



Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)

Call for proposals

CEF 2 Transport - Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility – Cohesion
envelope

(CEF-T-2024-AFIFCOEN)

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarification of activities that cannot be funded 	13
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Postponement of the last cut-off date 	14
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EUROPEAN CLIMATE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT EXECUTIVE AGENCY (CINEA)

CINEA.B – Sustainable networks and investments

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

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

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O. Introduction

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

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

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

The call is launched in accordance with the multiannual work programme 2021-2027 for the implementation of the Connecting Europe Facility – Transport sector for the period 2024-2025² (hereafter the multiannual work programme) and will be managed by the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA) ('Agency').

The call covers the following topics:

- CEF-T-2024-AFI FCOEN-UNITS: Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility - Unit Contributions
- CEF-T-2024-AFI FCOEN-COSTS: Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility - Co-Funding Rate

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

Transfer of applications between calls and/or topics will not be made.

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

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

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

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

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

² Commission Implementing Decision C(2023) 4886 final of 25.7.2023 amending Implementing Decision C(2021) 5763 final on the financing of the Connecting Europe Facility - Transport sector and the adoption of the work programme for 2021-2027.

- how to submit an application (section 11)
- the [Online Manual](#) outlines the:
 - procedures to register and submit proposals online via the EU Funding & Tenders Portal (**'Portal'**)
 - recommendations for the preparation of the application
- the [AGA – Annotated Grant Agreement](#) contains:
 - detailed annotations on all the provisions in the Grant Agreement you will have to sign, if your application is selected, in order to obtain the grant (*including cost eligibility, payment schedule, accessory obligations, etc.*).

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

1. Background

In December 2020, the Commission adopted the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy communication³. The strategy lays the foundation for how the EU transport system can achieve this transformation and sets concrete milestones to keep the **transport system's journey towards a smart and sustainable future on track**.

In order to reach climate neutrality by 2050, the European Climate Law⁴ establishes the binding Union 2030 climate target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55 % compared to 1990 levels by 2030.

In July 2021, the Commission adopted a package of legislative proposals "Fit for 55", including the Alternative Fuels infrastructure Regulation (AFIR), the ReFuelEU aviation initiative and the FuelEU maritime initiative.

The new Regulation⁵ for the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure (AFIR) sets concrete targets to boost the number of publicly accessible electric recharging pools and hydrogen refuelling stations in particular across the European Union's main transport corridors and hubs.

Along with the political initiatives mentioned above, the CEF Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility (AFIF), as established by the multiannual work programme, will contribute, together with other funding programme instruments (such as Recovery and Resilience Facility, Cohesion Policy Funds, InvestEU, Horizon Europe), to reach the AFIR objectives.

The AFIF will fund alternative fuels infrastructure by the combination of CEF grants with financial support from financial institutions to achieve a higher impact of the investment. National promotional banks, the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) will be Implementing Partners (IP) of the AFIF and will facilitate these operations. Other public or private financial institutions (Other FI), such as commercial banks, will also support the financing of the projects.

³ COM(2020)789 final.

⁴ Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulations (EC) No 401/2009 and (EU) 2018/1999 ('European Climate Law').

⁵ Regulation (EU) 2023/1804 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 September 2023 on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure.

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

Objectives

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

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

Activities that can be funded

The activities that can be funded under this call are relating to the deployment of Alternative fuel supply infrastructure.

The infrastructure shall be deployed in accordance with:

- Regulation (EU) 2023/1804 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 September 2023 on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure (hereafter “AFIR”) and,
- Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network, amending Regulations (EU) 2021/1153 and (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 (hereafter “the TEN-T Regulation”) and,
- in line with the requirements listed below.

The definitions set in AFIR and in the TEN-T Regulation apply to this call for proposals.

CEF-T-2024-AFIFCOEN-UNIT S: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility - Unit Contributions

- I. Electricity recharging infrastructure supported in the form of unit contributions
 - Publicly accessible recharging pools for light-duty vehicles (LDV) along the TEN-T road network:
 - Infrastructure
 - Publicly accessible recharging points dedicated to light-duty vehicles with a minimum power output of 150 kW.
 - At least 50% of the eligible recharging points in a pool will be able to provide in parallel a power output of 150 kW.
 - Locations
 - The recharging infrastructure must be located on the TEN-T road sections **identified in the ‘eligibility map’** (https://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/tentec/tentec-portal/map/docs/AFIF_150kw_350kw.pdf⁶) or within 3 km driving distance from the nearest exit⁷ of a TEN-T road section identified in the ‘eligibility map’.

⁶ It is possible to increase the zoom level in the TENtec viewer. The applicant will need to access the following link: <http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/tentec/tentec-portal/map/maps.html> and click once on ‘LAYERS’ to access the ‘AFIF ELIGIBILITY MAPS’ MAPS’ for 150 kW (LDV) and for 350 kW (HDV) respectively

⁷ Distance from the nearest exit of the TEN-T road alignment up to the entry point of the recharging station’s location. The nearest exit is the point in which the vehicle leaves the TEN-T road alignment with no possibility to go back (e.g. when the dotted line of a highway exit lane becomes a continued line). The road interchange used to exit has to be fully-fledged allowing both exit and re-entry.

- Publicly accessible recharging pools for heavy-duty vehicles (HDV) along the TEN-T road network, including on safe and secure parkings, and in TEN-T urban nodes:
 - Infrastructure
 - Publicly accessible recharging points dedicated to heavy-duty vehicles with a minimum power output of 350 kW along the TEN-T road network⁶, on safe and secure parkings and in TEN-T urban nodes.
 - Publicly accessible recharging points dedicated to heavy-duty vehicles with a minimum power output of 150 kW in safe and secure parkings.
 - Location
 - The recharging infrastructure must be located on the TEN-T road network or within 3 km driving distance from the nearest exit of a TEN-T road, including on safe and secure parkings, and/or in TEN-T urban nodes.

