



Contracting Authority: sequa

**AL-INVEST Verde. Component 1
EU- Latin America Alliance
for Sustainable Growth and Jobs**

**2nd Call for Proposals for Innovative
Partnership Projects
Guidelines for grant applicants**

Reference: AIV_P922_call2

Deadline for submission of applications

23/08/2023 at 23:59 (date and time of Bonn, Germany)



Important NOTICE

This is an open call for proposals (all documents have to be submitted together at the same time). In the first step an admin and eligibility check will be performed on the basis of Part II of the application form, the supporting documents provided and the signed 'declaration by the Lead Applicant'. In a second step, for those who passed, only the concept note (Part I of the application form) will be evaluated. In a third step for those who have passed steps I and II the full application (Part III of the application form) will be evaluated. In step 4 a provisional selection and the final verification of supporting documents takes place.

SUSPENSIVE CLAUSE

Please note that the awarding of the grant contracts under this call for proposals is subject to the condition of:

the prior conclusion of an addendum to the Grant Contract between the European Union and sequa, aiming at extending its current period of implementation which does not modify the elements of the call for proposals procedure. If the precedent condition is not met, the Contracting Authority will either modify the call for proposals or cancel the award procedure without the applicants being entitled to claim any compensation.

Preparation: Several Information sessions will be held virtually. Attendance is advised but optional i.e. not mandatory. Please check regularly the website at https://alinvest-verde.eu/en_gb/segunda-convocatoria/. No costs incurred by the applicants for attending this information session or preparing an application are reimbursable. Presentations will be shared on the AL-INVEST Verde website.

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1. EU-Latin America Alliance for Sustainable Growth and Employment: AL-INVEST Verde - Component 1

1.1. Background

AL-INVEST has been the European Union's (EU) flagship programme for MSME promotion and support in Latin America (LA) over the last two decades, leaving an impressive track record supporting tens of thousands of beneficiary MSMEs, hundreds of millions of Euros of business generated and an increased internationalisation of Latin American companies. Further, AL-INVEST has helped partner countries develop better MSME policies and has facilitated bi-regional policy dialogue between the EU and Latin America.

AL-INVEST Verde aims to promote economic growth alongside environmental sustainability. In light of the increasing challenges of climate change, and as countries look to reboot their economies following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the green transition is more relevant than ever. An economy following circular economy concepts, using fewer resources, and producing less waste and assuring sustainability in food production and related value chains, will be more resilient. Driven by AL-INVEST Verde¹, we aim to mobilise EU know-how and investment in support of green transition-related alliances with the private sector in LA.

In 2022, a 1st call for proposals (CfP) resulted in the award of 24 projects in the following countries: Argentina (3), Bolivia (1), Brazil (2), Chile (3), Colombia (5), Costa Rica (1), Ecuador (2), El Salvador (1), Honduras (1), Peru (4) and Uruguay (1).

A consortium led by sequa implements AL-INVEST Verde Component 1 under which the current call for proposals is being published. Thus, sequa is the Contracting Authority for this call. Sequa is a non-profit development organisation active globally. In close cooperation with the German business community, sequa has been implementing international cooperation projects and programmes since 1991. The focus of sequa's work is the promotion of the private sector. For more see www.sequa.de

The consortium partners are: Guatemalan Association of Exporters (AGEXPORT), Brazilian Confederation of Trade and Business Associations (CACB), Chamber of Industry, Commerce, Services and Tourism of Santa Cruz (CAINCO), Lima Chamber of Commerce (CCL), Employers' Confederation of the Mexican Republic (Coparmex Jalisco) and Eurochambres.

1.2. Objectives of the programme, lots and possible actions for this Call for Proposals

The **global objective** is to promote sustainable growth and jobs creation by supporting the transition towards a low-carbon, resource-efficient and a more circular economy in LA. The **specific objective** is that SMEs in LA use less polluting and more resource efficient products, processes, technologies, and services while more sustainable consumption patterns are adopted by countries. The idea is to **turn climate and environmental challenges into opportunities**.

To do so, this Call for Proposals aims at **supporting innovative partnership projects between Latin American and European institutions and organisations**, which will pursue the global and specific objectives stated above.

This call for proposals is divided into **two lots**:

Lot number	Lot title
Lot 1	Sustainable, deforestation-free agri-food systems and value chains
Lot 2	Transition towards low-carbon, resource-efficient and circular business models

¹ COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION on the financing of the annual action programme for 2020 - part II - in favour of the Latin American region to be financed from the general budget of the Union, PH/2020/8065 adopted on the 12/11/2020 by Commissioner Jutta URPIAINEN by empowerment procedure C/2014/8444



1.2.1 Subjects and context for this CfP

Food systems sustainability is a top political priority of the EU in the context of the European Green Deal² and the Farm to Fork strategy and also for Latin America. The EU aims to support the global transition to sustainable agri-food systems. As a major exporter of agricultural products, Latin America has an important role to play in ensuring sustainable and climate resilient agriculture. Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) was recognised as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda as a standalone Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 12). This aims to improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation. This is precisely the dynamic this Call for Proposals aims at enhancing, in line with the EU's own strategic commitment to sustainability in all its policies, encapsulated in the European Green Deal.

A key element of the European Green Deal is the preservation and restoration of ecosystems and biodiversity. Taking action against deforestation - which is crucial for tackling climate change and biodiversity loss – by decoupling deforestation from value chains is at the centre of European policies. The private sector has a role to play in countering this trend, in line with the UNFCCC Paris Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which the EU and Latin American countries have signed.

The 2023 Deforestation Regulation adopted by the European Parliament and the Council respectively on 19 April and 16 May 2023³ aims at eliminating deforestation driven by EU consumption and production of certain agricultural and industrial commodities (soy, beef, palm oil, wood, cocoa, coffee, rubber, and some of their derived products, such as furniture, print products or chocolate) whether produced in the EU or imported. Once in application, it will set mandatory due diligence rules for any company intending to place the commodities and products in its scope on the EU market or export them from it. Only deforestation-free (produced on land that was not subject to deforestation or forest degradation after 31 December 2020) and legal products (according to the laws of the country of origin) will be allowed on the EU market. At the core of this Regulation is traceability, to ensure that products are “deforestation-free”.

