



AGROECOLOGY PARTNERSHIP



2ND CO-FUNDED CALL

FAQs webinar (13 Dec 2024)

version 1.0



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1 Introduction

This documents provides an overview on the questions asked by the participants during the webinar, which took place on 13th December 2024, for the 2nd co-funded call. The recordings and presented slides of the webinar can be found here: <https://fz-juelich.sciebo.de/s/L8xHjOPFAXWW1Dz>. If chapters and Annexes are cited, this always refers to the call document which can be downloaded on the submission website or as direct link here: <https://agroecology.ptj.de/call2?genericModule=callDocuments&action=download&id=955>

1.1 Call procedure

How many proposals will be funded under each topic?

This cannot be answered as this depends on multiple aspects such as number of submitted pre proposals and invited full proposals, distributions of partners among the countries and budget of the Funders. However, the Funders Board anticipates a balanced distribution of selected projects among the themes and topics.

Having big partnerships of 8-10 members increase the chance to be funded or are small partnerships preferable? Considering the complicated system of funding, different for each country, and the limited budget for each country, probably big consortia are more difficult to be selected.

There are no preferences in terms of the size of the consortium. The consortium shall fit to the proposals and the objectives shall be achieved. However, the size of the consortium (maximum number of 12 partners) has to be taken into account (see chapter 4.2, bullet point 7 of the eligibility criteria).

What are the consortium criteria? How are the assessed/judged?

There are no specific criteria which will be assessed to the consortium itself. The proposal as such will be evaluated and scored as described in chapter 6.2 and 6.3, respectively.

How can we demonstrate the involvement of local stakeholders following the Living Lab methodology? Would a letter of commitment signed by each participant (companies, farmers, consumer associations, etc) be positively considered?

Local stakeholders can be included as partners, if they are eligible to receive funds from one of the Funders and request funds for their tasks or can be added to the consortium as associated partners. Associated partners are entities who participate on own resources. Here a letter of commitment is obligatory. It is also possible to submit a letter of intent only. Here the stakeholder is neither listed as partner nor associated partner, but shall be mentioned in the text, e.g. in the work plan.

What is the role of the Funders in evaluating and approval of the proposal?

The Funders have no role in the evaluation procedure itself. The evaluation will be done by the International Expert Panel (see chapter 6) which is established by the call office and endorsed by the Funders. There is no approval of proposals by the Funders but an eligibility check of proposals based on the general eligibility criteria (call office) and the individual eligibility criteria defined by each Funder (done by each Funder), for more details please consider chapter 4.2, chapter 5.1.1 and 5.3.1, respectively.

Different Funders have different max budget. So if a country has many applications, is it possible that the proposal is rejected, because one of the partners' Funders is out of budget?

During the pre proposal phase the selection is based on the two ranking lists (one per Topic) and the availability of funds. During this selection a balance of requested funds among all Funders will be taken into consideration when selecting pre proposals to be invited to submit a full proposal (see chapter 5.1.3). During the full proposal selection, each ranking list must be followed. The selection will stop, when the amount of available funds is exhausted (see chapter 5.3.3). This means that in both phases (pre and full proposal), proposals might be not selected due to a lack of funding.

Are you looking for a consortium with partners from multiple countries, or does the composition not matter?

The minimum is 3 partners from 3 different countries requesting funds from 3 participating Funders of this call (see chapter 4.2, bullet point 7). There is no evaluation criteria saying that consortium of more than 3 countries have an advantage over consortia with the minimum number of countries only. Important is rather the fact that the consortium is appropriate to meet the set targets, aims and ambitions of the proposal.

Could partners of the same country request funding from different Funders within the same country?

From a call office perspective this is possible. As an example: There are three different Funders from Spain participating in this call. However, each Funder may have different target groups: CDTI provides funding to companies only, whereas AEI provides funds to universities and research institutes. In case of uncertainties, e.g. if one partner is eligible to receive funds from either Funder in his/her country, please contact the Funder Contact Point (FCP) and ask for recommendation. Furthermore, applicants can indicate in their partner profile which Funder is preferred. We highly recommend to carefully consider Annex IX and get in contact with the FCP in case of any questions raised.

