

Clarifications



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These Clarifications arise following public enquiries received at ERA by the 8th July 2021 and are to be considered part of the Call, to be construed together with the Environment Fund package, including the Common Provisions, Guidelines for Applicants, Guidelines for Evaluators, and Frequently Asked Questions.

C1. Are there any criteria defining who can be the beneficiaries in projects submitted under the BELLUS Call?

The beneficiaries receiving financial contribution from the project's budget will have to be those listed under the 'eligible applicants' of the BELLUS Call. For the BELLUS Call, all the beneficiaries (including the lead beneficiary as well as all associated beneficiaries/ partners) have to be either: public entities, including Local Councils and bodies and associations governed by public law, voluntary organisations, established in accordance with the Voluntary Organisations Act (Cap. 492) or educational institutions.

C2. Are Church schools funded under the Call?

Church schools qualify as an educational institution. Nevertheless, applicants are to communicate with ERA via email on: funding.era@era.org.mt.

C3. Is the VAT number criteria applicable to an educational institution which does not have a VAT number?

The applicant has to be in possession of a VAT number as indicated under section 5.1 in Part B of the Guidelines for Applicants document. In case of no VAT number, applicants are to communicate with ERA via email on: funding.era@era.org.mt.

C4. Would HR fall under 'other costs'?

As indicated in section 14 of the Guidelines for Applicants document, staff and operational costs arising from the enterprise's day-to-day management and operation are considered ineligible for funding. However, justifiable services rendered in line with the objectives of the Call would be covered under the BELLUS Call.

C5. Should an application for an environment or planning permit not be in hand (i.e. permit in process of being issued), would the application form still be considered?

Since the intention of the call is to finance tangible projects, the applicant has to have relevant permits in hand or applications in process as indicated under article 6 of the Common Provisions and under 'Important considerations for applicants' of the BELLUS Call document. In cases where an environment or a planning permit is required but has not yet been issued or secured, the applicant must provide a reasonable justification with supporting evidence. The applicant must also include this issue under the Risks and Mitigation measures section and provide a mitigation measure should the permit not be issued by the Call deadline. It is noted that projects with full permitting in hand will be ranking higher.

C6. Is research funded under the Call? If not, what about monitoring measures?

Research is not included as an eligible cost under the BELLUS Call. Nevertheless, should the project deliverables require effectiveness assessments, these may be considered, provided that the project is

not a research project and is in line with the eligibility criteria specified under section 5 in Part B of Guidelines for Applicants document.

C7. Would there be funds to cover costs of purchasing/renting land for the project?

The purchase of land and real estate is not considered eligible for funding. Renting of land is however considered an eligible cost.

C8. Will the evaluators consider projects relating to improvement of commuting (i.e. improving air quality) because it seems it is not included in one of the targeted areas of the BELLUS funding.

Initiatives must contribute towards the objectives of the Call, in order to be considered eligible. Projects addressing elements which are also contributing towards biodiversity improvement and related wellbeing, are considered eligible. Thence, projects involving relevant air quality elements may be considered, provided there is due justification in line with the criteria of the Call.

C9. Is construction of wells for water conservation covered by the call?

Construction is considered an ineligible cost as indicated under section 14 of the Guidelines for Applicants document. However, should relevant permits for such wells be already at hand or in an advanced status and such wells actively contribute towards key actions of the project and are within the objectives of the Call, such project elements may be considered, provided there is due justification in line with the criteria of the Call.

C10. Is ERA's intention that to have such fund available every year?

The BELLUS Call is the first call issued under the Environment Fund. Additional calls may be issued by ERA under the Environment Fund in the future.

C11. Does the Project Manager have to be from the lead organisation or can the Project Manager be outsourced?

Every project needs to have a project manager. The project manager will be the person responsible for the project implementation on a day-to-day basis and the relevant contact point with the Authority. It is up to the applicant to determine who would be most fit for this role. Duties of the project manager cannot be sub-contracted.

C12. Does the 70% pre-financing require a financial guarantee?

Beneficiaries are required to submit a financial guarantee for the pre-financing, where applicable, as indicated in section 13 of the Guidelines for Applicants document.

C13. Can sub-contracting costs prior to the commencement of the project be financed e.g. sub-contracting service for the preparation of the application form?

Only eligible costs incurred during the lifetime of the project will be covered by the BELLUS Call. Any costs incurred beyond the eligible period of the project, including costs paid prior to the commencement of the Grant Agreement will not be covered.

C14. Will ERA support multiple Local Council projects in one single application?

Provided there is an adequate vision in line with the objectives and criteria of the Call, multiple actions under the same project may be financially supported. Applicants are to indicate the common theme

and, or vision in the Project Description section, with the different actions under Part B of the Application Form.

C15. Will ERA support complementary projects?

Project activities complementary with project activities financially supported by other funding instruments are welcomed, however applicants must ensure that there is no double financing of the same actions, as otherwise the project will be rendered ineligible.

C16. Is there a capping for sub-contracting costs?

There is no capping for sub-contracting costs.