

ECMWF Copernicus Grants



Guidelines for Applicants to the C3S NCP Call for Proposals 2025

C3S NCP Call for Proposals

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Table of Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	Call package	3
2.1	Call package	3
2.2	Other relevant documents	5
3	Roles and responsibilities at application stage	5
3.1	Coordinator	5
3.2	Beneficiaries	6
3.3	Affiliated Entities	7
3.4	Associated Partners	7
3.5	Subcontractors	7
4	Lump sum.....	8
5	Completing the application.....	9
5.1	Annex I - Technical Description	10
5.2	Annex II - Estimated Budget	10
5.3	Annex III - Administrative Information	10
5.4	Supporting documents	10
5.5	Submission Portal and clarification questions.....	11
6	ECMWF Right to request clarifications	11
7	Diversity and inclusion	11
8	Code of conduct	12

1 Introduction

This document contains the guidelines for applicants with respect to the information and documents relevant for the grants procedure C3S NCP Call for Proposals 2025 (Call ID: 2025_C3S2_G461). This document is a part of the package for the C3S NCP Call for Proposals 2025. Should there be any discrepancies between this document and the Call for Proposals document and/or the Grant Agreement Template, the Call for Proposals and the Grant Agreement Template shall prevail.

2 Call package

2.1 Call package

The Call package consists of the documents listed below:

- C3S NCP Call for Proposals 2025
- Grant Agreement Template
- Guidelines for Applicants to the C3S NCP Call for Proposals 2025
- Application Form
- Supporting Documents

In the tables listed below you will see an overview of the documents.

Document name	Content
C3S NCP Call for Proposals 2025	The Call for Proposals includes among the other elements: the five Actions' scope and specific requirements; Overall budget; Timetable; Admissibility criteria; Eligibility criteria; Exclusion criteria; Evaluation process and award criteria. It also sets out terms, conditions, and requirements that applicants must comply with when submitting a project proposal and participating in an ECMWF grants procedure.
Grant Agreement Template	The Grant Agreement Template serves as the basis for the Grant Agreement that sets out the obligations, terms and conditions according to which the Project shall be implemented. As a template, this document is provided for information purposes only. The Grant Agreement becomes legally binding once signed by ECMWF and the Coordinator, and (if any) by other Beneficiaries signing their accession form. All Beneficiaries (including any involvement of Affiliated Entities, Associated Partners, or Subcontractors) shall comply with the provisions of the signed Grant Agreement when implementing the Project. Therefore, it is recommended to consult the Grant Agreement Template already during project proposal preparation to see relevant provisions and understand applicable obligations, terms and conditions e.g. on Intellectual Property Rights; Communication, dissemination and visibility; etc.
Guidelines for Applicants to the C3S NCP Call for Proposals 2025	Overview of the information and documents relevant for the grants procedure C3S NCP Call for Proposals 2025.

Application form

Document name	Content
Application Form - Annex I - Technical Description	Technical description of the proposed project, elaborating on the project proposal's: 'Excellence; 'Impact'; 'Management and efficiency of the implementation'; Work packages; Risk assessment and mitigation action. Annex I also includes 'Appendix 1 – Operational Capacity of Project Participants', which comprises: List of relevant projects and activities; List of key personnel involved in the Project; CVs of key personnel involved in the Project.
Application Form - Annex II - Budget	Detailed breakdown of estimated project costs per cost category, per Beneficiary, per work package.
Application Form - Annex III - Administrative Information	Administrative data of the Project's Beneficiaries, Affiliated Entities, Associated Partners and Subcontractors, and contact points per participant for the project proposal submission.
ECMWF ProContract Submission Portal - online questionnaire	The Coordinator of the project proposal must respond to all items in the online questionnaire in the Submission Portal when uploading the application form, supporting documents and any other required documents.

Supporting documents

Document name	Content
Legal Entity Form	Form to provide official proof of the entity's legal status. There are three forms depending on the type of applicant: public entity; private entity; individual.
	Legal Entity Form _ Public Entity Form to provide official proof of the entity's legal status as a public entity, to be submitted together with supporting documents (i.e. - a copy of the resolution, law, decree or decision establishing the entity in question; - or, failing that, any other official document attesting to the establishment of the entity by the national authorities).
	Legal Entity Form _ Private Entity Form to provide official proof of the entity's legal status as a private entity, to be submitted together with supporting documents (i.e. - a copy of some official document (official gazette, company register etc.) showing the name of the legal entity, the address of the head office and the registration number given to it by the national authorities).
	Legal Entity Form _ Individual Form to provide official proof of the entity's legal status as a natural person, to be submitted together with supporting documents (i.e. - a legible photocopy of the identity card or passport; - and where relevant as per business data section, an official VAT document).
Declaration Form for Economic and Financial Capacity	Form to provide ECMWF with information for checks of financial standing of the Project's Beneficiaries and Affiliated Entities.
COP Restrictive Measures Form	Form to provide to ECMWF in respect to the EU Restrictive Measures checks.

