



Innovation and Networks Executive Agency

CALL FOR PROPOSALS CONCERNING PROJECTS OF COMMON INTEREST UNDER THE CONNECTING EUROPE FACILITY IN THE FIELD OF TRANS-EUROPEAN ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

CEF ENERGY 2016 CALL 2 (CEF-Energy-2016-2)

1. SUBJECT

Adequate, well integrated and reliable energy networks are a prerequisite for an integrated and competitive internal energy market. The aim of the Connecting Europe Facility¹ is to accelerate investment in the field of trans-European networks and to leverage funding from public and private sectors. While the bulk of the investment needed in the energy sector should be delivered by the market and its costs recovered through tariffs, EU financing may be needed for specific projects with wider regional and European benefits which are unable to attract market-based financing.

In this context and on the basis of the multiannual work programme adopted on 17 March 2016², a call for proposals is launched to support projects of common interest as defined in the TEN-E Regulation³ last amended by the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/89 of 18.11.2015.

2. OBJECTIVES

As indicated in section 3 of the Annex to the multiannual work programme, this call for proposals aims to enable projects of common interest to be prepared and implemented within the framework of the trans-European networks policy in the energy sector. In particular, the call shall contribute

¹ Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, amending Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulations (EC) No 680/2007 and (EC) No 67/2010 (hereinafter the 'CEF Regulation'), OJ L 348 of 20.12.2013, p.129

² Commission Implementing Decision C(2014)2080 final of 31.3.2014 establishing the multiannual work programme for granting financial aid in the field of trans-European energy infrastructure under the Connecting Europe Facility for the period 2014-2020 as last amended by Commission Implementing Decisions C(2016)1587 of 17.03.2016

³ Regulation (EU) 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2013 (hereinafter the 'TEN-E Regulation') as amended by Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) C(2015) 8052. of 18.11.2015 (hereinafter the 'PCI list'),

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to supporting energy infrastructure projects of common interest that have significant societal benefits and that ensure greater solidarity among Member States, but which do not receive adequate financing from the market. Special focus shall be placed on the efficient use of public investment.

3. EXPECTED RESULTS FROM THE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

As indicated in section 5 of the Annex to the multi-annual work programme, it is expected that the financial assistance contributes to the further development and implementation of projects of common interest in electricity and gas, helping to achieve the broader energy policy objectives of:

- increasing competitiveness by promoting the further integration of the internal energy market and the interoperability of electricity and gas networks across borders;
- enhancing the Union security of energy supply, and
- contributing to sustainable development and protection of the environment, inter alia by the integration of energy from renewable sources and by the development of smart energy networks.

Furthermore, in accordance with recital 57 of the CEF Regulation, this multiannual work programme aims at directing the major part of the financial assistance to electricity projects, subject to market uptake, the quality and maturity of actions proposed and their financing requirements, while fully recognising the importance of the gas projects on the PCI list.

4. BUDGET

The indicative amount to be allocated on the basis of this call for proposals to projects of common interest in the field of trans-European energy infrastructure is €600 million.

5. TIMETABLE

Date of publication of call for proposals	30 June 2016
Deadline for the submission of proposals	8 November 2016 (17:00 Brussels time)
Evaluation of proposals	November 2016 - January 2017 (indicative)
Consultation of CEF Coordination Committee; Information of European Parliament	February 2017 (indicative)
Adoption of the Selection Decision	March 2017 (indicative)
Preparation and signature of individual grant Agreements	As from March 2017 (indicative)

6. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A proposal **will not be evaluated** if at least one of the following situations occurs:

- It is not submitted electronically in the TENtec Information System eSubmission module⁴. **In this respect, proposals or part(s) of proposals submitted by email or in hard copy shall not be admissible**
- It is submitted after the deadline for submission of proposals (*see sections 5 'Timetable' and 13.2 'Submission of proposals'*).
- The proposal is incomplete, i.e. any form A, B, C or D is missing.
- The proposal is not duly signed by the applicant(s). E-signatures supported by verifiable valid certificates⁵ in the meaning of the electronic signatures Directive (1999/93/EC)⁶ shall be accepted.

7. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

7.1. Eligible applicants

Pursuant to Article 9 of the CEF Regulation⁷, only those proposals submitted by one of the following types of applicants are eligible:

- One or more Member States;
- With the agreement of the Member States concerned, international organisations, joint undertakings, or public or private undertakings or bodies established in Member States.

Where necessary to achieve the objectives of a given project of common interest and where duly motivated, third countries and entities established in third countries may participate in actions contributing to the projects of common interest. They may not receive funding except where it is indispensable to achieve the objectives of a given project of common interest.

Applications presented by third countries and entities established in third countries must contain the agreement of the Member State concerned by the proposed Action and a declaration on why the participation of the applicant is indispensable. Applicants that are entities established in a third country⁸ must also provide proof of the support of the third country authorities concerned.

⁴ The TENtec eSubmission module is part of the TENtec Information System used to manage CEF actions during their entire lifecycle and enables the electronic submission of proposals under the CEF calls. The link to TENtec is available under the "Application Forms" section of the call webpage:

<https://ec.europa.eu/inea/en/https%3A//ec.europa.eu/inea/en/connecting-europe-facility/cef-energy/calls/second-2016-cef-energy-call-proposals-2016-2>

⁵ For a list of trusted certificate providers please see

https://ec.europa.eu/information_society/policy/esignature/trusted-list/.

⁶ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A31999L0093>.

⁷ Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, amending Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulations (EC) No 680/2007 and (EC) No 67/2010 Text with EEA relevance.

⁸ The eligibility criteria as specified in this Call for proposals are complemented by those specified in Commission notice Nr. 2013/C 205/05 (OJEU C 205 of 19.07.2013, pp.9-11) in the applicable cases as described in the

Proposals may be submitted by entities which do not have legal personality under the applicable national law, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf and offer guarantee for the protection of the EU financial interests equivalent to that offered by legal persons.

Proposals submitted by natural persons are not eligible.

Any applicant that cannot provide the agreement of the EU Member State concerned will not be eligible.

Applicants may designate affiliated entities within the meaning of Article 122(2)(b) of the Financial Regulation⁹, for the purpose of supporting the implementation of the action submitted for funding. Such affiliated entities must comply with the eligibility criteria for applicants.

For multi-applicant proposals, it is recommended that an applicant is designated to coordinate the application.

7.2. Exclusion criteria

In line with Articles 106 to 108 and 131 of the Financial Regulation and Article 141 of the Rules of Application¹⁰, applicants will be excluded from participating in the call for proposals procedure if they are in any of the following situations:

- i. they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- ii. they or persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of a Member State which has the force of *res judicata*;
- iii. they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify including by decisions of the EIB and international organisations;
- iv. they are not in compliance with their obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- v. they or persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control over them have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering or any other illegal activity, where such illegal activity is detrimental to the European Union's financial

Commission notice.

⁹ Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the European Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002

¹⁰ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 of 29 October 2012, OJ L 362, 31.12.2012, p. 1.

interests;

- vi. they are subject to a financial or administrative penalty referred to in Article 109(1) of the Financial Regulation.

The cases referred to in point (v) above cover:

- 1) cases of fraud as referred to in Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the EU financial interests established by the Council Act of 26 July 1995;
- 2) cases of corruption as referred to in Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Union or officials of Member States of the European Union, established by the Council Act of 26 May 1997;
- 3) cases of participation in a criminal organisation, as defined in Article 2(1) of Joint Action 98/733/JHA of the Council;
- 4) cases of money laundering as defined in Article 1 of Council Directive 91/308/EEC.

Applicants will not be granted financial assistance if, in the course of the grant award procedure:

- i. they are subject to a conflict of interests;
- ii. they are guilty of misrepresenting the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the grant award procedure or have failed to supply that information;
- iii. find themselves in one of the situations of exclusion, referred to above.

The same exclusion criteria apply to affiliated entities. Applicants and their affiliated entities, if applicable, must certify that they are not in one of the situations listed above.

7.3. Eligible actions

In line with Article 7 of the CEF Regulation, only actions contributing to projects of common interest as identified in the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/89 of 18.11.2015 shall be eligible for support through EU financial aid in the form of grants.

