

Guidelines for applicants

ECAS Grant-making to its Members in the EU

ANNEX B to the Call for proposals

ECAS Brussels, 20th February 2023

Welcome

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1. INTRODUCTION

This is a call for proposal managed by European Citizenship Action Service (ECAS) under the [EURECA \(European Citizenship Accelerator\) 2023 project](#), co-funded by the Citizenship, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV) of the European Union.

In the context of this project, in 2023 ECAS will re-grant, on a competitive basis, to its 70 members - Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), based in the EU - to provide them with an opportunity to contribute to the achievement of ECAS's objectives, in the areas of Citizenship Rights and European Democracy.

2. CONDITIONS FOR THE RE-GRANTING

2.1 Purpose of the re-granting

ECAS membership is mission-driven and free-of-charge. ECAS members are individuals and not-for profit organisations who subscribe to the ECAS mission and vision and are active in the ECAS focus areas (EU rights and European democracy). ECAS actively involves its members in delivering its mission and in its activities focused on the promotion and defence of citizens' rights as well as the development and support of mechanisms aimed at increasing the democratic participation of citizens and citizen organisations in, and engagement with, the EU.

The **purpose** of ECAS re-granting to its members based in the EU is, therefore, to provide them with an opportunity to contribute to the achievement of the EURECA 2023 objectives, in the areas of:

- **Citizenship Rights** – aiming at strengthening European citizenship through citizens' engagement, supporting the post-COVID restoration of freedom of movement in the EU, fostering EU rights, including EU mobile citizens' rights, their voting rights and political and socio-economic integration in the host countries, and
- **European Democracy** – aiming at empowering citizens' participation in the democratic process by promoting innovative democratic approaches and tools to help citizens make their voices heard, with a special emphasis on countering disinformation and populist narratives.

The **goal** is two-fold:

- Build and increase the capacity of ECAS network members to develop coherent and coordinated activities to promote the relevant policy objectives in the areas of Citizenship Rights and European Democracy, and
- Increase the impact of ECAS activities in those areas in line with the objectives of ECAS four-year operating grant framework contract for the EURECA project.



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ECAS member organisations' projects would contribute to the achievement of at least one of the following **objectives** in the areas of Citizenship Rights and European Democracy outlined above:

- strengthened capacity to protect and promote EU rights and values;
- more supportive environment for CSOs and rights defenders such as national human rights institutions;
- better developed advocacy and watchdog role of CSOs;
- increased involvement of CSOs in policy- and decision-making processes with local, regional, and national governments;
- increased citizen awareness of EU rights and values;
- strengthened regional cooperation within civil society.

2.2 Available funding

ECAS will distribute a total of up to 380.000 euros to members applying for the re-granting scheme in 2023.

ECAS members based in the EU are two types – individual CSOs and CSOs that are networks themselves. The criteria for calculating the exact amount of the financial support would be the geographical scope of their project proposals' activities:

- Projects receiving a grant of up to **EUR 60 000** will be implemented on a national or trans-national level by ECAS members who are network organisations or ECAS members who are individual organisations leading a consortium, including at least two other relevant partners.
- Small projects receiving a grant of up to **EUR 25 000** are expected to be implemented on the grassroots level, reach out and engage citizens from a specific community (communities are understood not only in geographical sense, but also as identity-based).

This division has a twofold purpose: to involve these ECAS members, which are national-level CSOs/networks in the dissemination of Union Values to citizens, and to allow grassroots CSOs, including those which work for/represent underprivileged communities, to promote the Union Values in their work.

