



LIFE operating grants for non profit organisations

Framework Partnership Agreements and Specific Grant
Agreements for funding in 2025 and 2026



Information session

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LIFE Framework Partnership Agreements for Operating grants to non profit organisations

“LIFE **FPA**s aim at supporting a broad range of NGOs as well as networks of nonprofit-making entities that pursue an **aim which is of general Union interest**, and that are primarily active in the area of the environment or climate action, (...) in order to help such NGOs, networks and entities, to make **effective contributions to Union policy**, and to build and strengthen their capacity to become more **efficient partners**.”

“Operating grants shall support the functioning of non-profit making entities which are involved in the **development, implementation and enforcement of Union legislation and policy** and which are primarily active in the field of **environment or climate action, including clean energy transition**.”

LIFE Regulation 2021-2027



Fields of intervention

Operating grants' beneficiaries are active in one or several of the following areas:



Environment

Nature and biodiversity

Circular economy and quality of life



Climate action

Climate change mitigation

Climate change adaptation



Clean energy transition

Renewable energy

Energy efficiency

Which type of organisation?

- Non-profit entities
- Organisations independent from political parties and commercial interests
- Organisations active at EU level with a structure and activities covering at least three EU Member States or countries associated to the LIFE Programme
- Entities with an environmental and/or climate mission (including nature/biodiversity and clean energy transition)
- European added value

Tip: read carefully eligibility and award criteria



Twofold role:

1) Bottom-up

- Shaping EU policies:
 - Channelling members' views to the EU
 - Alert policy makers about new issues to be addressed
 - Participate in consultative groups or expert panels
 - Information input to policy formulation



Twofold role:

2) Top-down

- Supporting implementation of EU environmental & climate policy, including clean energy transition
 - Campaigns, exchange of best practice, awareness raising and citizen participation
 - Implementation and monitoring of transposition in Member States
 - Alarms or intervention in case of breach of legislation/regulation in the Member States
 - Enhancing policy acceptance



Two-steps application



Don't miss the deadlines!

Calls for proposals opened on **18 April 2024**

1. Framework partnership agreement (FPA)

- Deadline for applications:
5 September 2024
- Successful applicants will sign a long-term partnership agreement

2. Specific grant agreement (SGA)

- Deadline for applications:
17 September 2024
- One-year grant agreement
- Only organisations that will sign an FPA will be evaluated for SGA



2024 operating grants Calls - specificities

- Framework Partnership Agreements of **two years**, covering financial years 2025 and 2026
- FPA and SGA applications in parallel
- Maximum co-funding rate: **70%** of total eligible costs of the beneficiary organisation
- The maximum amount per year is **700 k €**
- it is possible to request more than the amount requested for the previous year
- Online application on the F&T Portal: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>
- Applicants must register in the [Participant register \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home)
- Financial simplification (see following slide)



Flat-rate funding

- Grant amounts will be calculated using a flat-rate for all beneficiaries: personnel costs + **50%** of personnel costs
- The flat-rate will cover all other costs incurred by the beneficiaries:
 - Travel and subsistence
 - Equipment and depreciation
 - Subcontracting
 - Rental
 - Other direct costs
- This will simplify the application, implementation and reporting processes

- The flat-rate of 50% has been calculated on the basis of the statistical analyses of historical data (operating grants 2014-2019), which shows a strong correlation between the cost category “personnel” and total costs, and a stable proportion of personnel costs of approximately **two thirds** of the total costs over the past six years

66.66% +

33.33% =

99.99% (good approximation of the total costs)



