



CALL FOR PROPOSALS AND GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

Call reference: EUBA-EFSA-2024-PLANTS-03

Call title: Commodity risk assessment for ornamental plants and plant products

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 and key messages:

This call for proposals aims to identify organisations for which tasks falling within the plant health mission of the PLANTS unit can be entrusted by EFSA. In particular, these tasks regard the commodity risk assessment and/or assessment of commodity treatments for the evaluation of the technical dossiers sent by Third Countries for High Risk Plants or for request of derogation of import prohibitions.



INDICATIVE PROCEDURE TIMETABLE

Milestone	Date ¹	Comments
Launch date	11/07/2024	Date of call publication on EFSA's website.
Deadline for applicants to raise clarification questions to EFSA	11/09/2024	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	13/09/2024	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	19/09/2024 At 17:00 (CEST)	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	OCTOBER 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	NOVEMBER 2024	Estimated

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



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ANNEXES

Annex 1a: Draft Framework Partnership Agreement

Annex 1b: Specific agreement template (including Estimated budget template and Financial Statement with timesheets)

Documents to be submitted with proposals (to be downloaded from the EU Funding and Tender portal Submission Service, see section 2 'Selecting proposal'):

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)

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. collecting and analysing data with a view to facilitating risk assessment by the Authority, including assessment tasks in the field of human nutrition in relation to Community legislation, especially the compiling and/or processing of scientific data on any substance, treatment, food or feed, preparation, organism or contaminant which may be linked with a health risk, and the collection and/or analysis of data on the exposure of Member States' populations to a health risk associated with food or feed;
2. 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;
3. preparing the Authority's scientific opinions, including preparatory work relating to the assessment of authorisation dossiers;
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.

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.



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.

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 2024 Work Programme for grants and operational procurements as presented in Annex XII of the Programming Document 2024-2026, available on the EFSA's website⁷.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL

BACKGROUND

The mission of the Plant Health & Pesticides Residues (PLANTS) Unit within EFSA is to provide the EU risk managers (the European Commission, the European Parliament and the EU Member States) with risk assessment, scientific advice and scientific and technical assistance on animal health, animal welfare and plant health.

The new EU plant health law, Regulation (EU) 2016/2031⁸ on the protective measures against pests of plants apply from 14 December 2019. In view of the above and in accordance with Article 29 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002⁹, the Commission asked EFSA to provide scientific opinions in the field of plant health. In particular, EFSA has been asked to prepare and deliver risk assessments for commodities that are listed in the relevant Implementing Acts^{10, 11} as "High risk plants, plant products and other objects". Article 42, paragraphs 4 and 5, of Regulation (EU) 2016/2031, establishes that a risk assessment is needed as a follow-up to evaluate whether the commodities will

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

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/2024-01/programming-document-2024-2026.pdf>

⁸ Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2016 on protective measures against pests of plants, amending Regulations (EU) No 228/2013, (EU) No 652/2014 and (EU) No 1143/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Council Directives 69/464/EEC, 74/647/EEC, 93/85/EEC, 98/57/EC, 2000/29/EC, 2006/91/EC and 2007/33/EC. OJ L 317, 23.11.2016, p. 4–104.

⁹ Regulation (EC) No 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. OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p. 1–24.

¹⁰ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/2019 of 18 December 2018 establishing a provisional list of high risk plants, plant products or other objects, within the meaning of Article 42 of Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 and a list of plants for which phytosanitary certificates are not required for introduction into the Union, within the meaning of Article 73 of that Regulation C/2018/8877. OJ L 323, 19.12.2018, pp. 10–15.

¹¹ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/2018 of 18 December 2018 laying down specific rules concerning the procedure to be followed in order to carry out the risk assessment of high risk plants, plant products and other objects within the meaning of Article 42(1) of Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 of the European Parliament and of the Council. C/2018/8876, OJ L 323, 19.12.2018, pp. 7–9.



remain prohibited, removed from the list and additional measures will be applied or removed from the list without any additional measures.

EFSA has been tasked by the European Commission DG SANTE to conduct such commodity risk assessment for High Risk Plants based on the technical dossiers submitted to the European Commission by the National Plant Protection Organisations (NPPOs) of Third Countries. Based on the trade data on past import by EU Member States of High Risk plants commodities from Third Countries, this task is expected to be ongoing, with a regular flow of dossiers in the next 2-4 years being submitted by Third Countries to the European Commission for performance of commodity risk assessment by EFSA.

The content of the technical dossiers for High Risk Plants commodities is defined in the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/2018 of 18 December 2018⁸ and in the EFSA Technical report on "Information required for dossiers to support demands for import of high risk plants, plant products and other objects as foreseen in Article 42 of Regulation (EU) 2016/2031"¹².

The methodology to be followed when evaluating such dossiers by EFSA is defined in the "Guidance on commodity risk assessment for the evaluation of high-risk plants dossiers"¹³ of the EFSA Scientific Panel on Plant Health.

EFSA has published two webinars on the EFSA website explaining this methodological approach:

- Webinar on: [How to prepare dossiers to support demands for import of high-risk plants and plant products.](#)
- Webinar on: [How to prepare a pest list for a commodity and a dossier for Momordica fruits.](#)

An example of a commodity risk assessment with this approach was recently performed by EFSA for the "Commodity risk assessment of *Cornus alba* and *Cornus sanguinea* plants from the UK"¹⁴.

MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL

This call for proposals aims to identify organisations for which tasks falling within the plant health mission of the PLANTS unit can be entrusted by EFSA. In particular, these tasks regard the commodity risk assessment and/or assessment of commodity treatments for the evaluation of the technical dossiers sent by Third Countries for High Risk Plants.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL

The specific aim of this Call for proposals is to conclude Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) to entrust the tasks described below.

