

CEF Digital 2022 Call for Proposals - Info Day

25 October 2022, 9:30–13:00

















Welcome

Mateusz KUJAWA, Head of Sector

CEF Digital - HaDEA



Agenda

- Welcome
- CEF Digital Policy Context
- 2022 calls overview
- Priorities of the Calls (topics):
 - 5G Corridors and 5GIntegra
 - 5G for Smart Communities
 - Digital Global Gateways
 - Quantum Communication Infrastructure
 - Cloud Federations
 - Operational Digital Platforms
- Q&A

Break

- Evaluation Process and Award Criteria
- Preparing a Successful Proposal and Budget requirements
- The application process in eGrants
- Q&A









CEF Digital Policy Context

Franco ACCORDINO, Head of Unit Investment in High-Capacity Networks European Commission, DG CONNECT



CEF Digital Call 2 – policy context

- ➤ Digital Decade policy programme (5G & Gigabit targets)
- ➤ Global Gateway strategy
- > Geopolitical tension, economic uncertainty, social challenges...
- > EU sovereignty and Sustainability



CEF Digital Call 2 : building on call 1 lessons

- ➤ More time for applicants to prepare proposals
- ➤ More time for MSs to provide support/approvals
- Continuity with exclusion clauses and guarantees
- Quality of proposal is key for success of any call!
- Indicative grant size of proposals
- Readiness of topics



Calls 2: opened 12 October – close 23 February 2023

Accelerating 5G deployment

- > 5G corridors:
 - o 25M€ for works
 - 5M€ for studies and CSA (5G-cloudedge integration)
- > 5G communities
 - o 50M€ for works
 - We expect around 15 new 5G standalone best practices

Synergy with Energy and Transport

Operational Digital Platforms

○ Coordination and support action: 4M€

Strategic backbones

- Global gateways
 - 100M€ for works, key strategic projects based on Global gateway priorities
- Cloud federation
 - 3M€ for studies, addressing specific domains (e.g. health cloud) at EU regional/national level
- > Euro QCI
 - o 90M€ for works
 - In 2023, 110M€ to be transferred to
 ESA through a contribution agreement







HaDEA – the European Health and Digital Executive Agency



Sammy LAURITSEN, Deputy Head of Unit

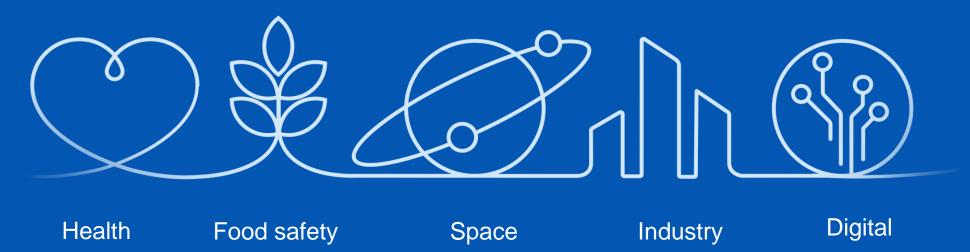
CEF Digital - HaDEA



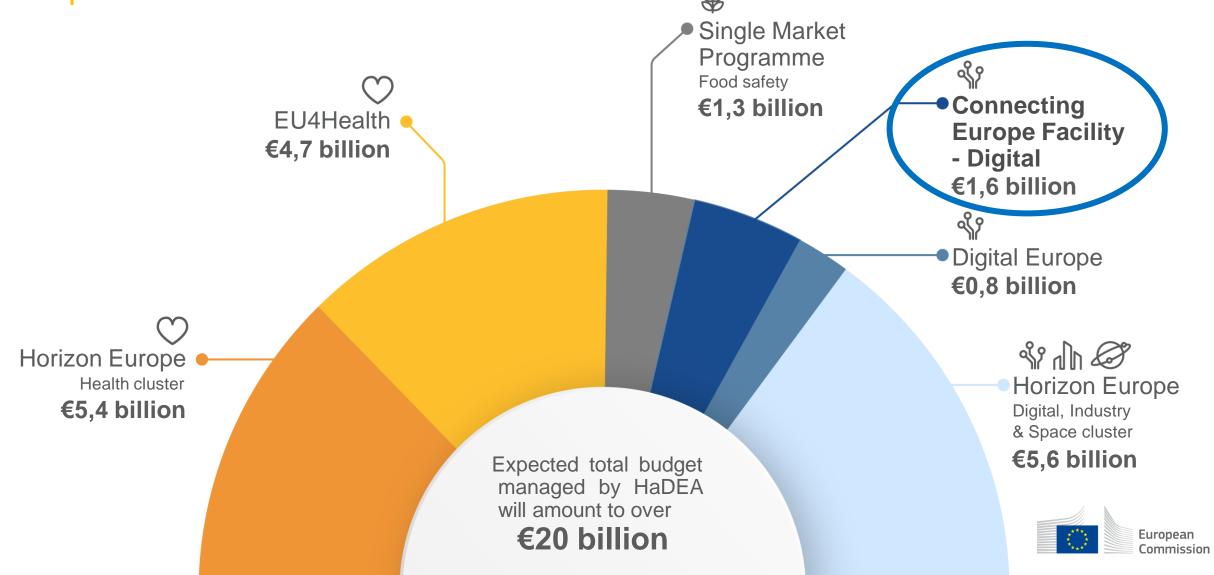
HaDEA – the European Health and Digital Executive Agency

"Boosting Europe by building, from earth to space, a healthy society, a digital economy and a competitive industry"

Programme sectors



HaDEA implements EU Programmes (2021-2027)



CEF Digital calls 2021 – state of play*

Calls	Proposals submitted	Proposals ineligible or inadmissible	Proposals above threshold (incl. reserve list)	Total budget requested for above-threshold proposals (EUR million)
5G Coverage along Transport Corridors	19	2	15	41.6
5G for Smart Communities	7	0	7	21.7
Backbone networks for pan-European cloud federation	6	2	3	10.8
Backbone connectivity for Digital Global Gateways	23	2	18	96.5
Coordination and Support Actions (CSA)	3	1	2	1.9



^{*}Final list of proposals to be funded is subject to formal selection decision of the Commission to be taken by end of this year

Overview of CEF Digital calls 2022

Calls	Topics	Budget (EUR)
5G Coverage along Transport Corridors	CEF-DIG-2022-5GCORRIDORS-WORKS CEF-DIG-2022-5GCORRIDORS-STUDIES	28.000.000
5G for Smart Communities	CEF-DIG-2022-5GSMARTCOM-WORKS	50.000.000
Backbone networks for pan-European cloud federation	CEF-DIG-2022-CLOUD-FED-STUDIES	3.000.000
Backbone connectivity for Digital Global Gateways	CEF-DIG-2022-GATEWAYS-WORKS	100.000.000
European Quantum Communication Infrastructure – The EuroQCI Initiative	CEF-DIG-2022-EUROQCI-WORKS	90.000.000
Operational Digital Platforms (ODPs)	CEF-DIG-2022-TA- PLATFORMS CEF-DIG-2022-TA- 5GINTEGRA	6.000.000



Tentative timeline

Call publication	12 October 2022
Deadline	23 February 2023 17:00 (Brussels time)
Evaluation of proposals	March - June 2023
Information to applicants and launch of Grant Agreement Preparation	July/August 2023
Grant Agreement signature	October/November 2023





