



Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)

Call for proposals

CEF 2 Transport - Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility – Cohesion envelope

(CEF-T-2021-AFIFCOEN)

Version 3.0
19 July 2023



| HISTORY OF CHANGES | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|--|---|
| Version | Publication Date | Change | Page |
| 1.0 | 16.09.2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initial version (new MFF). | |
| 2.0 | 16.03.2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use of the appropriate terminology for 150/350kW electricity recharging infrastructure: “publicly accessible recharging station” is replaced by “publicly accessible recharging points” ▪ Clarification on eligibility of electricity grid connection ▪ Clarification on activities that cannot be funded and on eligible costs ▪ Postponement of the 5th cut-off deadline ▪ Inclusion of clause from Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506 of 15 December 2022 on measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the principles of the rule of law in Hungary ▪ Clarification on project duration ▪ Clarification on overall and individual thresholds | <p>7-8</p> <p>7-8</p> <p>12-13 23-24</p> <p>14</p> <p>16</p> <p>17 & 21</p> <p>21</p> |
| 3.0 | 19.07.2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarification on the admissibility conditions for the 5th AFIF cut-off deadline | 13 & 14 |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ | |



EUROPEAN CLIMATE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT EXECUTIVE AGENCY (CINEA)

CINEA.B – Sustainable networks and investments
CINEA.B.3 – CEF Transport: South West Europe, BeNeLux + Innovation, ITS and RIS

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| 0. Introduction | 5 |
| 1. Background..... | 6 |
| 2. Objectives — Activities that can be funded — Expected impact | 7 |
| Objectives | 7 |
| Activities that can be funded | 7 |
| CEF-T-2021-AFIFCOEN-UNITS: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility - Unit Contributions | 7 |
| CEF-T-2021-AFIFCOEN-WORKS-ZE: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility - Works - Zero Emissions | 8 |
| CEF-T-2021-AFIFCOEN-WORKS-LNG: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility - Works - LNG..... | 10 |
| Expected impact..... | 13 |
| 3. Available budget | 13 |
| 4. Timetable and deadlines | 13 |
| 5. Admissibility and documents | 14 |
| 6. Eligibility..... | 15 |
| Eligible participants (eligible countries)..... | 15 |
| Consortium composition | 16 |
| Eligible activities..... | 16 |
| Geographic location (target countries)..... | 17 |
| Duration | 17 |
| 7. Financial and operational capacity and exclusion..... | 17 |
| Financial capacity | 17 |
| Operational capacity | 18 |
| Exclusion | 18 |
| 8. Evaluation and award procedure | 19 |
| 9. Award criteria..... | 20 |
| 10. Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements..... | 21 |
| Starting date and project duration | 21 |
| Milestones and deliverables..... | 22 |
| Form of grant, funding rate and maximum grant amount..... | 22 |
| Budget categories and cost eligibility rules..... | 23 |

| | |
|--|----|
| Reporting and payment arrangements..... | 25 |
| Prefinancing guarantees | 25 |
| Certificates | 25 |
| Liability regime for recoveries | 26 |
| Provisions concerning the project implementation | 26 |
| Other specificities | 26 |
| Non-compliance and breach of contract | 26 |
| 11. How to submit an application..... | 26 |
| 12. Help | 27 |
| 13. Important | 29 |

0. Introduction

This is a call for proposals for EU **action grants** in the field of Transport under the **Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)**.

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

- Regulation 2018/1046 ([EU Financial Regulation](#))
- the basic act (CEF Regulation [2021/1153](#)¹).

The call is launched in accordance with the multiannual work programme 2021-2027 for the implementation of the Connecting Europe Facility – Transport sector for the period 2021- 2023² (hereafter the multiannual work programme) and will be managed by the **European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA)** ('Agency').

The call covers the following **topics**:

- **CEF-T-2021-AFIFCOEN-UNITS: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility - Unit Contributions**
- **CEF-T-2021-AFIFCOEN-WORKS-ZE: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility - Works - Zero Emissions**
- **CEF-T-2021-AFIFCOEN-WORKS-LNG: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility - Works - LNG**

NOTE: The term 'project' used in this application form and other documents is synonymous to the term 'action' used in the CEF Regulation 2021/1153.

Each project application under the call must address only one of these topics. Applicants wishing to apply for more than one topic, must submit a separate proposal under each topic.

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

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

- the [Call Document](#) outlines the:
 - background, objectives, scope, activities that can be funded and the expected results (sections 1 and 2)
 - timetable and available budget (sections 3 and 4)
 - admissibility and eligibility conditions (including mandatory documents; sections 5 and 6)
 - criteria for financial and operational capacity and exclusion (section 7)
 - evaluation and award procedure (section 8)
 - award criteria (section 9)
 - legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements (section 10)
 - how to submit an application (section 11)
- the [Online Manual](#) outlines the:

¹ Regulation (EU) 2021/1153 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2021 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility (OJ L 249, 14.7.2021, p. 38–81).