2.3 Eligible activities and applicants

The following types of activities of ECAS members in the EU will be eligible for financial support in the areas of Citizenship Rights and European Democracy - EU rights and values under the EU Treaties and the EU Charter of fundamental rights, with a special emphasis on Citizenship rights, including freedom of movement and voting rights, and empowering citizens' participation in the democratic process, tackling disinformation and populist narratives:

- awareness raising and outreach campaigns, including communication and public information campaigns through social media, among the general public and key actors;
- organisation of civic platforms and civic dialogues linked to EU rights and values themes, described above;



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- coalitions and partnerships building among CSOs; coordination and strategic cooperation between CSOs and other stakeholders, public or private sector entities;
- watchdog and monitoring activities on the EU policies and rights and values, described above;
- training and capacity building of key stakeholders;
- promotion of the implementation of adopted policies, legislation and Court practice;
- lobbying/advocacy to influence policy and decision-making processes and practices;
- research and analysis aimed at knowledge building and fostering the development of tools and standards to support EU rights and values.

All projects' duration should not exceed six months and will need to demonstrate a clear European dimension of their activities.

To be eligible, project activities should not be funded by other financial sources.

Eligible to apply are:

A. For grants of up to 25 000 EUR:

All ECAS members, which are registered as legal entities, non-profit organisations in a Member State of the European Union and respect EU values as laid down in [Art.2 of the Treaty on European Union](#) and the [EU Charter of fundamental rights](#), will be eligible to apply for the call, with the exception of any member organisation being affiliated entity(ies), branches, associated partners or sub-contractors of ECAS.

B. For a grants of up to 60 000 EUR:

ECAS members who meet the above-mention conditions and are either networks of organisations or individual organisations leading a consortium, including at least two other relevant partners.

Projects can be implemented in partnership with other legal entities (public or private bodies), established in the same or in other EU Member States.

All applicants (ECAS members and their consortium partners, if applicable) will be required to formally commit to comply with European Union values in their Declaration of Honour to be eligible for funding.

Considering the short timeframe of the project implementation (6 months), a **member organisation could take part only in one project.**

In order to be eligible for funding, **project activities should take place in the Member States of the EU.**

2.4 Financial and operational capacity and exclusion

Applicants must have **sufficient capacity** to successfully implement the projects.

A **financial capacity check will** be carried out for selected applicants after the evaluation of proposals.

The selected applicants will be requested to provide supporting documents during the Grant Agreement preparation phase (e.g. main figures from their profit and loss account, balance sheet – in English

version) **within 5 working days from the reception of the evaluation results**. In case selected applicants are consortia of multiple organisations, the financial capacity check will be performed for the leading partner (ECAS members) only, unless the leading partner expressly requests to rely on the financial capacity of other partners, in which case other consortium partners will have to submit the supporting documentation as well.

Applicants must also demonstrate that they have the know-how, qualifications and resources to successfully implement the projects (including sufficient experience in projects of comparable size and nature). They will have to show their capacity via the following: CVs and last annual activity report.

Exclusion

Applicants are requested to declare that all information shared in their application is correct, complete and legitimate and that the legal entity is fully compliant with the eligibility criteria set out in the call, is not subject to any exclusion grounds under the [EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046](#) and has the financial and operational capacity to carry out the proposed project. Applicants (all partners in case of consortia) will be asked to sign a Declaration of Honour (Annex A.3 to the application form).

ECAS will not award a grant to an applicant who:

- is in an exclusion situation established in accordance with the terms of the Declaration of Honour
- has misrepresented the information required as a condition for participating in the procedure or has failed to supply that information; or
- was previously involved in the preparation of documents used in the award procedure where this entails a breach of the principle of equal treatment, including distortion of competition, that cannot be remedied otherwise.

2.5 Requirement for financial contribution to ECAS' own funding of the [EURECA \(European Citizenship Accelerator\) 2023 project](#)

As the EURECA project, in the framework of which the approved for funding projects of the ECAS's members will be implemented, is co-funded by ECAS as well, **the successful grantees** (applicants approved for funding) will be asked to:

- contribute to the ECAS own funding of EURECA 2023 project by allocating to ECAS an amount, equal to 20% of the budget of their projects within 14 days after the signing of the Grant Agreement;
- ensure that their financial contribution to ECAS comes from non-EU funded sources and
- sign a Declaration of Honour, stating the origin of the contributing funds.