Pursuant to Article 14(1) of the TEN-E Regulation, projects of common interest falling under the categories set out in Annex II.1, 2 and 4 of the TEN-E Regulation are eligible for EU financial assistance in the form of grants for studies (and financial instruments).

Pursuant to Articles 14(2), 14(3) of the TEN-E Regulation, projects of common interest falling under the categories set out in Annex II.1(a) to (d), 2 and 4 of the TEN-E Regulation, except for hydro-pumped electricity storage projects, are also eligible for EU financial assistance in the form of grants for works if they fulfil all of the following criteria:

- the project specific cost-benefit analysis pursuant to Article 12(3)(a) provides evidence concerning the existence of significant positive externalities, such as security of supply, solidarity or innovation;
- the project has received a cross-border cost allocation decision pursuant to Article 12; or, for projects of common interest falling under the category set out in Annex II.1(c) and that therefore do not receive a cross-border cost allocation decision, the

project shall aim to provide services across borders, bring technological innovation and ensure the safety of cross-border grid operation;

- the project is commercially not viable according to the business plan and other assessments carried out, notably by possible investors or creditors or the national regulatory authority. The decision on incentives and its justification referred to in Article 13(2) shall be taken into account when assessing the project's commercial viability.

Pursuant to Article 14(4) of the TEN-E Regulation, projects of common interest falling under the categories set out in Annex II.1(e) of the TEN-E Regulation, i.e. "smart grids", are also eligible for EU financial assistance in the form of grants for works, if the concerned project promoters can clearly demonstrate the significant positive externalities generated by the projects and their lack of commercial viability, according to the business plan and other assessments carried out, notably by possible investors or creditors or, where applicable, a national regulatory authority.

The proposals requesting grants for works which fail to provide the relevant supporting documents or that provide supporting documents that are not legally valid at the time of their submission shall not be eligible and will not be further evaluated.

The contents of the supporting documents and whether the proposed Action demonstrates evidence concerning the existence of significant positive externalities, such as security of supply, solidarity or innovation; provides services across borders, brings technological innovation and ensures the safety of cross-border grid operation; or is commercially not viable will be assessed during the evaluation under the applicable award criteria.

Proposals failing to meet the criteria described in section 7.1 and 7.2 will not be further evaluated.

8. SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection criteria are detailed in section 6.4 of the Annex to the multi-annual work programme. The operational and financial capacity of applicants will be assessed as specified below.

The requirement for applicants to demonstrate their operational and financial capacity does not apply to Member States, third countries, international organisations, public bodies established in the EU, transmission system operators certified following the procedures laid down in Articles 10 or 11 of Directive 2009/72/EC or Articles 10 or 11 of Directive 2009/73/EC, and joint undertakings established in the EU which qualify as public bodies. The certified transmission system operators are requested to submit their valid certification decisions.

The requirement to demonstrate operational and financial capacity also applies to affiliated entities only where, according to the proposal, the affiliated entity(ies) will be the only one(s) implementing the proposed Action.

8.1. Financial capacity

The applicants must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity

throughout the period during which the action is being carried out and to participate in its funding.

Together with the application, the applicants shall provide their financial statements certified by an external auditor for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed.

If an applicant has been operating for less than one financial year, the financial statements may be replaced by a letter of support obtained from a third party (e.g. the applicant's parent company) or by another applicant of the proposed Action, accompanied by the financial statements of the party providing the support.

These documents must be attached to the application.

8.2. Operational capacity

The applicants must have the operational and technical competencies and capacities required to complete the proposed Action for which the grant is awarded. They must provide appropriate documents attesting to that capacity (e.g. organisations' activity report, proof of the experience in carrying out infrastructure actions).

Information submitted by applicants who have benefited/are benefiting from CEF Energy financial support as from 2014 may be taken into account in the evaluation of their operational capacity.

9. AWARD CRITERIA

Only admissible proposals, compliant with the eligibility criteria will be evaluated against the following award criteria, which take into account the list of general orientation as stipulated in Article 17(5) and in Part V of the Annex I of the CEF Regulation.