² Commission Implementing Decision C(2021) 5763 final of 5.8.2021 on the financing of the Connecting Europe Facility - Transport sector and the adoption of the work programme for 2021-2027.

- 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, if your application is selected, in order to obtain the grant (*including cost eligibility, payment schedule, accessory obligations, etc.*).

You are also encouraged to visit the [CINEA website](#) to consult the list of previously funded projects.

1. Background

In December 2019, the Commission adopted the European Green Deal communication³. The European Green Deal calls for a 90% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in transport, the aim being for the EU to become a climate-neutral economy by 2050, while also working towards a zero-pollution ambition. In September 2020, the Commission adopted its proposal for a European Climate Law to reduce net emissions of greenhouse gases by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 and to put Europe on a responsible path to becoming climate-neutral by 2050⁴.

In December 2020, the Commission adopted the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy (SSMS) communication⁵. The strategy lays the foundation for how the EU transport system can achieve this transformation and sets concrete milestones to keep the transport system's journey towards a smart and sustainable future on track. The transport sector is still vastly reliant on fossil fuels. Boosting the uptake of zero- and low-emission vehicles, vessels and aeroplanes and of renewable and low-carbon fuels in all modes of transport is a priority objective in the quest to make all transport modes more sustainable.

The increased deployment and use of renewable and low-carbon fuels must go hand in hand with the creation of a comprehensive network of recharging and refuelling infrastructure to enable the widespread uptake of low- and zero-emission vehicles in all transport modes. It is important that no EU region or territory is left behind and that regional disparities in the deployment of the infrastructure for alternative fuels are well-addressed.

Along with the political initiative, the CEF Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility (AFIF), as established by the multiannual work programme, will provide the incentive, together with other funding programme instruments (such as Recovery and Resilience Facility, Cohesion Policy Funds, InvestEU, Horizon Europe), to reach the Green Deal and SSMS objectives.

The AFIF will fund alternative fuels infrastructure by the combination of CEF grants with financial support from financial institutions to achieve a higher impact of the investment. The European Investment Bank (EIB) and other national promotional banks will be Implementing Partners (IP) of the AFIF and will facilitate these operations. Other public or private financial institutions can also support the financing of the operations (Non-Implementing Partner).

³ COM(2019) 640 final

⁴ COM(2020)563 final. On 21 April 2021, the Council and Parliament reached provisional political agreement on the European Climate Law.

⁵ COM(2020)789 final.

2. Objectives – Activities that can be funded – Expected impact

Objectives

The objectives pursued under this call are defined in section 4 of the multiannual work programme.

More specifically, this call aims at supporting the deployment of Alternative Fuel supply infrastructure, contributing to decarbonising transport along the TEN-T network.

Activities that can be funded

The activities that can be funded under this call are relating to the deployment of Alternative fuel supply networks as defined in section 6.2.2 of the multiannual work programme.

The infrastructure shall be deployed in accordance with Directive 2014/94/EU and with Regulation 1315/2013 in line with the requirements listed below:

CEF-T-2021-AFIFCOEN-UNITS: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility - Unit Contributions

I. Electricity recharging infrastructure supported in the form of unit contributions

- Publicly accessible recharging stations⁶ **along the TEN-T road network:**
 - Infrastructure
 - Publicly accessible⁷ recharging points dedicated to light-duty vehicles⁸ with a minimum power output⁹ of 150 kW.
 - Publicly accessible recharging points dedicated to heavy-duty vehicles¹⁰ with a minimum power output of 350 kW.
 - Related necessary grid connection with a minimum power capacity of 600kVA.
 - Location
 - The recharging infrastructure must be located on the relevant TEN-T road sections identified in the “eligibility map” (https://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/tentec/tentec-portal/map/docs/AFIF_150kw_350kw.pdf¹¹). A buffer of 2km driving distance from the TEN-T road network is applicable, calculated from the closest exit¹².

⁶ A ‘recharging station’ means a physical installation at a single location, consisting of one or more recharging points. It should be distinguished from a ‘recharging point’, which means an interface that allows for the transfer of electricity to an electric vehicle, which, whilst it may have one or several connectors to accommodate different connector types, is capable of recharging only one electric vehicle at a time.

⁷ ‘publicly accessible’ means an alternative fuels infrastructure which is located at a site or premise that is open to the general public, irrespective of whether the alternative fuels infrastructure is located on public or on private property.

⁸ ‘light-duty vehicle’ means a motor vehicle of categories M1 or N1 as defined in Annex II to Directive 2007/46/EC

⁹ ‘power output’ means the theoretical maximum power, expressed in kW, that can be provided by a recharging point to a vehicle;

¹⁰ ‘heavy-duty vehicle’ means a motor vehicle of categories M2, M3, N2 or N3 as defined in Annex II to Directive 2007/46/EC

¹¹ It is possible to increase the zoom level in the TENtec viewer. The applicant will need to access the following link: <http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/tentec/tentec-portal/map/maps.html> and click once on ‘LAYERS’ to access the ‘AFIF ELIGIBILITY MAPS’.

