



## CALL FOR PROPOSALS<sup>1</sup> AND GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

**Call reference:** EUBA-EFSA-PLANTS-2024-01

**Call title:** Statistical and experimental protocols for estimation of pest survey parameters

**Project/Process code:** 04.01.28 Plant Health Monitoring

**Budget line:** 3210

Restricted to **the list of competent organisations** established by the Authority's Management Board in application of article 2 the Commission Regulation (EC) No 2230/2004 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 with regard to the network of organisations operating in the fields within the Authority's remit.

### **Brief description of the call objectives and key messages:**

The objective of this call is to prepare experimental and statistical protocols to quantify key survey parameters, Method Sensitivity, Relative Risk and Design Prevalence, for their estimation in the process of designing surveys for the EU priority pests.

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<sup>1</sup> The SENSITIVE marking is applied to EFSA documents that need to be protected due to their sensitive nature. Mandatory handling instructions for SENSITIVE information are given at <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/corporate-pubs/handling-sensitive-information-snc-issued-efsa>



## INDICATIVE PROCEDURE TIMETABLE

Milestone	Date <sup>2</sup>	Comments
<b>Launch date</b>	30/04/2024	Date of call publication on EFSA's website.
<b>Deadline for applicants to raise clarification questions to EFSA</b>	26/06/2024	If, after having read this Call for proposals and guide for applicants, you have any questions, you may address them to <a href="mailto:EFSAProcurement@efsa.europa.eu">EFSAProcurement@efsa.europa.eu</a> by indicating the Call reference.
<b>Deadline for EFSA to reply to clarification questions</b>	28/06/2024	Replies will be provided on EFSA's webpage where this Call is published and which the applicants are requested to consult regularly.
<b>Deadline for submission of proposals</b>	<b>04/07/2024 At 17:00 (CEST)</b>	Applicants can submit proposals by following the instructions in section 3.1 of this call for proposals. All applications must be submitted through the EU Funding and Tenders portal, following the instructions provided. <b>Hard copy paper applications will not be accepted.</b>
<b>Notification of the evaluation results</b>	July/August 2024	Estimated <i>Attention: outcome of the present call will be communicated to all applicants to the e-mail address indicated in their proposal. Accordingly, applicants who have submitted proposals under the present call are strongly invited to check regularly the inbox in question.</i>
<b>Grant agreement(s) signature</b>	September 2024	Estimated

<sup>2</sup> All times are in the time zone of the country of the EFSA.



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**ANNEXES**

Annex 1: Draft grant agreement

Documents to be submitted with proposals (to be downloaded from the EU Funding and Tender portal Submission Service, see section 2 'Selecting proposal'):

Annex 2: Administrative Declaration

Annex 3: Declaration on honour on exclusion criteria

Annex 4: Declaration on honour on selection criteria

Annex 5: Selection criteria template

Annex 6: Award criteria template and Estimated budget template (this latest **Not applicable** being a financing not linked to the costs grant – please see instruction in par. 1.4 of the call for proposals)



## 1. GRANT OPPORTUNITY AND CONDITIONS<sup>3</sup>

### 1.1 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Article 36 (1) of the Regulation (EC) 178/2002<sup>4</sup> of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety, stipulates that the Authority shall promote the European networking of organisations operating in the fields within the Authority's mission. The aim of such networking is, in particular, to facilitate a scientific cooperation framework by the coordination of activities, the exchange of information, the development and implementation of joint projects<sup>5</sup>, the exchange of expertise and best practices in the fields within the Authority's mission. The list of competent organisations designated by the Member States, which may assist EFSA with its mission, is approved and regularly updated by EFSA's Management Board. The full list of Article 36 organisations can be found [here](#).

EFSA's founding regulation was amended by Regulation (EU) 2019/1381 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on the transparency and sustainability of the EU risk assessment in the food chain.

The Commission Regulation (EC) 2230/2004 of 23 December 2004 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of the European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) 178/2002 with regard to the network of organisations operating in the fields within the EFSA's mission specifies in Article 4 that tasks may be entrusted by the Authority to organisations on the list of competent organisations.

#### **The present call specifically focuses on the below tasks defined in Article 4(3):**

1. disseminating best practices and improving methods of collecting and analysing scientific and technical data, particularly for the purposes of facilitating comparability and producing a Community-level summary.
2. collecting and analysing specific data in response to a common priority, in particular the Community priorities contained in the Authority's work programmes, and in cases where the Authority's scientific assistance is urgently needed by the Commission, especially in the context of the general plan for crisis management referred to in Article 55 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002.
3. preparing the Authority's scientific opinions, including preparatory work relating to the assessment of authorisation dossiers.
4. sharing data of common interest, e.g. the establishing of databases.

Article 5(2) of the Commission Regulation (EC) 2230/2004<sup>6</sup> of 23 December 2004 specifies that the financial support to the networking organisations shall take the form of subsidies (grants) awarded in accordance with the EFSA's financial regulation and implementing rules.

The present Call for proposals and guide for applicants (hereinafter referred to as "the Call") is procedurally governed by Title VIII of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union.

<sup>3</sup> The applicant is reminded that this Call and guide for applicants contains a selection of the most important conditions for the grant implementation. For the full set of conditions, the applicant is invited to consult the draft grant agreement in Annex 1 of this Call.

<sup>4</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2002:031:0001:0024:EN:PDF>

<sup>5</sup> Project is frequently referred to in this Call as "action", in line with EU Financial Regulation terminology.