Priorities of the topics



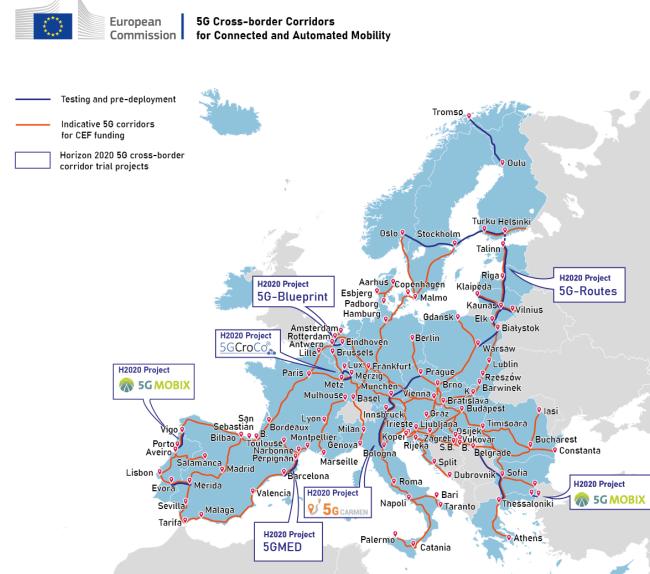


Christian MICAS
Policy Officer, Future Connectivity Systems
European Commission, DG Connect, Unit E1



5G Corridors: a driving force behind the EU Green and Digital Transition

- Multi-country project (MCP) Vision: Pan-EU 5G corridors for Connected and Automated Mobility
- Private investment with public funding of crossborder and "challenge" areas
- CEF Digital
 - Objective: 26.000km transport paths along TEN-T
 49 intra-EU borders: Investment required: ~EUR 5,4 bn
 - Planned EC funding ~€1B for 5G Corridors
 - First Call closed, implementation ongoing
 - Second Call open (Deadline 23 Feb 2023)
- Blending or coordination with RRF, InvestEU and national programmes
- Smart Networks and Services Joint Undertaking formally tasked to coordinate Strategic Deployment Agendas



CEF-DIG-2022-5GCORRIDORS (Works and Studies)

Objectives

- Complements Call 1 early-wave deployment actions for 5G systems along transport paths
 (TEN-T) for connected and automated mobility (CAM) including safety and non-safety services
 - ✓ Roads, rail, inland waterways, or multimodal
- Leverage the needed private investment in order to establish a full pan-European road and railway network of 5G corridors by the end of the CEF programme (2027)
- Results of preparatory works providing a basis for deployment plans are expected to be included in the proposal (some preparatory actions can still be included in the project)
- Insights and lessons learnt from 3 Horizon 2020 trials (Deployment Study): www.5gcroco.eu
- Inception studies with indicative budget of €1 million (EU contribution €500K), as a basis for works proposals (enabling e.g. regrouping of several corridors in the same region).

CEF-DIG-2022-5GCORRIDORS

Scope (1)

- Investment actions in challenging areas where market forces alone will not deliver quality 5G
- Focus on the indicative list of 5G corridors in Annex V of CEF Regulation, but not limited to
- Priority on cross-border sections involving two or more Member States (50% co-funding rate)
- Combined length of CEF-funded sections limited to 15% of TEN-T per Member State and per transportation mode
- Exceptions for longer sections and additional sections within national territory => proposals to demonstrate market failure under "Catalytic Effect", Section 5 of Part B
- 5G corridor deployment projects crossing the border of a third country are in scope
- Projects terminating at a port with maritime connections to other EU Member States
- Public funding not to be used to meet radio spectrum licence coverage obligations, but "beyond"

CEF-DIG-2022-5GCORRIDORS

Scope (2)

- Different categories of costs eligible for deployment works:
 - ✓ Deployment of passive network elements including civil works, e.g. ducts, dark fibre, 5G radio station, mast and pylons
 - ✓ Deployment and installation of active network elements, e.g. antennae, storage and computing capabilities such as network controllers, routers, switch, exchanges, edge MEC/node etc.
 - ✓ Deployment and installation of specific track side devices (e.g. road, rail) such as sensors, cameras etc. for traffic monitoring purposes, including connected road-side units
 - ✓ Preparatory works, including network planning



CEF-DIG-2022-5GCORRIDORS

Synergies

- Sharing infrastructure (passive/active) between safety and non-safety related services
- Sharing network infrastructure between FRMCS and Gigabit Train:
 - Passive: e.g. backhauling, mast, pylons, co-location
 - Active: network slicing
- Sharing infrastructure between roads and rail where possible
- Deployment of 5G nodes and integration with European Federation of Cloud infrastructure
- Synergies with CEF Transport (optional)
- Complementarity with national deployment projects, e.g. RRF, ESIF, Invest EU
- Cooperation with 5G SDA process (SNS JU): deployment scenarios and cooperation models
- Inception Studies may cover multiple corridors based on either location or transport mode



CEF-DIG-2022-5GCORRIDORS

Impact

- Move forward and accelerate large-scale deployment of 5G corridors to support the adoption of CAM, such as
 - ✓ Driving with higher levels of automation
 - ✓ Digitalisation of rail operations as well as other relevant modes of transport.
- Support the deployment of Future Rail Mobile Communication System (FRMCS) and trackside and associated on-board equipment related to critical automatic train control systems and applications (ETCS and/or ATO)
- Strengthen the social, economic, and territorial cohesion in the EU by addressing deployment gaps and removing capacity bottlenecks and technical barriers
- Specific measures addressing green policy objectives, in particular in terms of reducing the carbon footprint are encouraged!

CEF-DIG-2022-5GCORRIDORS

Requirements (1)

- Uninterrupted coverage meeting service requirements for safety (CAM, ITS, FRMCS) and nonsafety multi-service/multi-application 5G services with business continuity at the border
- Radio infrastructure to make use of 5G pioneer bands, and if appropriate, FMRCS and ITS bands
- Short range C-ITS (e.g. LTE-V2X and ITS-G5) in scope as complementary option (Compatibility/complementarity, interference considerations), no overbuild
- Clear indication of the 5G corridor and of funded sections (location, length)
- Infrastructure sharing, open access and/or access for CAM service providers
- Access to transport paths and, if appropriate, to radio spectrum
- Long-term development and service provision beyond the CEF project



CEF-DIG-2022-5GCORRIDORS

Requirements (2)

- Cooperation with the CSA "5G Strategic Deployment Agenda"
- Consortium composition:
 - ✓ at least 2 different undertakings and/or public bodies from 2 different Member States
 - ✓ exception for cross-border projects with a third country or projects terminating in a port with maritime connection to other Member States: a minimum of 2 applicants from the same Member State
- Support/endorsement by Member States
- Security declarations by participating entities are required for works.
- Security guarantees approved by the Member States are required for works and studies.



Coordination and Support Action: integration of 5G corridors and 5G communities with edge computing and federated cloud facilities

CEF-DIG-2022-TA

CEF-DIG-2022-TA-5GINTEGRA

Objectives/Impact

- Accelerate the development of edge computing solutions as part of 5G corridors and 5G local communities and to ensure an integrated approach across programmes
- Interconnection of newly deployed 5G corridor sections and 5G infrastructure for local communities with edge computing facilities and federated cloud infrastructures
- Accompany CEF-funded 5G deployment projects during their edge node deployment and service platform integration phase in order to adopt the common concepts developed

Activities

- Concept development, proof of concept
- Outreach, engagement and advisory services for 5G Corridor and Community projects to integrate the developed solutions

Main changes, budget and funding rates

1. CEF-DIG-2022-5GCORRIDORS-Works

- Eligibility of 5G corridor deployment projects crossing the border of a third country
- Eligibility of projects terminating at a port with maritime connections to other EU Member States
- For these projects consortium composition of at least 2 applicants from the same Member State

2. CEF-DIG-2022-5GCORRIDORS-Studies

Maximum grant amount per project: EUR 300k to 1.000k

3. CEF-DIG-2022-TA-5GINTEGRA

Security guarantees removed from admissibility and eligibility requirements

Budget and maximum co-funding rates:

Works: €25M, 30% Studies: €3M, 50%

CSA: €2M, 100%



Strong Cross-border Dimension: 50%

Outermost Regions: 70%





Eric GAUDILLAT
Head of Sector, 5G Connectivity
European Commission, DG CONNECT, Unit B5



CEF-DIG-2022-5GSMARTCOM

Funding

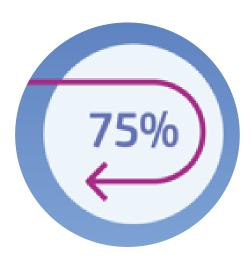
- Call 2: 50 million euros –
 open until 23 Feb 2023 12:00
- deployment and take up of 5G systems that enable innovative use-cases for services of general interest or public authorities
- Where relevant, integration with edge cloud computing

Raising Awareness

- benefits of 5G in populated areas
 & the importance of reaching 5G targets
- FYI: A dedicated Coordination & Support platform will also be launched to gather best practices & disseminate results – (the call for tender is now closed)
- See also the call: CSA for edge cloud integration



CEF-DIG-2022-5GSMARTCOM



 Reimbursing up to 75% of the infrastructure costs



Facilitating an online community for stakeholders (Futurium)





 "partner search" function of the submission portal



CEF-DIG-2022-5GSMARTCOM







At least:

The owners of the funded 5G infrastructure:

the company that will operate the network infrastructure (possibly a private network and with unlicensed 5G spectrum)

The providers of the use cases:

public authorities or providers of services of general interest (during the lifetime of the project)



CEF-DIG-2022-5GSMARTCOM

Eligible costs

- √ 5G passive & active infrastructure, including
 5G connectivity software & services and
 connectivity hardware/software for objects
- ✓ Performance of 5G indispensable for these use cases and not already available/planned
- ✓ Fibre backhaul, yet *not* the major focus (< about 10%)
- Individual applications, internet software services



Security Requirements

Applicants should fill in self-declarations, including guarantees approved by the Member State in which they are established, on the basis of national law (See call text)



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Backbone connectivity for Digital Global Gateways

Georgios TSELENTIS
Policy Officer, Investment in High-Capacity Networks
European Commission, DG CONNECT, Unit B5



CEF-DIG-2022-GATEWAYS-WORKS

Objective

Support the deployment of strategic networks as part of the Digital Global Gateway Strategy of the EU by addressing connectivity needs, such as:

- (1) Connecting **territories** of the EU including its **Outermost Regions**.
- (2) Supporting the specific connectivity needs of the Member States, which are **islands** themselves, or have islands as part of their territory.
- (3) Intermeshing backbones to interconnect major connectivity points in the EU.
- (4) Addressing the specific needs of Overseas Countries and Territories in the EU.
- (5) Ensuring **international connectivity** to EU partners worldwide as a basis for European strategic autonomy.
- (6) Promoting **synergy** projects addressing other objectives of CEF Digital, including sector specific considerations encompassing the connectivity of large-scale digital capacities such as HPC or cloud.



CEF-DIG-2022-GATEWAYS-WORKS

Scope

Support the deployment of backbone connectivity for routes **within** Member States, **between** Member States, and between the EU **and third countries**, including to remote territories where :

- (1) there is a lack of **redundancy**, or
- (2) existing infrastructure cannot satisfy **demand**, or
- (3) the users in the territories suffer from suboptimal **services** and **prices**.

Security requirements

- Exclusion of non-EU controlled entities (art. 11.4 CEF regulation).
- Exception for infrastructure connecting EU
 with third countries: legal entities in that third
 country where their participation is indispensable
 for the achievement of the objectives can
 participate subject to security guarantees
 approved by the third country.
- Security declaration that no security
 sensitive equipment or services
 procured from third country suppliers.



CEF-DIG-2022-GATEWAYS-WORKS

Technology neutral call

Digital Global Gateways can be provided with the technology best suited including e.g.:

- Submarine Cable Systems,
- Satellite Infrastructure,
- Connectivity to internet exchange points, and
- Inter-Connection of Backbones
 with networks within the supported territories

What will be co-financed

- For works: total project costs required to construct and deliver the described infrastructure for the foreseen lifetime, from end to end, including cable landing station and their connectivity. Operating costs, and costs for the land ownership excluded.
- For **studies** (<u>only as part of a works proposal</u>): all preparatory work required to design, deploy and deliver a backbone network, e.g. marine ground surveys for submarine cables, the application for required permits, technological solutions, including any step prior to signing a contract with a supplier, etc.



CEF-DIG-2022-GATEWAYS-WORKS

Important changes for call 2022:

- Call 2: only works proposals. Studies only as part of works proposal.
- Maximum co-financing rates:

Works: 30%	Studies part in the works: 50%
Strong Cross-border Dimension: 50%	
In Outermost Regions: 70%	

- Studies within a works proposal may also be financed up to 50%!
- Smart Cables (in scope)
 Overall budget 100 M€ (up from 40 M€ in Call 1)

Indicative grant size: up to 30 M€







Quantum Communication Infrastructure

Aymard DE TOUZALIN

Deputy Head of Unit, Emerging & Disruptive Technologies European Commission, DG CONNECT, Unit C4



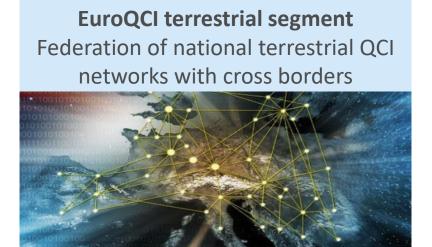
CEF-DIG-2022-EUROQCI

Objectives

- An integrated satellite and terrestrial system spanning the whole EU for ultra-secure exchange of cryptographic keys (Quantum Key Distribution)
- Quantum communication infrastructure (QCI) is part of the European Cybersecurity Strategy and is to be integrated in the new Secure Space Connectivity initiative











27

Quantum Communication Infrastructure

24

EuroQCI terrestrial segment

2020

Design & architecture

Studies:

Preparatory and first deployment phase

23

Establishing first national networks to experiment with QKD technology

Operational deployment phase

25

Operational deployment, testing, validation and operationalisation

26

Key activities supported with EC funding from DIGITAL Europe and CEF in 2021-22

- Maturing EU quantum communication technologies (DIGITAL QCI topic 1)
- Building the national QCI networks (DIGITAL QCI topic 2)
- Coordination of national activities (DIGITAL QCI topic 3)
- Cross-border links between national networks (CEF)
- Optical ground stations (CEF)
- Link with Security Operation Centers -SOCs- (CEF)
- Deployment of a European certification infrastructure (DIGITAL QCI topic 4)



EuroQCI space segment



- Eagle 1 under development, led by ESA
- Funded by Horizon Europe / ESA / Industry
- Operations:
 - QKD proof of concept & testing interfaces with OGS

