



Preparatory Studies for Cross-border renewable energy projects

Evaluation process and Award criteria

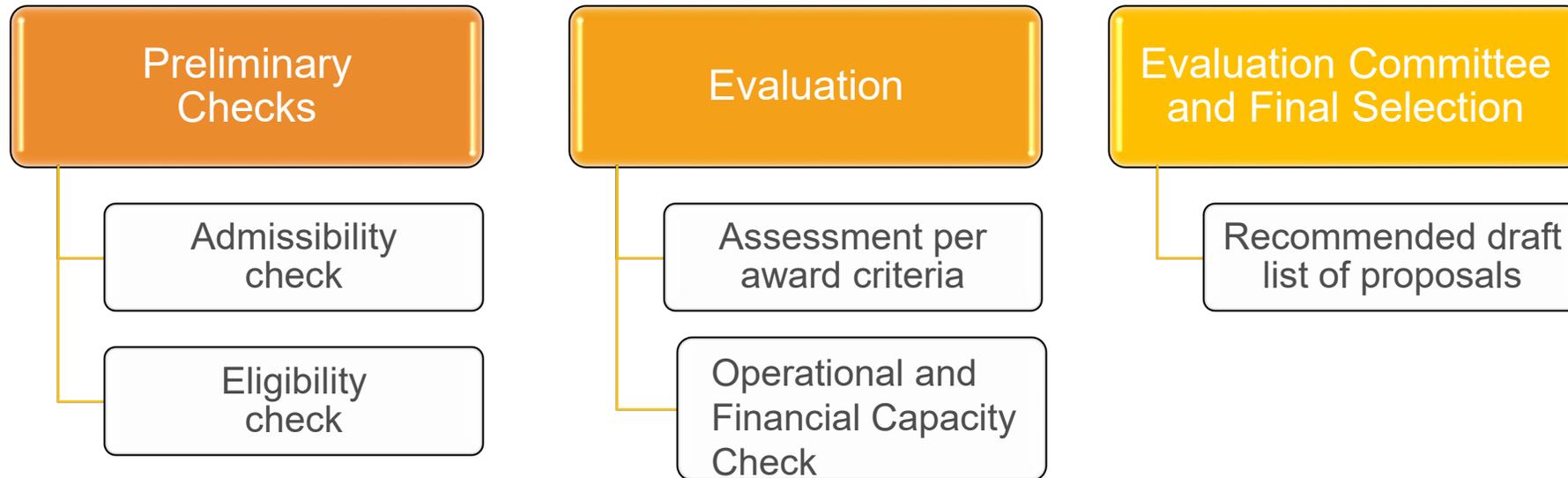
*CINEAB.B4 - CEF Energy and Renewable Energy
Financing Mechanism*

Tentative timeline

Call publication	22 September 2021
Info-Day	28 September 2021
Deadline	30 November 2021 17:00.00 (Brussels time)
Evaluation of proposals	December 2021 - January 2022
Launch of Grant Preparation (Inform applicants)	April 2022
Time To Grant	July 2022

Evaluation process

Principles for the evaluation and selection process



Final Selection Process

Preparation of Selection Decision

EC Inter-Service Consultation

Consultation of CEF Coordination Committee
Information of the European Parliament

Adoption of Commission Selection Decision

Information to Applicants
Launch of Grant Agreement Preparation

Admissibility and Eligibility

Admissibility

- Proposals must be submitted before the call deadline 30 November 2021 17.00 CET
- Proposals must be submitted electronically via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System (<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/CEF-E-2021-CBRENEW-PREPSTUDIES>). Paper submissions are NOT possible.
- Proposals must be complete and contain all the requested information and all required annexes and supporting documents. There will be no follow-up for missing elements.
- Your application must be readable, accessible and printable.
- Proposals are limited to maximum 120 pages (Part B). Evaluators will not consider any additional pages.