Can UK Universities participate in the proposal?

This is a co-funded call implemented in the framework of the partnership AGROECOLOGY (so-called cascade funding). For this, the funding is provided on national/regional level from the participating Funders only. Thus, universities from the UK are not eligible as no Funder from the UK is participating in this call. However, universities from the UK can participate on own resources as partner to a consortium.

Does the consortium need to contain a research partner (university or university of applied sciences) or can the consortium consist fully of other types of partners (companies, farms, regional authorities etc.)?

There is no eligibility criteria to this aspect, so it is not mandatory to have a research partner in a consortium. However, this call is about a call for proposals in research and innovation. Please

carefully read the scope and objectives and the evaluation criteria in the call announcement to check if you address all aspects (see chapter 3 and 6).

Can partners be part of more than one proposal?

Yes, this is possible from the perspective of the general eligibility criteria. Please do also consider the Funder specific eligibility criteria for any exceptions (Annex IX). In addition, it is not possible that one person is the coordinator of more than one proposal (see chapter 4.2, bullet point 12).

If an organisation is already participating in Call1 with a successful project as Coordinator, can they also apply as Coordinator for a project in Call2? Or would this be seen negatively by the evaluation committee?

From the eligibility criteria, this is possible. However, it is up to the experts evaluating the proposal if this will be seen negatively.

Can Lesotho participate in this Horizon Europe call for proposals as a third world country in collaboration with the EU member states or associated states?

This is a co-funded call implemented in the framework of the partnership AGROECOLOGY (so-called cascade funding). For this, the funding is provided on national/regional level from the participating Funders only. Thus applicants from Lesotho are not eligible as no Funder from the Lesotho is participating in this call. However, applicants from Lesotho can participate on own resources as partner to a consortium.

Will there be the additional funding available for the partner coordinating the project? Or, it's just within the budget as stated in the call for different countries?

There is no additional budget foreseen from the partnership for the coordinator of one proposal. However, some Funders increase the maximum limit per project, if the coordinator role is taken over by “their” applicants. Please check the Funder regulations for details (see Annex IX).

If a consortium is made up of researchers from different countries, should each researcher apply for funding from his/her country?

At a first stage the researchers submit a pre proposal and in case of success will be invited to submit a full proposal. At both phases, the researchers already include a budget table on the total amount of requested funding per category. However, the grant negotiation process between researcher and its Funder will start after the full proposal selection.

If any of the consortium partners does not have ‘Funders’ in his/her home country, can the grant be applied for with his/her participation?

No, grants can be only provided by Funders to their applicants in their country/region. In exceptional cases a so-called cross-border funding is eligible, meaning Funders provides funds to researchers which are not based in their country. This needs to be clarified on individual basis with individual Funder.

If I understood correctly, the profile in the submission platform is linked to a researcher. The CV of the researcher is expected and the publications, does it mean that the coordinator should have an academic profile?

The coordinator does not need to be a researcher by default. However, a brief CV is needed in any case. This will support the International Expert Panel to decide on the scientific excellence and

expertise of the entire consortium. Taken into consideration the general eligibility criteria, a non-academic coordinator is possible.

Can the consortium accept other small farm organizations to partner with them in other developing countries like South Sudan?

It is possible to have a partner from South Sudan. However, a partner from South Sudan is not eligible to receive funding as there are no Funders from South Sudan involved in this call.

Can we use the budgets of our partners from other countries in our own country?

The so-called cross border funding is possible from the general eligibility criteria. However, this remains an exceptional case and this needs to be clarified on individual basis with each Funder.

Recognizing the consortium criteria that you have just reviewed, might the call also support work in regions outside the Horizon Europe or Agroecology Partnership geographic areas (e.g. comparative work that includes some European countries, and some outside Europe)?

