



EUROSTAT grants 2022

Invitation to submit a proposal

GEOSPATIAL STATISTICS

SMP-ESS-2022-GEOS-IBA

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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

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0. Introduction

This is an invitation to submit proposals for EU **action grants** in the field of Economic, social and territorial cohesion under the **European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund**.

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

- Regulation 2018/1046 ([EU Financial Regulation](#))
- the basic act (SMP Regulation 2021/690¹, European Statistics Regulation 223/2009)
- the basic act (Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum and Migration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Border Management and Visa Instrument² ('the future CPR').

The invitation is launched in accordance with the 2022 Work Programme³ and will be managed by the **European Commission, Eurostat (DG ESTAT)**.

The call covers the following **topic**:

- **SMP-ESS-2022-GEOS-REGIO — Geospatial Statistics**

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

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

- the [Call Document](#) outlines the:
 - background, objectives, scope, activities that can be funded and the expected results (sections 1 and 2)

¹ Regulation (EU) 2021/690 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing a programme for the internal market, competitiveness of enterprises, including small and medium-sized enterprises, the area of plants, animals, food and feed, and European statistics (Single Market Programme) (OJ L 153, 3.5.2021, p. 1).

² Proposal for a Regulation COM(2018) 375 final of 29/.5.2018 – 2018/0196 (COD)

³ Commission Implementing Decision C(2022) 748 final of 11.2.2022 on the financing of the use of technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission in the framework of the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund and the adoption of the work programme for 2022

- timetable and available budget (sections 3 and 4)
- admissibility and eligibility conditions (including mandatory documents; sections 5 and 6)
- criteria for financial and operational capacity and exclusion (section 7)
- evaluation and award procedure (section 8)
- award criteria (section 9)
- legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements (section 10)
- the Online Manual outlines the:
 - procedures to register and submit proposals online via the EU Funding & Tenders Portal ('Portal')
 - recommendations for the preparation of the application
- the AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement contains:
 - detailed annotations on all the provisions in the Grant Agreement you will have to sign in order to obtain the grant (*including cost eligibility, payment schedule, accessory obligations, etc.*).

You are also encouraged to visit CIRCABC⁴ to consult the list of projects funded previously or read about previously funded projects in a dedicated publication⁵.

1. Background

Geo-referenced statistics have an important additional variable: the location. This information is crucial for analysing the EU's economic, social and territorial cohesion, needs for investment, demographic change, economic convergence and climate change. Combining geospatial data and statistics enables spatial analysis making evident phenomena that would be impossible to discover through statistical tables.

European statistics contribute in building the information capacity required to monitor the EU's strategic objectives and the underlying policies and policy instruments. Geographical Information used in combination with statistics and can contribute to building a Europe fit for the digital age and better meet users' needs for relevant high quality statistical and geospatial information from innovative sources and technologies.

The integration of Geographical Information and statistical data play an increasingly important role in policy-making, administrative planning processes, policy assessment and quantitative monitoring of the effects of policy decisions and consequently in the implementation of the Commission's Green Deal. It can provide information with the right spatial resolution from regional to European and global level, allowing for policy interventions at the level where they are most effective. It can also effectively support the design and monitoring of environmental policies, highlighting local environmental aspects and their specific effects.

⁴ <https://circabc.europa.eu/ui/group/9a3fadf7-19f6-4bd4-b3cb-30179950648b/library/d77c54bd-425a-4654-ac90-60d3d0e29115>

⁵ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-statistical-reports/-/ks-ft-19-004>

At the Member State level the degree of cooperation between National Statistical Institutes (NSI) and National Mapping and Cadastral Agencies (NMCA), a key factor for the integration of geospatial, earth observation and statistical data, varies significantly amongst the EU Member States. To address these imbalances - following the ESS Committee meeting of 9th February 2012 - Eurostat funded a number of projects related to statistical and geospatial data integration to support and improve the cooperation of NSI and NMCA.

In the DIMESA meeting of 2019 Member States supported the continuation of efforts to improve the integration of statistics and geospatial information and requested Eurostat to focus on a common statistical theme for integrating geospatial information and statistics enhance the cooperation between NSIs and NMCA. Similar - in the 2021 DGINS Conference on Earth observation for official statistics the statistical community acknowledge the urgent needs and the ongoing efforts to make extensive use of Earth Observation data in official statistics.