Each application is assessed against the award criteria on scale from 0 (very poor) to 5 (excellent), with the corresponding description. Marks will be weighted as follows:

	The description of criterion	Weight (proposals for works)	Weight (proposals for studies)
1	<p>Maturity of the action with regards to the developmental stage of the project, based on the implementation plan (Article 5(1) of the TEN-E Regulation)</p> <p><i>Maturity refers to the specific status of preparation of the Action for which the funding is requested, in order to establish the capacity for their implementation in accordance with the foreseen time plan and technical specifications, as well as the state of readiness for commencement at short term of the proposed Action. Furthermore, the appropriateness of the proposed Action as the next step in the development of the PCI</i></p>	20%	25%

	The description of criterion	Weight (proposals for works)	Weight (proposals for studies)
	<i>is also considered under this criterion.</i>		
2	<p>Cross-border dimension of the action, area of impact and number of Member States involved in the action</p> <p><i>This criterion refers to the extent of the cross-border impact of the action, taking into consideration the area, the number of Member States positively impacted by the action,(as seen in relation to the geographical location of the action) and the level of cooperation between the involved countries..</i></p>	10%	10%
3	<p>Extent of the positive externality provided by the action involving works, impact of the action on solidarity</p> <p><i>This criterion applies only to proposals for works and reflects the extent of the positive externalities provided by the PCI that go beyond its direct benefits. Positive externalities relate to macro-regional security of supply, solidarity between Member States or technological innovation.</i></p>	15%	NA
4	<p>Need to overcome financial obstacles</p> <p><i>This criterion refers to financial obstacles that impede the timely completion of the action and to how public funding would help to overcome this situation.</i></p>	15%	15%
5	<p>Soundness of the implementation plan proposed for the action</p> <p><i>The criterion refers to the coherence between the proposed Action's objectives and planned resources/activities leading to the timely completion of the proposed Action, the appropriateness of the project management processes and risk control issues.</i></p>	10%	10%
6	<p>Stimulating effect of the CEF financial assistance on the completion of the action</p> <p><i>This criterion refers to how CEF funding will ensure/accelerate the implementation of the proposed Action.</i></p>	15%	20%
7	<p>Priority and urgency of the action, will the project remove bottlenecks, end energy isolation and contribute to the implementation of the internal energy market</p> <p><i>This criterion refers to the priority of the proposed Action and to the importance to start it urgently, in relation with its impact on removing bottlenecks, ending energy isolation and contributing to the implementation of the internal energy market taking also into account that due consideration should</i></p>	15%	20%

	The description of criterion	Weight (proposals for works)	Weight (proposals for studies)
	<i>be given to electricity projects.</i>		

To be considered for funding, a proposal must reach a result for each criterion of at least 60% (at least 3 points before weighting is applied) of the maximum points foreseen per criterion. A ranking list of Actions proposed to receive CEF financial assistance will be established.

10. COMPLIANCE WITH UNION LAW

In accordance with Article 23 of the CEF Regulation, only actions in conformity with EU law and which are in line with the relevant EU policies shall be financed, in particular those relating to competition, the protection of the environment, state aid and public procurement.

In the evaluation process, consideration will be given to the implementation of the Third Energy Package rules (Directive 2009/72/EC; Directive 2009/73/EC; Regulation 714/2009; Regulation 715/2009) for the Member States involved, as relevant to the completion of the action.

11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

11.1. General principles

11.1.1. Other sources of financing

Pursuant to Article 129 of the Financial Regulation, no EU financial aid shall be awarded to actions receiving funds from other sources of EU financing. In no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice by the EU budget.

In that respect any actions or part thereof that receive or have received EU funding under other EU Programmes (i.e. TEN-E, EEPR, EIPA, IPA, ESIF, FP7, Horizon 2020) will not be funded under this call.

11.1.2. Non-profit principle

In accordance with Article 125 of the Financial Regulation, grants shall not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the action. Where a profit is made, the Commission shall be entitled to recover the percentage of the profit corresponding to the EU contribution to the eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiary to carry out the proposed Action¹¹.

