Erasmus+ Programme (ERASMUS)

Call for proposals

Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA)

to European Literacy Coalition consortium

and

the first Specific Grant Agreement (SGA) thereunder

(ERASMUS+ 2026 - EAC/S13/2026 -European Literacy Coalition consortium- FPA-SGA)

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EDUCATION, YOUTH, SPORT AND CULTURE

Erasmus+, Education and Skills
Basic Skills, Schools and Teachers

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Objectives....8
Themes and priorities (scope)....10
Activities that can be funded (scope)....10
Expected impact....12
Eligible participants (eligible countries)....14
Consortium composition....15
Eligible activities....15
Geographic location (target countries)....16
Duration....16
Ethics....16
Financial capacity....17
Operational capacity....17
Exclusion....18
Starting date and project duration....25
Milestones and deliverables....25
Form of specific grant, funding rate and maximum grant amount....25
Budget categories and cost eligibility rules....26
Reporting and payment arrangements....27
Prefinancing guarantees....28
Certificates....28
Liability regime for recoveries....28
Provisions concerning the project implementation....29
EU restrictive measures....29
Other specificities....29
Non-compliance and breach of contract....29

0. Introduction

This is a call for proposals for an EU framework partnership for grants **in the field of education and training under the Erasmus+ Programme.**

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

- Regulation 2024/2509 (EU Financial Regulation)[1]
- the basic act (Erasmus+ Regulation 2021/817[2]).

The call is launched in accordance with the 2026 Work Programme[3] and will be managed by the **Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC)**.

Framework partnerships (FPAs) are long-term cooperation instruments that serve as umbrella for regular or recurrent grants in the same field or area and under a common action plan (or work programme of activities). They are a prerequisite for being able to apply for these grants, but don't create any legitimate expectations or entitlement to get them. FPA beneficiaries are normally identified on the basis of a standard evaluation and award procedure and then invited to submit their proposals for grants (closed calls; addressed directly to the framework partners). Please note that for the first year, the FPA and the first Specific Grant Agreement (SGA) applications are submitted together as parts B.1 and B.2 of the application under this call (see section 5) due to time constraints. Where this call conditions pertain to the specific grant agreement, they apply only the first specific grant agreement concluded as a result of this call. Subsequent specific grant agreements, if any, will be subject to call conditions stated in a future invitation to the framework partnership, if any, to submit a proposal. Specific grant agreements (SGAs) can only be signed if the FPA has already been signed, and only until the FPA expires (i.e. before the FPA end date).

The call covers the following **topic**:

- **Support for the European Literacy Coalition**

We invite you to read the **call documentation** carefully, and in particular this Call document, and the annexed Model Framework Partnership Agreement and Grant Agreement, the information on the website and the EU Grants AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement.

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

- the Call document outlines the:
  - background, objectives, scope, activities that can be funded and the expected results (sections 1 and 2)
  - timetable and available budget (sections 3 and 4)

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

[2] Regulation (EU) 2021/817 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing Erasmus+: the Union Programme for education and training, youth and sport (OJ L 189, 28.5.2021, p. 1).

[3] Commission Implementing Decision C(2026)2250 of 10 April 2026 amending Implementing Decision C(2025)7358 on the financing of Erasmus+: the Union Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport and the adoption of the work programme for 2026.

  - admissibility and eligibility conditions (including mandatory documents; sections 5 and 6)
  - criteria for financial and operational capacity and exclusion (section 7)
  - evaluation and award procedure (section 8)
  - award criteria (section 9)
  - legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements (section 10)
  - how to submit an application (section 11)
- the Website provides:
  - space for answering your questions
- the AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement contains:
  - detailed annotations on all the provisions in the Grant Agreement you will have to sign in order to obtain the grant *(including cost eligibility, payment schedule, accessory obligations, etc)*.

You are also encouraged to visit the Erasmus+ Project Results website to consult the list of projects funded previously.

1. Background

Literacy competence ([4]) is essential for societies to safeguard their competitiveness, innovation capacity and preparedness, while navigating issues such as fake news, disinformation and eroding trust in democratic institutions. Reading is the basis of all other learning, and allows individuals to thrive in a complex, uncertain, fast-changing world.

Yet, one in three 15-year-olds (31.3%) struggles to understand basic texts, putting underachievement in literacy at an all-time high, while top performance is only at 4.8% across the EU. In response, the **European Education Area** strategic framework ([5]) includes an EU-level 2030 target of less than 15% underachievement in reading and another EU-level 2030 target of at least 12% top performance in reading.

