

## Joint Call for Proposals for Research and Innovation Projects

### EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP DRIVING URBAN TRANSITIONS

#### DUT Call 2023

Co-funded by the European Commission (Grant N° 101069506)

## Info Days 1 and 2 - Q&A

#### **IMPORTANT DEADLINES**

Submission deadline pre-proposals: 21 November 2023 at 13:00 (CET)

Submission deadline full-proposals: 30 April 2024 at 13:00 (CEST)

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## Revisions

If this document has been updated, the changes are tracked in the table below.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Update</b>
<b>September 26, 2023</b>	Updated question #2 in "Participation of cities" (p.5)
<b>October 18, 2023</b>	Added questions from the second info day: #4 and #6 in "Application procedure" (p.3) #4, #9 and #10 in "Structure of the consortium" (p.5) #8 in "Participation of cities" (p.7)
<b>March 4, 2024</b>	Changed the time of the Stage 2 deadline from 13:00 <b>CET</b> to 13:00 <b>CEST</b>

# 1 Elements of the proposal

## **Application procedure:**

### **Where can we find the call documents?**

You can find all the documents of the call on [the DUT website](#).

### **Through which portal shall the application be submitted and by whom?**

The transnational proposal of a project needs to be submitted on the [UDi-Manager platform](#) by the principal investigator (PI) of the main applicant.

A national application may be necessary (see next question).

### **Our organization from Austria will be the main applicant. Should the other two partners coming from other countries also apply at national level?**

For many countries, the answer is yes, they have to apply at national level as well. However, not all Funding Agencies require a national application. Please check Annex A of the Call Text or contact your national Funding Agency.

### **If a national application is declared ineligible in stage 1, will this lead to a rejection of the whole project, or is there a chance to adjust the application in stage 2?**

If the national Funding Agency declares a partner ineligible, this partner will be removed from the consortium and will not advance to the second stage. Therefore, we highly recommend getting in touch with your Funding Agency to avoid this. The whole project, however, will only be rejected if it is not eligible according to transnational eligibility rules (Call text, p.32) after the removal of the partner (e.g. if there are too few countries or if the consortium does not include a communal partner anymore).

### **I have seen that some countries have already scheduled a national info session. However, Spain has not confirmed a date yet. Will there be a designated session for Spain at all?**

In general, please contact your national contact point for dates and more details. You find the contact details in the Annex A of the Call Text. You can also find an overview of already confirmed national events [here](#).

Referring to Spain: In case of AEI, there probably won't be a separate info day. For information related to CDTI, the other Spanish Funding Agency, please consult them directly.

### **What kind of feedback will we get on our submitted proposal in stage 1?**

Once the evaluation and selection of projects to be invited to stage 2 are done, all Main Applicants will have the opportunity to check on the transnational submission platform the Summary report made by the experts. Then you will see the aspects to improve (and to take into consideration in case you want to submit for the next call).

### **At which stage can a widening country's organisation join?**

After Stage 1, when the projects have been invited to prepare their full proposals for Stage 2.

### **What is considered a fundamental change in the proposal?**

For example, fundamental changes could be an exceptional change of the principal investigator (PI) for the main applicant. A minor change would e.g. concern the demand of funding.

Generally speaking, if you are not sure if a change is permitted, please always contact your Funding Agency.

**Proposal template:**

**Can more than five project partners be added to the pre-proposal template?**

You may add as many project partners as needed.

**To what extent should a work plan (work packages, tasks, leadership of WPs in consortium) already be defined in the pre-proposal stage?**

An outline of the envisioned work programme, the results expected within the duration of the project and the main milestones should be described under section 6 in the pre-proposal. As the length of this section is limited in the template, you do not need to go in depth. Later on, in the full proposal, there will be no limit to develop the work plan.

**Is there a budget template that includes Swiss Francs and Euros, or should it all be aligned in Euros?**

As stated in the Call Text, p. 33, the estimated budget must be given in euros only.

**What do you consider a consortium reference as requested in the pre-proposal template?**

The section 7 in the pre-proposal template refers to relevant references related to the consortium in regard to your project`s topic. In practice, the project partners, who can present such relevant references themselves, bring them in.

