 000 can be set if appropriate.

²¹ Article 29 NDICI.

As mentioned in Section 1.2, applicants should describe in a few lines their proposed **financial support to third parties (FSTP) in Annex A.1 (Grant application form – Concept note)**, confirming the minimum amount of the budget allocated to FSTP. If not explicitly mentioned, it will be assumed that FSTP is not proposed and the application will be declared ineligible. The FSTP element will have to be further developed in the Full Proposal. Applicants should also demonstrate prior experience in and capacity to manage FSTP/cascade funding schemes.

Applicants must explain how FSTP is integrated and articulated with the other project activities. Applicants may use their own procedures for selecting the final beneficiaries of the financial support. However, selection procedures must be transparent, inclusive, ensure equal treatment and fair competition, and include appropriate measures to prevent conflicts of interest. Capacity building of third parties (e.g. training, coaching, mentoring, information sessions) must constitute a substantial component of the FSTP approach and be clearly described in the Full Application. Applicants must also describe the arrangements for monitoring and reporting on the activities of third parties and explain how the results of FSTP will be monitored and integrated into the overall results of the action, in particular within the logical framework. All costs related to FSTP must be clearly identified in the budget, including the amounts allocated to financial support for third parties, capacity-building costs, and resources dedicated to the management and monitoring of FSTP. Applicants are encouraged to consult the online tool for FSTP²².

For this Call for Proposals, competitive FSTP schemes (calls for proposals) will be prioritised above FSTP schemes that pre-identify FSTP recipients already in the Concept Note or Full Application.

In compliance with the present guidelines and notably of any conditions or restrictions in this Section, the lead applicant **should define mandatorily in Section 2.1.1 of Annex a.2 (Grant application form – Full application)**:

- (i) the overall objectives, the specific objective(s) and the outputs²³ (i.e. the results) to be achieved with the financial support;
- (ii) the different types of activities eligible for financial support, on the basis of a fixed list;
- (iii) the types of persons or categories of persons which may receive financial support;
- (iv) the criteria for selecting these entities and giving the financial support;
- (v) the criteria for determining the exact amount of financial support for each third entity; and
- (vi) the maximum amount which may be given.
- (vii) the proposed capacity-building activities and appropriate monitoring arrangements for third parties; and
- (viii) all costs related to FSTP in the proposed budget.

In all events, the mandatory conditions set above for giving financial support (points (i) to (vi)) have to be strictly defined in the grant contract as to avoid any exercise of discretion.]

Recipients of financial support cannot be designated in the lists of EU restrictive measures.

Visibility

The applicants must take all necessary steps to ensure the visibility of the European Union as the funder or co-funder of the action, through the correct and prominent display of the EU emblem and relevant funding statement. Unless the European Commission agrees otherwise, actions that are wholly or partially funded by the European Union must ensure the visibility of EU financing by displaying the EU emblem in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Operational guidelines for recipients of EU funding, published by the European Commission.

²² The EU has developed a collection of FSTP best practices: [Making financial support to third parties work in practice | EU International Partnerships Academy](#)

²³ As per OECD DAC definition, the term ‘results’ includes: ‘impact’ (overall objective), ‘outcome(s)’ (specific objective(s) and ‘output(s)’.

All measures and activities relating to visibility and, if applicable, communication, must comply with the latest Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU-funded external action, laid down and published by the European Commission [Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU External Actions | International Partnerships \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_2021_1117).

Derogation from contractual visibility obligations is permitted in exceptional situations, which may be required in the framework of this action due to security issues for the staff and beneficiaries, local political sensitivities, when this is in the interest of the beneficiary or the contracting authority. In such cases, visibility tools, products, and channels to be used in promoting a given action will be determined on a case-by-case basis, in consultation and agreement with the EU prior to limiting EU visibility. Requests for derogation from contractual visibility obligations should be included in Annex A.2 – Full application form and negotiated as part of the Special Conditions of the contract.

Number of applications and grants per applicants / affiliated entities

The lead applicant may not submit more than 1 application under this call for proposals.

The lead applicant may not be awarded more than 1 grant under this call for proposals.

The lead applicant may be a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in another application at the same time.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity can be the co-applicant or affiliated entity in more than 1 application per lot under this call for proposals.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity may not be awarded more than 1 grant per lot under this call for proposals.

Form of the grant

The grants awarded under this call for proposals take the following form(s):

- Reimbursement of eligible costs that may be based on any or a combination of the following forms as per Section 2.1.4:
 - (i) actual costs incurred by the beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies)

2.1.4. Eligibility of costs and eligibility of results/conditions

Reimbursement of costs

Where the grant takes the form of reimbursement of costs (entirely or partially), only ‘eligible costs’ can be covered by a grant. The categories of costs that are eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and an overall ceiling for “eligible costs”.

Eligible costs can be reimbursed as actual costs²⁴.

Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under this call for proposals, costs must comply with the provisions of Article 14 of the general conditions to the standard grant contract (see Annex G of the guidelines).

Recommendations to award a grant are always subject to the condition that the checks preceding the signing of the grant contract do not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget (such as arithmetical errors, inaccuracies, unrealistic costs and ineligible costs). The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the contracting authority to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. It is not possible to increase the grant or the percentage of EU co-financing as a result of these corrections.

It is therefore in the applicants' interest to provide a **realistic and cost-effective budget**.