EFSA envisages establishing Framework Partnership Agreements covering the following:

- Support to the development of commodity risk assessments as outlined in the specific tasks. The plant commodities object of this call will be mainly ornamental and landscape plants, plant products and other objects.

Proposals will be individually evaluated by EFSA according to the award criteria indicated in section 2.5. A framework partnership agreement will be awarded by EFSA to each organisation which passes the minimum quality thresholds set out in the award criteria.

¹² <https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/sp.efsa.2018.EN-1492>

¹³ <https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/j.efsa.2019.5668>

¹⁴ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/8657>



Cascade mechanism: The points awarded in the evaluation will constitute the ranking in order to establish a cascade of beneficiaries. EFSA will consult the beneficiary ranked first in order to conclude a specific agreement for work to be carried out.

In case the first ranked beneficiary does not accept the proposed specific agreement, the beneficiary ranked second will be consulted in accordance with the timescales mentioned below.

1.3 TASKS, DELIVERABLES, TIMELINES, MEETINGS AND PAYMENTS

Work Package / Objective	Tasks	Deliverables	Deadline
WP 1 Commodity Risk Assessment	Task 1: evaluation of commodity data (i.e. verify whether the plant has been correctly identified as stated in section 3.1 of the EFSA (2018) Technical Report ⁹ , verify whether a proper description of plant for planting, the growing media and the propagation material is provided according to section 3.2 and 3.3 of the EFSA (2018) Technical Report; verify whether the timing of agronomic practices, phenology of the crop, phytosanitary status and management, intended use, production areas and climate classification, are provided according to sections 3.7 to 3.13 of the EFSA (2018) Technical Report);	Deliverable 1: Report on the completeness of the dossier	As indicated in the specific agreement
	Task 2: identification of all pests potentially associated with the commodity plant species or genus worldwide, indicating: a) the evidence of the association; b) the presence/absence of the pest in the applicant country; c) the presence/distribution/absence of the pest in the EU; d) the association of the pest with the commodity; e) the impact caused by the pests.(see example reported in Appendix 1 – Point 2); This activities implies the consultation of thematic databases and to perform scientific literature searches.	Deliverable 2: Pest list for a given plant species/genus	As indicated in the specific agreement



	Task 3: evaluation of the identification of pests potentially associated with the commodity in the exporting country (i.e. verify whether the list of all pests potentially associated with the plant species or genus of the commodity in the exporting country has been compiled according to section 4.1 of the EFSA (2018) Technical Report; verify whether all the EU-regulated pests or non-regulated pests are included in the proper tables and all the relevant information are provided according to sections 4.2 and 4.3 of the EFSA (2018) Technical Report; verify whether for each pest that may need a phytosanitary mitigation measure or/and pose a potential risk for the EU, the required information is provided according to section 4.4 of the EFSA (2018) Technical Report).	Deliverable 3: Report on the evaluation of the pest list as provided by the applicant	As indicated in the specific agreement
	Task 4: evaluation of the data on phytosanitary mitigation measures (i.e. verify whether the description of the phytosanitary mitigation measures of the commodity, their effectiveness, the information on phytosanitary regulation and inspection systems, the description of surveillance and monitoring systems of the pests associated with the commodity, the post-harvest process, transport system and trade information are described and/or provided according to section 5.1 to 5.5 of the EFSA (2018) Technical Report).	Deliverable 4: Table with the evaluation of phytosanitary mitigation measures (Risk Mitigation Measures)	As indicated in the specific agreement
	Task 5: evaluation of commodity data (i.e. verify whether the plant has been correctly identified as stated in section 3.1 of the EFSA (2018) Technical Report⁹, verify whether a proper description of plant for planting, the growing media and the propagation material is provided according to section 3.2 and 3.3 of the EFSA (2018) Technical Report; verify whether the timing of agronomic practices, phenology of the crop, phytosanitary status and management, intended use, production areas and climate classification, are provided according to sections 3.7 to 3.13 of the EFSA (2018) Technical Report).	Deliverable 5: Report on the commodity description as provided by the applicant	As indicated in the specific agreement



	Task 6: development of a consolidated data sheet for each actionable pest using data of the dossier and additional data (see example reported in Appendix 1 – Point 4).	Deliverable 6: Pest data sheets	As indicated in the specific agreement
WP 2 Commodity Risk Assessment – Complementary activities	Task 7: Compilation of database inclusive of pests/pathogens associated with high-risk plants, plant products and other objects which are listed as plants for planting with associated country where the pest/pathogen (depending on the commodity) can potentially be found (for more details see Appendix 1 – point 5).	Deliverable 7: Pest data sheets	As indicated in the specific agreement
	Task 8: Reporting on activities related to commodity risk assessment	Deliverable 8: Reports	On ad-hoc basis

No.	Meetings	Deadline for finalisation
1	Kick-off meeting: teleconference meetings – one day The kick-off meeting is regarded as the start of the project and must take place no later than 2 months after the signature of the FPA. At this meeting, details of the project will be discussed and the objectives, the final report structure, deliverables and timeframe will be clarified. Minutes of the meeting shall be taken and provided to EFSA by the beneficiary. The presence at the kick-off meeting of a beneficiary's staff member responsible for administrative/finance issues of the project is advised as this will facilitate understanding by the beneficiary of the grant principles, related financial reporting requirements and significantly ease the financial management of the grant agreement, both for EFSA and the beneficiary.	Within 2 months after entry into force of FPA
2	Interim meeting: Teleconference meeting The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the methodology adopted and the deliverables as well as any problems or difficulties encountered during the project. Minutes of the meeting shall be taken and provided to EFSA by the beneficiary.	One for each specific agreement
3	Ad-hoc meetings (physical/teleconference meetings) The purpose of this meeting is to fine-tune the collaboration within the activities of the FPA.	When needed
No.	Payments	Linked to



		EFSA approval of deliverable No.
	The payment modalities applicable to each specific agreement are detailed in the model specific grant agreement (Annex 1b 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.