Another key component of the European Green Deal is the "Farm to Fork" strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system⁴, which will require substantial changes in the way food is produced, processed and consumed in the EU.

In February 2022, the European Commission adopted a proposal for a Directive on corporate sustainability due diligence⁵. This proposal is subject to approval by the European Council and European Parliament. The Directive aims to foster sustainable and responsible corporate behaviour throughout global value chains and to anchor human rights and environmental considerations in companies' operations and corporate governance. Companies play a key role in building a sustainable economy and society. They will be required to identify and, where necessary, prevent, end or mitigate adverse impacts of their activities on human rights, such as child labour and exploitation of workers, and on the environment, for example pollution and biodiversity loss.

Additionally, sustainability is one of the key objectives of EU trade policy, and the EU and its partners have committed to provisions on Trade and Sustainable Development in EU trade agreements with Central America, Colombia-Ecuador-Peru, the modernised agreements with Chile and Mexico (pending signature) and the proposed agreement with Mercosur.

² https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

³ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/es/press/press-releases/2023/05/16/council-adopts-new-rules-to-cut-deforestation-worldwide/>

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/food/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy_en

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_1145



1.2.2 Lot 1: Sustainable and deforestation-free value chains in agri-food industry

Lot 1 aims at supporting deforestation free and legal agri-food supply chains to the EU. This call for proposals will provide opportunities **to develop transparent and verified supply chains for products that do not contribute to deforestation and forest degradation**, and thereby boost their competitiveness on the EU market and other global markets.

Upon entry into force, the new **EU deforestation-free Regulation** will require operators and traders that place a set of commodities or products on the EU market or export from it to **exercise due diligence** in order to be able to prove that such products have not been produced on land deforested or degraded and have been produced in accordance with the laws of the country of production.

A key requirement for operators and traders will be to **collect the geographic coordinates of the land** where the commodities they place on the market were produced or harvested. This **strict traceability** is meant to ensure that only deforestation-free products enter the EU market – and that enforcement authorities in Member States have the necessary means to control that this is the case.

Commodities falling within the scope of this Regulation include **palm oil, cattle, soy, coffee, cocoa, timber, and rubber, as well as their derived products** (e.g., beef, leather, furniture, chocolate, print products, charcoal).

This call for proposals offers an opportunity to support small companies identify and fill possible gaps in practices, notably by upscaling the use of traceability and digital tools, to facilitate compliance with the new EU standards at their entry into application early 2025.

Examples for types of action

Proposals for innovative EU-LA partnership projects should present an integrated and comprehensive approach. Below is an illustrative and non-exhaustive list of possible types of actions:

- Digital solutions on geolocation (including possibility of using Copernicus⁶/Galileo⁷) and traceability adapted to a diversity of producers (including smallholders) and MSMEs across palm oil, cattle, leather, soy, coffee, cocoa, timber and rubber supply chains to facilitate deforestation-free and legal trade flows to the EU in the main agri-food value chains,
- Promotion of Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) and B2B initiatives to strengthen information flows across palm oil, cattle, soy, coffee, cocoa, timber, and rubber supply chains to the EU, including certification and incentive schemes for inclusive and sustainable agri-food value chains,
- Training and capacity building of MSMEs involved in supply chains of commodities covered by the EU Deforestation Regulation.

1.2.3 Lot 2: Transition to low-carbon, resource-efficient and circular business models

Lot 2 aims to finance initiatives in partner countries that support capacity building and adoption of sustainable practices that favour the transition to low-carbon, resource-efficient and more circular economies in Latin America.

In line with the 2030 Agenda, in March 2020, the Commission adopted the **Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP)** as part of its agenda for sustainable growth and the Green Deal. The CEAP is a comprehensive set of legislative and non-legislative actions, aimed at transitioning the European economy from a linear to a circular model. The aim of this call is to promote similar systemic change

⁶ <https://www.copernicus.eu/en>

⁷ <https://www.euspa.europa.eu/european-space/galileo/What-Galileo>



in EU partner countries in Latin America by creating global synergies and opportunities for the EU and Latin America to sharing relevant know-how and learn from each other.

In the Latin American context, a momentum for resources efficient, circular economic models is already emerging. In February 2021, the Coalition for the Circular Economy for Latin America and Caribbean was proposed within the framework of the XXII meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of LAC. The Coalition's aim is to implement a circular economy approach through collaboration between governments, businesses, and society as a whole. The private sector, including companies, micro and small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), business associations, chambers of commerce, among others, can become allies of the Coalition.

Examples for types of Action

Innovative partnership projects could promote sustainable economic practices in different phases such as (examples, non-exhaustive list):

- **Design phase** use of eco-innovation and eco-design approaches supported by new green technologies, research and design of products with lower environmental impact in the entire life cycle, including use and end-of-life stage (utilising concepts as Eco-design, Cradle to cradle, Design for Recycling, etc.); new sustainable business models in the emerging green economy (e.g., sustainable tourism practices adding value to local sustainable production; uptake of new business models based on renting goods, etc)
- **Production phase** introduction of clean energy sources and resource efficiency practices (e.g. energy, water, etc.); reduction of greenhouse gas emissions; industrial waste prevention/ minimisation/ reduction and management; promotion of circular economy and 3R practices (reduce, reuse, recycle approach) e.g. battery recycling and business models including for electric vehicles; promotion of responsible business practices; compliance to EU and ISO standards for products, industrial processes and services, introducing technical innovations for cleaner production, where possible with indigenous or locally produced technology; improved resource efficiency (materials, water, energy); embedding in environmental management systems (e.g. ISO 14001, EMAS, and others) and application of environmental accounting systems and reporting systems (ESG), low carbon source mining;
- **Logistics and distribution phase:** lowering greenhouse gas emissions in the distribution of products and services to retailers and consumers; enhancing traceability of goods using digital solutions.
- **Consumption and end-of-life management** Production and commercialisation of products/services with an ecological label and/or use of sustainability standards

1.2.4 Cross-cutting issues

The proposals will need to put forward concrete types of actions that ensure effective implementation and outreach towards a large number of MSMEs and small producers' organisations in Latin America taking into account the country and sector-specificities. Within the proposed activities, the involvement and cooperation of both EU and LA partners needs to be evident. Transfer of EU best practices in LA will be positively evaluated.

