

**CALL FOR PROJECTS - REGULATION APPLICABLE TO
THE AWARD OF GRANT CONTRACTS**

PROGRAMME NAME:
ANTI-CORRUPTION FUND

SUBJECT MATTER OF THE CALL FOR PROJECTS:
SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY AND INDEPENDENT MEDIA ENGAGED IN
THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

CALL FOR PROJECTS' TOTAL AVAILABLE AMOUNT:
1 880 000 EUR

FINANCIAL SIZING OF GRANTS:
MINIMUM GRANT AMOUNT: 40 000 EUR
MAXIMUM GRANT AMOUNT: 400 000 EUR

DATE AND TIME OF THE CALL FOR PROJECTS INFORMATION MEETING:
FR: 24TH OF JANUARY 2025 AT 10:00 A.M. (PARIS TIME)
EN: 24TH OF JANUARY 2025 AT 11:30 A.M. (PARIS TIME)

DEADLINE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF THE CONCEPT NOTE:
03RD OF MARCH 2025 AT 01:59 P.M. (PARIS TIME)

DISCLAIMER

This is a restricted call for projects. During the first stage, only concept notes (parts 1 and 2 of the grant application form) should be submitted for assessment. Subsequently, shortlisted lead applicants will be invited to submit a full application. After an assessment of the full applications, the eligibility of the provisionally selected applicants will be checked based on the supporting documents requested by Expertise France and the declaration signed by the lead applicant, submitted at the same time as the full application.

TABLE OF CONTENT

1. THE ANTI-CORRUPTION FUND.....	4
1.1 Context.....	4
1.2 Programme objectives and priorities	4
1.3 Financial envelope.....	5
1.4 Awarding of grants for similar projects.....	6
2 RULES APPLICABLE TO THIS CALL FOR PROJECTS	7
2.1 Eligibility criteria	7
2.1.1 Eligibility of the lead applicant	7
2.1.2 Eligible projects.....	10
2.1.3 Costs eligibility	12
2.1.4 Operational and budgetary consistency.....	13
2.2 Presentation of the application and procedures to be followed	14
2.2.1 Contents of the concept note.....	14
2.2.2 Where and how must the concept note be sent?	14
2.2.3 Deadline for submission of the concept note.....	15
2.2.4 Other information concerning the concept note	15
2.2.5 Full applications.....	15
2.2.6 Where and how must full applications be sent?	16
2.2.7 Deadline for full applications.....	16
2.2.8 Further information on full applications	16
2.3 Application evaluation and selection	16
2.4 Submission of supporting documents for provisionally selected applications	21
2.5 Notification of the Expertise France decision	22
2.6 Conditions for implementation after a decision by Expertise France to award a grant	23
2.7 Personal data protection and confidentiality	23
3 LIST OF ANNEXES.....	25

1. THE ANTI-CORRUPTION FUND

1.1 Context

The Anti-Corruption Fund aims to contribute to the reduction of corruption by supporting diverse and relevant actors committed to this issue. The fight against corruption represents a crucial challenge for transparency and accountability, including in West African and European countries. Corruption not only acts as a major brake on the achievement of sustainable development goals, but also exacerbates inequalities. In these regions, patterns of corruption are obstacles to the establishment of solid institutions, the strengthening of the rule of law and the establishment of governance that guarantees sustainable development for all. Corruption also undermines the legitimacy of states and institutions by weakening their ability to provide public services, and to generate citizen confidence in the state and public action. Against this backdrop, the Fund aims to strengthen public institutions and provide financial support for projects run by civil society and independent media committed to fighting corruption.

Analyses of needs and exchanges with state and non-state actors have led to the following conclusions:

- **West Africa (Benin, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo):** While progress has been made in strengthening institutions, challenges remain, particularly in terms of inter-institutional coordination. Non-state actors in the region, specialized in anti-corruption issues, face numerous organizational and structural difficulties;
- **Europe (Moldova, Montenegro and North Macedonia):** As candidates for membership of the European Union, these countries are required to meet certain criteria. Among these criteria, the fight against corruption occupies a central place in the negotiations for Chapters 23 and 24. However, analysis shows that progress is still needed to reach the required levels of alignment with European standards in this area.

These elements of analysis have enabled us to refine the objectives of this call for projects and the regional themes.

1.2 Programme objectives and priorities

i) Components

The **Anti-Corruption Fund** is structured around:

- **Component 1:** Creation of a platform of expertise enabling a rapid response to requests from public entities engaged in the fight against corruption in beneficiary countries;
- **Component 2: Financing of projects led by civil society and independent media engaged in the fight against corruption;**
- **Cross-cutting component: Integration of gender equality and the differentiated impact of corruption on men and women.**

The present **call for projects** falls within the framework of **Component 2** and the **cross-cutting component** of the Anti-Corruption Fund.

ii) Objectives

The **general objective** of this call for projects is to help strengthen civil society in the fight against corruption, and to contribute to improving gender equality.

The specific objectives (SO) are:

- **SO1:** Support the missions of civil society players in the fight against corruption, in particular their initiatives to promote gender equality;
- **SO2:** Improve knowledge, advocacy and dialogue between public institutions and civil society on the phenomena of corruption, and in particular their impact on women.

iii) Regional themes

The regional themes identified for West Africa are:

- **A.1:** Building capacity for investigative journalism;
- **A.2:** Strengthen the protection of whistle-blowers;
- **A.3:** Support collaboration between non-state and state actors in the fight against corruption.