CEF-T-2024-AFI FCOEN-COSTS: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility - Co-funding Rate

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

- Publicly accessible recharging pools for heavy-duty vehicles (HDV) along the TEN-T road network, including on safe and secure parkings, and in TEN-T urban nodes:
 - Infrastructure
 - Publicly accessible recharging pools dedicated to heavy-duty vehicles and equipped with at least 4 recharging points each having a minimum power output of 1 MW, or a combination of at least 4 recharging points each with a minimum power output of 1 MW and recharging points of 350 kW and/or 150 kW⁸. In the latter case, for each pool, the number of supported recharging points with a minimum power output of 350 kW and/or 150 kW cannot exceed the number of supported recharging points with a minimum power output of 1 MW.
 - The following elements are eligible for support: the recharging stations/points and the related electricity infrastructure within the pool (including cabling, electricity substations and on-site energy management devices; battery storage as synergetic element).
 - Locations
 - The recharging infrastructure must be located on the TEN-T road network or within 3 km driving distance from the nearest exit of a TEN-T road, including on safe and secure parkings, and/or in TEN-T urban nodes.
- Recharging stations supplying public transport in TEN-T Urban Nodes:
 - Infrastructure
 - Recharging points in bus depots.
 - Opportunity-based charging devices.
 - Related grid connection and energy storage facilities.
 - Location
 - In TEN-T urban nodes.

⁸ Combination with recharging points of 150 kW is only eligible on safe and secure parkings.

- Recharging stations supplying inland waterway and maritime vessels, and vessels for port operations:
 - Infrastructure
 - Shore-Side Electricity Systems, including Onshore Power Supply (OPS) and Shore-side Battery Charging, being fixed or mobile elements.
 - Electric or battery-electric inland waterway and short sea shipping vessels, as well as vessels for port operations, if it is demonstrated that an initial number of vessels is needed to kick-start the use of the supported recharging infrastructure.
 - Location
 - In TEN-T inland and maritime ports.
 - Electrification of port operations:
 - Infrastructure
 - Recharging stations supplying port vehicles and equipment used for the performance of port services and operations.
 - Zero-emission transshipment equipment.
 - The eligible cost shall be limited to the difference in cost between a fossil-fuel equipment and the zero-emission equipment.
 - Related necessary electricity grid connections inside the port area.
 - Location
 - In TEN-T inland and maritime ports.
 - Electrification of airport operations:
 - Infrastructure
 - Electricity and pre conditioned air supply to stationary aircraft and airships through fixed or zero-emission mobile equipment.
 - Electricity supply facilities for ground operation vehicles.
 - Related necessary electricity grid connections inside the airport area.
 - Recharging points and opportunity-based charging devices for buses operating between airport terminals.
 - Location
 - In TEN-T airports.
- III. Hydrogen refuelling infrastructure supported in the form of a fixed co-funding rate
- Publicly accessible Hydrogen Refuelling Stations (HRS) for light-duty vehicles and/or heavy-duty vehicles:
 - Infrastructure
 - HRS supplying liquid or gaseous hydrogen at pressure of 700 bar, or at a pressure of 350 bar and 700 bar.
 - Each HRS must have a supply capacity of minimum 1 ton of hydrogen per day.
 - Location
 - On the TEN-T road network or within 10 km driving distance from the nearest exit of a TEN-T road.
 - In TEN-T urban nodes.

- HRS for public transport (e.g. bus depots):
 - Infrastructure
 - HRS supplying liquid or gaseous hydrogen at pressure of 350 and/or 700 bar.
 - Location
 - In TEN-T urban nodes.
- HRS supplying inland waterway and maritime vessels, and vessels for port operations:
 - Infrastructure
 - HRS, including fixed and mobile elements, supplying liquid or gaseous hydrogen.
 - Inland and short sea shipping vessels, as well as vessels for port operations, propelled by liquid or gaseous hydrogen if it is demonstrated that an initial number of vessels is needed to kick-start the use of the supported refuelling infrastructure.
 - Location
 - In TEN-T inland waterway and maritime ports.
- HRS for port operations:
 - Infrastructure
 - HRS supplying vehicles and equipment used for the performance of port services and operations.
 - Zero-emission transshipment equipment.
 - The eligible cost shall be limited to the difference in cost between a fossil-fuel equipment and the zero-emission equipment.
 - Location
 - In TEN-T inland and maritime ports.
- HRS supplying railways:
 - Infrastructure
 - HRS supplying liquid or gaseous hydrogen.
 - Location
 - On sections of the TEN-T rail network for which a derogation from the electrification requirement has been granted in line with the TEN-T Regulation.
 - On isolated networks as defined in the TEN-T Regulation.
 - In terminals for refuelling shunting locomotives.
- HRS supplying airports:
 - Infrastructure
 - HRS supplying liquid or gaseous hydrogen to airport operations.
 - HRS supplying liquid or gaseous hydrogen to aircraft and airships.
 - HRS for buses operating between airport terminals.
 - Location
 - In TEN-T airports.

IV. Ammonia bunkering infrastructure supported in the form of a fixed co-funding rate

- Bunkering infrastructure for ammonia supply to maritime vessels and inland waterway vessels and vessels for port operations:
 - Infrastructure
 - Shore-based refuelling stations supplying ammonia for ships, including fixed and mobile elements if demonstrated essential for safe and efficient bunkering operations.
 - Waterborne equipment, including barges or bunkering vessels specifically designed for supply of ammonia for ships and of a maximum capacity of 10,000 cubic meters. The eligible costs shall be limited to the equipment necessary to supply ammonia and the grant amount shall not exceed €10,000,000 per barge or bunkering vessel.
 - Location
 - In TEN-T maritime ports and inland ports.

