



## **Guidelines for applicants**

# **LIFE 2020 Call for Proposals from NGOs on the European Green Deal (NGO4GD)**

### **Environment and Climate Action sub-programmes**

The current guidelines apply to the preparation of proposals to be submitted to the Contracting Authority for Preparatory Action Projects as defined in article 2 (paragraph g) of the LIFE Regulation. They aim to help the applicant prepare and submit a project proposal.

The Technical and Financial Application Forms are contained in separate files in Word and Excel format, respectively.

Action Grants financed in the context of this call for proposals will use simplified costs option in the form of lump sums. Personnel costs included in the lump sums will be based on unit costs contributions.

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# Part 1: General Information

## I. INTRODUCTION

### I.1. WHAT IS LIFE?

**LIFE** is the European Programme for the Environment and Climate Action, for the period from 1 January 2014 until 31 December 2020. The legal basis for LIFE is Regulation (EU) No 1293/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013<sup>1</sup> (hereinafter referred to as "the LIFE Regulation").

The LIFE Programme is structured in two sub-programmes: the sub-programme for environment and the sub-programme for climate action.

The **sub-programme for environment** covers three priority areas:

***LIFE Environment and Resource Efficiency***

***LIFE Nature and Biodiversity***

***LIFE Environmental Governance and Information***

The thematic priorities for each priority area are further described in Annex III to the LIFE Regulation.

The **sub-programme for climate action** covers three priority areas:

***LIFE Climate Change Mitigation***

***LIFE Climate Change Adaptation***

***LIFE Climate Governance and Information***

The overall financial envelope for the implementation of the LIFE Programme is EUR 3.457 Billion, 75% of which is allocated to the sub-programme for environment (EUR 2,592,491,250) and 25% of which is allocated to the sub-programme for climate action (EUR 864,163,750).

According to Article 17(4) of the LIFE Regulation, at least 81% of the total budget shall be allocated to projects supported by way of action grants or, where appropriate, financial instruments. The second LIFE Multiannual Work Programme (MAWP) covering the period 2018-2020 foresees a budget of EUR 1 243,81 million for the sub-programme for environment and EUR 413,25 million for the sub-programme for climate action<sup>2</sup>.

### I.2. WHAT IS THE SCOPE OF THE LIFE 2020 CALL FOR PROPOSALS FROM NGOS ON THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL?

According to Article 2(g) of the LIFE Regulation, preparatory projects are conceived "to support specific needs for the development and implementation of Union environmental

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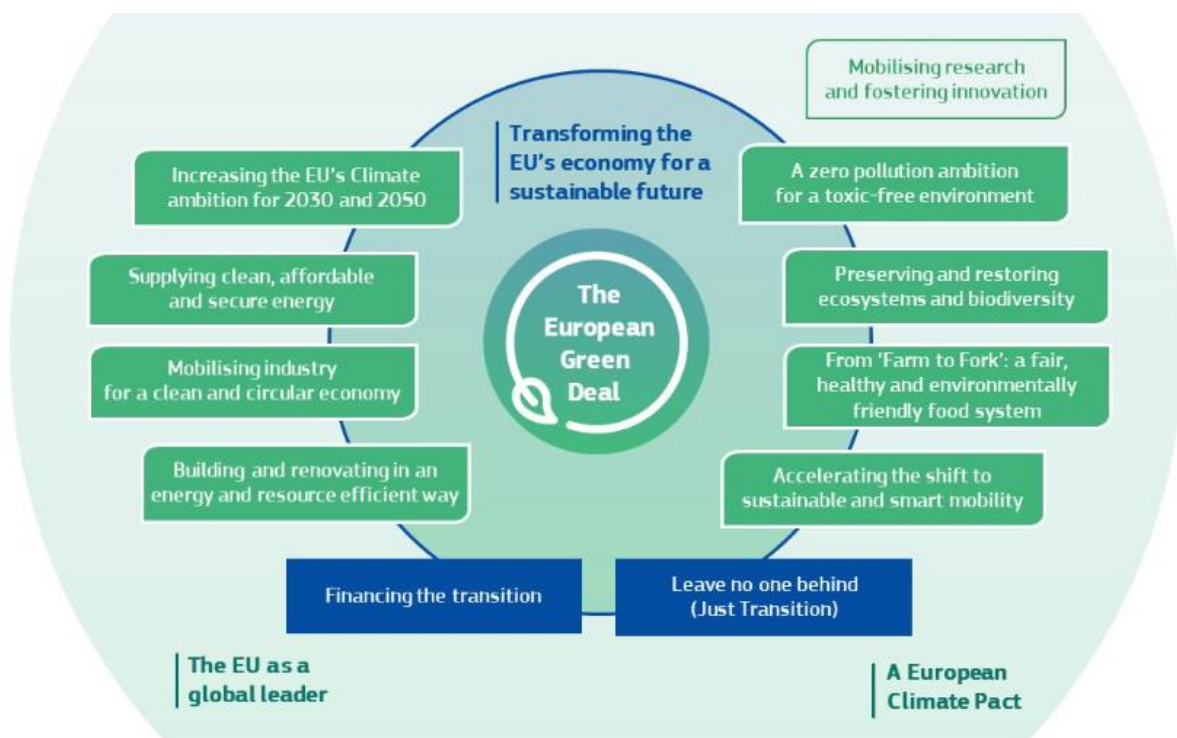
<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EU) No 1293/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013, published in the Official Journal L 347/185 of 20 December 2013  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:0185:0208:EN:PDF>

<sup>2</sup> Contracting Authority Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/210 of 12 February 2018 on the adoption of the LIFE multiannual work programme for 2018-2020  
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018D0210&from=EN>

or climate policy and legislation”. The Commission makes an inventory of specific needs to be addressed during the following years and identifies among them the needs that could be addressed by preparatory projects. Member States receive a draft list and are asked to comment. Based on these comments, a final list of preparatory projects is established and calls for proposals are launched.

The [European Green Deal](#) is the European Commission's blueprint and roadmap to make Europe the first climate neutral continent by 2050, with a sustainable economy that leaves no one behind. Amid the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic, civil society as a whole and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in particular are suffering a blow to their capacity to take actions and to contribute to the profound transformations needed to achieve a successful and just transition towards a sustainable future. The situation is likely to worsen before it gets better, and the risk of a substantial reduction of their activities is very much present.

The LIFE 2020 Call for Proposals from NGOs on the European Green Deal (**LIFE 2020 NGO4GD**) is reinforcing the capacity of NGOs acting at Member States’ level to mobilise and strengthen civil society participation and contribution to the implementation of the European Green Deal. Action grants that will be funded under this call are expected to deliver tangible results in strengthening knowledge and empowering civil society in one or several of the thematic areas reflecting the work streams of the European Green deal, namely: (1) Increasing climate ambition (2) Clean, affordable and secure energy (3) Industry for a clean and circular economy (4) Energy and resource efficient buildings (5) Sustainable and smart mobility (6) Farm to fork (7) Biodiversity and ecosystems (8) Zero-pollution, toxic-free environments (9) Sustainable finance.



Source: Communication from the Commission COM (2019) 640 final

### I.3. WHAT ARE THE FUNDING AVAILABLE AND THE COFUNDING RATES?

The total indicative EU budget available under the LIFE 2020 Call for Proposals from NGOs on the European Green Deal (**LIFE 2020 NGO4GD**) is EUR 12 million. The contracting authority reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

The **maximum co-financing rate from LIFE 2020 NGO4GD is 60% of the total eligible project costs**. The remaining 40% of the cost shall be covered fully by the own contributions of the project beneficiaries or supplemented by co-financers. In order to avoid any potential double-funding of projects using EU funds, **no other EU funds may be used to contribute to this 40%**. This means that the specific actions targeted and co-financed by LIFE funds cannot receive co-financing from any other EU fund.

