

**Contracting authority:**

**Italian Agency for Development Cooperation  
(AICS)**

**JOB CREATION THROUGH INFORMATION AND  
COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT) IN  
MOZAMBIQUE – AID 12454**

**Guidelines  
for Grant Applicants**

**Reference: 01/Grant/2023/AICS Maputo/AID 12454**

**Deadline for submission of concept note and full application:  
3<sup>rd</sup> November 2023 at 12,00 pm (Maputo date and time)**

## **Notice**

This is an open call for proposals, where all documents are submitted together (concept note and full application). In the first instance, only the concept notes will be evaluated. Thereafter, for the lead applicants who have been pre-selected, the full applications will be evaluated. After the evaluation of the full applications, an eligibility check will be performed for those which have been provisionally selected. Eligibility will be checked on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the contracting authority and the signed 'declaration by the lead applicant' sent together with the full application.

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# 1. JOB CREATION THROUGH INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT) IN MOZAMBIQUE – AID 12454

## 1.1. BACKGROUND

The programme, Job Creation through Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in Mozambique – AID 12454, aims at contributing to the job creation process of the Government of Mozambique articulated in the Action Plan of the Employment Policy (PAPE 2021-2024). The intervention strategy consists of 4 main components: a) support for investments in technical and vocational and educational and training (TVET) oriented to satisfy the current demand of the labour market, with particular focus on the ICT sector; b) promote the expansion of competitive micro, small and medium businesses (M/SME) through easier access to incubation and acceleration support services specialised in the digitalization; c) support for the implementation and enforcement of regulations on health and safety at work; d) institutional building to the Government entities responsible for the implementation and institutional coordination of the PAPE 2021-2024: the Secretariat of State for Youth and Employment (SEJE) and its operational bodies (IFPELAC, INEP and INJ).<sup>1</sup>

## 1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

The **global objective** of this call for proposals is the same as for the programme, i.e., to contribute to sustainable, inclusive, and decent work-creating economic development in Mozambique, especially for the growing youth population.

The **specific objective** of the action financed through the grant of this call for proposals consists in increasing youth employment in the capital Maputo and the provinces of Maputo, Manica and Tete, by a strategy focused on the ICT and articulated in supporting and integrating different lines of intervention for the investment in human capital and the creation of decent and quality employment for young women and men, promoted and coordinated by the SEJE.

The priorities of this call for proposal are two.

The first priority of the action (i.e., Expected Result - ER1) aims to an integrated and strengthened offer of vocational training courses delivered by IFPELAC with a better response to the market needs and absorption capacity, with an emphasis on ICT, ensuring fair access and adaptation of the curricula themselves for full utilisation by fragile youth groups (in particular women, persons with disabilities and possibly young people in detention or street dwellers).

The main outputs identified as capable to achieve ER1, through a set of activities to be proposed by the applicants, are the following:

- dialogue between IFPELAC training institutions and the private sector facilitated and supported to identify the most in-demand skill profiles, involving experts, government, and economic operators (*target: at least 20 meetings per year*);
- existing ICT-related curricula revised and/or new ones developed, based on the skills required by labour market, with specific attention to students with special needs (adaptation of content and training methods...) (*target: 5*);
- existing ICT and non-ICT tools introduced or improved to adapt courses (and where necessary the infrastructure of training centres) to ensure full accessibility of people with disabilities (*the target will be set at the beginning of the activities jointly by the grantee and IFPELAC*);
- ICT Education-support centre established by refurbishment of existing facilities (to be identified by IFPELAC), with computer and educational equipment, and adaptations for full access and use by persons with disabilities (*target: 1 – most likely at the IFPELAC headquarters compound in Maputo City*);

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<sup>1</sup> Instituto de Formacao Profissional e Estudos Laborais Alberto Cassimo (IFPELAC, IP), Instituto Nacional de Emprego (INEP, IP) and Instituto Nacional de Juventude (INJ, IP).

- the IFPELAC vocational training centres already organised and providing ICT courses shall be strengthened by ICT equipment for teaching (including distance learning) (*target: at least the existing 2*);
- courses in ICT literacy and professional use of specific applications organised and supported (IFPELAC and other equipped training institutions) (*target: at least 24 course per year*);
- Scholarships (compliant with IFPELAC standard and regulations) allocated and managed to ensure equal access to training courses and reward merit (*target: 24 per year in each of the target areas*);
- “training of trainers” courses held to achieve the outputs mentioned above (*target: at least 4 courses per year, for 3 years, in the 4 geographical target areas*).

These outputs shall be achieved, also, by providing technical assistance and support to the SEJE to stimulate, guide and monitor the implementation of the activities under the Employment Policy Action Plan (PAPE) and by proposing and sharing innovative tools, drawn from international good practices.

The second priority of the action (i.e., Expected Result – ER2) aims to the job creation through better conditions in order to employ or self-employ 3,000 youth<sup>2</sup> especially fragile youth groups (in particular women, persons with disabilities and possibly young people in detention or street dwellers) by supporting the M/SMES with high potential in terms of turnover growth, by increasing the availability of funding to youth and promoting effective organisational formulas.

The main outputs identified as capable to achieve ER2, through a set of activities to be proposed by the applicants, are the following:

- baseline survey conducted (processing of relevant statistical data collected from INE, MITESS, INEP, IPEME, MEF... - including publication and distribution to stakeholders) and study on the perspectives for ICT in traditional sectors (digitalisation of business processes) and for the digital economy;
- job fairs (in person and/or virtual) organised (including communication) and run according to INEP’s standards, which shall also involve scholarships, pre-professional and professional internships (*target: at least 4 fairs per year and 5,000 participants*);
- Various forms of dialogue (meetings, platforms, open days, etc.) promoted and realised between the business world and Employment Centres for the provision of professional and pre-professional internships (remunerated, if possible), with links with start-ups, cooperatives, other initiatives supported by the program and its partners (*target at least 8 meetings or structured, facilitated interactions per year, per target province*);
- SEJE and its operational entities provided with technical assistance for the promotion and management of dialogue and coordination of the involved stakeholders (*target: the three target provinces are supported*);
- remunerated internships funded and management expenses covered for unpaid internships (*target: at least 150 internships per year, for 3 years; 288 scholarships awarded*);
- INJ and INEP’s staff trained and supported with technical assistance to assist beneficiaries of FAIJ (Fundo de Apoio às Iniciativas Juvenis), of "Meu Kit, Meu Emprego" programme, as well as of the services of the “digital hub”;
- At least one "IT hub" established (refurbishment of building, equipped rooms, connectivity, accessibility and communications) and run (*target: for at least 2 years*), according to INEP standards and providing incubation and acceleration services to micro and small businesses;<sup>3</sup>
- Independent evaluation of the whole programme results (all 4 components, with special attention to components 1 and 2, mainly implemented by the grantee awarded under this Call for Proposals).

