Global Gateway

Africa Regional Centres of Excellence

Africa Regional Centres of Excellence (ArcX) Programme - Climate Change Resilience

Guidelines for Applicants to the Call for Proposals

Formation of a Network of Regional Centres of Excellence on Climate Change Resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa

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1. Introduction

This document provides guidance to Applicants regarding the information and supporting documentation required for the grant procedure under the ArcX Call for Proposals on **Formation of a Network of Regional Centres of Excellence on Climate Change Resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa** (Call ID: 2026_ArcX_G261). It forms an integral part of the documentation package for the ArcX Call for Proposals. In the event of any inconsistency or discrepancy between this document and the Call for Proposals or the Grant Agreement Template, the provisions of the Call for Proposals and the Grant Agreement Template shall prevail.

2. Call package and other relevant documents

Call package

The Call package consists of the documents listed below:

- Call for Proposals
- Grant Agreement Template
- Guidelines for Applicants
- Application Form
- Supporting Documents

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

Document name	**Content**
Call for Proposals	The Call for Proposals includes among others: the context and scope of the Call; 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 Proposal and participating in an ECMWF grants procedure.
Grant Agreement Template	The Grant Agreement Template serves as the basis for the Grant Agreement to be signed with ECMWF for each Grant under this Call for Proposals and 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 Associated Partners, or Subcontractors) shall comply with the provisions of the signed Grant Agreement when implementing the Project. During the Proposal preparation, the Grant Agreement Template provides the framework for determining the eligibility of costs for the estimated budget (Clause 6). **Therefore, it is recommended to consult the Grant Agreement Template already during the Proposal preparation to see relevant provisions and understand applicable obligations, eligibility of costs, terms and conditions e.g. on Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs); Communication, dissemination and visibility; etc.**
Guidelines for Applicants	Overview of the information and documents relevant for the grant procedure.

Application Form

Document name	Content
Application Form - Annex I – Technical Description	Technical description of the proposed Project; Annex I also includes 'Appendix 1 – Operational Capacity of Project Applicants', and 'Appendix 2 – Applicant Checklist for the Tier Assignment'.
Application Form - Annex II – Estimated Budget	Detailed breakdown of estimated Project costs per cost category, per each Beneficiary, per Work Package, and a summary with a justification per cost category (Use of Resources).
Application Form - Annex III – Administrative Information	Administrative data of the Proposal's Beneficiaries, Associated Partners and Subcontractors, and contact points per Participant for the Proposal submission.
Application Form - Annex IV – Letter of Commitment	Letter to be prepared on the official letterhead of the prospective Regional Centre of Excellence on Climate Change Resilience.
ECMWF ProContract Submission Portal - online questionnaire	The Coordinator 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 Proposal's Beneficiaries.
ArcX Restrictive Measures Form	Form to provide to ECMWF in respect to the ArcX Restrictive Measures checks.

Other relevant documents

Document name	Content
ECMWF ProContract Submission Portal - Instructions for Applicants & Request for Clarification Form	Instructions on how to submit a Proposal via the 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

Coordinator

The Beneficiary coordinating the Proposal preparation and the Grant Implementation – if applicable on behalf of and mandated by all the other proposed Participants – is defined as Coordinator. If 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.

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

The Coordinator must:

- Register on the Submission Portal (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 Proposal.
- The Coordinator is the ONLY legal entity that submits the Proposal. If applicable, all the other legal entities involved in the Proposal, i.e. other Beneficiaries, Associated Partners, and Subcontractors are NOT required to register on the Submission Portal and do NOT submit the Proposal;
- Confirm in the online questionnaire in the Submission Portal that, if applicable, they have been duly mandated by all Participants involved in the Proposal - including all Beneficiaries, Associated partners, and Subcontractors - to act on their behalf in all matters pertaining to the Proposal including, but not limited to, to submit responses to the questionnaire and to upload the required forms and documents on their behalf;
- If applicable, collect from the other Beneficiaries, Associated Partners, Subcontractors all information required for the Application Form (Annex I – Technical Description; Annex II – Estimated Budget; Annex III – Administrative Information); please note that Annex IV – Letter of Commitment is ONLY required from the Coordinator as prospective RCoE-C2R.
- Prepare the Application Form (Annex I – Technical Description; Annex II – Estimated Budget; Annex III - Administrative Information, and Annex IV – Letter of Commitment);
- Select and complete the appropriate Legal Entity Form (depending on their legal status: public/private/individual);
- If applicable, collect from the other Beneficiaries, Associated Partners, and Subcontractors the respective Legal Entity Forms;
- Complete the Declaration Form for Economic and Financial Capacity;
- If applicable, collect from the other Beneficiaries the Declaration Forms for Economic and Financial Capacity;

- Fill in the Table 1 – Part A of the ArcX Restrictive Measures Form the information required for its legal entity;
- If applicable, collect from the other Beneficiaries, Associated Partners, and Subcontractors their respective Table 1 – Part B already filled in by them in the ArcX Restrictive Measures Form.
- If applicable, undertake the EU restrictive measures checks of the Beneficiaries, Associated Partners, and Subcontractors as instructed in the ArcX Restrictive Measures Form.

When the Proposal provides for Subcontractors of the Coordinator to be involved in the Project, the Coordinator must also:

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

Beneficiaries

Each 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 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.