<sup>6</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:379:0064:0067:EN:PDF>



This call is based on EFSA's 2022 Work Programme for grants and operational procurements as presented in Annex XII of the Programming Document 2022 – 2024, available on the EFSA's website<sup>7</sup>.

## 1.2 BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL

### BACKGROUND

The mission of the EFSA Plant Health Monitoring team within the EFSA PLANTS Unit is to provide the EU risk managers (the European Commission, the European Parliament and the EU Member States) with scientific advice and scientific and technical assistance in the field of plant health. Since 2017, on requests of the European Commission, EFSA provides support to the EU Member States in the planning and execution of plant pest surveys.

To assist the EU Member States to carry out statistically sound and risk-based surveys on plant pests, as required by Regulation (EU) 2016/2031, EFSA has developed the Toolkit for Plant Pest Surveillance<sup>8</sup>. This includes survey guidelines, pest survey cards, and statistical software tools, including Ribess+ and RiPEST. To apply this methodology several survey parameters must be estimated<sup>7</sup>. Three key survey parameters are the Method Sensitivity, the Relative Risk and Design Prevalence. These parameters are difficult to estimate and vary for different pests, environments, and detection methods. The aim of this call is to develop and validate protocols that can be used by Member States to estimate these parameters for their specific conditions and so assist with survey planning.

The **method sensitivity** is the probability that a truly positive inspection unit will be confirmed as positive<sup>7</sup>. The method sensitivity has two components:

- *Sampling effectiveness* i.e. the probability of selecting an infested sample from an infested inspection unit (for example, for a plant pathogen, infection may be distributed heterogeneously within a plant and the sampling effectiveness will depend on how many leaf samples are taken and where they are taken from).
- *Diagnostic sensitivity* i.e. the probability that a truly positive sample will test positive, which is a characteristic of the laboratory test used in the identification process (this typically depends on the laboratory processes and techniques that are used to process a sample).

$$\text{Method sensitivity} = \text{sampling effectiveness} \times \text{diagnostic sensitivity}.$$

There are existing approaches to obtain and estimate the diagnostic sensitivity<sup>9</sup>. Approaches to quantify sampling effectiveness are less well studied and are thus the focus of the current call. However, the organization awarded the grant should work in line with the recommendations and specifications provided by the EU Reference Laboratories in Plant Health designated by the European Commission<sup>10</sup>, in consideration of the Diagnostic protocols developed by EPPO (European and Mediterranean, Plant Protection Organization) and the ISPM 27 (International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures) from the IPPC (International Plant Protection Convention) to identify

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate\\_publications/files/amp2224.pdf](https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/amp2224.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> <https://efsa.europa.eu/plants/planthealth/monitoring/surveillance/index>

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.eppo.int/RESOURCES/eppo\\_standards/pm7\\_diagnostics](https://www.eppo.int/RESOURCES/eppo_standards/pm7_diagnostics)

<sup>10</sup> [https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/european-union-reference-laboratories\\_en](https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/european-union-reference-laboratories_en)



appropriate approaches to obtain the diagnostic sensitivity for any proposed protocol so that the full method sensitivity can be determined.

The **relative risk** is an important parameter in the design of risk-based surveys. Many risk factors involve the distance to a particular risk location e.g. an entry point or an infested zone. To apply a risk factor in the survey design it is necessary to characterize the relative risk (compared to a baseline level of risk in the population) and the proportion of the overall target population in the survey area to which it applies. This depends crucially on the local spread capacity of the pest, which is a function of the dispersal ability of the pest, the host population and the environmental conditions for spread.

The **design prevalence** refers to the prevalence that the survey is designed to detect in the event that the pest is present in the survey area<sup>7</sup>. The design prevalence must be set in advance by the risk manager. In general, the lower the design prevalence the stronger the evidence for pest freedom but also the greater the survey resource required. The choice of design prevalence is thus a balance between resources available and the aim of the survey. A logical aim of a survey for a quarantine pest is to apply a design prevalence below which the pest can be eradicated. This may be determined using pest occurrence data and/or spread modelling approaches that capture different interacting factors which govern eradication success.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL

The objective of this call is to sign a grant agreement to support EFSA in the preparation of protocols to estimate the Method Sensitivity, Relative Risk and Design Prevalence for priority pests and candidate priority pests for the elicitation of these parameters.

The Plant Health Law (Regulation (EU) 2016/2031) defines a category of quarantine pests, the so called 'priority pests'. These plant pests are identified as the ones that could cause the most severe potential economic, environmental or social impact for the Union territory. The current call will focus on the 20 priority pests below mentioned (Table 1) and up to 5 further candidate priority pests during year 2 of the project.

### **Table 1: list of current Priority pests**

*Agrilus anxius* Gory  
*Agrilus planipennis* Fairmaire  
*Anastrepha ludens* (Loew)  
*Anoplophora chinensis* (Thomson)  
*Anoplophora glabripennis* (Motschulsky)  
*Anthonomus eugeniei* Cano  
*Aromia bungii* (Faldermann)  
*Bactericera cockerelli* (Sulc.)  
*Bactrocera dorsalis* (Hendel)  
*Bactrocera zonata* (Saunders)  
*Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* (Steiner et Bühner) Nickle et al.  
*Candidatus Liberibacter* spp., causal agent of Huanglongbing disease of citrus/citrus greening  
*Conotrachelus nenuphar* (Herbst)  
*Dendrolimus sibiricus* Tschetverikov  
*Phyllosticta citricarpa* (McAlpine) Van der Aa  
*Popillia japonica* Newman  
*Rhagoletis pomonella* Walsh  
*Spodoptera frugiperda* (Smith)  
*Thaumatotibia leucotreta* (Meyrick)  
*Xylella fastidiosa* (Wells et al.)