Those innovative projects to be funded under the two priorities of the Grant Scheme using **digital technologies** as an enabler for achieving sustainable development will be given advantage in the evaluation process.

The applicant consortium should pay special attention to envisage in their proposals a clear strategy for supporting **female and young entrepreneurs**, and where possible indigenous communities, and creating decent employment, particularly for youth and women⁸.

⁸ Youth hereby refers to persons between 17 and 29 years of age.



The innovative project proposals are encouraged to define actions to **identify bankable projects that can be scaled**, as well as actions aiming at **job creation** in the Latin America countries.

1.2.5 Ineligible types of actions

The following types of action are ineligible:

- actions related solely or mainly to individual sponsorship for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- actions relating solely or mainly to individual grants for studies or training courses;
- purchase of computers, hardware and equipment (including vehicles, machinery) at large scale, financial support to companies, on-off conferences, support to political parties, actions including proselytising, actions which discriminate individuals or groups on grounds of their sexual orientation, religious beliefs or lack of them, or their ethnic origin.

1.2.6 Expected outcome

Each innovative partnership project must be designed in such a way as to contribute to the objectives and results of the Programme outlined in the table below. In particular, each proposal needs to propose quantitatively its contribution to the achievement of the overall objectives and envisage monitoring of these indicators. Apart from the contribution to the specific objective indicators **proposals are expected to contribute in addition to a minimum of three of the following indicators from the list below; these contributions must be clearly quantified**: Indicators No. 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2.3, 2.6 (highlighted in green in the table).

The indicators do not refer to individuals or families but to MSMEs. Per project, at least 150 Latin American MSMEs have to adopt sustainable and digitalised economic practices unless, based on justified exceptional conditions (e.g., scarcely populated, and remote areas) a lesser threshold is formally agreed by the Contracting Authority.

The programme indicators are as follows:

Specific objective 1	Specific objective 2
OB ES* 1.1 Number of MSMEs in deforestation-free or sustainable supply chains as a result of support adopting sustainable and/or digitalised economic practices through AL-INVEST Verde.	OB ES 1.2 Number of full-time equivalent of green and digital jobs (disaggregated by sex) sustained/created as a direct result of support by AL-INVEST Verde.
Output 1	Output 2
1.1 Number of MSMEs (EU&LA) participating in AL-INVEST Verde (disaggregated by size and sector and region)	2.1 Number of audience reached in events to disseminate the experience and insights provided by the innovative projects (disaggregated by sex and age and sector).
1.2 Number of MSMEs that obtain firm-specific sustainability standards and/or certification e.g. GMPs (Good Manufacturing Practices) (disaggregated by size and sector) or that meet EU market requirements.	2.2 Number of entrepreneurial encounters and B2B events (partly or fully) promoted by the programme. (disaggregated by size and sector).
1.3 Growth: Number of MSMEs reporting increased turnover as a direct result of support received by AL-INVEST Verde (disaggregated by size and sector)	2.3 Number of MSME staff with increased knowledge in access to finance (disaggregated by sex and age).
1.4 Number of MSMEs reporting savings in resource usage (disaggregated by size and sector), taking into consideration greenhouse gas or resource savings	2.4 Number of participants reached at B2B events (disaggregated by sex, age and sector)



achieved through low carbon, circular economy or other actions.	
Output 1	Output 2
1.5 Number of BMO (Business Membership Organization) staff trained on green and digital services (disaggregated by sex and age)	2.5 Number of partnership agreements (sub-grant contracts) signed to support the transition to low-carbon and more circular economy in LA
1.6 Number of new digital and green services developed by BMOs	2.6 Number of bankable projects developed by MSMEs through BMOs

*OB ES = abbreviation for Objetivo Especifico in Spanish

1.3. Possible financial support

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is EUR 12,225,600.00. The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to allocate all available funds.

Indicative allocation of funds by lot:

Lot 1: EUR 6,112,800.00

Lot 2: EUR 6,112,800.00

If the allocation indicated for a specific lot cannot be used due to insufficient quality or number of proposals received, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to reallocate the remaining funds to the other lot.

Any **grant applied for under** this call for proposals must be between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

- minimum amount: **EUR 200,000**
- maximum amount: **EUR 300,000**

Any grant applied for under this call for proposals must claim the following percentages of the total eligible costs of the action:

Minimum of **50%** and maximum **80%**. That means that sequa finances 50% to 80% of the total cost of the action and the 20% to 50% (balance) is co-financed by the applicants.

The **balance** (i.e., the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the Contracting Authority) must be financed from sources other than the general budget of the European Union or the European Development Fund.

1.4. Duration

Each partnership project must have a duration of 18 to 27 months.



2. Rules for this Call for Proposals

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of the actions financed under this call, in conformity with the attached sequa award guide to applicants published on the following address www.alinvest-verde.eu, which is applicable to the present call.

2.1. Eligibility criteria

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

(1) the actors:

- The **'lead applicant'**, i.e. the entity submitting the application form,
- its co-applicant(s),

(2) the actions:

- Actions for which a grant may be awarded

(3) the costs:

- types of cost that may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant.

2.1.1 Eligibility of applicants (i.e., lead applicant and co-applicant(s))

Each innovative project proposal should be submitted under the form of a partnership which has to include, as a minimum participation requirement, one legal entity from the European Union (or representing European private sector in LA such as bilateral chambers) and one legal entity from a Latin American country/sub-region where the action is to be implemented. Hence, all European bi- or multilateral chambers and associations active in Latin America are considered as European partners under this call for proposals as they represent European private sector in Latin America. This partnership does not imply a legal link between both/all entities.

Thus, if for example the lead applicant is from EU, the applicant **must act with a minimum of one co-applicant** from the other region, i.e., at least one co-applicant must be from the following Latin American countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela⁹ **and vice versa**.