V. Methanol bunkering infrastructure supported in the form of a fixed co-funding rate

- Bunkering infrastructure for methanol supply to maritime and inland vessels and vessels for port operations:
 - Infrastructure
 - Shore-based refuelling stations supplying methanol for ships, including fixed and mobile elements if demonstrated essential for safe and efficient bunkering operations.
 - Waterborne equipment, including barges or bunkering vessels specifically designed for supply of methanol for ships and of a maximum capacity of 10,000 cubic meters. The eligible costs shall be limited to the equipment necessary to supply methanol and the grant amount shall not exceed €10,000,000 per barge or bunkering vessel.
 - Location
 - In TEN-T maritime and inland ports.

Synergetic elements

For projects supported in the form of a fixed co-funding rate, the following activities are eligible as synergetic elements:

- On-site electricity generation based on renewable energy sources;
- On-site hydrogen production based on renewable energy sources⁹ and a sustainable use of water resources¹⁰;
- Electricity grid connection;
- On-site electricity storage equipment.

⁹ As defined in the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/1184 of 10 February 2023 supplementing Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council by establishing a Union methodology setting out detailed rules for the production of renewable liquid and gaseous transport fuels of non-biological origin - C/2023/1087 - OJ L 157, 20.6.2023.

¹⁰ Information about the water resource needs and availability at the planned location will have to be provided in the application Form B under the heading "Impact".

The total costs of these synergetic elements shall not exceed 20% of the total eligible costs of the Action.

Horizontal requirements for all alternative fuels infrastructure

The beneficiary shall operate and maintain the supported infrastructure for a minimum period of 5 years starting from the end date of the related grant agreement. For beneficiaries operating under a Public Service Obligation contract which expires before the end of the 5 years period, this requirement will be fulfilled if the supported infrastructure is transferred and operated by the successor contract holder until the end of the 5 year period.

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

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

- o the recharging/refuelling points have to comply with the requirements set in Regulation (EU) 2023/1804 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 September 2023 on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure.

In addition:

- o the recharging/refuelling points have to be publicly accessible on a 24/7 basis irrespective of whether the infrastructure is located on a public or private site or premise.
- o the recharging/refuelling points are designed in such a way that they can be used by people with reduced mobility.
- o 24/7 phone assistance shall be provided to end users.

Horizontal requirements applicable to the maritime vessels

- o only for fitting or retrofitting the main propulsion system (zero-emission);
- o if for passenger transport, only for vessels longer than 30m with more than 150 passenger capacity;
- o the eligible cost shall be limited to the difference in costs between a fossil-fuel vessel and the alternative fueled vessel as regards the propulsion system, to be duly evidenced by the applicant;
- o the deployment of alternative fuel powered vessels for maritime transport can be for use in private fleets of ships and vessels, excluding cruises and Exclusive Day trip tourism vessels, on the condition that the vessels are operating under the law of a Member State of the EU and serving EU passenger and cargo destinations and/or other EU services predominantly for at least 5 years from the date they are put in operation.

Horizontal requirements applicable to the inland waterway vessels

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

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

The following indicative list of activities cannot be funded:

- o costs related to vehicles;
- o costs related to land acquisition, renting/leasing of facilities, procurement and permits;
- o administrative costs, including travel and subsistence costs and any indirect costs;
- o staff costs;
- o costs relating to any type of studies, design and work supervision, communication, dissemination and project management either in-house or outsourced;
- o OPEX;
- o upgrade of existing electric recharging infrastructure;
- o upgrade/extension of Hydrogen Refuelling Stations (HRS) capacity;
- o hydrogen production facilities based on Steam Methane Reforming or any type of hydrogen production facilities other than electrolyzers based on Renewable Energy Sources (RES);
- o costs of hydrogen pipelines connecting HRS to a production facility;
- o cost of ammonia/methanol pipelines connecting a bunkering/supply infrastructure to a production facility;
- o shore-based storage tanks for ammonia and methanol;
- o recharging points for electric vehicles located in elevated or underground parkings buildings.

Expected impact

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

3. Available budget

The indicative call budget is EUR 220.000.000.

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

The Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility will support projects combining grants with other sources of funding pursuant to Article 17 of the CEF Regulation and blending operations with InvestEU pursuant to Article 6 of the CEF Regulation¹¹.

¹¹ The implementation of the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility on the basis of blending operations under InvestEU pursuant Article 6 of the CEF Regulation shall only make use of funds from the General envelope and shall be limited to a maximum of half of the funds dedicated in this multiannual work programme to the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility under the General envelope. The CEF grants will be directly managed by the Commission consistently with the procedures already in place for managing grants under Title VIII of the Financial Regulation.

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

- 2/3 of the budget shall be implemented with Implementing Partners¹² (IP) having signed an administrative agreement with the European Commission for the purpose of implementing the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility;
- 1/3 of the budget shall be implemented with any other public or private financial institution established in the EU, **hereafter named "other financial institutions"** (Other FI).

The split of this indicative budget between IP and Other FI may be adjusted based on the effective absorption by each category and, if necessary, to ensure the most effective use of the available amounts.