Part of the Union of Skills, the **Action Plan on Basic Skills** ([6]) stresses the urgent need to reverse the decline in literacy, numeracy, science, digital, and citizenship skills across the EU. To address the basic skills challenge, the Commission proposes a mix of measures **from early childhood education and care through adult learning**, with a focus on improving teaching and learning, strengthening support for educators, and enabling supportive

[4]() Defined as part of the key competences for lifelong learning through high-quality and inclusive education and training systems. Council of the European Union (2018), Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning (2018/C 189/01).

[5]()Council of the European Union (2026), Council Resolution on the second cycle of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area (2026-2030) (C/2026/3720).

[6]()Action_Plan_on_Basic_Skills_COM_2025_88_1_EN_0.pdf

environments. One of the actions put forward is a **European Literacy Coalition** (further referred to as "Coalition").

By linking various sectors such as education, culture, employment and social inclusion, this action aims to support the European Literacy Coalition which will complement initiatives on lifelong learning, workforce preparedness and social convergence, while reinforcing efforts to reduce skills mismatches and prevent early exclusion. It will also support broader objectives tied to democratic resilience, acknowledging that skills policies serve not only economic and social but also civic domains.

The European Literacy Coalition will directly support the objectives of the forthcoming Education Package.

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

Objectives

This call aims to establish one **4-year Framework Partnership Agreement** (FPA) with one consortium of European stakeholders active in the field of literacy education and reading, representing formal and non-formal learning providers and coming together to provide structural support to the **European Literacy Coalition** (hereafter only the 'Coalition') launched in September 2026.The consortium (hereafter only the 'consortium') will be a managing body of the Coalition to run, steer and implement its activities. One of the tasks of the consortium is to build an organisational/governance structure which would ensure ongoing representation of the whole Coalition. This shall be guided by the principles set in the Memorandum, Coalition's founding document, and the conclusions from the launch event held in Brussels on 22 September 2026.

The Framework Partnership Agreement will be implemented by signing Specific Grant Agreements (see section 10 – Legal and Financial Set-up of the Grant Agreements). Proposals for the first specific grant are to be submitted under this call as part B.2 of the application (see section 5 – Admissibility and documents).

This action will support the Coalition in its objectives to gradually build, consolidate and expand a **multi-stakeholder European policy network** enabling structured cooperation, networking, sharing of expertise and resources among stakeholders from various sectors (e.g. education and training; culture and reading promotion; employment and social inclusion; health and wellbeing; digital and media; governance and policy; research and academia, among others) that promote **literacy education and reading in a lifelong learning perspective**. The stakeholder cooperation is expected to be grounded in a shared, evidence-based understanding of the role of literacy in contemporary world.

Furthermore, the action is aimed at supporting the Coalition in acting as a **policy network**, providing evidence-based actionable recommendations and developing activities to support decision-makers at different levels of governance (EU, national/regional and local) in designing and implementing literacy education and reading promotion policies and initiatives, while fully adhering to the EU subsidiarity principle.

It will also support the Coalition in its efforts to strengthen community-based learning, according to the 'whole school' approach, involving in cooperation with schools a broad range of local actors such as parents, librarians, NGOs, companies, social and health services, cultural organisations, public authorities, universities and more, to build literacy learning ecosystems in a shared responsibility.

The Coalition will be also supported in streamlining dispersed initiatives across Europe, building their capacities and stimulating the creation of national and regional platforms, where required, as well as in ensuring synergies with the **European Authors Day**[7], funded by the Creative Europe programme, that celebrates European literature and encourages interest in reading.

Themes and priorities (scope)

The action includes the following themes and priorities, enabling the Coalition to develop and implement targeted innovative and creative activities to support the effective development and implementation of policies and initiatives in the field of literacy education and reading at different levels of governance (EU, national/regional and local):

- Promotion of literacy education and reading in a lifelong learning perspective.
- Improvement of quality, equity, inclusion and access to literacy education and reading.
- Improvement of learners' literacy competences.
- Enhancing teachers, educators' and other relevant professionals' competences.
- Responding to challenges posed by the digital era (including AI) in the field of literacy and reading.
- Enabling long-term structured cooperation, peer learning and best-practice sharing between literacy education and reading stakeholders in Europe.
- Supporting, building or strengthening literacy ecosystems at local, regional and national levels.
- Increasing public awareness and support for literacy education and reading.

The action aims to support the Coalition in promoting equity and social inclusion, along with pedagogical and institutional innovation. Special attention should be given to learners in vulnerable situations including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, migrants and refugees, persons with disability, minority-language communities, and learners in rural and remote areas. The principles of equity and inclusion should be embedded in the Coalition's activities by design, including in the organisational structure and decision-making processes.