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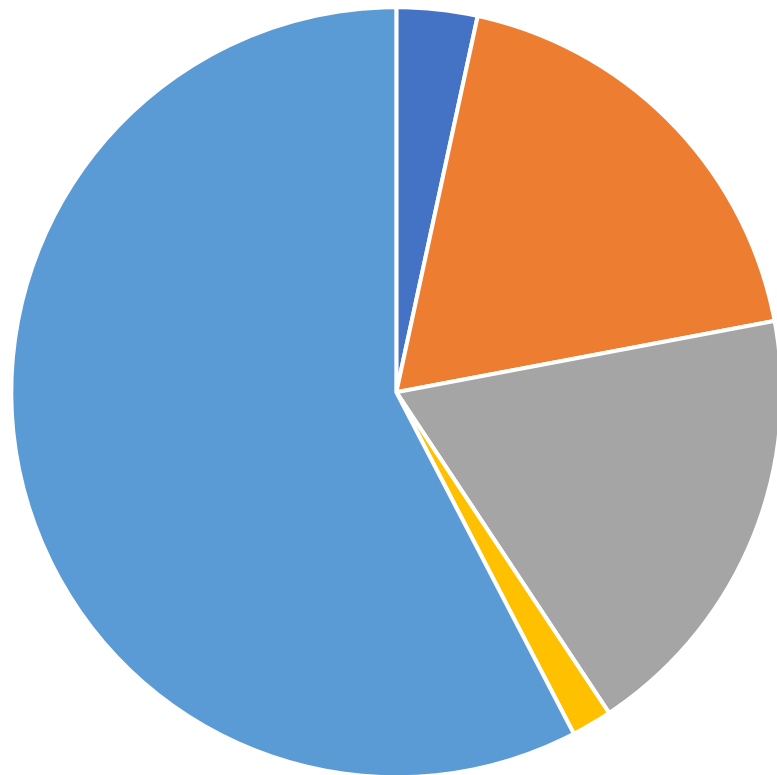
Previous operating grants calls (2021)

- Indicative budget: 44M € for 3 years
- 59 applications received
- Total requested EU contribution: ~ 68M €
- 47 applicants passed the evaluation
- **34 organisations** were selected to be funded in 2022-2024
- Average grant: ~445 k € EU funding per year
- Average EU funding: 43% of eligible costs
- Average policy shares:
 - Environment 62%
 - Climate action 28%
 - Clean energy 10%



Previous operating grants call: evaluation results

Call FPA 2021 evaluation results



59 applications:

Ineligible	2
Failed award	11
Funded	34
Reserve	11
Withdrawn	1



■ Ineligible ■ Failed award ■ Reserve
■ Withdrawn ■ Funded

Organisations currently funded (2022-2024)

Agroecology Europe	CEEweb for biodiversity	Transport & Environment	Health Care Without Harm	Oceana	Surfrider Foundation Europe
BirdLife Europe	ClientEarth	Europarc Federation	Health and Environment Alliance	Pesticide Action Network Europe	Wetlands International
Carbon Disclosure Project Europe	Climate Action Network Europe	Eurosite	Institute for European Environmental Policies	Renewables Grid Initiative	WWF -European Policy Office
Carbon Market Watch	Coalition Clean Baltic	FACE	IFOAM EU Group	Seas at Risk	WWF - CEE
CEE Bankwatch	European Cyclists' Federation	Fern	Justice & Environment	Shipbreaking Platform	Zero Waste Europe
	European Environmental Bureau	FoEE	MedPAN	Slow Food	



FPA application

Call for proposals opened on **18 April 2024** – closing on **5 September**

- Two-year framework partnership agreement (2025-2026)
 - Focus on two-year strategy, including an outline of activities:
 - already known or based on experience from previous years
 - distinguish between the first and second year
 - Financial details will be requested at SGA stage. Total costs and requested EU funding needed for:
 - financial viability
 - budget cut-off
 - in case of proposals with equal score – value for money



SGA application

Call for proposals opened on **18 April 2024** – closing on **17 September**

- Specific grant agreements – call and contract for the first financial year (2025)
- Following year (2026): invitation for proposals
- Annual work plan (based on FPA)
- Budget: staff costs + 50% flat rate
- Limited award criteria
- Same Ranking as FPA unless the proposal fails.