Completeness of documents + Annexes

- Checklist studies and works:

Application Form Part A — structured data introduced directly on Funding & Tender portal
Application Form Part B — Word document to be filled in and uploaded as pdf (contains the technical description of the project)
Detailed budget table per WP (Excel to be filled in and annexed)
Timetable/Gantt chart
Agreement by the concerned Member States (Letter of support)
CBA related calculations (optional, to be submitted under “Other Annexes”)
Annual activity reports

Not needed for public bodies, Member State organisations, certified TSOs and international organisations

Eligibility of actions

- Preparatory studies in the meaning of Article 7(3) of CEF Regulation: studies that aim to develop and identify the cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy
- Support to both EU Member States and private project promoters in order to advance cooperation ideas, create momentum amongst involved stakeholders and with this generate a pipeline of cross-border renewable projects
- **Support to the project before being included in the Union list of cross-border RES projects**

Scope of proposal

- Providing **technical, economic or legal support** in setting up or advancing cross-border cooperation with the objective to **select the best project concept**. It is possible to cover also some **wider system-related aspects**, e.g. the integration of additional storage investments, or of transport and/or digital related investments for synergetic elements.
- Exploring (mainly through desktop studies) the **possible sites** in the territory of Member States (or third countries) in order to **determine the hosting and participating countries**, as well as other exploratory tasks needed to assess the **overall cost and benefits** of the project. It should allow **identifying and formalising the underpinning cooperation mechanism** and may include **communication and stakeholder involvement** activities.
- Investigating **the best form of support**, such as the auctioning and tendering set-up as well as all aspects for which national grid, market and other rules differ in the participating Member States and would need to be agreed upon.

Duration and budget of the proposed project

- **Project duration: up to 24 months** (extensions are possible, if duly justified and through an amendment). Normally the starting date will be after grant signature. Retroactive application can be granted exceptionally for duly justified reasons but never earlier than the proposal's submission date.
- **Project budget** (maximum grant amount): projects of any budget are admitted. However it is recommended for the budget to be in the range of 100000–350 000EUR. The grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested.

Eligibility - participants

- Eligible applicants (beneficiaries and affiliated entities) must:
 - be legal entities (public or private bodies)
 - be established in one of the eligible countries, i.e.:
 - EU Member States (including overseas countries and territories (OCTs))
 - non-EU countries:
 - listed EEA countries and countries associated to the CEF Programme or countries which are in ongoing negotiations for an association agreement and where the agreement enters into force before grant signature (list of participating countries)

Operational Capacity

- Applicants must have the know-how, qualifications and resources to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share (including sufficient experience in projects of comparable size and nature).
- Applicants will have to show their capacity through:
 - Implementation plan (Application Form B – Section 3.1.)
 - applicants' activity reports of last year
- Public bodies, Member State organisations, transmission system operators and international organisations are exempted from the operational capacity check.

Financial Capacity Check

- Applicants must have stable and sufficient resources to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share. Organisations participating in several projects must have sufficient capacity to implement all these projects.
- A financial capacity check will be carried out for beneficiaries in selected or reserve-list proposals on the basis of the documents you will be requested to upload in the Participant Register during grant preparation
- The check will normally be done for all beneficiaries, except:
 - public bodies (entities established as public body under national law, including local, regional or national authorities) or international organisations or TSOs
 - if the individual requested grant amount is not more than EUR 60 000.

Award Criteria

Award criteria

Award criteria	Minimum pass score	Maximum score
Priority and urgency	3	5
Maturity	3	5
Quality	3	5
Impact	3	5
Catalytic effect	3	5
Overall (pass) scores	15	25

Resolving ties

For proposals with the same score a priority order will be determined according to the following approach:

1. Score obtained under the 'Priority and urgency' criterion
2. Score obtained under the 'Maturity' criterion
3. Score obtained under the 'Catalytic effect' criterion
4. Score obtained under the 'Impact' criterion
5. Score obtained under the 'Quality' criterion.

Priority and urgency of the Action

Evaluating correspondence of the proposal with the sectoral policy targets, objectives and priorities, notably its contribution to and alignment with achieving the EU 2030 climate and energy targets in view of reaching the Union's decarbonisation objectives, completion of the internal market and enhancing the security of supply; measuring its EU added-value and where applicable assessing the possible synergies with other sectors.

