

GUIDELINES FOR GRANT CONTRACT AWARD

PURPOSE OF THE GRANT CONTRACT :

*Sustainable consumption and production of plastic products and alternatives
(Call for result Area 3)*

MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF CONTRACT:

180 000 euros

REFERENCE NUMBER: RP-R3-2020

CUT OFF DATE AND TIME FOR SUBMITTING CONCEPT NOTES:

17/06/2020 at 12h UTC, 19h Paris time, 00h Hanoi time

DISCLAIMER

This is a restricted call for proposals. The first step entailed the submission of Concept Notes, and subsequently, the lead applicants who have been shortlisted are invited to submit a complete application, in response to these guidelines. After the evaluation of the complete applications, the eligibility of the applicants provisionally selected will be verified on the basis of the supporting documents requested by Expertise France and the declaration signed by the lead applicant, sent at the same time as the complete application.

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“Rethinking Plastics – Circular Economy Solutions to Marine Litter”

Sustainable consumption and production of plastic products and alternatives

1. ABOUT THIS CALL

1.1 Background

The “Rethinking Plastics – Circular Economy Solutions to Marine Litter” project will support selected pilot projects through financial contributions in the area of sustainable consumption and production of plastic and plastic waste management in Vietnam. Please find further information about the process hereafter.

Driven by rapid urbanisation, economic development and changing consumption and production patterns, the amount of single-use packaging and plastic items is rapidly increasing in East and Southeast Asia. At the same time, waste management systems still lack effectiveness in terms of environmentally sound collection, sorting, recycling, energy recovery and disposal of packaging waste. These trends significantly contribute to marine littering – a growing regional and global threat to marine ecosystems and fisheries as well as the tourism sector. Governments, businesses, academia and civil society increasingly recognise that a switch towards a circular economy approach to plastic waste is necessary to tackle these challenges.

The project “Rethinking Plastics – Circular Economy Solutions to Marine Litter” supports the transition towards a circular economy for plastics and sustainable plastic consumption and production in East and Southeast Asia to contribute to a significant reduction of marine litter. It implements advisory services and pilot projects in close cooperation with regional, national and local partners.

The project is funded by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). It is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and Expertise France. Project activities are defined and implemented in close cooperation with regional, national and local partners. On-going initiatives by other international organisations, the public and private sectors, civil society and academia are taken into account. In Vietnam, the national project partner is the Ministry of the Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE).

1.2 Program objectives and priorities

Pilot projects are a vital part of the implementation of the “Rethinking Plastics” project and selected ideas will be supported.

The selected pilot projects will serve to establish and disseminate good practices and shall consist of tangible initiatives that demonstrate change and results. They shall test new approaches or up-scale existing best practices with a close link to policy dialogues and processes, strategies and regulatory reforms at national and regional level.

The pilot project idea should concentrate on activities in Vietnam in the following area:

Sustainable consumption and production of plastic products and alternatives

Pilot projects could contribute to establish sustainable alternatives to plastic bags, cups, straws, cutlery, food containers, small portion sachets as well as other types of packaging and items by answering the following questions: Which alternative solutions are feasible in terms of reusability and material choice and sustainable in terms of ecological, social and economic aspects? How to promote product and system design for reuse, recyclability and the application of recycled materials without plastic leakage into the environment? Which packaging enables access to safe consumer goods for all levels of income while reducing the generation and leakage of plastic waste?

Potential categories of pilot projects are listed in section 2.1.4, as examples of actions that could be funded.

1.3 Funding amount granted by Expertise France

The overall amount available under this call for proposals is **180 000 EUR**. Expertise France reserves the right to not allocate all available funds.

Amounts of grants

Any grant application under this Call for Proposals must be at:

- a maximum amount of 180 000 EUR, and
- a suggested minimum amount of 90 000 EUR.

Please note that the exact level of funding per project will depend on which projects and associated budget is selected. This selection itself will be done according to the technical criteria and administrative eligibility set in these guidelines. The technical quality of the proposal will be a key determining factor. The minimum funding amount should be read simply as an indication.

Any grant requested under this call for proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum percentages of total eligible costs of the action:

- Minimum percentage: 80% of the total eligible costs of the action
- Maximum percentage: 90% of the total eligible costs of the action (see also Section 2.1.5).

The balance (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from Expertise France) must be financed from sources other than the budget of the European Union or the budget of Expertise France.

2. RULES APPLICABLE TO THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

These guidelines define the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of actions financed under this call for proposals, in accordance with Chapter 6 of the Practical Guide, which apply to this call¹.

2.1 Eligibility criteria

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, which relate to:

¹ The PRAG, and particularly its Chapter 6 is available on the web Site of EuropeAid at the following address: <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/document.do?nodeNumber=6>

(1) The actors:

- The 'lead applicant', i.e. the entity submitting the application form (2.1.1),
- if any, its co-applicant(s) (where it is not specified otherwise the lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) are hereinafter jointly referred as 'applicant(s)') (2.1.1),
- and, if any, affiliated entity(ies) to the lead applicant and/or to a co-applicant(s). (2.1.2);

(2) the actions:

actions eligible for a grant (2.1.4);

(3) the costs:

the types of costs that may be included in the calculation of the grant amount (2.1.5).

2.1.1 Eligibility of applicants (lead applicant and co-applicant(s))

Lead applicant

(1) To be eligible for a grant, the lead applicant must meet the following conditions:

- Be a legal person; and
- Be non-profit ; and
- Be established² in Vietnam or in a member State of the European Union and;
- Be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with co-applicants(s) and the affiliated entity(ies) and not act as an intermediary.