Contingency reserve

²⁴ Please note that where volunteer costs are accepted as co-financing, it shall be determined on the basis of the unit cost per volunteer per day as defined and authorised by the European Commission at the following address: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/unit-cost-decision>.

The budget may include a contingency reserve not exceeding 5% of the estimated direct eligible costs (in case of actions comprising also financing not linked to costs, to be calculated on the cost-based component). It can only be used with the **prior written authorisation** of the contracting authority.

Eligible indirect costs

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding, but the total must not exceed 7% of the estimated total eligible direct costs (except volunteer costs and project office costs) (in case of actions comprising also financing not linked to costs, to be calculated on the cost-based component). Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another budget heading in the standard grant contract. The lead applicant may be asked to justify the percentage requested before the grant contract is signed. However, once the flat rate has been fixed in the special conditions of the grant contract, no supporting documents need to be provided.

If any of the applicants or affiliated entity(ies) is in receipt of an operating grant financed by the EU, it may not claim indirect costs on its incurred costs within the proposed budget for the action.

Contributions in kind

Contributions in kind mean the provision of goods or services to beneficiaries or affiliated entities free of charge by a third party. As contributions in kind do not involve any expenditure for beneficiaries or affiliated entities, they are not eligible costs (except for personnel costs for the work carried out by volunteers under an action or operating grant if so authorised).

Contributions in kind may not be treated as co-financing.

However, if the description of the action as proposed includes contributions in kind, the contributions have to be made

Other co-financing shall be based on estimates provided by the applicant.

Ineligible costs

Costs that do not comply with the conditions laid down in the contract are not eligible. The following costs are not eligible:

- debts and debt service charges (interest);
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- costs declared by the beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme receiving a European Union (including through EDF) grant;
- purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary for the direct implementation of the action, in which case ownership must be transferred in accordance with Article 7.5 of the general conditions of the standard grant contract, at the latest at the end of the action;
- currency exchange losses;
- in kind contributions (except for volunteers' work);
- bonuses included in costs of staff;
- negative interest charged by banks or other financial institutions;
- credit to third parties
- salary costs of the personnel of national administrations.

2.1.5. Ethics and values

Absence of conflict of interest

The applicant must not be affected by any conflict of interest and must have no equivalent relation in that respect with other applicants or parties involved in the actions. Any attempt by an applicant to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the evaluation committee or the contracting authority during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing

applications will lead to the rejection of its application and may result in exclusion decisions for other award procedures and/or financial penalties according to the Financial Regulation in force.

Respect for environmental legislation and core labour standards

Applicants who are awarded a grant must comply with the environmental legislation including multilateral environmental agreements, and with the core labour standards as applicable and as defined in the relevant International Labour Organisation conventions (such as the conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining; elimination of forced and compulsory labour; abolition of child labour).

Respect of EU values

Applicants who are awarded a grant must commit to and ensure the respect of basic EU values, such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities.

Zero tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment:

The European Commission applies a policy of 'zero tolerance' in relation to all wrongful conduct which has an impact on the professional credibility of the applicant.

Physical abuse or punishment, or threats of physical abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation, harassment and verbal abuse, as well as other forms of intimidation shall be prohibited.

Successful applicants (and affiliated entities) other than (i) natural persons (ii) pillar-assessed entities and (iii) governments and other public bodies, shall assess their internal policy against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEA-H) through a self-evaluation questionnaire (Annex L). For grants of EUR 60 000 or less no self-evaluation is required. Such self-evaluation questionnaire is not part of the evaluation of the full application by the contracting authority but is an administrative requirement. See section 6.2.10. of the practical guide.

Anti-corruption and anti-bribery

The applicant shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations and codes relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption. The contracting authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel project financing if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process or during the execution of a contract and if the contracting authority fails to take all appropriate measures to remedy the situation. For the purposes of this provision, 'corrupt practices' are the offer of a bribe, gift, gratuity or commission to any person as an inducement or reward for performing or refraining from any act relating to the award of a contract or execution of a contract already concluded with the contracting authority.

Unusual commercial expenses

Applications will be rejected or contracts terminated if it emerges that the award or execution of a contract has given rise to unusual commercial expenses. Such unusual commercial expenses are commissions not mentioned in the main contract or not stemming from a properly concluded contract referring to the main contract, commissions not paid in return for any actual and legitimate service, commissions remitted to a tax haven, commissions paid to a payee who is not clearly identified or commissions paid to a company which has every appearance of being a front company.

Grant beneficiaries found to have paid unusual commercial expenses on projects funded by the European Union are liable, depending on the seriousness of the facts observed, to have their contracts terminated or to be excluded from receiving EU/EDF funds.

Breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud

The contracting authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to substantial breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud. If substantial breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the contract, the contracting authority may refrain from concluding the contract.

2.2. HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

To apply for this call for proposals the lead applicants need to:

I. Provide information about the organisations involved in the action.

Lead applicants, co-applicants and affiliated entities, other than natural persons, must register in PADOR²⁵.

PADOR is an on-line database in which organisations register and update information concerning their entity. Organisations registered in PADOR get a unique ID (EuropeAid ID) which they **must mention** in their application.

PADOR is accessible via the website: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/pador>

Lead applicants must register at the concept note step. Co-applicants and affiliated entities must register at the full application step; lead applicants must make sure that their PADOR profile is up to date.