## II. WHO MAY SUBMIT A PROPOSAL, WHO MAY TAKE PART IN IT AND FOR WHAT TYPE OF ACTIVITIES?

### II.1. WHO MAY SUBMIT A PROPOSAL?

A proposal must be submitted by a single non-profit making non-governmental organisation that is primarily active in the areas of environment and/or climate action and established in an EU member state. The applicant must demonstrate its legal status confirming a legal registration in the EU prior to 01 January 2018. Furthermore, depending on the size of the population of the country where it is established, the applicant must demonstrate its ability to operate at national level and/or at least at regional level. Additional eligibility criteria to be met by the applicant are detailed in section IV.

For UK applicants: Please be aware that following the entry into force of the [EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement](#)<sup>3</sup> on 1 February 2020 and in particular Articles 127(6), 137 and 138, the references to natural or legal persons residing or established in a Member State of the European Union are to be understood as including natural or legal persons residing or established in the United Kingdom.

UK legal persons are therefore eligible to participate under this call as long as they comply with the same eligibility rules than the other applicants.

For full details regarding the eligibility criteria and the compulsory administrative documents that are required with the proposal, please refer to section IV.2.

### II.2. WHO MAY TAKE PART IN A PROPOSAL?

An applicant becomes a **Beneficiary** upon signature of a grant agreement and reports directly to the Contracting Authority on the project's technical and financial progress. Only the applicant NGO, if selected, will become the single beneficiary of the grant and can claim costs. Entities affiliated<sup>4</sup> to the applicant are not eligible to receive funding under this Call for proposals.

Grants shall involve co-financing. As a result, the resources necessary to carry out the action/project shall not be provided entirely by the grant. Co-financing may be provided in the form of the beneficiary's own resources, income generated by the action or financial or in-kind contributions from third parties. One or more project **co-financers** may also be involved to cover the cost of the project. A project co-financer only contributes to the project with financial resources, has no technical responsibilities, and

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<sup>3</sup> Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community. Official Journal C 384 I/60 of 12 November 2019

<sup>4</sup> In accordance with Article 187 of the financial Regulation, entities that satisfy the eligibility criteria and that do not fall within one of the situations referred to in Articles 136(1) and 141(1) FR and that have a link with the applicant, in particular a legal or capital link, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation, will be considered as entities affiliated to the applicant.

cannot benefit from the EU financial contribution. Furthermore, it cannot act, in the context of the project, as a sub-contractor.

For specific tasks of a fixed duration, a proposal may foresee the use of **sub-contractors**. Sub-contractors provide external services to the project beneficiary who fully pay for the services provided.

For a more detailed description of the respective rules related to the beneficiary, co-financers and sub-contractors, please refer to the model grant agreement applicable to the LIFE 2020 NGO4GD published with this call.

### **II.3. WHAT KIND OF ACTIVITIES CAN BE INCLUDED?**

This call for proposals will fund activities that are typical of non-governmental organisations, whether operational or advocacy-related, and that contribute to strengthening the knowledge and empowering civil society for an inclusive implementation of the European Green Deal at national and/or sub-national level. Typically, this may include information campaigns, participation in public consultations; cooperation and coalition building with other organisations; elaboration of position papers, conferences, seminars; training activities; awareness raising and dissemination actions; actions aiming at the creation and improvement of networks, exchanges of good practices; studies, analyses, mapping activities, concrete implementation actions, volunteers mobilisation and support, etc.

### **III. WHEN, WHERE AND HOW TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL?**

The deadline for submission is: **Wednesday 31 March 2021 – 17:00 CET (Brussels)**

LIFE applicants must submit their proposals, using the forms included in this application guide and attaching all relevant documents. Submission is **electronic and by email only** to the following address:

[EASME-LIFE-2020-NGO4GD@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EASME-LIFE-2020-NGO4GD@ec.europa.eu)

**Confirmation of receipt** of the proposal will be sent by e-mail to the applicants indicating also the allocated LIFE project reference number within 5 working days of receipt.

The proposal must be submitted as **one single pdf document**, including all technical forms (i.e. A<sub>1</sub> and B forms for the proposal) and all financial forms (F forms for the proposal). Prior to submission, the proposal must be printable on a black-and-white printer, and in an A4 format. Applicants should ensure that the corresponding pdf file is of a readable quality (at a maximum resolution of 300 dpi - applicants must avoid sending files scanned at a higher resolution in order to keep file sizes manageable). Where proposal forms are signed, beneficiaries are strongly advised to check whether the signatures are still identifiable on a printout of the form.

The financial forms (F forms) of the proposal should be submitted in addition to the pdf version also in Excel format for validation purposes.

Supporting documents must be attached to the same email as the proposal in the format specified in Section IV below.

**Note that applicants should retain the original, signed Word and Excel files containing all of these forms, for possible use in preparation of the final grant agreements.**

#### IV. HOW WILL LIFE 2020 NGO4GD PROPOSALS BE SELECTED?

The Contracting Authority is responsible for the whole evaluation process. External experts may be identified to support the Contracting Authority work.

All evaluators must base their assessment of the proposals on the provisions of this application guide, using as a basis the questions established for each criterion. The principles of equal treatment, transparency, proportionality and non-discrimination between all proposals must be strictly applied throughout all phases of the evaluation process.

Evaluations and scores given to each proposal must be as objective and equitable as possible. Each decision and each score given must be clearly justified by reasoned comments.

Any information or documents not submitted by the applicant, or received after the deadline, will not be taken into account unless explicitly requested by the Contracting Authority.

All evaluation comments and the related correspondence will be made in English.

**NB: The e-mail address of the beneficiary contact person indicated in form A2 will be used to send all official correspondence from the Contracting Authority. The applicant should ensure that it is an e-mail account which is valid, active and checked (including spam folders) on a daily basis throughout the whole selection period.**

##### IV.1. OPENING PHASE

Proposals will be checked for compliance with the following criteria:

1. The proposal has reached the Contracting Authority by the deadline indicated in the call.
2. The official LIFE 2020 application forms for LIFE 2020 NGO4GD have been used for preparing and submitting the proposal.
3. The proposal has been sent to the Contracting Authority as a pdf document with the financial forms also in Excel.
4. Only one proposal per applicant is accepted. In case of multiple submissions by the same applicant, even if the proposals are different in content, only the last submitted proposal will be considered for further evaluation. All the others will be disregarded.

Non-compliance with the above requirements will result in a proposal not being further evaluated.

##### IV.2. ELIGIBILITY PHASE

Proposals that have passed the opening phase are checked for their compliance with the eligibility criteria. Proposals must be submitted by a single legal entity that fulfils the below requirements.

To be eligible, an applicant **MUST:**

1. be a non-profit making legal person;



2. be independent, in particular from government, other public authorities, and from political or commercial interests;
3. be primarily active in the areas of environment and/or climate action and have an environmental/climate objective which is aimed at:
  - a. the public good, and/or
  - b. sustainable development, and /or
  - c. the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental and/or climate policy and legislation;

In case of doubt, the Contracting Authority will refer to the statutes (or equivalent) of the NGO to determine its objective.

4. be established (legally registered) in one of the European Union Member States.
5. be established (legally registered) before 1 January 2018.
6. be operating at national level. In the case of applicants established in larger European Union Member States, this criterion can be met if the applicant operates at least at regional level<sup>5</sup>.
7. have a total revenue equal to at least € 700 000 as taken from the profit and loss account of the 2019 statements and/or an average number of permanent staff of at least 10 in 2019.
8. have recorded a negative trend in revenues for 2020 of at least 10% as compared to the average revenues of the previous two years OR a revenue loss of at least € 100 000;
9. Furthermore, to be eligible, an applicant **CANNOT BE** a recipient of a LIFE NGO Operating Grant.