The aim of this action is to support the integration of statistics and geospatial information with actions focused on themes that are common to participating countries and to enhance geospatial data availability and cooperation between NSIs and NMCAs/EO organisations.

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

SMP-ESS-2022-GEOS-REGIO — Geospatial Statistics

Objectives (expected outcome)

The action has a common set of objectives, supporting two different themes of work as outlined below.

The common objectives for this ESS call are:

- To support the integration of geospatial and statistical information during the statistical production process, considering outcomes from the GEOSTAT projects and various frameworks (e.g. Global Statistical Geospatial Framework (GSGF) Europe framework, Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF));
- To enhance the cooperation of National Statistical Institutes and National Mapping, Space and Cadastral Agencies to facilitate data-driven and evidence-based decision making to support local, sub-national, national, regional, and global development priorities and agendas;
- To establish internal and external processes required for a continuous (semi) automated regular update of geospatial data linking it to statistical data collections and concepts and linking to unique national identifier systems;
- To provide evidence based data for policy support based on spatial and temporal distribution of statistics.

The two themes should contribute to one or both of the expected outcomes:

- "Improving access to geospatial data" focussing on data flows mainly between Eurostat, NSIs, NMCA or other relevant organisations (e.g. ministries): Enabling access of ESTAT and NSIs to core data sets from INSPIRE⁶ Annex I⁷ and III⁸

⁶ [Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community](#)

considering if appropriate UNGGIM: Europe data specifications for e.g. Basic Services⁹.

- “Capacity Building on Earth Observation” addresses the usage of EO data for statistics: Establish processes and methods for using Earth Observation (e.g. Copernicus Sentinel products) for statistics and indicators e.g. SDG¹⁰ monitoring building on top of Copernicus DIAS or similar infrastructures¹¹ following the DGINS2021 Warsaw Memorandum¹².

Themes and priorities (scope) — Activities that can be funded (scope)

Proposals should be in the framework of the European Commission 2019-2024 priorities namely the European green deal, an economy that works for people, a Europe fit for the digital age, promoting the European way of life, a stronger Europe in the world and a new push for European democracy. The actions therefore should implement concrete actions by developing relevant and sustainable services.

Activities that can be funded

- Development and integration of a geocoded unit-record infrastructure for production processes based on address, building and dwelling registers provided by NMCA or other authoritative sources, especially in support to the delivery of basic services and if possible according to the UNGGIM: Europe or INSPIRE specifications. Access to the underlying data is to be provided as a minimum to the European Commission services, or preferably as open data;
- Projects on the use of Earth Observation for statistics producing reusable solutions building on top of Copernicus DIAS or similar national infrastructures with Analysis Ready Data (ARD);
- Studies on the spatial distribution of statistical phenomena and the inherent causes;
- Development and production of geospatial information with a well documented and assessed quality to be used with statistics for spatial analysis purposes (including improvements in performance of geospatial analysis) under the condition that there is a clearly defined maintenance strategy and data policy towards open data;
- Organisation of meetings/workshops of NMCAs and NSIs based on content related to the integration of statistical, earth observation and geospatial data and aiming to enhance the collaboration and/ or aiming to enhance the collaboration and to strengthen the capacity building.

⁷ <https://inspire.ec.europa.eu/Themes/Data%20Specifications/2892>

⁸ <https://inspire.ec.europa.eu/Themes/136/2892>

⁹ <https://un-ggim-europe.org/working-groups/working-group-core-data/>

¹⁰ Proposed topics should be related to SDG indicators presented here:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/sdi/indicators>

¹¹ <https://www.copernicus.eu/en/access-data/dias>

¹² <https://dgins2021.stat.gov.pl/warsaw-memorandum>

Communication and Dissemination of Results

The Project Manager and up to two additional colleagues are requested to participate in the kick-off and the closure conference organized at Eurostat premises (back to back with the GISCO Working Group) as well possibly to present the results at the GISCO Working Group. Additional communication activities like contributions to the EFGS¹³ or the INSPIRE conference and a statistical report or similar communication activities in the national statistical system are recommended. Funding notices need to be displayed on any dissemination product (e.g. reports, presentation).