11.1.3. Non-retroactivity

Pursuant to Article 130 of the Financial Regulation, no grants may be awarded retrospectively for actions already completed. A grant may be awarded for an action which has already begun

¹¹ In the meaning of Article 125 of the Financial Regulation, profit shall be defined as a surplus of the receipts over the eligible costs incurred by the beneficiary, when the request is made for payment of the balance.

provided that the applicant(s) can demonstrate the need for starting the action prior to the signature of the grant agreement.

11.2. Funding form

Grants to be awarded further to this call for proposals will take the form of reimbursement of a specified proportion of the eligible costs actually incurred.

11.2.1. Co-funding rates

The maximum co-financing rates of EU financial assistance to be granted under this call for proposals are laid down in Article 10(3) of the CEF Regulation and shall not exceed 50% of the eligible costs of studies and/or works. The funding rates may be increased to maximum of 75% for actions which, based on the evidence referred to in Article 14(2) of the TEN-E Regulation, provide a high degree of regional or EU-wide security of supply, strengthen the solidarity of the EU or comprise highly innovative solutions.

The Commission reserves the right to award a grant of less than the amount requested by the applicant.

11.2.2. Eligible costs

Eligible costs are costs actually incurred by the beneficiary of a grant which meet all the criteria laid down in Article 126(2) of the Financial Regulation. The same criteria apply to the costs incurred by affiliated entities and implementing bodies designated by the beneficiary.

The applicants' attention is drawn to points (3) to (8) of Article 8 of the CEF Regulation concerning the eligibility of costs. The full costs of purchase of equipment and infrastructure which are treated as capital expenditure are eligible under this call.

Costs may be eligible at the earliest from the date on which an application is submitted and up to the date of completion of the Action, which should be 31 December 2021 at the latest.

Indirect costs, i.e. costs which are not identifiable as direct cost, but which have nevertheless been incurred in connection with the implementation of the action, are not eligible.

In line with the first subparagraph of Article 8(7) of the CEF Regulation and Article 126(3)(c) of the Financial Regulation, VAT paid by beneficiaries of grants awarded following this call for proposals is eligible except:

- deductible VAT (VAT paid by the beneficiary for the implementation of taxed activities or exempt activities with right of deduction);
- VAT paid for the implementation of activities engaged in as a public authority by the beneficiary where it is a Member State, regional or local government authority of a Member State or another body governed by public law of a Member State. Considering that beneficiaries that are public bodies of Member States are expected to carry out activities as public authorities (to exercise prerogatives of public powers), VAT paid by beneficiaries that are public bodies established in Member States is, in principle, ineligible.

Detailed information on eligible and ineligible costs is included in the model grant agreement, which is available on the call page:

<https://ec.europa.eu/inea/en/https%3A//ec.europa.eu/inea/en/connecting-europe-facility/cef-energy/calls/second-2016-cef-energy-call-proposals-2016-2>.

11.2.3. Payment arrangements

For simple actions, a single pre-financing payment corresponding to 40% of the maximum grant amount awarded will be made within 30 days after the last party signs the grant agreement. No interim payment may be made.

For complex actions, a first pre-financing payment corresponding to 40% of the first instalment of grant awarded as specified in the grant agreement will be transferred to the beneficiary within 30 days after the last party signs the grant agreement. Further pre-financing payments may be made upon request and in accordance with the financial needs of the action. Requests for interim payments must be submitted at least every two years. The cumulative amount of all pre-financing and interim payments shall not exceed 80% of the maximum amount of the financial aid awarded.

As a rule, studies will be considered as simple actions and works will be considered as complex actions. However, studies with a total EU contribution to the eligible costs equal to or exceeding €4 million and a planned duration of more than 3 years might be considered as complex actions if requested and justified by the applicant(s).

In the event that the beneficiary's financial capacity is not satisfactory, the payment of pre-financing may be subject to the receipt of a financial guarantee for up to the same amount as the pre-financing payment to be made.