Activities that can be funded (scope)

Eligible activities must be directly linked to the objectives and priorities of the present call and must be coherent, consistent and cost-effective. Activities may be performed at European, cross-border, national, regional or local level. The activities described should cover the four years of the Framework Partnership Agreement.

The activities of the Coalition shall be guided by the **Warsaw Memorandum** for building the European Literacy Coalition (6-7 May 2026), as well as the **conclusions from the European Literacy Coalition launch event**[8], held on 22-23 September 2026 in Brussels, reflecting the voices of stakeholders active in the field and representing various sectors.

[7] European Authors Day - Culture and Creativity, Two editions of this initiative were organised in 2023 and 2024 by the European Commission; the third ongoing edition is run by a consortium of organisations active in the field: Read for Real - Read. For Real

[8] The conclusion will be summarised and published on the website after the launch event held on 22 September 2026.

An action grant may be awarded to the consortium through a Specific Grant Agreement in order to finance Coalition activities, insofar as they are in line with the objectives of the call in the areas concerned and the policy priorities that may be established by the Commission.

To be funded under this call, the activities carried out by the consortium are expected to be organised under all of the following clusters, possibly to a varying degree depending on the stage of the action:

- **Governance**: e.g. establishing an organisational and management structure for the Coalition, with clear distribution of tasks and responsibilities among the Framework Partners, to ensure an effective coordination and delivery of tasks. This includes setting up regular working processes within the broad and inclusive Coalition based on participatory, collaborative, co-creation approaches, to ensure relevant voices are heard, particularly those marginalised or absent from the discussion. Decision making within the Coalition should be guided by the principles of transparency, inclusiveness, shared responsibility and it should be based on evidence and regular evaluation of the progress made.

- **Network building**: e.g. implementing initiatives and events aiming at developing, consolidating and expanding the Coalition; enabling sustainable networking and partnerships with relevant stakeholders in the field; actively reaching out to and engaging sectors considered relevant for development of literacy and reading competences; supporting existing and emerging literacy ecosystems at local, regional and national levels. These activities should aim at creating a common platform to work collectively on shared European Union priorities, coordinate actions across policy areas and engage with policy makers through a single voice.

- **Policy initiatives**: e.g. issuing policy briefs, position papers, recommendations; implementation guidelines, publications, periodic reports; conducting (longitudinal, interdisciplinary) research and analysis, monitoring and evaluation; collecting and managing educational resources such as repositories of evidence-based practices, educational tools (e.g. lesson scenarios, supporting audiovisual/digital materials); organising periodic thematic conferences and events; activities facilitating access and participation of relevant stakeholders in the implementation of EU policies in the field of literacy education and reading; activities to increase policy impact on target groups, sectors and systems and aiming to institutionalise the Coalition’s work while anchoring the results in relevant strategies, policies and programmes. Activities establishing synergies between EU funding programmes (such as Erasmus+, Creative Europe, Horizon Europe, European Social Fund+, EU structural funds, Digital Europe and their successors) and national/regional funding sources are also encouraged.

- **Capacity building**: organising workshops and webinars, working groups, task forces, and roundtables steering or implementing the activities of the European Literacy Coalition; promoting transnational cooperation including through existing platforms such as eTwinning or the European School Education Platform; contributing to building communities of practice on the online platform which will be provided by the European Commission, through steering, developing and implementing their activities; supporting peer learning for professionals; improving the effectiveness of policy actions. These activities should also add value to the ongoing work of existing (pan-European) networks and organisations

without duplicating their efforts.

- **Communication and outreach:** e.g. awareness-raising, information and communication, dissemination and promotion activities such as seminars, workshops, social-media campaigns, meetings, public debates, to increase public awareness and support for literacy education and reading, including through EU actions in the field (e.g. relevant policy initiatives and EU funding programmes). The Coalition consortium should make use of communication tools and supporting materials such as the visual identity already developed by the European Commission.

While the action should include all five clusters, the above-listed activities are indicative, non-exhaustive and further activities can be included in the proposal, in line with the themes and priorities provided in this call. Activities should contribute to widening the outreach, effectiveness and impact of the Coalition using a variety of traditional and digital channels, to ensure a diversity of voices, and reaching people and stakeholders within and beyond education and training, reading promotion and cultural organisations.

Expected impact

The expected impact, based on qualitative and quantitative indicators, should be described at three levels within the FPA duration of 4 years and beyond:

- On the targeted groups and relevant sectors;
- On policymaking and relevant authorities at system level;
- On private or public policy-drivers at local, regional, national and/or European levels.

In addition, the project should demonstrate the impact of involving various target groups/stakeholders in the development and implementation of proposed activities and building their active commitment.

3. Available budget

The total budget earmarked for grants under this framework partnership call is EUR 1 600 000 for 2026-2029.