Expected impact

The action is expected to contribute to the ESS with better alignment of statistical and geographic Information according to the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework in Europe. In that respect the use of a geospatial infrastructure and geocoding for the geocoded unit records should lead to common geographies and enable interoperability, accessibility and usability.

Indicators for evaluation of the action:

Successful achievement of the objectives will be measured according to the following indicators:

- Complexity and sustainability of linking or integrating geography and statistics
- Innovativeness of the approach
- Quality of the derived information
- Extent to which software solutions can be used by others
- Free and open access to the data, algorithms and software
- Quality and comprehensibility of the documentation, reports and studies, and the documentation to allow for uptake by other organisations (e.g. NSIs, NMCA)
- Effective implementation in the national infrastructure according to the UNGGIM: Europe specifications and uptake into GSBPM.

3. Available budget

The available call budget is **EUR 1 000 000**. We reserve the right not to award all available funds or to redistribute them between the call priorities, depending on the proposals received and the results of the evaluation.

4. Timetable and deadlines

Timetable and deadlines (indicative)	
Call opening:	31 March 2022

¹³ European Forum for Geography and Statistics - <https://www.efgs.info/>

Deadline for submission:	<u>31 August 2022 – 17:00:00 CET</u> (Brussels)
Evaluation:	September 2022
Information on evaluation results:	October 2022
GA signature:	November 2022
Starting date:	January 2023

5. Admissibility and documents

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

Proposals must be submitted **electronically** via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System (accessible via link in the invitation letter). Paper submissions are NOT possible.

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

Project acronym — Please use the following naming convention: 'Year-Country-Acronym topic' (ex. 2022-BE-GEOS-EduHealth).

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

- Application Form Part A — contains administrative information about the participants (future coordinator, beneficiaries and affiliated entities) and the summarised budget for the project (*to be filled in directly online*)
- Application Form Part B — contains the technical description of the project (*to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed and then assembled and re-uploaded*)
- **mandatory annexes and supporting documents** (*to be uploaded*):
 - detailed budget table (*template available in the Submission System*)
 - calculator: not applicable (*template available in the Submission System*)
 - CVs of core project team: not applicable
 - activity reports of last year: not applicable
 - list of previous projects: not applicable
 - ESS personnel cost grids.

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


The personnel cost grids must be provided for each beneficiary and affiliated entity (merged into one PDF to upload). Use the latest validated unit cost grids for the NSI in your country (beneficiaries which are not NSIs may use the unit cost grid of the NSI of their country). During grant agreement preparation, you will have to re-upload the grids as Annex 2b to the Grant Agreement.

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

Your application must be **readable, accessible and printable**.

Proposals are limited to maximum **70 pages** (Part B). Evaluators will not consider any additional pages.

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

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

6. Eligibility

Eligible participants (eligible countries)

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

- be legal entities (public or private bodies)
- be established in one of the eligible countries, i.e.:
 - EU Member States (including overseas countries and territories (OCTs))
 - non-EU countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland ([list of participating countries](#))
- be national statistical institutes or other national authorities responsible for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics as referred to in Article 5 of the European Statistics Regulation [223/2009](#)

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

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

Specific cases

International organisations — International organisations are not eligible.

National statistical institutes (and other national authorities) — These cover entities that have been designated by the Member States under Article 5 of the European Statistics Regulation [223/2009](#). For calls that are restricted to such entities, all participants (beneficiaries and affiliated entities) must be on the '[Article 5 list](#)'. The lists are established by the National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) and then communicated to DG ESTAT (the detailed procedure is described on the [Eurostat](#)

[website](#)). Entities that have applied to be listed, can participate in our calls, provided that the listing procedure has been launched before (or at the same time) as the grant application and that it is concluded before grant signature.

EU restrictive measures — Special rules apply for certain entities (*e.g. entities subject to [EU restrictive measures](#) under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)*¹⁴ and entities covered by Commission Guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#)¹⁵). Such entities are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any).

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

Consortium composition

Proposals must be submitted by a consortium of at least one applicants (beneficiaries; not affiliated entities).

Affiliated entities and other participants are allowed, if needed, but do not count for the minimum consortium composition.

Eligible activities

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

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

Projects must comply with EU policy interests and priorities (*such as environment, social, security, industrial and trade policy, etc.*).