Evaluation

- Pre-assessment by external experts (independent evaluators)
- Final assessment by an Evaluation Committee (CINEA, DG Environment, DG Climate Action and DG Energy)
- List of selected organisations established in consensus

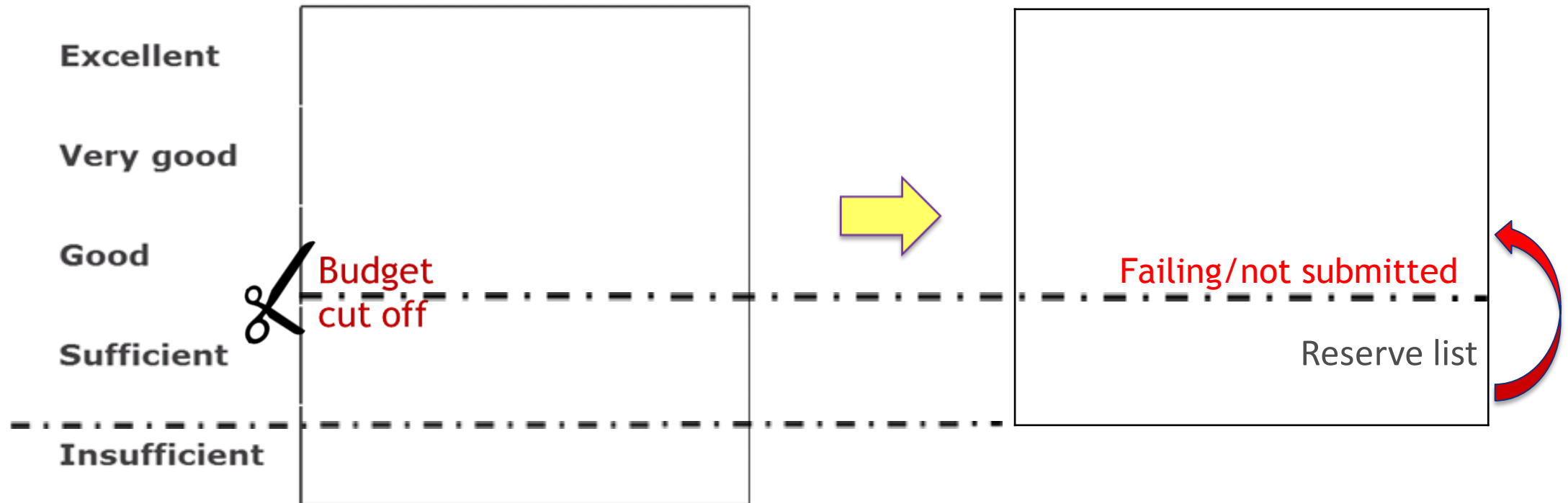


From FPA to SGA

~ 60? - 70? proposals

Framework partnership Agreement Call

Specific grant agreement Call



Calls FPA and SGA – indicative timeline

FPA and SGA Call Publication	April 2024
DL for FPA and SGA proposals	September 2024
Evaluation	October-December 2024
Notification of proposers	December 2024
FPA signature and SGA revision	January-March 2025
SGA signature	March-April 2025



Calls FPA and SGA - budget

- Indicative budget for this call: 2 x 14.370 million €
- ~ 35 NGOs are funded every year
- Maximum EU funding: **70%** of total eligible costs
- 700.000 € EU funding maximum per grant



Admissibility and exclusion criteria

- A proposal is not accepted if it is late, incomplete, or if the applicant is in an exclusion situation (bankruptcy, fraud, corruption, etc.)
- Most important:
 - Don't miss the deadline
 - Apply for both FPA and SGA
 - Use the application forms
 - The proposal must be complete
 - It must include all annexes detailed in the Calls
- Tip: – read the calls!



Eligibility criteria - who can apply?