Lead applicant

(1) In order to be eligible for a grant, the lead applicant must:

- be a legal person, **and**
- be non-profit-making, **and**
- be established¹⁰ in a Member State of the European Union or in one of the following eligible countries in Latin America: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama,

⁹ In accordance with Articles 2 and 16 of Regulation (EU) No 233/2014, because of the nature of the "EU- Latin America Alliance for Sustainable Growth and Jobs", under which this call for proposals is launched, as well the importance to ensure a complete regional coverage, the eligibility of the action extends exceptionally to Chile and Uruguay, as their participation subject to the differentiated approach is key to preserve the regional scope of the programme necessary to achieve its objectives.

¹⁰ To be determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes, which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned and that its head office is located in an eligible country. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has been concluded.



Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela. UK entities are no longer eligible to any EU funded projects.

This last obligation does not apply to international organisations; however, they cannot substitute an applicant from EU nor LA. International organisations may only act as a third partner, **and**

- be a specific type of organisation:
 - (i) Business support organisations representing the private sector, e.g. small and medium-sized enterprises¹¹. These include, inter alia, chambers of commerce, bi- or multilateral chambers, sector-specific trade, industrial and professional associations, clusters, cooperatives, as well as sector-based agencies working with MSMEs, universities and the business development centres located within the universities or,
 - (ii) Research centres, think tanks and other organisations focussing on innovation, digitalisation or transition to green economy,

and

- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s), not acting as an intermediary.
- (2) Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations listed in Section 5 of the sequa award guide.

Public agencies cannot apply as lead applicants, only as co-applicants.

Natural persons are NOT eligible.

Lead applicants, co-applicants, and, in case of legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over the lead applicant, the co-applicants are informed that, should they be in one of the situations of early detection or exclusion according to Section 5 of the sequa award guide, personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered and communicated to the persons and entities concerned in relation to the award or the execution of a grant contract. In this respect, provisionally selected lead applicants and co-applicants are obliged to declare that they are not in one of the exclusion situations through a **signed declaration on honour** (annexed to the application form, Annex I).

In the application form Part II ('declaration(s) by the lead applicant'), the lead applicant must declare that the lead applicant himself and the co-applicant(s) are not in any of these situations.

The lead applicant must act with co-applicant(s) as specified above.

If awarded the grant contract, the lead applicant will become the beneficiary identified as the coordinator in the grant contract /special conditions. The coordinator is the main interlocutor of the Contracting Authority. It represents and acts on behalf of any other co-applicant and coordinates the design and implementation of the action.

Co-applicants

Co-applicants participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the lead applicant.

Co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria applicable to the lead applicant and their involvement must be reflected in the budget and the plan of action.

In addition, co-applicants are allowed to

- be a specific type of organisation such as:

¹¹ https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/sme-definition_en



- (i) Business support organisations representing the private sector, e.g., small and medium-sized enterprises. These include, inter alia, chambers of commerce, bi- or multilateral chambers, sector-specific trade, industrial and professional associations, clusters, cooperatives, regulatory bodies and agencies promoting trade, investment and commercial activities as well as sector-based agencies working with MSMEs, or
- (ii) Public agencies (typically, boards of investment, trade promotion agencies etc.) at local, national or regional level, or
- (iii) Research centres, think tanks and other organisations focussing on innovation, digitalisation or transition to green economy

Co-applicants must sign the mandate in the application form (chapter 2.7 of Part II of the application form).

If awarded the grant contract, the co-applicants will become beneficiaries of the action (together with the coordinator or lead applicant)

- (3) Applicants included in the lists of EU restrictive measures at the moment of the award decision cannot be awarded the contract¹².

The following entities may not be applicants nor co-applicants and do therefore not have to sign the 'mandate for co-applicant(s)':

Contractors and external experts

The beneficiaries are permitted to award contracts, i.e. to sub-contract. Contractors (e.g. consulting companies, service providers) and external experts have to be **selected competitively** and are subject to the **procurement rules** set out in Annex II to the standard grant contract. External experts are persons which are foreseen to play a role in project implementation, but which are not part of the institution's payroll.

2.1.2 Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made

Definition

An action is composed of a set of activities.

Duration

The planned duration of an action may not be less than 18 months nor exceed 27 months.

Location

Actions must take place in one or more of the following country(ies):

Latin American countries (as specified in 2.1.1). and Member States of the EU. The main part of actions must take place in one or more of the eligible Latin American countries. If an action takes place in more than one country, then one main country must be specified where a major part of activities will take place and hence this country will count when it comes to the calculation of the maximum number of projects to be attributed in one country.

Types of activity and sectors or themes

Please see chapter 1.2 and 1.3

¹² The updated lists of sanctions are available at www.sanctionsmap.eu. Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails

**Important consideration**

The partnership projects selected within the present call will be invited by the Contracting Authority to attend training sessions, networking and benchmarking activities at the level of the overall AL-INVEST Verde Programme (i.e. training sessions on the grant contract financial procedures and on project performance indicators, AL-INVEST Verde stakeholders' annual meetings, workshops for exchange of experiences and best practices etc.). The above activities will be organised by the Management Team of the Contracting Authority. Attendance instructions and information will be given in due time. The applicant is therefore requested to allocate in its budget proposal an amount of EUR 14,000 as follows:

1.3.1.2 Per diem for transversal activities organised by the Contracting Authority (EUR 3,850)

2.1.2 Trips to transversal activities organised by the Contracting Authority (EUR 10,150)

This budget serves for the participation to the above activities. Some of the activities will be addressed to the Coordinators of the partnership projects only while others will target the entire consortium and its representatives.

Financial support to third parties

Applicants shall NOT foresee financial support to third parties, neither in kind nor as direct payment. This means that e.g., MSMEs can benefit from technical assistance and other support provided by the project but not receive funds, equipment and machinery.

Visibility

The applicants must take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the European Union has financed or co-financed the action. As far as possible, actions that are wholly or partially funded by the European Union must incorporate information and communication activities designed to raise the awareness of specific or general audiences of the reasons for the action and the EU support for the action in the country or region concerned, as well as the results and the impact of this support.