The financial guarantee, in euro, shall be provided by an approved bank or financial institution established in one of the EU Member States. When the beneficiary is established in a third country, INEA may agree that a bank or financial institution established in that third country may provide the guarantee if it is considered that the bank or financial institution offers equivalent security and characteristics as those offered by a bank or financial institution established in a Member State. Amounts blocked in bank accounts shall not be accepted as financial guarantees.

The guarantee may be replaced by a joint or several guarantees provided by third parties or by a joint guarantee of the beneficiaries of an action that are parties to the same grant agreement. The guarantee will be released as the pre-financing is cleared against the interim and/or balance payment(s) made, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the grant agreement.

In the event that the beneficiary's financial capacity is not satisfactory, a limited joint and several financial liability for recoveries may be applied in accordance with the terms and conditions of the model grant agreement.

The final amount of the grant to be awarded to the beneficiary is established after completion of the action, upon approval of the request for payment including, where applicable, the supporting documents as described in the model grant agreement.

For multi-beneficiary actions, it is strongly recommended that beneficiaries designate a coordinator and sign an internal cooperation agreement regarding their operation and coordination, including all internal aspects related to the management of the beneficiaries and the implementation of the action.

12. MODEL GRANT AGREEMENT

Applicant(s) will be invited to sign the model grant agreement if a proposal is selected for funding. The basic model grant agreement is not negotiable and shall be signed in English.

Submitting an application implies the acceptance of the terms and conditions of the model grant agreement, available on the call page. Applicants are invited to carefully read this document and its annexes before submitting an application.

13. PROCEDURE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Practical information on this call for proposals and the evaluation process is detailed in the Guide for Applicants, which is available together with the application forms and other relevant documents on the call page, accessible at the following link:

<https://ec.europa.eu/inea/en/https%3A//ec.europa.eu/inea/en/connecting-europe-facility/cef-energy/calls/second-2016-cef-energy-call-proposals-2016-2>.

Applicants are invited to carefully read all call-related documents, including the instructions given in the Guide for Applicants and the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) published on the call page.

13.1. Application forms

Proposals must be submitted using the application forms provided on the call page at the link above.

Where possible, applicants are strongly encouraged to submit joint applications for actions relating to the same project of common interest.

Proposals must be signed by the applicant(s) or his duly authorized representative and must be perfectly legible so that there can be no doubt as to words and figures. E-signatures supported by verifiable valid certificates¹² in the meaning of the electronic signatures Directive (1999/93/EC)¹³ shall be accepted.

The applicant(s) specified in the application form part A will automatically be considered as the beneficiary(ies) if the proposal is selected for funding. If applicants designate affiliated entities within the meaning of Article 122 of the Financial Regulation¹⁴ to support the implementation of the submitted action, the information on these affiliated entities must be encoded in the application form part A, and any relevant supporting documents must be provided.

¹² For a list of trusted certificate providers please see https://ec.europa.eu/information_society/policy/esignature/trusted-list/.

¹³ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A31999L0093>.

¹⁴ Regulation (EU, EURATOM) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2013 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the European Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002, OJ L 298 of 26.10.2012, p.1

13.2. Submission of proposals

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their applications in English.

Proposals must be submitted ***electronically*** using the TENtec eSubmission module accessible from the call page on the INEA website or through the link provided above. The electronic submission of proposals must be completed at the latest on **8 November 2016 at 17:00.00 Brussels time** (see also section 6 on admissibility conditions).

Application form part A is automatically generated by the TENtec eSubmission module. Application forms parts B, C and D must be downloaded from the call website at the link above and have to be duly filled in. Once final they must be uploaded into the TENtec eSubmission module. The same applies to any annexes or supporting documents accompanying the proposal. Application form part D may not exceed 40 pages.

Any parts of the application form that require signatures of applicants or relevant authorities must be scanned and uploaded into the TENtec eSubmission module. E-signatures supported by verifiable valid certificates¹⁵ in the meaning of the electronic signatures Directive (1999/93/EC)¹⁶ shall be accepted.

Applicants must be able to provide the original documents and send them to the Commission/ Agency services upon request.