The regional themes identified for Europe are:

- **B.1:** Facilitating forums fostering dialogue and combating corruption;
- **B.2:** Empowering civil society to access information;
- **B.3:** Enhancing transparency by disclosing public officials' interests and assets.

Cross-cutting theme: Support initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality, and in particular at reducing the differentiated impact of corruption on men and women, or sexist forms of corruption.

Project proposals must fit into **at least one regional theme** and, as far as possible, integrate the cross-cutting theme of **gender equality issues**.

1.3 Financial envelope

The indicative total amount made available under this call for projects is **EUR 1 880 000**. Expertise France reserves the right not to allocate all of the available funds.

i) Grant amounts

Any request for a grant under this call for projects must lay between the following amounts:

- **Minimum amount: EUR 40 000;**
- **Maximum amount: EUR 400 000.**

ii) Co-financing percentage

Any request for a grant under this call for projects must correspond to:

- **Minimum: 80%** of the project's total eligible costs (also see point 2.1.3);
- **Maximum: 100%** of the project's total eligible costs (also see point 2.1.3).

The grant may cover the full eligible costs of the project if this is deemed essential for its completion. If this is the case, the principal applicant must justify full funding in the grant application form. The validity of the justification provided will be examined during the evaluation procedure. Failure to do so may result in rejection of the application.

The balance (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the project and the amount requested from Expertise France) has to be financed by sources other than Expertise France's budget.

1.4 Awarding of grants for similar projects

By way of derogation from the grant award procedures (see point 3.4 of the Call for Projects Guide issued by Expertise France), Expertise France may award an additional grant contract via direct allocation for the implementation of a similar project to one of the successful applicants designated on conclusion of this call for projects.

Where such a contract is placed by Expertise France, the period during which new contracts may be entered into may not exceed 3 years from the date of notification of the initial grant contract.

2 RULES APPLICABLE TO THIS CALL FOR PROJECTS

This section defines the rules applicable to the submission, selection and implementation of the projects financed under this call for projects and which apply to this call for projects.

2.1 Eligibility criteria

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, respectively relating to:

- (1) The parties involved:
 - The **lead applicant**, i.e. the entity submitting the application form (2.1.1.a);
 - As applicable, its **partner(s)** (2.1.1.b);
 - As applicable, **associates** and **providers** (2.1.1.c).
- (2) **Projects** eligible for a grant (2.1.2);
- (3) The **types of costs** that may be included in grant amount calculations (2.1.3).

2.1.1 Eligibility of the lead applicant

a) Lead applicant

To be eligible for a grant, the lead applicant must be a civil society organization or an independent media organization.

Specific eligibility conditions are detailed below:

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION	INDEPENDENT MEDIA
<p><i>Eligibility criteria:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a legal entity (see below); • Be non-profit; • Belong to one of the following categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Association governed by local law; - Public utility association; - Non-governmental organization. • Be established in the State in which the project is implemented in accordance with article 2.1.2, or have a project partner established in this State; • Have been in business for at least two years; • Be directly responsible for preparing and managing the action with the partner(s), and not act as an intermediary. 	<p><i>Eligibility criteria:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a legal entity (media organizations, editorial structures, etc.); • Be non-profit, or be aware that no profit margin can be made on the project budget; • Belong to one of the following categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Association governed by local law; - Public utility association; - Non-governmental organization; - Private company. • Meet the following independence criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Independence of the publishing structure: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A press company is considered independent if the majority of its capital is held by natural or legal persons whose main activity is in the media; 2. For an association, independence is defined by the multiplicity and diversity of the subsidies it receives. - Independence of the editorial line: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compliance with the Munich Declaration, which defines the rights and duties of journalists, or other proof of commitment to ethical and

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION	INDEPENDENT MEDIA
	<p>professional standards for journalists (membership of press councils, platforms, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be established in the State in which the project is implemented in accordance with article 2.1.2, or have a project partner established in this State; • Have been in business for at least two years; • Be directly responsible for preparing and managing the action with the partner(s), and not act as an intermediary. <p><i>Ineligibility criteria:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be majority financed by a state, a structure or individual affiliated with a state or state role, or a company.

Foreign organizations, i.e. those established outside the countries of implementation (see article 2.1.2), are authorized to participate in the call for projects as lead applicants or partners exclusively within the framework of partnerships or collaboration with one or more local individuals or legal entities (associations, journalists, etc.). Foreign lead applicants must demonstrate that their experience brings **added value** and **technical/operational support** to the project, that the action (i) meets **identified** demand and **needs** at the local, national and/or regional level, (ii) contributes to the **development of connections** between ecosystems over the long term, and (iii) includes **active support for local partners** (capacity building, skills transfer).

In the case of a project proposal bringing together an **international structure not established** in the country of implementation and a **structure affiliated** to the former (via governance, administrative and/or operational management, etc.) that is **local and registered**, it will be considered favorable for the relevance of the project if the **local structure is the lead partner**.

Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or receive grants if they are in one of the situations listed in Appendix VIII of the draft contract.

On the grant application form ("declaration by the lead applicant"), the lead applicant must declare that neither he/she nor the partner(s) are in one of these situations.