Please note that the registration of this data in **PADOR is obligatory** for this call for proposals. If it is impossible to register online in PADOR for technical reasons or for security and confidentiality concerns, lead applicants, co-applicants and/or affiliated entity(ies) must complete the 'PADOR registration form'²⁶ attached to these guidelines. This form must be sent **together with the full application**, by the submission deadline (see Section 2.2.5).

The European Commission external action DGs (DG INTPA, DG NEAR, FPI) are migrating the management of their calls and contracts to an online portal based on a register of organisations participating in EU calls for proposals. This online register will apply the "once only" principle: data related to an organisation needs to be submitted only once. This portal will be used as a communication platform for the management of the contract(s). Since you are in the process of applying for a call for proposals financed by DG INTPA, DG NEAR or FPI, it is mandatory to register now in the European Commission's Participant Register.

This Participant Register will act as an entry point to the future call and contract management portal. By registering you will obtain a Participant Identification Code (PIC, 9-digit number) which will act as your unique identifier. Registration is free of charge. Not registering your organisation might create technical difficulties with the future data migration.

To apply for this call for proposal, it is mandatory for the lead and co-applicants to register in the **Participant Register**. In order to register your organisation, please follow this link: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/participant-register>.

II. Provide information about the action in the documents listed under sections 2.2.2 (Where and how to send concept notes) and 2.2.5 (Full applications).

Please note that online submission via **PROSPECT is obligatory** for this call.

It is strongly recommended to register in PADOR well in advance and not to wait until the last minute before the deadline to submit your application in PROSPECT.

Before starting using PADOR and PROSPECT, please read the user guides available on the website. All technical questions related to the use of these systems should be addressed to the IT helpdesk at ec-external-relations-application-support@ec.europa.eu via the online support form in PROSPECT.

2.2.1. Concept note content

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the concept note instructions in the grant application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex A). Lead applicants should then keep strictly to the format of the concept note and fill in the paragraphs and pages in order.

Applicants must apply in English.

²⁵ Natural persons who apply for a grant (if so allowed in the guidelines) do not have to register in PADOR. In this case, the information included in PROSPECT and in the concept note is sufficient.

²⁶ Which corresponds to Annex F – PADOR off-line form (Practical guide, Annex e13).

WARNING

The title of your proposal will become, if selected, the subject matter of the grant contract that will be signed with your organisation.

On the [Europa website](#), the field 'Public subject', using the title of the selected proposal, is used for publication in the Financial Transparency System (FTS) of all EU grants. This field, being intended for the general public, should provide general and clear information on the purpose of the expenditure.

We therefore recommend to define the subject matter of your proposal along the following indications.

An appropriate subject:

- refers to the content of the project or its objective;
- does not repeat information available in other fields such as the recipient's name, the programme, the year;
- is preferably written in English;
- may contain acronyms if relevant for the citizens;
- may contain the reference to the project or programme.

In the concept note, lead applicants must only provide an estimate of the requested EU contribution as well as an indicative percentage of that contribution in relation to the eligible costs of the action (the percentage only applicable, where the grant takes the form, entirely or partially, of reimbursement of costs).

A detailed budget is to be submitted only by the lead applicants invited to submit a full application in the second phase.

The elements outlined in the concept note may not be modified in the full application, except for the changes described below:

- The EU contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 20%. Lead applicants are free to adapt the percentage of co-financing required within the minimum and maximum amount and percentages of co-financing, as laid down in these guidelines in Section 1.3 (only applicable in the case of grants taking the form, totally or partially, of reimbursement of costs).
- The lead applicant may add, remove or replace one or more co-applicant(s) or affiliated entity (ies) only in duly justified cases.
- The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the action if unforeseen circumstances beyond the applicants control have taken place following the submission of the concept note and require such adaptation (risk of action not being carried out). In such cases, the duration must remain within the limits imposed by the guidelines for applicants.
- Own contributions by the applicants can be replaced by other donors' contributions at any time.

An explanation/justification of the relevant replacements/adjustments shall be included in the full application. Should the explanation/justification not be accepted by the evaluation committee, the proposal may be rejected on that sole basis.

Only the concept note form will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that this document contains ALL relevant information concerning the action. No additional annexes shall be sent.

Please complete the concept note carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly.

Please note that incomplete concept notes may be rejected. Lead applicants are advised to verify that their concept note is complete by using the checklist for concept note (Annex A.1, Instructions).

Any error or major discrepancy related to the concept note instructions may lead to the rejection of the concept note.

Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is not sufficient to conduct an objective assessment.

2.2.2. Where and how to send concept notes

The concept note together with the declaration by the lead applicant (Annex A.1 section 2) **must be submitted online via PROSPECT** <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/prospect> following the instructions given in the PROSPECT user manual.

Upon submission of a concept note online, the lead applicant will receive an automatic confirmation of receipt in its PROSPECT profile. Concept notes sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected. Hand-written concept notes will not be accepted.

2.2.3. Deadline for submission of concept notes

The deadline for the submission of concept notes is **08/04/2026 at 12:00** (Brussels date and time). In order to convert this deadline to local time you can use any online time converter tool that takes into account timezones and winter/summer time changes (example available [here](#))

The lead applicant is strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit its concept note, since heavy Internet traffic or a fault with the Internet connection (including electricity failure, etc.) could lead to difficulties in submission. The contracting authority cannot be held responsible for any delay due to such aforementioned difficulties.

Any concept note submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

2.2.4. Further information about concept notes

An online information session on this call for proposals will be held on 24th March 2026 at 10.00 (Brussels date and time).