If required, Letter of support	Letter of support from relevant end users/other entities may be required, as specified under each Action (see Call for Proposals, specifically in Actions related sections).
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2.2 Other relevant documents

Document name	Content
ECMWF ProContract Submission Portal - Instructions for Applicants & Request for Clarification Form	Instructions on how to submit a project proposal via the proposal Submission Portal (ProContract), including how to ask ECMWF for clarifications by submitting the Request for Clarification Form via the Messaging board on ProContract.

3 Roles and responsibilities at application stage

3.1 Coordinator

The Beneficiary coordinating the project proposals preparation and the grant implementation – on behalf of other Beneficiaries - is defined as Coordinator. If the Grant is awarded, the Coordinator is responsible for project monitoring and administration of the financial contribution. The Coordinator is the main point of contact with ECMWF at proposal preparation stage, as well as at grant implementation stage. Even in the case of a single Beneficiary, that Beneficiary is considered the Coordinator.

All communication from ECMWF (e.g. requests for information, documents, clarifications, etc.) concerning the project proposal – including matters related to all legal entities involved in the project, i.e. Beneficiaries, Affiliated Entities, Associated Partners, and Subcontractors – are addressed to the Coordinator. Only the Coordinator may respond to ECMWF, unless ECMWF explicitly contacts another legal entity involved in the Project and requests a direct reply.

Coordinator must:

- Register on the Proposal Submission Portal (ProContract) (see ‘ECMWF ProContract Submission Portal – Instructions for Applicants & Request for Clarification Form’). Once all required documents are fully completed, the Coordinator collects them and submits the project proposal.
- The Coordinator is the ONLY legal entity that submits the project proposal. All legal entities involved in the Project, i.e. other Beneficiaries, Affiliated Entities, Associated Partners, and Subcontractors are NOT required to register on ProContract and do NOT submit the project proposal;
- Confirm in the online questionnaire in the Submission Portal that they have been duly mandated by all participants involved in the Proposal - including all Beneficiaries, Affiliated entities, Associated partners, and Subcontractors, if applicable - to act on their behalf in all matters pertaining to this Proposal including, but not limited to, to submit responses to the questionnaire and to upload the required forms and documents on their behalf;
- Collect from the other Beneficiaries, Affiliated Entities, Associated Partners, Subcontractors all information required for the Application Form (Annex I - Technical Description; Annex II - Budget; Annex III - Administrative Forms);
- Select and complete the appropriate Legal Entity Form (depending on their legal status: public/private/individual);
- Collect from the other Beneficiaries, Affiliated Entities, Associated Partners, and Subcontractors the respective Legal Entity Forms;

- Complete the Declaration Form for Economic and Financial Capacity;
- Collect from the other Beneficiaries and Affiliated Entities the Declaration Forms for Economic and Financial Capacity;
- Fill in in Table 1 – Part A of the COP Restrictive Measures Form the information required for its legal entity;
- Collect from the other Beneficiaries, Affiliated Entities, Associated Partners, and Subcontractors their respective Table 1 – Part B already filled in by them in the COP Restrictive Measures Form.
- Undertake the EU restrictive measures checks of Beneficiaries, Affiliated Entities, Associated Partners, and Subcontractors as instructed in the COP Restrictive Measures Form;
- Collect the Letter(s) of Support from relevant end users/other entities, if required, as specified under each Action (see Call for Proposals document, specifically in the Actions related sections).

When Affiliated Entities and/or Subcontractors of the Coordinator are involved in the Project, the Coordinator must also:

- Coordinate with its Affiliated Entities to collect the required information and documents (see below under sub-section 3.3 Affiliated Entities).
- Coordinate with its Subcontractors to collect the required information and documents (see below under sub-section 3.5 Subcontractors).

3.2 Beneficiaries

The Beneficiary is legally responsible for the project implementation by signing the Grant Agreement with ECMWF. There is always a Beneficiary of the Grant; whereas – if not required for the implementation of the Grant – there can be Grants without other roles such as Affiliated Entities, Associated Partners, and Subcontractors. In the case of Grants with multiple Beneficiaries, they are jointly responsible for the grant implementation, and the Coordinator signs the Grant Agreement and the other Beneficiaries sign the accession forms to the Grant Agreement with ECMWF.