In particular, EFSA wishes to identify partner organisation/consortium for supporting the survey design for priority pests with the estimates of the Method Sensitivity, Relative Risk and Design Prevalence by preparation of experimental and statistical protocols and guidelines to quantify key survey parameters.

### 1.3 TASKS, DELIVERABLES, TIMELINES, MEETINGS AND PAYMENTS

Work Package / Objective	Tasks	Deliverables	Deadlines
<p><b>Task 1</b></p>	<p>Develop an approach to group pests for application of an appropriate protocol.</p> <p>Given the variety of pests, hosts, and detection methods available for different pests in different Member States, multiple protocols will be required to deal with different situations. The first task is to develop an approach to group pests and situations so they can be appropriately assigned to a survey. This could account for the pest type (e.g. vectored diseases, insect herbivores, soil-borne disease), the host type (e.g. agricultural, forests, urban environments), detection method(s) (e.g. insect traps, spore trapping, visual detection, sniffing dogs) or data availability (e.g. data-rich and data-poor situations, EU vs Non-EU pests). It is possible that a different approach to grouping the protocols will be needed for each of the survey parameters. The proposed approach should also account for potential new priority pests (to be further specified by EFSA) and it shouldn't be limited to the current list of priority pests. It should take into account groups of pests and respective host plants that are not included in the list.</p>	<p><b>Deliverable 1:</b> Technical report on grouping of the pests</p>	<p>2 months from kick-off meeting</p>
<p><b>Task 2</b></p>	<p><b>Design protocols for each group identified in task 1.</b></p> <p>Obtaining estimates for these parameters can be challenging, especially given that most priority pests are not currently known to occur in the EU. This is a common challenge in preparedness planning for invasive species. For the protocols, to estimate method</p>	<p><b>Deliverable 2.1:</b> Experimental protocols for estimation of Method Sensitivity for groups of pests</p> <p><b>Deliverable 2.2:</b> Experimental protocols for estimation of Design Prevalence for groups of pests</p> <p><b>Deliverable 2.3:</b> Experimental protocols for estimation of Relative Risk</p> <p><b>Deliverable 2.4:</b> Intermediate report</p>	<p>Continuous delivery of outputs</p> <p>(Deliverables 2 addressing at least 8 pest 12 months after kick-off meeting)</p>





	<p>sensitivity, this could involve the use of observed monitoring data from EU outbreak areas or other areas where the pest is present, conducting experiments to directly measure the sensitivity of different detection methods, and/or the use of "mock surveillance". These protocols should be developed in line with the recommendations and specifications provided by the EU Reference Laboratories, in consideration of the Diagnostic protocols developed by EPPO (European and Mediterranean, Plant Protection Organization), the ISPM 27 (International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures) from the IPPC (International Plant Protection Convention) and/or other relevant sources to capture existing methods to quantify diagnostic sensitivity. For the protocols to estimate the relative risk and design prevalence, protocols may differ depending on data availability, for example approximations based on simple models versus detailed species-specific spread models on realistic landscapes.</p>		<p>Deliverables 2 addressing remaining 17 pests by end of contract.)</p>
<p><b>Task 3</b></p>	<p><b>Pilot the protocols for pilot pest/group as an example.</b> The protocols for each survey parameter should be piloted for a minimum of two priority pest or candidate priority pest. The pilot pest(s) should be identified in discussion with EFSA.</p>	<p><b>Deliverable 3.1:</b> Report on case studies for estimation of Method Sensitivity <b>Deliverable 3.2:</b> Report on case studies for estimation of Design Prevalence <b>Deliverable 3.3:</b> Report on case studies for estimation of Relative Risk <b>Deliverable 3.4:</b> Final project report</p>	<p>20 months from kick-off meeting</p>
<p>Subcontracting is allowed for non-core tasks only. Core tasks for this project are: 1 and 2. Please also refer to section 1.7 'Possibility of implementing contracts and subcontracting'.</p>			

No.	Meetings	Deadline for finalisation
1	<p>Kick-off meeting: physical meeting in Parma – one day<sup>11</sup> / teleconference The kick-off meeting is regarded as the start of the project and takes place no later than two months after the signature of the grant agreement. At this meeting, details of the project will be discussed and the objectives, the final report structure and timeframe will be clarified. In particular, the beneficiary</p>	<p>2 months after entry into force of agreement</p>