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<sup>2</sup> This indicator refers to the whole programme

<sup>3</sup> Please note, the INEP central employment services already identified the IFPELAC Maputo Province Centre (Fomento neighbourhood) as the site for the first IT Hub. If more than one is proposed, it may be established in any other location belonging to the target areas of the action.

These outputs shall be achieved, also, by providing technical assistance and support to the SEJE to stimulate, guide and monitor the implementation of the activities under the Employment Policy Action Plan (PAPE) and by proposing and sharing innovative tools, drawn from international good practices.

**The activities proposed by the applicants to produce the outputs mentioned above shall respect the current standards and modalities in use by the local stakeholders.**

### **1.3. FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY**

**The overall indicative amount made available** under this call for proposals is EUR **2,290,000.00** (two million, two hundred and ninety thousand Euro). The contracting authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

The grantee shall allocate at least 80% of the funding budget to the geographical area of Maputo (City and province) and 25% of the funding budget to benefit people with disabilities.<sup>4</sup>

Still in terms of the target groups, besides ensuring gender principles mainstreaming, applicants are encouraged to allocate about 3% for young people in detention or street dwellers.

#### **Size of grants**

Any grant requested under this call for proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

- minimum amount: EUR 2,290,000
- maximum amount: EUR 2,290,000

Any grant requested under this call for proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum percentages of total eligible costs of the action:

- Minimum percentage: 100% of the total eligible costs of the action.
- Maximum percentage: 100% of the total eligible costs of the action (see also Section 2.1.4.).

Please note that the grant covers the entire eligible costs of the action, since the balance (i.e., the difference between the total eligible cost of the action and the amount requested from the contracting authority) shall be zero. Therefore, any inclusion of co-funding by the applicants will lead to the rejection of the application.

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<sup>4</sup> Failing to comply with these percentages leads to the exclusion of the proposal.

## 2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of the actions financed under this call, in conformity with the practical guide, which is applicable to the present call (available on the internet at this address <https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/ExactExternalWiki/ePRAG>).<sup>5</sup>

Notice: The Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), Maputo Office, is the contracting authority (C.A.) and the funds are availed by the Italian Government. The C.A. adopts for this Call for Proposals the rules set out to discipline the awarding procedures of Grants by the European Commission or by other C.A. for funds of the EU, therefore most of the documents attached to these Guidelines were adapted accordingly, but the Grant Contract General Conditions (ANNEX II e3h2\_gencond\_en) was left in the original version: all the references to the European Commission as C.A. or as responsible for the supervision of the procedure carried out by another C.A. with European funds, need to be interpreted as referring to Italy and its agency AICS as the funder, and to the AICS Maputo Office as the C.A, as specified in the Special Conditions.

### 2.1. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

(1) the actors (2.1.1.):

- the **'lead applicant'**, i.e. the entity submitting the application form;
- if any, its **co-applicant(s) (where it is not specified otherwise the lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) are hereinafter jointly referred as 'applicant(s)')**;
- and, if any, **affiliated entity(ies)** to the lead applicant and/or to a co-applicant(s);

(2) the actions (2.1.3.):

- actions for which a grant may be awarded;

(3) the costs (2.1.4.):

- types of cost that may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant.

#### ***2.1.1. Eligibility of applicants (i.e., lead applicant and co-applicant(s))***

##### **Lead applicant**

(1) In order to be eligible for a grant, the lead applicant must:

- be a legal person **and**
- be non-profit-making **and**
- be established in Mozambique or in one of the Member States of the European Union **and**
- be authorized to operate in Mozambique **and**

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<sup>5</sup> Note that a lead applicant (i.e., a coordinator) whose pillars have been positively assessed by the European Commission and who is awarded a grant will not sign the standard grant contract published with these guidelines but a contribution agreement based on the contribution agreement template. All references in these guidelines and other documents related to this call to the standard grant contract shall in this case be understood as referring to the relevant provisions of the contribution agreement template.

- not be linked to any of the above-mentioned central authorities partnering AICS in the programme AID 12454 **and**
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary.

The Lead Applicant shall also:

- demonstrate adequate capacities for planning, monitoring, evaluation, advocacy, communication applicable to the action proposed, and
- demonstrate expertise in similar projects worldwide, if possible, in a developing country. This set of experience and competences may be complemented by co-applicants and/or affiliate entities.

(2) Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations listed in Section 2.6.10.1 of the practical guide;

Lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entities and, in case of legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over the lead applicant, the co-applicants and the affiliated entities are informed that, should they be in one of the situations of early detection or exclusion according to Section 2.6.10.1 of the practical guide, personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form 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 detection and exclusion system, and communicated to the persons and entities concerned in relation to the award or the execution of a grant contract. In this respect, provisionally selected lead applicants, co-applicants and affiliated entities or those placed in the reserve list are obliged to declare that they are not in one of the exclusion situations through a signed declaration on honour (PRAG Annex A14). For grants of EUR 15 000 or less, no declaration on honour is required. See Section 2.4.

In Part B Section 8 of the grant application form ('declaration(s) by the lead applicant'), the lead applicant must declare that the lead applicant himself, the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) are not in any of these situations.

The lead applicant may act individually or with co-applicant(s).

If awarded the grant contract, the lead applicant will become the beneficiary identified as the coordinator in Annex G (special conditions). The coordinator is the sole interlocutor of the contracting authority. It represents and acts on behalf of any other co-beneficiary (if any) and coordinate the design and implementation of the action.

### **Co-applicant(s)**

Co-applicants participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the lead applicant.