1st Generation - deployment of LEO satellites with EU technology

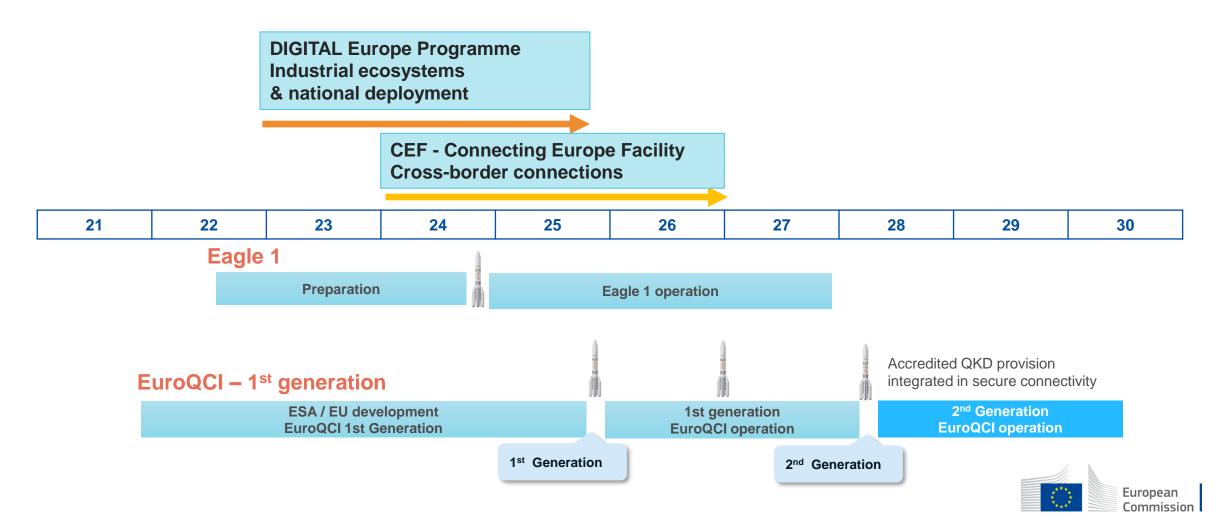
- First prototype satellite funded and led by ESA
- Next satellites funded by EU
- Possibly additional satellites by Member States
- Operations:
 - Exchange quantum keys between different sites on EU territory
 - First validation of end to end system: interconnected LEO satellites + ground stations + terrestrial systems
 - Initial coverage of user and security requirements Incremental approach

2nd Generation - deployment of a fully operational system integrated with Secure Connectivity

Full coverage of user and security requirements



EuroQCI space segment

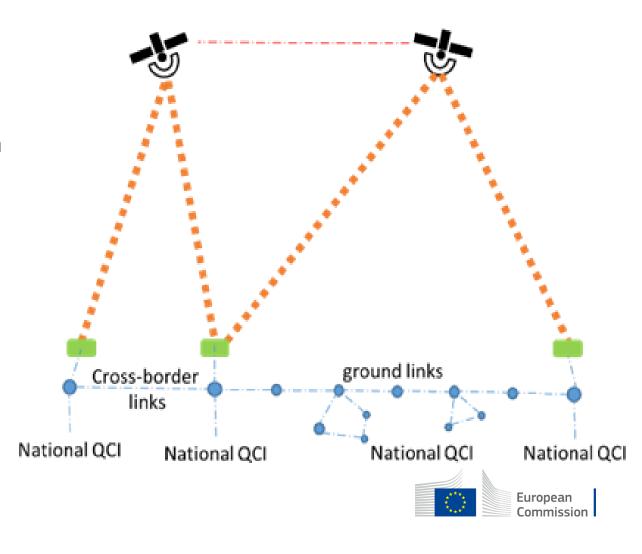


CEF-DIG-2022-EUROQCI

Scope

- deployment of the first cross-border
 quantum terrestrial backbone networks for
 interconnecting neighbouring national quantum
 communication infrastructures across borders,
 including if necessary through the deployment
 of "trusted nodes"
- interconnection with the EuroQCI's space segment, via optical ground stations
- fibre links between the EuroQCI and a pan-European network of Security Operation Centres (SOCs)

This includes the actions needed to manage encryption keys efficiently and securely in an end-to-end manner and ensure their transmission to recipients.



CEF-DIG-2022-EUROQCI

Security requirements

- Strict exclusion of non-EU controlled entities, under Article 11.4 of the CEF Regulation 2021/1153.
 - Participants to submit an ownership control questionnaire
- Security compliance (e.g. indicate that no security-sensitive equipment or services deployed or used will be procured from third country suppliers).
 - Proposals must include security declarations
- Project must be able to receive and create European Union Classified Information at the level of RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED or the equivalent at national level.
 - Please note that the grant agreement cannot be signed until at least one of the beneficiaries in a consortium has facility security clearing.
- The Commission intends to provide to the funded projects by mid-2024 at the latest the security baseline of EuroQCI (classified at level RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED).
 - Proposals to provide information on how they will fulfil the requirements for accreditation by the responsible National Security Authority



CEF-DIG-2022-EUROQCI

Expected Impact

- Enable reliable and resilient transmission of sensitive communications and data between public authorities, research entities and critical public infrastructures in Member States, including outermost regions and OCTs.
- Boost Europe's capabilities in developing quantum-secure optical telecommunication networks and their capacity to secure its critical public infrastructures, especially those that cross national borders and serve more than one Member State.
- Promote quantum-based secure networks and the emergence of a new ecosystem that would enable
 a large market uptake. This will ultimately support the growth of a pan-European quantum industry
 that will develop new, innovative systems and technologies critical for the EU's strategic autonomy
 and digital sovereignty.



CEF-DIG-2022-EUROQCI

Maximum Co-Funding Rates:

Works: 30%	Studies (as part of a Works proposal): 50%
Strong Cross-border Dimension: 50%	
Outermost Regions: 70%	

- Budget: EUR 90 million
- Project budget (max. grant amount): up to EUR 5 million grant per project
- Project duration: 36 months
- Indicative project start date: January 2024
- Co-funding:
 - Possible co-funding from the Recover and Resilience Facility (RRF)
 - if strong cross-border dimension including the space segment: maximum 50%





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Backbone Networks for pan-European Cloud Federation

Luis C. BUSQUETS PÉREZ Programme Officer, Cloud and Software European Commission, DG CONNECT, Unit E2



Backbone networks for pan-European cloud federation

CEF-DIG-2022-CLOUD

CEF-DIG-2022-CLOUD-FED-STUDIES

Objectives

- Enhance the availability and access to trustworthy cloud offerings throughout the EU
- Studies exploring interconnection needs and future deployment of Gigabit links between cloud infrastructures
- Identification of shortages for digital independence with current state of the art of technology

Background

- Enable the free flow of data across the EU
- Technological shift
- The market for cloud services and infrastructure is highly concentrated
- Especially problematic for public administrations and SGIs¹ and SGEIs².
- Opportunity for public administrations to rely on cloud infrastructures of another Member State, in a highly secured manner.



¹ Services of General Interest

² Services of General Economic Interest

Backbone networks for pan-European cloud federation

CEF-DIG-2022-CLOUD

CEF-DIG-2022-CLOUD-FED-STUDIES

Scope

- Investment needs of developing and deploying cross-border and national infrastructures for cloud interconnection
- Economic sovereignty of deployments
- Technological needs and carbon footprints
- Cybersecurity risks
- Preparatory work for deployment of backbone networks for cloud federations

Security requirements

Strict exclusion of non-EU controlled entities, under Article 11.4 of the CEF Regulation 2021/1153





Backbone networks for pan-European cloud federation

CEF-DIG-2022-CLOUD

CEF-DIG-2022-CLOUD-FED-STUDIES

Impact

- Investment Roadmaps
- Technological Roadmaps
- Take a cloud-first approach, responding to new data processing needs
- Reduce carbon footprints of data centres for public administration
- Improve resilience and reduce cybersecurity risks

Maximum Co-Funding Rate:

3 vertical sectors with strong connectivity needs

& 1 horizontal enabler

Health Data Space

Primary & Secondary data use cases

Energy Data Space

Secure and strong infrastructure for energy management applications



Digital ID & Wallets

European Digital Identity framework and future EUDI Wallet applications

Mobility Data Space

Emerging mobility data applications (traffic planning, predictive maintenance of infrastructure...)