¹² Distance from the closest exit of the TEN-T road alignment up to the entry point of the recharging station’s location. The closest exit is the point in which the vehicle leaves the TEN-T road alignment with no possibility to go back (e.g. when the dotted line of a highway exit lane becomes a continued line). The road interchange used to exit has to be fully-fledged allowing both exit and re-entry.

- Publicly accessible recharging stations on **safe and secure parkings** along the TEN-T road network:
 - Infrastructure
 - Publicly accessible recharging points dedicated to heavy-duty vehicles with a minimum power output of 150 kW.
 - Related necessary grid connection with a minimum power capacity of 600kVA.
 - Location
 - Safe and secure parking areas on the road Core network and its nodes, or on the road Comprehensive network if they primarily serve users of the road Core network, for trucks and commercial vehicles.
- Publicly accessible recharging stations **in urban nodes**:
 - Infrastructure
 - Publicly accessible recharging points dedicated to heavy-duty vehicles with a minimum power output of 350 Kw.
 - Related necessary grid connection with a minimum power capacity of 600kVA.
 - Location
 - Urban nodes, listed in Annex II.2 of the TEN-T Regulation.

CEF-T-2021-AFIFCOEN-WORKS-ZE: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility - Works - Zero Emissions

II. Electricity recharging infrastructure supported in the form of a fixed co-funding rate

- Recharging stations supplying public transport in TEN-T Urban Nodes:
 - Infrastructure
 - Recharging points in bus depots.
 - Opportunity-based charging devices.
 - Related energy storage facilities.
 - Location
 - Urban nodes, listed in Annex II.2 of the TEN-T Regulation.
- Recharging stations supplying inland waterway and maritime vessels
 - Infrastructure
 - Shore-Side Electricity Systems.
 - Related necessary grid connection.
 - Including zero-emission electric inland and short sea shipping vessels if it is demonstrated that an initial number of vessels is needed to kick-start the use of the supported recharging infrastructure.
 - Location
 - In TEN-T inland waterway and maritime ports as listed in Annex II.2 of the TEN-T Regulation.

As regards the inland waterway and maritime vessels the following conditions apply:

- only for fitting or retrofitting the main propulsion system (zero-emission);
- if for passenger transport, only for inland vessels longer than 20m with more than 12 passenger capacity;
- the eligible cost shall be limited to the difference in costs between a fossil-fuel vessel and the zero-emission vessel as regards the propulsion system, to be duly evidenced by the applicant;
- the deployment of electric powered vessels for waterborne transport can be for use in private fleets of ships and vessels, excluding cruises and Exclusive Day trip tourism vessels, on the condition that the vessels are operating under the

law of a Member State of the EU and serving EU passenger and cargo destinations and/or other EU services predominantly for at least 5 years from the date they are put in operation.

- Recharging facilities supplying port vehicles and equipment
 - Infrastructure
 - Recharging infrastructure used for the performance of port services and operations.
 - Including port vehicles and equipment.
 - Location
 - In TEN-T inland waterway and maritime ports as listed in Annex II.2 of the TEN-T Regulation.

As regards port vehicles and equipment the following conditions apply:

- only for fitting or retrofitting the main propulsion system (zero-emission);
 - the eligible cost shall be limited to the difference in costs between a fossil-fuel vehicle/equipment and the zero-emission vehicle/equipment as regards the propulsion system, to be duly evidenced by the applicant.
- Electrification of airport ground operations
 - Infrastructure
 - Electricity supply to stationary aircrafts.
 - Electric supply facilities for ground operation vehicles (excluding vehicles).
 - Location
 - In TEN-T airports as listed in Annex II.2 of the TEN-T Regulation.

III. Hydrogen refuelling infrastructure supported in the form of a fixed co-funding rate

- Publicly accessible Hydrogen Refuelling Stations (HRS) for light-duty vehicles and/or heavy-duty vehicles
 - Infrastructure
 - HRS supplying liquid or gaseous hydrogen at pressure of 700 bar, or at a pressure of 350 bar and 700 bar; supply may be limited to 350 bar only in cases of locations serving mostly captive fleets accepting only 350 bar pressure.
 - Location
 - On TEN-T road network with a buffer of 10 km driving distance, calculated from the closest exit.
 - In TEN-T urban nodes as listed in Annex II.2 of the TEN-T Regulation.
- HRS for public transport (e.g. bus depots)
 - Infrastructure
 - HRS supplying liquid or gaseous hydrogen at pressure of 700 bar, or at a pressure of 350 bar and 700 bar; supply may be limited to 350 bar only in cases of bus depots and other locations serving captive fleets accepting only 350 bar pressure.
 - Location
 - In TEN-T urban nodes as listed in Annex II.2 of the TEN-T Regulation.
- HRS supplying inland waterway and maritime vessels
 - Infrastructure
 - HRS supplying liquid or gaseous hydrogen at pressure of 350 bar and/or 700 bar.
 - Including inland and short sea shipping vessels propelled by hydrogen if it is demonstrated that an initial number of vessels is needed to kick-start the use of the supported refuelling infrastructure.