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of concept notes to the address(es) below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: **DELEGATION-KENYA-TENDERS-AND-CFP@ec.europa.eu**

The contracting authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for submission of concept notes.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the contracting authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entity(ies), an action or specific activities.

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure will be published on the website where the call was published: website of DG International Partnerships https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/home_fr and/or Funding & Tender opportunities (F&T Portal) <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home> and the available guide: [Decoding EU Calls of CSO Thematic Programme: A step-by-step guide for CSOs on grant applications | EU International Partnerships Academy](#), the need arises. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website(s) regularly in order Applicants can read more about application preparation of this nature.

to be informed of the questions and answers published.

All questions related to registration in PADOR or the online submission via PROSPECT should be addressed to the IT helpdesk at ec-external-relations-application-support@ec.europa.eu **via the online support form in PROSPECT**: Please note that the working languages of the IT support are English French and Spanish. Therefore, users are invited to send their questions in English, French or Spanish should they wish to benefit from an optimum response time.

Please note that the contracting authority may decide to cancel the call for proposals procedure at any stage according to the conditions set out in Section 6.5.9 of the practical guide.

2.2.5. Full applications

Lead applicants invited to submit a full application following pre-selection of their concept note must do so using the grant application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex A.2 – Grant application form – Full application). Lead applicants should then keep strictly to the format of the grant application form and fill in the paragraphs and pages in order.

The elements outlined in the concept note may not be modified in the full application, except for the changes described below:

- The EU contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 20 %. Lead applicants are free to adapt the percentage of co-financing required within the minimum and maximum amount and percentages of co-financing, as laid down in these guidelines in Section 1.3 (only applicable in the case of grants taking the form, totally or partially, of reimbursement of costs).
- The lead applicant may add, remove or replace one or more co-applicant(s) or affiliated entity(ies) only in duly justified cases.
- The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the action if unforeseen circumstances beyond the applicants control have taken place following the submission of the concept note and require such adaptation (risk of action not being carried out). In such cases, the duration must remain within the limits imposed by the guidelines for applicants.

An explanation/justification of the relevant replacements/adjustments shall be included in Annex A.2 – Instructions for drafting the Full Application, section 2.1.1, point viii. Should the explanation/justification not be accepted by the evaluation committee, the proposal may be rejected on that sole basis.

Lead applicants must submit their full applications in the same language as their concept notes.

Please complete the full application form carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly.

Any error related to the points listed in the checklist (Annex A.2, Instructions) or any major inconsistency in the full application (e.g. if the amounts in the budget worksheets are inconsistent) may lead to the rejection of the application.

Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is unclear and thus prevents the contracting authority from conducting an objective assessment.

Please note that only the full application form and the published annexes which have to be filled in (budget, logical framework) will be transmitted to the evaluators (and assessors, if used). It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL the relevant information concerning the action.

Please note that incomplete applications may be rejected. Lead applicants are advised to verify that their application is complete using the checklist (Annex A.2, Instructions).

If it is impossible to register online in PADOR for technical reasons, or for confidentiality and security concerns, **the lead applicant has to submit with the full application the completed PADOR form (Annex F) for the lead applicant, each (if any) co-applicants and each (if any) affiliated entities²⁷.**

In addition, the following documents²⁸ shall be submitted by the full application deadline together with the full application form:

1. The statutes or articles of association of the lead applicant, (if any) of each co-applicant and (if any) of each affiliated entity. Where the contracting authority has recognised the lead applicant's, or the co-applicant(s)'s, or their affiliated entity(ies)'s eligibility for another call for proposals under the same budget line within 2 years before the deadline for receipt of applications, it shall submit instead a copy of the document proving their eligibility in a former call (e.g. a copy of the special conditions of a grant contract received during the reference period), unless a change in legal status has occurred in the meantime. This obligation does not apply to international organisations which have been subject of a pillar assessment.
2. The declaration on honour (Annex H to these guidelines) signed by the lead applicant as well as all co-applicants and affiliated entities certifying that they are not in one of the exclusion situations (see Section 2.4.2 of the practical guide) where the amount of the grant exceeds EUR 15 000.

²⁷ Natural persons who apply for a grant (if so allowed in the guidelines for applicants) do not have to provide an organisation data form. In this case, the information included in the grant application form is sufficient.

3. In addition, for the purpose of the evaluation of the financial capacity, the following documents should be submitted²⁹:

a) For action grants exceeding EUR 750 000 and for operating grants exceeding EUR 100 000, the lead applicant must provide an audit report produced by an approved external auditor where it is available, and always in cases where a statutory audit is required by EU or national law. That report shall certify the accounts of the lead applicant for up to the last 3 available financial years.

In all other cases, the lead applicant shall provide a self-declaration signed by its authorised representative certifying the validity of its accounts for up to the last 3 available financial years.

This requirement shall apply only to the first application made by an applicant to the contracting authority in any one financial year.

The external audit report as well as the self-declaration certifying the validity of the accounts are not required from the co-applicant(s) or affiliated entities (if any).

b) A copy of the lead applicant's latest accounts (the profit and loss account and the balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed). A copy of the latest account is neither required from the co-applicant(s) (if any) nor from affiliated entity(ies) (if any).

These documents must be supplied in the form of originals (blue ink signature or by applying a qualified electronic signature (QES)³⁰), photocopies or scanned versions (i.e. showing legible stamps, signatures and dates) of the said originals. Where photocopies or scanned copies are provided, originals shall be kept on file for controls in accordance with the record keeping obligations laid down in Section 2.5.5. of the practical guide.