Depending on the number and quality of proposals, we expect to sign 1 Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA).

We expect to fund 1 project through a specific grant agreement (SGA) under the FPA signed under this call. The estimated available budget for the SGA under this call is EUR 400 000.

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)	
FPA/SGA	
Call opening:	22 September 2026
Deadline for submission:	23 November 2026 – 17:00:00 CET (Brussels)
Evaluation:	November - December 2026
Information on evaluation results:	December 2026
FPA signature:	December 2026/January 2027
SGA signature:	December 2026/January 2027

5. Admissibility and documents

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

Proposals must be submitted as detailed in section 11 of this Call.

Proposals (including annexes and supporting documents) must be submitted using the forms provided.

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
- Application Form **Part B** — contains the technical description of the project and must be presented in 2 parts
    - **Part B.1** – Action Plan for a 4-year period duration of the FPA
    - **Part B.2** – Proposal for a first SGA to be funded under the FPA
- **mandatory annexes and supporting documents**:
    - detailed budget table/calculator: applicable for proposal in part B.2
    - CVs of core project team: not applicable
    - list of previous projects, if available (key projects for the last 4 years)

At proposal submission, you will have to confirm that you have the **mandate to act** for all applicants. Moreover, you will have to confirm that the information in the application is correct and complete and that all participants comply with the conditions for receiving EU funding *(especially eligibility, financial and operational capacity, exclusion, etc)*. Before signing the framework partnership and grant, each beneficiary and affiliated entity will have to

confirm this again by signing a declaration of honour (DoH). Proposals without full support will be rejected.

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

Proposals are limited to maximum of 80 pages total, max. **40 pages** for Part B.1 and 40 pages for Part B.2. 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)*.

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.:
  - Erasmus+ Programme Countries:
    - EU Member States (including overseas countries and territories (OCTs))
    - non-EU countries:
      - listed EEA countries and countries associated to the Erasmus+ Programme (list of participating countries)

- for higher education institutions (HEIs) established in Erasmus+ Programme Countries *(see above)*: be holders of the ECHE certificate (Erasmus Charter for Higher Education)
- be active in the field of literacy education and /or reading promotion.

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

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

Specific cases and definitions

Natural persons — Natural persons are NOT eligible.

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

Entities without legal personality — Entities which do not have legal personality under their national law may exceptionally participate, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf, and offer guarantees for the protection of the EU financial interests equivalent to that offered by legal persons[9].

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

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

Associations and interest groupings — Entities composed of members may participate as 'sole beneficiaries' or 'beneficiaries without legal personality'[10]. ⚠ Please note that if the action will be implemented by the members, they should also participate (either as beneficiaries or as affiliated entities, otherwise their costs will NOT be eligible).

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

EU restrictive measures — Special rules apply for entities subject to EU restrictive measures under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)[11]. Such entities are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any).

EU conditionality measures — Special rules apply for entities subject to measures adopted on the basis of EU Regulation 2020/2092[12]. Such entities are not eligible to participate in any funded role (beneficiaries, affiliated entities, subcontractors, recipients of financial support to third parties, etc). Currently such measures are in place for Hungarian public interest trusts established under the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity they maintain (see Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506, as of 16 December 2022).

ℹ 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 5 applicants (beneficiaries; not affiliated entities), which complies with the following conditions:

- minimum 5 independent entities from 5 different eligible countries
- active in the field of literacy education and/or reading promotion and working with schools
- representing different relevant sectors such as education and training, youth, and culture including reading promotion organisations and different parts of the book value chain, among others.
- representing at least one formal and one non-formal learning provider.

Eligible activities

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

[11] 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.

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

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

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

Projects should take into account the results of projects supported by other EU funding programmes. The complementarities must be described in the project proposals (Parts B.1 and B.2 of the Application Form).

Projects must comply with EU policy interests and priorities *(such as environment, social, security, industrial and trade policy, etc)*. Projects must also respect EU values and European Commission policy regarding reputational matters (*e.g. activities involving capacity building, policy support, awareness raising, communication, dissemination, etc*).[13]

Financial support to third parties is allowed for grants or similar forms of support or prizes under the following conditions:

- the calls must be open, published widely and conform to EU standards concerning transparency, equal treatment, conflict of interest and confidentiality
- the calls must remain open for at least two months
- the outcome of the call must be published on the participants' websites, including a description of the selected projects, award dates, project durations, and final recipient legal names and countries
- the calls must have a clear European dimension.

Financial support to third parties will be accepted in projects which demonstrate a clear added value to the call's priorities, objectives, and activities.

Your project application must clearly specify why financial support to third parties is needed, how it will be managed and provide a list of the different types of activities for which a third party may receive financial support. The proposal must also clearly describe the results to be obtained.