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Preparation of works for Operational Digital Platforms (ODPs)

Svetoslav MIHAYLOV Policy Officer, Internet of Things European Commission, DG CONNECT, Unit E4



Preparation of works for Operational Digital Platforms

CEF-DIG-2022-TA CEF-DIG-2022-TA-PLATFORMS

Objectives/Expected outcomes

- Help alleviate the unprecedent energy crisis
- Support the EU environmental, energy and digitalization targets, by providing technologies and connectivity to enable a cyber-secure Internet of Energy and an optimised transport system along the major European paths.
- "Retro-fitting" the existing energy and/or transport infrastructures with the required cross-border digital infrastructure.
- Build on and integrate with existing and emerging European data, cloud and edge computing
 continuum and connectivity infrastructures, in particular those supported in other parts of CEF Digital,
 the Digital Europe Programme, and Horizon Europe.
- Comply with the requirements of the common European data spaces for energy/mobility and be a real-life instantiation of these data spaces
- Two-phase approach: a Coordination and Support Action (CSA) in current call and deployment works
 project(s) (in CEF Digital work programme 2024-27)





Preparation of works for Operational Digital Platforms

CEF-DIG-2022-TA

CEF-DIG-2022-TA-PLATFORMS

Scope/Activities

- Prepare the future works project(s) by identifying the most appropriate cases and delivering the building blocks (such as governance, detailed design, etc.) needed for immediate deployment within the works project(s).
- Four stages to be implemented in approximately 27 months' period as follows:
 - 1. Exploratory study to prepare the baseline and identify and shortlist lead use cases;
 - 2. **Feasibility study** for six shortlisted cases;
 - 3. **Detailed preparations** for three shortlisted cases;
 - 4. Assistance to projects coming from the first call for works.

Consortium should be well balanced across the relevant stakeholder groups and covering at least two of the three CEF sectors i.e. digital, transport and energy

Indicative **budget**: **EUR 4 Million**







Questions & Answers



Break Back at 11h45

Please fill in the short feedback survey on the streaming page!



Agenda

- Welcome
- Priorities of the Call (topics)
- Q&A

Break

- Evaluation process and Award Criteria
- Preparing a successful proposal
- The application process in eGrants
- Q&A





Evaluation Process and Award Criteria

Inmaculada AGUILERA
Call Coordinator
HaDEA.B1
Connecting Europe Facility Digital



Tentative timeline

Call publication	12 October 2022
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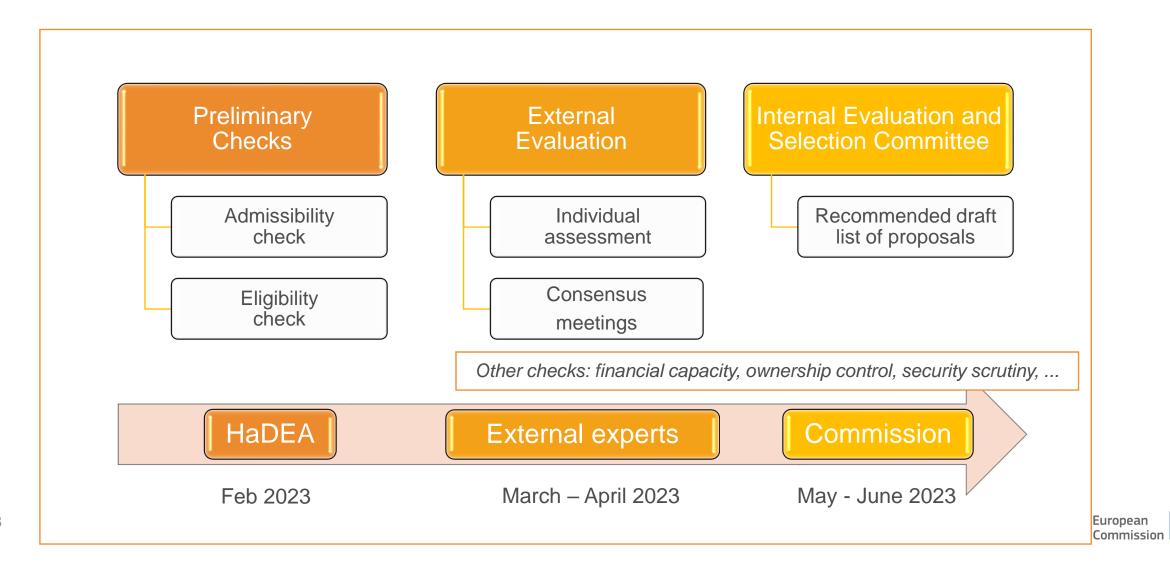




Evaluation process



Principles for the evaluation and selection process



Experts' tasks and role

Understand call text and procedure

- Read briefing material
- Follow briefings

Evaluate individually

- (minimum) 3 experts per proposal
- Draft individual assessment
- No contact between experts

Reach a consensus

- Discuss comments and scores with other experts
- Prepare a consensus report for each proposal



Final Selection Process (June - August 2023)

Preparation of Selection Decision

EC Inter-Service Consultation

Consultation of CEF Coordination Committee

Information to Applicants / Launch Grant Agreement Preparation Adoption of Commission Selection Decision





Admissibility and Eligibility



Admissibility

- Proposals must be submitted before the call deadline 23 February 2023, 17:00 CET (Brussels)
- Proposals must be submitted electronically via the <u>Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic</u> <u>Submission System</u>. Paper or e-mail submissions are NOT possible.
- Proposals must be complete, i.e. include all documents and mandatory annexes, using the templates provided in the Submission System.
- Proposals must be readable, accessible and printable.



Completeness of documents + Annexes

	For studies and CSAs	For works
Application Form Part A — Structured data introduced online in the Submission	√	√
System		
Application Form Part B — Technical description of the project (Word document to	\checkmark	✓
be filled in and uploaded as pdf)		
Part C additional project data and KPIs introduced online in the Submission System		√
Detailed budget table per WP (Excel template to be filled in and annexed)	√	✓
Timetable/Gantt chart	√	✓
Agreement by the concerned Member States (benefitting from the project)	√	√
Activity reports of last year *	√	✓
List of previous projects (key projects for the last 4 years) *	√	√
Other annexes (security requirements, self-declarations, etc.)	Check call text (section 5)	

^{*} Not needed for public bodies, Member State organisations and international organisations.



Lessons learnt from admissibility checks in 2021 calls

- Missing parts in application form Part B check pdf file before uploading!
- Part C (KPI information) incomplete
- Inconsistencies in budget between Part A (online) and detailed budget table per WP
- Missing annexes which are mandatory as per call text but the submission system "allows" submitting the proposal without them always check section 5 of call text!
- MS agreement not signed; missing agreements from other concerned MS (benefitting from the project)
- Incomplete information on security declarations and security guarantees new templates for these annexes in 2022 calls



Eligibility of the project

- The proposal is 'in scope': relates to the objectives, scope, and the types of activities that can be financed according to the call conditions.
- The proposed project activities take place in the eligible countries.



Eligibility of the participants

- Applicants (beneficiaries and affiliated entities) must:
 - be legal entities (public or private bodies)
 - be established in one of the eligible countries, i.e.:
 - EU Member States (including overseas countries and territories)
 - For some calls (e.g. 5G Corridors, Digital Global Gateways), entities from third countries can be exceptionally eligible if their participation is deemed essential for the implementation of the project.
- Other entities may participate in other consortium roles, such as affiliated entities, associated partners, subcontractors, etc.
- A minimum consortium composition is required for several topics (see section 6 of call text)
- For Digital Global Gateways, EuroQCI and Cloud: strict exclusion of entities directly or indirectly controlled by non-EU countries or non-EU countries entities



Lessons learnt from eligibility checks in 2021 calls

 Applicants do not fulfil the minimum consortium composition (if required by call conditions)

Pay attention to the type of participants in the consortium! Affiliated entities and associated partners do not count towards minimum consortium composition.

Affiliated entities: entities with a legal or capital link to a beneficiary which participate in the project with similar rights and obligations as the beneficiaries, but do not sign the grant.