- Location
 - In TEN-T inland waterway and maritime ports as listed in Annex II.2 of the TEN-T Regulation.

As regards the inland waterway and maritime vessels the following conditions apply:

- only for fitting or retrofitting the main propulsion system;
 - if for passenger transport, only for inland vessels longer than 20m with more than 12 passenger capacity;
 - the eligible cost shall be limited to the difference in costs between a fossil-fuel vessel and the zero-emission vessel as regards the propulsion system, to be duly evidenced by the applicant;
 - the deployment of hydrogen/fuel-cell powered vessels for waterborne transport can be for use in private fleets of ships and vessels, excluding cruises and Exclusive Day trip tourism vessels, on the condition that the vessels are operating under the law of a Member State of the EU and serving EU passenger and cargo destinations and/or other EU services predominantly for at least 5 years from the date they are put in operation;
- Refuelling facilities supplying port vehicles and equipment
 - Infrastructure
 - Refueling infrastructure used for the performance of port services and operations.
 - Including port vehicles and equipment.
 - Location
 - In TEN-T inland waterway and maritime ports as listed in Annex II.2 of the TEN-T Regulation.

As regards port vehicles and equipment the following conditions apply:

- only for fitting or retrofitting the main propulsion system (zero-emission);
 - the eligible cost shall be limited to the difference in costs between a fossil-fuel vehicle/equipment and the zero-emission vehicle/equipment as regards the propulsion system, to be duly evidenced by the applicant.
- Refuelling stations supplying railways:
 - Infrastructure
 - HRS supplying liquid or gaseous hydrogen
 - Location
 - on sections of the TEN-T rail network for which a derogation from the electrification requirement has been granted in line with Article 12(3) or 39(3) of the TEN-T Regulation;
 - on isolated networks as defined in Article 3 (u) of the TEN-T Regulation;
 - in terminals for refuelling shunting locomotives.

CEF-T-2021-AFIFCOEN-WORKS-LNG: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility - Works - LNG

IV. LNG refuelling infrastructure supported in the form of fixed co-funding rate

- Refuelling stations supplying inland waterway and maritime vessels
 - Infrastructure
 - Supplying infrastructure for TEN-T maritime and inland vessels on TEN-T inland waterway and maritime ports.
 - Including storage facilities for transport sector only.
 - Including bunkering vessels.
 - Location

- In TEN-T inland waterway and maritime ports as listed in Annex II.2 of the TEN-T Regulation.

LNG refuelling infrastructure is supported only as a transitional solution and priority will be given to actions demonstrating a progressive uptake of bio-LNG.

Horizontal requirements for all alternative fuels infrastructure

- If required for the viability of the deployment of transport related zero-emission recharging and refuelling infrastructure, in particular the following activities are eligible:
 - related energy storage facilities;
 - deployment of electrolyzers based on Renewable Energy Sources (RES) for electricity supply and a sustainable use of water resources for the production of green hydrogen for the purpose of transport.

Synergetic elements may be considered under the conditions specified in Section 10.6 of the Work programme.

- The beneficiary shall operate and maintain the supported recharging/refuelling points for a minimum period of 5 years, starting from the end date of the related grant agreement.

Horizontal requirements for all publicly accessible recharging and hydrogen refuelling points for road transport

The attention of the applicants is drawn to the fact that the grant agreement will include the following requirements:

- the recharging/refuelling points have to be publicly accessible on a 24/7 basis irrespective of whether the infrastructure is located on a public or private site or premise. No limitations or conditions shall apply in terms of access to the site (for example pre-registration) or premise and no preferential access shall be granted for a specific category of users.
- appropriate signposting has to be deployed on the areas where the recharging points are installed for easy identification.
- the recharging/refuelling points are designed in such a way that they can be used by people with reduced mobility.
- 24/7 phone assistance shall be provided to end users, in the local language and at least in English.
- any user shall be able to recharge/refuel on an ad hoc basis at the supported recharging/refuelling points (no prior registration or commercial agreement¹³).
- the recharging/refuelling points shall accept electronic payments through terminals and devices used for payment services, including at least one of the following:
 - (i) payment card readers (e.g. payment terminal);
 - (ii) devices with a contactless functionality that is at least able to read payment cards (e.g. contactless payment via NFC reader).

