



CALL FOR PROPOSALS AND GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

Call reference: EUBA-EFSA-2023-BIOHAW-06

Call title: Establishing capacities for active surveillance of highly pathogenic avian influenza in wild birds in Europe

Restricted to **the list of competent organisations** established by the Authority's Management Board in application of article 2 the Commission Regulation (EC) No 2230/2004 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 with regard to the network of organisations operating in the fields within the Authority's remit.

Brief description of the call objectives: This call aims to build capacities (infrastructure for capturing/sampling wild birds, and testing/sequencing of samples) for active surveillance of highly pathogenic avian influenza in wild birds by creating a network of surveillance nodes in Europe.



INDICATIVE PROCEDURE TIMETABLE

Milestone	Date ¹	Comments
Launch date	15/11/2023	Date of call publication on EFSA's website.
Deadline for applicants to raise clarification questions to EFSA	13/02/2024 27/02/2024	If, after having read this call for proposals and guide for applicants, you have any questions, you may address them to EFSAProcurement@efsa.europa.eu by indicating the call reference.
Deadline for EFSA to reply to clarification questions	15/02/2024 29/02/2024	Replies will be provided on EFSA's webpage where this Call is published and which the applicants are requested to consult regularly.
Deadline for submission of proposals	21/02/2024 At 17:00 06/03/2024 At 17:00 (CET)	Applicants can submit proposals by following the instructions in section 3.1 of this call for proposals. All applications must be submitted through the EU Funding and Tenders portal, following the instructions provided. Hard copy paper applications will not be accepted.
Notification of the evaluation results	March 2024	Estimated <i>Attention: outcome of the present call will be communicated to all applicants to the e-mail address indicated in their proposal. Accordingly, applicants who have submitted proposals under the present call are strongly invited to check regularly the inbox in question.</i>
Grant agreement(s) signature	April 2024	Estimated

¹ All times are in the time zone of the country of the EFSA.



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ANNEXES

Annex 1: Draft grant agreement (including Confidentiality declaration, if applicable)

Documents to be submitted with proposals:

Annex 2: Administrative Declaration

Annex 3: Declaration on honour on exclusion criteria

Annex 4: Declaration on honour on selection criteria

Annex 5: Selection criteria template (all requirements including CVs and information on environmental management)

Annex 6: Award criteria template



1. GRANT OPPORTUNITY AND CONDITIONS²

1.1 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Article 36 (1) of the Regulation (EC) 178/2002³ of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety, stipulates that the Authority shall promote the European networking of organisations operating in the fields within the Authority's mission. The aim of such networking is, in particular, to facilitate a scientific cooperation framework by the coordination of activities, the exchange of information, the development and implementation of joint projects⁴, the exchange of expertise and best practices in the fields within the Authority's mission. The list of competent organisations designated by the Member States, which may assist EFSA with its mission, is approved and regularly updated by EFSA's Management Board. The full list of Article 36 organisations can be found [here](#).

EFSA's founding regulation was amended by Regulation (EU) 2019/1381 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on the transparency and sustainability of the EU risk assessment in the food chain.

The Commission Regulation (EC) 2230/2004 of 23 December 2004 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of the European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) 178/2002 with regard to the network of organisations operating in the fields within the EFSA's mission specifies in Article 4 that tasks may be entrusted by the Authority to organisations on the list of competent organisations.

The present call specifically focuses on the below tasks defined in Article 4(3):

1. disseminating best practices and improving methods of collecting and analysing scientific and technical data, particularly for the purposes of facilitating comparability and producing a Community-level summary;
2. collecting and analysing specific data in response to a common priority, in particular the Community priorities contained in the Authority's work programmes, and in cases where the Authority's scientific assistance is urgently needed by the Commission, especially in the context of the general plan for crisis management referred to in Article 55 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002;
3. producing scientific data or works contributing to the risk assessment tasks, including assessment tasks in the field of human nutrition in relation to Community legislation, for which the Authority is responsible; this type of task must correspond to precise problems identified in the course of the work of the Authority, and in particular that of its Committee and permanent Scientific Panels, and must not duplicate Community research projects or data or contributions which it is the industry's duty to provide, especially in the context of authorisation procedures;
4. preparing the harmonisation of risk assessment methods;
5. sharing data of common interest, e.g. the establishing of databases;
6. the tasks referred to in Articles 6 and 18(3)(b) of Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003.

Article 5(2) of the Commission Regulation (EC) 2230/2004⁵ of 23 December 2004 specifies that the financial support to the networking organisations shall take the form of subsidies (grants) awarded in accordance with the EFSA's financial regulation and implementing rules.

² The applicant is reminded that this call and guide for applicants contains a selection of the most important conditions for the grant implementation. For the full set of conditions, the applicant is invited to consult the draft grant agreement in Annex 1 of this call.

³ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2002:031:0001:0024:EN:PDF>

⁴ Project is frequently referred to in this call as "action", in line with EU Financial Regulation terminology.

⁵ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:379:0064:0067:EN:PDF>



The present call for proposals and guide for applicants (hereinafter referred to as “the call”) is procedurally governed by Title VIII of 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.

This call is based on EFSA Founding regulation⁶ and EFSA’s 2023 Draft Work Programme for grants and operational procurements as presented in Annex XII of the Programming Document 2023 – 2025, available on the EFSA’s website⁷.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL

BACKGROUND

EFSA’s Biological Hazards & Animal Health and Welfare (BIOHAW) Unit regularly collects information from European countries on detections of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) viruses in domestic and wild birds, and more recently also in mammals. Based on data collected through the Animal Disease Notification System (ADIS) of the European Commission and the World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), as well as data voluntarily submitted by European countries to EFSA, regular updates on the avian influenza situation in Europe and worldwide are provided. In addition, EFSA also collects, compiles and analyses information on countries’ legally required and voluntary surveillance activities. However, in order to enhance preparedness for HPAI in Europe, EFSA has outsourced several activities to provide early warning systems, to increase knowledge of circulating avian influenza viruses, and fill evident research gaps. With the present call, EFSA aims to test the added value of an active surveillance component in wild birds in 9 selected geographic areas (Figure 1), when combined with already existing surveillance activities carried out by different stakeholders across Europe. Pipelines for the rapid detection and identification of avian influenza viruses are foreseen to make surveillance results available in almost real-time.

⁶ Regulation (EC) 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety, as amended by Regulation (EU) 2019/1381 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on the transparency and sustainability of the EU risk assessment in the food chain.