- Demonstrate how the envisaged cross-border RES project will contribute to **sectoral policy objectives** and explain how it is aligned with the **EU 2030 climate and energy targets, in particular RES**, in view of reaching climate neutrality by 2050, and consistent with relevant National Energy and Climate Plans.
- Explain to what extent **EU level action** will help to reach policy objectives more effectively and faster compared to exclusively national level action.
- Synergetic elements, if applicable, need to **significantly improve** the socioeconomic, climate or environmental benefits of the proposed project/envisaged cross-border RES project

Maturity

Assessing the maturity of the project in the development of the cross-border RES projects. The criterion will measure, among others: the readiness/ability of the project to start by the proposed start date and to complete by the proposed end date, the status of the contracting procedures and of the necessary permits, and information on the financial viability and availability needed to complement the CEF investment.

- **Preparatory steps** already completed or envisaged and confirmation that the project can be carried out without delay
- Confirmation that the proposed **project is mature** enough to be financed under this call
- **Information on cooperation mechanism**, including proof of steps taken so far to prepare a cooperation mechanism between the concerned Member States (e.g. bilateral meetings, draft Letters of intent or similar, etc.), if available
- Any pending legal, administrative or technical issues, which could prevent the proposed project from being implemented, such as procurement, permit

Quality

Evaluating the soundness of the implementation plan proposed, both from the technical and financial point of view, the architecture and design approach, the organisational structures put in place (or foreseen) for the implementation, the risk analysis, the control procedures and quality management and the communication strategy of the applicant.

- **Resources** needed (financial and human) to implement the project
 - *Project management costs should not exceed 10% of total project costs*
- **Organisational structure** and cooperation between applicants
- **Project management**, quality assurance and control procedures
- **Identified risks and mitigation measures**

Impact

Assessing, when applicable, the economic, social and environmental impact, including the climate impact. Moreover, when applicable, the criterion will assess, among others, the innovation aspects of the proposal, as well as its cross-border dimension and the effect of the proposal on the preparation of the project for an application to the list of cross-border RES project

- Explain **the impact of proposed project** in terms of the cross-border cooperation **for the envisaged cross-border RES project** (e.g. cross-border dimension, network integration).
- Describe the proposed project's contribution towards the development and identification of the envisaged cross-border RES project (technical, legal and economic support).
- If available, provide aggregated information on the costs and benefits of the global cross-border RES project and the added value of the project.

Catalytic effect

Evaluating the financial gap shall assess the catalytic effect of the EU financial assistance and determine whenever possible the actual co-funding rate to be granted.

- Explain how the EU grant will facilitate or accelerate the envisaged cross-border RES project, in comparison to a situation without the EU funding
- Indicate whether you expect any EU support under the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) (with an approximate amount)

To note!



- Information provided under the different criteria must be **coherent and consistent** across the application
- Important to check that all application form sections are **complete** and all applicable **supporting documents** are submitted
- The application should convincingly **demonstrate** the **need for EU funds**
- The term '**project**' used in application forms and other documents is synonymous to the term '**action**' used in the CEF Regulation 2021/1153!

Evaluation results

Results of the evaluation

- All proposals will be informed about the evaluation result (evaluation result letter). Successful proposals will be invited for grant preparation; the other ones may be put on a reserve list or rejected.
- Invitation to grant preparation does NOT constitute a formal commitment for funding. We will still need to make various legal checks before grant award: legal entity validation, financial capacity, exclusion check, etc.
- If you believe that the evaluation procedure was flawed, you can submit a complaint (following the deadlines and procedures set out in the evaluation result letter).

Grant preparation

- Successful applicants will be invited by CINEA to prepare the Grant Agreement via eGrants tool together with the EU Project Officer
- Grant preparation involves a dialogue in fine-tuning of technical and financial aspects, such as milestones, deliverables, etc., and implementation of recommendations from evaluation if applicable
- Grant Agreement provisions are defined in the model MGA and not-negotiable
- The Model Grant Agreement that will be used (and all other relevant templates and guidance documents) can be found on Portal Reference Documents

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Thank you



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