**Is the PIC-number the same as last year?**

The PIC of your organisation will be the same unless your organisation has legally changed.

## 2 The Consortium

**Structure of the consortium:**

**Is there a maximum number of applicants?**

As stated in the Call Text (p.32), small to medium sized consortia (involving funding requests to 3-5 Funding Agencies on average per proposal), are expected. However, there is no upper limit and consortia may involve as many partners as necessary for a convincing proposal, ensuring that all participants have a justified role.

**Does a consortium need to be transnational?**

The whole idea of DUT is to host transnational projects, which is clearly outlined in the Call Text (p.32). Therefore, yes, your consortium has to be transnational.

**Is a mixed consortium, i.e. at least 1 of each type of partner, expected or not necessary? Is there a minimum number of countries involved?**

Regarding transnational rules (Call Text, p.32), there is a minimum of three participating countries required. Mixed consortia with different types of partners are not necessary. There may, however, be stricter rules at national level - please check Annex A for details.

**What is the difference between the requirements "At least three eligible Applicants from at least three different participating countries" and "at least two of the eligible Applicants must be from different EU Member States or Associated Countries eligible for EC co-funding in this Call" under the first transnational eligibility rule?**

The consortium must include funded partners from three countries in total. Only two of those countries must be participating EU member states or associated partners (these can be found in the Call Text). The third country can be any country participating in the partnership, even if they are not a member state or associated partner.

**Do the cooperation partners satisfy the rule of having a minimum of three member states?**

As stated in the Call Text (p.31), they do not count toward the transnational eligibility rule 1.

**Can we add additional cooperation partners during the full proposal stage? Or do we need to fix the consortium at the pre-proposal stage?**

You may add cooperation partners (partners that do not directly receive funding) at any time.

**What needs to be considered for collaborations between EU and non-EU countries but who have access to Horizon? E.g. an EU research institute collaborating with a non-EU city as case implementation.**

Consortia must include at least three independent legal entities applying for funding from three different countries that have Funding Agencies participating in the call. In addition, at least two eligible applicants within a consortium must be from different EU member states or associated countries eligible for EC co-funding in this Call. If the non-EU country you are speaking of is an associated country with a Funding Agency funding your project partner, they would count towards both limits.

**I have noticed that Poland, for example, was not a project leader/main applicant last year. Is this year`s call meant for widening countries to lead a project or to rather take part as a partner?**

It is definitely possible for widening countries to be project leaders.

**How should we make visible in the application that we involved stakeholders in the project development and design?**

Describing it in the proposal (e.g. with graphs, data, numbers) is probably the easiest solution. If you have a stakeholder who is very committed, they can also become part of the consortium, e.g. as a cooperation partner who hands in a Letter of Interest but does not receive funding from any participating Funding Agency.

**Are Letters of Interests necessary for stage 1 or only stage 2?**

As stated in the Call Text (p.31), Letters of Interest from cooperation partners should be submitted with the full proposal (stage 2).

**Participation of cities:**

**Does the requirement for a local governance office/city office in the consortium apply to each international partner or the consortium as a whole?**

According to transnational eligibility rule 4, there needs to be one city/entity providing public services in the consortium (p.32 of the Call Text). However, each participating country also has national rules that apply (for example, they may require a city from their country). Therefore, it is always important to check the rules of the responsible agencies in Annex A of the Call Text.

**Is it a “must” that the city is part of the consortium or is an LOI describing the kind of cooperation on local level enough?**

According to the Call Text (Chapter 3.4), each consortium must include at least one urban government authority partner, either as a Main Applicant, Co-applicant or Cooperation Partner, depending on the national/regional eligibility criteria. Please check Annex A of the Call Text to be sure that city/urban authorities can be funded by your national/regional Funding Agency.

A Letter of Interest is mandatory only for Cooperation Partners (partners that participate with their own funds).

**Can cities receive funding?**

At transnational level, yes, but at national level not necessarily. Please check the rules of your national/regional Funding Agency (Annex A of the Call Text).

**In Spain, for example, public authorities are not eligible for funding from the national Funding Agencies. Cities, however, are compulsory to be part of a consortium. What do you expect from them, especially in basic research projects?**

We are looking for applied research in the DUT Calls. Cities must be included, as projects need to build on actual needs of the cities. Living Labs in specific cities help to test solutions. If your country cannot fund public authorities, city administrations need to be from another country in the consortium.