The total envelope EFSA has available to award grants under this call for proposals is **€ 500,000**. Applicants should note that in the Funding and Tender opportunities portal submission service under Administrative Form (Part A) there is an obligatory field regarding the financial envelope (section 3-budget). Applicants must insert the total envelope in the 'Requested grant amount' field.

1.4.1 Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA)

This Call for proposals aims to conclude several 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 financial ceiling available for specific agreements under the framework partnership agreements is **500,000 €**.

The costs under Specific Agreements are co-financed by EFSA at maximum 90% of the total eligible costs.

The maximum duration of the Framework Partnership Agreements is 4 years.

The duration of the specific agreements will be typically 2 years (however shorter or also longer duration can also be listed depending on the specific tasks). The FPA continues to apply to specific agreements after its expiry. The services relating to such specific agreements must be performed no later than six months after the expiry of the FPA.

This call will result in the signature of several FPAs. EFSA reserves the right to award Specific Agreements under the FPAs during their period of validity according to the preliminary estimates provided in the table below:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
Total	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000	500,000



EFSA further reserves the right not to award Specific Agreements under the FPAs without any compensation to be paid to the applicants.

Cascade mechanism: The points awarded in the evaluation will constitute the ranking in order to establish a cascade of beneficiaries. EFSA will consult the beneficiary ranked first in order to conclude a specific agreement for work to be carried out.

When in EFSA a need of entrusting a task arises, a specific request will be sent to the beneficiary ranked first in the cascade. The specific request will describe the tasks to be entrusted and will include a description of the expertise required to perform those tasks.

The beneficiary should reply to the specific request within 10 working days specifying if it accepts or refuses the request. If the request is accepted, the beneficiary should submit one or more CVs of staff members fulfilling the expertise criteria or specify that they do not accept the request.

Within 10 working days EFSA should confirm which person has been chosen. Individual Declarations of Interest of staff members fulfilling the expertise requirements should be submitted within 10 working days and within another 10 working days EFSA should send the specific agreement to the beneficiary for signature.

The precise scope of the specific assignment and the required profile/s of the staff who will perform the entrusted tasks will be described in the specific agreement. The specific agreement will further specify on an ad-hoc basis:

- The precise conditions for the performance of the entrusted tasks;
- The criteria to ensure that tasks are performed to high scientific and technical standards;
- The rules and procedures for ensuring that tasks are carried out with independence, integrity and respect for confidentiality.

In case the beneficiary does not to accept the request, EFSA will contact the second beneficiary in the cascade and the above timescales for replying would be applicable.

1.4.2 Implementation modalities:

The tasks entrusted through this grant agreement will be conducted by a staff member of the organisations awarded the grant. This support should be provided “extra-muros” from the beneficiary premises.

The tasks will be performed in accordance with the EFSA policies applicable for the respective outputs and, where relevant, in compliance with the specific procedural provision of the relevant legislation.

Should EFSA during implementation identify that a staff member of the beneficiary working on an entrusted task is not performing according to expectations, EFSA has the right to request a replacement staff member from the beneficiary. The beneficiary in such a case must ensure there is a smooth handover between the outgoing and new staff member and at the same time the beneficiary shall endeavour to minimise any negative impact from such a change of staff on the execution of the entrusted task.

The ownership of the delivered outputs as a result of these tasks will be vested solely in EFSA and EFSA will be solely responsible of the results of the tasks performed. Only with EFSA`s prior written permission the beneficiary will be allowed to use the outputs resulting from the entrusted tasks.



The staff having conducted the task will be mentioned in any authorship list and their affiliation to the beneficiary organisation will be acknowledged in any EFSA outputs.

WORKING CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYEES FROM THE SELECTED ORGANISATIONS:

The employees of the organisation awarded the grant agreement to perform the entrusted tasks (hereafter referred to as 'employees'¹⁵) will be working closely with the EFSA unit considering that only specific tasks, not full outputs, will be entrusted to the organisations and that a full coherence among EFSA outputs of similar nature is essential. The expert will work according to the plan and timeline of the Unit, in close collaboration with scientific officers working on the same or similar outputs, regularly attend team meetings and will report to the EFSA Project Manager of the scientific area related to the action.

The working conditions (including remuneration, working hours, leaves, social security) applicable to the employees will remain those established by the employer. For the benefit of the execution of the grant it is important to coordinate as much as possible with the EFSA Unit regarding the leave of the employee, but no formal agreement is required from EFSA before leaves are agreed by the home organisation. The employee should provide EFSA with a monthly timesheet, to be approved by the EFSA Process Manager (Annex 1).

During the performance of the entrusted tasks, the employees:

- Shall carry out the duties with the interests of EFSA in mind and shall neither seek nor take instructions from the employing organisation nor from any government, authority, organisation or person outside EFSA in relation to the execution of the tasks entrusted by means of the grant agreement. They shall carry out the duties assigned to them objectively and impartially.
- Shall be fully subject to the EFSA Policy on Independence¹⁶ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management¹⁷. They will submit an individual Declaration of Interest which will be screened according to the rules applicable to the external experts contributing to the EFSA's work (Articles 6-8) and the rules applicable to screening of Declarations of Interest in the context of procurement and grant awarding procedures (Article 15-16).
- Shall inform EFSA in advance of any involvement in an outside activity related to the subject matter of work performed under the grant agreement, whether paid or unpaid, or to carry out any assignment outside EFSA.
- Will not review their own work nor any output produced by their home organisation or by an individual from their home organisation.
- For the entire duration of the assignment, the individual shall refrain from engaging in any activity linked, relating to or having a connection or an impact on the tasks and/or subject matter of the grant awarded unless specifically authorised by EFSA.
- Shall refrain from any unauthorised disclosure of information received in the line of duty, unless that information has already been made public or is accessible to the public. Under the grant agreement, EFSA may grant the employee access to confidential data in order to perform the tasks. The employee will therefore be required to sign a confidentiality agreement before commencing the performance of tasks. (Annex 1).

