



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EUROPEAN CIVIL PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN AID
OPERATIONS (ECHO)
Disaster Preparedness and Prevention
Prevention and Disaster Risk Management

**INVITATION TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION
SINGLE COUNTRY GRANT FOR DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT
TRACK 1 (AWP 2021)**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ver. 2 – 09/09/2021 (new questions added: Q10, Q13-16, Q20)

A. ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS

Question (Q) 1: We are interested in having a study on two topics (on two different possible investments). Should we in this case send you one application or two?

Answer (A): In principle, if the two proposed projects are completely unrelated then you should send two different applications. If the two investments are linked, we encourage to articulate the two studies in a bigger project proposal – as this will reduce transaction costs (e.g. processing 1 application instead of 2 or more) and create efficiencies (e.g. in project management, reporting, etc.)

Q2: Before we decide if we choose to submit an application, could you tell us if our project idea and possible objective of the action [example], could be supported / are eligible under this measure?

A: The “Conditions for Application” (Annex 1) document defines (on page 3) the specific objectives of the actions that can be supported under this call. Please refer also to section 6.2 (Eligible activities) to ensure that the activity you propose fits under the eligible activities that Track 1 can finance.

We remain available for questions clarifying rules and procedures of the call.

Q3: Are municipalities and business associations eligible to apply?

A: The application must be submitted only by a national civil protection authority or by the relevant competent authority in charge of disaster risk management. The latter should be understood as “CP authority or any other entity in charge of **coordinating** disaster risk management at national level”.

The geographical scope of a proposed project can be the national territory or part of it (e.g. a region). Please refer to section 5 (Admissibility Requirements) and section 6 (Eligibility Criteria) of the “Conditions for Application” (Annex 1) document.

Q4: In section 6.3 (Ineligible activities) of the “Conditions for Application” (Annex I), what exactly does "works" mean in relation to ineligible costs?

A: The definition of “works” in section 6.3 (Ineligible activities) of the “Conditions for Application” (Annex I), concerns physical works e.g. construction or refurbishment of buildings or public works.

Q5: Are other ministries (other than the national level civil protection authority or relevant competent authority in charge of disaster risk management) of Member States according to their role in the field of disaster management eligible applicants /eligible for submitting the proposal under this invitation as a completely separate legal entity?

A: No. As mentioned in the “Conditions for Application” (Annex 1) document: “Proposals may be submitted only by the national level civil protection authority (or relevant competent authority in charge of disaster risk management) of Member States”. The latter should be understood as “CP authority or any other entity in charge of **coordinating** disaster risk management at national level”.

Q6: Would the national level civil protection authority (or relevant competent authority in charge of disaster risk management) of a Member State have any formal role/responsibilities in the application and implementation process in case the application is submitted and activities implemented by other ministries?

A: The UCPM work programme (and the Track 1 call) refers only to the national civil protection authority or “relevant competent authority in charge of disaster risk management” (this should be understood as: “CP authority or any other entity in charge of **coordinating** disaster risk management at national level”). Evidence of the legal mandate of said authority will need to be provided.

Q7: Are local authorities (municipalities or their corresponding administrative structures) according to their role in the field of disaster management eligible applicants for submitting a proposal under this invitation as a completely separate legal entity? Would the national level civil protection authority (or relevant competent authority in charge of disaster risk management) of Member States have any formal role/responsibilities in the application process in case the application is submitted and activities implemented by a municipal administration?

A: No, as they are not the national level civil protection authority (or relevant competent authority in charge of disaster risk management at national level) of Member States. The only option for a decentralised administrative CP structure (e.g. regional or municipal) to be associated to the grant management would be as an affiliated entity (see point below).

Q8: Are the rescue services (which in our country are legal entities, organised as non-profit non-governmental organisations) according to their role in the field of disaster management eligible for submitting a proposal under this invitation as a completely separate legal entity?

A: It is stated in point 6.1 (Eligible Applicants) of the “Conditions for Application” (Annex I), paragraph 5, that *“In all cases, the beneficiary national civil protection authority takes the responsibility for the oversight and execution of the activities and for the final deliverables to the Commission.”*

The action will need to be submitted and implemented by the national civil protection authority. Other entities can participate in the action simply as stakeholders (e.g. invited

to take part in a meeting, workshop, study visit, etc.) or – if they want to be able to submit costs for reimbursement (i.e. costs which they incur themselves) they will need to be either Affiliated Entities or Sub-Contractors.