⁷ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2022-01/amp2325.pdf>

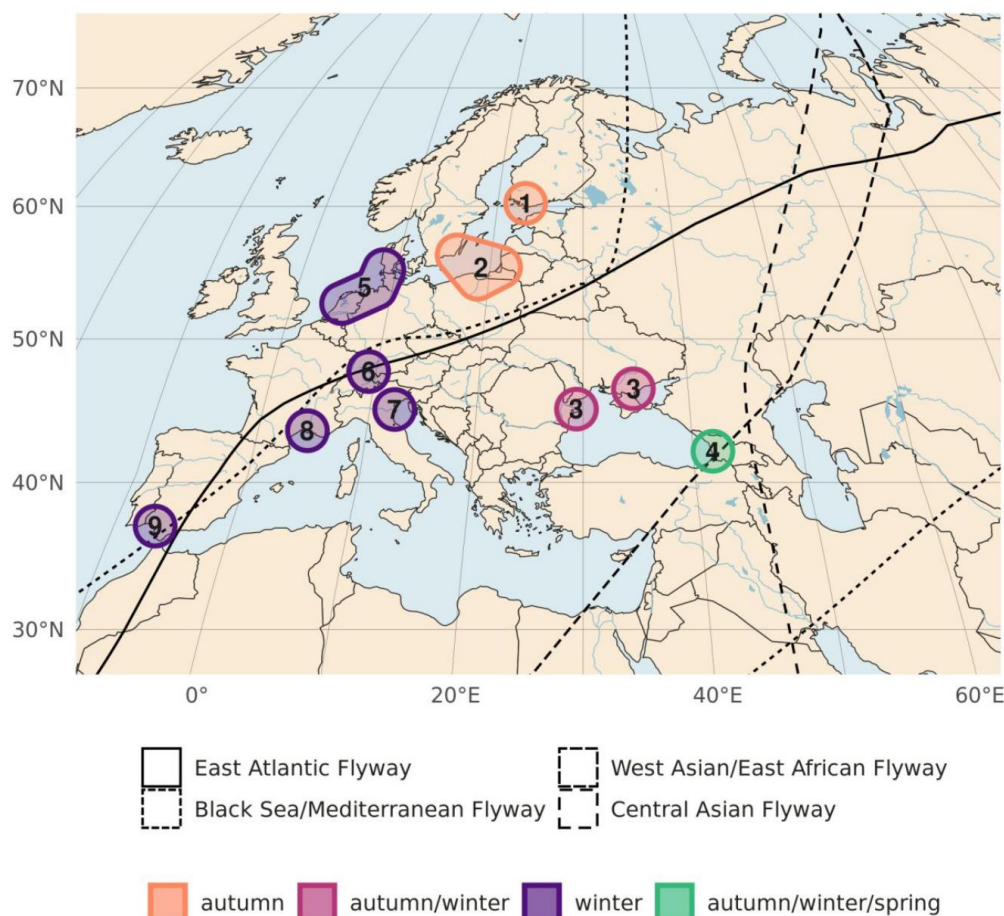


Figure 1: Geographic areas covered by this call (numbers correspond to lots)⁸

This call is to be intended complementary to other initiatives launched at local, regional, national and/or European level on the same topic. To this aim, applications proposing synergies with existing initiatives that bring added value and contribute to the objectives of this call (as listed in the paragraph below) are welcomed and rewarded, as detailed in the award criteria listed in Section 2.5 of this document. Examples of initiatives considered complementary include the following (**but are not limited to the below list**):

- Union surveillance programme⁹
- EU4Health Programme: CP-g-22-04.01 Direct grants to Member States' authorities: setting up a coordinated surveillance system under the One Health approach for cross-border pathogens that threaten the Union¹⁰
- Horizon Europe: 'Ecology and biology of HPAIV H5' (Kappa-Flu)¹¹

⁸ The rationale for selecting those geographic areas can be found in EFSA's External Scientific Report 'Active wild bird surveillance of avian influenza viruses, a report' available at: <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/en-7791>

⁹ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689 of 17 December 2019 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards rules for surveillance, eradication programmes, and disease-free status for certain listed and emerging diseases. OJ L 174, 3.6.2020, p. 211–340 – and – Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/1798 of 10 July 2023 amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards rules for surveillance, eradication programmes, and disease-free status for certain listed and emerging diseases. OJ L 233, 21.9.2023, p. 24–26.

¹⁰ https://ec.europa.eu/assets/sante/health/funding/wp2022_en.pdf

¹¹ <https://doi.org/10.3030/101084171>



The aim is to complement but not to double-fund already existing or planned activities, which is why allocated budget and tasks may vary between lots.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL

The objectives of the call are to

- establish a network of surveillance nodes across Europe
- build long-term capacities and partnerships for active surveillance of HPAI viruses in wild birds
- complement already existing (i.e. in wild birds found dead, injured or sick; in wild birds trapped or hunted with or without clinical signs, in sentinel wild birds) or planned surveillance activities
- provide a pipeline for rapid detection and identification of avian influenza viruses
- get a fuller picture of avian influenza viruses circulating in Europe and thereby increase the genetic pool available for further analyses

1.3 TASKS, DELIVERABLES, TIMELINES, MEETINGS AND PAYMENTS

Please note that for the description of the timeline in the column 'deadline', kick-off meeting is to be intended as the first annual network meeting (2024), further described in the table on Meetings.

Work Package	Tasks	Deliverables	Lots	Deadline
WP1: Participation in network activities	Task 1.1: Participation in the annual network meeting (2024) organised by EFSA's coordination team – physical attendance of at least one project team member per lot required (others should join online) <i>Meeting no.1 listed below</i>	Deliverable 1.1: Certificates of participation for project team members (issued by EFSA's coordination team) Deliverable 1.2: Presentation delivered at the meeting (covering partners involved and submitted proposal)	All	1 month from kick-off meeting <i>Kick-off meeting refers to the first annual network meeting (2024)</i>
	Task 1.2: Participation in on-site and online training organised by EFSA's coordination team –training sessions should be attended by project team members with relevant tasks (different project team members may attend different training sessions) <i>Meeting no. 2 listed below</i>	Deliverable 1.3: Certificates of participation and successful completion for project team members (issued by EFSA's coordination team)	All	4 months from kick-off meeting
	Task 1.3: Participation in the annual network meeting (2025) organised by EFSA's coordination team – physical attendance of at least one project team member per lot required (others should join online) <i>Meeting no. 4 listed below</i>	Deliverable 1.4: Certificates of participation for project team members (issued by EFSA's coordination team) Deliverable 1.5: Presentation delivered at the meeting (covering activities of the surveillance node, results thereof, and lessons learned for the past year)	All	13 months from kick-off meeting