Projects should be consistent with the action plan submitted for the framework partnership. Only applications that have first been awarded a framework partnership will be considered eligible.

Geographic location (target countries)

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

Duration

Projects funded through SGA should normally range between 9 and 15 months.

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

Ethics

Projects must comply with:

- highest ethical standards and

[13] See, for instance, Guidance on funding for activities related to the development, implementation, monitoring and enforcement of Union legislation and policy.

- applicable EU, international and national law.

7. Financial and operational capacity and exclusion

Financial capacity

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

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

The check will normally be done for coordinators, except:

- public bodies (entities established as public body under national law, including local, regional or national authorities) or international organisations
- public legal entities, and institutions and organisations in the fields of education and training, youth and sport that have received over 50% of their annual revenue from public sources over the last two years
- if the project requested grant amount is not more than EUR 60 000.

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

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

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

or

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

For the framework partnership, the financial capacity check will be done only once at FPA-level, for all applicants (since no budget threshold because no budget).

For more information, *see Rules for Legal Entity Validation, LEAR Appointment and Financial Capacity Assessment*.

Operational capacity

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

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

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

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

- profiles (qualifications and experience) of the experts involved in managing and implementing the project
- description of the consortium participants
- list of previous projects, if available (key projects for the last 4 years)

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

Public bodies, Member State organisations and international organisations are exempted from the operational capacity check.

For framework partnerships, the operational capacity check will be done generally at FPA-level and then again for each grant application in the grant calls.

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 participate[14]:

- 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 misconduct[15] (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 framework partnership/grant)

[14] See Articles 138 and 143 of EU Financial Regulation 2024/2509.

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

- 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 framework partnership/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 framework partnership/grant)
- guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of EU Regulation 2988/95 (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the framework partnership/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 framework partnership/grant)
- intentionally and without proper justification resisted[16] an investigation, check or audit carried out by an EU authorising officer (or their representative or auditor), OLAF, the EPPO, or the European Court of Auditors.

Applicants will also be rejected if it turns out that[17]:

- 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).

For framework partnerships, exclusion will be checked before FPA signature and then again before signature of each specific grant.

8. Evaluation and award procedure

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

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

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

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

[17] See Article 143 EU Financial Regulation 2024/2509.

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

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

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

3) If this does not allow to determine the priority, a further prioritisation can be done by considering the overall project portfolio and the creation of positive synergies between projects, or other factors related to the objectives of the call. These factors will be documented in the panel report.

4) After that, the remainder of the available call budget will be used to fund projects across the different topics in order to ensure a balanced spread of the geographical and thematic coverage and while respecting to the maximum possible extent the order of merit based on the evaluation of the award criteria.

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

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

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

If you believe that the evaluation procedure was flawed, you can submit a **complaint** (following the deadlines and procedures set out in the evaluation result letter). Please note that notifications which have not been opened within 10 days after sending will be considered to have been accessed and that deadlines will be counted from opening/access. 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:

For both parts,

Part B.1: Long-term Coalition Action Plan (4 years), and

Part B.2: Proposal for activities to be funded under the first specific grant agreement

the following criteria will be assessed:

1. **Relevance:** (Part B.1: max 15 points, Part B.2: max 15 points)

This criterion will assess the proposal's contribution to the EU strategic policy context; the extent to which the proposed activities match the themes and priorities and objectives of the call; the scope of planed activities and their innovativeness; the European/trans-national dimension. In particular:

Background and general objectives

- Link to EU strategic policy context: the proposal establishes and develops a project, taking into account, fostering and implementing existing EU policy initiatives and frameworks in the field, in particular the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030), the Union of Skills and the Action Plan on Basic Skills.
- Scope: The extent to which the proposal consistently integrates the activities, as specified in section 2 above.
- EU values: the proposal is relevant for the respect and promotion of shared EU values, such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, as well as fighting any sort of discrimination.

Needs analysis

• Needs analysis and specific objectives: the objectives of the project are based on a sound needs analysis in line with the specific objectives of the call. The project identifies and addresses relevant issues/challenges/gaps. The specific objectives are clearly defined, measurable, realistic and achievable within the duration of the project. For each objective appropriate indicators for measuring achievement are defined.

• Contribution: to what extent does the proposal include partners contributing to the specific objectives of the topic.

Complementarity with other actions and innovation – European added value

• Complementarity: to what extent does the project and its foreseen activities build on the results of and is/are complementary to past activities carried out in the field.

• Innovation: the proposal considers state-of-the-art methods and techniques and leads to innovative results and solutions.