Applicants must comply with the objectives and guarantee the visibility of sequa and the EU financing (in line with the Communication and Visibility Manual for AL-INVEST Verde actions specified and annexed to the grant contract).

Number of applications and grants per applicants

- The lead applicant may not submit more than one application under this call for proposals as lead applicant.
- The lead applicant may be a co-applicant in more than one application under this call for proposals at the same time.
- A co-applicant may be the co-applicant in more than one application under this call for proposals.
- A co-applicant may be awarded more than one grant as co-applicant under this call for proposals.
- In order to facilitate geographical distribution, it is envisaged to approve a maximum of three projects per country¹³ and per lot. In case there are more project proposals in quality or quantity, in order to use the total available funds, more proposals in specific countries may be awarded following the ranking in the established reserve list.

¹³ Country means where the major part of actions will take place.



The overarching contract between EU and sequa stipulates that the financial support to third parties (contribution) shall not exceed 300.000 EUR per party. Thus, the lead and the co-applicants are requested to provide a tentative budget division on sheet 4 of the budget which illustrates the share of the contribution of each consortium partner taking into consideration eventual granted funds under the 1. CfP (Annex III). This rule applies to all organisations during the whole duration of the programme. That means that organisations awarded in the first call can apply again for this call as long as they do not exceed an overall EU contribution of EUR 300,000.

2.1.3 Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included

Only 'eligible costs' can be covered by a grant. The categories of costs that are eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and an overall ceiling for 'eligible costs'.

The reimbursement of eligible costs may be based on:

- actual costs incurred by the beneficiaries;
- no simplified cost options except for per diems (unit costs). The unit cost should be checked ex-ante (before the signature of the contract). Afterwards, the unit cost cannot be put into question. It is in the applicants' interest to **provide a realistic and cost-effective budget**.

Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under this call for proposals, costs must comply with the provisions of Article 14 of the general conditions to the standard grant contract (see Annex II of the guidelines).

Salary costs of the personnel of national administrations may be eligible to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the action was not undertaken.

Duties, taxes and charges, including VAT, paid and not recoverable by the beneficiaries (see article 14.1 i) of the General Conditions – Annex II). In order to be eligible, the Beneficiaries (the lead applicant, each co-applicant) will provide a respective certificate stating that they are not recoverable from the auditor at the latest one month after the signature of the contract of the sub-grant project.

Except for per diems according to the relevant EU list¹⁴, so called "simplified cost options" or lump sums are not permitted.

Eligible indirect costs

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding, but the total **must not exceed 3%** of the estimated total eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another budget heading in the standard grant contract. The lead applicant may be asked to justify the percentage requested before the grant contract is signed. However, once the flat rate has been fixed in the special conditions of the grant contract, no supporting documents need to be provided.

If any of the applicants is in receipt of an operating grant financed by the EU, it may not claim indirect costs on its incurred costs within the proposed budget for the action.

Contributions in kind and volunteers' work

Contributions in kind and volunteers' work are not accepted as eligible costs.

Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- debts and debt service charges (interest);

¹⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/documents-library_en?keyword=per%20diem%20rates



- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- costs declared by the beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme receiving a European Union (including through EDF) grant;
- purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary for the direct implementation of the action, in which case ownership must be transferred in accordance with Article 7.5 of the general conditions of the standard grant contract, at the latest at the end of the action;
- currency exchange losses;
- credit to third parties;
- computers, hardware and equipment (including vehicles, machinery) at large scale – a maximum of 7% of the EU contribution may be assigned to the budget line “equipment”
- financial support to third parties (in kind or direct payment). This means that e.g., MSMEs shall benefit from technical assistance and other support provided by the project **but not receive** funds, equipment and machinery.

Ethics clauses and Code of Conduct

a) Absence of conflict of interest

The applicant must not be affected by any conflict of interest and must have no equivalent relation in that respect with other applicants or parties involved in the actions. Any attempt by an applicant to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the evaluation committee or the Contracting Authority during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing applications will lead to the rejection of its application and may result in administrative penalties according to the Financial Regulation in force.

b) Respect for human rights as well as environmental legislation and core labour standards

The applicant and its staff must comply with human rights. In particular and in accordance with the applicable act, applicants who have been awarded contracts must comply with the environmental legislation including multilateral environmental agreements, and with the core labour standards as applicable and as defined in the relevant International Labour Organisation conventions (such as the conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining; elimination of forced and compulsory labour; abolition of child labour).

Zero tolerance for children and labour exploitation, sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment:

The European Commission applies a policy of 'zero tolerance' in relation to all wrongful conduct, which has an impact on the professional credibility of the applicant.

The applicant and co-applicants shall have in place policies and practices to prevent any type of children labour exploitation, physical abuse or punishment, or threats of physical abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation, harassment and verbal abuse, as well as other forms of intimidation.

c) Anti-corruption and anti-bribery

The applicant shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations and codes relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption. The European Commission reserves the right to suspend or cancel project financing if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process or during the execution of a contract and if the Contracting Authority fails to take all appropriate measures to remedy the situation. For the purposes of this provision, 'corrupt practices' are the offer of a bribe, gift, gratuity or commission to any person as an inducement or reward for performing or refraining from any act relating to the award of a contract or execution of a contract already concluded with the Contracting Authority.



d) Unusual commercial expenses

Applications will be rejected or contracts terminated if it emerges that the award or execution of a contract has given rise to unusual commercial expenses. Such unusual commercial expenses are commissions not mentioned in the main contract or not stemming from a properly concluded contract referring to the main contract, commissions not paid in return for any actual and legitimate service, commissions remitted to a tax haven, commissions paid to a payee who is not clearly identified or commissions paid to a company which has every appearance of being a front company.

Grant beneficiaries found to have paid unusual commercial expenses on projects funded by the European Union are liable, depending on the seriousness of the facts observed, to have their contracts terminated or to be permanently excluded from receiving EU/EDF funds.

e) Breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to substantial breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud. If substantial breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the contract, the Contracting Authority may refrain from concluding the contract.