4. Timetable and deadlines

The Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility will be implemented through a rolling call for proposals with three cut-off dates for the submission of proposals until end 2025 as follows:

Timetable and deadlines (indicative)			
Call opening:	29 February 2024		
Deadline for submission:	1 st cut-off date	2 nd cut-off date	3 rd cut-off date
	<u>24 September 2024</u> <u>17:00 CET (Brussels)</u>	<u>11 June 2025</u> <u>17:00 CET (Brussels)</u>	<u>04 March 2026</u> <u>17:00 CET (Brussels)</u>
Evaluation:	October – November 2024	July – August 2025	April - May 2026
Information on evaluation results:	January 2025	October 2025	July 2026
GA signature:	May – June 2025	February - March 2026	November – December 2026

5. Admissibility and documents

Proposals must be submitted before the cut-off deadline (*see timetable section 4*).

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

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

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

- Application Form Part A — contains administrative information about the participants (future coordinator, beneficiaries and affiliated entities) and the summarised budget for the project (*to be filled in directly online*)

¹² The list of Implementing Partners is published on the Topic page in the [Funding & tender opportunities portal](#).

- Application Form Part B — contains the technical description of the project (*to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed and then assembled and re-uploaded*)

Note that the description of each Work Package in the appropriate section of the form Part B has to be sufficiently detailed with a clear description of the various tasks and relevant technical specifications.

- mandatory annexes and supporting documents (*templates available to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed, assembled and re-uploaded*):
 - detailed budget table per WP/calculator (budget must be rounded down to the nearest thousand)
 - activity reports of last year (unless exempted from operational capacity check; see section 7)¹³
 - list of previous projects (key projects for the last 4 years) (*template available in Part B*)¹⁴
 - timetable/Gantt chart
 - agreement by the concerned¹⁵ Member States (letters of support)
 - environmental compliance file¹⁶
 - financing approval letter (consisting of a transmittal letter certifying the approval of the financing by the **financial institution's** governing bodies¹⁷ in line with its own rules, policies and procedures, and the project summary sheet)
 - simplified cost-benefit analysis (CBA)¹⁸ calculator

Please note that the amounts entered into the summarised budget table (filled in directly online) must correspond to the amounts calculated in the detailed budget table. In case of discrepancies, the amounts in the online summarised budget table will prevail with the exception of the financing amount from the Implementing Partner/Other financial institution, where the financing amount confirmed by the Implementing Partner/Other financial institution will prevail.

When needed at proposal submission, the applicant will have to confirm that he has the mandate to act for all co-applicants. Moreover, you will have to confirm that the information in the application is correct and complete and that the participants comply with the conditions for receiving EU funding (especially eligibility, financial and

¹³ Public bodies, Member State organisations, and international organisations are exempted from the operational capacity check. Also, beneficiaries of grants under CEF 1 and 2 are not required to submit this annex.

¹⁴ Public bodies, Member State organisations, and international organisations are exempted from the operational capacity check. Also, beneficiaries of grants under CEF 1 and 2 are not required to submit this annex.

¹⁵ Letters of support are signed by the Member State or third country associated to CEF programme benefitting from the project.

¹⁶ The environmental compliance file must be submitted for all applications, with the exception of proposals submitted to the topic "**CEF-T-2024-AFIFCOEN-UNITS: Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility - Unit Contributions**". The declarations accompanying the file must be submitted in addition, when applicable, and do not replace the environmental compliance file.
For projects that do not affect significantly the environment, the ECF must be uploaded by ticking the **box of 'project type', and including in the comments boxes for each question 'not applicable'**.

¹⁷ Financing from an Implementing Partner can also be through a loan scheme and/or intermediated.

¹⁸ Submission of a CBA is neither required for proposals submitted with the support of an Implementing Partner nor for proposals submitted under the topic "**CEF-T-2024-AFIFCOEN-UNITS: Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility - Unit Contributions**".

operational capacity, exclusion, etc.). Before signing the grant agreement, each beneficiary and affiliated entity will have to confirm this again by signing a declaration of honour (DoH). Proposals without full support will be rejected.

Your application must be readable, accessible and printable.

Proposals are limited to maximum 120 pages (Part B). Evaluators will not consider any additional pages.

You may be asked at a later stage for further documents (*for legal entity validation, financial capacity check, bank account validation, etc.*).

 For more information about the submission process (including IT aspects), consult the [Online Manual](#).

6. Eligibility

Eligible participants (eligible countries)

In order to be eligible, the applicants (beneficiaries and affiliated entities) must:

- be legal entities (public or private bodies)
- be established in one of the eligible countries, i.e.:
 - Member States eligible for funding from the Cohesion Fund¹⁹.

Beneficiaries and affiliated entities must register in the [Participant Register](#) — before submitting the proposal — and will have to be validated by the Central Validation Service (REA Validation). For the validation, they will be requested to upload documents showing legal status and origin.

Other entities may participate in other consortium roles, such as associated partners, subcontractors, third parties giving in-kind contributions, etc. (*see section 13*).

Specific cases

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

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

International organisations — International organisations are eligible. The rules on eligible countries do not apply to them.

Entities without legal personality — Entities which do not have legal personality under their national law may exceptionally participate, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf, and offer guarantees for the protection of the EU financial interests equivalent to that offered by legal persons²⁰.

EU bodies — EU bodies can NOT be part of the consortium.

EU restrictive measures — Special rules apply for certain entities (*e.g. entities subject to [EU restrictive measures](#) under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union*

¹⁹ Only applicants from countries that are eligible to the Cohesion fund according to Annex IV of the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/1130 are eligible to submit proposals under this call for proposals.

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

(TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)²¹ and entities covered by Commission Guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#)²²). Such entities are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any).