This work is supported, however for this call no Funder from outside Europe is participating funds to this call. Thus, potential partner not listed as participating countries (see table 1 in chapter 4.4) can participate on own resources only. However, it might be possible to have subcontracts with partner from outside Europe or to apply a so-called cross-border funding, which means that Funders provide funds to researchers which are not based in their country, in exceptional cases. This needs to be clarified on individual basis with each Funder.

Can Joint Stock Consortia (e.g., regional authorities, working together with farmers associations or single farmers) participate?

This is possible. Please check the applicable Funder regulations in terms of eligibility of the partners (see Annex IX). In case some partners are not eligible, it is possible for those partners to join a consortium as associated partners on own resources. Here a letter of commitment is obligatory (see chapter 4.2)

Some Funders stipulate that all proposal applicants must hold a doctoral degree. Does this exclude early career researchers without a doctoral degree from collaborating on the project if it receives funding?

From the general eligibility criteria, there are no restrictions in terms of young researchers and the obligation of a doctoral degree. However, it is possible that Funders have included such restrictions in the Funder specific regulations (see Annex IX).

Suppose its consortium of Partners from the Sub Saharan part of Africa. Is that consortium eligible for this call?

This is a co-funded call implemented in the framework of the partnership AGROECOLOGY (so-called cascade funding). For this, the funding is provided on national/regional level from the participating Funders only. Thus applicants from Sub Saharan part of Africa are not eligible as no Funder from Africa in general is participating in this call. They can participate on own resources as partner to a consortium.

Is it correct that the amount each partner quotes in a proposal depends on the contribution/funding amount of their respective funding country?

Yes, this is correct. The funding is provided on national/regional level. Thus, the applicable rules of the Funders need to be respected (see Annex IX).

How do we set up a budget with partners from different countries? If Funders have different funding rules?

The maximum budget for each partner is outlined in the respective Funder regulations (see Annex IX). Example: an Estonian Funder provides 100,000 € per project and corresponding partner(s), a German Funder 250,000 € per project and its corresponding partner(s) and a Finnish Funder of 250,000 €. This means, the Estonian partner plans a budget for the work that he/she is carrying out of a maximum of 100,000 € whereas the German partner of a maximum of 250,000 € and the Finnish partner of 250,000 €, respectively. In total, the project has a maximum of 600,000 € requested funding, distributed among the partner according to the Funder's specific project limit for Estonia, Germany and Finland. In the current example this would also mean that the budget remains the same if a 2nd German partner joins the consortium. Thus, both German partners will share the maximum funding of 250,000 €. In case the 4th partner is from a different country, e.g. France, the total budget for the entire project will increase by the portion from the French partner. Please note that the figures above are meant as an example only, please consider the Funder regulations for all details and exceptions for maximum funding.

Will normal research and development possibly be funded in the next call for proposals especially for proposals that scored high in the last call?

Proposals from previous call will not be automatically high ranked and considered for selection for the next call. In case a proposal was not successful in one call, this proposal can be resubmitted in a next call, if it fits to the scope and objectives of the call.

Do the research and labs part of the project need to be developed in one of the three countries of the consortium?

This depends on the structure of each proposal. There is no eligibility criteria which set rule to this specific aspect. The consortium shall be complementary, so that the transnational aspects benefit the proposal (chapter 6.2, I3).

Is it correct that partnering must only be through the partnering request tool?

No, the partnering tool is a service provided by the call office to support you to build your consortium but you may well use any other channel.

Kindly explain the difference between a partner requesting and offering partnership. What is the criteria?

The partner request might be used if you have already a consortium and/or an idea of a proposal but lacking a certain expertise or an additional partner to fulfil certain tasks. For this you would use the partner request option and search for a specific type of partner. The partner offer might be used, if you like to join a consortium with your expertise but you do not have your own project idea.

If there are two Funders in one country - how can I know which of them will be my Funder? Is this dependent on the topic?