Beneficiaries must:

- Provide to the Coordinator all information required for the Application Form (Annex I - Technical Description; Annex II - Budget; Annex III - Administrative Forms);
- Select, complete, and provide to the Coordinator the appropriate Legal Entity Form (depending on their legal status: public/private/individual);
- Complete and provide to the Coordinator the Declaration Form for Economic and Financial Capacity;
- Fill in the Table 1 – Part B in the COP Restrictive Measures Form for their entity and provide it to the Coordinator.

When Affiliated Entities and/or Subcontractors of the Beneficiaries are involved in the Project, the Coordinator must also:

- Coordinate with its Affiliated Entities to collect the required information and documents (see below under sub-section 3.3 Affiliated Entities).
- Coordinate with its Subcontractors to collect the required information and documents (see below under sub-section 3.5 Subcontractors).

3.3 Affiliated Entities

Affiliated Entities are entities with a legal or capital link to a Beneficiary (which is neither limited to the Project nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation) which participate in the Project with similar rights and obligations to the Beneficiaries, but which do not sign the Grant Agreement and therefore do not become Beneficiaries themselves. Affiliate Entities are eligible for participation and funding.

Affiliated Entities must:

- Provide to the Beneficiary with which they are linked all information required for the Application Form (Annex I - Technical Description; Annex II - Budget; Annex III - Administrative Forms);
- Select, complete, and provide to the Beneficiary with which they are linked the appropriate Legal Entity Form (depending on their legal status: public/private/individual);
- Complete and provide to the Beneficiary with which they are linked the Declaration Form for Economic and Financial Capacity;
- Fill in the Table 1 – Part B in the COP Restrictive Measures Form for their entity and provide it to the Beneficiary with which they are linked.

3.4 Associated Partners

Associated Partners are entities which participate in the project with no funding and without signing the Grant Agreement with ECMWF. They may not charge costs or contributions to the project and the costs for their tasks are not eligible. For instance, they might be stakeholders with an interest in the project but with limited or no active participation in the implementation; or they might be entities from Third Countries not eligible to receive funding from ECMWF, but who can participate with their own funds (see Action 2025-3).

Associated Partners must:

- Provide to the Coordinator all information required for the Application Form (Annex I - Technical Description; Annex III - Administrative Forms);
- Select, complete, and provide to the Coordinator the appropriate Legal Entity Form (depending on their legal status: public/private/individual);
- Fill in the Table 1 – Part B in the COP Restrictive Measures Form for their entity and provide it to the Coordinator.

3.5 Subcontractors

Subcontracting refers to contracts concluded for the externalisation of specific tasks or activities which form part of the Project. Beneficiaries must have the necessary operational capacity to perform the Project themselves and they remain solely responsible for the implementation of the Project. Subcontracting should be exceptional and not cover core activities. Therefore, subcontracting should be limited to clearly defined parts of the Project and must not exceed the 20% cap of the total costs. Exceptionally, if duly justified in the project proposal, the 20% cap may be exceeded. If the contribution of the Subcontractors is critical for the project implementation, please also consider involving them as a Beneficiary. Subcontractors may be identified in the Proposal, but this is not mandatory. It is sufficient that the tasks to be subcontracted and the corresponding estimated costs are clearly described in the Proposal. The identification of specific Subcontractor(s) may take place during project implementation, in accordance with applicable procurement principles and subject to the relevant checks and formal approval by ECMWF.

Subcontractors must:

- Provide to the Beneficiary that contracted them all information required for the Application Form (Annex I - Technical Description; Annex III - Administrative Forms);
- Select, complete, and provide to the Beneficiary that contracted them the appropriate Legal Entity Form (depending on their legal status: public/private/individual);
- Fill in the Table 1 – Part B in the COP Restrictive Measures Form for their entity and provide it to the Beneficiary that contracted them.

Please note: in ‘Annex III - Administrative Forms’, information related Subcontractors are not required in the ‘Appendix 1 – Operational Capacity of Project Participants’.

4 Lump sum

The ECMWF financial contribution under the C3S NCP Call for Proposals 2025 will be awarded as a lump sum. The budget categories are fixed in the Grant Agreement Template. To complement the information provided in Section 7. FUNDING PROVISION of the C3S NCP Call for Proposals 2025, please consider the following important points regarding lump sum funding.

What triggers payments

- Payments are based on completed work, not on results.
- Lump sums are paid only after the completion and approval of the activities described in your Proposal (Annex I – Technical Description).
- Payments are made after each reporting period (i.e. interim report, and final report) if the work packages scheduled for that period are declared and accepted by ECMWF.