The employee may be sent on mission if this is related to the tasks defined under one of the specific agreements implementing the FPA, either as part of a delegation led by an EFSA official or

¹⁵ Not to be understood as EFSA employees but as employees of the beneficiary (grant signatory)

¹⁶ http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/engage/Procurement/EFSAPolicy_independence.pdf

¹⁷ http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/engage/Procurement/DecisionED_CompetingInterestManagement.pdf



temporary staff member, or on his/her own on the basis of a specific mandate given by the EFSA Executive Director. Any mission or trainings would be agreed in advance with the grant beneficiary (home organisation of the employee). Any mission expenses should be estimated in the estimated budget template for each specific agreement.

The expert shall be entitled to attend training courses organised by EFSA if the interest of EFSA warrant it.

The working language for performance of tasks will be English.

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 consortium partners, please contact your Focal Point at the following address: <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/partnersnetworks/eumembers> (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 the action is implemented properly;
- Act 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/EU¹⁸ 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;
- Tasks to be subcontracted and the corresponding estimated costs must be identified in the estimated budget and 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. 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. No amendment is needed;
- The conditions applicable to the beneficiaries under Articles 13 (*Confidentiality and security*), 15 (*Data Protection*), 17 (*Communication, Dissemination and Visibility*) of the grant agreement are also applicable to the subcontractor.

Subcontracting is not permitted under this call for proposals (i.e. staff members working in the project must be employed by organisation awarded the grant).

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 grant based on a combination of the forms of grant in accordance with Article 125(1)(f) EU FR. Specifically, reimbursement of a specified proportion of the total eligible project costs actually incurred (Article 125 (1)(b), Unit costs for certain cost headings (Article 125(1)(c), and flat rate financing (Article 125(1)(e).

- **Co-financing:** In accordance with Article 190 of the Financial Regulation, grants shall involve co-financing. The resources necessary to carry out the project /action shall not be

¹⁸ 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)



provided entirely by the grant. The project costs not covered by the EFSA grant must be financed from the applicant and partner/s resources. The applicant and its partner/s must therefore contribute financially to the project. Additionally, there may be also a financial contribution from another entity, but such an entity must be a public body. Contributions from the private sector are not permitted.

- **No-profit:** In accordance with Article 192 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. Profit is defined as a surplus of the receipts over the eligible costs incurred by the beneficiaries, at the time of request for payment of the balance. The receipts shall be limited to income generated by the project, as well as financial contributions specifically assigned by donors to the financing of the eligible costs. Where a profit is made, EFSA shall be entitled to recover a part of it in line with procedure foreseen in the Grant agreement. The verification of the non-profit rule does not apply to low value grants (≤ 60.000 €).
- **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, costs eligible for financing may not have been incurred prior to the date of submission of the grant application. No grant may be awarded retrospectively for a project already completed.
- **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. To ensure this, the applicant shall indicate the sources and amounts of Union funding received or applied for the same project or part of the project or for its functioning during the same financial year as well as any other funding received or applied for the same project.

1.9 ESTIMATED BUDGET AND ELIGIBLE COSTS

For the submission of a proposal under this Call for proposals, leading to the signature of an FPA, no estimated budget is required.

The estimated budget will be necessary only before the signature of the Specific Agreement. The estimated budget must show all the costs and income which the applicant considers necessary to carry out the tasks. The Estimated budget will be in practice prepared in close cooperation with EFSA's operational and finance units. It must be established in line with the [Rules on eligibility of costs](#).

Estimated budget prepared before signature of each Specific Agreement will have to be:

- sufficiently detailed to permit identification, monitoring and checking of the costs;
- balanced, i.e. total income and total costs must equal;
- consistent with the work plan;
- expressed in Euro.

1.10 PUBLICITY

All beneficiaries are expected to follow the rules on visibility of EFSA funding set out in Article 17 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.

1.11 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 15 of the draft grant agreement. Any personal data included in the Agreement must be processed by EFSA in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 2018/1725.¹⁹

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 15 of the Grant Agreement (Annex 1) as a data processor of EFSA.

1.12 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.

1.13 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.

1.14 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,

¹⁹ 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



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. 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:
	• 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 participate in the project financially; • Applicant and in case of consortium also its partner/s are involved in the execution of the project;
	Requested evidence:
	ADMINISTRATIVE DECLARATION 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
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: • maintain their activity throughout the period during which the project is being carried out, and • participate in its funding. If the Authority considers that financial capacity is weak, it may: – request further information; – decide not to give pre-financing; – decide to give pre-financing paid in instalments; – decide to give pre-financing covered by a bank guarantee; – where applicable, require the joint and several financial liability of all the co-beneficiaries. If the AO considers that the financial capacity is insufficient, the application may be rejected.



	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. • 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 signed by the contributing public body; it serves to confirm its commitment to financially contribute to the project; no template is provided by EFSA. 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.