	<p>Task 1.4: Participation in the annual network meeting (2026) organised by EFSA's coordination team – physical attendance of at least one project team member per lot required (others should join online)</p> <p><i>Meeting no. 5 listed below</i></p>	<p>Deliverable 1.6: Certificates of participation for project team members (issued by EFSA's coordination team)</p> <p>Deliverable 1.7: Presentation delivered at the meeting (covering activities of the surveillance node, results thereof, and lessons learned for the past year)</p>	All	25 months from kick-off meeting
	<p>Task 1.5: Participation in the annual network meeting (2027) organised by EFSA's coordination team – physical attendance of at least one project team member per lot required (others should join online)</p> <p><i>Meeting no. 6 listed below</i></p>	<p>Deliverable 1.8: Certificates of participation for project team members (issued by EFSA's coordination team)</p> <p>Deliverable 1.9: Presentation delivered at the meeting (covering activities of the surveillance node, results thereof, and lessons learned for the past year)</p>	All	37 months from kick-off meeting
	<p>Task 1.6: Participation in network communication and exchange throughout the project (e.g. Microsoft Teams channels) – the network should be kept informed about the activities of individual lots through appropriate communication channels – each lot should organise one online webinar during which their proposal (e.g. project team members, sampling site(s), sampling plan, experiences and challenges) should be introduced to the network</p> <p><i>Online meeting platform and date/time TBD by the beneficiary</i></p> <p><i>Meeting no. 3 listed below</i></p>	<p>Deliverable 1.10: Agenda, minutes, and recording of the online webinar organised/hosted by the beneficiary and presentation(s) delivered</p> <p><i>Date and time of the online webinar should be agreed with EFSA's coordination team</i></p>	All	12 months from kick-off meeting
	<p>WP2: Analysis of resources</p> <p>Task 2.1: Analysis of available resources for implementing the fieldwork (wild bird trapping/hunting), establishing a pipeline for the rapid detection and identification of avian influenza viruses (laboratory analyses), and data collection/management/sharing with the network and EFSA's coordination team</p> <p><i>This task should be performed in collaboration with EFSA's coordination team</i></p>	<p>Deliverable 2.1: Report (3-5 pp., using EFSA's template for External Scientific Reports) describing the types of resources analysed (e.g. geographic location(s), environmental conditions, sample transport means, wild bird traps, hunting grounds, laboratories, IT systems), highlighting needs and shortages</p> <p><i>This report should be reviewed by EFSA's coordination team and</i></p>	All	4 months from kick-off meeting



		<i>respective comments should be addressed before delivery</i>		
	Task 2.2: Analysis of needs for adding/shifting of resources for the fieldwork and laboratory analyses <i>This task should be performed in collaboration with EFSA's coordination team</i>	Deliverable 2.2: Report (minimum 10 pp., using EFSA's template for External Scientific Reports) providing summary results and an evaluation of the surveillance activities performed in the first year, highlighting challenges and lessons learnt, and an analysis of the current epidemiological situation in terms of adapting the hosts/sample matrices/months of the year targeted for sampling in the following year <i>This report should be reviewed by EFSA's coordination team and respective comments should be addressed before delivery</i>	All	15 months from kick-off meeting
	Task 2.3: Analysis of needs for adding/shifting of resources for the fieldwork and laboratory analyses <i>This task should be performed in collaboration with EFSA's coordination team</i>	Deliverable 2.3: Report (minimum 10 pp., using EFSA's template for External Scientific Reports) providing summary results and an evaluation of the surveillance activities performed in the second year, highlighting challenges and lessons learnt, and an analysis of the current epidemiological situation in terms of adapting the hosts/sample matrices/months of the year targeted for sampling in the following year <i>This report should be reviewed by EFSA's coordination team and respective comments should be addressed before delivery</i>	All	27 months from kick-off meeting
	Task 2.4: Final analysis of available and used resources for the fieldwork and laboratory analyses	Deliverable 2.4: Report (minimum 10 pp., using EFSA's template for External Scientific Reports) providing summary results and an evaluation of the surveillance activities performed in the third year, highlighting challenges and lessons learnt, and giving an outlook to the future in terms of long-term continuation and sustainability of the established capacities	All	39 months from kick-off meeting



		<i>This report should be reviewed by EFSA's coordination team and respective comments should be addressed before delivery</i>		
WP3: Establishment of capacities and infrastructure	Task 3.1: Establishment of relevant capacities and infrastructure as an outcome of Task 2.1 <i>This task should be performed in collaboration with EFSA's coordination team</i>	Deliverable 3.1: Report (5-10 pp., using EFSA's template for External Scientific Reports) describing the exact geographic location(s) selected, structure and features of the rapid detection and identification pipeline, and technical details on the wild bird traps and diagnostic tests to be used <i>This report should be reviewed by EFSA's coordination team and respective comments should be addressed before delivery</i>	Lots 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 (for Lots 1 and 4, this part is covered by other activities)	6 months from kick-off meeting
	Task 3.2: Maintenance of relevant capacities and infrastructure as an outcome of Task 2.2 <i>This task should be performed in collaboration with EFSA's coordination team</i>	Deliverable 3.2: Report (maximum 3 pp., using EFSA's template for External Scientific Reports) describing any adaptations or changes to structures/processes implemented <i>This report should be reviewed by EFSA's coordination team and respective comments should be addressed before delivery</i>	Lots 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 (for Lots 1 and 4, this part is covered by other activities)	18 months from kick-off meeting
	Task 3.3: Maintenance of relevant capacities and infrastructure as an outcome of Task 2.3 <i>This task should be performed in collaboration with EFSA's coordination team</i>	Deliverable 3.3: Report (maximum 3 pp., using EFSA's template for External Scientific Reports) describing any adaptations or changes to structures/processes implemented <i>This report should be reviewed by EFSA's coordination team and respective comments should be addressed before delivery</i>	Lots 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 (for Lots 1 and 4, this part is covered by other activities)	30 months from kick-off meeting
WP4: Preparation of the sampling plan	Task 4.1: Preparation of the sampling plan for the epidemiological year 2024-2025 <i>This task should be performed in collaboration with EFSA's coordination team</i>	Deliverable 4.1: Report (5-10 pp., using EFSA's template for External Scientific Reports) describing the sampling methods, hosts to be targeted (including numbers), sample matrices to be covered (including numbers), and a	Lots 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 (for Lots 1 and 4, this part is	5 months from kick-off meeting



		<p>detailed timetable for sampling</p> <p>The rationale to support these decisions should be provided (e.g. sample size estimation, analysis of ornithological and virological information)</p> <p><i>This report should be reviewed by EFSA's coordination team and respective comments should be addressed before delivery</i></p>	covered by other activities)	
	<p>Task 4.2: Preparation of the (adapted) sampling plan for the epidemiological year 2025-2026</p> <p><i>This task should be performed in collaboration with EFSA's coordination team</i></p>	<p>Deliverable 4.2: Report (5-10 pp., using EFSA's template for External Scientific Reports) describing the sampling methods, hosts to be targeted (including numbers), sample matrices to be covered (including numbers), and a detailed timetable for sampling</p> <p>The rationale to support these decisions should be provided (e.g. sample size estimation, analysis of ornithological and virological information)</p> <p><i>This report should be reviewed by EFSA's coordination team and respective comments should be addressed before delivery</i></p>	<p>Lots 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9</p> <p>(for Lots 1 and 4, this part is covered by other activities)</p>	17 months from kick-off meeting
	<p>Task 4.3: Preparation of the (adapted) sampling plan for the epidemiological year 2026-2027</p> <p><i>This task should be performed in collaboration with EFSA's coordination team</i></p>	<p>Deliverable 4.3: Report (5-10 pp., using EFSA's template for External Scientific Reports) describing the sampling methods, hosts to be targeted (including numbers), sample matrices to be covered (including numbers), and a detailed timetable for sampling</p> <p>The rationale to support these decisions should be provided (e.g. sample size estimation, analysis of ornithological and virological information)</p> <p><i>This report should be reviewed by EFSA's coordination team and respective comments should be addressed before delivery</i></p>	<p>Lots 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9</p> <p>(for Lots 1 and 4, this part is covered by other activities)</p>	29 months from kick-off meeting