In the first case (Affiliated Entity) there needs to be a capital link (i.e. the entity needs to be controlled by the CP National Authority in terms of budget) or a legal/statutory link (the entity needs to be included in the organigramme of the national authority) and this has to be demonstrated by providing documents which the Commission will then need to validate before awarding the grant.

Please note that the Affiliated Entity cannot be created ‘ad hoc’ for the project – the affiliation/link needs to be there already, regardless of the project.

In the second case (Sub-contractor), the entity will not be able to claim a direct expense – they will have to submit an invoice to the Main Applicant (CP national authority) who will include it in its costs.

Please note that, in the case of other public bodies (e.g. Ministries without a separate legal personality) participating in the project and covered by the same Legal Identity of the central government, they would not be considered as ‘Affiliated Entities’ (nor as “Subcontractor”). Their participation in the projects (e.g. activities they are in charge of, participation of their staff, etc.) needs to be clearly spelled out in the project proposal and in the budget that you will submit. These public bodies will be able to incur costs and submit them together with the costs incurred by the beneficiary.

Q9: Are there possibilities for validation of documents (evidences of legal mandates and documents demonstrating the relationship between Applicant and Affiliated Entity) before the application is submitted or only after official application?

A: DG ECHO will review the legal documents provided only once the application is formally submitted and is checked for eligibility.

NEW (09/09/2021) Q10: Is the Declaration on Honour (regarding the eligibility of the applicant and its affiliated entities in accordance with the criteria set out in the call) mandatory for the submission as an annex to the application form?

A: Yes, the Declaration on Honour must be duly filled out and signed and submitted together with the Application Form. You will find the template of the form on our website, in the folder “Application supporting documents” at the following address: https://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding-evaluations/financing-civil-protection/calls-for-proposals_en.

B. BUDGET

Q11: Could you please confirm that the co-financing rate is 95%?

A: Yes, indeed the maximum rate of co-financing is 95% of the eligible direct costs for all activities as stated in the “Conditions for Application” (Annex I), section 11 Financial provisions, point 1 c).

Indirect costs are not eligible (i.e. in common terms, the application should not include any general and administrative expenses).

Q12: If our application is successful, could you please confirm what would be the amount of money transferred to our account (whether it would be 70% of the EU contribution or more/less) after signing the Grant Agreement?

A: The pre-financing corresponds to 70% of the maximum grant amount and will be paid within 30 days after the reception of the signed Grant Agreement by the Commission as stated in the – “Conditions for Application” (Annex I), Section 11.7.1 Pre-financing.

NEW (09/09/2021) Q13: Is there any maximum amount or percentage concerning the Eligible direct costs - "the subcontracting of tasks forming part of the action"?

A: A maximum amount or percentage concerning the subcontracting of tasks forming part of the action has not been set. Please note the special conditions for sub-contracting (Annex VI - Grant Agreement: ARTICLE I.15 – SPECIAL CONDITIONS FOR SUBCONTRACTING):

“By way of derogation to letter (a) of Article II.11, core tasks may be sub-contracted if justified by the nature of the action and the degree of necessity for its implementation”.

according the Grant agreement, “Annex VI Model terms of reference for the certificate on the financial statements[: not applicable]”

NEW (09/09/2021) Q14: Is it eligible to include audit costs even if it is not required? Or do we have to pay for audit from our budget?

A: The beneficiary is requested to submit an audit certificate in case the maximum grant amount indicated for each beneficiary and its affiliated entities in the estimated budget as reimbursement of actual costs (EU contribution) is EUR 750 000 or more. The cost for such a certificate should be included in the “Estimated Budget” as an eligible cost. However, in case the EU contribution is lower than EUR 750 000 per beneficiary, the cost for an audit certificate will be considered as ineligible. The beneficiary has to cover such a cost from his own budget.

NEW (09/09/2021) Q15: According the Conditions of the Application part “11.6 Ineligible costs” are indirect costs, but according to the Grant Agreement part “II.19.3 Eligible indirect costs”, the indirect costs can be considered as eligible. Could you please clarify?

A: The indirect costs are considered as ineligible as mentioned in the Grant Agreement ARTICLE I.14 — SPECIAL PROVISION ON INDIRECT COSTS: “As an exception to Article II.19.3, indirect costs are not eligible”.

NEW (09/09/2021) Q16: Does VAT is not eligible for any public body which has been designated by the government?