2.2. How to apply and the procedures to follow

To apply for this open call for proposals the lead applicants need to:

- I. Provide an outline of the concept (chapter 1 in the application form [Annex I])
- II. Provide information about the organisations involved (lead applicant, co-applicant) in the action in the second part of the application form (chapter 2 in the application form [Annex I])
- III. Draft a full application (chapter 2 in the application form [Annex I]) including the budget (Annex III) with 4 sheets
- IV. Provide the supporting documents according to the checklist provided in Appendix 1 of Annex I at the time of presenting the proposal

All documents must be submitted via the AL-INVEST Verde website using the online submission form (to be found at https://alinvest-verde.eu/en_gb/segunda-convocatoria/) before the **deadline on 23.08.2023 at 23.59 hrs**, date and time of Bonn, Germany.

The uploaded documents have to follow the following nomenclature for naming the file: Country of implementation-lead applicant-name of document (e.g. Peru-sequa-logframe.xlsx).

The following documents have to be submitted via the online submission form:

- Application form (Annex I), as docx or pdf
- Administrative and eligibility checklist (Appendix 1 to Annex I), as docx or pdf
- Logframe (Appendix 2 to Annex I), as xlsx
- Budget (Annex III), as xlsx
- Legal entity forms (Annex IV), as separate pdf for each partner compiled in one compressed document (for example zip, 7z or others)
- Financial identification form (Annex V), as pdf
- Declarations of honour (Annex VI), as separate pdf for each partner compiled in one compressed document (for example zip, 7z or others)
- Declaration of the lead applicant (chapter 2.5 of Annex I), as pdf
- Mandates (chapter 2.6 of Annex I), as separate pdf for each partner compiled in one compressed document (for example zip, 7z or others)



- Supporting documents, as separate document for each partner compiled in one compressed document (for example zip, 7z or others)

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected. Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Please note that incomplete applications may be rejected. Lead applicants are advised to verify that their application is complete by using the respective checklist (Appendix 1 to Annex I).

The lead applicant is strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit its proposal, since heavy Internet traffic or a fault with the Internet connection (including electricity failure, etc.) could lead to difficulties in submission. The Contracting Authority cannot be held responsible for any delay due to such afore-mentioned difficulties.

Once the presentation of the online application through the system is completed, the applicant will receive an acknowledgment of receipt **within 72 hours**.

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected. Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Please note that incomplete applications may be rejected. Lead applicants are advised to verify that their application is complete by using the respective checklist (Appendix 1 from Annex I).

2.2.1 Administrative evaluation and applicant's eligibility (Part I)

The first evaluation step will be an administrative and eligibility evaluation check of the outlined points in Appendix 1 of Annex I (administrative evaluation grid). Applicants need to prove that they possess the necessary professional, technical and financial capacity to implement the suggested action. Thus, in Part I all applicants shall demonstrate their staff capacities, their technical experience as well as their sound financial status. Therefore, supporting documents like proof of registration, VAT number or equivalent, articles of association (all for the lead applicant and the co-applicants) as well as audit reports, balance sheets (accordingly for each lead applicant) need to be attached. If not, the application is automatically disqualified.

Please note that:

1. Declarations and mandates must be signed
2. Applicants must apply in English, Portuguese or Spanish. All key documents will be provided by the Contracting Authority in English, Spanish and Portuguese. In case of discrepancies the English version shall prevail. Supporting documents can be in any of the EU languages if a summary in English, Spanish or Portuguese is provided.
3. The Legal Entity Sheet and the Declaration of Honour need to be included in the submitted documents.
4. Clarifications may only be requested by the Contracting Authority when information provided is not sufficient to conduct an objective assessment. Responses must be sent to the Contracting Authority within four working days of receipt.

2.2.2 Concept Outline (Part II)

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the outline of the application respecting font and page restrictions (see Annex I *Application Form*).

Applicants must apply in English, Portuguese, or Spanish.



Please note that:

1. The elements outlined in the concept may not be modified in the full application. Provide information to the respective chapter headlines.
2. Own contributions by the applicants can be replaced by other donors' contributions at any time.
3. In the second stage only the concept outline will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that this document contains ALL relevant information concerning the action. No additional annexes should be sent.
4. For Part II no attachments, annexes or supporting documents are requested.
5. Any error or major discrepancy related to the concept note instructions may lead to the rejection of the concept outline.
6. Clarifications may be requested by the Contracting Authority when information provided is not sufficient to conduct an objective assessment; this does NOT apply when requested documents are omitted, incomplete and/or not submitted before the deadline. Replies need to be sent to the Contracting Authority within four working days after receipt.
7. Only concept outlines timely handed in through the online submission form will be evaluated. Hand-written concept outlines will not be accepted.
8. Only applications where the concept outline has satisfied the minimum criteria will be evaluated further.

2.2.3 Full Application Part III

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the outline of the application respecting font and page restrictions (see Annex I *Application Form*).

Applicants must apply in English, Portuguese, or Spanish.

Please note the following:

1. The elements outlined in the concept may not be modified in the full application.
2. Provide information to all the respective chapter headlines. Please complete the full application form carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly.
3. Own contributions by the applicants can be replaced by other donors' contributions or other sources than EU at any time.
4. In the third stage the full application will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that this document contains ALL relevant information concerning the action.
5. For Part III the only annex is the budget with 4 sheets in excel format. No other attachments, annexes or supporting documents are requested.
6. Any error or major discrepancy related to the application instructions may lead to the rejection of the entire application.
7. Clarifications may be requested when information provided is not sufficient to conduct an objective assessment; this does NOT apply when requested documents are omitted, incomplete and/or not submitted before the deadline. Replies need to be sent to the Contracting Authority within four working days after receipt.
8. Only applications handed in timely through the online submission form will be evaluated. Hand-written applications will not be accepted.



2.2.4 Information sessions and questions

Several Information sessions will be held virtually and in presence. Attendance is advised but optional i.e. not mandatory. Please therefore regularly check the website at <https://alinvest-verde.eu>.