The above financial contribution of ECAS members would support ECAS in executing state-of-the-art management of the grant-making scheme for members and high-quality Communication and Dissemination activities, including organisation of the introductory meeting for funded projects with all grantees in Brussels.



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3. LEGAL AND FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

3.1 Grant agreement and eligible costs

Selected beneficiaries (consortia's leaders or sole applicants) will be requested to sign a **Grant Agreement** detailing terms and conditions of the funding (model in Annex C to the call for proposal).

Applicants propose a **budget** based on an estimation of costs that summarises the direct costs of the beneficiary and/or its partners in the following categories:

- Personnel costs
- Subcontracting
- Travel, accommodation and subsistence
- Equipment (purchase and renting of equipment, infrastructure or other assets)
- Other goods, works or services, if necessary to implement the action (for instance, consumables and supplies, promotion, dissemination, protection of results, translations, events, publications, etc.)

The amount of the cost categories must be calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred, except for travel, accommodation and per diem (subsistence) costs, for which simplified cost options (lumpsum) will apply.

Information on the general cost eligibility criteria can be found in the [Annotated Model Grant Agreement for EU grants](#) provided by the European Commission, at **chapter 6.1**.

In addition, in order to be eligible, the costs:

- must correspond to the total amount as set out in the Grant Agreement
- must relate to work carried out in accordance with the description of the action as set out in the agreement, during the eligibility period stated and demonstrated by records and supporting documents (final report)
- must not be already funded by other funding sources
- must be expressed in Euros. Expenditures in currency other than the euro must be converted using the average of the daily exchange rates published in the [C series of the Official Journal of the European Union \(ECB website\)](#), calculated over the corresponding project implementation period. If no daily euro exchange rate is published in the Official Journal for the currency in question, they must be converted at the average of the monthly accounting exchange rates published on the [European Commission website \(InforEuro\)](#), calculated over the corresponding project implementation period.



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3.2 Payment arrangements

The project payment scheme will be based on **project risk assessment** and will combine risk mitigation measures with the provision of funds to ECAS members . ECAS will perform an initial risk assessment of the applicants approved for funding, taking into account:

1. The capacity of the member organisation:
 - 1.1. Experience in managing projects with a similar amount of funding;
 - 1.2. Financial stability of the organization(s) in view of the project implementation;
 - 1.3. Existence of a permanent team (persons employed)
2. Planned budget in view of any gaps or weaknesses identified.

The risk assessment scores will range from 1 to 5, being:

- 1 - Very low risk
- 2 - Low risk
- 3 - Medium Risk
- 4 - High risk
- 5 - Very high risk

The usual **project payment scheme** will include a pre-payment of 80% of the grant and a final payment (after reporting) of 20%.

However, if the risk assessment score of a given CSO is high or very high, it is possible to apply a payment scheme with reduced advance payment.

The awarded grant takes the form of a combination of actual costs incurred and lump sum contribution for the implementation of the project activities. The financial support will be reduced with the amount of all projects activities that have not been delivered or cannot be approved at the payment of the balance.

Payments will be made in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out in the Grant Agreement. They will be made in Euro to the bank account indicated by the beneficiary.

Beneficiaries (consortia's leaders or single entities) are signatories of the agreement and take complete responsibility for executing the proposed activities.

After grant signature, beneficiaries will receive an advance payment to start working on the project. The advance payment will be paid no later than 30 days from entry into force of the Grant Agreement. A final payment (payment of the balance) reimburses the remaining part of the eligible costs in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out in the Grant Agreement.



Please note that ECAS cannot take charge of costs incurred for cancelled events. In case of proven *force majeure* (e.g., new waves of COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions impeding the organization of in-person events)¹, the following options will apply:

- a) The event/s can be organized in a different format (for instance, an hybrid or virtual event)
- b) The event can be postponed (up until the end of 2023)

Points a) and b) require a justified request by the beneficiary to amend the Grant Agreement. However, the grant amount indicated in the agreement cannot be increased.

3.3 Additional information on eligible costs calculation

Specific cost eligibility conditions for each budget category are detailed at **chapter 6.2 of the [Annotated Model Grant Agreement for EU grants](#)**.