Designing work packages

Work packages are the core building blocks of your project and must:

- Represent major, verifiable blocks of work.
- Be clearly linked to reporting periods.
- Reflect the project structure and design of project implementation.

You are recommended:

- Not use a single activity as a work package.
- Not use a single task as a work package.
- Not set a work package as a percentage of progress (e.g., “50% of testing”).

Splitting long duration work packages

- Work packages with long duration (e.g., management, communication, dissemination, exploitation) may be split across reporting periods. This allows activities to be paid out incrementally and may help with project cash flow.

Example of single long-duration work package (WP)

WP no	WP name	Year 1	Year 2
		Reporting period 1	Reporting period 2
WP 1	Management		

After splitting:

Example of a work package (WP) after splitting, keeping the same content but adjusting it to the reporting periods (RP).

WP no	WP name	Year 1	Year 2
		Reporting period (RP) 1	Reporting period (RP) 2
WP 1	Management (RP 1)		
WP 2	Management (RP 2)		

- You do not need to repeat the full work package description in the Proposal when splitting, you may indicate that the same tasks are repeated.

Preparing a Detailed Budget Table

To define and justify the lump sum requested in your Proposal, you must provide a very detailed budget table completing 'Annex II_Estimated Budget_Lump Sum'. As explained in the Instructions provided in this document, you are required to: (1) Identify the Coordinator, all Beneficiaries, and all Affiliated Entities under tab "List of Participants"; (2) Identify all work packages in the activity under tab "List of work packages"; (3) Provide a detailed budget for each participating entity breaking down the costs by type of expenditure and work package; (4) Provide the details of Person Months broken down by level of personnel, work package and participant; (5) Update the Lump sum summary as necessary to include all entities and work packages ensuring the total budget is correct.

These cost estimations must:

- Represent a realistic approximation of your actual costs;
- Follow the eligibility rules applicable
- Be based on your normal accounting practices;
- Be reasonable, non-excessive, and necessary for the planned activities.

Please consider:

Although your Project will be funded through a lump sum, these cost estimations remain critical. They are used to automatically calculate the distribution of the lump sum across Beneficiaries and work packages. This breakdown is essential to verify the coherence of your Proposal and to enable appropriate monitoring during implementation. You are strongly advised to ensure that the budget table is consistent with 'Annex I - Technical Description' and aligns closely with the planned activities and work packages. A well-structured, transparent, and justified budget will strengthen the credibility of your Proposal and facilitate a smooth evaluation and implementation process if awarded.

5 Completing the application

The Application Form is composed of three parts:

- Annex I - Technical Description (where the technical proposal is presented in maximum 35 pages), including 'Appendix 1 – Operational Capacity of Project Participants' (page limit does not apply to Appendix 1).
- Annex II - Estimated Budget (where the detailed budget per each participating organisation and per Work-Package is presented).
- Annex III - Administrative Information (administrative details for each participating Beneficiary, Affiliated Entity, Associated Partner and, if identified at application stage, Subcontractors).

With the Application Form, the supporting documentation listed in section 2.1 need to be submitted.

5.1 Annex I - Technical Description

This is the part where the project proposal is described under three main sections: 1. 'Excellence', 2. 'Impact' and 3. 'Management and efficiency of the implementation'. It is mandatory to use the template provided by ECMWF. Guidelines – in red text – are also provided in all the sections and sub-sections of the template. Please remove the guidelines from the final Proposal you will submit. One Annex I per Proposal should be submitted.

Formatting requirements

In Application Form 'Annex I - Technical Description', please follow the following formatting requirements:

- Margins: 25mm margins on all sides.
- Font: Calibri.
- Font Size: 11 points (or text inside tables Calibri 10 is allowed).
- Page size: A4.

You may add your own footnotes as needed. The use of the provided templates is mandatory.

Page limit

'Annex I - Technical Description' of the Application Form has a page limit of 35 pages, excluding the cover (with the list of applicants and abstract of the proposal) and 'Appendix 1 – Operational Capacity of Project Participants' (with list of relevant projects, key personnel and Cvs of the key personnel). All tables, figures, references and any other element – under section 1 'Excellence', 2 'Impact' and 3 'Management and efficiency of the implementation' of the Technical Description - must be included as an integral part of these sections and are thus counted against this page limit. Excess pages will NOT be taken into consideration by the evaluators during the evaluation. The Proposal is a self-contained document. Evaluators will be instructed to ignore hyperlinks to information that is specifically designed to expand the proposal, thus circumventing the page limit. It is in your interest to keep your text as concise as possible, since evaluators rarely view unnecessarily long Proposals in a positive light.