Eligible implementing organisations of the pilot projects can include public-benefit / non-profit organisations such as for example:

- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- Inter-governmental organisations
- Universities, Institutes, Think Tanks, Foundations and Associations
- Local or provincial government entities such as municipalities and Provincial Offices of Natural Resources and Environment, national government entities

For-profit organisations (e.g. consulting companies, productive industrial companies, start-ups) can be part of the project implementation as sub-contractors of the recipient non-profit organisation. However, the following conditions apply:

- The activities financed should be primarily of public benefit and not primarily serve their core business interest
- Transparent and strict tendering procedures need to be followed and documented according to the rules and procedures of EF and in coordination with the EF contracts department. Sub-contractors cannot be named in the full project proposal.

² The institution is determined on the basis of the statutes of the organization which must demonstrate that the organization was created by an act of domestic law of the country concerned and that its head office is located in an eligible country. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been created in another country can not be considered as an eligible organization, even if it is registered locally or a "memorandum of understanding" has been concluded.

(2) Potential applicants can not participate in calls for proposals or receive grants if they are in one of the situations mentioned in the Practical Guide (PRAG).

In Section 3 of the Annex A - Grant Application Form («Lead Applicant Declaration»), the Lead Applicant must declare that neither is he/she nor the co-applicant(s) nor the entity(ies) affiliated are in one of these situations.

If awarded the grant, the lead applicant becomes the beneficiary identified as the coordinator in the Grant Contract (Annex F – Contract Special Conditions). The coordinator is the main interlocutor of Expertise France. He/she represents potential other beneficiaries and acts on their behalf. He/she designs and coordinates the implementation of the action.

Co-applicants

Co-applicants participate in the definition and implementation of the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the lead applicant.

Co-applicants must meet the eligibility criteria that apply to the lead applicant itself.

Co-applicants must sign the terms of reference Section 4 of the Grant Application Form (Annex A).

If awarded the grant, the potential co-applicants will become the beneficiaries of the action, together with the coordinator.

(3) Applicants included in the lists of EU restrictive measures (see Section 2.4. of the PRAG) at the moment of the award decision cannot be awarded the contract³.

2.1.2 Affiliated entities

The lead applicant and its co-applicants may act with one or more affiliated entities.

Only the following entities may be considered affiliated to the lead applicant and/or co-applicant(s) :

Only entities structurally related to the applicants (the lead applicant or a co-applicant) in particular in capital or legal terms.

This structural link mainly covers two notions:

- (i) control, as meant by Directive 2013/34/UE on annual financial statements and related reports of certain types of enterprises :
 - Entities affiliated to an applicant may therefore be:
 - o Entities controlled directly or indirectly by the applicant (subsidiary or subsidiary of first rank, or controlled by an entity itself controlled by the applicant (sub-subsidiaries or second level subsidiaries). This is valid for other levels of control;

³ The updated lists of sanctions are available at www.sanctionsmap.eu.

Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

- Entities directly or indirectly controlling the applicant (parent company. In the same way, it may be entities controlling a company controlling the applicant ;
- (ii) Entities with the same level of direct or indirect level as the applicant (siter companies)
- (iii) Membership, i.e. the applicant is legally defined as e.g. a network, a federation, an association to which the affiliated entity participates or the applicant participates in the same organization (e.g. network, federation or association) than the proposed affiliated entity.

The structural link should not be limited to the action or established solely to implement it. It must exist independently of the award of the grant. This means that this link should exist before the call for proposals and remain valid once the action is completed.

What can not be an affiliated entity?

The following organizations cannot be considered affiliated entities to the applicant:

- Entities that have entered into a (procurement) contract or subcontract with an applicant, act as concessionaires or delegates for public services for an applicant,
- Entities that receive financial support from the applicant,
- Entities that cooperate on a regular basis with an applicant on the basis of a memorandum of understanding or share some assets,
- Entities that have signed a consortium agreement under the grant contract (unless this consortium agreement leads to the creation of a 'sole applicant' as described above).

How to verify the existence of the link with an applicant?

Affiliation resulting from a control relationship may be established in particular on the basis of the consolidated group accounts to which the applicant and the proposed affiliated entity belong.

Affiliation resulting from membership may be established in particular on the basis of the statutes (or any equivalent constitutive act) defining the applicant as a network, federation or association to which the applicant participates.

If a grant contract is awarded to applicants, their affiliated entity (ies) will neither become beneficiaries of the action nor signatories of the contract. However, they participate in the definition and implementation of the action and the costs they incur (in particular those relating to implementation contracts and financial support to third parties) may be eligible provided that they comply with the relevant rules applicable to the beneficiary (s) under the grant contract.

Affiliated entities must meet the same eligibility criteria as those applicable to the lead applicant or co-applicants. They must also sign the declaration available in Section 5 of the grant application form.

2.1.3 Associates and contractors

The following entities are neither applicants nor affiliated entities. They do not have to sign the "co-applicant's mandate" or the "affiliated entity declaration":

Associates

Other organizations or individuals may be involved in the action. Associates do participate in the action but cannot claim any grant benefits, except for daily allowances and travel expenses. They are not held to meet the eligibility criteria mentioned in point 2.1.1. The associates must be mentioned in Section 6 of the grant application form, entitled "Associates participating in the action".

Contractors

Beneficiaries and their affiliated entities may award contracts. The associates or affiliated entity (ies) can not at the same time be project contractors. Contractors are subject to the procurement rules set out in Annex F – I. of the grant contract template.

2.1.4 Eligible actions: for which actions can an application be submitted?

Definition

An action includes a series of activities linked by a common goal.

Duration

The implementation of each pilot project can run until 28th of February 2022 with a minimum duration of 12 months. It is expected to start by September 2020, or earlier if possible.

Types of action eligible for funding under this call for proposals. Please note that this list is not exhaustive.

