

IFE-15-Social-Protection-C5: Call for Proposals January 2025 in Ghana, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal

Answers to Applicants' Questions - Concept Note (Stage 1)

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No.	Section	Questions in English	Answers in English
Categorisation / Catégorisation			
1	Categorisation	For Category 1, Can the 10% Own Contribution all be in-kind contribution? Would salaries be considered an eligible own contribution?	Applicant's Own Contribution can be in either cash or a mix of cash or in-kind towards the overall project budget, In kind contribution can be a maximum of 85% of the total Own contribution, while the cash-contribution cannot be less than 15% of the total own contribution. Operational expenditure such as salaries, utilities, rent etc. cannot be considered as an eligible expense. please visit the eligible expenditure section in the guidelines for applicants.
2	Categorisation	If a project includes both capacity building and income-generating activities for beneficiaries (youth and women), would it qualify under Category 1?	Category 1 can be considered in case the applicant entity does not receive any revenues out of the project and in case the final beneficiaries are not private entities
Eligibility / Eligibilité			
3	Eligibility	Does the applicant entity need to be registered in one of the four CfP countries, or is it sufficient for the project implementation to take place in one of them?	When applying as an individual entity: - Must be a separate legal entity registered in the concerned country. The exact type of legal form must be disclosed in the application form. When applying as a Consortium of several entities: - All applicants of the consortium must each be a separate legal entity registered in the concerned country, in Africa or EU/EFTA. - The exact type of legal form must be disclosed in the application form. Entities registered outside of the country, EU/EFTA or Africa are not eligible - At least one member of the applying consortium must be duly registered and operating under all licenses required for the given line of business in the country purpose of the specific Call for Proposal.

4	Eligibility	What can a startup submit instead of prior year audited financial statements when applying?	<p>startups applying as the applicant entity are not eligible for the IFE grant. All applicants (the Individual, Lead Applicant, and Consortium members) must have been operating for a minimum of 3 years, and provide documentary evidence of 3 years historical financial statements and legal documents of the company.</p> <p>Exception: In case of a recently registered entity in the country of call, which is an investee of an individual applicant or any of the consortium members (e.g. subsidiary, joint venture, Special Purpose Vehicle-SPV), then the respective shareholders of this entity must have been operating for a minimum of 3 years at the time of CN submission</p>
General / Générale			
6	General	How does the "we invest when you invest" principle apply?	IFE does not accept projects without a contribution from the applicant. In addition, IFE expects the applicants to be ready to exhaust their committed funds (own cash contribution) towards the project prior to IFE disbursements whenever possible.
7	General	It appears that the investment plan is 100% capex funding (e.g., excluding salary costs). However, the guidelines for applicants mention 'training projects' as an example of eligible funding for not for profit projects. What specific costs can be covered under training projects?	<p>Training costs can only be considered during the investment phase and only in case these are provided by external parties. Costs for training undertaken by the applicant or during the operational phase are not eligible.</p> <p>For eligible expenditure for the investment, please visit section 2.4.3 in the guidelines for applicants</p>
8	General	Is it possible to receive a debriefing after the submission to review the strengths and weaknesses of a specific application? If so, how can such a debriefing be arranged?	<p>In case of disqualification during the concept note stage, You will receive a letter outlining the areas that need to be strengthened based on the evaluation of your application. in case of being shorlisted, You will receive an invitation letter to submit your full project proposal. Additionally, you will have two individual sessions will be conducted, where guidance on what is expected for the Full Project Proposal will be communicated to your team.</p> <p>in case your project got disqualified during the due diligence stage, IFE team will reach out to you for a debriefing session to outline the gaps and areas of improvement needed for the proposal.</p>

9	General	Is an organization allowed to submit two proposals? If so, what key considerations should be taken into account in this scenario?	<p>There is no restriction on the number of projects an applicant can submit and each application is separately evaluated. However, it's important to carefully consider certain aspects. If multiple proposals are submitted by the same applicant entity, a justification should be provided for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Management capacity to manage multiple investment projects at a time. 2- Why are the projects taking place simultaneously instead of focusing the company resource towards one of them. 3- Additionality
10	General	How do you define third party entites? Can they include other companies operating within the same supply chain as the applicant entity?	<p>Yes, companies along the supply chain can be considered for job creation. In case the new jobs are to be created at Third Parties, these jobs can only be counted if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The Third Party is not related to any of the applicant's entity/ies; - The Third Party commits via a Letter of Intent to create new good jobs; - The Third party confirms that the job creation is a direct result of the IFE grant (i.e., the Third Party would not have created these new good jobs without the IFE-supported project).
11	General	Can a foreigner residing in Rwanda qualify for the grant?	<p>IFE cannot enter into a grant agreement or accept concept notes from individual persons. All applicants that apply to IFE must be legal entities residing in Africa, EU/EFTA.</p>
12	General	What type of proof is required to demonstrate project additionality?	<p>Additionality demonstration that IFE's grant support is essential for the implementation of the proposal and does not replace other available financing options (demonstrated by low IRR, lack of collaterals, lack of available loan schemes, bank rejection letters, etc.). Please refer for further details to Annex 6.2 of the Guidelines</p>
13	General	Can you explain the difference between the preparatory phase and the investment phase? Is a detailed budget required at this stage?	<p>Preparatory phase cannot exceed 12 months to finalize the preparatory work for the start of implementation of investment such as permits, licenses, E&S studies, etc. While the the investment phase starts when the actual implementation of the investment starts and cannot exceed 24 months until completion of the investment (i.e. start of the operational phase). preparatory phase and investment phase combined cannot exceed 30 months.</p>