Where such documents are not in one of the official languages of the European Union [or in the language of the country where the action is implemented], a translation into English of the relevant parts of these documents proving the lead applicant's and, where applicable, co-applicants' and affiliated entity(ies)' eligibility, must be submitted for the purpose of analysing the application.

Where these documents are in an official language of the European Union other than English, it is strongly recommended, in order to facilitate the evaluation, to provide a translation of the relevant parts of the documents, proving the lead applicant's and, where applicable, co-applicants' and affiliated entity(ies)' eligibility, into English.

Applicants have to take into consideration the time necessary to obtain official documents from national competent authorities and to translate such documents in the authorised languages while registering their data in PADOR.

If the abovementioned supporting documents are not provided by the deadline for the submission of the full application, the application may be rejected.

No additional annexes should be sent.

2.2.6. Where and how to send full applications

Full applications (i.e. the full application form, PADOR registration form (where applicable)³¹, the budget, the logical framework, the declaration on honour on exclusion criteria, and the declaration by the lead applicant) must be submitted online via PROSPECT <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/prospect> following the instructions given in the PROSPECT users' manual.

²⁹ No supporting documents will be requested for applications for a grant not exceeding EUR 60 000, or the following categories of lead applicants: (i) natural persons in receipt of education support (ii) natural persons most in need, such as unemployed and refugees, and in receipt of direct support (iii) public bodies, including Member State organisations (iv) international organisations.

³⁰ Please note that only the QES within the meaning of Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 (eIDAS Regulation) will be accepted. Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market and repealing Directive 1999/93/EC.

³¹ If the PADOR registration form is submitted, this shall be accompanied by the requested supporting documents.

Upon submission of the full application online, the lead applicants will receive an automatic confirmation of receipt in their PROSPECT profile. The other supporting documents, except the declaration on honour on exclusion criteria, shall be uploaded in PADOR³².

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected. Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

2.2.7. Deadline for submission of full applications

The deadline for the submission of full applications will be indicated in the letter sent to the lead applicants whose application has been pre-selected. This letter will appear online automatically in the PROSPECT profile of the lead applicant.

Lead applicants are strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit their full applications, since heavy Internet traffic or a fault with the Internet connection (including electricity failure, etc.) could lead to difficulties in submission. The Contacting Authority cannot be held responsible for any delay due to such afore-mentioned difficulties.

Any application submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

2.2.8. Further information about full applications

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of full applications to the addresses listed below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: **DELEGATION-KENYA-TENDERS-AND-CFP@ec.europa.eu**

The contracting authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for the submission of full applications.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the contracting authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entity(ies), or an action.

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure, will be published on the website of DG International Partnerships: https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/home_fr and/or Funding & Tender opportunities (F&T Portal) <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home> and the available guide: [Decoding EU Calls of CSO Thematic Programme: A step-by-step guide for CSOs on grant applications | EU International Partnerships Academy](#), as the need arises. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

All questions related to registration in PADOR or the online submission via PROSPECT should be addressed to the IT helpdesk at ec-external-relations-application-support@ec.europa.eu **via the online support form in PROSPECT**. Please note that the working languages of the IT support are English French and Spanish. Therefore users are invited to send their questions in English, French or Spanish should they wish to benefit from an optimum response time.

Please note that the contracting authority may decide to cancel the call for proposals procedure at any stage according to the conditions set out in Section 6.5.9 of the practical guide.

2.3. EVALUATION

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the contracting authority with the possible assistance of assessors. All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in Section 2.1, the application will be rejected on this sole basis.

2.3.1. STEP 1: ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION

(1) During the administrative check the following will be assessed:

³² See footnote 31.

- If the deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will be automatically rejected.
- If the concept note satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist in Annex A.1, Instructions of the grant application form. This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The concept notes that pass this check will be evaluated on the relevance and design of the proposed action.

The concept notes will receive an overall score out of 50 using the breakdown in the evaluation grid below. The evaluation will also check on compliance with the instructions on how to complete the concept note, which can be found in Annex A.1.

The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheadings. Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Evaluation Grid

Section	Maximum Score
1. Relevance of the action	20
1.1. Consistency with the objectives of the call: How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals and to the specific themes/sectors/areas or any other specific requirement stated in the guidelines for applicants? Are the expected results of the action aligned with the priorities defined in the guidelines for applicants (section 1.2)?	5
1.2. Relevance to the country/region/sector needs: How relevant is the proposal to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies), region(s) and/or relevant sectors (including synergy with other development initiatives and avoidance of duplication)?	5
1.3. Target groups and final beneficiaries: How clearly defined and strategically chosen are the target groups and final beneficiaries? Have their needs (as rights holders and/or duty bearers) and constraints been clearly defined? Does the proposal address them appropriately?	5
1.4. Added value elements: Does the proposal contain particular added-value elements (e.g. innovation, best practices)? and the other additional elements indicated under 1.2. of the guidelines for applicants	5
2. Design of the action	30
2.1. Intervention logic. Does the proposal indicate the expected results (outputs/outcomes/impacts) to be achieved by the action? Does the design of the proposed action identify explicitly the necessary sequence to achieve the desired objectives beginning with inputs, moving through activities and outputs, and culminating in outcomes and impacts?	5x2**
2.2. Context analysis. Does the design of the action include a robust analysis of the needs to be addressed, including the capacities of the relevant stakeholders? Are those also embedded adequately in the intervention logic?	5
2.3. Risks and assumptions. Is the design based on clear assumptions (the necessary and positive conditions that allow for a successful cause-and-effect relationship between different levels of results)? Does it take into account also risks (the factors that might hinder the achievement of results)?	5
2.4. Indicative Activities. Is the indicative list of activities linked to and consistent with the expected outputs?	5
2.5. Cross-cutting issues: To which extent does the proposal integrate relevant cross-cutting elements such as environmental/climate change issues, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of indigenous peoples, youth, combating HIV/AIDS (if there is a strong prevalence in the target country/region)?	5
Maximum total score	50