Associated partners: partner organisations which participate in the project but without the right to get funding.

Proposal is 'out of scope' under the topic submitted



Financial & Operational Capacity

- Financial capacity:
 - Applicants must have stable and sufficient resources to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share. Organisations participating in several projects must have sufficient capacity to implement all these projects;
 - Financial capacity check will be carried out for all beneficiaries, except public bodies, international
 organisations or if the individual requested grant amount is ≤ EUR 60 000. The result may lead to a
 request for a financial guarantee.
- Operational capacity:
 - Assessed together with the 'Quality' award criterion, on the basis of the competence and experience
 of the applicants and their project teams;
 - Public bodies, Member State organisations and international organisations are exempted.



CEF-DIG Call 2 Security Requirements Summary

Security requirement	5G for Smart Communities	5G Coverage for Corridors	Digital Global Gateways	Cloud	CSA/TA	EuroQCI
Ownership control questionnaire			Works	Studies		Works
Security declaration	Works	Works	Works		e n t	Works
Security scrutiny					r e m	Works
Security guarantees approved by the MS	Works	Works/Studies			qui	
Security guarantees approved by the third country			Works		r e	
Application Form Part B - Digital Security section 4.3	Works	Works	Works		o Z	
Application Form Part B - Security section 7.2						Works



Award Criteria



Award criteria

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



Resolving ties

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

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



Priority and urgency of the Action

Evaluating correspondence of the proposal with the sectoral policy objectives and priorities, measuring its EU added-value and, where applicable, assessing the possible synergies with other sectors or CEF Digital topics and, where applicable, ensuring a geographical balance of the CEF digital support in the respective area

- Demonstrate how the proposed Action will contribute to sectoral policy objectives.
- Explain to what extent **EU level action** will help to reach policy objectives more effectively and faster compared to exclusively national level action.
- **Synergies** with other CEF sectors, other CEF Digital topics or other EU programmes (Resilience and Recovery Facility (RRF), Digital Europe, Horizon Europe, etc.).



Maturity

Assessing the maturity of the action in the project development:

- i) the readiness/ability of the project to start and complete by the proposed dates
- ii) the status and planning of the contracting procedures and the necessary permits
- iii) information on the availability of the financial resources needed to complement the CEF investment
- **Preparatory steps** already completed or envisaged and confirmation that the project can be carried out without delay
- Confirmation that the proposed project is mature enough to be financed under this call
- Procurement procedures needed, contracts awarded and planned
- Financial viability and commitments, explaining efforts to secure other sources of funding
- Summary of the public consultation
- Authorisations, approvals and permits



Quality

Evaluating the soundness of the implementation plan proposed (both from the technical and financial point of view), the architecture and design approach, the organisational structures put in place (or foreseen) for the implementation, the risk analysis, the control procedures and quality management and the communication strategy. When applicable, it will also assess the information related to the operations/maintenance strategy proposed for the completed project

- Resources needed (financial and human) to implement the project, evidence that the project is correctly sized
- Organisational structure and cooperation between applicants
- Project management, quality assurance and control procedures
- Risk management methods and procedures
- Risk assessment



Impact

Assessing, when applicable, the economic, social, competition and environmental impact, including the climate impact, and other relevant externalities. This criterion may be substantiated by a Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA). It will also assess, where applicable, the safety, security, cybersecurity of electronic communication networks, interoperability and accessibility aspects of the proposal, innovation and digitalisation, as well as its cross-border dimension, and contribution to network integration and territorial accessibility, including particular for Outermost Regions and islands. Moreover, it will assess potential complementarities with other public funding programmes

- Positive externalities, namely in terms of economic, social, competition and environmental impact, including the climate impact
- Safety, security, cybersecurity of telecommunication networks
- Interoperability and accessibility aspects of the proposal
- Innovation and digitalization
- Cross-border dimension, including area of impact, Member States concerned, cooperation between Member States and promoters



Catalytic effect

Evaluating the effect of the EU financial assistance on the realisation of the project, for instance by overcoming a financial gap generated by insufficient commercial viability, high upfront costs or the lack of market finance, increasing the capacity to mobilise differentiated investments sources, improving the quality of the project or accelerating the overall investment plan

- Demonstrate why the CEF grant makes a **positive difference** to the Action in terms of accelerating its implementation
- Explain the difficulties in obtaining market finance and how the grant can help to overcome this shortage
- Will the CEF grant help to mobilise additional public and private sources of financing?
- Explain if the proposed investment is made in challenging areas where there is an indication of market failure and how this has been assessed



To note!



- Information provided under the different criteria must be coherent and consistent across the application
- The application should convincingly demonstrate the need for EU funds
- Important to check that all application form sections are complete and all required supporting documents are submitted
- Proposals are limited to maximum 120 pages (Part B). Any additional pages will be made invisible to the evaluators by the system. Supporting documents do not count towards page limit.
- All beneficiaries, affiliated entities and associated partners must be registered in the <u>Participant Register</u> before submitting the application.





Evaluation results



Results of the evaluation

- All proposals will be informed about the evaluation result (evaluation result letter).
 Successful proposals will be invited for grant preparation; the other ones may be put on a reserve list or rejected.
- Invitation to grant preparation does NOT constitute a formal commitment for funding.
 We will still need to make various legal checks before grant award: legal entity validation, financial capacity, ownership control assessment, etc.
- If you believe that the evaluation procedure was flawed, you can submit a complaint (following the deadlines and procedures set out in the evaluation result letter).



Grant preparation

- Grant preparation involves a dialogue in fine-tuning of technical and financial aspects, such as milestones, deliverables, etc., and implementation of recommendations from evaluation if applicable
- Grant Agreement provisions are defined in the Model Grant Agreement (MGA) and not-negotiable
- The Model Grant Agreement that will be used (and all other relevant templates and guidance documents) can be found on Portal Reference Documents



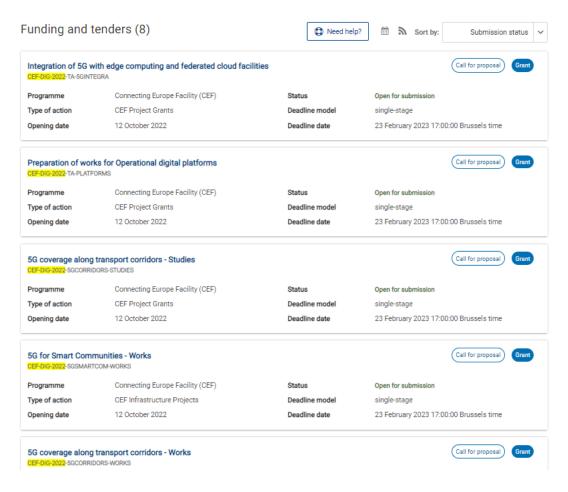


Preparing a successful proposal

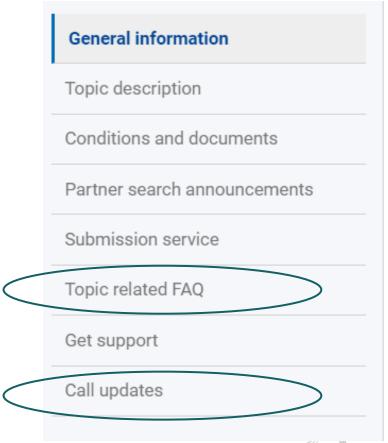
Karina MARCUS
Project Advisor
HaDEA.B1
Connecting Europe Facility Digital