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

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

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

Consortium composition

Not applicable

Eligible activities

Eligible activities are the ones set out in section 2 above. They have to be supported by a financing from an Implementing Partner (IP) or another public or private financial institution (Other FI) of at least 10% of the proposed Project cost (except if the financing is taking the form of equity) duly approved by its governing body in line with its own rules, policies and procedures.

Projects should take into account the results of projects supported by other EU funding programmes. The complementarities (if any) must be described in the project proposals (Part B of the Application Form).

Projects must comply with EU policy interests and priorities (such as environment, social, security, industrial and trade policy, etc.).

Financial support to third parties is not allowed.

Geographic location (target countries)

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

Duration

See section 10.

Project budget (minimum and maximum grant amount)

See section 10.

7. Financial and operational capacity and exclusion

Financial capacity

²¹ Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the [EU Sanctions Map](#).

²² Commission guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#) on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the EU from 2014 onwards (OJEU C 205 of 19.07.2013, pp. 9-11).

Applicants must have stable and sufficient resources to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share. Organisations participating in several projects must have sufficient capacity to implement all these projects.

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

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

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

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

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

- further information
 - an enhanced financial responsibility regime, i.e. joint and several responsibility for all beneficiaries or joint and several liability of affiliated entities (*see below, section 10*)
 - prefinancing paid in instalments
 - (one or more) prefinancing guarantees (*see below, section 10*)
- or
- propose no prefinancing
 - request that you are replaced or, if needed, reject the entire proposal.

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

Operational capacity

Applicants must have the know-how, qualifications and resources to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share (including sufficient experience in projects of comparable size and nature).

This capacity will be assessed together with **the 'Quality' award criterion**, on the basis of the competence and experience of the applicants and their project teams, including operational resources (human, technical and other) or, exceptionally, the measures proposed to obtain such capacity by the time the task implementation starts.

If the evaluation of the award criterion is positive, the applicants are considered to have sufficient operational capacity.

Applicants will have to show their capacity via the following information:

- description of the consortium participants
- **applicants' activity reports of last year**
- list of previous projects (key projects for the last 4 years)

Additional supporting documents may be requested, if needed to confirm the operational capacity of any applicant.

Public bodies, Member State organisations and international organisations are exempted from the operational capacity check.

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

Exclusion

Applicants which are subject to an EU exclusion decision or in one of the following exclusion situations that bar them from receiving EU funding can NOT participate²³:

- bankruptcy, winding up, affairs administered by the courts, arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or other similar procedures (including procedures for persons with unlimited liability for **the applicant's** debts)
- in breach of social security or tax obligations (including if done by persons with **unlimited liability for the applicant's** debts)
- guilty of grave professional misconduct²⁴ (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- committed fraud, corruption, links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement, prize, expert contract, or similar (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No [2988/95](#) (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin or created another entity with this purpose (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant).

Applicants will also be refused if it turns out that²⁵:

- during the award procedure they misrepresented information required as a condition for participating or failed to supply that information
- they were previously involved in the preparation of the call and this entails a distortion of competition that cannot be remedied otherwise (conflict of interest).

8. Evaluation and award procedure

²³ See Articles 136 and 141 of EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

²⁴ Professional misconduct includes: violation of ethical standards of the profession, wrongful conduct with impact on professional credibility, false declarations/misrepresentation of information, participation in a cartel or other agreement distorting competition, violation of IPR, attempting to influence decision-making processes or obtain confidential information from public authorities to gain advantage.

²⁵ See Article 141 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).


The proposals will have to follow the standard submission and evaluation procedure (one-stage submission + one-step evaluation).

An evaluation committee will assess all applications. Proposals will be checked for formal requirements (admissibility, and eligibility, *see sections 5 and 6*). Proposals found admissible and eligible will be evaluated against the operational capacity and award criteria and then ranked according to their scores (*see sections 7 and 9*).

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

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

All proposals will be informed about the evaluation result (evaluation result letter). Successful proposals will be invited for grant preparation; the other ones will be rejected.

 No commitment for funding — Invitation to grant preparation does NOT constitute a formal commitment for funding. We will still need to make various legal checks before grant award: *legal entity validation, financial capacity, exclusion check, etc.*

Grant preparation will involve a dialogue in order to fine-tune technical or financial aspects of the project and may require extra information from your side. It may also include adjustments to the proposal to address recommendations of the evaluation committee or other concerns. Compliance will be a pre-condition for signing the grant.

If you believe that the evaluation procedure was flawed, you can submit a complaint (following the deadlines and procedures set out in the evaluation result letter). Please note that notifications which have not been opened within 10 days after sending are considered to have been accessed and that deadlines will be counted from opening/access (*see also [Funding & Tenders Portal Terms and Conditions](#)*). Please also be aware that for complaints submitted electronically, there may be character limitations.

9. Award criteria

The award criteria for this call are as follows:

- **Priority and urgency:** evaluating the correspondence of the proposal with the call requirements, the sectoral policy objectives and priorities, measuring its EU added-value and where applicable assessing the possible synergies with other sectors; (5 points)
- **Maturity:** assessing the maturity of the action in the project development. The criterion will measure, among others: i) the readiness/ability of the project to start by the proposed start date and to complete by the proposed end date, ii) the status of the contracting procedures and of the necessary permits, and iii) information on the financial availability needed to complement the CEF investment; (5 points)
- **Quality:** evaluating the soundness of the implementation plan proposed, both from the technical and financial point of view, the architecture and design approach, the organisational structures put in place (or foreseen) for the implementation, the risk analysis, the control procedures and quality management and the communication strategy of the applicant. Moreover,

when applicable, it will also assess the information related to the maintenance strategy proposed for the completed project; (5 points)

- **Impact:** assessing, when applicable, the economic, social and environmental impact, including the climate impact, and other relevant externalities. This criterion may be substantiated by a Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA)²⁶ or, in the absence of such tool, other forecast of end-user take-up, in which case the evaluation will look at the soundness, comprehensiveness, and transparency of the analysis as well as proposed means to monitor its impact. Moreover, when applicable, the criterion will assess, among others, the innovation and digitalisation, safety and interoperability and accessibility aspects of the proposal, as well as its cross-border dimension, effect/contribution to the network territorial accessibility; (5 points)
- **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; (5 points)

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

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

Maximum points: 25 points

Individual thresholds per criterion: 3 points

Overall threshold: 15 points

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

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

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

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

²⁶ Submission of a CBA is neither required for proposals submitted with the support of an Implementing Partner **nor for proposals submitted under the Topic "CEF-T-2024-AFIFCOEN-UNITS: Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility - Unit Contributions"**.