If the grant is awarded, the lead applicant becomes the beneficiary identified in the Special Conditions. As such, it assumes full financial responsibility for the implementation of the action, in compliance with the terms of the grant contract. The beneficiary is Expertise France's main contact. It represents any other partners and acts on their behalf. It designs and coordinates the implementation of the action.

b) *Partners*

Project partners can be:

- **Civil society organizations;**
- **Independent media;**
- **Higher education establishments (HEE):** Public or private universities, training or research centers associated with a university.

Partnerships are not mandatory, but may be recommended depending on the logic of the action and the theme(s) into which it fits:

THEMES	PARTNERSHIP
West Africa	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A.1: Building capacity for investigative journalism; 	Recommended
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A.2: Strengthen the protection of whistle-blowers; 	Recommended
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A.3: Support collaboration between non-state and state actors in the fight against corruption. 	Strongly recommended
Europe	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B.1: Facilitating forums fostering dialogue and combating corruption; 	Strongly recommended
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B.2: Empowering civil society to access information; 	Recommended
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B.3: Enhancing transparency by disclosing public officials' interests and assets. 	Recommended

Building partnerships is:

- **Minimum: 0** (no partnership mandatory);
- **Maximum: 6 partners.**

The consortium is therefore made up of a maximum of 7 structures, 1 lead applicant and 6 partners.

Project partners:

- Participate in the **definition and implementation of the action**, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the lead applicant;
- Must meet the **eligibility criteria** that apply to the lead applicant;
- Must sign the "**Mandate for the lead applicant**" on the grant application form.

c) *Associates and contractors*

The following entities are neither applicants nor partners. They are not required to sign the "beneficiary mandate". However, an **information sheet** must be completed by the lead applicant.

Associates

Other organizations or individuals may be associated with the project. Associates actually take part in the action, but are not entitled to the grant, with the exception of per diems and travel expenses. Associates do

not have to meet the eligibility criteria set out in point 2.1.1. Associates must be listed on the grant application form, under the heading "Associates participating in the project".

Partners could be, for example:

- **National public institutions** whose mandate covers the fight against corruption, gender equality and any other action related to this call for projects;
- **Local, regional or international organizations** whose mandate covers the fight against corruption, gender equality and any other action related to the present call for projects.

Contractors

The beneficiaries and their partners may place contracts. The associates and partners may not simultaneously be project contractors. Contractors are subject to the same rules applicable to the awarding of contracts set out in Annex IV of the model grant contract.

2.1.2 Eligible projects

Definition

An **action** should be described as a **coherent set of activities** designed to meet the **specific needs of target groups** and achieve **specific objectives** within a limited **timeframe**. Consequently, the project implies the implementation of a **new action**, or the **extension of the activities** of an ongoing action to other subjects or situations. **Measurable and verifiable performance indicators** must be proposed by the applicant.

Duration

The initial duration of the project must be:

- **Longer than 6 months;**
- **Less than or equal to 18 months;**
- **Started between September 01, 2025 and December 31, 2025;**
- **Be completed by May 31, 2027.**

Geographical coverage

Actions must be implemented in one or more countries in one or more of the following regions:

- **West Africa:**
 - Benin
 - Côte d'Ivoire
 - Togo
- **and/or**
- **Europe**
 - Moldova
 - Montenegro
 - North Macedonia

N.B. The list of implementing countries is limited to the six above. Eligible countries of registration for lead applicants will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Activities type

The types of activities eligible for funding under this call for projects are:

- **Activities carried out by CSOs** and independent media in the country/region;
- **Capacity-building** (in their organization, in their mechanisms for protecting whistle-blowers, etc.);

- Initiatives that take into account the **differentiated impact** of corruption on men and women.

Applicants must describe in their **project proposals** the activities they wish to implement to meet the objectives and the selected theme(s).

Applicants must demonstrate their **experience** and **technical capacity** to carry out activities **related to the selected theme(s)**. All projects **must integrate, as far as possible, a gender, age, disability and diversity equality approach** in programming, monitoring and reporting.

The following types of action are **not eligible**:

- Actions consisting solely or mainly in **sponsoring** the participation of individuals in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- Actions consisting solely or mainly in financing **per diems**;
- Actions with **discriminatory aspects**;
- Actions aimed at **supporting political parties or activities**;
- Actions involving **religious or political proselytism**.

Expertise France reserves the right to rule on the eligibility of types of action not included in the present list in relation to the objectives identified in point 1.2.

Financial support to third parties¹

Applicants may propose to **support third parties financially** to help achieve the objectives of the action.

The maximum amount of such financial support is **EUR 40 000 per third party**.

Financial support for third parties may be the main objective of the action.

In accordance with the conditions laid down in these Regulations, the lead applicant wishing to redistribute the grant must indicate in the grant application form:

- (1) The **objectives and results to be achieved** with this financial support;
- (2) An exhaustive list of the types of **activities eligible** for financial support;
- (3) The **categories of people eligible** for financial support;
- (4) The **criteria for selecting** them and awarding them financial support;
- (5) The criteria for determining the **exact amount** of financial support for each third party;
- (6) The maximum amount that can be **redistributed**.

In the context of this call for projects, examples of third parties may be:

- Local associations;
- Whistleblower protection offices;
- Journalists;

(Non-exhaustive list).

In any case, these conditions are mandatory. They must be clearly defined in the grant contract, to avoid financial support being awarded on a discretionary basis.