- **Plastic waste free markets / schools / public institutions and space:** Markets, supermarkets, schools, and academic institutions etc. might provide a suitable scope for pilot projects due their clear system boundaries and stakeholders. Pilot projects could envisage a transformation process leading to a significant reduction of single-use plastics (e.g. bags, straws, cups, plates, cutlery, boxes, Styrofoam). Packaging from alternative materials (e.g. cupboard, paper, wood, metal) or deposit-refund schemes for reusable beverage containers might be tested. A transformation process might involve baseline studies on current waste generation and management practices as well as life-cycle assessments of alternatives, including potential effects on reducing plastic leakage into the environment. It could include moderated multi-stakeholder dialogues with vendors, suppliers, restaurants, market or school authorities, city officials and others. It could involve awareness raising campaigns to inform consumers about plastic issues and intended changes regarding consumption patterns.
- **Plastic waste free tourism / leisure industry:** The tourism industry has an inherent business interest in keeping the landscape, beaches and the ocean clean. Pilot projects could therefore focus on dialogue processes and partnerships with hotels, restaurants, retailers, tourism operators, public authorities, civil society, national parks and other stakeholders in touristic or leisure areas. Joint activities could consist in identifying reusable and recyclable alternatives to substitute single-use plastics. Retail chains of drinks in reusable beverage containers and deposit-refund schemes for cups used in specific areas could be explored. Awareness raising for tourists and inhabitants, including beach clean-ups, could be involved. Pilot projects could also consider innovative organisational solutions (e.g. stakeholder alliances, public-private partnerships) or include mechanisms to raise environmental tourism fees that support the financing schemes for the collection and treatment of remaining waste.
- **Circular product design:** The design of products and packaging in terms of material composition, form and colour is crucial for its ability to be reused or recycled. Pilot projects could conduct stakeholder dialogues between the public and private sector, civil society and academia at local, national or regional level for the elaboration of technical standards e.g. to optimise packaging design for recyclability, to expand the use of recycled materials in new products and to avoid the use of primary microplastics in cosmetics. Pilot projects could also explore options and specific value chains to substitute, for certain uses, plastics through organic, biodegradable materials (e.g. seaweed, cassava, rice straws, bamboo, wood, cotton) or to reduce packaging together with packaging producers, the consumer goods industry, retailers and the delivery sector. They could

involve assessments of technological options as well as the related environmental, social and economic aspects. Pilot project can foresee the use of recycled material product design (e.g. upcycling).

- **Actions aimed at increasing public awareness around the key issues described above.**

Note on COVID-19

Please note that in the current COVID-19 context, it is encouraged that applications consider the impact of pandemic on the type, scope, expected results, and timing of the suggested activities. While applicants are not expected to redesign their initial proposals, any inclusion of the impact of COVID-19 would be encouraged and valued. Please note that this aspect will not be assessed separately, rather as part of the other criteria listed in the assessment grid under 2.4.

As the current COVID-19 situation represents a challenge to all areas of social life, please consider this new situation as a cross-cutting issue when filling out all parts of the full project proposal. Reliable provisions of how the pandemic and its related socio-economic impacts will evolve are not possible. However, please ensure that the pilot projects are as suitable as possible for implementation throughout the pilot project duration (e.g. September 2020 to February 2022).

Please outline specifically in section 11 (risks and mitigation) how you plan to cope with these potential impacts.

As an orientation, the following aspects should be considered according to the project scope:

- Potentially continued “physical distancing” measures (e.g. distance of 1.5 metres between persons; upper limit of number of persons at a meeting and at events). Please consider how to deal with this constraint concerning intended meetings, interviews, surveys, outreach events, awareness raising activities, training; please consider (virtual) alternatives and that the availability, access, capacity or willingness may differ between stakeholders and within groups (e.g. varying IT literacies depending on ages).
- Potentially continued travel restrictions (international, domestic). Please consider what limitations to travelling implies for your project (e.g. local staff / distance between head office and project area; need for travel; modes of cooperation), meetings, etc.
- Potential impacts on plastic consumption and production. Please consider e.g. how to mitigate increasing plastics consumption related to food delivery and take-away / delivery of different products / increasing packaging consumption; increased attention to hygiene for substitution of certain single-use plastic items (straws, cutlery, plates, bags, Styrofoam boxes etc.)
- Impacts on plastic waste management and recycling. Please consider e.g. how to ensure continued operations of waste management services; advise to households concerning appropriate waste handling and separation in times of infectious/medical waste; potentially increased hardship for the informal sector; health and safety standards for waste workers; financing schemes / Extended Producer Responsibility to mitigate price volatility of recycled materials.
- Potentially overall socio-economic impacts. Please consider e.g. reduction in tourism due to travel bans and other factors; continued closure of certain shops and restaurants; increase in unemployment / reduced income; interrupted international value chains.

Information resources on COVID-19 and circular economy:

- European Commission - DG Environment (2020) Waste management in the context of the coronavirus crisis, 14 April 2020. https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/waste_management_guidance_dg-env_en
- Basel Convention Secretariat (2020) 'Waste management an essential public service in the fight to beat COVID-19'. 20 March 2020, <http://www.basel.int/Implementation/PublicAwareness/PressReleases/WastemanagementandCOVID19/tabid/8376/Default.aspx>
- Association of Cities and Regions for sustainable Resource Management (2020) 'Municipal waste management and COVID-19'. <https://www.acrplus.org/en/municipal-waste-management-covid-19>
- Climate and Clean Air Coalition – Waste Management (2020) Waste Management and COVID-19. <https://www.waste.ccacoalition.org/activity/waste-management-and-covid-19-0>
- GIZ / China Integrated Waste Management NAMA (2020) 'COVID-19 Outbreak: Impacts on China's Circular Economy and Plastic Recycling Economy'. <https://www.iwm-nama.org/posts/covid-19-outbreak-impacts-on-chinas-circular-economy-and-plastic-recycling-industry/>
- International Solid Waste Association (ISWA) (2020) COVID-19 response – international knowledge sharing on waste management. <https://www.iswa.org/?id=1627>
- Urban Pathways (2020) 'How to continue waste management services during the COVID-19 pandemic'. <https://nuacampus.org/how-to-continue-waste-management-services-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>
- WIEGO (2020) 'Waste Pickers: Essential service providers at high risk'. <https://www.wiego.org/waste-pickers-essential-service-providers-high-risk>
- World Health Organisation (2020) Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Pandemic. <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
- Zero Waste Cities (2020) 'COVID-19 and Zero Waste'. <https://zerowastecities.eu/academy/covid19-zero-waste/>