In order to be eligible for a grant, the co-applicants must:

- be a legal person **and**
- be established in any of the countries belonging to the Organisation for the Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as member countries or eligible for development aid according to the OECD-DAC List of ODA Recipients<sup>6</sup> **and**

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<sup>6</sup> Please refer to: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/daclist.htm>



- not be linked to any of the above-mentioned central authorities partnering AICS in the programme AID 12454.

Co-applicants must sign the mandate in Part B Section 4 of the grant application form.

If awarded the grant contract, the co-applicant(s) (if any) will become beneficiary(ies) in the action (together with the coordinator).

In addition, please note that contracts cannot be awarded to or signed with applicants included in the lists of EU restrictive measures (see Section 2.4. of the PRAG).

### **2.1.2. Affiliated entities**

The lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) may act with affiliated entity(ies). **Only the following entities may be considered as affiliated entities to the lead applicant and/or to co-applicant(s):**

Only entities having a structural link with the applicants (i.e. the lead applicant or a co-applicant), in particular a legal or capital link.

This structural link encompasses mainly two notions:

- (i) Control, as defined in Directive 2013/34/EU on the annual financial statements, consolidated financial statements and related reports of certain types of undertakings:

Entities affiliated to an applicant may hence be:

- Entities directly or indirectly controlled by the applicant (daughter companies or first-tier subsidiaries). They may also be entities controlled by an entity controlled by the applicant (granddaughter companies or second-tier subsidiaries) and the same applies to further tiers of control;
  - Entities directly or indirectly controlling the applicant (parent companies). Likewise, they may be entities controlling an entity controlling the applicant;
  - Entities under the same direct or indirect control as the applicant (sister companies).
- (ii) Membership, i.e. the applicant is legally defined as a e.g. network, federation, association in which the proposed affiliated entities also participate or the applicant participates in the same entity (e.g. network, federation, association,...) as the proposed affiliated entities.

The structural link shall, as a general rule, be neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation. This means that the link would exist independently of the award of the grant; it should exist before the call for proposals and remain valid after the end of the action.

By way of exception, an entity may be considered as affiliated to an applicant even if it has a structural link specifically established for the sole purpose of the implementation of the action in the case of so-called 'sole applicants' or 'sole beneficiaries'. A sole applicant or a sole beneficiary is a legal entity formed by several entities (a group of entities) which together comply with the criteria for being awarded the grant. For example, an association is formed by its members.

#### What is not an affiliated entity?

The following are not considered entities affiliated to an applicant:

- Entities that have entered into a (procurement) contract or subcontract with an applicant, act as concessionaires or delegates for public services for an applicant,
- Entities that receive financial support from the applicant,
- Entities that cooperate on a regular basis with an applicant on the basis of a memorandum of understanding or share some assets,
- Entities that have signed a consortium agreement under the grant contract (unless this consortium agreement leads to the creation of a ‘sole applicant’ as described above).

#### How to verify the existence of the required link with an applicant?

The affiliation resulting from control may in particular be proved on the basis of the consolidated accounts of the group of entities the applicant and its proposed affiliates belong to.

The affiliation resulting from membership may in particular be proved on the basis of the statutes or equivalent act establishing the entity (network, federation, association) which the applicant constitutes or in which the applicant participates.

If the applicants are awarded a grant contract, their affiliated entity(ies) will not become beneficiary(ies) of the action and signatory(ies) of the grant contract. However, they will participate in the design and in the implementation of the action and the costs they incur (including those incurred for implementation contracts and financial support to third parties and subcontractors) may be accepted as eligible costs, provided they comply with all the relevant rules already applicable to the beneficiary(ies) under the grant contract.

Affiliated entity(ies) must satisfy the same eligibility criteria as the lead applicant and the co-applicant(s). They must sign the affiliated entity(ies) statement in Part B Section 5 of the grant application form.

In addition to the categories referred to in Section 2.1.1, the following are however also eligible:

- be established in any of the countries belonging to the Organisation for the Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as member countries or eligible for development aid according to the OECD-DAC List of ODA Recipients.<sup>7</sup>

### **2.1.3. Associates and contractors**

The following entities are not applicants nor affiliated entities and do not have to sign the ‘mandate for co-applicant(s)’ or ‘affiliated entities’ statement:

- Associates

Other organisations or individuals may be involved in the action. Such associates play a real role in the action but may not receive funding from the grant, with the exception of per diem or travel costs. Associates do not have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in Section 2.1.1. Associates must be mentioned in Part B Section 6 — ‘Associates participating in the action’ — of the grant application form.

They may be linked to any of the above-mentioned central authorities partnering AICS in the programme AID 12454.

- Contractors

The beneficiaries and their affiliated entities are permitted to award contracts. Associates or affiliated entity(ies) cannot be also contractors in the project. Contractors are subject to the procurement rules set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

<sup>7</sup> Please refer to: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/daclist.htm>

#### **2.1.4. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made**

Definition:

An action is composed of a set of activities.

##### Duration

The initial planned duration of an action may not be lower than 30 months nor exceed 36 months.

##### Sectors or themes

Sustainable Development Goal target:

- SDG 4: Quality Education.
- SDG 5: Gender Equality
- SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
- SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure

OECD - DAC codes target:

- 16020: Education policy and administrative management
- 22040: Gender equality and women's empowerment
- 11330: Technical and vocational education and training (TVET)
  
- Micro-and small-business creation, development, support in “incubation” stages
- Technical assistance to local stakeholders or public bodies in developing countries.

##### Location

Actions must take place in the following country and provinces: Mozambique, Greater Maputo area, and for specific activities Manica<sup>8</sup> e Tete<sup>9</sup> provinces.

##### Types of action

Types of action which may be financed under this call:

- integration and strengthening the offer of vocational training courses delivered by IFPELAC with a better response to the market needs and absorption capacity, with an emphasis on ICT, ensuring fair access and adaptation of the curricula themselves for full utilisation by fragile youth groups (in particular women, persons with disabilities and possibly young people in detention or street dwellers).
- job creation through better conditions in order to employ or self-employ youth, especially fragile youth groups (in particular women, persons with disabilities and possibly people in detention or street dwellers) by supporting the M/SMES with high potential in terms of turnover growth, by increasing the availability of funding to youth and promoting effective organisational formulas.

Applicants are encouraged to adopt the Result Based Management (RBM) approach.