Financial support to third parties is not allowed.

7. Financial and operational capacity and exclusion

Financial capacity

Not applicable.

Operational capacity

Not applicable.

Exclusion

Applicants which are subject to an **EU exclusion decision** or in one of the following **exclusion situations** that bar them from receiving EU funding can NOT participate¹⁶:

¹⁴ Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the [EU Sanctions Map](#).

¹⁵ Commission guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#) on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the EU from 2014 onwards (OJEU C 205 of 19.07.2013, pp. 9-11).

¹⁶ See Articles 136 and 141 of EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

- bankruptcy, winding up, affairs administered by the courts, arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or other similar procedures (including procedures for persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts)
- in breach of social security or tax obligations (including if done by persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts)
- guilty of grave professional misconduct¹⁷ (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- committed fraud, corruption, links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement, prize, expert contract, or similar (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No [2988/95](#) (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin or created another entity with this purpose (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant).

Applicants will also be refused if it turns out that¹⁸:

- during the award procedure they misrepresented information required as a condition for participating or failed to supply that information
- they were previously involved in the preparation of the call and this entails a distortion of competition that cannot be remedied otherwise (conflict of interest).

8. Evaluation and award procedure

The proposals will have to follow the **standard submission and evaluation procedure** (one-stage submission + one-step evaluation).

An **evaluation committee** will assess all applications. Proposals will first be checked for formal requirements (admissibility, and eligibility, *see sections 5 and 6*). Proposals found admissible and eligible will be evaluated (for each topic) against the operational capacity and award criteria (*see sections 7 and 9*) and then ranked according to their scores.

¹⁷ Professional misconduct includes: violation of ethical standards of the profession, wrongful conduct with impact on professional credibility, false declarations/misrepresentation of information, participation in a cartel or other agreement distorting competition, violation of IPR, attempting to influence decision-making processes or obtain confidential information from public authorities to gain advantage.


¹⁸ See Article 141 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

For proposals with the same score (within a topic) a **priority order** will be determined according to the following approach:

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

- 1) The *ex aequo* proposals within the same topic will be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the award criterion 'Relevance'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Impact'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Quality'.

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

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

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

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

9. Award criteria

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

- **Relevance:** clarity and consistency of project, objectives and planning; extent to which they match the themes and priorities and objectives of the call; contribution to the EU strategic and legislative context; European/trans-national dimension; impact/interest for a number of countries (EU or eligible non-EU countries); possibility to use the results in other countries; potential to develop mutual trust/cross-border cooperation (30 points)
- **Quality:**
 - **Project design and implementation:** technical quality; logical links between the identified problems, needs and solutions proposed (logical frame concept); methodology for implementing the project (concept and methodology, management, procedures, timetable, risks and risk management, monitoring and evaluation); feasibility of the project within the proposed time frame; cost effectiveness (sufficient/appropriate budget for proper implementation; best value for money) (30 points)
 - **Project team and cooperation arrangements:** quality of the consortium and project teams; appropriate procedures and problem-solving mechanisms for cooperating within the project teams and consortium (30 points)

- **Impact:** ambition and expected long-term impact of results on target groups/general public; appropriate dissemination strategy for ensuring sustainability and long-term impact; sustainability of results after EU funding ends (10 points).

Award criteria	Minimum pass score	Maximum score
Relevance	21	30
Quality — Project design and implementation	21	30
Quality — Project team and cooperation arrangements	21	30
Impact	7	10
Overall (pass) scores	70	100

Maximum points: 100 points.

Individual thresholds per criterion: 21/30, 21/30, 21/30 and 7/10 points.

Overall threshold: 70 points.

Proposals that pass the individual thresholds AND the overall threshold will be considered for funding — within the limits of the available call budget. Other proposals will be rejected.

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

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

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

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

Starting date and project duration

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

Project duration: up to 24 months (extensions are possible, if duly justified and through an amendment).

Milestones and deliverables

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

The following deliverables will be mandatory for all projects:

- Interim progress report: an intermediate report on the degree of progress and difficulties encountered should be supplied at mid-project.