Visibility

Applicants must take all necessary steps to ensure the visibility of funding by Expertise France and the Agence française de développement. Actions financed in whole or in part by Expertise France must, as far as possible, include information and communication activities designed to make all or part of the public aware of the

¹These third parties are neither partners, nor associates nor contractors.

reasons for the action, the reason for the assistance provided by Expertise France in the country or region concerned, and the results and impact of this assistance.

Applicants must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of Expertise France funding.

N.B. Considering the sensitivity of the theme, this visibility clause may be reviewed by Expertise France in agreement with the lead applicant.

Number of applications and grants per applicant

The lead applicant:

- **May not be awarded more than one (1) grant** under this call for projects as an applicant;
- **May be one (1) partner** in another application.

Partner:

- **May not be a partner in more than two (2) applications** under the present call for projects.
- **May not be awarded more than two (2) grants** under the present call for projects as a partner.

There are no restrictions on associates or contractors.

A structure submitting a project proposal as lead applicant may also be a partner in an action submitted by another lead applicant. However, the activities financed as a partner must be justified and different from the action financed as lead applicant. If the justification does not demonstrate that it is in the interest of the action to finance this partner, the latter may be requalified as an associate.

2.1.3 Costs eligibility

Only "**eligible costs**" may be covered by a **grant**. The different types of eligible and ineligible costs are set out below. The budget constitutes both a cost estimate and an overall ceiling for "eligible costs".

Recommendations to award a grant are always subject to verifications preceding signature of the grant contract not revealing any issues requiring modification of the budget (e.g. arithmetical errors, inaccuracies, unrealistic costs and ineligible costs). The verification procedure may give rise to clarification requests and lead Expertise France to impose modifications or reductions in order to correct any such errors or inaccuracies. Corrections may not give rise to a higher grant and higher percentage of cofinancing from Expertise France.

Consequently, it is applicants' interests to provide a **realistic budget and appropriate cost effectiveness**.

Eligible direct costs

In order to be eligible under this call for projects, costs must satisfy the conditions set out in **Article 14 of the general conditions** of the model grant contract.

Contingency reserve

The budget may include a contingency reserve up to a maximum of 5% of estimated direct eligible costs. It may only be used with **prior written authorisation** from Expertise France.

Eligible indirect costs

Indirect costs incurred during the implementation of the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding. Indirect costs are eligible insofar as they do not include costs charged to another budget heading in the model grant contract. The lead applicant may be asked to justify the percentage requested before signing the subsidy contract. However, once the flat rate has been set in the specific conditions of the subsidy contract, no supporting documents need be provided by the beneficiary.

Should any applicant or partner be in receipt of an operating grant covering the entirety of their operating costs, indirect costs may not be recorded against their incurred costs in the proposed project budget.

Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- Debts and debt servicing costs (interest);
- Provisions for possible future losses or debts;
- Costs declared by the beneficiary and financed by another subsidized action or work program;
- Purchases of land or buildings, unless such purchases are essential for the direct implementation of the action, in which case ownership must be transferred in accordance with article 7.5 of the general conditions of the model grant contract, at the latest at the end of the action;
- Exchange losses;
- Credits to third parties;
- Salary costs for national government staff;
- Taxes and VAT, unless the structure provides evidence that the reimbursement of paid taxes (including VAT where applicable) cannot be applied (on the basis of supporting documents).

2.1.4 Operational and budgetary consistency

This multi-regional call for projects does not impose a specific financial envelope for one or more themes, in order to adapt to the different applicants, national and regional contexts, and where appropriate to the composition of the consortium. However, consistency between project activities and budget is required, and is an integral part of the evaluation criteria for the concept note and project proposal.

For information purposes, the table below sets out the expected operational and budgetary coherence. It does not include third-party financial support activities and is designed for an 18-month project:

Selected theme(s)	Implementing country(ies)	Partner(s)	Suggested minimum amount	Suggested maximum amount
1	1	0	EUR 40 000	EUR 200 000
1 or 2	1 or 2	Between 0 or 3	EUR 40 000	EUR 300 000
3 or more	3 or more	Between 0 or 6	EUR 40 000	EUR 400 000

*N.B. This table **gives an idea of the budget** that may be requested, but **does not imply any grounds for exclusion**. For example, this table:*

- *Indicates that for a 250,000 EUR project, it is recommended to integrate activities in 1 or 2 regional/cross-cutting themes, in 1 or 2 countries and with a maximum of 3 partners;*
- *Does not indicate that a 400,000 EUR project is ineligible if it integrates only 1 theme in 2 countries.*

2.2 Presentation of the application and procedures to be followed

2.2.1 Contents of the concept note

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the instructions relating to the concept note contained in the Grant Application Form appended to these Regulations (Appendix A).

Applicants must submit their applications in **English or French**. If a choice has to be made between these two languages, applicants must submit their application in the language most widely used by the target population of the country in which the action takes place.