WP 5: Evaluation of the surveillance node (fieldwork)	<p>Task 5.1: Trapping/hunting, sampling, and identification of wild birds according to the sampling plan established in Task 4.1</p> <p><i>Other samples such as hunting bag or environmental samples may be targeted upon agreement with EFSA's coordination team</i></p> <p><i>This task must be performed in the geographic area indicated by the lot (Figure 1) unless otherwise agreed with EFSA's coordination team</i></p>	<p>Deliverable 5.1: Report (max. 3 pp., using EFSA's template for External Scientific Reports) describing the execution of the sampling plan established in Task 4.1, highlighting any deviations and reasons thereof</p> <p><i>This report should be reviewed by EFSA's coordination team and respective comments should be addressed before delivery</i></p>	<p>Lots 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9</p> <p>(for Lots 1 and 4, this part is covered by other activities)</p>	<p>12 months from kick-off meeting</p>
	<p>Task 5.2: Trapping/hunting, sampling, and identification of wild birds according to the sampling plan established in Task 4.2</p> <p><i>Other samples such as hunting bag or environmental samples may be targeted upon agreement with EFSA's coordination team</i></p> <p><i>This task must be performed in the geographic area indicated by the lot (Figure 1) unless otherwise agreed with EFSA's coordination team</i></p>	<p>Deliverable 5.2: Report (max. 3 pp., using EFSA's template for External Scientific Reports) describing the execution (summary statistics) of the sampling plan established in Task 4.2, highlighting any deviations and reasons thereof</p> <p><i>This report should be reviewed by EFSA's coordination team and respective comments should be addressed before delivery</i></p>	<p>Lots 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9</p> <p>(for Lots 1 and 4, this part is covered by other activities)</p>	<p>24 months from kick-off meeting</p>
	<p>Task 5.3: Trapping/hunting, sampling, and identification of wild birds according to the sampling plan established in Task 4.3</p> <p><i>Other samples such as hunting bag or environmental samples may be targeted upon agreement with EFSA's coordination team</i></p> <p><i>This task must be performed in the geographic area indicated by the lot (Figure 1) unless otherwise agreed with EFSA's coordination team</i></p>	<p>Deliverable 5.3: Report (max. 3 pp., using EFSA's template for External Scientific Reports) describing the execution of the sampling plan established in Task 4.1, highlighting any deviations and reasons thereof</p> <p><i>This report should be reviewed by EFSA's coordination team and respective comments should be addressed before delivery</i></p>	<p>Lots 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9</p> <p>(for Lots 1 and 4, this part is covered by other activities)</p>	<p>36 months from kick-off meeting</p>
WP 6: Evaluation of the surveillance node (screening for HPAI)	<p>Task 6: Continuous rapid diagnostic testing for HPAI viruses – samples should be processed in almost real-time without prolonged storage/freezing</p>	<p>Deliverable 6: Continuous (at least monthly) submission of laboratory data (diagnostic test results – both positive and negative diagnostic test results) to EFSA's coordination team</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>Continuously</p>



		<i>The format of the laboratory data to be submitted will be defined by EFSA's coordination team</i>		
WP 7: Evaluation of the surveillance node (whole genome sequencing)	Task 7: Continuous whole genome sequencing of samples resulting positive for HPAI viruses in Task 6 – samples should be processed in almost real-time without prolonged storage/freezing	Deliverable 7: Continuous (at least monthly) submission of whole genome sequencing data to a public database <i>The public database will be communicated by EFSA's coordination team</i>	All	Continuously
WP 8: Data collation and analysis	Task 8: Preparation of descriptive statistics	Deliverable 8: Continuous (at least monthly) collation and submission of descriptive statistics (e.g. summary tables) on wild birds sampled and corresponding diagnostic test results (1-3 pp.) to EFSA's coordination team	All	Continuously
WP 9: Communication of results to relevant stakeholders	Task 9: Preparation and execution of a communication plan to notify local authorities of HPAI virus detections in wild birds	Deliverable 9.1: Report (maximum 3 pp., using EFSA's template for External Scientific Reports) describing the proposed communication plan <i>This report should be reviewed by EFSA's coordination team and respective comments should be addressed before delivery</i> Deliverable 9.2: Records of notifications (e.g. emails)	All	5 months from kick-off meeting Continuously
Subcontracting is allowed for non-core tasks only, which are those falling under WP5 and WP7. Please also refer to section 1.7 'Possibility of implementing contracts and subcontracting'.				

No.	Meetings	Deadline for finalisation
1	<p>Kick-off meeting (first annual network meeting – 2024) physical meeting (with option to join online) organised by EFSA's coordination team – 2 days (expected in May 2024) – location TBD</p> <p>At this meeting, details of the project will be discussed, and the tasks, deliverables and overall time frame will be clarified. The beneficiaries of the different lots will be introduced, and EFSA's coordination team will present their proposal on the training to be organised and a harmonised data collection framework.</p> <p>The presence of a beneficiary's project team member responsible for administrative/finance issues is advised (one per lot), as this will facilitate understanding of the grant principles and significantly ease the financial management of the grant agreement, both for EFSA and the beneficiary.</p>	1 month after entry into force of agreement (expected in May 2024)
2	<p>On-site (one per lot) + online (one for all lots combined) training physical (2 days per lot, tailored to the local circumstances) and online (2 days for all lots combined – split into different sessions, covering general aspects and process</p>	4 months from kick-off meeting



	harmonisation) training organised by EFSA's coordination team in the first months of the project. Topics covered will be related to the fieldwork, laboratory analyses, and data collection/management/sharing.	
3	Online webinars (one per lot) Online webinars (1 hour per lot) organised and hosted by the beneficiaries of the respective lots to introduce their proposals (e.g. project team members, sampling site(s), sampling plan, experiences and challenges) to the network. The participation of all beneficiaries in all webinars is strongly recommended.	12 months from kick-off meeting
4	Second network meeting – 2025 physical meeting (with option to join online) organised by EFSA's coordination team – 2 days – date/time and location TBD At this meeting, activities of the past year will be discussed as well as experiences shared among all beneficiaries of the different lots.	13 months from kick-off meeting
5	Third network meeting – 2026 physical meeting (with option to join online) organised by EFSA's coordination team – 2 days – date/time and location TBD At this meeting, activities of the past year will be discussed as well as experiences shared among all beneficiaries of the different lots.	25 months from kick-off meeting
6	Last network meeting – 2027 physical meeting (with option to join online) organised by EFSA's coordination team – 2 days – date/time and location TBD At this meeting, activities of the past year will be discussed as well as experiences shared among all beneficiaries of the different lots. It will also be an opportunity to discuss on the future of the network and potential follow-up activities.	37 months from kick-off meeting
7	Ad hoc online meetings EFSA reserves its right to call ad hoc online meetings to discuss and provide updates on the methodology/guidance followed, or in case of emerging issues that deserve attention and discussion among the network.	Continuously
No.	Payments	Linked to EFSA approval of deliverable No.
	The payment modalities applicable to each specific agreement are detailed in articles 4 and 5 of the draft specific agreement published under the framework partnership agreement (Annex 1 of the call for proposals).	NA

Deliverables must be drafted in English and may be subject to publication at EFSA's discretion.

Please note that all reporting, minutes, outcome of the discussions could be submitted at EFSA's discretion to EFSA's Panel and Working Group members. Use of the grant deliverables may be subject to publication, subject to the terms and conditions set out in the draft grant agreement (Annex 1 of the call for proposals).