** : this score is multiplied by 2 because of its importance

Note: A score of 5 (very good) will only be allocated if the proposal specifically addresses more than the required minimum number of priorities as indicated in Section 1.2 (objectives of the programme) of these guidelines.

Once all concept notes have been assessed, a list will be drawn up with the proposed actions ranked according to their total score.

Firstly, only the concept notes with a score of at least will be considered for pre-selection.

Secondly, the number of concept notes will be reduced, taking account of the ranking, to the number of **at least 300%** of the available budget for this call for proposals. The amount of requested contributions of each concept note will be based on the indicative financial envelopes for each lot, where relevant.

Lead applicants will receive a letter indicating the reference number of their application and the respective results. This letter will automatically appear online in the PROSPECT profile of the lead applicant.

The pre-selected lead applicants will subsequently be invited to submit full applications.

2.3.2. STEP 2: EVALUATION OF THE FULL APPLICATION

Firstly, the following will be assessed:

- If the submission deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will automatically be rejected.
- If the full application satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist (Annex A.2, Instructions). This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The full applications that pass this check will be further evaluated on their quality, including the proposed budget and capacity of the applicants and affiliated entity(ies). They will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria in the evaluation grid below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and award criteria.

The selection criteria help to evaluate the applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s operational capacity and the lead applicant's financial capacity and are used to verify that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the proposed action and, where appropriate, to participate in its funding (this only applies to lead applicants);
- have the management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed action. This applies to applicants and any affiliated entity(ies).

For the purpose of the evaluation of the financial capacity, lead applicants must ensure that the relevant information and documents (i.e. accounts of the latest financial years and external audit report, where applicable) are up to date either in their PADOR profile or when submitting the requested documents with PADOR registration form. If the information and documents requested are outdated and do not allow for a proper evaluation of the financial capacity, the application may be rejected.

The award criteria help to evaluate the quality of the applications in relation to the objectives and priorities set forth in the guidelines, and to award grants to projects which maximise the overall effectiveness of the call for proposals. They help to select applications which the contracting authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities. They cover the relevance of the action, its consistency with the objectives of the call for proposals, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

Scoring:

The evaluation grid is divided into Sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Evaluation grid

Section	Maximum Score
1. Financial and operational capacity	20
1.1. Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient in-house experience of project management?	5
1.2. Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient technical in-house expertise (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)?	5
1.3. Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient management in-house capacity (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4. Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5
2. Relevance of the action	20
2.1. Consistency with the objectives of the call: How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals and to the specific themes/sectors/areas or any other specific requirement stated in the guidelines for applicants? Are the expected results of the action aligned with the priorities defined in the guidelines for applicants (section 1.2)?	5
2.2. Relevance to the country/region/sector needs: How relevant is the proposal to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies), region(s) and/or relevant sectors (including synergy with other development initiatives and avoidance of duplication)?	5
2.3. Target groups and final beneficiaries: How clearly defined and strategically chosen are the target groups and final beneficiaries? Have their needs (as rights holders and/or duty bearers) and constraints been clearly defined? Does the proposal address them appropriately?	5
2.4. Added value elements: Does the proposal contain particular added-value elements (e.g. innovation, best practices)? [and the other additional elements indicated under 1.2. of the guidelines for applicants]	5
3. Design of the action	15
3.1. Intervention logic. Does the proposal indicate the expected results (outputs/outcomes/impacts) to be achieved by the action? Does the design of the proposed action identify explicitly the necessary sequence to achieve the desired objectives beginning with inputs, moving through activities and outputs, and culminating in outcomes and impacts? Is the indicative list of activities linked to and consistent with the expected outputs?	5
3.2. Logical Framework Matrix: Is the logical framework provided in Annex C complete? Does each result (output, outcome, impact) include an adequate number of indicators that are sufficient in scope to measure its achievement? Is each indicator RACER (Relevant, Accepted, Credible, Easy to monitor, Robust)? Does each indicator have a baseline value (with year), target value (with year), and a credible source of data? If baselines and targets are not available, this is to be justified and a study (or other relevant tools) to be foreseen and budgeted in the proposal? In the case of use of FNLC, are the FNLC results and indicators clearly marked?	5
3.3. Context analysis. Does the design of the action include a robust analysis of the needs to be addressed, including the capacities of the relevant stakeholders? Are those also embedded adequately in the intervention logic?	5
4. Implementation approach	15
4.1. Action plan: Is the action plan for implementing the action clear and feasible? Are types of activities clearly clustered by output in the Activities Matrix? Is the timeline realistic?	5
4.2. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation: Does the proposal include an effective and efficient monitoring and reporting system? Is the system in place adequate to update the values of	5