Applicants must be:

- Non-profit legal entities
- Independent from government/authorities, political parties and commercial interests
- Primarily active in field of environment and/or climate action (including clean energy transition) with an environmental/climate objective (proof: statutes)
- Aiming at the public good / sustainable development / implementation and enforcement of EU environmental and/or climate policy and legislation including clean energy transition
- Active at EU level with a structure and activities covering at least three EU Member States or countries associated to the LIFE Programme



Selection criteria

- Operational capacity

Assessment of professional competencies and qualifications based on key staff description (Participant information form) and recent activity report

- Financial capacity

Assessment of the financial viability of the organisation based on auditor's certified accounts and annual statement to demonstrate stable and sufficient sources of co-funding throughout the two years



FPA award criteria

Award criteria	Maximum score	Weighting	Weighted score
1) Relevance	20	1	20
2) EU policy shaping	20	1	20
3) EU policy implementation	20	1	20
4) Sensor function	20	0,25	5
5) Organisational development	20	0,75	15
Maximum total score	100	N/A	80
Overall pass threshold	N/A	N/A	45



Award criterion 1 - Relevance

- Relevance of the contribution to one or several of the specific objectives of the LIFE Programme
- Extent to which the work plan is in line with the relevant policies covered by the call for proposals
- Extent to which the proposal demonstrates EU added value



Award criterion 2 – EU policy shaping

- Extent to which the proposal shows an in-depth understanding of the EU policy process
- Extent to which the applicant improves the knowledge and evidence base, thus supporting the Union's environment, climate and energy policies
- Extent to which the applicant fosters the integration of environmental, climate and/or energy policies and coherence with other policies, e.g. agriculture, transport, cohesion policy
- Extent to which the applicant will act as a channel between the EU level and civil society, providing coordinated policy input
- Appropriateness of means and structures aimed at voicing the concerns of EU citizens and at ensuring their democratic representation vis-à-vis the relevant institutions



Award criterion 3 – EU policy implementation

- Extent to which the strategy improves implementation and enforcement of EU environmental, climate and/or energy legislation on local, Member State and/or European level
- Extent to which the applicant will act as a channel between the EU level and civil society, promoting and ensuring acceptance of policy implementation
- Extent to which the applicant uses its network to identify obstacles to policy implementation at national/regional level, for policy feedback
- Appropriateness and quality of the measures to communicate and disseminate in order to create leverage
- Extent to which the strategy helps to secure investment for environment, climate and/or energy policy, addressing environmental externalities



Award criterion 4 – sensor function

- Extent to which the proposal helps to detect new or emerging issues in the area of environment, climate change and/or energy and is able to analyse the causes of such issues and their possible effects
- Capacity of the applicant to propose appropriate solutions and to provide feedback or improve policy making on the identified new or emerging issues



Award criterion 5 – organisational development

- Quality of the strategy to address the identified organisational development needs and areas for improvement
- Extent to which the applicant represents relevant stakeholders and endeavours to develop its membership (grassroots or members base)
- Extent to which the fundraising strategy of the applicant ensures the diversification and sustainability of the organisation
- Analysis of the applicant's dependence on the LIFE operating grant and strategies addressing this dependence
- Value for money of the proposed work



Preparation of the proposal



- Proposals must be submitted electronically via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System
- Proposals (including annexes and supporting documents) must be submitted using the forms provided inside the Submission System
- Application forms:
 - Application Form **Part A** — contains administrative information about the applicant and the summarised budget for the work plan (to be filled in directly online)
 - Application Form **Part B** — contains the technical description of the work plan (to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed and then re-uploaded)
 - **Part C** (to be filled in directly online) contains some basic LIFE Programme KPI



FPA application form - Part B

- Maximum number of pages: 90
- Please use English
- Carefully follow all instructions contained in the template
- Be clear – avoid jargon and acronyms (include a glossary if needed)
- Your project's name and acronym are the name and acronym of your organisation
- Provide proper background and context



FPA Part B (1) Relevance, Impact

- Profile of the organisation: brief description of the nature, structure and activities of the applicant and members
- Mission, vision and objectives
- Contribution to EU policies
- Policy priorities (tick boxes) and % environmental / climate / energy policies
- Problem(s), evidence base
- Target groups
- Outreach
- Expected impact of the organization's activities