B) Professional and operational capacity

Criterion No. 2.4.B	Requirements and requested evidence
1	Professional and operational capacity:
	Requirements:
	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: 1. Requirements for the organisation: The applicant should provide evidence of expertise (at least 5 years) in the field of plant health and crop protection, with specific focus on the following topics: phytosanitary risk assessment, entomology, acarology, micology, virology, bacteriology, nematology. 2. Requirements for the team of experts: Experts involved in the tasks should prove a University degree at post-graduate level (minimum master degree) and the team of experts should cover the following fields: a. plant health/phytosanitary risk assessment, to be proven by at least one recent risk assessment in plant health (e.g. a pest risk assessment or a pest categorisation (as per ISPM 1115), or a commodity risk assessment); b. plant entomology/acarology, to be proven by recent institute or laboratory reports or research project reports or pest monitoring reports or other form of institutional reports or by scientific publications;



	c. plant mycology for plant pests, to be proven by institute or laboratory reports or research project reports or pest monitoring reports or other form of institutional reports or by scientific publications; d. plant virology, to be proven by institute or laboratory reports or research project reports or pest monitoring reports or other form of institutional reports or by scientific publications; e. plant bacteriology, to be proven by institute or laboratory reports or research project reports or pest monitoring reports or other form of institutional reports or by scientific publications; f. plant nematology, to be proven by institute or laboratory reports or research project reports or pest monitoring reports or other form of institutional reports or by scientific publications. 3. Requirements for the team of experts: The team of experts must have each expert individually an 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 at least 2 years of work in an English-speaking environment OR at least 3 publications in English where the expert is mentioned as author or co-author; 4. Environmental management (the answers to this section are for information purposes and will not be considered under any criteria, neither selection nor award criteria): 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. 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).
	Requested evidence:
	• <u>EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 1:</u> evidence of a recently finalised research project (within the last 3 years) and of a new or ongoing research project relevant to the topics of this grant. • <u>EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 2:</u> CURRICULUM VITAE 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 individual team members are not yet assigned for the proposed project, applicants should provide details of the staff profiles necessary for the project; • <u>EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 3:</u> • Detailed CVs 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 C1 level where applicable



- **EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 4:**
Annex 5 – Selection criteria, Information on environmental management
 - **LIST OF PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS NAMES** – in addition to the CV's, the applicant should also summarise on one page, the names of the individual project team members.
- For requirements 1,2, 3 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 including CVs), in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal.**
- **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

The award criteria, which serve to assess the quality of the proposals in relation to the objectives of the Call, are listed below.

As specified in this call, EFSA TASKING GRANTS enable Article 36 partners to support us in our day-to-day scientific activities. In this case, Article 42 of the European Regulation (EU) 2016/2031, on the protective measures against pests of plants, introduces the concept of 'high risk plants, plant products and other objects' that are identified on the basis of a preliminary assessment to be followed by a commodity risk assessment. The commodity risk assessments performed by EFSA will be based on the information provided by the National Plant Protection Organisations of non-EU countries requesting a lifting of import prohibition of a high risk commodity. Following a request of the European Commission, a guidance was developed to establish the methodology to be followed when performing a commodity risk assessment for high risk commodities (high risk plants, plant products and other objects). Following international standards on pest risk analysis, this guidance describes a two-step approach for the assessment of pest risk associated with a specified commodity. In the first step, pests associated with the commodity that require risk mitigation measures are identified. In the second step, the overall efficacy of proposed risk reduction options for each pest is evaluated.

The applicant for this grant should deliver two example outputs²⁰ and a draft work plan considered to be representative of its capacity to perform the entrusted tasks under the Specific Agreement:

²⁰ If the example outputs to be submitted by the applicant are available online in publicly accessible sites, it would be acceptable to provide in the application a clear indication of the internet link (URL, DOI) rather than a physical copy of the document. The applicant is however responsible to ensure that the link provided works fully and is freely accessible by EFSA. Applicants must be aware that in case the link does not work, EFSA will not be able to clarify this with the applicant during the evaluation and this would result in this example output not being evaluated.



Criterion No.	
1	Example Output A: Pests List - The applying organisation must provide an identification of the pests potentially associated with a commodity in a non-EU Third Country (Third Country to be chosen by the applicant) of one plant species/commodity belonging to one of the genera: Aesculus, Baunhinia, Buxus, Caesalpina, Camelia, Cassia, Hamamelis, Laburnum, Mahonia, Myrtus, Phillyrea, Rhus, Sambucus, Taxus. The compiled pest list for that plant species/commodity must be fully referenced and provide all the necessary information needed by EFSA for making a Commodity Assessment in line with what specified in the EFSA Technical Report and the relevant EFSA Plant Health Panel Guidance. As an example of how to perform this task, please also refer to the Commodity risk assessment of <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> plants from UK published by EFSA in June 2024 (see particularly section 4 starting at page 16, and Appendix C); also suggestions on how to compile the pests-list can be found in an EFSA webinars at https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/190212. Adequately addressing the specific objective and tasks, particularly regarding the scope, methodology and data sources, search documentation and completeness, in the proposed Example Output A – Pests List (Max 40 points, minimum threshold 50%).
2	Example Output B: Pest Datasheet - Additionally, the applicant must provide a pest data sheet for one pest species (chosen by the applicant) included in the Pests-List of the chosen commodity produced in Example Output A. Examples of how to perform this task can be found in Appendix A of the Commodity risk assessment of <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> plants from UK. and in Adequately addressing the specific objective and tasks, particularly regarding the scope, methodology and data sources and correctness, in the proposed Example Output B – Pest Datasheet (Max 30 points, minimum threshold 50%).
3	Draft work plan - Finally, the applicant will provide a draft practical and schematic work plan of how, in case of award of a specific agreement for one or more commodities, the applicant would generate a pests list and the pest datasheets for the relevant pests [including phases, timelines, milestones (e.g. via a Gantt chart), tasks distribution and proposed contingency plan in case of deviations from the project programme], together with a succinct explanation on the steps to be taken by the applicant organization to ensure a timely and exhaustive delivery of a large number of commodity pest lists and data sheets, meeting EFSA quality standards. Adequately addressing the specific objective and tasks, particularly regarding clarity and feasibility of the proposed Draft Workplan (Max 30 points, minimum threshold 50%).