- Final Methodological report: to be submitted no later than the **30 days before** closing date of the action
- In case of data delivery: to be submitted no later than the **30 days before** closing date of the action.
- Presentation in Kick-off meeting and Closure Day Conference organized at Eurostat (virtual or in person)

All reports and documentation should be provided in English.

All deliverables have to be provided no later than the closing date of the action.

All the reports and deliverables are intended for dissemination. If reports should not be disseminated e.g., in case they include confidential data, this should be clearly indicated in the application and on the cover page of the report. If the report refers to some confidential information, the applicant has to provide additionally a publishable version of the report, which excludes the confidential information. This non-confidential report will be published by Eurostat.

Form of grant, funding rate and maximum grant amount

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

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

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

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

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

Budget categories and cost eligibility rules


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

Budget categories for this call:

- A. Personnel costs
 - A.6 ESS personnel costs based on time
 - A.7 ESS personnel costs based on deliverables
- B. Subcontracting costs
- C. Purchase costs
 - C.1 Travel and subsistence
 - C.2 Equipment
 - C.3 Other goods, works and services
- E. Indirect costs

Specific cost eligibility conditions for this call:

- personnel costs:
 - other personnel costs: Yes
 - ESS personnel unit costs based on time¹⁹
 - ESS personnel costs based on deliverables
- travel and subsistence unit cost²⁰: Yes
- equipment costs: depreciation
- other cost categories:
 - costs for financial support to third parties: not allowed
- indirect cost flat-rate: 30% of the eligible personnel costs (category A, except volunteers costs, if any)
- VAT: non-deductible VAT is eligible (but please note that since 2013 VAT paid by beneficiaries that are public bodies acting as public authority is NOT eligible)
- other:
 - in-kind contributions for free are allowed, but cost-neutral, i.e. they cannot be declared as cost
 - other ineligible costs: No

 ESS personnel costs based on time must be validated by the granting authority in a separate procedure, see [SMP ESS Unit cost grid validation procedure](#).

Reporting and payment arrangements

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


After grant signature, you will normally receive a **prefinancing** to start working on the project (float of normally 40% of the maximum grant amount; exceptionally less or no prefinancing). The prefinancing will be paid 30 days from entry into force/10 days before starting date/financial guarantee (if required) — whichever is the latest.

There will be no **interim payments**.

In addition, you will be expected to submit one or more progress reports not linked to payments.

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

All payments will be made to the coordinator.

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

¹⁹ [Decision](#) of 06 April 2021 authorising the use of unit costs for eligible personnel costs for actions implemented by Eurostat.

²⁰ Commission [Decision](#) of 12 January 2021 authorising the use of unit costs for travel, accommodation and subsistence costs under an action or work programme under the 2021-2027 multi-annual financial framework (C(2021)35).

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

Prefinancing guarantees

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

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

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

Prefinancing guarantees are formally NOT linked to individual consortium members, which means that you are free to organise how to provide the guarantee amount (*by one or several beneficiaries, for the overall amount or several guarantees for partial amounts, by the beneficiary concerned or by another beneficiary, etc.*). It is however important that the requested amount is covered and that the guarantee(s) are sent to us in time to make the prefinancing (scanned copy via Portal AND original by post).

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

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

Certificates

n/a

Liability regime for recoveries

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

For ESS beneficiaries, it is usually limited joint and several liability with individual ceilings — *each beneficiary up to their maximum grant amount*.

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

Provisions concerning the project implementation

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

- rights of use on results: Yes
- access rights to ensure continuity and interoperability obligations: No

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

- communication and dissemination plan: No
- additional communication and dissemination activities: Yes

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

Other specificities

n/a

Non-compliance and breach of contract

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



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

11. How to submit an application

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

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

a) create a user account and register your organisation

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

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

b) submit the proposal

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

Submit your proposal in 3 parts, as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

[webform](#), explaining the circumstances and attaching a copy of the proposal (and, if possible, screenshots to show what happened).

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

12. Help

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

- [Online Manual](#)
- [Portal FAQ](#) (for general questions).

Contact

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

Non-IT related questions should be sent to the following email address: ESTAT-E4-GRANTS@ec.europa.eu (copy to ESTAT-DIRECTORATE-E-GRANTS@ec.europa.eu).

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

13. Important



IMPORTANT

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

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

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

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

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

This includes:

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

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

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