**Is it beneficial to have several cities/municipalities from different countries as living labs - meaning is it better to have more than one living lab in the consortium?**

That depends on your project, and its goals and challenges. In general, the involvement of cities is welcome.

**Would a consortium that includes a city (county capital) as well as a commune (smaller municipality of 4 villages) researching a mirror/parallel process centred on nature-based solutions be suitable? (The rural municipality and the city in our coalition share/neighbour a natural area and face similar and different challenges.)**

From a transnational standpoint, this is acceptable. Please check the rules of your national/regional Funding Agency (Annex A of the Call Text).

**Can cities in global South be a) included in DUT project 2) funded by DUT project?**

They can participate as cooperation partners. As funded partners, only organisations/institutions/companies from participating countries can receive funding (the list is available on the website and in the Call Text).

**Should we foresee a case study site in each participating country of our project or is one in the whole project sufficient?**

This depends mainly on your proposal/project - if having just one physical site makes sense, then this should be fine (unless the national/regional rules of your funding agency demand you have more than one). If having more sites makes your proposal stronger, then this would of course be a good idea. Generally speaking, the project should have a clear benefit from the transnational implementation, so if you have only one physical site it still needs to be clear why the project is better suited for a transnational approach than simply being submitted to a purely national call.

**Different types of applicants:**

**Who can apply for funding?**

The principal types of eligible applicants according to transnational rules are listed in the Call Text, p.31:

- research organisations (higher education institutions including universities, university colleges; research institutes or other entities with research undertakings),
- companies and commercial organisations,
- urban government authorities (such as regional and local government institutions, municipalities and municipal organisations, city authorities, urban public administrations, and infrastructure and service providers),
- consumers and civil society representatives (e.g. local and community organisations, non-governmental organisations, not-for-profit organisations, citizens' representatives, etc.).
- From the culture and creative sectors (e.g. artists and designers)

However, apart from this transnational definition, national funding rules may restrict the eligibility of certain groups. Therefore, it is important to countercheck with the specific rules in your country/region and the respective Funding Agency. Please refer to Annex A of the Call Text for further details.

**Is it possible for a water utility to submit an application during this call? (This is a local entity with a municipal scope but with statutory, administrative and financial autonomy.) Or can only public organisations apply?**

This is perfectly possible on a transnational level; a consortium should include as many practical partners as is necessary for the project's success.

There is no transnational rule stating that only public organisations can apply. The Call text (p.31) lists all types of applicants that can apply for funding. Additionally, cooperation partners not receiving funds may be included in a project as well (without restrictions regarding their organisation type).

However, there may be restrictions on the national level – please check the rules of your Funding Agency to see if they fund water utility organisations.

**If we are not eligible for direct funding as an NGO in our country, can we join a consortium as subcontractor?**

This depends on the eligibility rules of the respective Funding Agency. Please check Annex A of the Call Text or contact the Funding Agency directly.

**As an academic in a UK university, in which capacity can I participate in a proposal (given that the UK is back in the Horizon Europe)?**

Unfortunately, unlike 2022, the UK is not participating as a funding country this year. This may change again in 2024. Therefore, you cannot join as a funded partner this year. However, you may still join consortia as a cooperation (unfunded) partner.

**Are there restrictions for the participation of affiliated companies? For example would two companies from the same group (but in different countries) participating in the project be eligible?**

Different national restrictions may apply. Affiliated companies may not count towards the minimum requirements on countries involved. Therefore, we strongly suggest contacting your national/regional Funding Agencies and the Call Secretariat since details on how your companies are linked to each other may matter greatly.

**Find other partners:**

**Can more than two partners participate in a matchmaking meeting?**

The meetings can only be initiated by two partners – however, more guests can be added once the meeting has been initiated, using the “Invite Guests” button.

**What is the email to express our interest to make a pitch?**

Making pitches increases your chances to find suitable project partners to cooperate.

There is no email address where you have to submit your pitch – instead, there is a form that needs to be filled out.

You can indicate your interest in pitching your project idea during the Info Day 2 (10 October) on the [B2Match platform](#) or under [this link](#) until the 27th of September 12:00 CET.