• European added value: the proposal has a clear European added value based on transnational cooperation which allows achieving results that would not be achieved at country level alone, and there is potential for transferring results to countries not involved in the proposal or to other sectors.

2. Quality:

Project design and implementation: (Part B.1: max 10 points, Part B.2: max 10 points)

This criterion will assess the overall consistency and clarity of project design. This includes technical quality of the proposal; logical links between the identified problems, needs and solutions proposed; methodology for implementing the project; feasibility of the project within the proposed time frame; cost effectiveness; as well as best value for money. In particular:

Concept and methodology

- Coherence and methodology: the overall project design ensures consistency between project objectives, methodology, activities, duration and the budget proposed. The proposal presents a coherent and comprehensive set of appropriate activities to meet the identified needs and lead to the expected results.
- Structure: the work programme is clear and complete (covering appropriate project phases: preparation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, dissemination and exploitation).

Project management, quality assurance and monitoring and evaluation strategy

- Management: solid management arrangements are foreseen ensuring that the project implementation is of high quality and completed in time.
- Quality assurance: the proposal describes methods to ensure good quality, monitoring, planning and control.
- Evaluation strategy: the proposal includes evaluation methods and indicators (quantitative and qualitative) to monitor and verify the outreach and coverage of the activities and results. The indicators proposed to measure progress are relevant, realistic and measurable.

Cost effectiveness and financial management

- Budget: the budget provides for appropriate resources necessary for success, is clearly linked to the proposal activities, and is neither overestimated nor underestimated.
- Financial management and control: the proposal indicates the arrangements adopted for the financial management of the project and, in particular, how the financial resources will be allocated and managed within the consortium.

Risk management

- Critical risks and risk management strategy: the proposal describes critical risks, uncertainties or difficulties related to the implementation of the project, and the measures/strategy for addressing them.

3. Partnership and cooperation arrangements: (Part B.1: max 10 points, Part B.2: max 10 points)

This criterion will assess the quality of the consortium and project teams, as well as appropriate procedures and problem-solving mechanisms for cooperating within the project teams and consortium. In particular:

Consortium set-up

• Configuration: the composition of the partnership is in line with the call and project objectives. It brings together an appropriate mix of relevant organisations with the necessary profiles, skills, experience, expertise and management support required for the successful delivery of the whole project. The proposal includes partners that adequately match the needs of the call. This includes,

- The extent to which the partnership of the proposal represents diverse sectors involved in literacy education and reading promotion and working with schools.
- The extent to which the partnership involves one or more formal learning provider(s) and one or more non-formal/informal learning provider(s).

• Commitment: the contributions from partners are significant and pertinent. The distribution of responsibilities demonstrates the commitment and active contribution of all participating organisations in relation to their specific expertise and capacity.

Consortium management and decision-making

• Tasks: the coordinator shows high-quality management and coordination of transnational networks and leadership in complex environment. Individual tasks of partners are allocated on the basis of the specific know-how of each partner. The distribution of responsibilities and tasks is clear and appropriate.

• Collaboration/Team spirit: an effective mechanism is proposed to ensure an efficient coordination, decision-making, communication and conflict resolution between the participating organisations, participants and any other relevant stakeholder.

4. Impact: (Part B.1: max 15 points, Part B.2: max 15 points)

This criterion will assess the ambition and expected long-term impact of the results on target groups; the appropriate dissemination strategy for ensuring viability of the activities and deliverables and its multiplier effect; as well as sustainability of results after EU funding ends. In particular:

Impact and ambition

• Exploitation: the proposal demonstrates how the outcomes of the project will be mainstreamed at system level at different levels of governance. It provides means to measure exploitation within the project lifetime and after.

• Impact: the proposal demonstrates the potential impact of the project, within the project's duration and beyond:

- On the targeted groups and relevant sectors;
- On policymaking and relevant authorities at system level;
- On private or public policy-drivers at local, regional, national and/or European levels.

The proposal includes measures and identifies quantitative and qualitative targets and indicators to monitor progress and assess the expected impact (short- and long-term).

Communication, dissemination and visibility

• Dissemination: the proposal provides a clear plan for the dissemination of results, to ensure the visibility of the activities and their results, and includes appropriate identified quantitative targets, activities, relevant timing, tools and channels to ensure that the results and benefits will be spread effectively to the right stakeholders and policy makers and drivers of innovation within and after the project's lifetime. The proposal also indicates which partners will be responsible for dissemination and demonstrates the relevant experience that they have in dissemination activities.

Sustainability and continuation

• Open access: as a general rule, and within the limits of existing national and European legal frameworks, results should be made available as open educational resources (OER) as well as on relevant professional, sectorial or competent authorities' platforms. The proposal will describe how data, materials, documents and audio-visual and social media activity produced will be made freely available and promoted through open licences and does not contain disproportionate limitations.