Funding & Tenders portal → the submission platform



Sections in the topic page

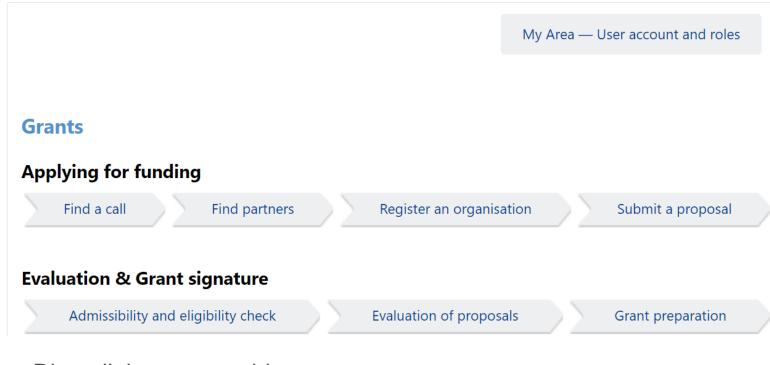






Funding & Tenders portal → the submission platform

Online Manual



Direct link to user guide
https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/funding-tenders-opportunities/display/OM/Online+Manual



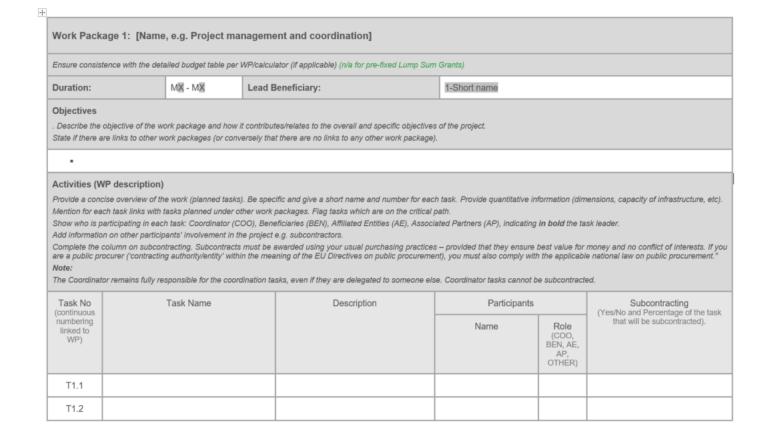
Pay attention to terminology (I)

- Project: The term 'project' used in the call text, application form and other documents is synonymous to the term 'action' used in the CEF Regulation (see definition article 2)
 - Article 2 (CEF Regulation 2021/1153): "action" means any activity which has been identified as financially and technically independent, has a set time-frame and is necessary for the implementation of a project.
- Work Package: a Work Package (WP) is a major subdivision of the project
 - Ex: Project Management, Preparation of Detailed Design and Tender Documents,
 Construction of antenna
 - WPs can run in parallel and/or be sequential



Pay attention to terminology (II)

- Task: subdivision of WPs
 - Ex: Within WP "Project
 Management": coordination
 meetings, accounting, project
 monitoring.
 Ex: Within "core" WPs:
 Detailed documentation,
 construction and acceptance
 tests of the facilities.
 - You need to estimate percentage of subcontracting for each task
 - Recommendation: do not define sub-tasks





Quality of proposal (I)

Who will read your application?

- External evaluators:
 - Their individual expertise may not cover the entire technical background of your proposed project
 - Will have several proposals to evaluate within a limited timeframe
- EC staff:
 - HaDEA: to check proposal's admissibility & eligibility
 - > DG CNECT: an internal committee will recommend a draft list of selected proposals



Quality of proposal (II)

What is the reader looking for?

- 1. Simple language
 - Avoid jargon and do not take any background knowledge for granted
- 2. Information easy to find
 - ➤ It is your responsibility to demonstrate how your proposal addresses the award criteria as indicated in the call text. The evaluation of your proposal is based on the content you provide in the application form; be as specific and clear as possible. No assumptions or requests for additional information will be made.
- 3. Mandatory annexes
- 4. Relevant maps, graphs, etc. (voluntary annexes)



Quality of proposal (III)

Project's Scope (1/2)

What

- What is the <u>Project</u> about?
 - Ex: Inception Study, preparation of permitting documents, ...
- What are the technical parameters of the project?
 - ➤ Ex: 5G coverage in km, length of submarine cable, data transfer rate between cloud nodes, ...

How

- How will the Project's objectives be reached?
 - WPs, Tasks, Milestones, Deliverables



Quality of proposal (IV)

Project's Scope (2/2)

Who

- Who will carry out the project?
 - Ex: all tasks of the project will be carried out by internal and external resources.
 - ➤ Subcontracting per WP (Procurement aspects)

Why/Results

- What are the expected results of the project?
 - Ex: use-case supporting of schools, mobility enabled on a specific corridor, final procurement documents prepared, approval of permitting documents, etc.



Procurement aspects



To keep in mind

- Compliance with EU law (sound financial management, best value for money, no conflict of interests, transparency, equal treatment etc.).
- Depending on applicant's status: to establish whether a proposed project is to be implemented in compliance with EU law on public procurement.
- During implementation:
 - Procurement is verified at payment time.
 - Non-compliance leads to rejection of costs or reduction of support.



Quality of proposal (V)

Work Packages

What

- What are the objectives of the WP?
 - ➤ Ex: commissioning of cable, preparing documentation
- Clear WP name matching its description.
 - Ex: Detailed Design and Tender Documents, Deployment of cable

Tasks, Deliverables and Milestones

- What are the **tasks** in the WP?
 - Ex: construction and acceptance tests of the facilities, supervision of the construction
- What are the deliverables?
 - Ex: application documents and the acknowledgement of receipt by the competent authority, report on the completed deployment works.
- What are the milestones?
 - Ex: Selected service provider for deployment, 60% of the deployment of the cable completed



Quality of proposal (VI)

Milestones

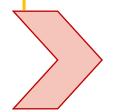


3 Rules of thumb

- 1. Each work package should have at least 2 milestones START → END.
- 2. Work packages lasting >1 year, ideally at least one milestone every 12 months.
- 3. Means of verification should be reliable and realistic.
 - Ex: Written notification of the contractor to the beneficiaries, Publication of the notice of the tender in the OJEU, Contractor's progress report approved

Milestone No.	Milestone description	Milestone Summary	Due date	Means of verification
1				

Quality of proposal (VII)



Make sure that a "common thread" runs through your proposal combining objectives, WPs, resources and planning in a way that is coherent with achieving the stipulated deliverables

- Information in one part of the application matches the information in another.
 - Ex: supporting documents do not contradict the information in application form part B.
- Information is presented in a logical way.
 - ➤ Ex: administrative procedures are presented in chronological order in the WP table; basic study finalised before design study starts.
- Gantt chart is consistent with the WP dates, milestones etc.



Applicant's checklist (I)





- **Scope**: Does your proposal fit in the scope of the Work Programme and the call for proposals for which you are applying?
- Proof-read your proposal
 - Do one last check to ensure that your proposal is clear and easy to follow and explain issues, including local context, that may be evident to you
 - External evaluators can only assess your proposal based on provided information no assumptions will be made
 - Make sure that your proposal demonstrates the added value of CEF Digital funding



 Make sure that you use the application forms and templates provided on the Submission System – the use of those forms is compulsory



Applicant's checklist (II)



Did you...

- ...encode all sections of application form part A directly in the F&T platform?
- > ...read through, complete, and upload application form part B?
- ...complete part C directly in the F&T platform (for works proposals)?
- ...attach all mandatory annexes:

see section 5. Admissibility and documents of the relevant call text



Applicant's checklist (III)



Did you...

- Contact external stakeholders (administrations, MS), as early as possible in order to get support letters, security guarantees approvals, in time
 - Check the National Contact Points (europa.eu)



- Deadline by 23 February 2023 at 17:00 (Brussels time)
 - Complete your application sufficiently in advance to avoid any last-minute technical problems. Don't leave submission to the last day!