Questions may be sent by email and in the format provided no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of applications to the address listed below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

Email address: call-for-proposals2@sequa.de

The Contracting Authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Received questions and their answers will be published every 15 days. Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for the submission of the applications.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, or an action.

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the evaluation procedure, will be published on the AL-INVEST Verde website as the need arises. It is advisable to regularly consult the abovementioned website to be informed of the questions and answers published.

In case of technical problems (access to submission form, upload of proposal etc.) please consult alinvest-verde.it-helpdesk@sequa.de.

2.3. Evaluation and selection of applications

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the Contracting Authority with the support of the members of the consortium and the possible assistance of external assessors. All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in Section 2.1, the application will be rejected on this sole basis.

2.3.1 STEP 1 Opening, administrative and eligibility check

During the opening, administrative and eligibility check, the following will be assessed:

- If the deadline has been met. Here, the date and time issued on the Email received on the sequa server is relevant. Otherwise, the application will be automatically rejected.
- If the administrative requirements as set out in the respective checklist (Appendix 1 of Annex I – Part 1) are met.
- If the eligibility requirements as set out in the respective checklist (Appendix 1 of Annex I – Part 2) are met.
- If the concept satisfies all instructions of the application form. This also includes an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further. **To avoid this situation, please compare your application thoroughly with the afore-mentioned checklist before submission.**
- If the declaration and mandate(s) have been signed accordingly.



- If the required supporting documents are attached and in the language permitted¹⁵; i.e.
 - The statutes or articles of association of the lead applicant and of each co-applicant. These documents will have to bear a cover sheet clearly referring to the respective articles that prove that the institution is a non-profit institution.
 - The lead applicant must provide an audit report produced by an approved external auditor where it is available, and always in cases where a statutory audit is required by EU or national law. That report shall certify the accounts for the last 3 financial years available.
 - A copy of the lead applicant's accounts of the last three years (the profit and loss account and the balance sheet).
- If the applicants satisfy all the criteria specified in section 2.1 of the guidelines for applicants. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The selection criteria help to evaluate the applicant's and co-applicants' operational capacity, technical and the lead applicant's financial capacity and are used to verify that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the proposed action and, where appropriate, to participate in its funding (this only applies to lead applicants);
- have the management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed action.

For the purpose of the evaluation of the financial capacity, lead applicants must ensure that the relevant information and documents (i.e. accounts of the latest financial year and external audit report, where applicable) have been attached.

If the total score for Part II (financial, technical and operational capacity) is less than 12 points, the application will be rejected. If the score for at least one of the subsections under Part II is 1, the application will also be rejected. The applications that pass this check will be further evaluated.

For proposals that receive a score below 12 points from one evaluator and above 12 points from the other one, it is established that a third evaluation will be done. The result of the third evaluator will be added to the scores of the other two evaluators and the overall sum will be divided by three to obtain the final result.

Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Evaluation Grid Part I

Section	Maximum Score
1. Financial, technical and operational capacity	20
1.1. Do the applicants have sufficient in-house experience of project management?	5
1.2. Do the applicants have sufficient technical in-house expertise (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)?	5
1.3. Do the applicants have sufficient management in-house capacity (including staff, infrastructure and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4. Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5

¹⁵ Where such documents are not in one of the official languages of the European Union or in the language of the countries where the action is implemented, a translation into English, Portuguese or Spanish of the relevant parts of these documents must be attached for the purpose of analysing the application.



2.3.2 STEP 2 Concept outline evaluation

The concept outlines that pass this check will be evaluated by the evaluation committee on the relevance and design of the proposed action. The concepts can receive an overall score out of 20 using the breakdown in the evaluation grid below.

The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheadings. Each subheading will be given a score between 0 and 2.

Evaluation Grid Part II

Section	Maximum Score
1. Relevance of the action	10
1.1. How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and envisaged outcomes of the call for proposals and to the specific themes/sectors/areas or any other specific requirement stated in the guidelines for applicants? Are the expected results of the action aligned with the outcomes defined in the guidelines for applicants?	2*2
1.2. How relevant is the proposal to the problems identified in the target country(ies), region(s) and/or relevant sectors?	2
1.3. How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)?	2
1.4. Does the proposal contain particular added-value elements (e.g. innovation, best practices, digitisation)?	2
2. Design of the action	10
2.1. How coherent is the overall design of the action? Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale to achieve the expected results?	2*2
2.2. Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved, and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?	2
2.3. Does the design foresee mechanisms to ensure sustainability?	2
2.4. To which extent does the proposal integrate relevant cross-cutting elements such as women and youth, job creation and MSME outreach as well as development of replicable and bankable projects.	2
Maximum total score	20

Once all concept outlines have been assessed, a list will be drawn up with the proposed actions ranked according to their total score. Moreover, the number of applications will be reduced, taking account of the ranking, to the number of concept outlines and capacity whose total aggregate amount of requested contributions is equal to 400% the available budget for this call for proposals.

Only the concept notes with a score **of at least 12** will be considered for pre-selection.

2.3.3 STEP 3 Evaluation of the full application

Firstly, the following will be assessed:

- If the full application satisfies all the criteria specified in the guidelines. This also includes an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is



incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The full applications that pass this check will be further evaluated on their quality, including the proposed budget (see Annex III). They will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria in the evaluation grid below.