Please note the following:

- In the **concept note**, lead applicants need only to provide an **estimate of the grant requested**, together with an **indicative percentage of this contribution** in relation to the eligible costs of the action. A detailed budget should only be submitted by lead applicants invited to submit a full application in the second phase;
- The **elements** defined in the **concept note cannot be modified in the full application**. The contribution requested from Expertise France may not vary by more than 20% from the initial estimate. Lead applicants are free to adapt the percentage of co-financing required, while respecting the minimum and maximum amounts and percentages of co-financing indicated in point 1.3 of these regulations. The lead applicant may only replace a partner in duly justified cases (e.g. bankruptcy of the original partner). In such cases, the new partner must be similar in nature to the original partner. The lead applicant may adapt the duration of the action if unforeseen circumstances outside the scope of the applicant have arisen after submission of the concept note and require such an adaptation (risk of non-execution of the action). In such cases, the duration must remain within the limits set out in the Regulations for Applicants. An explanation/justification of the replacement/adjustment concerned will be provided in an accompanying letter or e-mail. Applicants' own contributions may be replaced at any time by contributions from other donors;
- **Only the concept note will be evaluated**. It is therefore very important that this document contains ALL relevant information about the project. No additional annexes should be sent. Any major error or inconsistency in the instructions concerning the concept note may result in its rejection. Expertise France reserves the right to request clarification if the information provided does not enable it to make an objective assessment. Handwritten concept notes will not be accepted;
- The concept note must also include all the **information and documents required to assess the applicant's eligibility**, as requested in the application form (Appendix A).

2.2.2 Where and how must the concept note be sent?

The concept note and Declaration by the Lead Applicant (Appendix A - Parts 1 and 2 of the Grant Application Form) must be submitted online to the following URL address:

<https://www.marches-publics.gouv.fr/entreprise>

Applications sent by other means (e.g. fax or e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

Lead applicants must ensure that their concept notes are complete by using the checklist (Appendix A, Part 2 of the Grant Application Form). Incomplete concept notes may be rejected.

2.2.3 Deadline for submission of the concept note

The closing date and time for the submission of concept notes are indicated on the cover page of these Regulations as evidenced by the date of the electronic acknowledgement of receipt.
Any concept note submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

2.2.4 Other information concerning the concept note

Applicants may send their questions electronically, no later than 10 days before the deadline for submission of concept notes, to the address(es) below, clearly indicating the reference of the call for projects:

- Address for submitting questions: <https://www.marches-publics.gouv.fr/entreprise>
Or
Email address for questions: flcc@expertisefrance.fr
- Expertise France is not obliged to provide clarification on questions received after this date;
- Questions will be answered no later than 5 days before the deadline for submission of concept notes on the above-mentioned website.

In order to guarantee equal treatment of applicants, Expertise France cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, partners, specific actions or activities.

Questions will not be answered individually. All questions and their answers, as well as other important information communicated to applicants during the evaluation procedure, will be published in due course and shared with all applicants. Applicants are therefore advised to consult the above website regularly to keep abreast of published questions and answers.

2.2.5 Full applications

Lead applicants invited to **submit a full application following the shortlisting of their concept notes** must do so using **Part 3 of the grant application form annexed to these Regulations (Annex A)**. Lead applicants must strictly comply with the format of the grant application form and complete the paragraphs and pages in order.

The elements stated in the concept note may not be modified by the lead applicant in the full application. The contribution from Expertise France may not vary by more than 20% from the initial estimate, even though lead applicants may adapt the percentage of the required cofinancing subject to the minimum and maximum amounts and the cofinancing percentages set out in section 1.3 of these Regulations. The lead applicant may only replace a partner in duly justified circumstances (e.g. bankruptcy of the initial partner). In such a case, the new partner must be similar in nature to the initial partner. The lead applicant may amend the duration of the project if unforeseen circumstances outside the control of the applicants arise after submission of the concept note, duly calling for said change (risk of project non-implementation). In such a case, the duration of the project must remain within the limits specified in the Regulations as applicable to applicants. An explanation/justification of the replacement/amendment in question must be provided in a supporting letter or email.

Lead applicants must submit their **full applications in the same language as that of their concept note**.

Lead applicants must complete the full application form as clearly and carefully as possible in order to aid the evaluation process.

Any error relating to the points mentioned in Part 3 of the grant application form in Annex A, or any **significant inconsistency** in the full application (inconsistency of the amounts stated in the budget calculation spreadsheets, for example) may lead to the **immediate rejection** of the application.

Clarification will only be sought if the information provided is unclear, preventing Expertise France from carrying out an objective evaluation.

Handwritten requests will not be accepted.

It should be noted that only the **complete application** form and published **annexes to be completed (budget, logical framework, declaration, timeline)** will be sent to the **evaluators** (and, as applicable, the assessors). It is therefore particularly important that these documents contain ALL pertinent information relating to the project. **No supplementary annex is to be sent.**

2.2.6 Where and how must full applications be sent?

The lead applicant's complete application (Appendix A - Part 3 of the grant application form) must be submitted by electronic means to the following URL address:

<https://www.marches-publics.gouv.fr/entreprise>

Applications sent by other means (e.g. fax or e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

Applicants must ensure that their application is complete by using the grant application form (Appendix A - Part 3). Incomplete applications may be rejected.

2.2.7 Deadline for full applications

The deadline for submitting full applications will be communicated in the letter sent to the shortlisted lead applicants.

2.2.8 Further information on full applications

Applicants may submit their questions by email, no later than 10 days before the full application submission deadline, to the address(es) listed below, with the call for projects reference clearly stated:

- Address for submitting questions: <https://www.marches-publics.gouv.fr/entreprise>
Or
Email address for questions: flcc@expertisefrance.fr
- Expertise France is not obliged to provide clarification on questions received after this date;
- Questions will be answered no later than 5 days before the deadline for submission on the above-mentioned website.

In order to ensure equality of treatment between applicants, Expertise France cannot issue any prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, partners or projects.