#### **IV.2.1. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS REQUESTED TO ASSESS ELIGIBILITY**

In order to assess the applicants' eligibility, the following supporting documents are requested:

1. The Registration document: Register(s) of Companies, Official Gazette, etc.
2. The Statutes of the NGO (or equivalent)
3. The Annual Activity Report of the previous year
4. The audited financial statements (balance sheet and profit & loss account) for 2018, 2019 and 2020.

These documents must be annexed to the LIFE proposal as scanned pdf files, printable in A4 paper format. In case audited accounts are not required by law and/or in case the 2020 accounts are still provisional, a self-declaration certifying the validity of the accounts will be signed by a legal representative and annexed to the LIFE proposal as per the model provided.

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<sup>5</sup> Larger European Union Member States are here defined on the basis of their total population in 2019. A Member State with a total population in 2019 above 25 million will be considered as larger. This includes Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Poland and the UK.



5. The "LIFE Simplified Financial Statements", provided with the LIFE Application Package, must be completed for 2018, 2019 and 2020 and annexed as an excel file.

**In case a proposal fails to include one of the above supporting document, the Contracting Authority will send a message to the Applicant indicating which document(s) is/are missing.** The Applicant will have **5 working days** to reply and provide the missing document. In exceptional circumstances, the Contracting Authority may extend the deadline.

### IV.3. AWARD PHASE

All proposals that successfully passed the opening phase are admitted to an in-depth evaluation of their quality in the Award phase. A proposal admitted to this phase will be given scores on the basis of the following award criteria:

Award criteria	Minimum pass score*	Maximum score
AW1: Technical coherence and quality of the proposal in relation to the specific need addressed	22	45
AW2: Comprehensiveness and relevance of the approach in relation to the needs identified	15	30
AW3: Financial coherence and quality (including value for money)	12	25
Overall (pass) scores*	55	100

*(\*) A project proposal has to reach at least the minimum pass score for each award criterion and also the sum of scores for criteria for which a minimum score has been fixed has to be equivalent to 55 points or more.*

**Award Criteria 1: Technical coherence and quality.** This criterion will focus on the clarity, feasibility and sustainability of the actions proposed in the proposal and the overall organisation of the project. The pre-operational context must be thoroughly described. There should be a clear link in the proposal between the problems and threats identified, the project objectives, the proposed actions and their expected results. All actions should be properly described and quantified. The proposal must clearly describe how, where, when and by whom each action in the proposal will be undertaken. The proposal must be drafted to allow the evaluators to assess to what extent the technical means and expertise foreseen are adequate for implementing the project. The time planning must be realistic and potential difficulties must be correctly assessed in the relevant forms.

Furthermore, this criterion will also assess the proposal's potential to have a real direct/indirect impact measured against quantified indicators as well as the sustainability of the project results in the medium and long term after its implementation. Applicants have to provide a clear and credible description of the strategy and actions foreseen to ensure this.

Proposals may receive up to 45 points for this criterion. The pass score for this criterion is 22 points.

**Award Criteria 2: Comprehensiveness and relevance of the approach in relation to the needs identified.** This criterion will assess the proposal's comprehensiveness and relevance to contribute to mobilizing, strengthening and empowering civil society participation in the formulation and implementation of national and/or subnational initiatives in the thematic areas reflecting the work streams of the European Green deal. (1) Increasing climate ambition (2) Clean, affordable and secure energy (3) Industry for a clean and circular economy (4) Energy and resource efficient buildings (5) Sustainable and smart mobility (6) Farm to fork (7) Biodiversity and ecosystems (8) Zero-pollution, toxic-free environments (9) Sustainable finance. It will assess how the proposal links and contributes to their implementation, shaping and/or development, and how the work will have an impact at national and/or subnational level. There is no correlation between the number of thematic areas covered and the evaluation result. An applicant with high quality activities in a one area will get a higher score than an applicant with medium quality activities in many areas.

Proposals may receive up to 30 points for this criterion. The pass score for this criterion is 15 points.

**Award Criteria 3: Financial coherence and quality (including value for money).** The proposed budget and its consistency with the actions proposed and with the applicable rules as well as the cost-effectiveness of the proposed approach will be evaluated. Financial coherence will also be assessed. The financial contribution of the beneficiary/co-financers, the proposed budget and the proposed project expenditures must comply with the rules and principles foreseen in this LIFE guidelines for applicants, the General Conditions of the LIFE Model Grant Agreement (see link under section 3.12) and the LIFE Regulation. The budget must be transparent, coherent and cost-efficient, including for the management of the project.

Proposals may receive up to 25 points for this criterion. The pass score for this criterion is 12 points. A proposal would receive a score below the pass score if its financial part is poorly conceived and/or requires a considerable revision.

For each proposal, the above award criteria will be assessed and scored by two evaluators. On the basis of these two independent assessments a synthesis report will be prepared.

#### **IV.4. ADMISSIBILITY AND EXCLUSION PHASE**

Proposals that have passed the Award Phase are checked for compliance with the following admissibility and exclusion criteria:

##### **IV.4.1. ADMISSIBILITY**

- The scanned application forms A3 and A4 bear dated signatures with the status and full name of the signatory.

For all proposals that do not fully comply with one or more of the above situations but are otherwise complete, the Contracting Authority will send a message to the coordinating beneficiary indicating the annexes that are missing.

The applicant will have **5 working days** to reply and provide the missing/incomplete documents/forms. In exceptional circumstances, the Contracting Authority may extend the deadline of 5 working days.

**Those proposals for which all the requested missing/incomplete documents/forms have not been provided by the fixed deadline are declared inadmissible.**

#### IV.4.2. EXCLUSION

A proposal will be excluded when the declaration of compliance with the criteria set out in Article 136(1), 136(4), and 141 of the Financial regulation of the European Union<sup>6</sup> has not been provided by the applicant. **Applicants must be ready to provide evidence to substantiate the declaration within 5 working days if requested.** In exceptional circumstances, the Contracting Authority may extend the deadline of 5 working days.

#### IV.5. TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SELECTION PHASE

##### IV.5.1. TECHNICAL RELIABILITY OF THE PROJECT APPLICANT

A proposal can be rejected on the basis of this criterion if:

- there is evidence that the applicant does not have the technical competency to carry out the project,
- there is evidence that the applicant has been an unreliable manager in previous LIFE- or other European Union-financed projects and has given no proof that necessary initiatives have been taken to avoid similar problems in the future.

##### IV.5.2. FINANCIAL RELIABILITY OF THE PROJECT APPLICANT

The purpose of the financial check is to verify the compliance of LIFE proposals with the provisions of Article 198 of the EU Financial Regulation. These require that: "*The applicant must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain his or her activity throughout the period during which the grant is awarded and to participate in its funding ("financial capacity").*"

The Contracting Authority will use all the information at its disposal to assess whether the applicant fulfil the selection and the exclusion criteria. A proposal will be rejected if there is evidence that it falls into the following situation:

- if there is information available to indicate that the applicant, contrary to the declaration for exclusion, are in one of the situations referred to in art. 136(1), 136(4) and 141 of the Financial Regulation n° 2018/1046 of 18 July 2018 (JO L 193 of 30/07/2018);
- on the basis of the financial viability test, it is concluded that the applicant does not have the capacity to manage the financial amounts provided for in the proposal budget within the proposed project period;

The financial viability of the applicant and its capacity to manage large EU grants are assessed on the basis of the financial information provided with the "simplified financial statement" of the applicant.