1.4 INFORMATION ON THE GRANT AGREEMENT

Applicants should note that the draft grant agreement is published with the call for proposals. If any applicant should have specific comments on the provisions of the draft grant agreement, these must be raised in a clarification, prior to the deadline for receipt of proposals so that a clear and transparent reply may be published for the benefit and information of all applicants.

Applicants should note that in the Funding and Tenders opportunities portal submission service under Administrative Form (Part A) there is an obligatory field regarding the budget (section 3). Applicants must insert the total of their budget proposal in the 'Requested grant amount' field, without the need to show the split of the budget between partners (if applicable).

1.4.1 Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA)



This call for proposals aims to conclude Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) for the performance of the tasks described in these specifications. An FPA is a long-term cooperation between the Authority and one or several partners. It sets out the framework conditions and is subsequently implemented through Specific Agreements. The Specific Agreements will set out the specific conditions for performing the respective assignments.

The maximum duration of these FPAs is 3 years.

The duration of the Specific Agreements will typically be 12 months. The FPAs continue to apply to Specific Agreements after their expiry. The services relating to such Specific Agreements must be performed no later than 6 months after the expiry of the FPAs.

This call will result in the signature of several FPAs – one or several for each of the 9 lots, depending on the proposals received.

EFSA reserves the right to award Specific Agreements under the FPAs during their period of validity according to the estimates provided in the table below (**which is to be considered indicative**) and until reaching the financial ceiling available for Specific Agreements under the each FPA:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Financial ceiling available per lot
Lot 1 (Gulf of Finland)	43,750	41,625	44,625	130,000
Lot 2 (Southern Baltic Sea)	127,000	48,500	53,500	229,000
Lot 3 (Western Black Sea coast)	115,000	51,500	46,500	213,000
Lot 4 (Eastern Black Sea coast)	43,750	41,625	44,625	130,000
Lot 5 (Wadden Sea region)	181,000	92,000	100,000	373,000
Lot 6 (Lake Constance region)	128,000	54,000	57,000	239,000
Lot 7 (Veneto region)	100,000	50,500	55,500	206,000
Lot 8 (Camargue region)	137,000	60,500	63,500	261,000
Lot 9 (Gulf of Cadiz)	124,000	46,000	49,000	219,000
Total	999,500	486,250	514,250	2,000,000

EFSA reserves the right to shift budget from one lot to another during the evaluation phase. Exact financial ceiling of each lot will be fixed at the end of the evaluation phase of proposals and communicated to beneficiaries with the award decision.

One FPA will be signed for each separate lot. You may submit a proposal for one or more lots, but **your proposal should indicate clearly for which lot you are applying. In case you decide to apply for several lots, a separate proposal for each lot must be provided.** Proposals for each lot will be individually evaluated by EFSA according to the award criteria indicated in section 2.5.

EFSA further reserves the right not to award Specific Agreements under the FPAs without any compensation to be paid to the applicants. EFSA reserves the right to allocate unused funds from a specific lot to a different lot in case of operational need during the course of FPA implementation.

1.5 ELIGIBLE ORGANISATIONS

To be eligible, applicants must be on the list of competent organisations designated by the Member States in accordance with Article 36 of Regulation (EC) 178/2002 and Commission Regulation (EC) 2230/2004. This list is regularly updated by EFSA Management Board and is available for consultation using this link <https://efsa.force.com/competentorganisations/s/>.



In order to achieve the main objective of the call, proposals can be submitted by one eligible organisation or by a consortium of eligible organisations. In case of a consortium, one of the partners must be identified in the proposal as the consortium leader. The applicant (consortium leader) is responsible for identifying consortium partners.

If you are searching for a consortium partners, please contact your focal point at the following address: [EU Member States | EFSA \(europa.eu\)](#) (go to section: Focal points members and observers).

1.6 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

For proper understanding of this call it is important to have clarity on the terminology regarding involved organisations and their roles.

Proposals submitted by a sole applicant:

- **The Applicant** submits the proposal to EFSA. There can be only one applicant in the proposal.

As soon as the grant agreement is signed, the applicant becomes the beneficiary. The beneficiary is liable for the technical implementation of the project as described in the proposal which becomes Annex 1 of the grant agreement.

The beneficiary:

- Communicates with EFSA;
- Receives and answers all claims EFSA might have in relation to the implementation of the project;
- Requests and reviews any documents or information required by EFSA and verifies their completeness and correctness before passing them to EFSA;
- Informs EFSA of any event that is likely to substantially affect the implementation of the project;
- Submits the deliverables and reports to EFSA;
- Requests and receives payments from EFSA.

Proposals submitted by consortium:

- **The Applicant** submits the proposal to EFSA on behalf of the consortium. The applicant is the leading entity of the consortium.
- **The Partner** is the other entity in the consortium. There can be a minimum of one partner or more partners.

Once the grant is awarded, the grant agreement is signed between EFSA and the applicant (leading entity of the consortium).

Partners do not sign the grant agreement directly but instead sign a mandate (template provided by EFSA) authorising the applicant to sign the grant agreement and any future amendments on their behalf.

As soon as the grant agreement is signed, the applicant becomes the Coordinator and partner/s become co-beneficiary/ies. The coordinator and co-beneficiary/ies are referred to as the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries are jointly and severally liable for the technical implementation of the project as described in the proposal which becomes Annex 1 of the grant agreement. If a beneficiary fails to implement its part of the project, the other beneficiaries become responsible for implementing that part.



The coordinator has the following important roles:

- Takes part in implementing the project;
- Monitors that the action is implemented properly;
- Acts as intermediary for communication between the consortium and EFSA;
- Receives and answers all claims EFSA might have in relation to implementation of the project;
- Requests and reviews any documents or information required by EFSA and verifies their completeness and correctness before passing them to EFSA;
- Informs EFSA and the partner/s of any event that is likely to substantially affect implementation of the project;
- Submits the deliverables and reports to EFSA;
- Requests and receives payments from EFSA and distributes the funds to partner/s without unjustified delays.

The coordinator may not delegate the above-mentioned tasks to the co-beneficiary/ies or subcontract them to any third party.

The other beneficiary/ies:

- Take part in implementing the project;
- Forward to the coordinator the data needed to draw up reports, financial statements and other documents required under the grant agreement;
- Inform the coordinator of any event or circumstances likely to substantially affect or delay the implementation of the project.

1.7 IMPLEMENTING CONTRACTS AND SUBCONTRACTING

Implementation contracts:

Where the implementation of the project requires the award of procurement contracts (implementation contracts), e.g. purchase of services and/or goods or equipment necessary for the implementation of the action, the beneficiary must award the contract to the entity offering the best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interests. The beneficiary is expected to clearly document the tendering procedure and retain the documentation for the event of an audit.

Entities acting in their capacity as contracting authorities within the meaning of Directive 2014/24/EU¹² must comply with the applicable national public procurement rules.