<sup>11</sup> One day = 8 hours, half day = 4 hours



	<p>will explain their proposal. Minutes of the meeting shall be taken and provided to EFSA by the beneficiary.</p> <p>The presence at the kick-off meeting of a beneficiary's staff member responsible for administrative/finance issues of the project is advised as this will facilitate understanding by the beneficiary of the grant principles, related financial reporting requirements and significantly ease the financial management of the grant agreement, both for EFSA and the beneficiary.</p>	
2	<p>Interim meetings: physical meeting in Parma – one day<sup>12</sup> / teleconference</p> <p>The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the quality and completeness of the deliverables as well as any problems or difficulties (technical or financial) encountered during their preparation. Minutes of the meeting shall be taken and provided to EFSA by the beneficiary. Additional meetings may be organised at the request of either party.</p>	12 months from kick-off meeting
3	<p>Final meeting: physical meeting in Parma – one day<sup>13</sup> / teleconference</p> <p>The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the deliverables as well as any problems or difficulties (technical or financial) encountered during the project.</p>	24 months from kick-off meeting
No.	Payments	Linked to EFSA approval of deliverables No.
1	<b>Pre-Financing payment</b> 20% of the grant amount as specified in article 4.2 of the model grant agreement (Annex 1 of the call for Proposals).	n/a
2	<b>Interim payment</b> , as specified in articles 4.2 of the model grant agreement (Annex 1 of the call for Proposals). Based on the request for interim payment 12 months after kick-off meeting, 40% of the grant amount will be paid subject to the approval by EFSA of Deliverable 2.4 that will include the deliverables corresponding to Deliverable 1 and of Deliverables 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 addressing at least 8 pests.	40% when the intermediate report D2.4 (D=Deliverable) is delivered Together with D1, D2.1, D2.2, D2.3, including min 8 pests
3	<b>Payment of the balance</b> as specified in article 4.2 of the model grant agreement (Annex 1 of the call for Proposals). The amount due as the balance payment is calculated by EFSA by deducting from the final grant amount the total amount of pre-financing and interim payments already made. The final payment is subject to the approval by EFSA of all the deliverables presented in the final report 3.4.	Balance when the final report D3.4 is delivered and approved  D3.4 should include D2.4 and -D2.1, D2.2, D2.3 for 17 pests (on top of the 8 pests include in the intermediate version of the deliverables) -D3.1, D3.2, D3.3

Deliverables must be drafted in English and may be subject to publication at EFSA's discretion.

Please note that all reporting, minutes, outcome of the discussions could be submitted at EFSA's discretion to EFSA's Panel and Working Group members. Use of the grant deliverables may be subject to publication, subject to the terms and conditions set out in the draft grant agreement (Annex 1 of the call for proposals).

<sup>12</sup> One day = 8 hours, half day = 4 hours

<sup>13</sup> One day = 8 hours, half day = 4 hours



## 1.4 INFORMATION ON THE GRANT AGREEMENT

Applicants should note that the draft grant agreement is published with the call for proposals. If any applicant should have specific comments on the provisions of the draft grant agreement, these must be raised in a clarification, prior to the deadline for receipt of proposals so that a clear and transparent reply may be published for the benefit and information of all applicants.

The total amount EFSA has available to award grants under this call for proposals is € 300,000. Applicants should note that in the Funding and Tender opportunities portal submission service under Administrative Form (Part A) there is an obligatory field regarding the budget (section 3). Applicants must insert the total budget) in the 'Requested grant amount' field.

### 1.4.1 Direct Agreement

This Call for proposals aims to conclude a Direct Agreement for the performance of the tasks described in these specifications for a fixed duration. The Agreement can be signed between the Authority and one or several partners.

The budget EFSA has available is 300,000 €.

The maximum duration of this Direct Agreement is **2 years from the kick-off meeting.**

EFSA intends to fund one proposal following this Call. However, EFSA reserves the right not to award all the funds available at any cost, e.g. if the quality of submitted proposals will not be satisfactory.

Please note that EFSA reserves the right not to award any grant and/or to cancel the whole grant procedure at any time before the signature of the grant agreement without any compensation to be paid to the applicant.

## 1.5 ELIGIBLE ORGANISATIONS

To be eligible, applicants must be on the list of competent organisations designated by the Member States in accordance with Article 36 of Regulation (EC) 178/2002 and Commission Regulation (EC) 2230/2004. This list is regularly updated by EFSA Management Board and is available for consultation using this link <https://efsa.force.com/competentorganisations/s/>.

In order to achieve the main objective of the call, proposals can be submitted by **one eligible organisation or by a consortium of eligible organisations.** In case of a consortium, one of the partners must be identified in the proposal as the consortium leader. The applicant (consortium leader) is responsible for identifying consortium partners.

**If you are searching for consortium partners, please contact your Focal Point at the following address: <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/partnersnetworks/eumembers> (section: Focal Points members and observers).**

## 1.6 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

For proper understanding of this call it is important to have clarity on the terminology regarding involved organisations and their roles.

**Proposals submitted by a sole applicant:**



- **The Applicant** submits the proposal to EFSA. There can be only one applicant in the proposal.

As soon as the grant agreement is signed, the applicant becomes the beneficiary. The beneficiary is liable for the technical implementation of the project as described in the proposal which becomes Annex 1 of the grant agreement.

**The beneficiary:**

- Communicates with EFSA;
- Receives and answers all claims EFSA might have in relation to the implementation of the project;
- Requests and reviews any documents or information required by EFSA and verifies their completeness and correctness before passing them to EFSA;
- Informs EFSA of any event that is likely to substantially affect the implementation of the project;
- Submits the deliverables and reports to EFSA;
- Requests and receives payments from EFSA.

**Proposals submitted by consortium:**

- **The Applicant** submits the proposal to EFSA on behalf of the consortium. The applicant is the leading entity of the consortium.
- **The Partner** is the other entity in the consortium. There can be a minimum of one partner or more partners.

Once the grant is awarded, the grant agreement is signed between EFSA and the applicant (leading entity of the consortium).