The financial viability check will also be used to assess whether a financial guarantee would be required to cover fully or partially the EU pre-financing payment to the project.

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<sup>6</sup>Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1

In particular a financial guarantee may be requested in the following cases if none of the following 3 criteria are respected:

- a. the ratio "total grant requested divided by the number of project years" / "shareholders' equity" is lower than 1
- b. the ratio "current assets" / "current liabilities" is higher than 1
- c. the ratio "total debts" / "total assets" is lower than 0.8

Proposals may be rejected when none of the criteria are respected and the ratios diverge significantly from the thresholds indicated above.

When applicants owe to the Contracting Authority any overdue debt, this will be carefully evaluated and the Contracting Authority will take the necessary precautionary measures including, in extreme cases, refusing the financial support requested if deemed necessary.

#### **IV.6. CONCLUSION OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS**

On the basis of the synthesis reports and scores, the final decision on the scores to be awarded to each proposal will be taken during a meeting chaired by the Contracting Authority.

Any proposal receiving a final score below the pass score for any of the Award criteria or a total pass score (for criteria 1, 2 and 3) below 55 points will be declared "rejected at the Award phase".

Once the final approval of the scores to be awarded to each proposal in the Award phase has taken place, a list will be established. Besides ranking the proposals by quality (i.e. their Award score), this list will take into account the following condition:

- *geographical balance will be ensured by allocating **at least the best passing proposal** per Member State.*

To satisfy this geographical balance condition, only proposals that have passed all stages of the evaluation process will be taken into consideration. Once this condition is satisfied, further proposals are added to the list ranked by quality.

Once the entire available budget is used up, the remaining proposals are added in a reserve list accounting for an additional amount equivalent to 30% of the available budget. A list of proposals for a maximum of 100% of the budget together with a reserve list (up to 30% of the budget), is in this way established. Only the projects on this list representing up to 130% of the available budget will enter the revision phase.

If necessary, a priority order for proposals which have been awarded with the same score will be established by the evaluation committee. The priority order will be established on the basis of the following principles:

- Priority will be given to applications that achieved a higher score on Award Criteria 1
- Thereafter, priority will be given to applications according to their estimated value for money.

#### **IV.7. REVISION**

The aim of the revision phase is to clarify, for selected proposals, all open questions regarding feasibility, cost-effectiveness and eligibility of individual actions, compliance with the LIFE Regulation and the General Conditions of the LIFE Model Grant Agreement. During the revision phase, the Contracting Authority may ask the applicant to provide further details about particular aspects of the proposal and/or to introduce modifications or improvements to the original proposal. The applicant may also be asked

to delete certain actions and/or to reduce the project budget, the EU financial contribution and/or the EU co-financing rate to the project.

The applicant will have 15 calendar days to reply to the questions and a further 15 calendar days to introduce the requested modifications or improvements to its proposal. In exceptional circumstances, the Contracting Authority may extend the deadline. The Contracting Authority will send all revision questions and instructions to the Applicant. Applicants shall not introduce any modifications to their proposal other than those requested by the Contracting Authority. It should be noted here that a revision letter sent out to an applicant with questions or requests for modifying the proposal does not entail, on behalf of the Contracting Authority, any commitment to a definitive funding of the proposal.

Furthermore, on the basis of the replies received, the Contracting Authority may still decide to reduce the project budget or even exclude a project from financing. By the end of the revision phase, all projects retained are expected to be fully coherent and transparent, and in line with all technical and financial requirements of the LIFE Regulation and the General Conditions of the LIFE Model Grant Agreement.

The applicants of the selected proposals will then be informed about the outcome of the revision phase and will be asked to provide 2 identical paper copies of the final revised proposals. At this stage, commitments from co-financers must be fully confirmed in the revised forms. Applicants shall not introduce any unilateral modifications at all to the revised proposal after the conclusion of the revision phase, otherwise the project may be excluded from the award.

#### **IV.8. AWARD DECISION**

After the formal endorsement of the Contracting Authority of the evaluation results, applicants will be officially informed by letter about the results of the evaluation of their proposals and, where appropriate, about the reasons for rejection. Any budget remaining at the conclusion of the award decision procedure will be reassigned to the budget for other type of LIFE projects.

### **V. FURTHER GENERAL GUIDANCE TO APPLICANTS**

The current chapter replies to some **frequently asked questions** on how to conceive a proposal for the LIFE 2020 NGO4GD call for proposals.

#### ***In which language may I submit the proposal?***

Applicants are encouraged to submit their proposal in English<sup>7</sup>.

#### ***Can I submit more than one proposal under the LIFE 2020 NGO4GD Call for Proposals?***

No. An organization can only submit a single proposal under this call. If the same organization submits more than one proposal, only the last proposal submitted will be considered.

#### ***Is there a national allocation under the LIFE 2020 NGO4GD Call for Proposals?***

There is no national allocation under this call. However, the list of proposals recommended for funding will be established with due consideration to the geographical

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<sup>7</sup> Proposals may also be submitted in another official EU language.

balance by ensuring that at least the best passing proposal per EU Member State is included. See Section IV for further information on the selection procedure.

***What is the optimal starting date of a LIFE 2020 NGO4GD project?***

When preparing the project's time planning, beneficiaries should be aware that the expected earliest date of the signature of the grant agreements under the LIFE 2020 NGO4GD will be in August 2021. Proposed starting date cannot be before the submission deadline. If a proposal is selected, a definitive starting date will be fixed during GA preparation in agreement with the applicant. Any costs incurred before the project's starting date will not be considered eligible and cannot be included in the project budget.

***What is the maximal duration of a LIFE 2020 NGO4GD project?***

LIFE 2020 NGO4GD projects must have a maximum foreseen project duration of 24 months. Beneficiaries should be aware that a project that has completed all of its actions prior to the expected end date can submit its final report ahead of schedule and receive its final payment before the official project end date mentioned in the grant agreement.

***Where can a LIFE 2020 NGO4GD project take place?***

LIFE 2020 NGO4GD projects must take place on the territory of an EU Member State.

***Is outsourcing of project activities possible?***

The applicant should have the technical and financial capacity and competency to carry out the proposed project activities. It is therefore expected that the share of the project budget allocated to external assistance should remain below 35%. Higher shares may be accepted if an adequate justification for this is provided in the project proposal.

In line with Article 19.3 of the LIFE Regulation, beneficiaries (public and private) are strongly advised to use "green" procurement. The European Commission has established a toolkit for this purpose. More information can be found at [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/toolkit\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/toolkit_en.htm).

***May I give financial support to third parties as part of a LIFE 2020 NGO4GD projects?***

Under specific conditions laid down in the Grant Agreement, beneficiaries may provide financial support to third parties (e.g. non-profit organisations, local authorities or citizens groups) in the implementation or development of local initiatives that will contribute to the project's objectives.

Applicants should explain clearly why they wish to provide financial support to third parties, how they will manage the process and provide a list of the different types of activities for which a third party may receive financial support. The proposal must also clearly describe the results to be obtained.

These costs are eligible only if:

- a) This type of support is foreseen in the proposal, described and justified as requested above;
- b) The criteria for allocation and financial support are transparent, non-discriminatory and clearly documented;
- c) The support is provided to legal entities and regulated by specific contracts;

d) The maximum amount allocated to any third party involved may not exceed EUR 20,000 and the total amount of such costs overall may not exceed EUR 100,000 during the lifetime of the project.