Sub-contracting:

Sub-contractors are not consortium partners and are not party to the grant agreement. They do not have any contractual relationship with EFSA. Subcontractors are entities contracted by the beneficiary to carry out some specific tasks or activities. Subcontracting is allowed under these conditions:

- **Core tasks must not be subcontracted.** Only ancillary and assistance tasks can be subcontracted.
- Subcontracts must be awarded to the entity offering best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interests;
- Subcontracting must only cover the implementation of a limited part of the action;
- Recourse to subcontracting must be justified having regard to the nature of the project and what is necessary for its implementation;

¹² Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC (OJ L 94, 28.3.2014, p. 65-242)



- Tasks to be subcontracted must be identified in the proposal and be approved by EFSA before the signature of the grant agreement;
- Recourse to subcontracting during project implementation, if not envisaged from the outset in the proposal, is subject to prior authorisation in writing by EFSA, and must be formalised via an amendment to the grant agreement. Approval may be granted as long as it does not entail a change to the grant agreement which would call into question the decision awarding the grant or be contrary to the equal treatment of applicants;
- The conditions applicable to the beneficiaries under Articles II.6 (*Confidentiality*), II.7 (*Processing of Personal Data*), II.8 (*Visibility of Union Funding*) of the grant agreement are also applicable to the subcontractor.

1.8 GRANT PRINCIPLES

The financial help provided by EFSA under this call is a grant governed by the EU Financial Regulation referred to in part 1.1. Accordingly, the grant awarded following this call must comply with the following principles:

The form of grant awarded under this call is based on financing not linked to the costs of the relevant operations in accordance with Article 125 (1)(a) of the EU Financial Regulation. Grants financed in this way require the fulfilment of conditions set out in sector specific rules of Commission decisions or the achievement of results measured by reference to previously set milestones or through performance indicators.

The present call for proposals comes with an innovative and simplified grant management, where the grant amounts paid to the partner are based on the pre-defined sums which are not linked to the actual costs of the action. This means there is no need for co-financing from the partner, and no need for completion of estimated budgets or timesheets to record the work. The agreed sums are set at a level designed to stimulate the mutually convenient partnership creation. The payment of agreed sums from EFSA will be carried out based on the acceptance by EFSA of the delivered work. If you have questions on this grant form, during the application period, please raise any clarification questions to EFSAProcurement@efsa.europa.eu.

The financial support provided by EFSA under this call is a grant governed by the EU Financial Regulation referred to in part 1.1. Accordingly, the grant awarded following this call must comply with certain grant principles established in the EU Financial Regulation, specifically:

- **Non-retroactivity:** A grant may be awarded for a project which has already begun only where the applicant can demonstrate in the grant application the need to start the action before the grant agreement is signed. In accordance with Article 193 of the Financial Regulation. The tasks entrusted by EFSA should not be performed before the signature of the grant Agreement.

Article 180(3) of the EU Financial Regulation specifically states that **the following grant principles are NOT applicable** where the grant takes the form of financing not linked to the costs pursuant to article 125(1)(a):

- **Co-financing:** In accordance with Article 190 of the Financial Regulation, grants shall involve co-financing.
- **No-profit:** In accordance with Article 192(3)(d) of the Financial Regulation, grants shall not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the project for the applicant or partner.
- **Non-cumulative:** In accordance with Article 191(3) of the Financial Regulation, in no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice from the EU budget.



1.9 PUBLICITY

All beneficiaries are expected to follow the rules on visibility of EFSA funding set out in Article II.8 of the grant agreement.

According to Article 38 of the EU Financial Regulation EFSA is bound to publish information on recipients of its grants at its website. Such publication shall take place no later than 30 June of the year following the financial year in which the grants were awarded and shall cover these data of the beneficiaries:

- name of the beneficiary
- address of the beneficiary
- subject of the grant
- amount awarded

With regards to publications of EFSA outputs that are integrating the preparatory work delivered in the context of this grant, the beneficiary could be mentioned in authorship lists indicating the affiliation to its organisation.

1.10 PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA IN RELATION TO GRANT PROCEDURES

Processing of personal data by EFSA

Information on the processing of personal data by EFSA in the context of this grant procedure is available in the [Privacy Statement](#) on the EFSA website as well as in Article II.7 of the draft grant agreement. Any personal data included in the Agreement must be processed by EFSA in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 2018/1725.¹³

Applicants should note that personal data as applicant or selected beneficiary may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) if you are in one of the situations mentioned in Article 136 of the Financial Regulation. For more information see the Privacy Statement on: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm#BDCE).

Processing of personal data by the beneficiary

In case the implementation of activities under the grant agreement resulting from this call entails the processing of personal data, the beneficiary shall comply with the relevant rules in Article II.7.2 of the Grant Agreement (Annex 1) as a data processor of EFSA.

1.11 PUBLIC ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS

In the general implementation of its activities and for the processing of grant procedures in particular, EFSA observes Regulation (EC) N° 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents.

1.12 OPEN ACCESS

EFSA is committed to the publication of grant outputs in the [Knowledge Junction](#) in order to improve transparency, reproducibility and evidence reuse. The Knowledge Junction runs on the EU-funded Zenodo research-sharing platform where uploaded items receive a unique Digital Object Identifier to make them citable. Any part of the output resulting from the action under this grant may be published (at EFSA's discretion) on the Knowledge Junction with attribution to the beneficiary.

¹³ Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC



1.13 HUNGARIAN PUBLIC INTEREST TRUSTS ESTABLISHED UNDER HUNGARIAN ACT IX OF 2021

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.



2. SELECTING PROPOSALS

The Evaluation Committee established by EFSA specifically for this call will evaluate the submitted proposals in five steps:

1. Verification of submission requirements (2.1)
2. Eligibility criteria (2.2)
3. Exclusion criteria (2.3)
4. Selection criteria (2.4)
5. Award criteria (2.5)

If the proposal fails at any step it is automatically excluded from further evaluation. EFSA may contact the applicant during the evaluation process if there is a need to clarify certain aspects or for the correction of clerical mistakes.

2.1 VERIFICATION OF SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The following will be verified:

- proposal was submitted within the deadline for submission of proposals;
- administrative data for grant application form is duly signed by the authorised representative of the applicant;
- proposal is complete and includes all the supporting documents.

2.2 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Criterion No. 2.2	Requirements and requested evidence
1	Eligibility criteria
	The following requirements will be verified:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the day of deadline for submission of proposals, the applicant and in case of consortium also its partner/s are on the list of competent organisations designated by the Member States in accordance with Art 36 of Regulation (EC) 178/2002 and Commission Regulation (EC) 2230/2004; • Applicant and in case of consortium also its partner/s are involved in the execution of the project; • Subcontracting, if any, is justified in the proposal.
	Requested evidence:
	ADMINISTRATIVE DECLARATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annex 2, available to download in the Funding and Tenders Portal under Part B Templates. The applicant and partner(s) (if applicable) must complete and sign the form. The applicant must upload the signed form in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal.

2.3 EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Criterion No. 2.3	Requirements and requested evidence
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2	Exclusion criteria
	The following requirements will be verified:
	The applicant and partner/s must sign a declaration on their honour certifying they are not in one of the exclusion situations referred to in the Articles 136-140 of EU Financial Regulation.
	Requested evidence:
	THE DECLARATION ON HONOUR ON EXCLUSION CRITERIA Annex 3, available to download in the Funding and Tenders Portal under Part B Templates. The applicant and the partner(s) (if applicable) must complete and sign separate forms. The applicant must upload the form in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal. If applying in consortium, the consortium leader must convert all declarations on honour on exclusion for all partners into one single PDF and upload the single document in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal.