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

CINEA shall terminate the Grant Agreement if the beneficiary fails to provide proof of the signature of the financing agreement with the financing institution that has provided the Financial Approval Letter, within 12 months after the cut-off date.

Starting date and project duration

The starting date shall not be earlier than the application date. The project starting date and duration will be fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 1*).

A project should end within 39 months from the cut-off date.

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

For projects funded with unit contributions the end date may be postponed by up to 12 months maximum through an amendment of the Grant Agreement.

Milestones and deliverables

The milestones and deliverables for each project will be managed through the Portal Grant Management System and will be reflected in Annex 1 of the Grant Agreement.

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

Form of grant, funding rate and maximum grant amount

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

Project budget (minimum and maximum grant amount): in order to ensure efficiency in EU funding interventions, for each application the total requested EU contribution shall be **no less than €2,000,000** for projects under the unit contributions topic (CEF-T-2024-AFIFCOEN-UNITS) and no less than **€1,000,000** for projects under the co-funding rate topic (CEF-T-2024-AFIFCOEN-COSTS).

The grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested.

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

For topic CEF-T-2024-AFIFCOEN-UNITS: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility - Unit Contributions:

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

Recharging point of minimum	Unit contribution (EUR)
150 kW (for LDV)	30.000
350 kW (for HDV)	60.000

For topic CEF-T-2024-AFIFCOEN-COSTS: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility – Co-funding Rate:

The grant will be a budget-based actual cost grant. This means that it will reimburse ONLY certain types of costs (eligible costs) and costs that were *actually* incurred for your project (NOT the *budgeted* costs).

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

- maximum 50% for the cost of works, vessels and equipment,
- maximum 70% for the costs of works, vessels and equipment located in outermost regions.

Under this topic the maximum grant amount for each electricity recharging point will be determined as follows:

- a) For a recharging point with a power output of 1 MW or more, 50% of eligible costs (70% in outermost regions).
- b) For a recharging point with a power output of at least 350 kW and less than 1 MW, 50% of eligible costs (70% in outermost regions) and not more than €60,000.
- c) For a recharging point with a power output of at least 150 kW and less than 350 kW, 50% of eligible costs (70% in outermost regions) and not more than €30,000.

Grants may NOT produce a profit (i.e. surplus of revenues + EU grant over costs). For-profit organisations must declare their revenues and, if there is a profit, it will be deducted from the final grant amount (*see art 22.3*).

Moreover, please be aware that the final grant amount may be reduced in case of non-compliance with the Grant Agreement (*e.g. improper implementation, breach of obligations, etc.*).

Budget categories and cost eligibility rules

The budget categories and cost eligibility rules are fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 3, art 6 and Annex 2*).

For topic CEF-T-2024-AFIFCOEN-UNITS: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility - Unit Contributions:

Unit cost categories for this topic²⁷:

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

Specific cost eligibility rules for this call:

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

For topics CEF-T-2024-AFIFCOEN-COSTS: Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility – Co-funding Rate:

Budget categories:

- A. Personnel costs
 - A.1 Employees
 - A.2 Natural persons under direct contract
 - A.3 Seconded persons

²⁷ [Decision](#) of 22 July 2021 authorising the use of unit contributions to support the deployment of ERTMS, electric vehicles recharging infrastructure and the retrofitting of noisy wagons under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) – Transport Sector.

- A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries
- B. Subcontracting costs
- C. Purchase costs
 - C.1 Travel and subsistence
 - C.2 Equipment
 - C.3 Other goods, works and services
- D. Other cost categories
 - D.1 Financial support to third parties
 - D.3 Synergetic elements²⁸
 - D.4 Works in outermost regions
- E. Indirect costs

Specific cost eligibility conditions for this call:

- personnel costs:
 - average personnel costs (unit cost according to usual cost accounting practices): Yes
 - SME owner/natural person unit cost²⁹: Yes
- subcontracting costs:
 - country restrictions for subcontracting costs: Yes, subcontracted work must be performed in the eligible countries or target countries
- travel and subsistence unit cost³⁰: No (only actual costs)
- equipment costs: full cost
- other cost categories:
 - costs for financial support to third parties: not allowed
 - studies: No
 - synergetic elements: Yes³¹
 - works in outermost regions: Yes
 - land purchases: No
- indirect cost flat-rate: 0% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs and exempted specific cost categories, if any)
- VAT: NOT eligible
- other:


²⁸ This cost category is not applicable for topic CEF-T-2024-AFIFCOEN-UNITS: Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility - Unit Contributions.


²⁹ Commission [Decision](#) of 20 October 2020 authorising the use of unit costs for the personnel costs of the owners of small and medium-sized enterprises and beneficiaries that are natural persons not receiving a salary for the work carried out by themselves under an action or work programme (C(2020)7715).