## 3 Call topics

**Cross-topic:**

**Is there an overview per pathway regarding which countries can or cannot be involved in a topic?**

Annex A of the Call Text (available on the [website](#)) includes a table that indicates which Funding Agency supports projects under which pathways and topics.

Additionally, this information can be found directly on the website [here](#).

**Each topic lists a number of "expected outputs". Should proposals/projects address all the bullet points listed here or just a selection?**

The list of expected outputs is not a mandatory tick-the-box list, so not all aspects need to be covered. However, it will be beneficial in the evaluation if most/a high number of them are considered.

**Is it beneficial to tackle neighbourhood social cohesion and bonding issues throughout the three pathways?**



Social cohesion and the concept of local community building are represented in the PED pathway in topic 1 and topic 2 and are definitely considered welcome aspects to be included in project ideas.

The same applies to the CUE and 15mC pathways. Tackling social cohesion issues can help make a proposal more holistic.

**How do you see ideas regarding “accessibility” taking part in all three pathways? I see that “15-minute cities” are primarily oriented around this topic, but what about Positive Energy Districts (PED) and Circular Urban Economies (CUE)?**

It is definitely an important aspect of the PED topics as well, in terms of getting the public on board of the transformation process.

**15-minute City Transition Pathway:**

**Do the acceptance of the “15-minute City” idea and various measures by the population also interest you?**

I think it is important to say that we see the 15mC concept as one way of achieving the urban mobility transition. It is a means to an end. Part of the call is to develop and apply new ways of involving people and bringing their expertise and engagement on board for reimagining our cities.

**There is a trend that availability of utilities and services diminish more in rural areas/small villages than in cities while car-dependency increases. To what extent is this pathway (15mC) focusing on non-city environments?**

It is important to understand that cities are strongly connected and interlinked with their sub- and peri-urban surroundings. This is definitely part of the call and the challenges laid out. In addition, the context of small and mid-sized cities is highly relevant. However, projects that only focus on rural areas may fit better in other funding programmes than "Driving Urban Transitions".

**What does "leave no one behind" mean in the context of the 15mC pathway? Does it refer to a particular group?**

Similar to EU policies, "leave no one behind" refers to a general objective and intention to place a high importance on issues of equality and inclusion. While placing a focus on the most vulnerable groups, we do not refer to one or the other specific group, but rather to the general objective.

**For the 15mC pathway, to what extent do innovations need to focus on 'local action'? Can results also be nation-wide innovative policies at the national government level?**

Usually, our focus is set on urban contexts. If you can argue the importance of support from the national level, and then connect to local issues / implementation, we would not see any problem.

**About “15mC” topic 3 “Empower People for Urban Mobility Transitions”: Do we expect real-time solutions to motivate users or long-term impact (e.g. education) or both?**

When drafting the topic, the discussion was more focused around ideas and methods for co-creative and longer-term (not in singular, fragmented events) involvement of inhabitants. Depending on how you argue it, both, short and long-term orientation would be possible. However, we see an urgent need for action and favour more short-term implementation.

**I wonder how it could be possible to include and test theoretical assumptions empirically, such as an urban scaling law for the 15-minute city. I am confident that such insight might be strongly policy-relevant but not sure whether such experimental approaches go too far beyond immediate practical needs of partner cities.**

This would be a research-oriented project (ROI). We have a few of them in the cohort of projects from DUT Call 2022 and see the relevance. If you can get other partners and city administrations for that on board (maybe especially bringing in their needs and priorities), there should be no hindrance.

**Positive Energy Districts Transition Pathway:**

**We are an urban planning practice and we are working on a proposal within the PED Transition Pathway, topic 2 "Urban regeneration and refurbishment", referring to processes on land recycling and transforming existing built environment in order to achieve better energy efficiency and eliminate energy waste. Would such a project be eligible?**

From a first assessment, that sounds eligible. Please note that we can obviously not guarantee this from such a short project description.

The evaluation of the projects will be done by an independent panel of experts.

## 4 Funding

**Is the list of national Funding Agencies final or will more agencies be added?**

The list for the 2023 Call is final, however, more Agencies may join in next year's call.