***How voluminous should a proposal for LIFE 2020 NGO4GD projects be?***

The page limitations in the Application Form must be respected. A proposal should be as concise and clear as possible. Applicants should not provide excessively detailed descriptions of project areas etc. and information provided beyond the maximum number of pages allowed will be disregarded. Brochures, CVs and similar documents should not be submitted and will always be ignored even if provided.

***Is the medium-long term sustainability of LIFE 2020 NGO4GD projects and its actions important?***

The sustainability of the project results in the medium and long term is understood as the capacity to maintain project's results and their utilization after its completion. It is obligatory that throughout the duration of a project, the beneficiaries consider how the results they are aiming for will be secured, maintained, developed and made use of after the end of the project. This requires a strategy including tasks to multiply the impacts of the projects' solutions and mobilise a wider uptake, reaching a critical mass during the project and/or in a short and medium term perspective after its end.

***Can the LIFE 2020 NGO4GD projects include research activities?***

Whereas EU funding for research activities is provided under Horizon 2020 – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014–2020)<sup>8</sup>, limited research aimed to improve and enhance the knowledge data underpinning the project may be carried out within a LIFE project. Research must be strictly and intrinsically related to the project's objectives and the applicant shall explain in detail how the proper implementation of the project relies on these research activities, showing that the existing scientific basis is insufficient, and how the additional knowledge will be used to implement the project actions. In such a case, scientific publications are considered important deliverables of the project.

However, in most cases no need for such research activities is expected in the context of LIFE 2020 NGO4GD projects.

***Can LIFE 2020 NGO4GD projects include construction of infrastructure?***

The construction of infrastructure is not eligible under this call.

***Can LIFE 2020 NGO4GD projects include Land purchase/lease of land and/or compensation payment for use rights?***

The purchase or lease of land or compensatory payments is not eligible under this call.

***Can LIFE 2020 NGO4GD projects include the use of volunteers?***

"Volunteer" means a person working on a non-compulsory basis for an organisation without payment. Volunteers will only be accepted if they comply with the following basic requirements:

- they comply with the relevant national legislation,

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<sup>8</sup> Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 laying down the rules for participation and dissemination in "Horizon 2020 - the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020)" and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1906/2006 (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 81).



- they are part of a structured approach within the project and their role is clearly explained,
- a reliable system to register the time they worked for the project will be put in place.

Applicants are invited to provide a description of the volunteer's activities and organisational set-up in their proposal. The work performed by volunteers can be considered as an eligible personnel cost and shall take the form of a **unit cost per day** (based on the country where the volunteer performs the work, see PART 2 Section III below on how to fill in the Financial Application Form as well as Form F02 of the Financial Forms). In case the volunteer does not work full days, one day is to be divided by 8 and multiplied by the number of hours worked.

The unit cost only covers the direct 'personnel costs'. Any other direct costs related to volunteers, like e.g. travel and subsistence – when specifically incurred for the LIFE project – have to be declared under the respective cost category.

The volunteer costs may be included in the basis for the calculation of the flat rate for overheads. All other costs related to volunteers that are not only nor specifically incurred for the LIFE project, are deemed to be covered by the flat rate for the overheads.

There are **two limitations** to the usage of volunteer costs:

- In accordance with Article 186 of the Financial Regulation the Union Contribution shall be limited to the estimated eligible costs other than those covering volunteers' work.
- And Article 190 of the Financial Regulation limits the value of the volunteers' work to 50% of the funding sources of the action, including in kind contribution.

The adequacy and the relevance of volunteers' work that the beneficiary intends to assign to the action will be assessed against the planned outputs when evaluating the proposals.

### ***Efforts for reducing the project's "carbon footprint"***

As the LIFE programme is the only EU programme targeting specifically the environment, nature and biodiversity and climate action, your project should have the lowest carbon footprint possible. The description of your project should include details on actions taken to reduce CO2 emissions emitted during the project's lifetime. Be as precise as possible and don't hesitate to refer to green procurement practices, labels of eco-products bought, reduced transport, etc.

## **VI. GUIDANCE ON LUMP SUMS & UNIT COSTS FOR PERSONNEL**

### ***What is lump sum funding and why is it used for this call for proposals?***

A lump sum funding is a grant based on a pre-fixed lump sum amount and not on the reimbursement of actual costs. The lump sum must be an approximation of the beneficiaries' underlining actual costs. In projects using lump sums, payments are dependent on performance. Lump sum funding is one of the simplification measures implemented by the European Commission to reduce the administrative burden in EU-funded programmes. It removes the obligation to report costs and to collect and manage related justifying documents, thus lifting a major part of the administrative burden on beneficiaries and shifting the focus from financial management and checking costs to delivering of results and impact.

### ***How are the lump sums determined?***

The overall lump sum contribution applicants apply for cannot exceed 300.000 EUR nor can it be more than 60% of total estimated eligible costs.

The overall lump sum contribution applied for should be broken-down by work package: applicants should indicate the lump sum applied for under each work package.

In their application form, applicants are required to describe in detail the activities and related expected results for each work package. They should also provide, per work package, the total estimated eligible costs per cost categories. Estimated personnel costs should be calculated on the basis of pre-defined unit costs (see below) and indirect costs should be calculated by applying a flat-rate of 7% to the amount of the total eligible direct costs.

The proposal will be evaluated according to the standard LIFE Programme evaluation procedures with the help of outside experts. Experts with the necessary financial knowhow will check the detailed budget estimates and assess whether the resources proposed and the split of resources between work packages would allow achieving the expected results. Some changes may be requested in the course of preparing the grant agreement. The Contracting Authority will fix the lump sum per work package and the overall lump sum contribution based on the proposal and the evaluation result.

### ***How should personnel costs be estimated?***

Personnel costs must be estimated on the basis of unit costs pre-established by the contracting authority. These unit costs are expressed per working day for each EU Member States and have been determined taking into account historical data collected from previous LIFE projects. They can be consulted in Part 2 Section III below and are embedded in the Financial Forms of the Application Form. The same unit costs should be applied for all personnel necessary to carry out the action were it management, operational or support staff (accountant, secretaries etc). In case the staff does not work full days, one day is to be divided by 8 and multiplied by the number of hours worked. The suitability of the proposed personnel and the related cost effectiveness will be assessed during evaluation.

### ***What records and documents need to be submitted?***

There is no need to report on the actual costs incurred, so you will not need to submit invoices or timesheets. Instead, you will be asked to submit a final report at the end of project implementation describing in detail activities that were implemented and identifying to which extent the expected results have been achieved and the deliverables correctly delivered. The payment of the lump sums is indeed linked to the results and the deliverables of the action. The lump sums related to the corresponding work packages could be reduced or not paid if the expected results have not been reached or have only been partially reached or if the deliverables are missing or do not meet the expected quality and/or quantity described in the grant agreement.

## **VII. PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION CLAUSE**

The personal data supplied with the proposal, notably the name, address and other contact information of the beneficiaries and co-financers, will be placed in a database called BUTLER, which will be made available to the EU Institutions and agencies and to an external monitoring team who are bound by a confidentiality agreement. BUTLER is used exclusively to manage LIFE projects.

A summary of each project, including the name and contact information of the coordinating beneficiary, will be placed on the LIFE website and made available to the

general public. At a certain point the coordinating beneficiary will be invited to check the accuracy of this summary.

The list of successful beneficiaries and the relative amounts awarded to successful proposals will also be published in a public database called the Financial Transparency System<sup>9</sup>.

The Contracting Authority, or its contractors, may also use the personal data of unsuccessful applicants for follow up actions in connection with future applications.

Throughout this process, data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 2018/1725 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies. Unless indicated otherwise, the questions and any personal data requested, which are required to evaluate the application in accordance with the specifications of the call for proposal will be processed solely for that purpose by the Head of Unit LIFE and CIP Eco-innovation of EASME.