³⁰ Commission [Decision](#) of 12 January 2021 authorising the use of unit costs for travel, accommodation and subsistence costs under an action or work programme under the 2021-2027 multi-annual financial framework (C(2021)35).

³¹ This cost category is not applicable for topic CEF-T-2024-AFIFCOEN-UNITS: Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility - Unit Contributions.

- in-kind contributions for free are allowed, but cost-neutral, i.e. they cannot be declared as cost
- project websites: No
- eligible cost country restrictions: Yes, only costs for activities carried out in eligible countries or target countries are eligible
- other ineligible costs: Yes, costs related to purchase of land

 Please be aware that in case of significant changes to the circumstances that have an impact on the project budget, you may be asked to request an amendment to reduce the maximum grant amount. If you do not comply with this request, we may have to terminate the grant and reduce it from our side (see art 32).

 Similarly, you may be asked to request an amendment to reduce the maximum grant amount, if your project encounters major delays during the project implementation. If you do not comply with this request, we may have to terminate the grant (see art 32).

Reporting and payment arrangements

The reporting and payment arrangements are fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4 and art 21 and 22*).


After grant signature, you will normally receive a prefinancing to start working on the project. The amount will be established based on the grant type or estimated project duration at the time of grant signature and will vary between 25% and 50%. The prefinancing will be paid 30 days from entry into force/financial guarantee (if required — whichever is the latest).

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

In addition, you will be expected to submit one or more progress reports not linked to payments.

Payment of the balance: At the end of the project, we will calculate your final grant amount. If the total of earlier payments is higher than the final grant amount, we will ask you (your coordinator) to pay back the difference (recovery).

All payments will be made to the coordinator.

 Please be aware that payments will be automatically lowered if one of your consortium members has outstanding debts towards the EU (granting authority or other EU bodies). Such debts will be offset by us — in line with the conditions set out in the Grant Agreement (*see art 22*).

Please also note that you are responsible for keeping records on all the work done and the costs or units declared.

Prefinancing guarantees

If a prefinancing guarantee is required, it will be fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4*). The amount will be set during grant preparation and it will normally be equal or lower than the prefinancing for your grant.

The guarantee should be in euro and issued by an approved bank/financial institution established in an EU Member State. If you are established in a non-EU country and would like to provide a guarantee from a bank/financial institution in your country, please contact us (this may be exceptionally accepted, if it offers equivalent security).

Amounts blocked in bank accounts will NOT be accepted as financial guarantees.

Prefinancing guarantees are normally requested from the coordinator, for the consortium. They must be provided during grant preparation, in time to make the prefinancing (scanned copy via Portal AND original by post).

If agreed with us, the bank guarantee may be replaced by a guarantee from a third party.

The guarantee will be released at the end of the grant, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Grant Agreement (*art 23*).

Certificates

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

Liability regime for recoveries

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

For beneficiaries, it is one of the following:

- limited joint and several liability with individual ceilings — *each beneficiary up to their maximum grant amount*
- unconditional joint and several liability — *each beneficiary up to the maximum grant amount for the action*

or

- individual financial responsibility — *each beneficiary only for their own debts.*

In addition, the granting authority may require joint and several liability of affiliated entities (with their beneficiary).

Provisions concerning the project implementation

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

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

- rights of use on results: Yes

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

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

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

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

Other specificities

n/a

Non-compliance and breach of contract

The Grant Agreement (chapter 5) provides for the measures we may take in case of breach of contract (and other non-compliance issues).

 For more information, see [AGA – Annotated Grant Agreement](#).

11. How to submit an application

All proposals must be submitted directly online via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System. Paper applications are NOT accepted.

Submission is a 2-step process:

a) create a user account and register your organisation

To use the Submission System (the only way to apply), all participants need to [create an EU Login user account](#).

Once you have an EU Login account, you can [register your organisation](#) in the Participant Register. When your registration is finalised, you will receive a 9-digit participant identification code (PIC).

b) submit the proposal

Access the Electronic Submission System via the Topic page in the [Search Funding & Tenders](#) section (or, for calls sent by invitation to submit a proposal, through the link provided in the invitation letter).

Submit your proposal in 3 parts, as follows:

- Part A includes administrative information about the applicant organisations (future coordinator, beneficiaries, affiliated entities and associated partners) and the summarised budget for the proposal. Fill it in directly online.
- Part B (description of the action) covers the technical content of the proposal. Download the mandatory word template from the Submission System, fill it in and upload it as a PDF file.
- Annexes (*see section 5*). Upload them as PDF file (single or multiple depending on the slots). Any template made available in Excel has to be uploaded in this format.

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

Documents must be uploaded to the right category in the Submission System otherwise the proposal might be considered incomplete and thus inadmissible.

The proposal must be submitted before the call deadline (*see section 4*). After this deadline, the system is closed and proposals can no longer be submitted.

Once the proposal is submitted, you will receive a confirmation e-mail (with date and time of your application). If you do not receive this confirmation e-mail, it means your proposal has NOT been submitted. If you believe this is due to a fault in the Submission System, you should immediately file a complaint via the [IT Helpdesk webform](#), explaining the circumstances and attaching a copy of the proposal (and, if possible, screenshots to show what happened).

Details on processes and procedures are described in the [Online Manual](#). The Online Manual also contains the links to FAQs and detailed instructions regarding the Portal Electronic Exchange System.

12. Help

As far as possible, *please try to find the answers you need yourself*, in this and the other documentation (we have limited resources for handling direct enquiries):

- [Online Manual](#)
- FAQs on the Topic page
- [Portal FAQ](#) (for general questions).
- call information on the [CINEA website](#).

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

Contact

For individual questions on the Portal Submission System, please contact the [IT Helpdesk](#).