A: The value added tax (VAT) is not eligible under the Agreement. Therefore, they will not be taken into account in the final calculation of the grant and must not be entered in the Estimated Budget table at the application stage or at final reporting stage.

C. APPLICATION FORM (ANNEX II)

Q17: Since there only is an electronic submission, can we sign the document electronically or do you prefer to receive a document signed by hand and scanned in?

A: Applicants who have the possibility to sign the agreement using a Qualified Electronic Signature (QES) should have it signed electronically by the authorised representative(s).

Please note that only the qualified electronic signature (QES) within the meaning of Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 (eIDAS Regulation) will be accepted.

Documents signed with a QES benefit from the highest level of security and legal certainty under the eIDAS Regulation. More background information can be found here: <https://ec.europa.eu/cefdigital/wiki/display/CEFDIGITAL/eSignature+-+Get+started>

Applicants who do not have access to QES should sign (by hand) and scan before sending the application.

Please note that all applications must be sent via email to the following address: ECHO-CP-P&P@ec.europa.eu.

Q18: Who should sign the application form (Annex II) to be submitted?

A: The application form should be signed by the person authorised, namely the legal representative(s) who, if the application is successful, will sign the grant agreement with the Commission. In case you have the possibility to sign the agreement using a qualified electronic signature (QES), please have it signed electronically by your authorised representative(s).

Q19: What are the documents to be submitted for the grant application?

A: The list of documents to be submitted by 24 September 2021 are detailed on the last page of the application form (“Checklist for applicants”).

Documents listed in the table:

- 1) Application form;
- 2) Budget form;
- 3) Legal Entity Form;
- 4) Bank Form;
- 5) Declaration of Honour for applicant and, if applicable, each affiliated entity.

(Optional) Support letter to demonstrate Government intention to follow up the grant with investment/policy/legislation/etc.

(Optional) any other document you want to submit to support your application.

(Optional) Evidence of the legal mandate of the relevant competent authority in charge of disaster risk management

NEW (09/09/2021) Q20: Regarding the “SUMMARY OF THE APPLICATION”, what we should insert in the section “Title”? The name of the project or the name of the action „Single Country Grants for Disaster Risk Management (“Track 1”)?

A: Applicants should insert in the “Title” section the name of the project they are proposing.

D. BUDGET (ANNEX III)

Regarding the sheet “Estimated Budget”, Table 1 “Estimated eligible costs of the action and EU contribution”

Q21: How should we demonstrate that staff costs budgeted in the line “Personnel costs” correspond to the payment for the time dedicated to the implementation of the project?

A: Please refer to Articles I.10 to I.14 and II.19.2 of the Grant Agreement for details on eligible direct costs.

At the stage of proposal submission, you should simply include under “Personnel Costs” amounts corresponding to the estimated time unit (hours) the personnel members will work on the project.

Further as stated in Article I.13., Please note that as an exception to Article II.19.2 (a), salary costs of the personnel of national administrations are eligible only to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities, which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the project concerned were not undertaken, (provided that all other eligibility conditions set in the grant agreement are met). As a consequence, successful applicants will be required to keep evidence of the fact that these project tasks are in addition to the “ordinary” ones, together with the evidence of actual salary paid (payrolls) and actual time devoted to the project (Annex V Financial statement, tab “Model Timesheet”).

Q22: Is buying stationery, laptops or other material needed for the implementation of the project eligible?

A: Office supplies and equipment (e.g. laptop, computer) are considered indirect costs and are therefore not eligible for reimbursement. Please refer to point 6.3 (Ineligible activities) of the “Conditions for Application” (Annex 1) document (page 7).

Q23: Cell D32 sums up only personnel and travel costs, is that correct?

A: In table 1, cell D32 shows the “Total EU contribution” which corresponds to the total direct eligible EU costs (cell D30) from all the categories – Personnel, Travel and Subsistence, Sub-contracting and Other costs.

Regarding the sheet “Estimated Budget”, Table 3 “Estimated Revenue of the Action”

Q24: Does the “Requested EU grant” (cell N11) refer to the total EU contribution in Table 1 (cell D32)?

A: Indeed, the “Requested EU grant” (cell N11) corresponds to the “Total EU contribution” (cell D32) from Table 1.

Q25: What does “2. Financial contribution of the beneficiary (own resources)” mean? Is it the total contribution of the beneficiary?

A: Financial contribution of the beneficiary (own resources): this refers to the difference between the total value of the action and the EU contribution (which is max 95% of the total value).