Details concerning the processing of personal data are available on the privacy statement at: <https://ec.europa.eu/easme/sites/easme-site/files/privacy-statement-calls-easme.pdf>

Personal data may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System by the EASME, should the beneficiary be in one of the situations mentioned in Articles 136 and 141 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018R1046>). For more information see the Privacy Statement on:

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/data-protection-public-procurement-procedures\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/data-protection-public-procurement-procedures_en)

Submission of a proposal implies that the applicant accepts that the personal data contained in the proposal is made available as described above. It will not be used in any other way or for any other purposes than those described above.

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<sup>9</sup> [Financial Transparency System \(FTS\) - European Commission](#)

## Part 2: Guidance on Filling in the Application Form

### I. GENERAL REMARKS

There is a set of Application Forms for LIFE 2020 Call for Proposals from NGOs on the European Green Deal (**LIFE 2020 NGO4GD**) which consists of:

Technical A and B forms in a Word file, and

Financial F forms in an Excel file.

While filling in the technical forms A – B, please respect the standard A4 format. No annexes will be accepted. Text limitation in the application must be respected. Font used to fill in Forms B should not be smaller than 10.

The predefined texts of the various forms with special regard to declarations are not to be modified so as to avoid that they would be considered incomplete and invalid but instructions embedded in the forms can be deleted if necessary.

The data between various technical and financial forms are intrinsically linked, therefore please ensure the coherence of information of relevant forms across the application.

Any date entered must be in the following format: DD/MM/YYYY.

### II. TECHNICAL APPLICATION FORM

The technical application forms of the LIFE 2020 Call for Proposals from NGOs on the European Green Deal (**LIFE 2020 NGO4GD**) consist of 2 parts (A and B).

The Contracting Authority strongly recommends that applicants complete the proposal in English.

#### II.1. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION (A FORMS)

##### **Form A1 – General project information**

**Name of the coordinating beneficiary:** Provide the full name of the coordinating beneficiary.

**Project title (max 200 characters):** It should include the key elements and objective of the project, such as the environmental /climate issue targeted and the geographical scope. Note that the Contracting Authority may ask you to change the title in order to make it clearer. The title of the project must always be in English, even if the proposal itself is submitted in a different language.

**Project acronym (max 25 characters):** The acronym must contain the word 'LIFE'

**Geographic location of the project:** Indicate the Member State and/or regions where the project will take place.

**Expected start date:** Type in the date in the format DD/MM/YYYY. Please note that if you choose a later date, the costs of participation in the kick-off meeting for all new projects may not be eligible.

**Expected end date:** Type in the date in the format DD/MM/YYYY.

**Project budget and requested EU funding:** Indicate the total cost of the actions foreseen within the LIFE 2020 NGO4GD project itself as well as the total cost eligible for

co-financing by LIFE. Indicate the requested amount and percentage of contribution from LIFE in proportion to the eligible cost. The amount cannot be higher than 300.000 EUR and the EU co-financing percentage cannot be higher than 60%.

### **Form A2 – Coordinating beneficiary Profile**

**Legal name:** Provide the full name under which the beneficiary is officially registered.

**Short Name (max 10 characters):** The beneficiary will be identified throughout the technical forms, the financial forms and the reports by its short name.

**Legal Status:** indicate your legal status (eg. private non-commercial).

**Value Added Tax (VAT) number:** If applicable, provide the entity's VAT registration number.

**VAT Reimbursement:** please note that non-deductible VAT is an eligible cost, except for those activities matching the concept of sovereign powers exercised by Member States. If your organisation is unable to recover VAT paid you can opt to include the reimbursement of VAT in your costs submitted under this proposal, in that case then please tick the box 'YES', otherwise tick the box 'NO'.

**Legal Registration Number:** If applicable, provide the entity's legal national registration number or code from the appropriate register.

**Registration date:** Type in the date in the format DD/MM/YYYY.

**PIC Number (not compulsory):** The PIC (Participant Identification Code) is a unique 9-digit code used for the identification of validated legal entities of projects funded under a number of EU programmes. **It is not mandatory to provide this number at the time of the proposal submission**, however applicants are invited to provide it if they already have a validated PIC.

**Contact person information:** Enter Surname, First Name.

**Title:** Enter Ms or Mr

**Function:** provide the function of the person in charge of coordinating the proposal. Example: Managing Director, Project Manager, etc.

**E-mail: IMPORTANT** This e-mail address will be used by the Contracting Authority as the single contact point for all notifications to or correspondence with the applicant during the evaluation procedure.

**Telephone:** Provide information for the contact person.

**Department / Service Name:** Name of the department and / or service in the entity coordinating the proposal and for which the contact person is working. The address details given in the fields which follow must be for the department/service and not the legal address of the entity. Enter: Street name and no., PO Box, Town / City, Post code, Country.

**Legal address:** Enter Street name and no., PO Box, Town / City, Post code.

**Member State:** Use the relevant member state code as indicated at:

[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts\\_nomenclature/introduction](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/introduction)

**Legal representative information:** Enter Surname, First Name.

**Title:** Enter Ms or Mr

**Function:** Provide the function of the person. Example: CEO.

**E-mail:** Provide information for the legal representative.

**Telephone:** Provide information for the contact person.

**Department / Service Name:** Name of the department and / or service in the entity coordinating the proposal and for which the contact person is working. The address details given in the fields which follow must be for the department/service and not the legal address of the entity. Enter: Street name and no., PO Box, Town / City, Post code, Country.

**Address details:** Enter: Street name and no., PO Box, Town / City, Post code, Country (if they are identical to the legal address, you may copy them directly).

**Website:** Provide the beneficiary's official website.

**Brief description of the activities of the coordinating beneficiary (max 3000 characters):** Please describe the entity, its legal status, its activities and its competence in the field of the proposed actions. The description given should enable the Contracting Authority to evaluate the technical reliability of the coordinating beneficiary, i.e. whether it has the necessary experience and expertise for a successful implementation of the proposed project. In this section applicants should also provide details showing that they are active at national or, for large countries, at multi-regional level. This could be proven by describing the extent of the network, number of offices or regional representatives, list of projects or initiatives and their territorial or population coverage, membership composition, statutory objectives, etc.

### **Form A3 – Coordinating beneficiary declaration**

Fill in the following fields:

- Full name of the coordinating beneficiary.
- 'At....on....': Indicate the place and the date of the signature.
- 'Signature': This form must be signed.
- 'Name(s) and status of signatory': The **name** and **status** of the person signing the form must be clearly indicated.

**Important:** Before completing this form, please check that the beneficiary does not fall into any of the situations listed in art. 136(1), 136(4) and 141 of the Financial Regulation n° 2018/1046 of 18 July 2018 (JO L 193 of 30/07/2018), reference:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1549552252045&uri=CELEX:32018R1046>

and that the beneficiary complies with all relevant eligibility criteria, as defined in these Guidelines for Applicants.

For accuracy purposes, make sure that this form is **completed**, signed and dated **after** having entered all the technical and financial data into your application.

### **Form A4 – Co-financers**

The form has to be filled in separately for each co-financer.

For completing this form, please **see also the instructions for form A3 above**.

**Note that the co-financer contribution will have to be entered here and also in financial form F1 (see below).**

**Status of the financial commitment:** please indicate either "*Confirmed*" or "*To be confirmed*". If the status is "to be confirmed", this must be explained with an indication on when the confirmation is expected. Note that at a later stage in the selection process, you will be required to provide this form with status "confirmed".