Partners do not sign the grant agreement directly but instead sign a mandate (template provided by EFSA) authorising the applicant to sign the grant agreement and any future amendments on their behalf.

As soon as the grant agreement is signed, the applicant becomes the Coordinator and partner/s become co-beneficiary/ies. The coordinator and co-beneficiary/ies are referred to as the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries are jointly and severally liable for the technical implementation of the project as described in the proposal which becomes Annex 1 of the grant agreement. If a beneficiary fails to implement its part of the project, the other beneficiaries become responsible for implementing that part.

**The coordinator** has the following important roles:

- Takes part in implementing the project;
- Monitors the action is implemented properly;
- Act as intermediary for communication between the consortium and EFSA;
- Receives and answers all claims EFSA might have in relation to implementation of the project;
- Requests and reviews any documents or information required by EFSA and verifies their completeness and correctness before passing them to EFSA;
- Informs EFSA and the partner/s of any event that is likely to substantially affect implementation of the project;
- Submits the deliverables and reports to EFSA;
- Requests and receives payments from EFSA and distributes the funds to partner/s without unjustified delays.



The coordinator may not delegate the above-mentioned tasks to the co-beneficiary/ies or subcontract them to any third party.

**The other beneficiary/ies:**

- Take part in implementing the project;
- Forward to the coordinator the data needed to draw up reports, financial statements and other documents required under the grant agreement;
- Inform the coordinator of any event or circumstances likely to substantially affect or delay the implementation of the project.

## 1.7 IMPLEMENTING CONTRACTS AND SUBCONTRACTING

**Implementation contracts:**

Where the implementation of the project requires the award of procurement contracts (implementation contracts), e.g. purchase of services and/or goods or equipment necessary for the implementation of the action, the beneficiary must award the contract to the entity offering the best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interests. The beneficiary is expected to clearly document the tendering procedure and retain the documentation for the event of an audit.

Entities acting in their capacity as contracting authorities within the meaning of Directive 2014/24/EU<sup>14</sup> must comply with the applicable national public procurement rules.

**Sub-contracting:**

Sub-contractors are not consortium partners and are not party to the grant agreement. They do not have any contractual relationship with EFSA. Subcontractors are entities contracted by the beneficiary to carry out some specific tasks or activities. Subcontracting is allowed under these conditions:

- **Core tasks must not be subcontracted.** Only ancillary and assistance tasks can be subcontracted.
- Subcontracts must be awarded to the entity offering best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interests;
- Subcontracting must only cover the implementation of a limited part of the action;
- Recourse to subcontracting must be justified having regard to the nature of the project and what is necessary for its implementation;
- Tasks to be subcontracted must be identified in the proposal and be approved by EFSA before the signature of the grant agreement;
- Recourse to subcontracting during project implementation, if not envisaged from the outset in the proposal, is subject to prior authorisation in writing by EFSA. Approval may be granted as long as it does not entail a change to the grant agreement which would call into question the decision awarding the grant or be contrary to the equal treatment of applicants. No amendment is needed;
- The conditions applicable to the beneficiaries under Articles [13H.6 \(Confidentiality\)](#), [15H.7 \(Processing of Personal Data\)](#), [17H.8 \(Visibility of Union Funding\)](#) of the grant agreement are also applicable to the subcontractor.

## 1.8 GRANT PRINCIPLES

<sup>14</sup> Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC (OJ L 94, 28.3.2014, p. 65-242)



The financial help provided by EFSA under this Call is a grant governed by the EU Financial Regulation referred to in part 1.1. Accordingly, the grant awarded following this Call must comply with the following principles:

The form of grant awarded under this Call is based on financing not linked to the costs of the relevant operations in accordance with Article 125 (1)(a) of the EU Financial Regulation. Grants financed in this way require the fulfilment of conditions set out in sector specific rules of Commission decisions or the achievement of results measured by reference to previously set milestones or through performance indicators.

The present call for proposals comes with an innovative and simplified grant management, where the grant amounts paid to the partner are based on the pre-defined sums which are not linked to the actual costs of the action. This means there is no need for co-financing from the partner, and no need for completion of estimated budgets or timesheets to record the work. The agreed sums are set at a level designed to stimulate the mutually convenient partnership creation. The payment of agreed sums from EFSA will be carried out based on the acceptance by EFSA of the delivered work. If you have questions on this grant form, during the application period, please raise any clarification questions to [EFSAProcurement@efsa.europa.eu](mailto:EFSAProcurement@efsa.europa.eu).

The financial support provided by EFSA under this Call is a grant governed by the EU Financial Regulation referred to in part 1.1. Accordingly, the grant awarded following this Call must comply with certain grant principles established in the EU Financial Regulation, specifically:

- **Non-retroactivity:** A grant may be awarded for a project which has already begun only where the applicant can demonstrate in the grant application the need to start the action before the grant agreement is signed. In accordance with Article 193 of the Financial Regulation. The tasks entrusted by EFSA should not be performed before the signature of the grant Agreement.

Article 180(3) of the EU Financial Regulation specifically states that **the following grant principles are NOT applicable** where the grant takes the form of financing not linked to the costs pursuant to article 125(1)(a):

- **Co-financing:** In accordance with Article 190 of the Financial Regulation, grants shall involve co-financing.
- **No-profit:** In accordance with Article 192(3)(d) of the Financial Regulation, grants shall not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the project for the applicant or partner.
- **Non-cumulative:** In accordance with Article 191(3) of the Financial Regulation, in no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice from the EU budget.