The following types of action are not eligible:

- Actions consisting solely or mainly of sponsoring the participation of individuals in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- Actions consisting solely or mainly of funding individual scholarships for studies or training.

Financial support to third parties⁴

Applicants may propose financial support to third parties. Applicants may propose financial support to third parties in order to help achieving the objectives of the action. The maximum amount of financial support per third party is EUR ≤ 60 000. Under this call, financial support to third parties is not considered essential to achieve the objective of the action.

In compliance with the present guidelines and notably of any conditions or restrictions in this Section, the lead applicant should define mandatorily in Section 2.1.1 of the grant application form:

⁴ These third parties are not affiliated entities, partners or contractors.

- (i) the overall objectives, the specific objective(s) and the outputs⁵ (i.e. the results) to be achieved with the financial support
- (ii) the different types of activities eligible for financial support, on the basis of a fixed list
- (iii) the types of persons or categories of persons which may receive financial support
- (iv) the criteria for selecting these entities and giving the financial support
- (v) the criteria for determining the exact amount of financial support for each third entity, and
- (vi) the maximum amount which may be given.

Visibility

Applicants must take all necessary measures to ensure the visibility of funding from the European Union. Actions financed wholly or partly by this call for proposals must as far as possible include information and communication activities aimed at making all or part of the public aware of the reasons for the action, and on the grounds of the aid implemented by Expertise France with the financing of the European Union in the country or region concerned.

Applicants must ensure the visibility of funding from the European Union, implemented by Expertise France as a key institutional player in the project must therefore be guaranteed.

Applicants must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU financing (see the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU external actions specified and published by the European Commission at http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/communication-and-visibility-manual-eu-external-actions_en).

Knowledge sharing, dissemination, and replication

The dissemination on the achievements and lessons learned from successes and failures is at the heart of this call for proposals to facilitate exchanges at local, national and regional level. These exchanges will be the necessary material for potential replication across the region to disseminate innovation, but also to policy makers to change public policies.

As such, the applicants will have to explain how the project will ensure the knowledge sharing and dissemination of results, including monitoring and evaluation, including for example:

- the objectives of such dissemination process of the project,
- the mechanism and the method (s) envisaged for collecting and preserving the different types of information,
- the description of the information to be disseminated,
- the targets according to the nature of the information,
- the nature of the activities intended to disseminate the disseminated information and the methods of access to this information,
- the means that will be implemented to achieve the objectives,
- the possible major events envisaged in connection with the local, national, regional or international context.

⁵ As per OECD DAC definition, the term 'results' includes: 'impact' (overall objective), 'outcome(s)' (specific objective(s) and 'output(s)'.

Applicants will need to consider, in their dissemination strategies, methods for sharing results and lessons learned that can be used in other areas of intervention, to percolate knowledge beyond their scale of intervention, and to promote dialogue between scales and between themes.

A communication and dissemination plan will therefore be developed at the beginning of the project according to the communication and dissemination guidelines that will be annexed to the grant contract through the grant management guide.

Monitoring and evaluation

Each project is encouraged to have an internal monitoring and evaluation system that makes it possible, in particular, to monitor progress in the implementation of the planned actions, and the evolution of the indicators, by distinguishing the indicators based on the means and techniques, and indicators based on effects and impacts. The system put in place would then provide evidence-based quality reporting for data use and learning throughout the project. It could include semi-annual and annual technical reports focused on effects and impacts much more than activities and products.

In addition to the monitoring-evaluation and impact indicators specific to each project, other indicators common to all selected projects could be specified at the time of contracting with the applicant. The applicant would, however, have to demonstrate its capacity and describe the approach to carry out this monitoring and evaluation in its detailed proposal.

On the basis of the proposed monitoring and evaluation mechanism described in the detailed proposal, the applicants would develop at the beginning of the project a definitive monitoring and evaluation system that complies with the monitoring and evaluation guidelines which will be annexed to the grant contract through the grant management guide.

A reference baseline study, at the beginning, and an external evaluation at the end of the project could be planned and included in the project budget for which funding is requested, for example.

Number of applications and grants per applicant / affiliated entity

The lead applicant cannot submit more than one application under this Call for Proposals.

The lead applicant cannot be awarded more than one (1) grant under this Call for Proposals.

The lead applicant may be at the same time a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in another application.

A co-applicant / affiliated entity may not be a co-applicant or affiliated entity in more than one application under this Call for Proposals.

A co-applicant / affiliated entity may not be awarded more than 1 grant under this Call for Proposals.

2.1.5 Eligibility of costs: which costs can be included?

Only "eligible costs" can be covered by a grant. The types of eligible and ineligible costs are listed below. The budget is both an estimate of costs and an overall ceiling for 'eligible costs'.

The reimbursement of eligible costs is based on the costs actually borne by the beneficiary (ies) and the affiliated entity (ies).