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

- score a minimum of 70 points out of maximum possible 100 points; and
- for criteria 1, 2, 3, score at least 50% of the points attributed to that 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.

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 Tender 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 e-mail address of the participant's contact person indicated in the register. It is the responsibility of the participant to provide a valid e-mail 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 & 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.



4. RULES ON ELIGIBILITY OF COSTS

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The eligible costs of the project receiving an EFSA grant must be shown in detail in an estimated budget. EFSA will take the final decision on the nature and amount of the costs to be considered as eligible.

Estimated budget must be:

- sufficiently detailed to permit identification, monitoring and checking of the costs;
- balanced, i.e. total income and total project costs must be equal;
- consistent with the work plan;
- expressed in Euro.

Costs eligible for an EFSA grant are those that are:

- incurred during the duration of the project, with the exception of costs relating to audit certificates;
- indicated in the estimated budget of the project;
- necessary for the implementation of the project which is the subject of the grant;
- identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiary is established and according to the usual cost accounting practices of the beneficiary;
- complying with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- reasonable, justified, and comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

Estimated budget – cost side:

- **Eligible direct costs:**
 1. Costs of personnel;
 2. Travel costs and subsistence allowances;
 3. Depreciation costs of equipment or other assets;
 4. Consumables and supplies;
 5. Workshops, seminar, conferences;
 6. Subcontracting;
 7. Eligible VAT;
 8. Miscellaneous costs are costs arising directly from the requirements imposed by the grant agreement.

The above categories represent an exhaustive list of possible eligible direct costs. However, if, for example, the project does not foresee costs for workshops / seminars / conferences, then this category of costs can be left empty in the estimated budget.

- **Eligible indirect costs** incurred in carrying out the project are eligible for a flat-rate funding capped at not more than 10% of the total eligible direct costs. If a beneficiary (partner in the consortium) already receives an operational grant from the EU budget its indirect costs are not eligible under the present call.



Estimated budget – income side:

- **Mandatory incomes:**
 1. Grant requested from EFSA;
 2. Applicant's financial contribution;
 3. Partners financial contribution;
- **Optional incomes:**
 4. Financial contributions from other public bodies;
 5. Income generated by the project.

To be eligible, costs need to be incurred during the duration of the project, i.e. from the grant agreement entry into force and project deadline.

The eligible costs presented in the estimated budget must be as realistic as possible, except for eligible indirect costs which are a flat rate.

Once the project is implemented all the eligible actually incurred direct costs must be justified by supporting documents, e.g. invoices, timesheets, evidence of travel or presence at a meeting etc. EFSA reserves the right to ask any supporting document in order to verify that the costs declared as eligible were actually incurred and paid.

2. ELIGIBLE COSTS

2.1 ELIGIBLE DIRECT COSTS

"Direct costs" of the project are those specific costs which are directly linked to the implementation of the project and can therefore be attributed directly to it. They may not include any indirect costs²¹. To be eligible, direct costs shall comply with the conditions of eligibility set out above in point 1.

2.1.1 COSTS OF PERSONNEL – Estimated Budget Excel, Sheet A.1

The costs of personnel working under an employment contract with the beneficiary or an equivalent appointing act and assigned to the project are considered eligible costs (comprising actual salaries plus social security contributions and other statutory costs included in the remuneration).

In line with the EU Financial Regulation, the salary costs of public officials will be considered as a direct cost of the beneficiary to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority as beneficiary would not carry out if the project concerned was not undertaken.

The costs of natural persons working under a contract with the beneficiary other than an employment contract may be assimilated to costs of personnel, provided that the following conditions are fulfilled:

- the natural person works under the instructions of the beneficiary;
- the result of the work belongs to the beneficiary

If the above conditions are not met, the amounts paid to the natural person shall be presented under the category "subcontracting".

²¹ Indirect costs are explained in section 2.2 below.



IMPORTANT:

Staff assigned to the project must be classified in one of the [four](#) categories Manager, Researcher/Teacher/Trainer, Technical, Administrative. EFSA will check the correctness of the assigned category of each staff member from the CV's which will be provided by the beneficiary.

UNIT COSTS for personnel are shown in the table below. These costs are calculated based on EUROSTAT data, EFSA historical data, information received from other EC services and considering the annual labour costs per country. An annual revision of unit costs is done based on the application of the national inflation rates as published by [Eurostat](#). The updated unit costs will be applied to new Specific Agreements to be signed under a Framework Partnership Agreement already in force as of the date of the entry into force of this decision.

The **UNIT COSTS** per day for staff **must** be used when establishing the estimated budget and when declaring the incurred costs. **THE NUMBER OF DAYS** spent on the project (one day is composed of 8 working hours according to working day duration at EFSA) is to be indicated when establishing the estimated budget and when declaring the incurred costs.

The rate of the country in which the partner organisation is registered should be applied, independently of where the tasks will be executed (i.e. a staff member of an organisation of Country A working fully or partly in Country B will be budgeted on the basis of the rates of Country A).

The beneficiary must be able to justify the personnel costs at the end of the project by providing supporting documents (e.g. timesheets), if requested by EFSA.

The beneficiary shall ensure that CVs for all profiles (including technical and administrative staff) inserted in the budget are submitted together with the proposal for **direct** agreements. This will allow EFSA to check the correctness of the assigned role of each staff member. For those profiles for which the applicant reserves the right to recruit staff after the communication of the outcome of the call, CVs need to be provided to EFSA for checking the correctness of the assigned role as soon as the recruitment is complete.