the indicators included in the Logical Framework Matrix - thus informing regularly on progress towards the achievement of impact, outcomes and outputs? Is there an evaluation planned and budgeted (previous, during or/and at the end of the implementation)? If relevant, is the role of third party assessor included?	
4.3. Project management (technical): Do the co-applicant(s) and (if applicable) their affiliated entities have the necessary technical skills to attain the objectives of the action? Are the co-applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s adequately involved in the implementation (e.g. advocacy, research, capacity building, outreach related activities)?	5
5. Sustainability of the action	15
5.1. Long-lasting benefits: Is the action likely to ensure long lasting and transformative benefits to the target groups and the final beneficiaries?	5
5.2. Multiplier effects: Is the action likely to have multiplier effects, including scope for replication, extension, cross-fertilisation of experience and knowledge sharing?	5
5.3. Sustainability How likely the effects are to last after the intervention ends?- Financial sustainability: which financial resources are available to fund the continuation of the services provided by the intervention? How long are they likely to be available and from which sources?)- Institutional sustainability: which institutional arrangements allow for maintaining the benefits achieved? Is there any measure in place to ensure local ownership?)- Policy level sustainability (if applicable): is there any expected policy related effect from the action, e.g. improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods- Environmental sustainability (if applicable): will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?)- Risk analysis and mitigation measures: will the action be accompanied by a good risk analysis (including physical, environmental, political, economic and social risks) and relevant mitigation measures?	5
6. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action	15
6.1. Budget: Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget? In the case of entire or partly use of financing not linked to costs, are the results and performance indicators adequately reflected in the budget?	5
6.2. Efficiency: Is the relation between the estimated amounts as per budget and the expected results adequate?	5x2**
Maximum total score	100

****:** this score is multiplied by 2 because of its importance

If the total score for Section 1 (financial and operational capacity) is less than 12 points, the application will be rejected. If the score for at least one of the subsections under Section 1 is 1, the application will also be rejected.

If the lead applicant applies without co-applicants or affiliated entities the score for point 4.3 shall be 5 unless the involvement of co-applicants or affiliated entities is mandatory according to these guidelines for applicants.

Provisional selection

After the evaluation, a table will be drawn up listing the applications ranked according to their score. The highest scoring applications will be provisionally selected until the available budget for this call for proposals is reached. In addition, a reserve list will be drawn up following the same criteria. This list will be used if more funds become available during the validity period of the reserve list. The contracting authority informs those lead applicants provisionally selected and those placed on the reserve list, that they will be subject to the final eligibility check.

2.3.3. STEP 3: VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF THE APPLICANTS AND AFFILIATED ENTITY(IES) AND OTHER SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The eligibility verification will be performed on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the contracting authority (see Section 2.2.). It will by default only be performed for the applications that have been provisionally selected (including those placed on the reserve list) according to their score and within the available budget for this call for proposals. In this case:

- The declaration by the lead applicant (Section 5 of Annex A.2) will be cross-checked with the supporting documents provided by the lead applicant. Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the declaration by the lead applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the application on that sole basis.
- The eligibility of applicants and the affiliated entity(ies) will be verified according to the criteria set out in Section 2.1.1, including exclusion criteria.

Any rejected application will be replaced by the next best placed application on the reserve list that falls within the available budget for this call for proposals.

In the eventuality that the evaluation committee is not satisfied with the strength, solidity, and guarantee offered by the structural link between one of the applicants and its affiliated entity, it can require the submission of the missing documents allowing for its conversion into co-applicant. If all the missing documents for co-applicants are submitted, and provided all necessary eligibility criteria are fulfilled, the above mentioned entity becomes a co-applicant for all purposes. The lead applicant has to submit the application form revised accordingly.

2.4. AWARD DECISION

After verifying the supporting documents (step 3), the evaluation committee will make a final recommendation to the contracting authority, which will decide on the award of grants.

The contracting authority may decide not to award any grants and cancel the call for proposals without having the applicants any right to compensation.

The award decision shall indicate the successful applicants, the names of the applicants rejected, and a reserve list (if any).

2.5. NOTIFICATION OF THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION

The lead applicants will be informed in writing of the contracting authority's decision concerning their application.

In case of rejection, they will be informed about the reasons for the negative decision. For the avoidance of doubt, please note that for applications rejected for reasons such as non-compliance with the admissibility requirements (for example, if the application was sent after the deadline), with the eligibility (the entity or person is not part of the predefined eligible population of entities or persons), the selection (the entity does not have financial capacity or professional or operational capacity) and the award criteria (the proposal does not comply with the predefined requirements such as quality, cost/efficiency), no prior adversarial procedure is required.

Applicants placed on the reserve list will also be informed. The applicable terms to the reserve list are laid down in Section 6.5. of the practical guide.

The successful applicants shall also be informed, and will be requested to provide some information and documents, including (for grants exceeding EUR 60 000) the self evaluation questionnaire on SEA-H. The lead applicant as well as all co-applicants and affiliated entities other than (i) natural persons (ii) pillar-assessed entities and (iii) governments and other public bodies shall fill in the self-evaluation questionnaire assessing the organisation's internal policy and procedures against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEA-H) (Annex L) (see Section 6.2.10 of the practical guide).

Successful applicants will also be informed if the first instalment of pre-financing is subject to the validation of a financial guarantee by the contracting authority. In this case, the applicant will be requested to send the

guarantee in time to proceed to the payment of the first instalment in accordance with the payment provisions of the grant contract.