• Sustainability: the proposal explains how the project will be rolled out and further developed at different levels (local, regional, national). The proposal includes the design of a long-term action plan for the progressive roll-out of project deliverables after the project has finished and their incorporation into the mainstream. This plan shall be based on sustained partnerships between policymakers, education and training and culture providers and key stakeholders from other sectors at the appropriate level. It should include the identification of appropriate governance structures, as well as plans for scalability and financial sustainability, including the potential identification of financial resources (European, national and private) to ensure that the results and benefits achieved will have a long-term sustainability.

	Award criteria	Minimum pass score	Maximum score
Part B.1 4-year Action Plan for the FPA	Relevance	11	15
	Quality — Project design and implementation	6.5	10
	Quality — Partnership and cooperation arrangements	6.5	10
	Impact	11	15
Part B.2 Proposal for a specific grant to fund Coalition activities under a 9–15-month project	Relevance	11	15
	Quality — Project design and implementation	6.5	10
	Quality — Partnership and cooperation arrangements	6.5	10
	Impact	11	15
	Overall (pass) scores	**70**	**100**

Maximum points: 100 points.

Individual thresholds per criterion: see the table.

Overall threshold: 70 points.

The proposal that passes the individual thresholds AND the overall threshold AND achieves the highest total score will be considered for conclusion of FPA and SPA. Other proposals will be rejected.

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

If the application is selected, a Framework Partnership Agreement[18] detailing the conditions of cooperation will be sent to the applicant together with information on how to formalise the agreement.

The Commission will sign a Framework Partnership Agreement with a maximum duration of 4 years with the successful consortium of applicants, followed by a Specific Grant Agreement[19] to fund the project described in Part B.2.

The award of a Specific Grant Agreement under this call year does not establish an entitlement for subsequent grants.

Within the period covered by the Framework Partnership Agreement, the Commission may invite the consortium to submit another proposal/s. It will evaluate the applications

[18] A model Framework Partnership Agreement is available in annex 1a.

[19] A model specific Grant Agreement is available in annex 1b.

submitted against the award criteria listed in such invitation. Specific Grant Agreements can be signed subject to a positive evaluation of the application and to approval of the EU budget by the EU budgetary authority.

At this stage, the exclusion and selection criteria will not be re-examined. Partners must report any change in circumstances since they signed the Framework Partnership Agreement that could affect the exclusion and selection criteria. 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.

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

Starting date and project duration

The project starting date and duration will be fixed in the Specific 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: see section 6 above (extensions are possible, if duly justified and through an amendment).

Milestones and deliverables

The milestones and deliverables for each project will be reflected in Annex 1 of the Specific Grant Agreement.

Form of specific grant, funding rate and maximum grant amount

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

Project budget (maximum grant amount) under Part B.2: EUR 400 000. The grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested.

The specific 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 (80%).

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

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

Budget categories and cost eligibility rules

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

Budget categories for this call:

- A. Personnel costs
  - A.1 Employees, A.2 Natural persons under direct contract, A.3 Seconded persons
  - A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries
  - A.5 Volunteers
- B. Subcontracting costs
- C. Purchase costs
  - C.1 Travel and subsistence
  - C.2 Equipment
  - C.3 Other goods, works and services
- D. Other cost categories
  - D.1 Financial support to third parties
- E. Indirect costs

Specific cost eligibility conditions for this call:

- personnel costs:
  - SME owner/natural person unit cost[20]:Yes
  - volunteers unit cost[21]: Yes (with indirect costs)
- travel and subsistence unit cost[22]: Yes[23]
- equipment costs: depreciation
- other cost categories:
  - costs for financial support to third parties: allowed for grants and prizes; maximum amount per third party is EUR 60 000;
- indirect cost flat-rate: 7% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs and exempted specific cost categories, if any)
- VAT: non-deductible 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

[20] Commission Decision of 20 October 2020 authorising the use of unit costs for the personnel costs of the owners of small and medium-sized enterprises and beneficiaries that are natural persons not receiving a salary for the work carried out by themselves under an action or work programme (C(2020)7715).

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

[22] 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).

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

- kick off meeting: costs for kick-off meeting organised by the granting authority are eligible (travel costs for maximum 2 persons, return ticket to Brussels and accommodation for one night) only if the meeting takes place after the project starting date set out in the Grant Agreement; the starting date can be changed through an amendment, if needed.
- project website: costs for establishing and running a dedicated project website are eligible
- other ineligible costs: No

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

If indirect costs for volunteers costs are eligible, you can add them manually to the volunteers costs category in Annex 2 (calculate the 7% flat-rate on the amount of volunteers costs calculated as unit costs, and then add them on top).