Budget



Budget requirements for proposals

Detailed budget breakdown per cost category

II. Detailed budget table per work package

NOTE: I and II are mandatory to be encoded/submitted with each proposal



Budget requirements for proposals

I) Detailed budget breakdown per cost category - 1

- Structured financial information encoded directly via the Funding & Tenders portal
- Based on five cost categories: A. personnel, B. subcontracting, C. purchase,
 D. other cost categories and E. indirect costs
- To be encoded per participant



IMPORTANT

'financial support to third parties' and 'land purchases' are ineligible costs under CEF Digital – these columns should be left empty.

Indirect costs are not applicable under CEF Digital call (flat rate of 0%)

Costs of applications preparation are not eligible

Operational costs necessary for running the day-to-day operations. are not eligible



Budget requirements for proposals

I) Detailed budget breakdown per cost category - 2

- In principle one funding rate per proposal, which could be increased ("top-up") under certain conditions (see the specific call funding conditions).
- One exception for different funding rates in one proposal, if applicable: 'D.4 works in outermost regions', and "D.2 studies" (in a works proposal), with a respective fixed funding rate.
- One possibility to extend the base of eligible costs: category 'D.3 Synergetic elements' in works proposals. It does not imply a funding rate different to the entire proposal.



Budget requirements for proposals

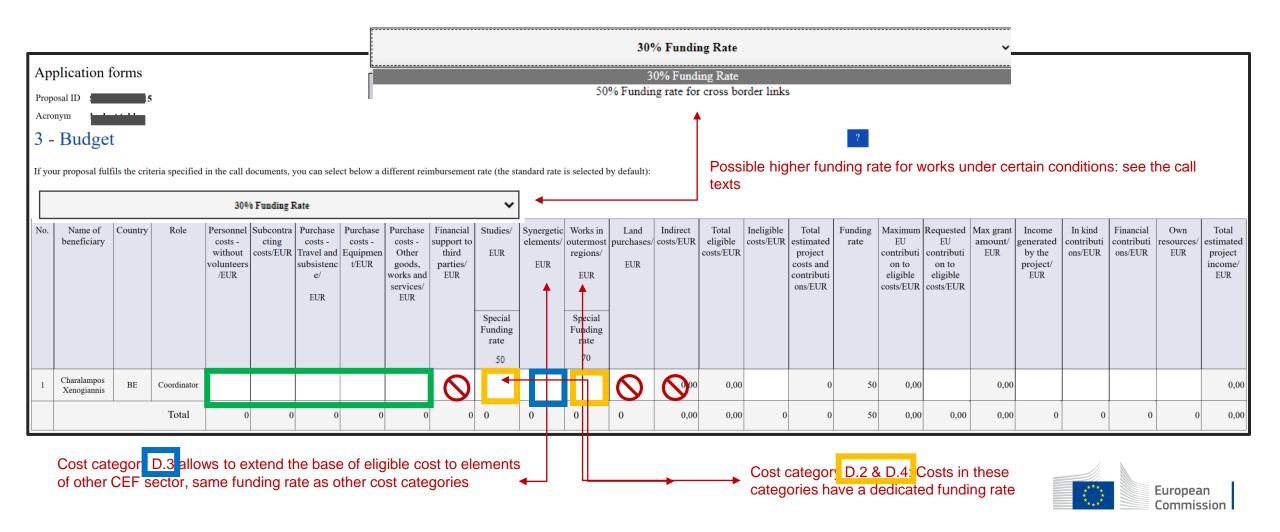
I) Detailed budget breakdown cost category - 3

- A. Personnel cost
- B. Subcontracting costs: contracts for goods, works or services that are part of the action tasks
- C. Purchase costs: contracts for goods, works or services needed to carry out the action (e.g., equipment, consumables and supplies) but which are not part of the action tasks

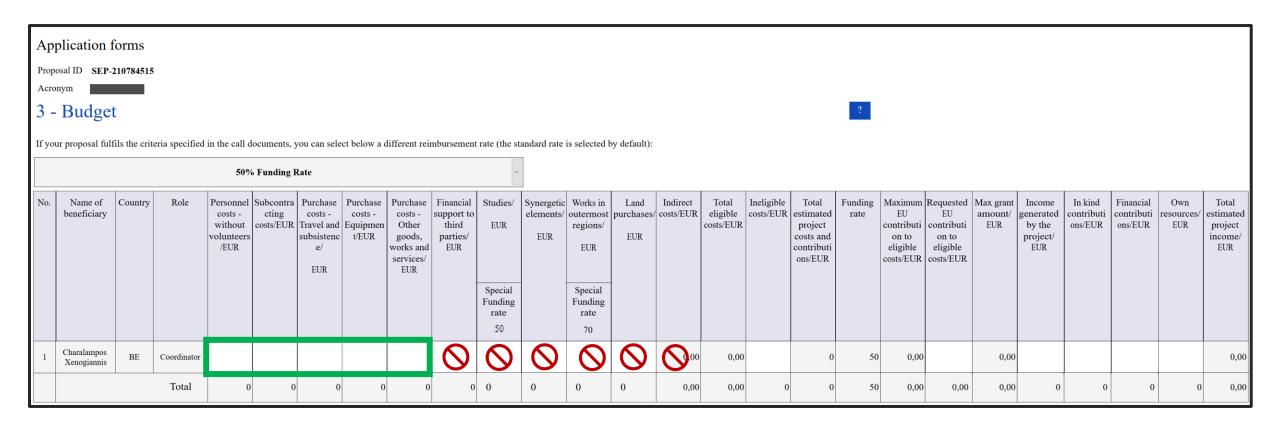
REMINDER: procurement rules and principles to be respected



Example 1: Budget for Works applications e.g. Digital Global Gateways



Example 2: Budget for studies proposal in a study topic e.g. Cloud





Budget requirements for proposals

II) Detailed budget table per work package

- Encoded in an Excel file available for <u>download</u> and to be uploaded after completion (unstructured financial information)
- Based on costs per work package
- To be encoded as costs per work package, per applicant (several applicants per work package are possible) and per reporting period
- Calculates the totals per work package and per applicant for each reporting period



Budget requirements for proposals (Excel file)

START (BUDGET FORECAST PER WP)

PROJECT DATA

Project number:
Project acronym:

Work package name

WP name 1 0%
WP name 2 0%
WP name 3 0%
WP name 4 0%

Participant name
Participant name1
Participant name2

DETAILED BUDGET TABLE PER WP PROJECT DATA Project number: 0 Project acronym: **BUDGET BREAKDOWN PER WORK PACKAGE AND PARTICIPANT Funding rate** Reporting Reporting Reporting Reporting Reporting Total EU Work Package **Participant** (for work period 1 period 2 period 3 period 4 period 5 costs contribution package) WP name 1 Participant name1 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0% 0.00 WP name 1 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0% Participant name2 0.00 0.00 0% WP name 2 Participant name1 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0% WP name 3 Participant name1 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 WP name 4 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0% Participant name1 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 Total 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00





Budget requirements for proposals

Consequences for budget planning and structure

- Total costs must match between the tables per cost category (structured) and per work package (unstructured financial information)
- In case of divergences the information in the budget per cost category in the structured data will prevail
- Plan and prepare your accounting and reporting: any cost foreseen to be claimed for reimbursement in the future must be clearly attributable under both approaches (cost categories and work packages)



Contact us

Questions on the CEF-Digital calls should be sent to HADEA-CEF-DIGITAL-CALLS@ec.europa.eu

For IT/technical issues on the Portal Submission System, questions should be sent to <u>IT Helpdesk</u>

Take some time to fill in the short feedback survey in the streaming page!





The application process in eGrants

Inmaculada AGUILERA
Call Coordinator
HaDEA.B1
Connecting Europe Facility Digital





Questions & Answers



CEF Digital Information Day Thank you!

Take some time to fill in the short feedback survey in the streaming page!



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