**Comments:** please make any relevant comments.

## **II.2. DETAILED TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTIONS (B FORMS)**

### **Form B1 – Description of the Intervention**

The description of the intervention shall be structured, concise and clear. It should not exceed 1 (one) page and instructions embedded in the form can be deleted if necessary. The description should include:

- **Background situation and relevant stakeholders:**

Describe the environmental / climate issues directly targeted by the action. Indicate the geographical coverage of the proposed action.

Indicate the stakeholders the proposal intends to involve and how. Please indicate what kind of input you expect from them and how their involvement will be used in and/or needed for the action.

- **Analysis of the existing needs**

Describe the present gaps or shortcomings the project will be addressing.

- **Specific objectives of the intervention and how it will contribute to the objectives of the call for proposals**

Provide a brief description of the specific objectives of the action itself, listing them by decreasing order of importance. These objectives must be realistic (be achievable within the timeframe of the project with the proposed budget and means) and clear (without ambiguity). They must be directly related to the gaps and shortcomings identified above and the environmental / climate issues targeted by the project and their contribution to the call's objectives should be detailed out.

### **Form B2 – Detailed Description of the Work Packages**

A **maximum of 5 WP in total** can be described. The description of the work packages (WP) shall be structured, concise and clear. It should not exceed 10 (ten) pages in total and instructions embedded in the form can be deleted if necessary.

Each work package (WP) must have a reference and a name and full consistency must be ensured throughout the Application Form.

The duration in months of each WP must be indicated (eg. M1 to M12).

For each WP, the following must be included:

**Activities & Means:** Describe the activities within the framework of the WP at reference. Note that focus should be on the main activities that outline the intentions of the WP. Activities must be numbered and given a short name that clearly reflects the objective of the activity. Briefly explain why the activity is necessary and how it will contribute to reaching the project's objectives. Describe the content of each activity indicating what



will be done, specifying and justifying as relevant the “what?”, “why?”, “how?”, “who?”, “where?” etc. Specify the links with other foreseen activities.

**Expected Results:** the expected results for each WP in qualitative and quantitative terms must be described (e.g. improved support from the local community, 2500 persons informed, 3000 newsletters circulated, ...), indicating how this serves the project's objectives.

**Deliverables:** Please list the main deliverable associated with this WP, providing details on their quality and quantity and using a coherent numbering linking the deliverables to the work package described above.

**Milestones:** Please list all major milestones associated with this WP. **Milestones** are defined as **key moments** during implementation of the project e.g. “Nomination of the Project Manager”, “Completion of information campaign”, etc.

**Expected risks and constraints:** It is important to identify possible internal or external risks and constraints that could have major negative impacts on the successful implementation of the project and explain how they would be overcome.

**Continuation/valorisation of results:** indicate how the continuation and valorisation of the project's results and effects will be ensured. Describe how the implementation of the WP will be continued after the end of the LIFE funding, and what actions are required to consolidate the results.

In the description of the Work Packages, particular attention must be paid to the different actions aimed at managing / operating the project and monitoring the progress of the project and evaluating it (activities such as planning, finances, coordination and internal communication, organisation of project meetings, monitoring and evaluation of project, etc...). A description of efforts made for reducing the project's carbon footprint and for green procurement must be included.

A dedicated full or part-time project manager is recommended.

### **Form B3 – Estimated total eligible costs per Work Package**

The table contained in Form B3 should be copied and filled in for each Work Package (maximum of 1 page per work package). A justification for the means required in relation to the main activities/expected results foreseen per work package should be provided. Justifications must be fully coherent with the description of the activities in Form B2 and the costs indicated should be fully coherent with those in the financial forms.

### **Form B4 – Timeline**

The timeline should not exceed 4 (four) pages in total and instructions embedded in the form can be deleted if necessary.

Fill in cells in grey to show the duration of all activities ordered by work package and using the number and name. Repeat lines/columns as necessary. Use the project month numbers instead of calendar months.

## **III. FINANCIAL APPLICATION FORM**

**Important:** The project's budget must only include costs which are in accordance with the point VI of the guidelines for applicants.

## **General remarks**

Please make sure that all costs are rounded down to the next integer. Decimals cannot be entered in the forms.

All contracts attributed under any of the cost categories should respect the principle of absence of conflict of interest, regardless of the amount involved.

Value added tax paid by the beneficiary is eligible except for:

- a) taxed activities or exempt activities with right of deduction;
- b) activities engaged in as a public authority by the beneficiary where it is a State, regional or local government authority or another body governed by public law.

To add a cost line use the 'Add' button, to delete a cost line use the 'Delete' button.

All financial forms are tab activated: in order to create costs lines quickly, you may use the Tab key on your keyboard to move from one field to the next one, and then to the 'Add' button (then press the 'Enter' key: the cost line is added).

## **Form F0 – Estimated budget summary**

**The estimated budget summary** consists of budgeted eligible expenditure/costs categories for each work package. This information is extracted automatically from the form F1 to F5. Thus the forms F1 to F5 should be filled in first.

Please note the last columns of Form F2 to F5 are filled in automatically (extracted from the other cells of the workbook), therefore other cells should be filled in first.

Indirect costs: are automatically calculated based on flat rate of 7% on all direct costs. The total eligible expenditures will be sum of all direct costs with indirect costs.

The lump sum share per work package is calculated on total eligible expenditure multiplied by the Union contribution rate.

**Union contribution amount:** the amount of financial EU contribution requested by the applicant will be calculated based on the total eligible expenditure after deducting the applicant contribution. The maximum EU contribution rate is limited to 60%.

## **Form F1– Financial contributions**

This form describes the funding of the action by the applicant and / or co-financier(s), as well as other source of revenues.

**Contribution of the applicant:** Specify the amount of financial contribution provided by the applicant. This amount cannot include any funding obtained from other public or private sources specifically earmarked for the project or for a part of it (which should be declared as other co-financing).

**Other sources of co-financing:** Indicate the financial contribution of each co-financier.

## **Form F2 – Direct personnel costs**

The personnel costs are to be calculated based on unit costs per country. The same unit costs should be applied for all personnel necessary to carry out the action were it management, operational or support staff (accountant, secretaries etc).

Please first select your country from the dropdown list on top of the F2 Form. This will activate automatically the daily unit costs in the relevant column “Daily Unit Cost”. The unit costs per country are provided in Table 1 below – “Table 1”.

**Staff role:** Please indicate the staff role under this column (manager, operational staff, financial staff, secretary etc...)

**Number of days:** Please indicate the number of days per staff in this column. In case the staff does not work full days, one day is to be divided by 8 and multiplied by the number of hours worked (eg: for 6 hours worked 0,75 days should be budgeted). The total costs per staff role will be calculated automatically after filling in all other cells.

Note that personnel costs must be filled in per work packages as indicated in Form F2.

***Table 1: Unit costs per day to be applied for direct personnel costs in EUR***

<b>Beneficiary country</b>	<b>Unit cost per day</b>	<b>Beneficiary country</b>	<b>Unit cost per day</b>	<b>Beneficiary country</b>	<b>Unit cost per day</b>
LU	350	IE	178	HU	98
DK	353	IT	221	LV	131
BE	313	ES	188	CZ	131
SE	345	SI	171	LT	121
NL	380	GR	139	PL	96
FI	279	CY	134	EE	133
AT	273	PT	135	SK	120
DE	330	MT	165	RO	96
FR	260	HR	104	BG	86
UK	205				

## **Use of Volunteers**

Volunteer costs must be included as personnel costs on the basis of unit costs that were authorized ex-ante. The costs of volunteer work will need to be clearly specified in Form F2 by filling in the “total number of volunteer days” in the dedicated “volunteer” row. The selection of your country from the dropdown list on top of the F2 Form will activate automatically the daily unit costs for volunteers in the relevant column “Daily Unit Cost” and relevant row “volunteer”. The unit costs per country are provided in Table 2 below – “Table 2”.