The general rules for estimation and calculation of **personnel costs** for EU projects consists in dividing the total amount of the yearly cost of the person working on the project by 215 (to determine the daily rate) and then multiplying the result for the number of day-equivalent worked for the project.

To be eligible, **subcontracting costs** must be based either on the best value for money or the lowest price and not be subject to conflict of interest. Beneficiaries are requested to compare offers from at least three potential subcontractors to ensure best value for money.

Travel, accommodation and subsistence costs (per diem) must be calculated, for each travel and person travelling, in accordance with the methodology set out in the [European Commission Decision C\(2021\)35](#) and the table annexed to the Grant Agreement.

Costs for the **purchase of equipment** are eligible only for the portion of the depreciation costs allocable to the project, not for the entire the purchase price. The depreciation rates must be calculated according to the usual internal practice of the beneficiary under recognition of national and international rules and standards. The costs of **equipment rental** for the project period can be charged at full cost, as long as the rental cost is not greater than the depreciation cost had the equipment been purchased.

All **other purchase costs** (goods, works and services) must be calculated on the basis of actual costs.

Indirect costs must be calculated and will be reimbursed at the fixed flat rate of 7% of the eligible direct costs.

¹ 'Force majeure' means any situation or event that has all the following characteristics:

- prevents either party from fulfilling their obligations under the Agreement,
- was unforeseeable, exceptional situation and beyond the parties' control,
- was not due to error or negligence on their part (or on the part of other participants involved in the action), and
- proves to be inevitable in spite of exercising all due diligence.



4. TIMELINE AND DEADLINES

Timetable (indicative)	
Call opening	20 th February 2023
Deadline for submissions	20 th April 2023
Evaluation	End of April/May 2023
Information on evaluation results	End of May 2023
Grant Agreement signature and kick-off meeting	June 2023
Projects' implementation	From June to November 2023
Projects' reporting	Until 15 th December 2023

5. ADMISSIBILITY AND DOCUMENTS

Applying consortium leaders/single entities are required to register their organisation in the EU Funding & Tenders Portal and get a Participant Identification Code (PIC) following the instructions available at this link:

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/participant-register>

Proposals should be submitted electronically and include completed **application form** and **annexed documents** listed in it.

The application form and mandatory annexes must be completed in all parts and submitted **in English**.

The Application Form includes **information about the applicant**, the **technical description of the project** and **budget (separate annex in Excel)** justifying the requested financial support amount for implementation of project activities.

Most of the sections are **limited in the number of characters**, which is clearly stated in each section. Applicants must comply with the limits indicated. In case of non-compliance, characters exceeding the limits will not be taken into consideration in the evaluation of the application. Hyperlinks should not be used.

The applicant is required to annex **CVs** of the project staff and collaborators, as well as its **last annual activity report** available to the Application Form (all merged in a single PDF file).

The applicant (single organisation or all consortium partners) is also requested to sign and submit a **Declaration of Honour** (Annex A.3) stating that their projects would not breach Union values, promote



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values contradictory to Union values and/or engage into activities contradictory to Union values. The Declaration will state that breaches will make the (potential) beneficiaries liable to exclusion, administrative sanctions or cancellation of funding.

After the deadline for submitting the proposals, the ECAS staff will check if the applications are duly completed in all parts. In the event of identified instances of administrative non-compliance, the applicant will be allowed to correct them within five working days.

6. GENDER BALANCE, INCLUSION, DIVERSITY AND REPRESENTATIVENESS

Applicants are required to demonstrate how they would ensure **gender and non-discrimination mainstreaming** in the project cycle. This means integrating gender equality and non-discrimination considerations in the **design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of project activities**.

Projects activities should contribute to the equal empowerment of women and men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, and ensure that they achieve their full potential, enjoy the same rights and opportunities. Gender and non-discrimination mainstreaming are a key mechanism for achieving gender equality and combating multiple and intersecting discrimination. In the delivery of project activities gender mainstreaming shall be ensured by systematically **monitoring access, participation, and benefits among different genders**, and by incorporating **remedial action** that redresses any gender inequalities and discriminatory effects in implementation of planned activities.