2.4 SELECTION CRITERIA

A) Financial capacity

Criterion No. 2.4A	Requirements and requested evidence
1	Financial capacity
	The purpose of the selection criteria is to verify the financial capacity of the applicant and in case of consortium also of its partner/s.
	The applicant and in case of consortium also its partner/s must have stable and sufficient financial resources to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintain their activity throughout the period during which the project is being carried out.
	Requested evidence:
	Documents to be provided by the applicant: DECLARATION ON HONOUR ON SELECTION CRITERIA Annex 4, available to download in the Funding and Tenders Portal. Only the applicant (or consortium leader if applicable) is required to complete and sign the form. The applicant must upload the form in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SIMPLIFIED FINANCIAL STATEMENT available here only required for private bodies if the grant requested from EFSA is >60.000 €. The template published with the call should be completed for at least the last two closed financial years. LETTER OF COMMITMENT: applicable only when another public body financially contributes to the project (body other than EFSA, applicant or in case of consortium, its partners); to be



	<p>signed by the contributing public body; it serves to confirm its commitment to financially contribute to the project; no template is provided by EFSA.</p> <p>The applicant must convert the Declaration on honour on selection criteria, the Simplified Financial statement (if applicable) and the letter of commitment (if applicable) into one single PDF and upload the single document in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal.</p>
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B) Professional and operational capacity

Criterion No. 2.4.B	Requirements and requested evidence
1	Professional and operational capacity
	Requirements:
	<p>The applicant or in case of a consortium, the consortium as a whole, must have the professional resources, competencies and qualifications necessary to complete the proposed project:</p> <p>1. Requirements for the organisation:</p> <p>The applicant should provide evidence of expertise in the fields of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • animal disease surveillance (at least 3 years); • diagnostic testing (at least 5 years); • ornithology OR avian diseases (at least 2 years). <p>2. Requirements for the team of experts:</p> <p>The team of experts should consist of at least 3 experts.</p> <p>Experts involved in the tasks should prove a University degree at post-graduate level (minimum Master's degree) and the team of experts should cover the following fields (one expert can cover several fields):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Animal disease surveillance</u> (at least 3 years of professional experience in the field) <u>Epidemiology OR statistics</u> (at least 2 years of professional experience in the field) <u>Implementation of field surveys/studies/trials</u> (at least 1 year of professional experience in the field) <u>Diagnostic testing</u> (at least 3 years of professional experience in the field) <u>Whole genome sequencing</u> (at least 3 years of professional experience in the field) <u>Ornithology OR avian diseases</u> (at least 2 years of professional experience in the field) <u>Project management</u> (at least 3 years of professional experience in the field) <p>Technicians involved in the fieldwork may prove relevant expertise in the implementation of field surveys/studies/trials without the requirement to have a Master's degree.</p> <p>3. Requirements for the team of experts:</p> <p>The individual experts <u>covering expertise a, b, and g</u> must have excellent level of spoken and written standard UK English. For non-native speakers, this should be demonstrated by an official certificate of English proving a B2 level or higher OR at least 3 years of work in an English-speaking environment OR involvement in at least 5 publications written in English (3 publications in case of first or last author).</p>



	<p>4. Environmental management:</p> <p>Environmental protection is an integral part of EFSA's governance. EFSA has established, implemented and maintains a certified environmental management system in accordance with the international standard ISO 14001 and the European EMAS regulation. Environmental impacts of EFSA's activities are identified, managed and monitored in order to improve environmental performance. This commitment to environmental sustainability requires us to consider a life-cycle perspective when purchasing our services.</p> <p>For this reason, we are asking you some information on the environmental management of your activities, to be provided filling in Annex 5 (Selection criteria - Information on environmental management). The answers will not be considered under any criteria, neither selection nor award criteria).</p>
	Requested evidence:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 1: evidence of a recently finalised research project (within the last 5 years) OR of a new or ongoing research project relevant to the topic of this grant OR of a governmental mandate to carry out related activities. • EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 2: CURRICULUM VITAE (CV) of the experts and other staff to be involved in the project, including a brief description of the expertise and a list of publications relevant to the project for each person proposed, if available. If individual team members are not yet assigned for the proposed project, applicants should provide details of the staff profiles necessary for the project. • EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed CVs, including lists of publications, of the project team members proposed for the assignment. EFSA strongly recommends submitting the CVs in the EU CV format which can be accessed here. • Official certificate of English proving a B2 level or higher where applicable. • EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 4: Annex 5 – Selection criterion, Information on environmental management • LIST OF PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS NAMES – in addition to the CVs, the applicant should also summarise on one page, the names of the individual project team members. <p>For requirements 1 to 4 (including CVs), a template (Annex 5) is available to download in the Funding and Tenders Portal. The applicant must upload the completed template (a single PDF document of all requirements) in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INDIVIDUAL DECLARATION OF INTERESTS Template available here. Individual DOIs may be requested for members of the project team having influence and/or control over scientific outputs, in advance of the signature of each specific agreement. Individual DOIs do not need to be provided with your proposal at this stage. Please refer to EFSA's policy on independence and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management for more detailed information.

2.5 AWARD CRITERIA

Table to be considered for Lots 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 only:



Criterion No. 2.5	<p>For the award criteria, a template (Annex 6) is available to download in the Funding and Tenders Portal. The applicant must upload the completed template (a single PDF document of all criteria) in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal.</p> <p>The award criteria serve to assess the quality of the proposals in relation to the objectives of the call. The following award criteria are applicable to this call.</p>
1	The extent to which the proposal achieves the objectives of this call and is likely to deliver outputs that will be useful: MAX 8 POINTS.
2	<p>The extent to which the project is described in detail, as well as the proposed methodology is well described and of high quality with particular reference to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Proposal on conducting the fieldwork, including how capacities will be established/enhanced/used in the field (e.g. wild bird traps), and laboratory analyses (e.g. diagnostic testing – diagnostic tests to be used): MAX 8 POINTS; b. Proposal for the structure of the laboratory pipeline for rapid (almost real-time) detection and identification of avian influenza viruses: MAX 5 POINTS; c. Proposal for the exact geographic location(s) (Figure 1) of the sampling to be conducted, including a proposal on (i) how relevant permits and ethical approval for sampling will be obtained, and (ii) how existing regional/national regulations on disease control will be followed: MAX 13 POINTS; d. Proposal for a communication plan (of results) already agreed with the relevant regional/national authorities carrying the mandate to report HPAI virus detections in the respective geographic location(s): MAX 8 POINTS. e. Proposal on forming synergies with other existing initiatives that bring added value and contribute to the objectives of this call: MAX 8 POINTS;
3	<p>The extent to which the proposal is likely to boost scientific cooperation between EFSA and MSs, and at EU level, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. consortium size: for any additional consortium member, 3 additional points, up to a maximum of 9 additional points¹⁴: MAX 9 POINTS; b. consortium expertise coverage - applicants must ensure that the expertise covered is commensurate with its objectives, and as well explain the reasons for choosing their partners, including their role (e.g. if knowledge transfer is foreseen by including less experienced partners in the project): MAX 10 POINTS.
4	Task distribution among consortium partners (if applicable) and individual team members, both internally (i.e. within the consortium/team) and externally (communication with EFSA): MAX 8 POINTS.
5	Sustainability/long-term prospect of the proposed capacity-building plan: MAX 10 POINTS.
6	Description of identified risks and proposed mitigating actions, if any: MAX 5 POINTS.
7	Description of specific quality assurance measures proposed for the project to guarantee high quality of deliverables: MAX 8 POINTS.