5.2 Annex II - Estimated Budget

For lump sum grants, a very detailed budget is required at application stage, because no cost reporting is required at implementation stage, once the Grant is awarded. So, the budget is assessed and approved during the evaluation and, potentially queried and revised, during the Grant Agreement Preparation stage. One Annex II per Proposal should be submitted.

5.3 Annex III - Administrative Information

In this file, all the relevant information are required for each participating organisation, and key contacts are also required to ensure the efficient processing of the evaluation (e.g. if there are queries on the financial assessment; on the legal entity), and in case the Proposal is recommended for funding, the efficient preparation of the Grant Agreement. Guidelines – in red text – are also provided in all the sections and sub-sections of the template. Please remove the guidelines from the final Proposal you will submit. One Annex III per Proposal should be submitted.

5.4 Supporting documents

Each participant (Coordinator; Beneficiaries; Affiliated Entities; Associated Partners and Subcontractors) will have to submit:

- The 'Legal Entity Form' with official documentation specified in the form (one per participant);
- Provide the required information for the COP Restrictive Measures Form to the Coordinator

(one form per Proposal must be submitted, regardless of the number of participants).

In addition, the Coordinator, Beneficiaries and Affiliated Entities will have to submit:

- The Declaration Form for Economic and Financial Capacity (one per participant).

Please refer to section 3.1 for clarification on all the documents.

5.5 Submission Portal and clarification questions

Please consult the document 'ECMWF ProContract Submission Portal - Instructions for Applicants' which provides guidance to applicants on how to submit a project proposal via the proposal Submission Portal (ProContract) available on: [Copernicus grants ECMWF](#). The document also explains under section "Messaging board for applicants' clarification questions" how to submit questions related to the Call for Proposals by completing the form "Request for Clarification Form.xlsx" and uploading it via the proposal Submission Portal's (ProContract) messaging board.

Please note all Clarification Questions must be received by the 15th of September 2025. ECMWF will endeavour to respond to requests for clarification within 7 calendar days of receiving them. Responses provided by ECMWF, including the decision not to give a substantive reply and to refer the questioner back to the Call for Proposals documentation, are final and shall not be subject to appeal or complaint.

Clarifications will be shared with all applicants who have expressed an interest in the relevant Call for Proposals if deemed to be of general interest, particularly where they concern overarching aspects of the Call for Proposals and the respective Actions (e.g. conditions, terms, requirements, scope, roles and tasks of applicants, or funding provisions etc.). Clarifications related to project-specific topics (e.g. applicants' proposed approaches, ideas, or solutions etc.) will not be shared more broadly. The identity of the questioner will not be disclosed. ECMWF alone will determine whether a clarification is of general interest, and this determination shall not be subject to appeal or complaint.

6 ECMWF Right to request clarifications

At any stage of the grants procedure, ECMWF may request applicants (Coordinators, Beneficiaries, Affiliated Entities, Associated Partners, or Subcontractors) to provide updates, additional information, supporting documents, or clarifications regarding the submitted project proposal. Failure to comply with such requests may result in the exclusion of the concerned entities from the grants procedure and/or the rejection of the entire project proposal.

7 Diversity and inclusion

At ECMWF, we believe that scientific progress thrives in an environment that values diversity and inclusion. We are committed to fostering an organisation that is equitable, diverse, and inclusive, and to promoting gender balance in all aspects of our operations. We recognise that diversity and collaborative environment are essential for advancing scientific discovery and innovation, and we are dedicated to creating a culture that encourages and supports the contributions of individuals from all backgrounds. As part of this commitment, we encourage Proposals from applicants that share our values and demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusion in their own organisations. We believe that working with Project Beneficiaries who support our efforts to create a more inclusive and diverse community is key to achieving our goals and driving progress forward in all our areas of activities.

In case of Proposals with the same score within the same Action, a priority order is determined as follows: 1. Proposals submitted by applicants that are based in Countries that have not yet been

awarded an ECMWF NCP-related contract or Grant; 2. Proposals with the highest score under criterion 2 'Impact'; 3. Proposals which addressed well the measures for diversity and inclusion.

ECMWF will take into consideration the measures - if any - to promote diversity and inclusion in the project proposal (please see sub-section 3.5 in Annex I - Technical Description).

8 Code of conduct

The applicants (including Coordinators/Beneficiaries, Affiliated Entities, Associated Partners, and Subcontractors) shall not:

- disclose information related to a Proposal with entities external to the Proposal;
- make any attempt to induce or discourage any other person or entity from submitting a project proposal.