UNIT COST PER DAY IN EUROS (September 2023)

Updated unit costs for staff - daily rates 2023

Country	Manager	Researcher Teacher Trainer	Technical	Administrative
Austria	500	337	272	216
Belgium	469	380	268	239
Bulgaria	73	66	50	34
Croatia	249	203	163	103
Cyprus	348	259	161	109
Czech Republic	227	127	92	72
Denmark	638	451	303	283
Estonia	135	108	71	52
Finland	472	278	224	173
France	468	378	277	230
Germany	543	339	274	222
Greece	222	142	104	92
Hungary	139	115	77	52
Ireland	443	367	268	199
Italy	477	313	231	183
Latvia	117	87	58	50
Lithuania	159	94	54	47
Luxembourg	584	383	309	261
Malta	135	113	88	66
Netherlands	462	374	263	209
Poland	170	102	75	56
Portugal	270	189	128	81
Romania	143	109	85	54
Slovakia	135	109	96	78
Slovenia	257	195	156	98
Spain	344	227	174	125
Sweden	417	335	276	212
Iceland (EEA Country)	416	378	326	210
Norway (EEA Country)	537	430	364	280



2.1.2 TRAVEL COSTS AND SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES – Estimated Budget Excel, Sheet A.2

All travel costs for missions, workshops/seminars/conferences must be included under Sheet A.2:

MISSIONS: travel costs and related subsistence allowances of staff and other persons taking part in the project are eligible. Kick-off, interim, final meetings and field trips (if any) are part of this category.

WORKSHOP/SEMINAR/CONFERENCE: travel costs for external participants and speakers (not staff employed by coordinator or partners) are eligible. As subsistence allowances are not foreseen for the participation of external participants in workshops/seminars/conferences, meals and accommodation for workshops must be inserted under the category "Miscellaneous" – Sheet A.6. The daily subsistence allowances and travel costs of EFSA representatives shall not enter in the estimated budget because these costs are paid by EFSA directly to the staff concerned.

Travel costs

These unit costs must be applied when establishing the estimated budget and when declaring the incurred costs:

UNIT COSTS

Type of transport	Distance in road Km	Travel Unit cost
Car	Any distance	0.33 €/Km
Train	Any distance	0.40 €/Km
Flight	Any distance	500 €

If two or more staff members travel together sharing a car, the cost should be calculated only one time for the entire group of people. Insert the number of km for only one of the staff travelling by car and insert "shared" for all other staff traveling together.

Inter-continental flights are not included. They should be estimated on a case-by-case basis and declared on real incurred cost of flight ticket. The most economical fares must be sought (i.e., non-flexible economic class).

Daily subsistence allowances (DSA)

The DSA applies only for a mission to a place more than 50 km from the normal place of employment.

For travels related to workshops, the DSA is not applicable because costs of hotel accommodation and meals (lunch and dinner) are to be declared under item Miscellaneous costs (see article 2.1.5).

The amounts presented in the below table are calculated to cover the following expenses during a day of mission: accommodation, meals, local transport to reach airport/train station at the place of residence/employment and within the place of mission (car, parking, taxi and/or public transport), and sundry expenses, such as telecommunications costs (fax, internet).

The DSA is to be calculated according to the length of the mission: from the time of departure of the means of transport used until the arrival at the place of employment or home.



- ≤ 24 hours: full DSA;
- > 36 hours ≤ 48 hours: 2 x DSA, etc.

Missions to countries not mentioned in the below table shall be submitted to EFSA for an ex-ante agreement.

Country	€
Austria	234
Belgium	250
Bulgaria	192
Croatia	185
Cyprus	228
Czech Republic	194
Denmark	297
Estonia	185
Finland	255
France	282
Germany	225
Greece	194
Hungary	184
Iceland (EEA country)	245
Ireland	267
Italy	246
Latvia	189
Liechtenstein (EEA country)	175
Lithuania	186
Luxembourg	246
Malta	226
Netherlands	269
Norway (EEA country)	220
Poland	183
Portugal	184
Romania	198
Slovakia	174
Slovenia	201
Spain	216
Sweden	304
Switzerland (EFTA country)	220



2.1.3 DEPRECIATION COSTS OF EQUIPMENT OR OTHER ASSETS – Estimated Budget Excel, Sheet A.3

These costs are eligible if:

- the acquisition is strictly necessary for the performance of the project;
- those costs are recorded in the accounting statements of the beneficiary;
- the asset has been purchased in accordance with Article 6.2 of the Grant agreement and it is written off in accordance with the international accounting standards and the usual accounting practices of the beneficiary.
- **Important:** The depreciation costs of equipment/software bought before the submission of the proposal can be taken into account in the estimated budget and when declaring the incurred costs but only for the portion covered by the period of the implementation of the proposed action. The percentage and the period covered by the depreciation costs should comply with the usual accounting practices of the beneficiary.

EFSA reserves the right to verify the correct application of the usual accounting practices of the beneficiary. In case the depreciation periods are not clearly indicated in those practices the following rules will be applied by EFSA:

- computer equipment (hardware) is written off over a period of 3 years,
- office furniture and equipment (photocopiers, fax, etc.) over 5 years, and
- specific computer software (not common software which is supposed to be covered by indirect costs) is covered in full.

The costs of rental or lease of equipment or other assets are also eligible, provided that these costs do not exceed the depreciation costs of similar equipment or assets and are exclusive of any finance fee.

Only the portion of the equipment's depreciation corresponding to the duration of the project and the rate of the actual use for the purposes of the project can be considered by EFSA as eligible. Consult the call for proposals for the maximum allowed duration of the project.

2.1.4 CONSUMABLES AND SUPPLIES – Estimated Budget Excel, Sheet A.4

The costs of consumables and supplies are eligible if:

- they are purchased in accordance with Article 6.2 of the Grant agreement;
- they are directly assigned to the project.