Non-IT related questions³² should be sent to the following email address: CINEA-CEF-TRANSPORT-CALLS@ec.europa.eu.

Please indicate clearly the reference of the call and topic to which your question relates (*see cover page*).

³² Interested applicants are invited to see first if a question is already answered from the existing FAQs published on the [Funding & tenders portal](#).

13. Important

IMPORTANT

- **Don't wait** until the end — Complete your application sufficiently in advance of the deadline to avoid any last minute technical problems. Problems due to last minute submissions (*e.g. congestion, etc.*) will be entirely at your risk. Call deadlines can NOT be extended.
- Consult the Portal Topic page regularly. We will use it to publish updates and additional information on the call (call and topic updates).
- Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Exchange System — By submitting the application, all participants accept to use the electronic exchange system in accordance with the [Portal Terms & Conditions](#).
- Registration — Before submitting the application, all beneficiaries, affiliated entities and associated partners must be registered in the [Participant Register](#). The participant identification code (PIC) (one per participant) is mandatory for the Application Form.
- Consortium roles — When setting up your consortium, you should think of organisations that help you reach objectives and solve problems.

The roles should be attributed according to the level of participation in the project. Main participants should participate as beneficiaries or affiliated entities; other entities can participate as associated partners, subcontractors, third parties giving in-kind contributions. Associated partners and third parties giving in-kind contributions should bear their own costs (they will not become formal recipients of EU funding).

- Coordinator — In multi-beneficiary grants, the beneficiaries participate as consortium (group of beneficiaries). They will have to choose a coordinator, who will take care of the project management and coordination and will represent the consortium towards the granting authority. In mono-beneficiary grants, the single beneficiary will automatically be coordinator.
- Affiliated entities — Applicants may participate with affiliated entities (i.e. entities linked to a beneficiary which participate in the action with similar rights and obligations as the beneficiaries, but do not sign the grant and therefore do not become beneficiaries themselves). They will get a part of the grant money and must therefore comply with all the call conditions and be validated (just like beneficiaries); but they do not count towards the minimum eligibility criteria for consortium composition (if any).
- Associated partners — Applicants may participate with associated partners (i.e. partner organisations which participate in the action but without the right to get grant money). They participate without funding and therefore do not need to be validated.
- Consortium agreement — For practical and legal reasons it is recommended to set up internal arrangements that allow you to deal with exceptional or unforeseen circumstances (in all cases, even if not mandatory under the Grant Agreement). The consortium agreement also gives you the possibility to redistribute the grant money according to your own consortium-internal principles and parameters (for instance, one beneficiary can reattribute its grant money to another beneficiary). The consortium agreement thus allows you to customise the EU grant to the needs inside your consortium and can also help to protect you in case of disputes.

- **Balanced project budget** — Grant applications must ensure a balanced project budget and sufficient other resources to implement the project successfully (*e.g. own contributions, income generated by the action, financial contributions from third parties, etc.*). You may be requested to lower your estimated costs, if they are ineligible (including excessive).
- **No-profit rule** — Grants may NOT give a profit (i.e. surplus of revenues + EU grant over costs). This will be checked by us at the end of the project.
- **No double funding** — There is a strict prohibition of double funding from the EU budget (except under EU Synergies actions). Outside such Synergies actions, any given action may receive only ONE grant from the EU budget and cost items may under NO circumstances be declared to two different EU actions.
- **Completed/ongoing projects** — Proposals for projects that have already been completed will be rejected; proposals for projects that have already started will be assessed on a case-by-case basis (in this case, no costs can be reimbursed for activities that took place before the project starting date/proposal submission).
- **Combination with EU operating grants** — Combination with EU operating grants is possible, if the project remains outside the operating grant work programme and you make sure that cost items are clearly separated in your accounting and NOT declared twice (*see [AGA — Annotated Model Grant Agreement, art 6.2.E](#)*).
- **Multiple proposals** — Applicants may submit more than one proposal for *different* projects under the same call (and be awarded a funding for them).

Organisations may participate in several proposals.

BUT: if there are several proposals for *very similar* projects, only one application will be accepted and evaluated; the applicants will be asked to withdraw one of them (or it will be rejected).

- **Resubmission** — Proposals may be changed and re-submitted until the deadline for submission.
- **Rejection** — By submitting the application, all applicants accept the call conditions set out in this this Call Document (and the documents it refers to). Proposals that do not comply with all the call conditions will be rejected. This applies also to **applicants: All applicants need to fulfil the criteria; if any one of them doesn't, they must be replaced or the entire proposal will be rejected.**
- **Cancellation** — There may be circumstances which may require the cancellation of the call. In this case, you will be informed via a call or topic update. Please note that cancellations are without entitlement to compensation.
- **Language** — You can submit your proposal in any official EU language (project abstract/summary should however always be in English). For reasons of efficiency, we strongly advise you to use English for the entire application.

- Transparency — In accordance with Article 38 of the [EU Financial Regulation](#), information about EU grants awarded is published each year on the [Europa website](#).

This includes:

- beneficiary names
- beneficiary addresses
- the purpose for which the grant was awarded
- the maximum amount awarded.

The publication can exceptionally be waived (on reasoned and duly substantiated request), if there is a risk that the disclosure could jeopardise your rights and freedoms under the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights or harm your commercial interests.

- Data protection — The submission of a proposal under this call involves the collection, use and processing of personal data. This data will be processed in accordance with the applicable legal framework. It will be processed solely for the purpose of evaluating your proposal, subsequent management of your grant and, if needed, programme monitoring, evaluation and communication. Details are explained in the [Funding & Tenders Portal Privacy Statement](#).