¹³ i.e. the EV user is not required to register, conclude a written agreement, or enter into a longer-lasting commercial relationship with the operator of that recharging/refuelling point beyond the mere purchase of the recharging/refuelling service.

- prices charged at recharging/refuelling points shall be reasonable, easily and clearly comparable, transparent and non-discriminatory. The operators of the recharging/refuelling infrastructure shall neither discriminate between the prices charged to end users (ad hoc price) and prices charged to mobility service providers nor between prices charged to different mobility service providers. Where relevant, the level of prices may only be differentiated in a proportionate manner, according to an objective justification.
- the ad hoc price and all its components will have to be clearly displayed at all recharging/refuelling stations to ensure an appropriate information of users prior to the recharging/refuelling session.
- static and dynamic data¹⁴ relating to recharging/refuelling infrastructure shall be made available in a digital format and accessible¹⁵ through the National Access Points¹⁶ at no cost.

Specific additional requirements for publicly accessible electricity recharging points

- All supported recharging points must be digitally-connected.
- For the EV to recharging point communications, recharging point to CPO back-end communications, roaming communications and communications with distributed energy resources and the grid, communication standards and protocols that are widely used, open and non-proprietary, and supported in the European Union shall be applied for interoperability purposes.
- It shall be ensured that, when automatic authentication is offered at a recharging point, end users always have the right not to make use of the automatic authentication and are informed accordingly.
- Only one or a combination of the following price components has to be applied, and clearly displayed, for ad hoc recharging sessions, namely price per session, price per minute or price per kWh.

The following indicative list of activities cannot be funded:

- costs related to vehicles or vessels except in the case of inland waterway and short sea shipping as mentioned above;
- costs related to land acquisition, renting/leasing of facilities, procurement and permits;
- administrative costs, including travel and subsistence costs and any indirect costs;
- staff costs;

¹⁴ At least the following data types shall be made available, to the extent relevant for the type of infrastructure:

- Static data: geographic location; number & type of connectors; number of parking spaces for people with disabilities; contact information of the owner & operator of the station; identification (ID) codes of the recharging/refuelling point operator & mobility service providers; type of current (AC/DC) & power output (kW); pressure level of gaseous fuels.
- Dynamic data: operational status; availability; ad hoc price.

¹⁵ 'Accessibility of data' means the possibility to request and obtain the data at any time in a machine readable format, as defined in Article 2, point (5) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/96221)

¹⁶ 'National access point' means the digital interface where certain static and dynamic data are made accessible for re-use to data users, as implemented by Member States in compliance with Article 3 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/96229

- costs relating to any type of studies, design and work supervision, communication, dissemination and project management either in-house or outsourced;
- OPEX;
- upgrade of existing electric recharging infrastructure;
- hydrogen production facilities based on Steam Methane Reforming or any type of hydrogen production facilities other than electrolyzers based on Renewable Energy Sources (RES);
- hydrogen production facilities mainly used for other purposes than transport.

Expected impact

The results expected under this call are defined in section 5 of the multiannual work programme.

3. Available budget

The available call budget is **EUR 375.000.000**.

We reserve the right not to award all available funds or to redistribute them between the call topics, depending on the proposals received and the results of the evaluation.

The Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility will support projects combining grants with other sources of funding pursuant to Article 17 of the CEF Regulation and blending operations with InvestEU pursuant to Article 6 of the CEF Regulation¹⁷.

The budget of the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility shall be implemented as follows:

- at least 2/3 of the budget shall be implemented with Implementing Partners¹⁸ (IP) having signed an administrative agreement with the European Commission for the purpose of implementing the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility;
- up to 1/3 of the budget shall be implemented with any other public or private financial institution established in the EU, hereafter named “non-Implementing Partner financial institutions”.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: Due to effective budget absorption under cut-off 1-4 and the resulting budgetary constraints, the 5th cut-off will only be open to proposals supported by an Implementing Partner. Proposals supported by other public or private financial institutions will be declared inadmissible.

4. Timetable and deadlines

The Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility will be implemented through a specific rolling call for proposals launched in 2021 with five cut-off dates for the submission of proposals until end 2023.

¹⁷ The implementation of the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility on the basis of blending operations under InvestEU pursuant Article 6 of the CEF Regulation shall only make use of funds from the General envelope and shall be limited to a maximum of half of the funds dedicated in this multiannual work programme to the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility under the General envelope. The CEF grants will be directly managed by the Commission consistently with the procedures already in place for managing grants under Title VIII of the Financial Regulation.