Unlike the equipment, these are “consumables²²”, i.e. items that are not entered as fixed assets in the accounts (or inventory) of the beneficiary and are not written off. The term “directly assigned to the project” is important in order to avoid reimbursing the same cost twice by way of indirect costs. The nature of the project and the fact that the costs are specific to the project are key factors justifying direct cover of these costs.

All other items that are not “consumables” are to be inserted under “miscellaneous” (e.g. publication fees).

2.1.5 SUBCONTRACTING – Estimated Budget Excel, Sheet A.5

²² For example: laboratory material, reagents, gloves, medicines, etc.



Costs entailed by subcontractors within the meaning of Article 6.2 of the Grant agreement are eligible, provided that the conditions laid down in that Article and in the Call for proposals are met.

The costs of natural persons working under a contract with the beneficiary other than an employment contract and which cannot be assimilated to costs of personnel, as indicated in part 2.1.1, are to be declared in this section.

Core tasks²³ may not be subcontracted. Only ancillary and assistance tasks may be subcontracted.

2.1.6 MISCELLANEOUS COSTS– Estimated Budget Excel, Sheet A.6

GENERAL MISCELLANEOUS COSTS: These might be the costs arising directly from requirements imposed by the Grant agreement, e.g. dissemination of information, specific evaluation of the project, audits, translations, printing/copying, including the costs of any requested financial guarantees, provided that the corresponding services are purchased in accordance with Article 6.2.

MISCELLANEOUS COSTS RELATED TO WORKSHOPS, SEMINARS, CONFERENCES: This category of eligible costs is intended to cover costs linked to the organisation of a workshop, seminar or conference, in particular:

1. hire of premises;
2. hire of equipment;
3. interpretation (interpreters and hiring of booths);
4. translation costs in connection with workshop/seminar/conference;
5. catering (lunch and dinner) and accommodation costs for external participants and speakers
6. external speaker fee (intended for an expert coming from outside of beneficiary/consortium), max 500 € per speaker per day;
7. other costs (e.g. printing costs for documentation to be distributed to participants, various supplies, reception staff).

In case a contract is to be awarded within the context of a workshop, e.g. translation or preparation of documents, these services or supplies must be purchased in accordance with Article 6.2 of the Grant agreement.

2.1.7 ELIGIBLE VAT

Duties, taxes and charges paid by the beneficiary, notably value added tax (VAT), are eligible, provided that they are included in eligible direct costs.

VAT is accepted as an eligible cost if it is not recoverable, and so declared on honour by the beneficiary in the estimated budget.

The eligible VAT cost should be declared in the same heading of the estimated budget in which the related cost is declared.

2.2 ELIGIBLE INDIRECT COSTS – Estimated Budget Excel, Summary sheet

"Indirect costs" of the project are those costs which are not directly linked to the implementation of the project and can therefore not be attributed directly to it. They may not include any costs identifiable or declared as eligible direct costs.

²³ For example coordination of the grant



To be eligible, indirect costs shall represent a fair apportionment of the overall overheads of the beneficiary and shall comply with the conditions of eligibility set out in point 1.

Unless otherwise specified, eligible indirect costs shall be declared on the basis of a flat rate of 10% of the total eligible direct costs. Eligible indirect costs may not include any eligible direct costs. The formula in the Summary of the estimated budget excel automatically calculates the eligible indirect costs at 10% of the inserted eligible direct costs.

The indirect costs are frequently of an administrative, technical and logistical nature, are cross-cutting for the operation of the beneficiary's various activities and cannot therefore be booked in full to the project for which the grant is awarded because this grant is only one part of those activities. Indirect costs comprise costs connected with infrastructures and the general operation of the organisation such as renting or depreciation of buildings and plant, water/gas/electricity, maintenance, cleaning, insurance, supplies, small office equipment such as toner, paper, stationary, communication and connection costs (phone, internet, fax, etc.), postage, and costs connected with horizontal services such as administrative and financial management, human resources, training, legal advice, documentation, IT, etc.

3. INELIGIBLE COSTS

In addition to any other costs which do not fulfill the conditions set out for eligible costs, the following costs shall not be considered eligible:

- return on capital;
- debt and debt service charges;
- provisions for losses or debts;
- interest owed;
- doubtful debts;
- exchange losses or costs of conversion;
- costs of transfers from the Authority charged by the bank of the partner;
- costs declared by the beneficiary in the framework of another action receiving a grant financed from the Union budget (including grants awarded by a Member State and financed from the Union budget and grants awarded by other bodies than the Authority for the purpose of implementing the Union budget); in particular, indirect costs shall not be eligible when the beneficiary already receives an operating grant financed from the Union budget during the period in question;
- contributions in kind from third parties;
- excessive or reckless expenditure;
- deductible VAT.

The ineligible costs, if any, must be declared in the Estimated Budget excel, Summary Sheet.

4. FLEXIBILITY WITH APPROVED ESTIMATED BUDGET

After the estimated budget of the project has been approved by EFSA (corrections are possible during the evaluation of the proposal) it becomes the approved estimated budget, and it will be attached to the Grant agreement. The approved estimated budget is based on estimates, and therefore it is normal that during the project implementation there might be a need to adjust it to reality or any unforeseen events.

The approved estimated budget may be adjusted by making transfers provided that such adjustments do not affect the basic purpose and the completion of the project is not jeopardised. No amendment is necessary for these transfers.



If the beneficiary wishes to replace a staff member by another employee, e.g. because of dismissal, maternity leave, long term sick leave of original staff member, a prior approval of EFSA should be sought and the new CV and individual declaration of interest (if DoIs are applicable) shall be provided. No amendment is necessary for these changes.