## 1.9 ESTIMATED BUDGET AND ELIGIBLE COSTS

NOT APPLICABLE

## 1.10 PUBLICITY

All beneficiaries are expected to follow the rules on visibility of EFSA funding set out in Article [17H-8](#) of the grant agreement.

According to Article 38 of the EU Financial Regulation EFSA is bound to publish information on recipients of its grants at its website. Such publication shall take place no later than 30 June of the year following the financial year in which the grants were awarded and shall cover these data of the beneficiaries:



- name of the beneficiary
- address of the beneficiary
- subject of the grant
- amount awarded

With regards to publications of EFSA outputs that are integrating the preparatory work delivered in the context of this grant, the beneficiary could be mentioned in authorship lists indicating the affiliation to its organisation.

### **1.11 PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA IN RELATION TO GRANT PROCEDURES**

#### Processing of personal data by EFSA

Information on the processing of personal data by EFSA in the context of this grant procedure is available in the [Privacy Statement](#) on the EFSA website as well as in Article [15H.7](#) of the draft grant agreement. Any personal data included in the Agreement must be processed by EFSA in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 2018/1725.<sup>15</sup>

Applicants should note that personal data as applicant or selected beneficiary may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) if you are in one of the situations mentioned in Article 136 of the Financial Regulation. For more information see the Privacy Statement on: [http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect\\_en.cfm#BDCE](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm#BDCE)).

#### Processing of personal data by the beneficiary

In case the implementation of activities under the grant agreement resulting from this call entails the processing of personal data, the beneficiary shall comply with the relevant rules in Article [15H.7.2](#) of the Grant Agreement (Annex 1) as a data processor of EFSA.

### **1.12 PUBLIC ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS**

In the general implementation of its activities and for the processing of grant procedures in particular, EFSA observes Regulation (EC) N° 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents.

### **1.13 OPEN ACCESS**

EFSA is committed to the publication of grant outputs in the [Knowledge Junction](#) in order to improve transparency, reproducibility and evidence reuse. The Knowledge Junction runs on the EU-funded Zenodo research-sharing platform where uploaded items receive a unique Digital Object Identifier to make them citable. Any part of the output resulting from the action under this grant may be published (at EFSA's discretion) on the Knowledge Junction with attribution to the beneficiary.

### **1.14 HUNGARIAN PUBLIC INTEREST TRUSTS ESTABLISHED UNDER HUNGARIAN ACT IX OF 2021**

Following the Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506, as of 16th December 2022, no legal commitments (including the grant agreement itself as well as subcontracts, purchase contracts, financial support to third parties etc.) can be signed with Hungarian public interest trusts established under Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity they maintain.

<sup>15</sup> Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC



Affected entities may continue to apply to calls for proposals. However, in case the Council measures are not lifted, such entities are not eligible to participate in any funded role (beneficiaries, affiliated entities, subcontractors, recipients of financial support to third parties).

In this case, co-applicants will be invited to remove or replace that entity **■** and/or to change its status into associated partner. Tasks may be redistributed accordingly.





## 2. SELECTING PROPOSALS

**The Evaluation Committee** established by EFSA specifically for this call will evaluate the submitted proposals in five steps:

1. Verification of submission requirements (2.1)
2. Eligibility criteria (2.2)
3. Exclusion criteria (2.3)
4. Selection criteria (2.4)
5. Award criteria (2.5)

If the proposal fails at any step it is automatically excluded from further evaluation. EFSA may contact the applicant during the evaluation process if there is a need to clarify certain aspects or for the correction of clerical mistakes.

### 2.1 VERIFICATION OF SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The following will be verified:

- proposal was submitted within the deadline for submission of proposals;
- administrative data for grant application form is duly signed by the authorised representative of the applicant;
- proposal is complete and includes all the supporting documents.

### 2.2 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Criterion No. 2.2	Requirements and requested evidence
<b>1</b>	<b>Eligibility criteria</b>
	The following requirements will be verified:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the day of deadline for submission of proposals, the applicant and in case of consortium also its partner/s are on the list of competent organisations designated by the Member States in accordance with Art 36 of Regulation (EC) 178/2002 and Commission Regulation (EC) 2230/2004;</li> <li>• Applicant and in case of consortium also its partner/s are involved in the execution of the project;</li> <li>• Subcontracting, if any, is justified in the proposal</li> </ul>
	Requested evidence:
	<p><b>ADMINISTRATIVE DECLARATION</b></p> <p>Annex 2, available to download in the Funding and Tenders Portal under Part B Templates. The applicant and partner(s) (if applicable) must complete and sign the form. The applicant must upload the signed form in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal.</p>



## 2.3 EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Criterion No. 2.3	Requirements and requested evidence
<b>2</b>	<b>Exclusion criteria</b>
	The following requirements will be verified:
	The applicant and partner/s must sign a declaration on their honour certifying they are not in one of the exclusion situations referred to in the Articles 136-140 of EU Financial Regulation.
	Requested evidence:
	<p><b>THE DECLARATION ON HONOUR ON EXCLUSION CRITERIA</b></p> <p>Annex 3, available to download in the Funding and Tenders Portal under Part B Templates. The applicant and the partner(s) (if applicable) must complete and sign separate forms. The applicant must upload the form in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal. If applying in consortium, the consortium leader must convert all declarations on honour on exclusion for all partners into one single pdf and upload the single document in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal.</p>