The following types of action are ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;

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<sup>8</sup> (up to 10% of the budget)

<sup>9</sup> (up to 10% of the budget)

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;

### Types of activity

In Section 1.2 two priorities were established. All proposals shall cover both priorities. Two sub-sets of activities were proposed as suitable to pursue the two respective expected results (ER1 and ER2) and may be financed under this call, with possible integrations and changes as deemed appropriate by the applicant.

#### **For the first priority, they are:**

1. **Sub-set of activities 1** - Analyses and consultations with companies in the relevant economic sectors to identify the most in-demand skill profiles, involving experts, government, and economic operators.
2. **Sub-set of activities 2** - Technical and financial assistance and collaboration with IFPELAC in inclusive ICT-related training activities (e.g. analysis, planning, implementation of courses, training of trainers in ICT):
  - Revise existing ICT-related curricula and/or develop new ones, based on the skills required by labour market, with specific attention to students with special needs (adaptation of content and training methods...);
  - Introduce or reinforce existing ICT and non-ICT tools with which to adapt courses (and where necessary the infrastructure of training centres) to ensure full accessibility of people with disabilities;
  - Supply IFPELAC vocational training centres already providing ICT courses with ICT equipment and software for teaching (including distance learning);
  - Based on the new skills required by labour market, organize courses in ICT literacy and professional use of specific applications (e.g. accounting and administrative-financial management, website design and construction, image management and advertising graphics, typographic processes and video production, or -also- in some new uses of AutoCAD software for high-level trainees).
  - Organize training for trainers (ToT) in ICT, with attention to the transfer of skills and knowledge to students with special needs;
  - Organize soft-skills training modules in all training initiatives.
3. **Sub-set of activities 3** - Investment/establishment of funding/study support mechanisms (scholarships, internships, transport or accommodation solutions)
  - Allocate and manage scholarships (compliant with IFPELAC standards and regulations) to ensure equal access to training courses and reward merit;
  - Strengthen dialogue with companies for integrating the training packages with new pre-professional and professional internship opportunities in ICT-related sectors.
4. **Sub-set of activities 4** - Establishment of an Inclusive Centre for Digital Skills at IFPELAC:
  - Refurbish existing facilities (to be identified by IFPELAC), including supplying IT equipment and software for both face-to-face and distance training;
  - Adapt training spaces and supply support technologies for full access and use by persons with disabilities.

#### **For the second priority, they are:**

1. **Sub-set of activities 1** – Studies and analyses
  - Conduct a baseline survey (processing of relevant statistical data collected from INE, MITESS, INEP, IPEME, MEF... - including publication and distribution to stakeholders);
  - Conduct a study on the perspectives for ICT in traditional sectors (digitalisation of business processes) and for the digital economy;
  - Conduct an independent evaluation of the whole programme results (all 4 components, with special attention to components 1 and 2, mainly implemented by the grantee awarded under this Call for Proposals).
2. **Sub-set of activities 2** – Technical and financial assistance to INEP to promote employment opportunities for young people in the private sector:

- Organise and run job fairs (in person and/or virtual – including communication) according to INEP’s standards, which shall also involve scholarships, pre-professional and professional internships;
- Promote dialogue (meetings, platforms, open days, etc.) between the business world and Employment Centres for the provision of professional and pre-professional internships (remunerated, if possible), with links with start-ups, cooperatives, other initiatives supported by the program and its partners;
- Provide SEJE and its operational entities with technical assistance for the promotion and management of dialogue and coordination of the involved stakeholders;
- Fund remunerated internships and cover management expenses for unpaid internships;
- Train and support (technical assistance) INJ and INEP’s staff to assist beneficiaries of FAIJ (Fundo de Apoio às Iniciativas Juvenis), of "Meu Kit, Meu Emprego" programme, as well as of the services of the “digital hub”;
- Activate or reinforce monitoring and support services for youth when they get job placement or internships under the programme (e.g. psychological support, follow-up visits etc.).

3. **Sub-set of activities 3** – Incubation and acceleration activities for micro and small enterprises in the digital sector:

- Establish at least one "IT hub" (refurbishment of building, equipped rooms, connectivity, accessibility and communications) and run it for at least 2 years and run (target: for at least 2 years), according to INEP standards and providing incubation and acceleration services to micro and small businesses;
- Activate incubation and acceleration services for micro and small enterprises in the digital sector (e.g. development of business plans, tutoring in financing proposals to the banking system, coaching in management and business communication plans, encouragement to create co-operatives, among others);
- Promote political dialogue towards the introduction of incentive mechanisms for medium and large companies to collaborate with the objectives of the programme.

Financial support to third parties<sup>10</sup>

Applicants may propose financial support to third parties.

Applicants may propose financial support to third parties in order to help achieving the objectives of the action.

The maximum amount of financial support per third party is EUR 60 000 except where achieving the objectives of the actions would otherwise be impossible or overly difficult, in which case this threshold can be exceeded. A threshold below EUR 60 000 can be set if appropriate.

In compliance with the present guidelines and notably of any conditions or restrictions in this Section, the lead applicant should define mandatorily in Section 2.1.1 of the grant application form:

- (i) the overall objectives, the specific objective(s) and the outputs<sup>11</sup> (i.e. the results) to be achieved with the financial support
- (ii) the different types of activities eligible for financial support, on the basis of a fixed list
- (iii) the types of persons or categories of persons which may receive financial support
- (iv) the criteria for selecting these entities and giving the financial support
- (v) the criteria for determining the exact amount of financial support for each third entity, and
- (vi) the maximum amount which may be given.

<sup>10</sup> These third parties are neither affiliated entity(ies) nor associates nor contractors.

<sup>11</sup> As per OECD DAC definition, the term ‘results’ includes ‘impact’ (overall objective), ‘outcome(s)’ (specific objective(s) and ‘output(s)’.

In all events, the mandatory conditions set above for giving financial support (points (i) to (vi)) have to be strictly defined in the grant contract as to avoid any exercise of discretion.

### Visibility

Applicants must take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) has financed the action. Actions that are wholly funded by AICS must incorporate information and communication activities designed to raise the awareness of specific or general audiences of the reasons for the action and the support from AICS for the action in the country or region concerned, as well as the results and the impact of this support.