The activities shall also seek to **reduce levels of discrimination suffered by particular groups** (as well as those at risk of multiple discrimination) and to improve equality outcomes for individuals.

Besides ensuring a balanced and equal representativeness of genders, as well as inclusion of groups at risk of discrimination thorough the project activities, the applicant should **incorporate gender equality issues and non-discrimination considerations** in the assessments of **target groups' needs**, the definition of **indicators** measuring achievement of project's objectives, the definition of **results/outcomes** and of **critical risks**, the design of **communication** messages and materials.

The project assessors will evaluate the applicants' expertise and capacity to integrate the gender perspective in their activity and recommend additional training/capacity building if needed.

7. EVALUATION AND AWARD PROCEDURE

Any project proposal that is found to meet the administrative eligibility criteria will be subject to a qualitative assessment according to preliminary announced criteria.

Award criteria for evaluation of project proposals are:

1. **Compliance and relevance of the project *vis à vis* the objectives of the call and the needs of target groups:** extent to which the proposal matches the priorities and objectives of the call; clearly



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defined needs and robust needs assessment; clearly defined target group, with gender perspective being appropriately taken into account; envisaged results bringing positive change for target groups and enhancing coordination, cooperation and capacity of CSOs in the field of EU rights and values – *max 30 points*

2. **Quality, feasibility and sustainability:** clarity and consistency of project; logical links between the identified problems; needs and solutions proposed; methodology for implementing the project with gender perspective being appropriately taken into account; adequate risk analysis and risk management; ethical issues are addressed; feasibility of the project within the proposed time frame; long-term sustainability of project results – *max 30 points*
3. **Capacity of the applicant:** experience of the applicant and its project team in managing similar projects successfully; adequate qualifications, know-how and resources – *max 20 points*
4. **Economy of budget and realistic forecast of costs:** financial feasibility (sufficient/appropriate budget for proper implementation; cost-effectiveness); costs being in line with good housekeeping practice when spending public money and not excessive; minimum use of financial resources to produce the maximum quality - *max 10 points*
5. **Gender equality and non-discrimination:** applicants' expertise and capacity to integrate the gender and non-discrimination perspective in their activity. – *max 10 points*.

Award criteria	Minimum pass score	Maximum score
Relevance and compliance with call's objectives and needs	15	30
Quality, feasibility and sustainability	15	30
Capacity and team of the applicant	10	20
Economy of the budget and realistic cost forecast	5	10
Gender equality and non-discrimination	5	10
Overall pass score	50	100

Maximum points: 100 points

Individual thresholds:

- Relevance and compliance with call's objectives and needs: 15
- Quality, feasibility and sustainability: 15
- Capacity and team of the applicant: 10
- Economy of the budget and realistic cost forecast: 5
- Gender equality and non-discrimination: 5

Overall threshold: 50 points

Submitted project proposals will be evaluated by two impartial evaluation experts working independently from each other. The quantitative assessment on each criterion will be supported by a short and clear justification. The final score of the project proposal is the average of the scores given by the two experts. In case the lower score given is more than 30% less than the higher one and the project proposal has



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obtained the minimum score determined in the Guidelines for Applicants, the project will be referred to a third evaluator for arbitration. The final score of the project proposal will be calculated as the average of the two nearest score values.

Each evaluation expert will sign a declaration on conflict of interest. A ranked projects' list will be submitted for review by the Selection Committee (SC). The SC consists of ECAS' Executive Director, ECAS' Chairperson of the Board of Directors and ECAS' Treasurer, all of them with long-standing proven experience and expertise in working in the fields of EU rights and values and knowledge of the civil society sector.

The SC approves funding for both types of projects - up to 25 000 and up to 60 000 EUR financial support - taking into account their ranking by points and the available budget for the call. The proposed project budgets will be assessed in view of complying with the principles of effectiveness, efficiency and economy. The SC may, by reasoned decision, propose a change in the ranking of projects in justified cases, including in relation to the requirements of the call, the achievement of the objectives, priorities and indicators of the call.