## 2.4 SELECTION CRITERIA

### **A) Financial capacity**

Criterion No. 2.4A	Requirements and requested evidence
<b>1</b>	<b>Financial capacity</b>
	The purpose of the selection criteria is to verify the financial capacity of the applicant and in case of consortium also of its partner/s.
	<p>The applicant and in case of consortium also its partner/s must have stable and sufficient financial resources to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintain their activity throughout the period during which the project is being carried out, and</li> </ul> <p>If the Authority considers that financial capacity is weak, it may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– request further information;</li> <li>– decide not to give pre-financing;</li> <li>– decide to give pre-financing paid in instalments;</li> <li>– decide to give pre-financing covered by a bank guarantee;</li> <li>– where applicable, require the joint and several financial liability of all the co-beneficiaries.</li> </ul> <p>If the AO considers that the financial capacity is insufficient, the application may be rejected.</p>
	Requested evidence:



	<p><b>Documents to be provided by the applicant:</b></p> <p><b>DECLARATION ON HONOUR ON SELECTION CRITERIA</b> Annex 4, available to download in the Funding and Tenders Portal. Only the applicant (or consortium leader if applicable) is required to complete and sign the form. The applicant must upload the form in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SIMPLIFIED FINANCIAL STATEMENT</b> available <a href="#">here</a> only required for private bodies if the grant requested from EFSA is &gt;60.000 €. The template published with the Call should be completed for at least the last two closed financial years.</li> <li>• <b>LETTER OF COMMITMENT:</b> applicable only when another public body financially contributes to the project (body other than EFSA, applicant or in case of consortium, its partners); to be signed by the contributing public body; it serves to confirm its commitment to financially contribute to the project; no template is provided by EFSA.</li> </ul> <p>The applicant must convert the <b>Declaration on honour on selection criteria, the Simplified Financial statement (if applicable) and the letter of commitment</b> (if applicable) into one single pdf and upload the single document in the relevant field under Part B and Annexes of the Funding and Tenders Portal.</p>
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## **B) Professional and operational capacity**

Criterion No. <b>2.4.B</b>	Requirements and requested evidence
<b>1</b>	<b>Professional and operational capacity:</b>
	Requirements:
	<p>The applicant or in case of a consortium, the consortium as a whole, must have the professional resources, competencies and qualifications necessary to complete the proposed project:</p> <p><b>1. Requirement for the team of experts:</b> Experts involved in the tasks should provide CVs proving a university degree at post-graduate level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• at least one expert with minimum a PhD degree relevant to the fields listed below,</li> <li>• the other experts with minimum a master's degree relevant to the fields listed below.</li> </ul> <p>The team of experts should have at least 2 years of work experience covering all the following fields: pest population dynamics, spread modelling, statistics, agronomy, plant pathology, entomology and field inspection and diagnostics.</p> <p><b>2. Requirements for the team of experts:</b> In addition to the above requirement, the team coordinator (also EFSA contact person) should have an excellent level of spoken and written English (evidenced either by a certificate demonstrating at least level B.2 of the Common European Framework of References for Languages; or evidence of having worked for at least 2 years in a working environment where English is used for meetings, communications and producing written reports and scientific publications).</p>



	<p><b>3. Environmental management (the answers to this section are for information purposes and will not be considered under any criteria, neither selection nor award criteria):</b></p> <p>Environmental protection is an integral part of EFSA's governance. EFSA has established, implemented and maintains a certified environmental management system in accordance with the international standard ISO 14001 and the European EMAS regulation. Environmental impacts of EFSA's activities are identified, managed and monitored in order to improve environmental performance. This commitment to environmental sustainability requires us to consider a life-cycle perspective when purchasing our services.</p> <p>For this reason, we are asking you some information on the environmental management of your activities, to be provided filling in <b>Annex 5 (Selection criteria - Information on environmental management)</b>.</p>
	Requested evidence:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>EVIDENCE REQUESTED FOR REQUIREMENT 1 and 2:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>CURRICULUM VITAE</b> of the experts, or, if the individual members not yet assigned for the proposed project, at least staff profiles necessary for the project, including for each member a brief summary of the relevant expertise, and a list of publications relevant to the project.</li> <li>- <b>Copy of peer reviewed scientific paper(s) (and/or institution report(s)) on fields relevant to plant health</b>, co-authored/co-produced by the experts.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>INSTITUTIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</b>            Template available <a href="#">here</a>. EFSA will request Institutional and Individuals DoIs only from the awarded beneficiary, prior to and as a condition of grant agreement signature. The requirement to submit Institutional and Individual DoIs will be specified in the award letter and will have to be provided and assessed by the EFSA Authorising Officer before and as a condition of grant agreement signature. <b><u>Institutional and Individual DoIs do not need to be provided with your proposal at this stage.</u></b>            In case of a consortium and/or in case of subcontracting, such declarations will need to be completed separately and submitted for each partner and for each identified subcontractor and for each individual member of the project team coming from consortium partners or subcontractors. Please refer to <a href="#">EFSA's policy on independence</a> and the <a href="#">Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management</a> for more detailed information.         </li> </ul>