**Is ANR the only French Funding Agency involved?**

No, ADEME is another French Funding Agency. However, please consider that not every Funding Agency supports all pathways. Please check Annex A of the Call Text.

**Which costs are eligible?**

Please regard the national/regional information and eligibility criteria in Annex A of the Call Text and consult your national/regional Funding Agency for further details.

**What are the rules for sub-contracting?**

This depends on your responsible Funding Agency - please check Annex A of the Call Text for details.

**Will each project partner receive only national funding or is there also a transnational budget?**

Most project partners (those from eligible countries) will also receive co-funding by the European Commission.

**What about the maximum possible funding amount for a project? Can the total funding for a project can be higher than each country range?**

The maximum funding for each project partner depends on the funding rules of the respective national or regional Funding Agency. Therefore, the total funding rate at project level can be higher than at partner level.

**If we have a 500k project and a partner in another country (i.e. Italy) than the country of the lead partner (e.g. Romania), will the Italian partner receive their respective budget from their country's (Italy) total budget or from the Romanian budget?**

The partner receives the funding from the Funding Agency in its own country/region. It is therefore important to check the national eligibility rules in Annex A of the Call Text.

**Is it expected to have a consortium with joint liability or will the partnership be as in EU projects with grant agreement (GA) (every partner has its own liability)?**

A project does not receive a joint GA, but GA from each involved Funding Agency. Therefore you need a consortium agreement (CA) that covers liability (and also the minimum requirements stated in the Call Text).

**Within each Transition Pathway, will there at least one research-oriented approach and one innovation-oriented approach be funded?**

That is the goal, yes. Whether or not this goal can be achieved depends on the submitted projects.

**Can a project proposal be declined because one of the national budgets for one of the partners is oversubscribed? In other words, does it pay off to include partners from 'undersubscribed countries'?**

Yes, that may happen (depending on your score) and therefore it may pay off to include partners from undersubscribed countries. An analysis regarding under- and oversubscriptions will be published on the website soon.

**If we are a partner from Romania and our country does not have a budget for the CUE pathway, but the lead partner does have a budget on this priority - could we be part of this project and receive funds from our lead partner`s national agency?**

In general, you cannot be part of a consortium that follows this pathway if your Funding Agency does not fund it. In such cases, however, please always check back with your Agency to get their consult.

**Is there a relationship between DUT and Horizon funding?**

The DUT partnership is a project funded by HORIZON EUROPE. Therefore, all your projects are also co-funded by the European Commission.

## 5 Other

**What are the upsides and possible downsides of submitting several proposals for the call? Is there anything to consider, if one organization is planning to submit submissions for all three transition pathways and possibly even proposals for different topics under one pathway.**

There are no downsides in applying in multiple proposals, as long as you show sufficient capacities to work on all proposals at the same time. Additionally, please make sure you check with your National Contact Point (see Annex A in the Call Text) first, if you may apply multiple times according to your national/regional rules. Please also make sure you respect the transnational rule 3 on PIs (explained in the Call Text).

**A question about cooperation between projects: is it something you are considering at the proposal evaluation stage?**

Cooperation between projects is technically not explored during the evaluation stage. For your information, the Knowledge Hub, (section 5.3.3 of the Call Text) could allow such cooperation in the future.

**What is the level of achievements expected at the end of a DUT project? Should it be more focused on studies, inquiries (first stage: design) or more on prototypes, real-life experiments (second stage: testing), or even investment, full-scale demonstration (third stage: implementation)?**

It depends on the type of approach you choose (strategic research, applied research or innovation). Remember to check Annex A of the Call Text to see what types of approach your Funding Agency supports.

**How would the expected outcomes/products change if you choose research-oriented approach (ROA) versus innovation-oriented approach (IOA)?**

ROA supports projects aimed at producing knowledge, analysing data, better understanding and modelling phenomena, and developing expertise and tools that will be useful to stakeholders, practitioners and policymakers. It calls for proposals mainly focused on strategic and/or applied research. IOA supports projects aimed at developing or improving practical operational solutions – technological and organisational – for companies, local communities and authorities in charge of urban transport and urban planning as well as management and testing of such solutions. It calls for proposals mainly focused on applied research and innovation.