**Table 2: Unit costs per day to be applied for volunteer costs under direct personnel costs in EUR**

Beneficiary country	Unit cost per day	Beneficiary country	Unit cost per day	Beneficiary country	Unit cost per day
LU	157	BE	131	HU	47
DK	157	IT	131	LV	47
IE	157	ES	78	HR	47
SE	157	SI	78	LT	47
NL	157	GR	78	PL	47
AT	157	CY	78	EE	47
FI	131	PT	78	SK	47
DE	131	MT	78	RO	47
FR	131	CZ	78	BG	47
UK	131				

There are **two limitations** to the usage of volunteer costs:

- In accordance with Article 186 of the Financial Regulation the Union Contribution shall be limited to the estimated eligible costs other than those covering volunteers' work.
- And Article 190 of the Financial Regulation limits the value of the volunteers' work to 50% of the funding sources of the action, including in kind contribution.

### **Form F3 – Travel and subsistence costs**

**Destination:** Please indicate the corresponding type of destination: national, inside EU, International outside EU.

**Description/Link with activities:** The purpose of travel must be clearly described and linked with the activities, in order to allow an assessment of the costs in relation to the objectives of the work package.

**Average cost per travel per person:** Only costs for travel and subsistence must be included here. Costs related to the attendance of conferences, such as conference fees, should be reported under "Other costs" (form F5). The cost of participation in a conference is only considered eligible if the project is presented at the conference. The number of participants in conferences is limited to those for whose attendance there is a valid technical justification.

Travel costs shall be charged in accordance with the internal rules of the beneficiary.

Beneficiaries shall endeavour to travel in the most economical and environmentally friendly way – video conferencing must be considered as an alternative.

In absence of internal rules governing the reimbursement of the use of an organisation's own cars (in opposition to private cars) costs are to be estimated at 0.25 € / km. If only costs for fuel are foreseen, they should also be listed here.

Subsistence costs shall be charged in accordance with the internal rules of the beneficiary (daily allowances or direct payment of meals, hotel costs, local transportation etc.). Make sure that meals related to travel / meetings of the beneficiaries are not included if subsistence costs are already budgeted as per diem allowances.

**Number of travels:** please specify the number of travels per person.

**Total costs:** total costs will be automatically calculated once you entered all relevant information.

#### **Form F4 – Equipment and depreciation**

**Item:** Please indicate the Equipment item.

**Description:** Provide a clear description of each item, e.g. ‘laptop computer’, ‘database software (off-the-shelf or developed under sub-contract)’, ‘measurement equipment’, ‘mowing machine’, etc. and provide the link with the activities.

**Purchase costs:** indicate the purchase costs of the item as per your accounting records.

Fill in the number of months used for the action, depreciation in months and percentage of the allocation to the action.

**Exception:** For this call, the cost of durable goods purchased by applicant shall be considered eligible at 100%, if the organisation complies with all conditions set in the Grant Agreement. In this case, the depreciation amount indicated should be the same as the actual cost/purchase cost. For this exception, please fill in the “Number of months used for the action” and “Depreciation in months” with “1” and allocate the item 100% to the *action*. The applicant concerned will need to certify the compliance with the aforementioned conditions by signing a certificate that has to be included with the proposal. The template is available with the LIFE application package.

The total costs will be calculated automatically after filling in all relevant cells.

Please note the Equipment must be filled in per work packages as indicated in Form F4.

#### **Form F5 – Other direct costs**

Please select the type of the “Other direct costs” from the drop down list indicated on the first column “Type of cost” illustrated in below table “Table 2”.

**Description:** Provide a clear description of each item and explain the link with the activities.

**Purchase costs:** indicate the purchase costs of the item as per your accounting records.

Fill in the percentage of the allocation to the action.

The total costs will be calculated automatically after filling in all relevant cells.

Other direct costs must be filled in per work packages as indicated in Form F5.

**Table 3: Other direct costs.**

<b>Other direct costs</b>
Rental costs
External assistance/Subcontracting
Consumables
Other costs

## CHECKLIST

The questions below aim to help you check that your application is as well prepared as possible. Your answers should in all cases be "yes". However, the list of questions is not exhaustive and the questions do not provide all the detailed information necessary; please refer to the detailed information included in other sections of this document.

1. Are you legally registered in the EU prior to 1 January 2018?
2. Are you a non-profit making organisation primarily active in the areas of environment and/or climate action?
3. Are you independent from governments, other public authorities, and from political or commercial interests?
4. Are you active at national level and/or regional level if you are established in a larger country?
5. Do you have a total revenue equal to at least € 700 000 as taken from the profit and loss account of the 2019 statements and/or an average number of permanent staff of at least 10 in 2019?
6. Have you recorded a negative trend in revenues for 2020 of at least 10% as compared to the average revenues of the previous two years OR a revenue loss of at least € 200 000?
7. Have you used all the standard Application Forms provided with this call for proposals, including the financial forms in Excel?
8. Have you included the mandatory annexes?
  - i. The Registration document: Register(s) of Companies, Official Gazette, etc.
  - ii. The Statutes of the NGO (or equivalent)
  - iii. The Annual Activity Report of the previous year
  - iv. The audited financial statements (balance sheet and profit & loss) for 2018, 2019 and 2020.

These documents must be annexed to the LIFE proposal as scanned pdf files, printable in A4 paper format. In case audited accounts are not required by law and/or in case the 2020 accounts are still provisional, a self-declaration certifying the validity of the accounts will be signed by a legal representative and annexed to the LIFE proposal as per the model provided. The template is available within the LIFE application package.

- v. The "LIFE Simplified Financial Statements", provided with the LIFE Application Package, must be completed for 2018, 2019 and 2020 and annexed to the proposal as an Excel file.
9. Is Form A3 signed and dated?
10. In case of third parties cofinancing the project, is form A4 signed and dated?
11. For each work package, have you detailed the expected results and the deliverables? Are they as far as possible defined in quantitative and qualitative terms?
12. Have you included coherent communication and dissemination actions?

13. Have you included actions to monitor the impact of the project, and the direct/indirect impact of its actions on the environmental / climate issues targeted?
14. Have you included a time safety margin at the end of the project to allow for unforeseen delays?
15. Is the project management team sufficient?
16. Have you excluded all ineligible actions - in particular research activities and construction of infrastructure?
17. In case you decided to make use of the exception concerning depreciation and you allocated 100% of the cost of a durable good, have you included a signed certificate as per the template provided?
18. Have you read the model Grant Agreement in full?



## ANNEX 1: CALENDAR OF THE EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

<b>Timetable and deadlines</b>	
Call opening:	December 2020
Information Session (virtual)	12 January 2020 (tbc) Will be announced on LIFE website
Deadline for submission	31 March 2021 – 17:00 CET (Brussels)
<b>Note: The dates below are indicative but reflect the length of the stages concerned</b>	
Evaluation of the proposals	April 2021 – May 2021
Information on evaluation results	June 2021
Revision of proposals recommended for funding	June 2021-July 2021
Signature of grant agreements:	August 2021 (at the earliest)

## ANNEX 2: USEFUL LINKS

- [Regulation \(EU\) No 1293/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the LIFE Programme](#)
- [LIFE Multiannual Work Programme 2018-2020](#)
- Links to the [LIFE communication section](#) of the LIFE website and [LIFE Communication toolbox](#)
- [The European Green Deal](#)
- [Regulation \(EU, Euratom\) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union](#)