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 the specific grant signature, you will normally receive a **prefinancing** to start working on the project (float of normally **70%** of the maximum grant amount; exceptionally less or no prefinancing). The prefinancing will be paid 30 days from entry into force/financial guarantee (if required) — whichever is the latest.

There will be no **interim payments.**

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)*.

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

Prefinancing guarantees

If a prefinancing guarantee is required, it will be fixed in the specific 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 e-mail 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 specific Grant Agreement.

Certificates

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

Liability regime for recoveries

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

For beneficiaries, it is one of the following:

- limited joint and several liability with individual ceilings — *each beneficiary up* to their maximum grant amount
- unconditional joint and several liability — *each beneficiary up to the maximum grant amount for the action*

or

- individual financial responsibility — *each beneficiary only for their own debts*.

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

Provisions concerning the project implementation

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

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

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

- additional communication and dissemination activities: Yes

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

EU restrictive measures

Yes

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

You can submit your application on paper or electronically as below.

Submission on paper:

The application must be submitted in the correct form, duly completed and dated. It must be submitted in 3 copies (one original clearly identified as such, plus 2 copies) and signed by the person authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant.

The application must be sent to the following address[24]:

European Commission
Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture
Unit B1: Basic Skills, Schools and Teachers
J70 3/85
B-1049 Brussels

- by post (evidence will be constituted by the postmark),
- by hand-delivery, (evidence will be constituted by the acknowledgement of receipt), or
- by courier service (evidence will be constituted by the acknowledgement of receipt).

Electronic submission:

In case the applicant has the possibility to sign using a qualified electronic signature (QES), they should have the documents signed electronically by their authorised representative. Only the qualified electronic signature (QES) within the meaning of Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 (eIDAS Regulation) will be accepted.

Before sending the electronically signed documents, the signatures and validity of the certificates should be checked with one of the following tools:

- DSS Demonstration validation tool available at https://ec.europa.eu/cefdigital/DSS/webapp-demo/validation can help checking the

[24] *Article 152(5) FR*

validity of a certificate by indicating the number and type of valid signatures in a document.

- EU Trusted List Browser can be consulted in order to check whether the electronic signature provider and the trust service it provides are part of European Union Trusted List: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/tl-browser/#

The applicant needs to make sure to use a QES compliant to eIDAS Regulation, by checking that both the service provider and the qualified certificate generation service used are included in the EU Trusted List Browser.

The application must be sent to the following email address:

EAC UNITE B1 EAC-EUROPEAN-LITERACY-COALITION-CALL@ec.europa.eu

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):

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

Contact

Questions should be sent to the following email address: EAC-EUROPEAN-LITERACY-COALITION-CALL@ec.europa.eu. Answers will be published on the website.

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 Topic page regularly. We will use it to publish updates and additional information on the call (call and topic updates).
- **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.

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

- **Balanced project budget —** Grant applications must ensure a balanced project budget and sufficient other resources to implement the project successfully *(e.g. own contributions, income generated by the action, financial contributions from third parties, etc)*. You may be requested to lower your estimated costs, if they are ineligible (including excessive).

- **Completed/ongoing projects —** Proposals for projects that have already been completed will be rejected; proposals for projects that have already started will be assessed on a case-by-case basis (in this case, no costs can be reimbursed for activities that took place before the project starting date/proposal submission).

- **No-profit rule —** Grants may NOT give a profit (i.e. surplus of revenues + EU grant over costs). This will be checked by us at the end of the project.

- **No cumulation of funding/no double funding —** It is strictly prohibited to cumulate funding from the EU budget (except under 'EU Synergies actions'). Outside such Synergies actions, any given action may receive only ONE grant from the EU budget and cost items may under NO circumstances be declared under two EU grants; projects must be designed as different actions, clearly delineated and separated for each grant (without overlaps).

- **Combination with EU operating grants —** Combination with EU operating grants is possible, if the project remains outside the operating grant work programme and you make sure that cost items are clearly separated in your accounting and NOT declared twice *(see AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement, art 6.2.E)*.

- **Multiple proposals —** Applicants may submit more than one proposal for *different* projects under the same call (and be awarded funding for them).

  Organisations may participate in several proposals.

  BUT: if there are several proposals for *very similar* projects, only one application will be accepted and evaluated; the applicants will be asked to withdraw the others (or they will be rejected).

- **Resubmission —** Proposals may be changed and re-submitted until the deadline for submission.

- **Rejection —** By submitting the application, all applicants accept the call conditions set out in this 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 Regulation 2018/1725. 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 Privacy Statement – Annex 8.