14	General	What elements are recommended to be included in the project to get bonus points, and what qualifies for the additional grant under the Social protection component?	<p>Bonus points under component 1 (job creation) are available for projects prove their contribution to feminist development policy, youth employment and just transition.</p> <p>Bonus points for Component 2 (Social Protection): are available for projects that avail social protection measures that are beyond the minimum statutory requirement by law for the employees and beneficiaries of the project - please visit section 4.3.e in the guidelines for applicant for the exhaustive list. for more information on additional grant co-funding under component 2 (social protection) please visit section 4.3.e in the guidelines for applicants.</p>
15	General	What percentage of indirect costs is accepted?	There is no provision for indirect costs—only investment items that are directly related to the project are eligible. raw materials, is conditionally eligible limited to a maximum of 7.5% of the total project cost (or covering up to three months of operations while not exceeding 7.5% of the total project cost). Please refer to chapter 2.4.3 of the Guidelines for details
16	General	Does having a strong German connection (e.g., an application from a German company expanding into one of the four countries) increase the chances of approval?	As stated in our Guidelines for Applicants, there is no specific advantage given to companies based in the European Union or Germany. However, certain eligibility criteria—such as being registered in the EU apply. Nevertheless, the project must take place in the country of the call for proposals.
17	General	With co-financing ranging from €650,000 to €10 million per project, does this imply that the minimum co-financing you can offer is €650,000?	Yes. IFE minimum ticket size of co-financing cannot be less than €650,000
18	General	Are projects restricted to your specific definition of social protection, or can other forms of social protection also be considered?	The guidelines for applicants illustrate examples of eligible measures for social protection components. Nevertheless, if your project is proposing an innovative social protection measure, prior to submitting your concept note, kindly write to the CfP mail box requesting clarification on the eligibility of the aforementioned measure.
19	General	How should potential cost increases during project implementation be addressed? For example, if the applicant prudently reserves 10% of the budget for contingencies, would this reduce the grant amount since, at the time of the grant award, there is no cost overrun yet, potentially lowering the financial gap compared to project completion?	At the concept note stage, we ask for a preliminary cost estimate. If your project is shortlisted and invited to submit a full project proposal, you will have to submit the full investment budget supported by updated evidence of cost estimates. However, the requested grant amount cannot be increased. all applicants are responsible for covering any cost overruns and must prove the availability of related financial means. Please note that a general cost line for contingencies is not eligible.

KPI / ICP			
20	KPI	Does the project need to achieve all three types of KPIs, or can it focus on one only?	KPI1 (new jobs to be created) is a mandatory key performance indicator. KPI2 and KPI3 are non compulsory depending on the nature of the project.
21	KPI	Is there a minimum number of jobs that must be created within a specific timeframe, such as a year, to fulfill the job creation KPI?	The cost per job cannot of €10,000. with reference to the minimum ticket size of the IFE co-financing, the minimum number of jobs that can be accepted is 65 new good jobs, in case the project is only requesting for EUR 650.000 as co-financing from IFE. All jobs need to be created within 3 years after the start of the operating phase.
22	KPI	Can you explain how Component 1 and Component 2 can be integrated into a single project and the best approach to achieve this?	For example, if you're building a factory under Category 4 to expand your facility and create jobs, you may consider adding a social protection component—such as making the facility more accessible for people with disabilities or offering a pension or private insurance scheme for employees. These measures can help you earn additional funding and bonus points. Please note that the related investment plans should be separated. Please refer to the guidelines for applicant for additional details.
SmartME			
23	SmartME	Can you provide a proposal template for offline preparation before uploading it to SMART ME?	There is no offline template for concept notes. You can start your application online in SmartME and save your progress before your final submission.

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Company Address IFE
Eulenkrogstrasse 55-57
22359 Hamburg | Germany