14. COMMUNICATION ON THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Further information or clarifications concerning this call for proposals will be published on the call page at the following link:

<https://ec.europa.eu/inea/en/https%3A/ec.europa.eu/inea/en/connecting-europe-facility/cef-energy/calls/second-2016-cef-energy-call-proposals-2016-2>.

Applicants are invited to regularly consult the call page and the INEA website/Twitter feed (@inea_eu) until the deadline for submission of proposals.

Any additional specific questions related to this call may be addressed to the email of the call helpdesk: INEA-CEF-Energy-calls@ec.europa.eu.

The answers to questions submitted will be published in the FAQ list on the call website, in order to ensure equal treatment of all potential applicants. Questions related to the call should be submitted at the latest by 24 October 2016 to ensure sufficient time for the last update of the FAQs by 31 October 2016.

Questions which are specific to a particular proposal and where the answer would provide a comparative advantage to the applicant will not be answered.

However, individual technical questions related to TENtec eSubmission module will be treated until the call deadline.

¹⁵ For a list of trusted certificate providers please see

https://ec.europa.eu/information_society/policy/esignature/trusted-list/

¹⁶ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A31999L0093>

15. PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA

Applicants' reply to the grant application involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CV), which will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. Unless indicated otherwise, applicant's replies to the questions in this form and any personal data requested are required to assess an applicant's grant application in accordance with the specifications of the call for proposals and will be processed solely for that purpose by the Innovation and Networks Executive Agency as data controller for this purpose. An applicant may, upon request, have his/her personal data sent to him/her and rectify any inaccurate or incomplete particulars. Should an applicant have any queries concerning the processing of his/ her personal data, please address them to the entity acting as data controller within INEA.

The data subjects have the right of recourse at any time to the Data Protection Officer of the Executive Agency (INEA-DPO@ec.europa.eu) or in case of conflict with the Controller or data protection officer concerning the processing of his/her personal data, an applicant has the right to submit a complaint at any time directly to the European Data Protection Supervisor (www.edps.europa.eu).

Details concerning the processing of an applicant's personal data are available in the privacy statement on the call page:

<https://ec.europa.eu/inea/en/https%3A//ec.europa.eu/inea/en/connecting-europe-facility/cef-energy/calls/second-2016-cef-energy-call-proposals-2016-2>.

Personal data included in the application (name, title, organisation, contact information) may be shared with the concerned Member States' representatives in the CEF Coordination Committee on a need to know basis in view of their role in the approval of proposals selected for funding as well as responsibilities under the CEF Regulation.

An applicant personal data (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form, registration number and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the Early Warning System (EWS) only or both in the EWS and Central Exclusion Database (CED) by the Accounting Officer of the Commission, should the applicant be in one of the situations mentioned in:

- Commission Decision 2014/792/EU of 13 November 2014 on the Early Warning System to be used by the authorising officers of the Commission and by the executive agencies (OJ 2014 L 329 of 14 November, p.68) (for more information see http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm#SAP), or
- the Commission Regulation 2008/1302 of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database (OJ L 344, 20.12.2008, p. 12) (for more information see the Privacy Statement on http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/sound_fin_mgt/privacy_statement_ced_en.pdf).

Applicants are informed that, to ensure that the European Union's financial interests are protected, their personal data may be communicated to internal audit services, the European Commission, the European Court of Auditors, the body specialising in financial irregularities (Financial Irregularities Panel) or the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF).

The data of applicants in any of the situations referred to in Articles 106(1), 107 and 109(2)(a) of the Financial Regulation may be included in a central exclusion database and communicated to designated persons in the Commission, the other institutions, agencies, authorities and bodies referred to in Article 108(1) and (2) of the Financial Regulation. This also applies to those with powers of representation, decision-making power or powers of control in respect of such applicants. Following a request to the Commission's Accounting Officer, anyone registered in the database is entitled to be informed of the data recorded about them.

16. IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

In preparing an application, please ensure that all of the following documents, which are available on the call website, are referred to:

- Multi-annual work programme
- Application form (parts A, B, C and D)
- Guide for Applicants
- FAQs published on the call page
- CEF Regulation
- TEN-E Regulation as amended
- Model grant agreement
- EU Financial Regulation and Rules of application
- Application checklist