ECAS will provide all applicants with an **evaluation letter**, including the scores of the criteria.

The results of the call will be published on a tailored page of ECAS **website**, including legal name and country of the grantees, grant awarded, project title and duration, short project summary, target group.

8. HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION

Project proposals must be submitted by **20th April 2023** through the submission page on the ECAS website.

Please include your PIC (Participant Identification Code) and complete the Application Form and mandatory annexes in English. Only applications using the provided template will be considered eligible. Participation in more than one project proposal is not allowed under this call.

Once the proposal is submitted, you will receive a confirmation e-mail. If you do not receive a confirmation e-mail, it means your proposal has NOT been submitted.

Queries related to technical issues can be sent by email to anita.marullo@ecas.org before **16th April 2023**. We cannot guarantee that emails will be answered after this date.

A Q&A (Questions and Answers) section will be posted on the ECAS website and updated regularly. All applicants will be informed of the results of the evaluation process by email by the end of May 2023. The results will then be published on the ECAS dedicated website.



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9. GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

As part of the grant-making process, ECAS will conduct two webinars:

- An **informational webinar** for all its eligible members following the publication of the Call for proposals to explain the objectives of the call, the procedure and the requirements, with a special emphasis on the integration of the gender perspective in the project proposals and the adherence to EU values. The recording will be made available on ECAS' website.
- A **webinar for the selected grantees** in order to clarify their **contractual obligations** and explain in detail all concepts related to:
 - Avoiding conflict of interest
 - Confidentiality and security obligations
 - Ethics
 - Give visibility to the EU funding
 - Information obligations
 - Record-keeping
 - Adherence to EU values
 - Gender perspectives

An **in-person kick-off meeting** of the selected grantees will take place in Brussels in June 2023, during which the grantees will present their projects; explore the potential for synergies, mutual support and multiplication of the project results among themselves. ECAS will clarify the grantees' contractual obligations and will explain in detail all concepts related to:

- Avoiding conflict of interest
- Confidentiality and security obligations
- Ethics
- Giving visibility to the EU funding
- Information obligations
- Record-keeping
- Adherence to EU values
- Gender perspectives

A **tailored webinar on gender and non-discrimination mainstreaming** may be organised if the evaluation of the project proposals reveals insufficient expertise and capacity of the selected grantees to integrate the gender and non-discrimination perspective in their activities.

In the course of the application, ECAS team will not provide individual consultations for the preparation of a specific project; **Q&A responses** in written form will be made available to all applicants.



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10. PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA

The reply to any call for proposals involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, e-mail, and address). Such data will be processed pursuant [to Regulation \(EU\) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016](#) on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and the free movement of such data. Unless indicated otherwise, the questions and any personal data requested that are required to evaluate the application in accordance with the call for proposal will be processed solely for that purpose.

11. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND PROCEDURE FOR COMPLAINTS

ECAS applies a policy of equal opportunities and accepts applications without discrimination on the ground of sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation.

In the course of the application, ECAS team will not provide individual consultations for the preparation of a specific project; Q&A responses in written form will be made available to all applicants.

If your proposal is rejected and you believe that the rejection was a result of a procedural error, you can submit a **complaint** within 5 working days and following the procedures set out in the **evaluation result letter**.

Complaints will be subject to the following conditions:

- Complaints must be limited to procedural aspects, not on the merits of the proposal. The complaint must relate to the evaluation procedure, admissibility or eligibility checks and demonstrate a procedural irregularity, factual error, manifest error of assessment. Mere repetitions of the content of the proposal or disagreements with the result or reasoning of the evaluation will not be considered.
- Only one request for review per proposal will be considered. The request cannot refer to the evaluation of proposals submitted by other applicants or under different or previous calls.
- Review requests will not automatically trigger a re-evaluation of the proposal. Re-evaluations will only be carried out if the complaint demonstrates that the procedural irregularity, factual error or manifest error of assessment. Thus, for example, a problem relating to one of the evaluation criteria will not lead to a re-evaluation if, even by adding the maximum points under this criterion, the final score of the proposal would still remain below the threshold for funding.