The award criteria help to evaluate the quality of the applications in relation to the objectives and priorities set forth in the guidelines, and to award grants to projects which maximise the overall effectiveness of the call for proposals. They help to select applications which the Contracting Authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities. They cover the relevance of the action, its consistency with the objectives of the call for proposals, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

Scoring: The evaluation grid is divided into Sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Evaluation grid Part III / Full application

Section	Maximum Score
1. Relevance and general outline of the action (here the result of the evaluation of the concept outline Part I will be used)	20
2. Design of the action	20
2.1. How convincing is the design of the action? Is the relationship between results and outcome logical? Is the design of the action likely to achieve the planned indicators?	5
2.2 Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the envisaged outputs and expected outcome(s) described in 1.2.3?	5
2.3 Does the proposal/Logical Framework include credible baseline, targets and sources of verification/data? If not, is a baseline study foreseen (and is the study budgeted appropriately in the proposal)?	5
2.4 Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved, and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?	5
3. Implementation approach	15
3.1. Is the action plan for implementing the action clear and feasible? Is the timeline realistic?	5
3.2. Does the proposal include an effective and efficient monitoring system?	5
3.3. Is the co-applicant(s)'s and other stakeholders level of involvement and participation in the action satisfactory?	5
4. Sustainability of the action	10
4.1. Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5
4.2. Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable? - Financially (e.g. financing of follow-up activities, sources of revenue for covering all future operating and maintenance costs) - Institutionally (will structures allow the results of the action to be sustained at the end of the action? Will there be local 'ownership' of the results of the action? Scope for replication?) - Environmentally (will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?)	5



Section	Maximum Score
5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action	15
5.1. Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	5
5.2. Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected outcomes and results (e.g. number of reached MSMEs) satisfactory?	5*2
6. Financial, technical and operational capacity (here the result form the evaluation of Part I will be used)	20
Maximum total score	100

Provisional selection

After the evaluation, a table will be drawn up listing the applications ranked according to their score. The highest scoring applications will be provisionally selected until the available budget for this call for proposals is reached. In addition, a reserve list will be drawn up following the same criteria. This list will be used if more funds become available during the validity period of the reserve list.

The evaluation committee will finalise the evaluation and establish **a list of provisionally selected proposals pending a final eligibility check**. These proposals are ranked according to the total scores obtained by each application taking into consideration that a **maximum of three projects per country and lot** may be awarded under this call for proposals. A reserve list will be also drawn up following the same approach.

2.3.4 STEP 4 Verification of final eligibility of the applicants

The eligibility verification will be performed on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the Contracting Authority. It will by default only be performed for the applications that have been provisionally selected according to their score and within the available budget for this call for proposals.

- The declaration by the lead applicant will be cross-checked with the supporting documents provided by the lead applicant. Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the declaration by the lead applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the application on that sole basis.
- The eligibility of applicants will be verified and re-checked.
- The supporting documents of Part II will be cross-checked, additional documents requested if deemed necessary.

Any rejected application will be replaced by the next best placed application on the reserve list that falls within the available budget for this call for proposals.

2.4. Submission of supporting documents for provisionally selected applications

A lead applicant whose application has been provisionally selected or placed on the reserve list will be informed in writing by the Contracting Authority. It will be requested to supply the following documents in order to allow the Contracting Authority to verify the eligibility of the lead applicant and the one of the co-applicant(s):

The following documents must be provided (partly already submitted at the time of application):

1. Legal entity sheet (see Annex IV of these guidelines) duly completed and signed by each of the applicants (i.e. by the lead applicant and by each co-applicant), accompanied by the justifying documents requested there.



2. A financial identification form of the lead applicant (not from co-applicant(s)) conforming to the model attached as Annex V of these guidelines, certified by the bank to which the payments will be made. This bank should be located in the country where the lead applicant is established. If the lead applicant has already submitted a financial identification form in the past for a contract where sequa was in charge of the payments and intends to use the same bank account, a copy of the previous financial identification form may be provided instead.
3. The lead applicant as well as all co-applicants shall fill in and sign the declaration on honour certifying that they are not in one of the exclusion situations (see Annex VI).
4. A self-evaluation regarding the internal Policy and Procedures against Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEA-H) of lead applicant and co-applicant (see Annex VIII).

The requested supporting documents must be supplied as scanned versions (i.e. showing legible stamps, signatures and dates) of the said originals.

Where such documents are not in one of the official languages of the European Union or in the language of the countries where the action is implemented, a translation into English, Portuguese or Spanish of the relevant parts of these documents proving the lead applicant's and, where applicable, co-applicants' eligibility, must be attached for the purpose of analysing the application.

Where these documents are in an official language of the European Union other than the language(s) of the call for proposals, it is **strongly** recommended, in order to facilitate the evaluation, to provide a translation of the relevant parts of the documents, proving the lead applicant's and co-applicants' eligibility, into English.

If the abovementioned supporting documents are not provided before the deadline indicated in the request for supporting documents sent to the lead applicant by the Contracting Authority, the application may be rejected.

After verifying the supporting documents, the evaluation committee will make a final recommendation to the Contracting Authority, which will decide on the award of grants.

2.5. Notification of the Contracting Authority's decision

The lead applicants will be informed in writing of the Contracting Authority's decision concerning their application and, if rejected, the reasons for the negative decision. A respective notification will be sent by e-mail to the applicant after the corresponding evaluation step.

An applicant believing that it has been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may lodge a complaint. This complaint will have to be sent by Email to call-for-proposals2@sequa.de within 15 working days after having received the respective notification by the Contracting Authority. The Email has to arrive before midnight of the 15th working day. No claims will be accepted after this date.



2.6. Timetable and deadlines

	DATE
Call opening	23/05/2023
1. Information meeting (if any)	See list under 2.2.4.
2. Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the Contracting Authority	27/07/2023
3. Last date on which clarifications are issued by the Contracting Authority	06/08/2023
4. Deadline for submission of entire application	23/08/2023, 23:59 (date and time of Bonn, Germany)
5. Information to lead applicants on the evaluation	After each evaluation step
6. Notification of award (tentative)	End of November/ Mid-December 2023
7. Contract signature (tentative)	January/ February 2024

All times are in the time zone of the country of the Contracting Authority (Germany), except where indicated differently.

This indicative timetable refers to provisional dates and may be updated by the Contracting Authority during the procedure.

LIST OF ANNEXES

Documents for Application

- Annex I Grant application form (Word format)
- Appendix 1 to Annex I Administrative checklist
- Appendix 2 to Annex I LogFrame template
- Annex III Budget (Excel format)
- Annex IV Legal Entity Sheet
- Annex V Financial Identification Form

Documents for Information

- Annex II General Conditions
- Annex VI Declaration of Honour
- Annex VII Financial Guarantee Pre-Financing
- Annex VIII SEA-H Self-assessment
- Grant Award Guide for Information
- Grant Contract Template - Special Conditions