All measures and activities relating to visibility and communication must comply with the latest Communication and Visibility Requirements for AICS-funded action, laid down and published on the AICS website (<https://www.aics.gov.it/home-ita/settori/linee-guida>).

### Number of applications and grants per applicants / affiliated entities

The lead applicant may not submit more than 1 application under this call for proposals.

The lead applicant may not be a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in another application at the same time.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity may not be the co-applicant or affiliated entity in more than 1 application under this call for proposals.

### ***2.1.5. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included***

AICS contributions under this call for proposals take the following form:

- Reimbursement of eligible costs based on actual costs incurred by the beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies).

Only 'eligible costs' can be covered by the grant. The categories of costs that are eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and an overall ceiling for 'eligible costs'.

Recommendations to award a grant are always subject to the condition that the checks preceding the signing of the grant contract do not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget (such as arithmetical errors, inaccuracies, unrealistic costs and ineligible costs). The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the contracting authority to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. It is not possible to increase the grant as a result of these corrections.

It is therefore in the applicants' interest to provide a **realistic and cost-effective budget**.

### Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under this call for proposals, costs must comply with the provisions of Article 14 of the general conditions to the standard grant contract (see Annex G of the guidelines).

The applicants (and where applicable their affiliated entities) agree that the expenditure verification(s) referred to in Article 15.7 of the general conditions to the standard grant contract (see Annex G of the guidelines) will be carried out by [the contracting authority or any external body authorised by AICS].

### Contingency reserve

The budget may include a contingency reserve not exceeding 5 % of the estimated direct eligible costs. It can only be used with the **prior written authorisation** of the contracting authority.

### Eligible indirect costs

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat rate funding, but the total must not exceed 5 % of the estimated total eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another budget heading in the standard grant contract. The lead applicant may be asked to justify the percentage requested before the grant contract is signed. However, once the flat rate has been fixed in the special conditions of the grant contract, no supporting documents need to be provided.

If any of the applicants or affiliated entity(ies) is in receipt of an operating grant financed by the EU, it may not claim indirect costs on its incurred costs within the proposed budget for the action.

#### Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- debts and debt service charges (interest);
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- costs declared by the beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme receiving an AICS grant or contribution;
- purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary 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 standard grant contract, at the latest at the end of the action;
- currency exchange losses;
- in kind contributions;
- bonuses included in costs of staff;
- negative interest charged by banks or other financial institutions;
- VAT, except in specific cases for costs incurred in Mozambique;<sup>12</sup>
- credit to third parties;
- salary costs of the personnel of national administrations.

### **2.1.6. Ethics clauses and Code of Conduct**

All beneficiaries of the grant shall strictly comply with all the provisions of both the AICS Code of Ethics and Conduct ([here in English](#), [qui in Italiano](#), [aqui em português](#)) and the AICS PSEAH Code ([here in English](#), [qui in Italiano](#)).

In particular, the following principles apply.

#### a) Absence of conflict of interest

The applicant must not be affected by any conflict of interest and must have no equivalent relation in that respect with other applicants or parties involved in the actions. Any attempt by an applicant to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the evaluation committee or the contracting authority during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and

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<sup>12</sup> VAT in any other country is ineligible. For costs incurred in Mozambique, VAT may be eligible unless the deliverables of the activities benefit from the provisions set by Decree n. 66 of 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2017 of the Government of Mozambique and subsequent updates (*Mecanismo Fiscal de Regularização do IVA suportado nas aquisicoes de bens e servicos no ambito de projectos publicos financiados por instituicoes financeiras internacionais e parceiros de desenvolvimento*).

comparing applications will lead to the rejection of its application and may result in administrative penalties according to the Financial Regulation in force.

b) Respect for human rights as well as environmental legislation and core labour standards

The applicant and its staff must comply with human rights. In particular, and in accordance with the applicable act, applicants who have been awarded contracts must comply with the environmental legislation including multilateral environmental agreements, and with the core labour standards as applicable and as defined in the relevant International Labour Organisation conventions (such as the conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining; elimination of forced and compulsory labour; abolition of child labour).

**Zero tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment**

The European Commission applies a policy of 'zero tolerance' in relation to all wrongful conduct which has an impact on the professional credibility of the applicant.

Physical abuse or punishment, or threats of physical abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation, harassment and verbal abuse, as well as other forms of intimidation shall be prohibited.

Applicants (and affiliated entities) other than (i) natural persons, (ii) pillar-assessed entities and (iii) governments and other public bodies, whose application has been provisionally selected or placed in a reserve list shall assess their internal policy against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEA-H) through a self-evaluation questionnaire (Annex L). For grants of EUR 60 000 or less no self-evaluation is required. Such self-evaluation questionnaire is not part of the evaluation of the full application by the contracting authority, but is an administrative requirement. See Section 2.5.6 of the PRAG.

c) Anti-corruption and anti-bribery

The applicant shall comply with all applicable laws, regulations and codes relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption. The contracting authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel project financing if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process or during the execution of a contract and if the contracting authority fails to take all appropriate measures to remedy the situation. For the purposes of this provision, 'corrupt practices' are the offer of a bribe, gift, gratuity or commission to any person as an inducement or reward for performing or refraining from any act relating to the award of a contract or execution of a contract already concluded with the contracting authority.

d) Unusual commercial expenses

Applications will be rejected or contracts terminated if it emerges that the award or execution of a contract has given rise to unusual commercial expenses. Such unusual commercial expenses are commissions not mentioned in the main contract or not stemming from a properly concluded contract referring to the main contract, commissions not paid in return for any actual and legitimate service, commissions remitted to a tax haven, commissions paid to a payee who is not clearly identified or commissions paid to a company which has every appearance of being a front company.

e) Breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud

The contracting authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud. If breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the contract, the contracting authority may refrain from concluding the contract.



## 2.2. HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

### 2.2.1. *Application forms*

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the instructions on the concept note and the full applications in the grant application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex A). Lead applicants should then keep strictly to the format of the grant application form and fill in the paragraphs and pages in order.

Applicants must apply in English.

Please complete the full application form carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly.

Any error or major discrepancy related to the points listed in the instructions on the concept note or any major inconsistency in the application (e.g. if the amounts in the budget worksheets are inconsistent) may lead to the rejection of the application.