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- Re-evaluations will be made on the proposal as it was originally submitted; no additional information will be admitted. Re-evaluations will be partial (limited to the criterion affected by the error) or full (when the whole evaluation has been recognized as flawed) - depending on the case.
- The score following a re-evaluation may be lower than the original score.
- All requests for review will be treated as confidential.

12. CONSORTIUM MANAGEMENT

If the awarded project is carried out in consortium with multiple partners, the ECAS member leading the consortium will be the sole signatory of the grant agreement ('Beneficiary') and the only responsible for its implementation. Any **consortium partner** should give a mandate (see Annex C) to the beneficiary for engaging and representing it for the implementation of the action, and commit to carry out the action as set out in the Grant Agreement.

The beneficiary must have appropriate resources to implement the action and implement the action under its own responsibility. If it relies on partners or subcontractors, it retains sole responsibility towards ECAS and the European Union bodies.

Project's costs will be eligible only as long as the beneficiary and partners are eligible.

An internal consortium agreement between partners is required, as set out in Annex C – Model Grant Agreement.

In addition, the beneficiary must ensure that their contractual obligations also apply to partners and subcontractors.

13. COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION AND VISIBILITY OF THE EU FUNDING

Successful applicants must promote their project and its results by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public), in accordance with Annex A – Application Form and in a strategic, coherent and effective manner.

Before engaging in a communication or dissemination activity expected to have a major media impact, the grant beneficiaries must inform ECAS.

Applicants (sole organisations or all consortium partners) are requested to commit – in case of selection – to acknowledging the European Union's contribution in all publications or in conjunction with activities for which the grant is used. In this respect, beneficiaries are required to give prominence to the name and emblem of the European Union on all their publications and other products realised under the co-funded project. Where appropriate, they should also use the ECAS visuals. Examples of the appropriate EU logos are given in the Model Grant Agreement (Annex C to the call for proposals).



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14. ETHICS, EU VALUES AND DUE DILIGENCE

Applicants are required to describe how they would address potential **ethical issues** that may arise during the project implementation, in order to carry out the activities in compliance with the highest ethical standards and the applicable EU, international and national law on ethical principles. They are also requested to explain the measures that would apply for **protection of personal data and child protection** (if applicable) during the implementation of the project activities. Furthermore, applicants must ensure the **respect of of EU values** (such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities).

More details on how to ensure full compliance on these aspects, and about consequence of non-compliance, are given in the Model Grant Agreement (Annex C).

The evaluation experts will assess the applicants' reputation (including if they are aware of any facts and circumstances of violations of European values by the applicant and the proposed project team). In case of doubts that an applicant does not fully demonstrate that its activities are in line with European values, a member of the grant management team will carry out additional verification after the evaluation and before approval of the proposed ranking by the Selection Committee. The check will include verification of the profile of the organisation(s) in the Trade Registry and a register of non-profit organisations – their current articles of association, annual activity reports, composition of governing bodies; a review of their online presence, including their social media channels and those of their key personnel and trustees/board members. In case more detailed information is needed to make a conclusion, the applicant will be required to provide additional evidence of its work in the field of protection of European values, including references. Eventual signature of a grant agreement will be subject to the outcome of the **due diligence process**, including requests for additional information to facilitate transparency.

15. CONFIDENTIALITY, SECURITY AND OWNERSHIP OF RESULTS

Project deliverables can be **public, sensitive or EU classified**.

In principle, a maximum of deliverables should be available for public dissemination. However, applicants and grant beneficiaries may require to keep confidential any data, documents or other material identifying them as sensitive (“SEN”) in the Application Form and/or in the Grant Agreement. In that event, sensitive information can be disclosed only to the applicant/beneficiary personnel or other project participants, and to ECAS / the European Commission.