Eligible direct costs

To be eligible for the purposes of this call for proposals, the costs must comply with the conditions laid down in Article 14 of the general conditions of the grant contract template (see Annex F-II of these guidelines).

Applicants (and, where applicable, their affiliated entities) agree that the expenditure verification (s) referred to in Article 15.7 of the General Conditions of the Grant Contract Template (see Annex F-II of these Guidelines) will be carried out by Expertise France or any external organization authorized by Expertise France.

The salary costs of full-time local government staff may be eligible as long as they are related to the costs of the activities that the administration in question would not support if the action was not undertaken.

By way of derogation from the provisions of Articles 14.2, 14.3 and 14.4 of the general conditions of the grant contract template (see Annex F-II of these Guidelines), simplified cost options are not permitted under this Call for Proposals.

Contingency reserve

The budget may include a contingency reserve of up to 5% of the estimated eligible direct costs. It may only be used with the **prior written authorization** of Expertise France.

Eligible indirect costs

The indirect costs incurred during the implementation of the action may be eligible for lump sum financing, but the total amount may not exceed 7% of the total estimated eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible in as much as they do not include costs accounted in another budget heading in the grant contract template. The lead applicant may be asked to justify the percentage requested before the grant contract is signed. However, once the fixed rate has been fixed in the special conditions of the grant contract, no supporting document shall be provided by the beneficiary.

If one of the applicants or one of the affiliated entities receives an operating grant financed by Expertise France or the EU, it cannot include indirect costs in the costs that it assumes in the proposed budget for the action.

Contributions in kind

Contributions in kind mean the provision of goods or services to beneficiaries or affiliated entities free of charge by a third party. As contributions in kind do not involve any expenditure for beneficiaries or affiliated entities, they are normally not eligible costs.

Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- debts and the burden of debt (interest);
- provisions for possible future losses or debts;
- costs declared by the beneficiary (ies) and financed by another action or another work program receiving a grant from Expertise France or the European Union (including the EDF)
- purchases of land or buildings, except where such purchases are essential for the direct implementation of the action, in which case their ownership must be transferred in accordance with Article 7.5 of the general conditions of the model grant contract, at the latest at the end of the action
- exchange losses
- credit to third parties

- salary costs of the personnel of national administrations
- VAT and other national taxes.

Ethics clauses and Code of Conduct

a) Absence of conflict of interest

The applicant must not be affected by any conflict of interest and must have no equivalent relation in that respect with other applicants or parties involved in the actions. Any attempt by an applicant to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the evaluation committee or the contracting authority during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing applications will lead to the rejection of its application and may result in administrative penalties according to the Financial Regulation in force.

b) Respect for human rights as well as environmental legislation and core labour standards

The applicant and its staff must comply with human rights. In particular and in accordance with the applicable act, applicants who have been awarded contracts must comply with the environmental legislation including multilateral environmental agreements, and with the core labour standards as applicable and as defined in the relevant International Labour Organisation conventions (such as the conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining; elimination of forced and compulsory labour; abolition of child labour).

Zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and sexual abuse:

The European Commission applies a policy of 'zero tolerance' in relation to all wrongful conduct which has an impact on the professional credibility of the applicant.

Physical abuse or punishment, or threats of physical abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation, harassment and verbal abuse, as well as other forms of intimidation shall be prohibited.

c) Anti-corruption and anti-bribery

The applicant shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations and codes relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption. The European Commission reserves the right to suspend or cancel project financing if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process or during the execution of a contract and if the contracting authority fails to take all appropriate measures to remedy the situation. For the purposes of this provision, 'corrupt practices' are the offer of a bribe, gift, gratuity or commission to any person as an inducement or reward for performing or refraining from any act relating to the award of a contract or execution of a contract already concluded with the contracting authority.

d) Unusual commercial expenses

Applications will be rejected or contracts terminated if it emerges that the award or execution of a contract has given rise to unusual commercial expenses. Such unusual commercial expenses are commissions not mentioned in the main contract or not stemming from a properly concluded contract referring to the main contract, commissions not paid in return for any actual and legitimate service, commissions remitted to a tax haven, commissions paid to a payee who is not clearly identified or commissions paid to a company which has every appearance of being a front company.

Grant beneficiaries found to have paid unusual commercial expenses on projects funded by the European Union are liable, depending on the seriousness of the facts observed, to have their contracts terminated or to be permanently excluded from receiving EU funds.

e) Breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud

The contracting authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud. If breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the contract, the contracting authority may refrain from concluding the contract.

2.2 Presentation of the application and procedures to follow

2.2.1 Full applications

Lead applicants invited to submit a full application following the pre-selection of their Concept Notes must do so using the Grant Application Form annexed to these Guidelines (Annex A). Lead applicants must adhere strictly to the format of the grant application form and complete the paragraphs and pages in order.

The elements set out in the concept note cannot be changed by the lead applicant in the full application. The contribution of Expertise France may not deviate by more than 20% from the initial estimate, even if lead applicants are free to adjust the percentage of co-financing required as far as the minimum and maximum amounts as well as the co-financing percentages, as indicated in section 1.3 of these guidelines, are respected. The lead applicant may only replace a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in duly justified cases (eg bankruptcy of the original co-applicant or affiliated entity). In this case, the new co-applicant / affiliate must be similar in nature to the co-applicant / affiliate. The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the action if unforeseen circumstances outside the scope of the applicants have occurred after the submission of the concept note and require such adaptation (risk of non-performance of the action). In these cases, the duration must remain within the limits set out in the Guidelines for Applicants. An explanation / rationale for the replacement / adjustment will be provided in an accompanying letter or email.

Lead applicants must submit their full applications in **English**.

Lead applicants must complete the full application form as carefully and clearly as possible to facilitate its evaluation.