Table to be considered for Lots 1 and 4 only:

¹⁴ Consortium of 2 partners: 3 points; consortium of 3 partners: 6 points; consortium of 4 or more partners: 9 points.



Criterion No. 2.5	<p>For the award criteria, a template (Annex 6) is available to download in the Funding and Tenders Portal. The applicant must upload the completed template (a single PDF document of all criteria) in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal.</p> <p>The award criteria serve to assess the quality of the proposals in relation to the objectives of the call. The following award criteria are applicable to this call.</p>
1	The extent to which the proposal achieves the objectives of this call and is likely to deliver outputs that will be useful: MAX 10 POINTS.
2	<p>The extent to which the project is described in detail, as well as the proposed methodology is well described and of high quality with particular reference to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal for the laboratory analyses to be conducted (e.g. diagnostic testing – diagnostic tests to be used) on how capacities will be established/enhanced/used: MAX 8 POINTS; Proposal for the structure of the laboratory pipeline for rapid (almost real-time) detection and identification of avian influenza viruses: MAX 12 POINTS; Proposal for a communication plan (of results) already agreed with the relevant regional/national authorities carrying the mandate to report HPAI virus detections in the respective geographic location(s): MAX 8 POINTS. Proposal on forming synergies with other existing initiatives that bring added value and contribute to the objectives of this call: MAX 12 POINTS;
3	<p>The extent to which the proposal is likely to boost scientific cooperation between EFSA and MSs, and at EU level, in particular:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> consortium size: for any additional consortium member, 3 additional points, up to a maximum of 9 additional points¹⁵: MAX 9 POINTS; consortium expertise coverage - applicants must ensure that the expertise covered is commensurate with its objectives, and as well explain the reasons for choosing their partners, including their role (e.g. if knowledge transfer is foreseen by including less experienced partners in the project): MAX 10 POINTS.
4	Task distribution among consortium partners (if applicable) and individual team members, both internally (i.e. within the consortium/team) and externally (communication with EFSA): MAX 8 POINTS.
5	Sustainability/long-term prospect of the proposed capacity-building plan: MAX 10 POINTS.
6	Description of identified risks and proposed mitigating actions, if any: MAX 5 POINTS.
7	Description of specific quality assurance measures proposed for the project to guarantee high quality of deliverables: MAX 8 POINTS.

In order to be considered for a reserve list, the proposal must:

- score a minimum of 60 points out of maximum possible 100 points; and
- for criteria 1 and 2, score at least 60% of the points attributed to each criterion and
- for criteria 2c (**for all lots**) and 2d (**only for Lots 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9**), score at least 70% of the points attributed to each criterion.

Proposals which have satisfied these quality thresholds will be ranked in a reserve list. The reserve list will be valid for six months from the signature of the feedback letter.

¹⁵ Consortium of 2 partners: 3 points; consortium of 3 partners: 6 points; consortium of 4 or more partners: 9 points.



2.6 PROCESS FOLLOWING THE ASSESSMENT AGAINST AWARD CRITERIA

The applicant(s) will be notified, once the evaluation has been finalized, whether they are placed on the reserve list or not.

Following their ranking on the reserve list, EFSA reserves the right to invite applicants to adapt their proposal based on the evaluators' comments, in accordance with article 200(5) EU FR. The number of applicants invited to adjust their proposals and ultimately awarded an EFSA grant will be decided based on the value of grants requested compared to the overall available budget of EFSA for this call.

Following the successful conclusion of the adaptation phase, the award decision will be taken by EFSA. Subsequently, the grant agreement will be prepared.

In case some applicants fail to adapt the proposal, EFSA reserves the right to reject the proposal. The budget made available in this way may be used for projects of next applicants on the reserve lists. EFSA may repeat the adaptation process until the available budget of the call is assigned to other applicants on the reserve list.



3. SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

3.1 SUBMISSION MODALITIES

You must submit your proposal electronically via the [EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#) before the time limit for receipt of proposals (indicated on page 2 of this call). A webinar showing step-by-step the use of the EU funding and Tenders Portal for grant submission on a pilot EFSA call is available at [this link](#) (from minute 15:39 to minute 45:55).

Registration in the Participant Register

Applicants submitting a proposal must be registered in the Participant Register - an online register of organisations and natural persons participating in European Commission's calls for tenders or proposals.

On registering, each participant obtains a Participant Identification Code (PIC, 9 - digit number) which acts as its unique identifier in the Participant Register. A participant needs to register only once – the information provided can be further updated or re-used by the participant in other European Commission's calls for tenders or calls for proposals.

At any moment during the grant procedure the Research Executive Agency Validation Services (hereafter the EU Validation Services) may contact the participant and ask for supporting documents on legal existence and status.

The requests will be made through the register's messaging system to the email address of the participant's contact person indicated in the register. It is the responsibility of the participant to provide a valid email address and to check it regularly.

The documents that may be requested by the EU Validation Services are listed in the [EU Grants and Tenders Rules on Legal Entity Validation, LEAR appointment and Financial Capacity assessment](#). Please note that a request for supporting documents by the EU Validation Services in no way implies that the grant application has been successful.

Submitting your proposal

The EU Funding and Tenders Portal allows applicants to respond to calls for proposals by preparing applications electronically in a structured and secured way and submitting proposals electronically.

To find more information on submitting your proposal, please read carefully the information on the page [Submit a proposal – electronic submission system](#). On the same page useful links to the [User guide of the submission system](#) and an [FAQ on proposal submission](#) are provided.

Make sure you submit your application on time: you are advised to start completing your application early. To avoid any complications with regard to late receipt/non-receipt of applications within the deadline, please ensure that you submit your application several hours before the deadline. It is not possible to submit an application after the deadline.

3.2 LANGUAGE OF THE PROPOSAL AND THE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Proposals may be submitted in any official language of the European Union. However, as EFSA's working language is English, the submission of proposals in English would speed up the evaluation process.



Please note that some supporting documents (e.g. CVs) are required. These supporting documents are an integral part of the proposal. If these supporting documents are in a language other than English, in order to facilitate and speed up the evaluation, it would be appreciated if a reliable translation of the relevant parts of the documents into English is provided with the proposal.

3.3 EXPECTED DURATION OF PROCEDURE

In accordance with Article 194(2) of the Financial Regulation, the maximum time-limits for the procedure are as follows:

- All applicants will be informed of the decision regarding their application within 6 months of the deadline for submission of proposals.
- Signature of the grant agreement will take place within 3 months from the date the successful applicant/s has/have been informed of the decision on their application.