EU classified information (EUCI) refers to any information or material designated by an EU security classification, whose unauthorised disclosure could cause varying degrees of prejudice to the interests of the Union or of one or more of the Member States. In the (unlikely) event that any project deliverable

contains EU-classified information, the parties must handle classified information in accordance with the applicable EU, international or national law on classified information (in particular, [Decision 2015/44416](#) and its implementing rules).

Deliverables which contain classified information must be submitted according to special procedures agreed with ECAS and the European Commission. More details are available in the Model Grant Agreement and [here](#).

The beneficiary must ensure that all consortium partners give each other access to the respective data, know-how and information identified as needed for implementing the action.

ECAS and the European Commission do not obtain ownership of the results produced under the project. 'Results' means any tangible or intangible effect of the project - such as data, know-how or information - whatever its form or nature, whether or not it can be protected, as well as any rights attached to it, including intellectual property rights.

ECAS and the EC have the right to use non-sensitive information relating to the project, materials and documents received from the beneficiaries (notably summaries for publication, deliverables, as well as any other material, such as pictures or audio-visual material, in paper or electronic form) for policy, information, communication, dissemination and publicity purposes — during the project or afterwards. If materials or documents are subject to moral rights or third party rights (including intellectual property rights or rights of natural persons on their image and voice), the beneficiaries must ensure that they comply with their obligations specified in the Grant Agreement (in particular, by obtaining the necessary licences and authorisations from the rights holders concerned).

16. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest is considered to exist whenever the exercise of functions impartially and objectively may be compromised for reasons related to personal and family life, political or national affinity, personal connection to applicants/beneficiaries, economic interest or any other interests.

The **Model Grant Agreement** explains the requirement to avoid conflicts of interests in the process of implementing initiatives, applicants and beneficiaries must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the Agreement could be compromised for reasons involving family, emotional life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other direct or indirect interest. They must formally notify ECAS y without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation, as stated in their Declaration of Honour.

ECAS will immediately notify the European Commission of any situation that represents or may give rise to a conflict of interest, including any steps taken / planned to remedy that situation.

17. INFORMATION OBLIGATION, REPORTING AND RECORD KEEPING

The grant beneficiaries (consortium leaders or sole organisation) must provide any information requested in order to verify eligibility of the costs or contributions declared, proper implementation of the action and compliance with the other obligations described in the Grant Agreement .

The information provided must be accurate, precise and complete and in the format requested.

Notably, the beneficiaries must immediately inform ECAS of any event or circumstance that may affect the implementation of the project.

Furthermore, all consortia's partners or single beneficiaries must keep records and other supporting documents to prove the proper implementation of the work programme as set out in the grant agreement. For actual costs, they should also keep adequate records and supporting documents to prove the costs declared (such as contracts, subcontracts, invoices and accounting records).

At the conclusion of the projects, beneficiaries are requested to submit a final report, including a narrative report, financial statements and explanation of the use of resources. Mandatory templates are provided in the Grant Agreement.

18. LIST OF ANNEXES TO THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Applicants are invited to carefully read and complete the following annexes to the call for proposals.

- ❖ **Application form** (Annex A), including a templates for mandatory annexes, and a separate Excel file with budget table (Annex A.2a);
- ❖ **Guidelines for applicants** (Annex B) , including further details on the call for proposals' requirements, instructions for filling in the application forms and annexes, a detailed description of the project selection process, evaluation criteria/grid with weights, information about the decision-making procedure, procedure for Q&A and complaints mechanism, obligations related to avoidance of conflict of interest, confidentiality and security, ethics, visibility to EU funding, information and record keeping;
- ❖ **Model Grant Agreement** including terms and conditions (Annex C) for receiving funding, including a description of the reporting and payment procedures with sample of technical and financial report.
- ❖ **Model financial statements** (Annex 4a to Annex C) for the final financial report on the project.



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Guidelines for Applicants

ECAS Grant-making to its Members in the EU

ECAS Brussels, 20th February 2023

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Welcome