Any error in the points mentioned in the checklist of the grant application form (Annex A) or major inconsistency in the complete application (for example, inconsistency of the amounts in the budget spreadsheets) may lead to immediate rejection of the application.

Clarifications will only be requested when the information provided is not clear and therefore prevent Expertise France from making an objective assessment.

Handwritten requests will not be accepted.

It should be noted that only the full application form and the published annexes that must be completed (budget, logical framework) will be sent to the evaluators (and, where appropriate, to the assessors). It is therefore very important that these documents contain ALL relevant information about the action. **No additional annexes should be sent.**

2.2.2 Where and how to send complete applications?

Full applications (i.e. the full application form, the budget, the logical framework and the declaration by the lead applicant) must be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) – **and electronically** - to the postal and electronic addresses below:

Expertise France

**To the attention of Ms Fanny Quertamp
59 Ham Long, Hoan Kiem, Hanoi
Vietnam**

and

plasticasiaproject@gmail.com

Applications must be submitted in one original and one copy (owing to environmental considerations) in A4 format, bound separately. The electronic file must be **exactly the same** as the attached paper version.

The checklist of the grant application form and the declaration of the lead applicant must be stapled separately and enclosed in the envelope.

The envelope must bear:

- the reference number and title of the call for proposals,
- the number assigned to them following the evaluation of the Concept Note,
- the full name and address of the lead applicant,
- the mention “Do not open before the opening session.”

Applicants must ensure that their application is complete by using the checklist (Section 7 of the grant application form). **Incomplete applications may be rejected.**

2.2.3 Deadline for submission of complete applications

The deadline for submitting full applications has been set at 17 June 2020 17h UCT, 19h Paris time and 00h HCMC time.

2.2.4 Other information on complete applications

Applicants may send their questions by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for submitting full applications to the address below, clearly indicating the reference of the call for proposals:

email address:

plasticasiaproject@gmail.com

Expertise France is under no obligation to provide clarification on questions received after this date.

They will be answered no later than 11 days before the deadline for submitting complete applications.

Another dematerialized information session in the form of a webinar will be organized again for this step. The date and specific information will be communicated in the letter sent to the lead applicants whose application has been pre-selected.

In order to ensure the equal treatment of applicants, Expertise France may not give prior notice on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entity (ies) or an action.

No individual answers will be given to the questions. All questions and answers as well as other important information communicated to applicants during the evaluation process will be published on the website www.expertisefrance.fr. It is therefore recommended to regularly consult the websites listed above to be informed of published questions and answers.

2.3 ASSESSMENT AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be examined and evaluated by Expertise France with the help, if necessary, of external assessors. All applications will be evaluated according to the steps and criteria described below.

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not fulfill the eligibility criteria described in 2.1.4, the application will be rejected on that sole basis.

Step 1: Opening & Administrative Checks

Opening and administrative verification

In the first place, the following points should be assessed:

- Respect of the submission deadline. Otherwise, the request will be automatically rejected.
- Full application for all the criteria specified in the checklist (Section 7 of the grant application form). This examination also includes an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the information requested is missing or incomplete, the application may be rejected on this **sole** basis and will not be evaluated.

Compliance between the Lead Applicant's Declaration (Section 8 of the Grant Application Form) and the supporting documents provided by the Lead Applicant will be verified. Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the declaration of the lead applicant and the supporting documents may lead on this sole basis to the rejection of the application.

Verification of eligibility

Eligibility of applicants and affiliated entities will be verified on the basis of the criteria set out in Part 2.1 of these Guidelines and recalled in the Grant Application Form.

Step 2: Evaluation Of Complete Applications

Full applications satisfying this control will then be assessed against their quality, including the proposed budget and the capacity of the applicants and the affiliated entity (ies), based on the evaluation criteria of the evaluation grid reproduced below. The evaluation criteria are broken down into selection criteria and award criteria.

The **selection criteria** help to assess the operational capacity of the applicant (s) and affiliated entity (ies) and the financial capacity of the lead applicant and are used to verify that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the proposed action and, if necessary, to participate in its funding (this applies only to lead applicants, it is recommended at this stage to provide any document justifying this criterion);
- have the necessary expertise, skills and networks to implement the action.

The **award criteria** help to assess the quality of applications against the objectives and priorities set in the guidelines, and to award grants to projects that maximize the overall effectiveness of the call for proposals. They help to select the requests that ensure Expertise France of compliance with its objectives and priorities. They relate to the relevance of the action and its coherence with the objectives of the call for proposals, the quality, the expected effect, the sustainability of the action as well as its effectiveness in relation to the costs.

Rating:

The evaluation criteria are subdivided into headings and sub-headings. Each sub-item is scored between 1 and 5, as follows: 1 = very poor, 2 = insufficient, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = very good.

It is strongly encouraged to back each claim by tangible, truthful and relevant examples.

Evaluation grid

Item	Maximum score
<p>1. Financial and operational capacity</p> <p><i>If the total score for heading 1 (Financial and operational capacity) is less than 12 points, the application will be rejected. Similarly, the application will be rejected if at least one of the sub-headings of section 2 receives a score of 1 point.</i></p>	25
<p>1.1 Does the applicant (and, where applicable, the affiliated entities) have sufficient experience in managing multi-stakeholder projects? How clearly and convincingly has the applicant demonstrated the relevance of this past experience to the proposed project?</p>	5
<p>1.2 Does the applicant (and, if applicable, the affiliated entities) have sufficient technical expertise in the field of sustainable consumption and production of plastic products and alternatives (plastic waste free markets / schools / public institutions and space, plastic waste free tourism / leisure industry, circular product design, etc)?</p>	5
<p>1.3 Does the applicant (and, where applicable, the affiliated entities) participate in international, national or umbrella networks for the dissemination of results and action? If so, which ones? How clearly and convincingly has the applicant demonstrated the relevance of such networks to the proposed project, and their capacity to support and disseminate the project results?</p>	5
<p>1.4 Does the applicant (and, if applicable, the affiliated entities) have sufficient management capacity, including staff, equipment and ability to manage the budget for the action? How clearly and convincingly has the applicant presented these, and explained how they would be used for the effective management of the proposed project?</p>	5
<p>1.5 Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of funding?</p>	5
<p>2. Relevance of the action⁶</p>	40