FPA Part B (2) Implementation

- Bi-annual action plan
 - List of work packages or chart (graphic presentation)
- Work packages: activities are separated by thematic areas
- Tip: divide activities by year of implementation (2025 / 2026)
- WP1 should cover only organisational development
- WP2 and further WPs should be used for other activities, corresponding to different policy areas.
- You can create as many work packages as needed by copying the template of WP2



FPA Part B (3) Timetable, visibility, resources

- Use the first timetable for FPA (projects up to 2 years)
- Communication, dissemination and visibility of funding
- Resources:
 - Management of the work programme
 - Measures planned to ensure good quality, monitoring, planning and control of WP implementation
 - Budget and financial management
 - Multi-annual budget estimate
 - Risk management



FPA application - Annexes

- Mandatory annexes and supporting documents (to be uploaded):
 - Statutes of the organisation
 - A list of the members of the executive board or administrative / steering body (names and title/function within the applicant organisation)
 - Applicant's activity report of previous year
 - Participant's information (description of main staff)



SGA application forms - Part B (1)

- Maximum number of pages: 45
- Please use English
- Be clear – avoid jargon and acronyms (include a glossary if needed)
- NB: funding for third parties and volunteers costs are not allowed for OGs
- Relevance: contribution to the Framework Partnership
- Implementation: work plan for the year 2025 (for the first SGA), list of WPs or graphic presentation
- Work packages
 - WP 1: organisational development
 - WP 2 and following: activities by thematic areas



SGA application forms - Part B (2)

- Communication, dissemination and visibility of funding
- Internal management
- Risk management
- Declaration on other EU operating grants (no double funding)
- Timetable: for SGA use the first timetable (projects up to 2 years)
- Resources: estimated budget
 - Personnel costs for work programme activities
 - Flat rate (50% of staff costs)
 - Total
 - Requested EU contribution



Keep in touch with us



https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/life/clean-energy-transition_en/



[@CleanEnergy_EU](#), [@LIFEprogramme](#)



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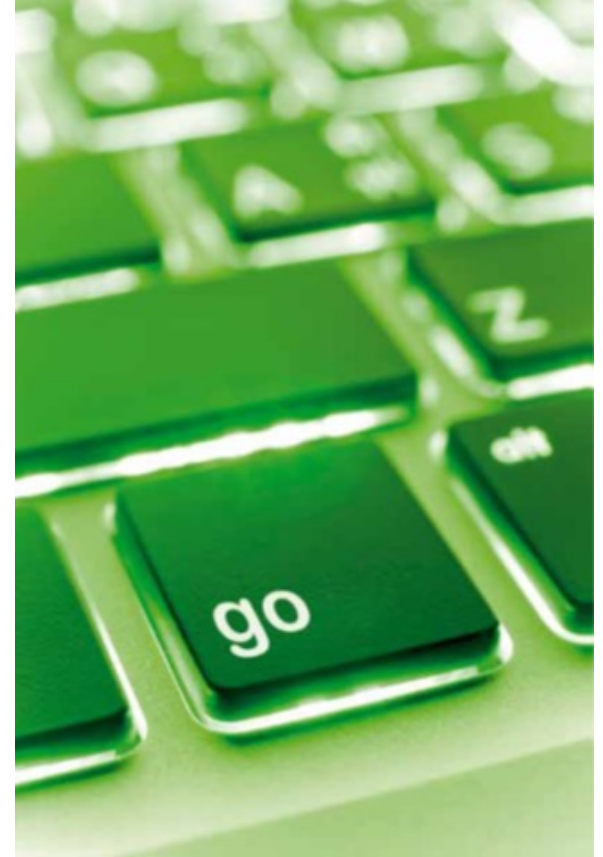
Website & functional mailbox

LIFE website: <https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/life>

Funding & Tender Portal

For any questions please send an email to:

CINEA-LIFE-NGO@ec.europa.eu



Thank you

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