



ENVIRONMENT

EASME

Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

THE LIFE PROGRAMME 2014-2020

APPLYING SUCCESSFULLY TO LIFE

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Executive
Agency for
SMEs

Programmes managed by EASME



SME SUPPORT



ENERGY



ENVIRONMENT



MARITIME

- ❖ LIFE 2014-2020
- ❖ COSME
- ❖ Horizon 2020 Energy, Environment and Resources and SME Instrument.
- ❖ European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
- ❖ Eco-Innovation
- ❖ Intelligent Energy Europe

The diagram illustrates the EASME Policy Cycle as a continuous loop of four stages, each represented by a grey circle with a colored arrow indicating the flow:

- Evaluation** (top circle, green arrow)
- Revision** (second circle from top, blue arrow)
- Monitoring** (third circle from top, red arrow)
- Policy feedback** (bottom circle, orange arrow)

The cycle is connected to external entities as follows:

- EASME** (green rounded rectangle) has a green arrow pointing into the **Evaluation** stage.
- EU policy Directorates** (orange rounded rectangle) has a red arrow pointing into the **Monitoring** stage.
- A large orange arrow points from the **Policy feedback** stage back to the **EU policy Directorates**.

KEY CHALLENGES

- ❖ There is **significant competition** for LIFE funds
- ❖ It takes **time and money to prepare** an application
- ❖ Proposals that **fail are poorly prepared** or simply not as good as the others, funding is limited
- ❖ You can't get a grant if you don't submit an application (at concept note stage for environment sub-programme)

INFORMATION SOURCES

- ❖ LIFE websiteLIFE Web site
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm> – It contains everything you need: in particular LIFE project database
- ❖ **LIFE Regulation**, in particular the priority areas
- ❖ **Multi-annual work-programme** – project topics
- ❖ **Application Packages** and **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**
- ❖ **Guides for evaluation** of LIFE project proposals
- ❖ Eventually, specific information, guidelines designed by your **National Contact Point**
- ❖ **Evaluation comments** from previous submissions

PROJECT DESIGN - I

- ❖ **Baseline description should be clear** enough as it is essential for evaluating the potential of the project (AW1 CN/FP)
- ❖ The **sequence of actions should be logical** and clearly linked to project description (AW1 CN/FP)
- ❖ Expected results and quantitative **estimations of projects impacts** (during and 3/5 years after project end) (AW2 CN - AW3 FP)

PROJECT DESIGN - II

- ❖ **Activities/plans to ensure sustainability** of the project results are absolutely crucial! (AW2 CN – AW4 FP)
- ❖ **Replication and/or transfer** needs to be taken into account and **related project actions** need to be well conceived (AW4 FP)
- ❖ Clear **description of staff involved** in specific actions (AW1 CN/FP)

PROJECT DESIGN - III

Transnational projects:

- ❖ the proposal has to show that there is sufficient evidence for an added value of the transnational approach (If such evidence can be provided, the proposal will be considered for a higher scoring in the project selection process and will therefore have a higher chance of being selected for co-funding – AW6)

PROJECT DESIGN - IV

- ❖ Limit the number of **actions to the ones essential to achieve the project objectives**
- ❖ **Partnership** structure: look for complementarity and avoid redundancy of expertise (key stakeholders should be involved)

PROJECT DESIGN - V

- ❖ **Project duration** should take into account:
 - ❖ Possible delays due to **weather or other external events** (mainly NAT projects)
 - ❖ Some projects are subject to an **Environmental Impact Assessment** (EIA) or NATURA 2000 assessment
 - ❖ Sufficient time to **gather information** about the impact of project activities
 - ❖ Delays in **obtaining permits and authorisations**
 - ❖ Authorisations needed, procedure and time needed to get them should be clearly described
 - ❖ In some cases you may need to initiate the procedures before actual project start (complex permits)

PROJECT DESIGN

GOOD DESIGN

Solid analysis of the problem, state of play and solution proposed (baseline)

Key stakeholders involved (incl. users)

Robust assessment of impacts over the life cycle of the solution proposed

Clear strategy on how to sustain and multiply the impacts

COMMON PROBLEMS

Insufficient background information (why, who and how)

Rationale for projects is defined during the project

Objectives too broad, too many

Poor partnership (partners don't fit regarding know-how or insufficient budget)

Over-optimistic / unrealistic or lack of quantification of impacts

Replication confused with networking and dissemination

Vague plans to sustain the project/results after project end

ESTABLISHING THE PROJECT BUDGET

GENERAL REMARKS

- ❖ Read the **model grant agreement**, Annex X, FAQ and application guide
 - ❖ Art. II.10 (award of contracts), Art. II.11 (subcontracting), Art. II.19 (eligible costs), Art. II.21 (affiliated entities)
- ❖ Be realistic!
- ❖ Only costs within project duration (except audit/final reporting)

FINANCIAL APPLICATION FORMS (F1- F8)

- ❖ Put costs in the **correct cost category** (F-forms)
- ❖ Round costs to the **nearest EUR**
- ❖ Each beneficiary to include its **own/affiliate's costs**
 - ❖ No subcontracting between beneficiaries/affiliates
 - ❖ Avoid internal invoicing => costs to be included in the appropriate category
- ❖ **No VAT** to be included unless it cannot be recovered and for public bodies no VAT for activities engaged in as a public body