⁶ See technical criteria, page 4 of the document “Call for Pilot Project Ideas for Vietnam “: 1.1 To what extent is the proposal relevant to the objectives and priorities of the call for ideas? 1.2 Is the innovative nature (technical and organisational solutions and collaboration networks) of the proposal relevant and sufficient to the themes chosen? Is it well presented? 1.3 To what extent is the proposal relevant to the particular needs and characteristics of the country, area and beneficiaries of the intervention (environmental, social and economic aspects)? 1.4 To what extent can the project have bridges, both in terms of indirect impacts and capitalization, with other areas of intervention? 1.5 To what extent are the parties involved (end beneficiaries, target groups) clearly defined and strategically selected? Have their needs been clearly defined and are they adequately addressed in the proposal? 1.6 Will ownership of beneficiaries and durability of the action after completion of the

This section will not be re-evaluated, instead the notes scored during the first phase of the evaluation of the concept note will be carried over.

3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the action	40
<p>3.1 How coherent is the design of the action? Has the link between the issues, the proposed activities, the needs of the territory covered, and the beneficiaries considered been adequately argued? Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale to achieve the expected results? Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the envisaged outputs and outcome(s)?</p>	5
<p>3.2 Is the area considered consistent with the objectives and expected results of the action? Are the pilot sites clearly described and justified?</p>	5
<p>3.3 Is the action plan for implementing the action clear and feasible? Is the proposed timeline of the project realistic, including in the current COVID-19 crisis?</p>	5
<p>3.4 Is the level of involvement and participation in the action of the applicant and the affiliated entities (partners) satisfactory? Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved, and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?</p>	5
<p>3.5 Do the proposed activities contain specific elements promoting gender equality and targeting the reduction of the vulnerability of the most vulnerable populations? If so, how clearly and convincingly has the applicant presented such activities?</p>	5
<p>3.6 Is the approach and the dissemination process selected clearly explained? Are they likely to generate impacts on a larger scale and in the longer term?</p> <p><i>NB: projects with a proven dissemination dimension at national level will benefit from the maximum score.</i></p>	5
<p>3.7 How is the proposed monitoring and evaluation mechanism designed? Is it satisfactory? Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for evaluating the results of the action, including for assessing the differentiated impacts according to the level of vulnerabilities of the target groups? Does the monitoring and evaluation framework include the 2 mandatory indicators (see section 2.1.4 "monitoring and evaluation" of the guidelines) and is their evaluation method satisfactory? Is a baseline and final evaluation planned?</p>	5

project be sufficient? 1.7 To what extent is the proposal suitable to showcase concrete solutions for public communication and visibility? 1.8 To what extent is the proposal considering international best practices?

3.8 Does the proposal have a good communication and visibility strategy for the project? Does it comply with the minimum EU requirements for visibility? How will it enable broader dissemination of achievements and lessons learned from successes and failures as well as exchanges at the local, national and regional level?	5
4. Sustainability and replicability of the action	20
4.1 Are cross-cutting issues addressed? If so, how well are they dealt with? Are there relevant, clear, and convincing proposed activities to support the integration of such issues?	5
4.2 Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on the target groups? If so, how clearly and convincingly has the applicant demonstrated this in its proposal?	5
4.3 Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects at national level? How will it support the potential reproduction, extension and sharing of information? At the public policy and political level, what will be the structural impact of the action? For example, could it lead to the elaboration of legal framework or local regulation, etc.?	5
4.4 Are the possibilities and modalities for continuing the actions undertaken and the results obtained by the project at the end of the funding sufficiently explained? How sustainable are the expected results of the proposed action? From a financial point of view (how will the activities be financed after the financing?) From an institutional point of view (will there be structures allowing activities to continue at the end of the action, will there be "ownership" at the level of local or national institutions of the results of the action?) From an environmental level? Will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?	5

5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action	15
5.1 Are the activities adequately reflected in the budget?	5
5.2 Is the ratio of the estimated costs to the expected results satisfactory?	10
Maximum total score	140

Provisory selection

After the evaluation, a table will be drawn up, summing up all the applications classified according to their score.

First, the applications with the highest score will be provisionally selected, provided they **have a minimum score of 80 points**.

The requests initially selected first will then be classified by field of intervention so that the number of applications retained by domain can be counted.

Secondly, as with the previous phase of selection of concept notes, the rest of the proposals not selected first will now be classified by area of intervention.

In order to reach the exhaustion of the budget foreseen for this call, the best requests of the domain least represented during the first wave selection will be selected.

A reserve list will also be established following the same criteria. This list will be used if more funds become available during its validity period.

It should be noted that the verification of eligibility will be carried out on the basis of the supporting documents requested by Expertise France (see point 2.4). It will only be carried out for applications that have been provisionally selected on the basis of their score and within the budget provided for this call for proposals.

2.4 VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND SUBMISSION OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR PROVISIONALLY SELECTED APPLICATIONS

A lead applicant whose application has been provisionally selected or put on the reserve list will be informed in writing by Expertise France. It will be requested to provide the following documents to allow Expertise France to verify its eligibility and, if applicable, that of the co-applicant (s) and their affiliated entity (s). These are also listed in Annex H - Administrative, financial and organisational assessment grid⁷:

⁷ No supporting documents will be required for grant applications not exceeding EUR 60 000.