¹⁸ The [list](#) of Implementing Partners is published on the Topic page in the [Funding & tender opportunities portal](#)

| Timetable and deadlines (indicative) | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|---|
| Call opening: | 16 September 2021 | | | | |
| Deadline for submission: | 1st cut-off date | 2nd cut-off date | 3rd cut-off date | 4th cut-off date | 5th cut-off date* |
| | <u>19 January 2022</u> <u>17:00 CET</u> <u>(Brussels)</u> | 7 June 2022 17:00 CET (Brussels) | 10 November 2022 17:00 CET (Brussels) | 13 April 2023 17:00 CET (Brussels) | 7 November 2023 17:00 CET (Brussels) |
| Evaluation: | February-March 2022 | July-August 2022 | December 2022 – January 2023 | May – June 2023 | December 2023 – January 2024 |
| Information on evaluation results: | May 2022 | October 2022 | March 2023 | July 2023 | March 2024 |
| GA signature: | September – October 2022 | February - March 2023 | July – August 2023 | December 2023 – January 2024 | -July - August 2024 |

* please refer to point 3 "available budget" above for more information.

5. Admissibility and documents

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

For the 5th cut-off only proposals submitted with the support of an Implementing Partner will be considered admissible.

Proposals must be submitted **electronically** via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System (accessible via the Topic page in the [Search Funding & Tenders](#) section). Paper submissions are NOT possible.

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

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

- Application Form Part A – contains administrative information about the participants (future coordinator, beneficiaries and affiliated entities) and the summarised budget for the project (*to be filled in directly online*)
- Application Form Part B – contains the technical description of the project (*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 per WP/calculator (*template available in the Submission System*)
 - activity reports of last year
 - list of previous projects (key projects for the last 4 years) (*template available in Part B*)
 - timetable/Gantt chart
 - agreement by the concerned Member States (letters of support)

- environmental compliance file
- financing approval letter (consisting of a transmittal letter certifying the approval of the financing by the financial institution's governing bodies¹⁹ in line with its own rules, policies and procedures, and the project summary sheet)
- simplified cost-benefit analysis (CBA) calculator if the project is supported with financing of a non-Implementing Partner financial institution.


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. In case of discrepancies, the amounts in the online summarised budget table will prevail with the exception of the financing amount from the Implementing Partner or non-Implementing Partner financial institution, where the financing amount confirmed by the Implementing Partner or non-Implementing Partner financial institution will prevail.

When needed at proposal submission, the applicant will have to confirm that he has the **mandate to act** for all co-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 agreement 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 **120 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 Member States eligible for funding from the Cohesion Fund.

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

¹⁹ Financing from an Implementing Partner can also be through a loan scheme and/or intermediated.

Exceptional funding — Entities from other countries (not listed above) are exceptionally eligible for projects of common interest in the field of transport, energy and digital and for cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy, if the granting authority considers their participation essential for the implementation of the action.

Natural persons — Natural persons are NOT eligible (with the exception of self-employed persons, i.e. sole traders, where the company does not have legal personality separate from that of the natural person).

International organisations — International organisations are 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 persons²⁰.

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

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)*²¹ and entities covered by Commission Guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#)²²). 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).

Following the [Council Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2022/2506](#), as of 16th December 2022, no legal commitments (including the grant agreement itself as well as subcontracts, purchase contracts, financial support to third parties etc.) can be signed with Hungarian public interest trusts established under Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity they maintain.

Affected entities may continue to apply to calls for proposals. However, in case the Council measures are not lifted, such entities are not eligible to participate in any funded role (beneficiaries, affiliated entities, subcontractors, recipients of financial support to third parties). In this case, co-applicants will be invited to remove or replace that entity and/or to change its status into associated partner. Tasks and budget may be redistributed accordingly.

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

[Consortium composition](#)

n/a

[Eligible activities](#)

Eligible activities are the ones set out in section 2 above. They have to be supported by a financing from an Implementing Partner or another public or private financial institution (non-Implementing Partner financial institution) of at least 10% of the

²⁰ See Article 197(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

²¹ 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](#).

²² 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).

Global Project cost (except if the financing is taking the form of equity) duly approved by its governing body in line with its own rules, policies and procedures.

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).

Financial support to third parties is not allowed.

Geographic location (target countries)

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

Proposals submitted under the first sub-topic of topic 'CEF-T-2021-AFIFGEN-UNITS: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility - Unit Contributions' shall be compliant with the applicable eligibility map (one map for 150 kW recharging points and another map for 350 kW recharging points) displayed on: https://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/tentec/tentec-portal/map/docs/AFIF_150kw_350kw.pdf²³.

Two updated maps shall be published as an addendum to the call text for the third and fourth cut-off dates, and other two updated maps for the fifth cut-off date.

The final eligibility check shall be based on the map applicable at the date of application.

Duration

See section 10.

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 these projects.

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

The check will normally be done for all beneficiaries, except:

- public bodies (entities established as public body under national law, including local, regional or national authorities) or international organisations
- if the individual requested grant amount is not more than EUR 60 000.

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

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

- further information

²³ It is possible to increase the zoom level in the TENtec viewer. The applicant will need to access the following link: <http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/tentec/tentec-portal/map/maps.html> and click once on 'LAYERS' to access the 'AFIF ELIGIBILITY MAPS'.