Please check the regulations of both Funders, sometimes you will be eligible only for one of them. In case you are eligible to receive funding from both of them, we recommend to get in contact with the Funder Contact Point (FCP) and ask for advice.

How are projects selected, if the both are ranked equally?

Equally scored proposals are equally ranked. If it is not possible to select both proposals due to lack of funding, the Funders Board will decide which proposal will be selected.

At what point do the partners deal with the Funders contact point? Is it before submitting the pre proposal or when the proposal is approved?

The Funder Contact Point shall be contacted in all requests dealing with the respective Funder specific rules and doubts about them. This can be during the pre as well as full proposal phase.

I read about universities and higher education. How about Vocational Education & Training (VET). Can that type of education participate to?

This depends on the specific Funder regulation, if this type of partner is eligible to receive funding (see Annex IX for details).

In which case Letter of Financial Commitment is needed?

This is needed for all associated partners, which are partners not requesting funding from one of the listed Funders, but participating as partners in a consortium on own resources (see chapter 4.2, bullet point 8).

Is Morocco an eligible country for partners or only as associated partner?

This is a co-funded call implemented in the framework of the partnership AGROECOLOGY (so-called cascade funding). For this, the funding is provided on national/regional level from the participating Funders only. Thus applicants from Morocco are not eligible as no Funder from Morocco is participating in this call. They can participate on own resources as partner to a consortium.

What is the meaning of Annex XI List of beneficiaries of AGROECOLOGY (research performing organisations only)? Are only these organizers eligible to be funded partners in the projects?

This list includes all Research Performing Organisations that are also partners in the partnership AGROECOLOGY. Annex XI is included for transparency issues and the listed organisations have no advantage in the competitive co-funded call towards other research performing organisations that are not part of the partnership AGROECOLOGY.

Will new countries (and their national Funders until submission) join or will only conditions be updated as in the case of FORMAS (Sweden)?

In principle it is possible that Funders may join during the submission phase, however this is very unlikely to happen. It is likely to happen that the conditions described by each Funder may be subject to change, e.g. some conditions will be added by more explanations, adaptations to budget. In such cases, this will be announced on the landing page of the submission website of call 2. Here you will always find the current version of the call announcement and Funder regulations incl. a brief description of adaptations/updates where applicable.

Does the funding for a given project comes from all three of the countries involved or only from the country of the coordinator? If the former, should we be strategic about who we list as coordinator based on funds available etc.?

The funding for this call is provided as so-called virtual common pot. This means that funding for each partner and coordinator will be provided by its applicable national/regional funding agency as listed in Annex IX – Funder regulations. As an example: an applicant from the Netherlands has to check if he/she is eligible to receive funding from MINLNV. The coordinator role shall be chosen by the consortium based on their needs and preferences. The call office cannot provide any support on the decision making here.

Are living labs or research infrastructures a prerequisite for funding?

No, this is not a general eligibility criteria. However, please consider the call objectives and scope (chapter 3) in the call announcement: Here it is clearly stated among other things that proposals [...] *shall apply the multi-actor approach and exhibit co-creation and co-implementation structures, via Living labs or initiatives following the Living lab approach.* [...]. We also recommend to check the individual Funder regulations (Annex IX) for exceptions.

Do I understand correctly that the budget from the national Funder (e.g. 250.000€) is the total budget for all project partners of the respective country?

Please check each individual Funder regulation if this is the case. The maximum amount of funding may differ in case of several partners of one country participating in one proposal; and, in some cases depending on the role of the partner, as a partner or as a coordinator, may have an influence on the total amount of funding budget per proposal.

I guess the question regarding consortium criteria could be understood like if the identity of the applicants is relevant or it is a double blind review?

No, the evaluation is not conducted as double blind review. Please check chapter 6 for full details on the evaluation procedure.

As per presenter's statement while opening Q&A, does it mean that there are already 19 listed ones in the first call and these are somehow connected to second call?