Clarifications will only be requested when the information provided is unclear and thus prevents the contracting authority from conducting an objective assessment.

Please note that only the grant application form and the published annexes which have to be filled in (budget, logical framework) will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL the relevant information concerning the action.

**No additional annexes should be sent.**

### 2.2.2. *Where and how to send applications*

Grant applications must be submitted by e-mail to the address below:

[Maputo@aics.gov.it](mailto:Maputo@aics.gov.it)

Applications sent by any other means or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

The e-mail subject must bear the **reference number of the call for proposals “01/Grant/2023/AICS Maputo/AID 12454”**, **together with the name or acronym of the lead applicant**. The e-mail must indicate the list of Annexes that are attached.

Each Annex should be attached as a separate file, as follows:

**Annex A:** Grant application form, in **PDF/A -searchable-** and **Word format**.

**Annex B:** Budget in **PDF/A -searchable-** and **Excel format**.

**Annex C:** Logical framework in **PDF/A -searchable-** format.

**Applicants are advised to verify that their application is complete using the checklist (Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form). Incomplete applications may be rejected.**

### 2.2.3. *Deadline for submission of applications*

The applicants' attention is drawn to the fact that the only system for sending applications is **by e-mail**, to the address provided above.

The deadline for the submission of applications is **3<sup>rd</sup> November 2023 at 12,00 pm (noon), Maputo time**. The date/time of receipt of the complete application recorded by the e-mail server [maputo@aics.gov.it](mailto:maputo@aics.gov.it) will be considered. Any application submitted after the deadline will automatically be rejected.

#### **2.2.4. Further information about applications**

Online information sessions on this call for proposals will be held on:

- 8<sup>th</sup> August 2023 at 2.30 pm (Maputo time)
- 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 2.30 pm (Maputo time)

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of applications to the below address(es), indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: [maputo@aics.gov.it](mailto:maputo@aics.gov.it)

The contracting authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for the submission of applications.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the contracting authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entity(ies), an action or specific activities.

Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with the answers, will be published on the website of AICS Maputo (<http://maputo.aics.gov.it>), as the need arises. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

Please note that the contracting authority may decide to cancel the call for proposals procedure at any stage according to the conditions set out in Section 6.5.9 of the PRAG.

### **2.3. EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS**

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the contracting authority with the possible assistance of external assessors. All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in Section 2.1, the application will be rejected on this sole basis.

## (1) STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION

During the opening and administrative check the following will be assessed:

- If the deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will be automatically rejected.
- If the application satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist in Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form. This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The concept notes that pass this check will be evaluated on the relevance and design of the proposed action.

The concept notes will receive an overall score out of 50 using the breakdown in the evaluation grid below. The evaluation will also check on compliance with the instructions on how to complete the concept note, which can be found in Part A of the grant application form.

The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheadings. Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

### Scores

<b>1. Relevance of the action</b>	Sub-score	<b>20</b>
1.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals and to the specific themes/sectors/areas or any other specific requirement stated in the guidelines for applicants? Are the expected results of the action aligned with the priorities defined in the guidelines for applicants (Section 1.2)?	5	
1.2 How relevant is the proposal to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies), region(s) and/or relevant sectors (including synergy with other development initiatives and avoidance of duplication)?	5	
1.3 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs (as rights holders and/or duty bearers) and constraints been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5	
1.4 Does the proposal contain particular added-value elements (e.g. innovation, best practices) and the other additional elements indicated under 1.2. of the guidelines for applicants?	5	
<b>2. Design of the action</b>	Sub-score	<b>30</b>
2.1 How coherent is the overall design of the action?  Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale to achieve the expected results?	5x2**	
2.2 Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved, and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?	5	
2.3 Does the design take into account external factors (risks and assumptions)?	5	

2.4 Are the activities feasible and consistent in relation to the expected results (including timeframe)? Are results (output, outcome and impact) realistic?	5	
2.5 To which extent does the proposal integrate relevant cross-cutting elements such as environmental/climate change issues, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of indigenous peoples, youth, combating HIV/AIDS (if there is a strong prevalence in the target country/region)?	5	
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>		<b>50</b>

\*\*this score is multiplied by 2 because of its importance

Once all concept notes have been assessed, a list will be drawn up with the proposed actions ranked according to their total score.

Firstly, only the concept notes with a score of at least 30 will be considered for pre-selection.

Secondly, the number of concept notes will be reduced, taking account of the ranking, to the number of concept notes whose total aggregate amount of requested contributions is equal to 500% of the available budget for this call for proposals. The amount of requested contributions of each concept note will be based on the indicative financial envelopes for each lot, where relevant.

After the evaluation of concept notes, the contracting authority will send letters to all lead applicants, indicating whether their application was submitted by the deadline, informing them of the reference number they have been allocated, whether the concept note was evaluated and the results of that evaluation. The evaluation committee will then proceed with the lead applicants whose proposals have been pre-selected.

## **(2) EVALUATION OF THE FULL APPLICATION**

If the applications pass the opening and administrative checks along the instructions of the Step 1: they will be further evaluated on their quality, including the proposed budget and capacity of the applicants and affiliated entity(ies). They will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria in the evaluation grid below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and award criteria.

**The selection criteria** help to evaluate the applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s operational capacity and the lead applicant's financial capacity and are used to verify that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the proposed action and, where appropriate, to participate in its funding (this only applies to lead applicants);
- have the management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed action. This applies to applicants and any affiliated entity(ies).