- 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 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 such capacity 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 capacity via the following information:

- description of the consortium participants
- applicants' activity reports of last year
- list of previous projects (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.

Applications submitted with the support of an Implementing Partner may be exempted from the operational capacity check.

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 participate²⁴:

- 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 misconduct²⁵ (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)

²⁴ See Articles 136 and 141 of EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

- 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 that²⁶:

- 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 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 and then ranked according to their scores (*see sections 7 and 9*).

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

- 1) Score obtained under the 'Priority and urgency' criterion
- 2) Score obtained under the 'Maturity' criterion
- 3) Score obtained under the 'Catalytic effect' criterion
- 4) Score obtained under the 'Impact' criterion
- 5) Score obtained under the 'Quality' criterion.

²⁵ 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.

²⁶ See Article 141 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

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 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:

- **Priority and urgency:** evaluating the correspondence of the proposal with the sectoral policy objectives and priorities, measuring its EU added-value and where applicable assessing the possible synergies with other sectors; (5 points)
- **Maturity:** assessing the maturity of the action in the project development. The criterion will measure, among others: i) the readiness/ability of the project to start by the proposed start date and to complete by the proposed end date, ii) the status of the contracting procedures and of the necessary permits, and iii) information on the financial availability needed to complement the CEF investment; (5 points)
- **Quality:** evaluating the soundness of the implementation plan proposed, both from the technical and financial point of view, the architecture and design approach, the organisational structures put in place (or foreseen) for the implementation, the risk analysis, the control procedures and quality management and the communication strategy of the applicant. Moreover, when applicable, it will also assess the information related to the maintenance strategy proposed for the completed project; (5 points)
- **Catalytic effect:** evaluating the financial gap (for instance the need to overcome financial obstacles generated by insufficient commercial viability, high upfront costs or the lack of market finance), the capacity to mobilise different investments sources, the capacity to trigger important overall investments with limited EU support and when appropriate the extent to which externalities justify the CEF financial support²⁷. It shall assess the catalytic effect of the EU financial support and determine whenever possible the actual co-funding rate to be granted; (5 points)

²⁷ As regards the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility, for applications supported by an Implementing Partner, the catalytic effect will be evaluated on the basis of the capacity to mobilise different investments sources and the capacity to trigger important overall investments with limited EU support.

- **Impact:** assessing, when applicable, the economic, social and environmental impact, including the climate impact, and other relevant externalities. This criterion may be substantiated by a Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA)²⁸ or, in the absence of such tools, other forecast of end-user take-up, in which case the evaluation will look at the soundness, comprehensiveness, and transparency of the analysis as well as proposed means to monitor its impact. Moreover, when applicable, the criterion will assess, among others, the innovation and digitalisation, safety and interoperability and accessibility aspects of the proposal, as well as its cross-border dimension, effect/contribution to the network territorial accessibility; (5 points)

As a standard practice, a score is assigned for each of the criteria on a scale from 0 (insufficient) to 5 (excellent).

| Award criteria | Minimum pass score | Maximum score |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Priority and urgency | 3 | 5 |
| Maturity | 3 | 5 |
| Catalytic effect | 3 | 5 |
| Impact | 3 | 5 |
| Quality | 3 | 5 |
| Overall (pass) score | 15 | 25 |

Maximum points: 25 points

Individual thresholds per criterion: 3 points

Overall threshold: 15 points

Proposals that pass the individual thresholds AND the overall threshold will be considered for funding – within the limits of the available budget (i.e. up to the budget ceiling). Other proposals will be rejected.

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

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

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

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

The signature of the Grant Agreement will be conditional to the prior signature of the financing agreement with the Implementing Partner or with the non-Implementing Partner financial institution mentioned in the application. CINEA may decide to terminate the Grant Agreement preparation if the beneficiary fails to confirm this signature within a reasonable time period. In such case, the beneficiary may resubmit its proposal under a subsequent cut-off date.

Starting date and project duration

²⁸ Submission of a CBA is not required for proposals submitted with the support of an Implementing Partner

The starting date shall not be earlier than 1st January 2021 for the first cut-off date or than the application date for the following cut-off dates.

Project duration: a project can last up to 36 months after the respective cut-off date (e.g. 4th cut-off: up to 12 April 2026 and 5th cut-off: up to 6 November 2026).

During implementation, in duly justified cases, the end date may be postponed through an amendment of the grant agreement.

No extension will be possible for projects funded with unit contributions beyond 36 months after the respective cut-off date.

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.

Beneficiaries will also be invited to provide and update information regarding network allocation and output indicators.

Form of grant, funding rate and maximum grant amount

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

Project budget: in order to ensure efficiency in EU funding interventions, applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications for projects with a total requested EU contribution to the eligible costs of no less than €1,000,000. Where possible, related projects should be grouped and submitted as one proposal.

The grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested.

Union financial support with regard to the grants under the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility shall take the form of:

For topic **CEF-T-2021-AFIFCOEN-UNITS: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility - Unit Contributions:**

The grant will be a **unit grant**. This means that it will reimburse a fixed amount per unit, based on unit costs, unit contributions or financing not linked to costs, as follows:

- **Unit contributions for electric vehicle recharging points of minimum 150 kW and minimum 350 kW:**

| Recharging point of minimum | Unit contribution (EUR) |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 150 kW | 30.000 |
| 350 kW | 60.000 |

- **Unit contribution for grid connection:**

| Grid connection | Unit contribution (EUR) |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| | 30.000 |

For topics **CEF-T-2021-AFIFCOEN-ZE: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility – Works – Zero Emissions** and **CEF-T-2021-AFIFCOEN-LNG: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility – Works – LNG:**

The grant will be a budget-based actual cost grant. 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).

The costs will be reimbursed at the funding rates ('project funding rate') fixed in the Grant Agreement, as follows :

| Type of Alternative Fuels | Infrastructure | Vessels/ port vehicles & equipment* |
|---------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Electricity/Hydrogen | 50% | 50% |
| LNG | 20% | n/a |

(*) for vessels and port vehicles & equipment, the percentage is applied to the difference in costs between a fossil-fuel vessel/vehicle/equipment and the zero-emission vessels/vehicle/equipment as regards the propulsion system.

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, it will be deducted 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*).

For topic **CEF-T-2021-AFIFCOEN-UNITS: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility - Unit Contributions**:

*Budget categories for this call*²⁹:

- A. Contributions for recharging points
 - A.1 Recharging points \geq 150 kW
 - A.2 Recharging points \geq 350 kW
- B. Contributions for grid connections

Specific cost eligibility rules for this call:

- eligible cost country restrictions: Yes, only costs/contributions for activities carried out in eligible countries or target countries are eligible.

For topics **CEF-T-2021-AFIFCOEN-ZE: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility – Works – Zero Emissions** and **CEF-T-2021-AFIFCOEN-LNG: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility – Works – LNG**:

Budget categories:

- 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

²⁹ [Decision](#) of 22 July 2021 authorising the use of unit contributions to support the deployment of ERTMS, electric vehicles recharging infrastructure and the retrofitting of noisy wagons under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) – Transport Sector

- 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
 - D.3 Synergetic elements³⁰
 - D.5 Land purchases
- E. Indirect costs

Specific cost eligibility conditions for this call:

- personnel costs:
 - average personnel costs (unit cost according to usual cost accounting practices): Yes
 - SME owner/natural person unit cost³¹: Yes
- subcontracting costs:
 - country restrictions for subcontracting costs: Yes, subcontracted work must be performed in the eligible countries or target countries
- travel and subsistence unit cost³²: No (only actual costs)
- equipment costs: full cost
- other cost categories:
 - costs for financial support to third parties: not allowed
 - studies: No
 - synergetic elements: Yes³³
 - land purchases: No
- indirect cost flat-rate: 0% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs and exempted specific cost categories, if any)
- VAT: VAT is NOT eligible
- other:
 - in-kind contributions for free are allowed, but cost-neutral, i.e. they cannot be declared as cost
 - project websites: No

³⁰ This cost category is not applicable for topic CEF-T-2021-AFIFGEN-UNITS: Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility - Unit Contributions

³¹ 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).

³² 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).

³³ This cost category is not applicable for topic CEF-T-2021-AFIFGEN-UNITS: Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility - Unit Contributions

- eligible cost country restrictions: Yes, only costs for activities carried out in eligible countries or target countries are eligible

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. The amount will be established based on the grant type or estimated project duration at the time of grant signature and will vary between 25% and 50%. The prefinancing will be paid 30 days from entry into force/financial guarantee (if required – whichever is the latest).

There will be one or more **interim payments** (with detailed cost reporting).

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 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

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

Liability regime for recoveries

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

For beneficiaries, it is 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

Security rules: *see Model Grant Agreement (art 13 and Annex 5)*

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

- rights of use on results: Yes

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

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

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

- Member State information: Yes
- specific rules for digital infrastructure projects: No
- specific rules for ATM common projects: No
- durability: Yes
- specific rules for blending operations: 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

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). Excel upload is sometimes possible, depending on the file type.

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

Documents must be uploaded to the **right category** in the Submission System otherwise the proposal 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](#)
- FAQs on the Topic page (for call-specific questions in open calls; not applicable for actions by invitation)
- [Portal FAQ](#) (for general questions).
- call information on the [CINEA website](#).

Please also consult the Topic page regularly, since we will use it to publish call updates.

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: CINEA-CEF-TRANSPORT-CALLS@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).

- **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 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.

- **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](#).