1. The statutes, articles or official documents of the lead applicant, any co-applicants and any affiliated entities⁸, showing: the date of creation of the organisation, its status, its type (agency, NGO, local association, etc.), the location of its head office, its size, its organisational chart, any contractual documents for past grants including with co-beneficiaries.
2. A copy of the financial statements of the last 3 years of the lead applicant (income statement and balance sheet for the last financial year ended), information on the accounting system and processes used, and/or on multi-year budgetary planning tools⁹ for assessing the financial strength of the lead applicant. Potential co-applicants or affiliated entities are not required to submit a copy of their financial statements.
3. Any internal procedure manuals, internal audit system, anti-fraud system, personnel management procedures, procurement standard procedures, etc. for assessing the organisational strength of the lead applicant.
4. The legal entity form (see Annex D.1 and D.2 of these guidelines) duly completed and signed by each applicant (ie the lead applicant and any co-applicants) together with the supporting documents requested.
5. A financial identification form of the lead applicant (not co-applicants) in accordance with the template attached as Annex E.1 and E.2 to these guidelines, certified by the bank to which the payment is to be made. This bank must be located in the country where the lead applicant is located.

The documents must be provided in the form of originals, photocopies or scanned versions (showing the legal stamps, signatures and dates) of these originals.

Where such documents are not in English or French, a translation into English or French of the relevant parts of the document proving the eligibility of the lead applicant and, if there is co-applicants and their **affiliated entity (ies)** must be included for the analysis of the application.

If the supporting documents mentioned above are not provided before the deadline fixed in the request for submission of supporting documents sent by Expertise France to the lead applicant, the application may be rejected.

After verifying the supporting documents, the evaluation committee will make a final recommendation to the Chief Executive Officer of Expertise France or his delegate, who will decide on the awarding of the grants.

NB: If Expertise France is not convinced by the strength, the solidity and the guarantee offered by legal or capital link between an applicant and its affiliated entities, it may require the presentation of missing documents to enable them to be converted into co-applicants. If all the missing documents are submitted, and provided that all eligibility conditions are fulfilled, the entity becomes co-applicant for all purposes. The lead applicant must submit the amended application form accordingly.

2.5 NOTIFICATION OF EXPERTISE FRANCE'S DECISION

2.5.1 *Content of the decision*

The Lead Applicants will be notified in writing of the decision made by Expertise France regarding their request and, in case of rejection, the reasons for this negative decision.

⁸ Where the lead applicant, the co-applicants and / or affiliated entity (ies) is / are a public entity (ies) created by law, a copy of the said law must be provided.

⁹ This obligation does not apply to natural persons who have received a scholarship or who are most in need of direct assistance, nor to public entities or international organizations. This does not apply when the accounts are in practice the same documents as the external audit report already provided under point 2.4.2.

If an applicant feels wronged by an error or irregularity in the award procedure, it can file a complaint with the Registry of the Administrative Court of Paris, 7 rue de Jouy, 75004 Paris - <http://paris.tribunal-administratif/>.

2.5.2 Indicative timetable

	DATE	HOUR
1. Information meeting (if necessary)	20 May 2020	8h UTC* 10h PARIS 15h HCMC
2. Deadline for clarification requests to Expertise France	27 May 2020	16h UTC 18h Paris 23h HCMC
3. Last date on which clarification is given by Expertise France	3 June 2020	16h UTC 18h Paris 23h HCMC
4. Deadline for submission of the complete application	17 June 2020	17h UTC 19h Paris 00h HCMC
5. Notification of the award	To be determined	To be determined
6. Signature of the contract	To be determined	To be determined

*UTC: Universal Time Coordinated.

This indicative timetable refers to provisional dates (except for dates 2, 3 and 4) and can be updated by Expertise France during the procedure. In this case, the updated calendar will be published on the sites www.expertisefrance.fr

2.6 CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AFTER EXPERTISE FRANCE'S DECISION TO AWARD A GRANT

Following the decision to award a grant, the beneficiary (ies) will be offered a contract based on the grant contract template (Annex F of these guidelines). By signing the application form (Annex A of these Guidelines), the applicants accept, if the grant is awarded, the contractual terms and conditions of the grant contract template.

Implementation contracts

Where the implementation of an action requires the awarding of contracts by the beneficiary (ies) and (if applicable) its affiliated entity (ies), the contract must be awarded in accordance with the Annex F-I of the grant contract template.

3. LIST OF ANNEXES

DOCUMENTS TO COMPLETE

- Annex A: Grant Application Form (Word format)
- Annex B: Budget (Excel format)
- Annex C: Logical Framework (Word format)
- Annex D1.: Legal Entity Form Public or Private Law
- Annex D.2: Legal Entity Form Public Body Law
- Annexes E.1: Financial identification form
- Annexes E.2: Third identity sheet
- Annex J: Declaration of honour on exclusion criteria and absence of conflict of interest

DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION

- Annex F: Model Grant Contract
 - Annex I: Procurement rules applicable in the implementation framework of grants awarded by Expertise France
 - Annex II: General conditions
 - Annex III: Payment Request Template
 - Annex IV: Interim Narrative Report Template²
 - Annex V: Final Narrative Report Template¹⁹
 - Annex VI: Financial Report Template¹⁹
 - Annex VII: Model of transfer of ownership of assets
 - Annex VIII: Guidelines and checklist for assessing action budgets
- Annex G: Information on the tax regime applicable to the grant contract signed under the call for proposals
- Annex H: Administrative, financial and organisational assessment grid
- Annex I: Maximum per diem rates available at the following address:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/about-procurement-contracts/procedures-and-practical-guide-prag/diems_en (all necessary information is available through the link)

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