**The award criteria** help to evaluate the quality of the applications in relation to the objectives and priorities set forth in the guidelines, and to award grants to projects which maximise the overall effectiveness of the call for proposals. They help to select applications which the contracting authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities. They cover the relevance of the action, its consistency with the objectives of the call for proposals, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

*Scoring:*

The evaluation grid is divided into Sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

## Evaluation grid

Section	Maximum Score
<b>1. Financial and operational capacity</b>	<b>20</b>
1.1 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient in-house experience of project management?	5
1.2 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient in-house technical expertise? (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)	5
1.3 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient in-house management capacity? (Including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4 Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5
<b>2. Relevance</b>	<b>20</b>
<i>Score transferred from the Concept Note evaluation</i>	
<b>3. Design of the action</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1 How coherent is the design of the action? Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale to achieve the expected results? Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the envisaged outputs and outcome(s)?	5
3.2 Does the proposal/Logical Framework include credible baseline, targets and sources of verification? If not, is a baseline study foreseen (and is the study budgeted appropriately in the proposal)?	5
3.3 Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved, and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?	5
<b>4. Implementation approach</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1 Is the action plan for implementing the action clear and feasible? Is the timeline realistic?	5
4.2 Does the proposal include an effective and efficient monitoring system? Is there an evaluation planned (previous, during or/and at the end of the implementation)?	5
4.3 Is the co-applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s level of involvement and participation in the action satisfactory?	5
<b>5. Sustainability of the action</b>	<b>15</b>
5.1 Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5

5.2 Is the action likely to have multiplier effects, including scope for replication, extension, capitalisation on experience and knowledge sharing?	5
5.3 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable?  - Financially ( <i>e.g. financing of follow-up activities, sources of revenue for covering all future operating and maintenance costs</i> )  - Institutionally ( <i>will structures allow the results of the action to be sustained at the end of the action? Will there be local 'ownership' of the results of the action?</i> )  - At policy level (where applicable) ( <i>what will be the structural impact of the action — e.g. improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods</i> )  - Environmentally (if applicable) ( <i>will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?</i> )	5
<b>6. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action</b>	<b>15</b>
6.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	/ 5
6.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the results satisfactory?	/ 10
<b>Maximum total score</b>	<b>100</b>

If the total score for Section 1 (financial and operational capacity) is less than 12 points, the application will be rejected. If the score for at least one of the subsections under Section 1 is 1, the application will also be rejected.

If the lead applicant applies without co-applicants or affiliated entities the score for point 4.3 shall be 5 unless the involvement of co-applicants or affiliated entities is mandatory according to these guidelines for applicants.

#### *Provisional selection*

After the evaluation, a table will be drawn up listing the applications ranked according to their score. The highest scoring applications will be provisionally selected until the available budget for this call for proposals is reached. In addition, a reserve list will be drawn up following the same criteria. This list will be used if more funds become available during the validity period of the reserve list.

### **(3) STEP 3: VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF THE APPLICANTS AND AFFILIATED ENTITY(IES)**

The eligibility verification will be performed on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the contracting authority (see Section 2.4). It will by default only be performed for the applications that have been provisionally selected according to their score and within the available budget for this call for proposals.

- The declaration by the lead applicant (Section 8 of Part B of the grant application form) will be cross-checked with the supporting documents provided by the lead applicant. Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the declaration by the lead applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the application on that sole basis.
- The eligibility of applicants and the affiliated entity(ies) will be verified according to the criteria set out in Section 2.1.1, 2.1.2.

Any rejected application will be replaced by the next best placed application on the reserve list that falls within the available budget for this call for proposals.



## 2.4. SUBMISSION OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

A lead applicant whose application has been provisionally selected or placed on the reserve list will be informed in writing by the contracting authority. It will be requested to supply the following documents in order to allow the contracting authority to verify the eligibility of the lead applicant, (if any) of the co-applicant(s) and (if any) of their affiliated entity(ies):

1. The statutes or articles of association of the lead applicant, (if any) of each co-applicant and (if any) of each affiliated entity. Where the contracting authority has recognised the lead applicant's, or the co-applicant(s)'s, or their affiliated entity(ies)'s eligibility for another call for proposals under the same budget line within 2 years before the deadline for receipt of applications, it should be submitted, instead of the statutes or articles of association, a copy of the document proving their eligibility in a former call (e.g. a copy of the special conditions of a grant contract received during the reference period), unless a change in legal status has occurred in the meantime. This obligation does not apply to international organisations which have signed a framework agreement with the European Commission.
2. Legal entity form (see Annex D of these guidelines) duly completed and signed by each of the applicants (i.e. by the lead applicant and by each co-applicant, if any), accompanied by the justifying documents requested there. If the applicants have already signed a contract with the contracting authority, instead of the legal entity sheet and supporting documents, the legal entity number may be provided, unless a change in legal status occurred in the meantime.
3. A financial identification form of the lead applicant (not from co-applicant(s)) conforming to the model attached as Annex E of these guidelines, certified by the bank to which the payments will be made. This bank should be located in the country where the lead applicant is established. If the lead applicant has already submitted a financial identification form in the past for a contract where the European Commission was in charge of the payments and intends to use the same bank account, a copy of the previous financial identification form may be provided instead.
4. Declaration on honour: the lead applicant as well as all co-applicants and affiliated entities shall fill in and sign the declaration on honour certifying that they are not in one of the exclusion situations (see Section 2.6.10.1 of the PRAG) where the amount of the grant exceeds EUR 15 000. The declaration on honour shall be dated and signed, either by hand or by applying a qualified electronic signature (QES)<sup>13</sup> by an authorised representative of the signatory.
5. Self-evaluation questionnaire on SEA-H: the lead applicant as well as all co-applicants and affiliated entities shall fill in the self-evaluation questionnaire assessing the organisation's internal policy and procedure against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEA-H) (Annex L) where the amount of grant exceeds EUR 60 000 (see Section 2.5.6 of the PRAG).<sup>14</sup>

In addition, for the purpose of the evaluation of the financial capacity, the following documents should be submitted:<sup>15</sup>

6. For action grants exceeding EUR 750 000 and for operating grants above EUR 100 000, the lead applicant must provide an audit report produced by an approved external auditor where it is available, and always in cases where a statutory audit is required by EU or national law. That report shall certify the accounts for up to the last three available financial years. In all other cases, the applicant shall provide a self-declaration signed by its authorised representative certifying the validity of its accounts for up to the last three available financial years. Such self-declaration shall

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<sup>13</sup> Please note that only the QES within the meaning of Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 (eIDAS Regulation) will be accepted. Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market and repealing Directive 1999/93/EC.

<sup>14</sup> Applicants, co-applicants and affiliated entities who are (i) natural persons (ii) pillar-assessed entities and (iii) governments and other public bodies do not have to submit the self-evaluation questionnaire.

<sup>15</sup> No supporting documents will be requested for applications for a grant not exceeding EUR 60 000.

be dated and signed, either by hand or by applying a qualified electronic signature (QES)<sup>16</sup> by an authorised representative of the signatory.