No individual responses will be given to the questions asked. All questions and answers and other important information provided to applicants during the assessment process will be published in a timely manner and shared with all applicants. You are therefore advised to regularly access the website at the above address in order to stay informed about the published questions and responses.

2.3 Application evaluation and selection

Applications will be examined and evaluated by Expertise France, if necessary with the support of external assessors. All applications will be evaluated in line with the following stages and criteria.

If examination of the application reveals that the proposed project does not meet the eligibility criteria set out in 2.1, the application will be rejected on this basis alone.

STAGE 1: OPENING, ADMINISTRATIVE VERIFICATION AND VERIFICATION OF THE ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS AND PARTNER(S)

i) Opening and administrative verification

At the opening and administrative verification stage, the following elements will be examined:

- Compliance with the deadline. If the deadline has not been met, the application will be automatically rejected.
- Compliance, via the concept note, with all criteria specified in the grant application form. This examination also includes an assessment of the project's eligibility. If any of the requested information is missing or incorrect, the application may be rejected on this basis **alone** and may not be evaluated.

ii) Verification of eligibility

Eligibility will be verified on the basis of the supporting documentation requested by Expertise France (see point 2.4). It will be solely conducted for applications that have been provisionally selected based on their score and within the limits of the budget specified for this call for projects.

- Checks will be carried to ensure consistency between the information on the lead applicant's declaration (in the grant application form) and the supporting documents provided. Any missing supporting documentation or inconsistency between the lead applicant's declaration and the supporting documentation may lead to the rejection of the application on this basis alone.
- The eligibility of applicants and partners will be verified in line with the criteria set out in sections 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3.

Any rejected application will be substituted by the next best placed application on the reserve list that complies with the budget limits specified for this call for projects.

STAGE 2: EVALUATION OF CONCEPT NOTES

The concept notes passing this control point will be evaluated against the pertinence and overall concept of the proposed project.

Concept notes will be given an overall score out of 50 in line with the breakdown given in the scoring table below. The evaluation will also verify compliance with the instructions on how to complete the concept note, which are included in the grant application form.

The evaluation criteria are divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection is scored between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = highly unsatisfactory, 2 = unsatisfactory, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = very good.

SECTION	NOTES	SCORE
1. Relevance of the project	Sub-notes	30
1.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the call for projects?	5(x2)*	
1.2 How relevant is the proposal to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies) or region(s) (including synergy with other Expertise France, EU, International Organization initiatives and absence of duplication)?	5(x2)*	
1.3 To what extent are the stakeholders (final beneficiaries, target groups) clearly defined and strategically selected?	5	
1.4 Is the proposal relevant to the cross-cutting theme of the call for projects (project theme, objectives, activities and/or expected results)? Does it identify and address the specific needs of women? Do specific elements relating to the promotion of gender equality and/or the fight against sexist forms of corruption add value?	5	
2. Project design	Sub-notes	20
2.1 How coherent is the overall concept of action? In particular, does it reflect the problem analysis, take account of external factors and the stakeholders involved?	5	
2.2 Is the action feasible and logical in terms of the objectives and expected results? (Existence of a consortium or not, resources required for the size of the action, etc.).	5(x2)*	
2.3 Is the proposal based on an analysis that makes visible gender inequalities and imbalances related to corruption, or particular obstacles in accessing rights and justice (e.g. for reporting corruption) and identifies differentiated needs?	5	
TOTAL		50

*These scores are multiplied by 2 due to their importance.

Once all of the concept notes have been evaluated, a list **will be produced classifying the project proposals by total score**.

In the **first instance**, only the concept notes that have achieved a total score of at least 30 will move on to the **preselection stage**.

In the **second instance**, the number of concept notes will be reduced in light of their **ranking** on the list and the **number of concept notes** of which the aggregate amount of requested contributions equates to **at least 200% of the available budget** for this call for projects. The amount of contributions requested from each concept note will be based on the planned indicative financial allocations.

Once the concept notes have been assessed, Expertise France will send a letter to all applicants, specifying whether their application was submitted before the deadline, informing them of the reference number they have been allocated and whether their concept note has been assessed, as well as **the results of this assessment**. **Shortlisted lead applicants will then be invited to submit a full application**.

STAGE 3: EVALUATION OF FULL APPLICATIONS

ij) Procedure

The following points will be evaluated in the first instance:

- Compliance with the submission deadline. If the deadline has not been met, the application will be automatically rejected.
- The full application complies with all criteria specified in these rules in the application form. This examination also includes an assessment of the project's eligibility. If any of the requested information is missing or is incomplete, the application may be rejected on this basis **alone** and will not be evaluated.

Those full applications passing this control point will then be evaluated in terms of quality, including the proposed budget and the capacity of the applicants and partners, based on the evaluation criteria contained in the **scoring table** provided below. The evaluation criteria break down into selection criteria and award criteria.

The **selection criteria** help to assess the **operational capacity of the applicant** and **partners** and are used to verify that they enjoy the management ability, skills and professional qualifications required for successful implementation of the proposed project. This applies to lead applicants and is based on the analysis of information provided under Annex E.

The **award criteria** help to assess the **quality of the applications** in terms of the objectives and priorities specified in these Regulations and to award grants to the projects that maximize the overall effectiveness of the call for projects. They help to select the applications that will ensure Expertise France is able to satisfy its objectives and priorities. They relate to the **pertinence** of the project, its **consistency with the objectives** of the call for projects and the **quality**, anticipated **impact** and **durability** of the project, in addition to its **cost effectiveness**.

ii) Scoring

The evaluation criteria are broken down into sections and sub-sections. Each subsection is scored between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = highly unsatisfactory, 2 = unsatisfactory, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = very good

Scoring table: points system may be adapted with prior approval.