This letter will be sent by e-mail and will appear online automatically in the PROSPECT profile of the user who submitted the application. Lead applicants who, in exceptional cases (see Section 2.2), had to submit their application by post, private courier or hand-delivery, will be informed by email or by post if they did not provide any e-mail address. Therefore, please check regularly your PROSPECT profile, taking into account the indicative timetable below. Please note that the lead applicant is the intermediary for all communications between applicants and the contracting authority during the procedure.

An applicant believing that it has been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may lodge a complaint. See further Section 2.12 of the practical guide.

2.6. SIGNATURE OF THE GRANT CONTRACT

Following the decision to award a grant, the beneficiary(ies) will be offered a contract based on the standard grant contract (see Annex G of these guidelines). By signing the application form (Annex A of these guidelines), the applicants agree, if awarded a grant, to accept the contractual conditions of the standard grant contract. Where the coordinator is an organisation whose pillars have been positively assessed, it will sign a contribution agreement based on the contribution agreement template. In this case, references to provisions of the standard grant contract and its annexes shall not apply. References in these guidelines to the grant contract shall be understood as references to the relevant provisions of the contribution agreement.

The budget proposed for the action by the successful applicants at the call for proposals stage must be corrected to remove any obvious arithmetical errors or ineligible costs prior to signing the contract. The description of the action is corrected accordingly if need be.

The contracting authority may decide that other clarifications or minor corrections may be made to the description of the action or to the budget in so far as they do not call into question the grant award decision, do not conflict with equal treatment of applicants, and:

- relate to matters clearly identified by the evaluation committee; or
- aim at taking into consideration changes that have occurred since the date of receipt of the proposal.

These amendments cannot lead to an increase in either the amount of the grant or the percentage of the European Union contribution as set in the guidelines of the call for proposals. In this respect, records of the contacts with the applicants must be kept on the file.

In no case the conditions announced in the guidelines can be altered at this stage. Apart from the above-mentioned clarifications and/or corrections, any other alteration of the initial proposal or deviation from the award conditions laid down in the guidelines is strictly prohibited.

Any other alteration to the successful applicant's proposal, or negotiation of it, is prohibited.

2.7. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

	DATE	TIME
1. Information meeting (if any)	24 th March 2026	10.00 (CET – Brussels date and time)
2. Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the contracting authority	18 th March 2026	-
3. Last date on which clarifications are issued by the contracting authority	27 th March 2026	-
4. Deadline for submission of concept notes	08 th April 2026	12.00 (CET Brussels date and time)
5. Information to lead applicants on administrative checks and concept note evaluation (Step 1) and invitation to submit full applications	May 2026	-
6. Deadline for submission of full applications	June 2026	-
7. Notification of the contracting authority decision	July/August 2026	-

This indicative timetable refers to provisional dates (except for dates 2, 3, and 4) and may be updated by the contracting authority during the procedure. In such cases, the updated timetable will be published on the web site where the call was published: website of DG International Partnerships https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/home_fr and/or Funding & Tender opportunities (F&T Portal) <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>.

2.8. EARLY DETECTION AND EXCLUSION SYSTEM

Applicants and, if they are legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over them, natural or legal person that assumes unlimited liability for the debts, natural or legal person who is essential for the award or for the implementation of the legal commitment, beneficial owner or any affiliate of the applicant, are informed that, should they be in one of the situations of early detection or exclusion, their personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form) may be registered in the early detection and exclusion system, and communicated to the persons and entities concerned in relation to the award or the execution of a grant contract.

For more information, you may consult the privacy statement available on http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm

3. ANNEXES

DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED

Annex A	Grant application form (Word format)
A.1	Concept note
A.2	Full application form
Annex B	Budget (Excel format)
Annex C	Logical framework (Excel format)
Annex D	[Not applicable]
Annex E	[Not applicable]
Annex F	PADOR registration form
Annex H	Declaration on Honour on exclusion criteria
Annex L	Self-evaluation questionnaire on SEA-H

DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION³³

Annex G	Standard grant contract
Annex II	General conditions
Annex IV	Contract award rules
Annex V	Standard request for payment
Annex VI	Model narrative and financial report
Annex VII-A	Model report of factual findings and terms of reference for an expenditure verification of an EU financed grant contract for external action
Annex VII-B	Terms of reference for a third party assessment in case of financing not linked to costs
Annex VIII	Model financial guarantee
Annex IX	Standard template for transfer of ownership of assets
Annex I	Daily allowance rates (per diem), available at the following address: https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/funding/guidelines/managing-project/diem-rates_en (not published)
Annex J	Information on the tax regime applicable to grant contracts signed under the call.
Annex K	Additional clarifications on financing not linked to costs

USEFUL LINKS

PRAG	https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/ExactExternalWiki/ePRAG
Project Cycle Management Guidelines	https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/funding/managing-project_en
The implementation of grant contracts, A Users' Guide	https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=48169235

³³ These documents should also be published by the contracting authority.

Financial Toolkit³⁴

https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/financial-management-toolkit_en

Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES)

https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/how-it-works/annual-lifecycle/implementation/anti-fraud-measures/edes_en#data-protection

³⁴ Please note that the toolkit is not part of the grant contract and has no legal value. It merely provides general guidance and may in some details differ from the signed grant contract. In order to ensure compliance with their contractual obligations, beneficiaries should not exclusively rely on the toolkit but always consult their individual contract documents.