This requirement shall apply only to the first application made by a beneficiary the same contracting authority in any one financial year.

The external audit report is not required from the co-applicant(s) or affiliated entities (if any).

This obligation does not apply to pillar assessed entities.

This obligation does not apply to secondary and higher education establishments.

Documents must be supplied in the form of originals, photocopies or scanned versions (i.e. showing legible stamps, signatures and dates) of the said originals.

Where these documents are in a language **other than English, Italian or Portuguese**, a translation into English or Portuguese of the relevant parts of these documents proving the lead applicant's and, where applicable, co-applicants' and affiliated entity(ies)' eligibility, must be attached for the purpose of analysing the application.

If the abovementioned supporting documents are not provided before the deadline indicated in the request for supporting documents sent to the lead applicant by the contracting authority, the application may be rejected.

After verifying the supporting documents, the evaluation committee will make a final recommendation to the contracting authority, which will decide on the award of grants.

**NB:** In the eventuality that the contracting authority is not satisfied with the strength, solidity, and guarantee offered by the structural link between one of the applicants and its affiliated entity, it can require the submission of the missing documents allowing for its conversion into co-applicant. If all the missing documents for co-applicants are submitted, and provided all necessary eligibility criteria are fulfilled, the above-mentioned entity becomes a co-applicant for all purposes. The lead applicant has to submit the application form revised accordingly.

## **2.5. NOTIFICATION OF THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION**

### ***2.5.1. Content of the decision***

The lead applicants will be informed in writing of the contracting authority's decision concerning their application and, if rejected, the reasons for the negative decision. Please note that the lead applicant is the intermediary for all communications between applicants and the contracting authority during the procedure.

An applicant believing that it has been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may lodge a complaint to AICS, Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo, Via Cantalupo in Sabina 29, 00191 ROMA (Italy) – Tel. +39 06 324921.

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<sup>16</sup> Please note that only the QES within the meaning of Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 (eIDAS Regulation) will be accepted. Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market and repealing Directive 1999/93/EC.

### 2.5.2. Indicative timetable

	DATE	TIME
<b>1. Information meeting (if any)</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> August 2023	2.30 pm (Maputo time)
	11 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	2.30 pm (Maputo time)
<b>2. Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the contracting authority</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	4.00 pm (Maputo time)
<b>3. Last date on which clarifications are issued by the contracting authority</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2023	-
<b>4. Deadline for submission of applications</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> November 2023</b>	<b>12.00 pm – noon (Maputo time)</b>
<b>5. Information to lead applicants on opening, administrative checks and concept note evaluation (Step 1)</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> November 2023	-
<b>7. Information to lead applicants on the evaluation of the full applications (Step 2)</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> November 2023	-
<b>8. Notification of award (after the eligibility check) (Step 3)</b>	December 2023	-
<b>9. Contract signature</b>	January 2024	-

All times are in the time zone of the country of the contracting authority.

This indicative timetable refers to provisional dates (except for dates 2, 3, and 4) and may be updated by the contracting authority during the procedure. In such cases, the updated timetable will be published on the web site where the call was published: AICS Maputo Office [website](#).

### 2.6. CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AFTER THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION TO AWARD A GRANT

Following the decision to award a grant, the beneficiary(ies) will be offered a contract based on the standard grant contract (see Annex G of these guidelines). By signing the application form (Annex A of these guidelines), the applicants agree, if awarded a grant, to accept the contractual conditions of the standard grant contract. Where the coordinator is an organisation whose pillars have been positively assessed, it will sign a contribution agreement based on the contribution agreement template. In this case, references to provisions of the standard grant contract and its annexes shall not apply. References in these guidelines to the grant contract shall be understood as references to the relevant provisions of the contribution agreement.

#### Implementation contracts

Where implementation of the action requires the beneficiary(ies) and its affiliated entity(ies) (if any) to award procurement contracts, those contracts must be awarded in accordance with Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

In this context, a distinction should be made between awarding implementation contracts and subcontracting parts of the action described in the proposal, i.e. the description of the action annexed to the grant contract, such subcontracting being subject to additional restrictions (see the general terms and conditions in the model grant contract).

Awarding implementation contracts: implementation contracts relate to the acquisition by beneficiaries of routine services and/or necessary goods and equipment as part of their project management; they do not cover any outsourcing of tasks forming part of the action that are described in the proposal, i.e. in the description of the action annexed to the grant contract.

Subcontracting: subcontracting is the implementation, by a third party with which one or more beneficiaries have concluded a procurement contract, of specific tasks forming part of the action as described in annex to the grant contract (see also the general terms and conditions in the model grant contract).

### 3. LIST OF ANNEXES

#### DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED

(with the application form by the submission deadline indicated above:)

Annex A: Grant application form (Word format)

Annex B: Budget (Excel format)

Annex C: Logical framework (Excel format)

(after the full proposals evaluation:)

Annex D: Legal entity form

Annex E: Financial identification form

Annex H: Declaration on Honour

Annex L: Self-evaluation questionnaire on SEA-H

#### DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION<sup>17</sup>

Annex G: Standard grant contract

- Annex II: general conditions
- Annex IV: procurement rules for beneficiary(ies) - *Note that this document of the EU (PRAG) was partially adapted to suit the Contracting Authority AICS*
- Annex V: standard request for payment
- Annex VI: model narrative and financial report (3 documents)
- Annex VII: model report of factual findings and terms of reference for an expenditure verification of an AICS-financed grant contract for external action (2 documents)
- Annex VIII: model financial guarantee
- Annex IX: standard template for transfer of ownership of assets

Annex J: Information on the tax regime applicable to grant contracts signed under the call.

#### Useful links:

##### Project Cycle Management Guidelines

[https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/funding/managing-project\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/funding/managing-project_en)

##### The implementation of grant contracts

##### A Users' Guide

<https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=48169235>

##### Financial Toolkit

[https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/financial-management-toolkit\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/financial-management-toolkit_en)

Please note: the toolkit is not part of the grant contract and has no legal value. It merely provides general guidance and may in some details differ from the signed grant contract. In order to ensure compliance with their contractual obligations beneficiaries should not exclusively rely on the toolkit but always consult their individual contract documents.

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<sup>17</sup> These documents should also be published by the contracting authority.