SECTION	NOTES	SCORE
1. Project relevance	/30	
<i>Transfer of the score obtained during the evaluation of the concept note</i>		
2. Effectiveness and feasibility of the action	/30	
2.1 Are the proposed activities appropriate, concrete and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	5(x2)*	
2.2 Is the action plan clear and feasible?	5	
2.3 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators to assess the results of the action?	5	
2.4 Is the level of involvement and participation in the action by the applicant, partner(s) and beneficiaries satisfactory?	5	
2.5 The action plan includes specific activities to reduce gender inequality (resources, services, training, etc.). If so, do these indicators make it possible to assess the results of the action in terms of reducing gender inequalities and, in particular, sexist forms of corruption?	5	
3. Sustainability of the action	/20	
3.1 Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on the target groups?	5	
3.2 Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects? (Possibility of capitalization, dissemination of good practices, etc.)	5	
3.3 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From a financial point of view (how will the activities be financed at the end of the funding period?) • From an institutional point of view (will there be structures in place to allow activities to continue after the action has ended? Will there be local "ownership" of the results of the action? In the case of gender equality projects, is there in-house expertise, with a referent or specific representation?) • At the political level (if applicable) (what will be the structural impact of the action - for example, will it lead to better laws, codes of conduct, methods, control of sexist forms of corruption, etc.)? • If applicable, from an environmental point of view, will the action have a positive/negative impact on the environment? 	5	
3.4 Will the proposal improve women's living conditions or, more importantly, have a transformative effect on women's situation and position in society? Will the action strengthen access to rights and justice for women victims of corruption, particularly sexist forms of corruption (legal guidance, whistle-blowing mechanism, protection mechanism to avoid reprisals, etc.)?	5	
4. Budget and cost-effectiveness of action	/20	
4.1 Are activities and, where appropriate, partners, adequately reflected in the budget?	5(x2)*	

SECTION	NOTES	SCORE
4.2 Is the ratio between estimated costs and expected results satisfactory?	5(x2)*	
4.3 Does the budget include budget items dedicated to women and/or gender equality, and/or activities that help reduce these inequalities?	2 bonus points	
Maximum total score	100	

iii) *Provisional selection*

After evaluation, a **table will be produced of all the applications classified by score**. The applications that have obtained the best scores will be provisionally selected until the budget for the call for projects has been reached. A **reserve list** will also be produced using the same criteria. This list may be exploited if more funds become available during the period of validity.

In order to represent the different regions and countries eligible for this call for projects, the region or country where the applicant and partners are based may be included in the selection criteria.

2.4 Submission of supporting documents for provisionally selected applications

Lead applicants whose applications have been provisionally selected or included on the reserve list will be notified in writing by Expertise France. They will be asked to provide the following documents to enable Expertise France to verify their eligibility and, as applicable, that of their partner(s)².

i) Supporting documents applicable to all types of structure

- An external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the accounts of the lead applicant for the last available financial year where the total amount of the grant is above EUR 750,000 (EUR 100,000 for operating grants). The partners, if any, are not required to submit an external audit report.
This obligation does not apply to public bodies, international organisations, or secondary or higher education institutions.
- A **copy of the lead applicant's** most recent financial statements (income statement and balance sheet for the last financial year)³. The partners, if any, are not required to submit a copy of their financial statements;
- **Any document providing details of grants received** (amounts, projects, consortium or not, donors, etc.) by the lead applicant over the last two years (annual report, summary document, etc.);
- The **financial identity information sheet** (see **Annex D**) duly completed and signed by each applicant (i.e. the lead applicant and its partners, as applicable), accompanied by the requested supporting documentation;
- A **capacity description sheet for the lead applicant** (not partners) in accordance with the model attached in **Annex E** of these Rules;

²No supporting documentation will be required for grant applications not exceeding EUR 40,000.

³This obligation does not apply to individuals who have been awarded a scholarship or who are in greatest need of direct assistance. Public entities and international organisations are likewise exempt. This also does not apply when the accounts, in practice, are the same documents as the external audit report already provided under 2.4.2.

ii) *Supporting documents specific to civil society organizations*

- Articles of association, internal rules of procedures and minutes of the constituent general meeting;
- Deposit slip (and publication of this receipt in the Journal Officiel, if applicable);
- **Tax and social security certificates;**
- **Latest technical and financial report** for a project with a budget equivalent to or greater than, or as close as possible to, that requested here.

iii) *Supporting documents specific to independent media*

- A recent **extract from the commercial register;**
- **Latest technical and financial report** for a project with a budget equivalent to that requested here;
- **Any document attesting to the media's independence;**
- **Tax and social security certificates;**

iv) *Higher education Establishment (HEE)*

- Proof of being a **public or private legal entity;**
- **Proof of recognition** as such by competent local authorities;
- **Degree programs** recognized by local authorities;
- **Proof that the HEI has expertise in the project theme(s) in which it is involved.** For example, to integrate gender equality into a project on the development of spaces for dialogue on corruption between state and non-state actors, it may be relevant to include a researcher from a university specialized in the subject.

v) *Translation and eligibility*

Documents must be supplied in the form of originals, photocopies or scanned versions (showing **legal stamps, signatures and dates**) of these originals.