PERSONNEL COST – ALL PARTNERS

- ❖ Only costs related to **employees** /personnel with an **equivalent appointing act** (e.g. secondment) or contracts with natural persons (e.g. consultancy/civil contracts) which are assigned to the project
- ❖ Ensure that tasks are carried out by the appropriate staff level
 - ❖ Number of person days
 - ❖ Daily rate
- ❖ Daily rate = Yearly salary cost/Yearly productive days
 - ❖ Salary cost includes social security contribution & other statutory costs (see Annex X)
 - ❖ Productive days = 261 – holidays - illness

PERSONNEL COST – PUBLIC BODIES

- ❖ Only costs re. activities that would not have been carried out if the project would not have been undertaken
- ❖ **2% rule:** sum of public body contributions (beneficiaries) **MUST** exceed by at least 2% the salary cost of non-additional staff
- ❖ Additional staff = permanent/temporary staff whose contracts or contract renewals start
 - ❖ On or after the start date of the project
 - ❖ On or after the signature of the grant agreement (if before start)
 - ❖ Specifically seconded/assigned to the project
 - ❖ Contract renewal <> contract re-assignment

2% RULE - EXAMPLE

Example of budget:

- Personnel
 - Non-additional **105 €**
 - Additional staff 20 €
- External Assistance 50 €
- Equipment 25 €
- **Total 200 €**



LIFE contribution ► **60%**
but
Minimum own contribution
from public beneficiaries
= **105 €** + 2% ► **107,10 €**
Maximum LIFE contribution
► **92,90 €**

EQUIPMENT/INFRASTRUCTURE / PROTOTYPE

- ❖ General principle = **only depreciated costs** up to a limit
 - ❖ 50% total purchase cost of equipment
 - ❖ 25% total purchase cost of infrastructure
- ❖ Exceptions where the eligible cost can be 100% of purchase cost
 - ❖ Prototypes (specifically created for the project/not available as serial product/not commercialised)
 - ❖ Nature projects: public bodies/ non for profit organisations if they fulfil certain conditions (definitive assignment to nature conservation activities after end of the project)

SUBCONTRACTING

- ❖ Only for implementation of limited part of the project (max. 35% of the total budget unless justified)
- ❖ Only if really necessary for the implementation
- ❖ In principle not for project management unless justified

OTHER COSTS

- ❖ Resulting directly from requirements imposed by the grant agreement
 - ❖ Financial guarantees (no need to budget upfront – will be communicated during the revision stage)
 - ❖ Audit certificate (costs of beneficiaries with Union Contribution at least 750,000 EUR)
 - ❖ Translation costs
 - ❖ Costs for dissemination materials
 - ❖ ...

OVERHEADS

- ❖ Flat rate
- ❖ Max. 7% of total direct eligible costs excluding land purchase/LT lease/one-off compensations
- ❖ Maximum is per beneficiary
- ❖ Fair share of the overall overheads of the beneficiary

AWARD OF CONTRACTS

- ❖ To tender offering **best value for money/lowest price**
- ❖ **No conflict of interest**
- ❖ Indicate **type of procedure** to be used (or used), use the types mentioned in the application guide
 - ❖ Public bodies = public procurement rules!
 - ❖ Private entities = use internal rules organisation BUT obligation to use an 'open' tendering procedure > **135 000 EUR** (no salami slicing to avoid this procedure!)

REMEMBER

- ❖ Be **clear** and **precise** – applications are only evaluated on what is submitted (not on the potential of the idea)
- ❖ It takes **TIME to read** the application guidelines:
 - ❖ Verify that LIFE is the appropriate funding programme for you
- ❖ Be **AWARE** of all the exceptions that may apply to you
- ❖ Financial coherence is a key issue , check systematically **COST EFFECTIVENESS**
- ❖ **Avoid to** include actions not related to the objective of your proposal
- ❖ **Read about and talk** to ongoing projects

Check the LIFE Database of funded projects

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm>

!!! START EARLY!!!

CONCEPT NOTES

RATIONALE FOR 2 STAGES APPROACH

- ❖ Simplification of the application process and evaluation of LIFE traditional projects
- ❖ Easier procedure & faster feedback
- ❖ Need to address the decreasing number of applications for LIFE co-financing in recent years

EVALUATION CRITERIA – STAGE 1: CONCEPT NOTE

- ❖ **Overall quality of the proposal:** clarity of the proposals (including the description of the pre-operational context), its feasibility and the indicative value for money. (max. 20 – passing score: min 5)
- ❖ **Overall EU added value:** project's contribution to the LIFE priorities, expected impact, and sustainability of the project results. (max. 30 – passing score: min 10)

SUBMISSION OF CONCEPT NOTES (CNs)

❖ 1079 CNs RECEIVED

- ❖ 573 Environment and Resource Efficiency
- ❖ 326 Nature and Biodiversity
- ❖ 172 Governance and Information
- ❖ 8 Withdrawn

CONCEPT NOTE 2ND STAGE

❖ 281 CNs INVITED TO THE 2ND STAGE

- ❖ 139 Environment and Resource Efficiency (24%*)
- ❖ 121 Nature and Biodiversity (37%*)
- ❖ 21 Governance and Information (12%*)
- ❖ 32 Ineligible CNs (13 NAT, 1 GIE, 18 ENV)

* of the total submissions

CONCEPT NOTE

MAIN BENEFITS – CONFIRMED

- ❖ Simpler application process
- ❖ Increased number of applications
- ❖ Complex vs simple proposals
- ❖ Easier to understand and evaluate

CONCEPT NOTE

MAIN ISSUES

- ❖ Information on the baseline (what and extend of the problem, state of play, state of the art)
- ❖ Actions completeness vs level of details
- ❖ Timeline and use of budget
- ❖ Quantification of impacts
- ❖ Partnership and involvement
- ❖ Budget



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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION
AND GOOD LUCK!

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