## 2.5 AWARD CRITERIA

<p>Criterion No. <b>2.5</b></p>	<p>The award criteria serve to assess the quality of the proposals in relation to the objectives of the Call.</p> <p>Applicants must provide a <b>detailed technical proposal</b> addressing all points in this call for proposals and each of the quality award criteria. Repetition of mandatory requirements in the call for proposals without providing further detail will only result in a very low score.</p> <p><b>Applicants should propose an example they have developed of an experimental protocol</b> indicating, its context and objectives, the different steps to implement it, the input values and the estimations resulting from its implementation with the corresponding assumptions.</p>
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<b>1</b>	<p><b>Methodology proposed for implementation and quality of deliverables</b>                  A detailed description of the approach proposed to meet the objectives of the call for proposal, highlighting relevant features of the required services and how they will be provided; covering how to produce and present the different deliverables.  <b>MAX 45 POINTS</b></p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Project programme description clarity</b>                  a) including phases, clear timelines for the project tasks completion, detailed milestones per task (e.g. via a project Gantt chart), expected outcomes and deliverables, distribution of deliverables over time.  <b>MAX 20 POINTS, MIN 12 POINTS</b></p> <p>b) Proposal for workload and plan optimization (e.g. clustering of pests).  <b>MAX 15 POINTS</b></p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Measures to ensure quality of the deliverables and risk management</b>                  a) Description of the proposed specific <b>quality assurance system</b> put in place to ensure high-quality delivery of the requested deliverables.  <b>MAX 10 POINTS, MIN 6 POINTS</b></p> <p>b) Identification of <b>risks and mitigation measures</b> proposed to overcome/remedy them throughout the implementation of the services requested, including back-up persons.  <b>MAX 10 POINTS, MIN 6 POINTS</b></p>

In order to be considered for a reserve list, the proposal must:

- score a minimum of 70 points out of maximum possible 100 points; and
- for criteria 2 a), 3 a) and 3 b) score at least 60% of the points attributed to that criterion.

Proposals which have satisfied these quality thresholds will be ranked in a reserve list. The reserve list will be valid for six months from the signature of the feedback letter.

**2.6 PROCESS FOLLOWING THE ASSESSMENT AGAINST AWARD CRITERIA**

The applicant(s) will be notified, once the evaluation has been finalized, whether they are placed on the reserve list or not.

EFSA reserves the right to invite the 1<sup>st</sup> ranked applicant on the reserve list, to adapt its proposal based on the evaluators' comments in accordance with article 200(5) EU FR.

Following the successful conclusion of the adaptation phase, the award decision will be taken by EFSA. Subsequently, the grant agreement will be prepared.

If the 1<sup>st</sup> ranked applicant fails to adapt its proposal, EFSA reserves the right to reject the proposal. The budget made available in this way may be used for a project of the next ranked applicant on the reserve list.



### 3. SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

#### 3.1 SUBMISSION MODALITIES

You must submit your proposal electronically via the [EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#) before the time limit for receipt of proposals (indicated on page 2 of this call). A webinar showing step-by-step the use of the EU funding and Tender Portal for Grant submission on a pilot EFSA call is available at [this link](#) (from minute 15:39 to minute 45:55).

#### Registration in the Participant Register

Applicants submitting a proposal must be registered in the Participant Register - an online register of organisations and natural persons participating in European Commission's calls for tenders or proposals.

On registering, each participant obtains a Participant Identification Code (PIC, 9 - digit number) which acts as its unique identifier in the Participant Register. A participant needs to register only once – the information provided can be further updated or re-used by the participant in other European Commission's calls for tenders or calls for proposals.

At any moment during the grant procedure the Research Executive Agency Validation Services (hereafter the EU Validation Services) may contact the participant and ask for supporting documents on legal existence and status.

The requests will be made through the register's messaging system to the e-mail address of the participant's contact person indicated in the register. It is the responsibility of the participant to provide a valid e-mail address and to check it regularly.

The documents that may be requested by the EU Validation Services are listed in the [EU Grants and Tenders Rules on Legal Entity Validation, LEAR appointment and Financial Capacity assessment](#). Please note that a request for supporting documents by the EU Validation Services in no way implies that the grant application has been successful.

#### Submitting your proposal

The EU Funding & Tenders Portal allows applicants to respond to calls for proposals by preparing applications electronically in a structured and secured way and submitting proposals electronically.

To find more information on submitting your proposal, please read carefully the information on the page [Submit a proposal – electronic submission system](#). On the same page useful links to the [User guide of the submission system](#) and an [FAQ on proposal submission](#) are provided.

Make sure you submit your application on time: you are advised to start completing your application early. To avoid any complications with regard to late receipt/non-receipt of applications within the deadline, please ensure that you submit your application several hours before the deadline. It is not possible to submit an application after the deadline.



### **3.2 LANGUAGE OF THE PROPOSAL AND THE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

Proposals may be submitted in any official language of the European Union. However, as EFSA`s working language is English, the submission of proposals in English would speed up the evaluation process.

Please note that some supporting documents (e.g. CVs) are required. These supporting documents are an integral part of the proposal. If these supporting documents are in a language other than English, in order to facilitate and speed up the evaluation, it would be appreciated if a reliable translation of the relevant parts of the documents into English is provided with the proposal.

### **3.3 EXPECTED DURATION OF PROCEDURE**

In accordance with Article 194(2) of the Financial Regulation, the maximum time-limits for the procedure are as follows:

- All applicants will be informed of the decision regarding their application within 6 months of the deadline for submission of proposals.
- Signature of the grant agreement will take place within 3 months from the date the successful applicant/s has/have been informed of the decision on their application.



No amendment is necessary for these changes.