Where such documents are not in French or English, a **French or English translation of the relevant parts of the document proving the eligibility of the lead applicant and, where applicable, the partners, must be attached for analysis of the application.**

If the above-mentioned **supporting documents are not provided** by the deadline set in the request for submission of supporting documents sent by Expertise France to the lead applicant, **the application may be rejected.**

After verification of the supporting documents, the evaluation committee will make a final recommendation to the Director General of Expertise France or his delegate, who will decide on the award of grants.

2.5 Notification of the Expertise France decision

i) *Content of the decision*

Lead applicants will be advised in writing of Expertise France's decision regarding their applications and, if rejected, the reasons for the negative decision.

Should an applicant believe they are the victim of an error or irregularity committed during a call for projects procedure, they must refer the matter directly to Expertise France. Expertise France must issue a response within 30 days of receiving the complaint. Furthermore, if the response from Expertise France is unsatisfactory to the

applicant, within two months following notification of their decision, said applicant may lodge an appeal with the Registrar of the Paris Administrative Court, 7 rue de Jouy, 75004 Paris, France - <http://paris.tribunal-administratif.fr/>.

ii) *Indicative timetable*

STEPS	DATE (DD/MM/YYYY)	TIME
1. Information meeting	24/01/2025	FR: 10:00 am EN: 11:30 am
2. Deadline to submit clarification requests to Expertise France	18/02/2025	01:59 pm
3. Last date on which clarifications are given by Expertise France	23/02/2025	01:59 pm
4. Submission deadline for concept notes	03/03/2025	01:59 pm
5. Notification of lead applicants regarding opening, administrative verifications, eligibility (Stage 1) and evaluation of the concept note (Stage 2)	03/03/2025	
6. Invitations to submit a full application (after eligibility checks)	04/04/2025	
7. Deadline for submission of complete application	19/05/2025	
8. Notification of lead applicants regarding the evaluation of full applications (Stage 3)	20/05/2025	
9. Notification of award	30/06/2025	
10. Signing of the contract	31/07/2025	

All times are in the **Paris, France time zone**.

This indicative calendar refers to **provisional dates (except for dates 1, 2, 3 and 4)** and may be updated by Expertise France during the procedure. Candidates will be duly informed of any changes to the timetable.

2.6 Conditions for implementation after a decision by Expertise France to award a grant

Following a decision to award a grant, the beneficiaries will be offered a contract based on the **model grant contract (Annex F to these Rules)**. By signing the application form (**Annex A of the Rules**), applicants accept the contractual terms set out in the model grant contract in the event that a grant is awarded.

Where implementation of a project requires the beneficiary and, as applicable, its partners to place contracts, such contracts must be placed in accordance with Annex IV of the model grant contract.

2.7 Personal data protection and confidentiality

Expertise France undertakes to comply with the regulations in force applicable to the processing of personal data and, in particular, Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 applicable as of 25 May 2018.

Identity and contact details of the Data Controller and its representative:

Expertise France
 40 Boulevard de Port Royal
 75005 Paris, France
 Represented by its CEO,
 Operational Data Controller:
 The Information Systems Department represented by its Director

Contact details of the personal data protection officer:

informatique.libertes@expertisefrance.fr

The legal grounds justifying the data processing correspond to sections c) and e) of Article 6.1 of the GDPR, namely that:

- Processing is necessary to comply with a legal obligation to which Expertise France is subject;
- Processing is necessary for the performance of a mission carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of the public authority vested in Expertise France.

The purposes of the processing are:

- The management and monitoring of this call for projects,
- Managing and monitoring of the award of the grant that is the subject of the call for projects.

The recipients or category of recipients of personal data are exclusively the authorized staff of the contracting authority, ministries, and State operators charged with the signing and performing of the contract, as well as the service providers assisting them in their activities.

Retention period: these data are stored throughout the period during which the contract is signed and performed, as well as for the duration of administrative usefulness (DUA) applicable to the contract.

In accordance with the provisions of Articles 15 to 21 of the GDPR, persons whose personal data are collected have a right of access, rectification and erasure of this information concerning them. They also have a right to restrict processing and to oppose this processing on legitimate grounds. Information rights and any other right of the persons affected by the processing implemented may be exercised with the Expertise France Data Protection Officer.

Individuals whose personal data are collected in connection with the present procedure have the right to lodge a complaint with the French Data Protection Authority (CNIL).

Expertise France undertakes to guarantee the confidentiality of the proposals sent to it and to ensure the security and storage of these proposals.

3 LIST OF ANNEXES

Documents to be completed

Annex A: Grant Application Form (Word format)

Annex B: Budget (Excel format)

Annex C: Logical framework (Excel format)

Annex D: Financial identification sheet

Annex E: Form setting out the financial and organisational capacities of the applicant

Information documents⁴

Annex F: Model grant contract

Annex II: General Terms and Conditions

Annex III: Budget (Annex B to this document)

Annex IV: Rules applicable to procurement contracts

Annex V: Letter for submission of reports and payment requests

Annex VI: Model narrative and financial report

Annex VII: Transfer of ownership of assets

Annex VIII: Integrity commitment

Annex G: Daily allowance rates (per diem), available at:

<https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/2024/Annexe%20M%20Current%20per%20diem%20rates.pdf> (all necessary information is available via the link, publication of the annex is optional)

⁴ These documents should also be published by Expertise France.