No, the proposals for the 2nd call do not need to be connected to the 1st call.

My question is, if a person is an independent researcher, can they apply for funding? And a person from EU-extra (e. g. Turkey) can be eligible for apply?

This is up to the individual Funder regulation as outlined in Annex IX. Here you can check whether the applicable Funder of your country/region provides funding to independent researchers. Only applicants from countries and regions listed in table 1 (chapter 4.4) of the call announcement may be eligible to receive funding, subject to the respective applicable Funder regulation. Regarding the example from the question, a Funder from Türkiye participates in this call.

What is meant by "confirmation of the financial own contribution" for SME as requested by the BMBF?

Please contact the Funder Contact Point (FCP) of BMBF for further details.

1.2 Others

Is there access to an overview of the winners and the granted proposals from call 1?

The proposals are already selected and results will be published soon on our website: <https://www.agroecologypartnership.eu/>

What was the ratio of submitted and funded proposals for the first call?

89 pre proposals have been submitted in response to the 1st co-funded call and in result of the evaluation by the International Expert Panel and selection by the Funders Board, 38 pre proposals have been invited to submit a full proposal. The result of the evaluation of full proposals and the selection by the Funders Board, 19 proposals were selected for funding. For more details, please check on our recent Newsletter: <https://www.agroecologypartnership.eu/news/newsletterdec2024>

Will you share the slides and a list of participants after the meeting?

Slides are available, however we do not share the list of participants due to our Data Protection Rules. In case you wish to get connected with potential applicants, please make use of our partnering tool: <https://agroecology.ptj.de/partnering>

1.3 Scope and topics

Will this call potentially support social science research into the opportunities and obstacles associated with the transition to agroecology (e.g. into the social, economic and political 'trade offs' that it may require and whether/how those might be surmounted)?

Definitely, social sciences are highly encouraged to apply to the call. Analysing the opportunities and obstacles associated with the transition to agroecology is part of the call's objectives. Besides, as stated in the call announcement, the analyses of impacts and scenarios must involve the environmental, social, and economic perspectives. Depending on the specific theme and approach chosen, social sciences could be involved in or lead a proposal on Topic 2 or Topic 1.

Can Training farm or Experimental station of University working together with farmers, farmers union, Chamber of Agriculture, Advisory Service, Companies be a Living Lab? How it has to be documented? Should all participating organisations should sign agreement?

Yes, these types of entities could form a living lab and join forces to apply for the call. The way the project will follow a living lab approach must be explained in the proposal, by outlining the respective roles of the different entities and how they will work together in a co-creation approach.

Can existing Living Labs be funded as well?

The call will fund research and innovation projects following a living lab approach. This can involve an existing Living Lab, a new one, or a multi-stakeholder approach inspired by living labs. Only research and innovation activities will be funded. Please do also check the Funder regulation (Annex IX) for details on eligibility.

Could you please elaborate on the living lab approach? Would a proposed project need to refer to a specific place in which a living lab already exists or should be developed?

In general, living labs in agroecology are local, as agroecology implementation typically depends on local conditions. This context-dependency makes it advisable for the project to refer to a specific place. It is not compulsory to have an operative living lab at each specific place but to follow a living-lab approach and explain how it will be implemented and the actors and their roles involved in the activities.

Should the consortium itself be 'multi-stakeholder' or is it sufficient that the 'multi-stakeholder' component comes through the funded research/activities?

It is recommended to implement a 'multi-stakeholder' consortium wherever possible. However, depending on the individual Funder Regulations of each funding agency (Annex IX), this may not always be feasible. In such cases, the proposal should clearly demonstrate that an approach inspired by the Living Lab methodology will be followed.

1.4 Submission tool

Can you provide the code for figure attaching?

Figures included in text fields within the submission tool can be embedded by `[[figure1]]`, if a respective figure is uploaded in the submission tool in menu "FIGURES".



Can you share the link of the partnering tool please?

<https://agroecology.ptj.de/partnering>