Each of the Beneficiaries must:

- Provide the Coordinator with all information required for the Application Form (Annex I – Technical Description; Annex II – Estimated Budget; Annex III – Administrative Information); Please note that Annex IV – Letter of Commitment is ONLY required from the Coordinator as prospective RCoE-C2R.
- Select, complete, and provide the Coordinator the appropriate Legal Entity Form (depending on their legal status: public/private/individual);
- Complete and provide the Coordinator with the Declaration Form for Economic and Financial Capacity;
- Fill in the Table 1 – Part B in the ArcX Restrictive Measures Form for their entity and provide it to the Coordinator.

When the Proposal provides for Subcontractors of the Beneficiaries to be involved in the Project, the Coordinator must also:

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

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.

Each of the Associated Partners must:

- Provide to the Coordinator with all information required for the Application Form (Annex I – Technical Description; Annex III – Administrative Information); Please note that Annex IV – Letter of Commitment is ONLY required from the Coordinator as prospective RCoE-C2R.
- 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 ArcX Restrictive Measures Form for their entity and provide it to the Coordinator.

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 Project Implementation. 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% of the total costs. Exceptionally, if duly justified in the 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.

Each of the Subcontractors must:

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

Please note in 'Annex I – Technical Description', information on Subcontractors should not be included in 'Appendix 1 – Operational Capacity of Project Applicants'.

4. Lump sum

The ECMWF financial contribution under the ArcX Call for Proposals will be awarded as a lump sum. The budget categories are fixed in the Grant Agreement Template. To complement the information provided in Section 8. FUNDING PROVISION of the ArcX Call for Proposals, Applicants are asked to consider the following important points regarding lump sum funding.

What triggers payments

- Payments are based on completed work, meaning completed Work Packages.
- 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 the Proposal and must:

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

It is recommended to:

- 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").

Please ensure that at least one Deliverable is assigned to each Work Package to provide evidence of its completion, as required under lump-sum grants.

Splitting long duration Work Packages

The duration of the Work Packages can be split to align with the reporting periods specified in the Call: the First Interim Report (Months 1–12), the Second Interim Report (Months 13–24), and the Final Report (Months 25–32/34).

This approach would facilitate the reporting and claiming of costs incurred during each project year (Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3), including for ongoing Work Packages that extend across multiple reporting periods.

The tables below provide examples of single long-duration Work Package (WP) such as Project Management which will last from Month 1 to the end of the project (Month 32/34).

In the first case (table below), the Work Package Project Management will only be paid at the end of the project.

WP no	WP name	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
		First Reporting Period	Second Reporting Period	Final Reporting Period
WP 1	Project Management	From Month 1 to Month 32/34		

After splitting - In the second case (table below), the Work Package Project Management will be paid after each reporting period.

WP no	WP name	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
		First Reporting Period	Second Reporting Period	Final Reporting Period
WP 1	Project Management Phase 1	Month 1-12		
WP 2	Project Management Phase 2		Month 13-24	
WP 3	Project Management Phase 3			Month 25-32/34

Applicants do not need to repeat the full Work Package description in the Proposal when splitting, Applicants may indicate that the same tasks are repeated.

Furthermore, Applicants are encouraged to ensure that the work plan remains focused and efficient by limiting Deliverables to the mandatory ones and only those strictly necessary to the sound implementation of the Project. Additional Deliverables should only be proposed where they clearly add value or are indispensable. Please note that each Work Package must have at least one associated Deliverable. Similarly, the number of Milestones should be restricted to those required and those that are essential for tracking the effective implementation of the Project. This approach strengthens the clarity and relevance of the work plan, ensures proportionality between effort and reporting, and allows resources to be concentrated on achieving substantive results.

Preparing a detailed budget table

To define and justify the lump sum requested in the Proposal, Applicants must provide a very detailed budget table completing ‘Annex II – Estimated Budget’. As explained in the instructions provided in this document, Applicants are required to: (1) Identify the Coordinator, all Beneficiaries, under tab "List of Participants"; (2) Provide a detailed budget for each participating entity breaking down the costs by type of expenditure and Work Package; (3) Update the lump sum summary as necessary to include all entities and Work Packages ensuring the total budget is correct; (4) Provide a short summary per cost category in the ‘Use of Resources’ e.g. a total of 15 person-months for Work Package 1; 6 International Travel; etc.

These cost estimations must:

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

Please refer to Clause 6 of the Grant Agreement Template for eligible and ineligible costs.

The Applicants should consider that, although the Project will be funded through a lump sum, the cost estimations remain critical. This breakdown is essential to verify the coherence of your Proposal and to enable appropriate monitoring during Project Implementation. Applicants 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 the Proposal and facilitate a smooth evaluation and implementation process if awarded.

5. Completing the Application

The Application Form is composed of four parts:

- Annex I – Technical Description (where the technical Proposal is presented in maximum 25 pages), including 'Appendix 1 – Operational Capacity of Project Applicants' and 'Appendix 2 – Applicant Checklist for the Tier Assignment' (page limit does not apply to Appendix 1 and Appendix 2).
- 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 the Coordinator, and for each Beneficiary, Associated Partner and, if identified at application stage, Subcontractor).
- Annex IV – Letter of Commitment (Letter to be prepared on the official letterhead of the prospective Regional Centre of Excellence on Climate Change Resilience and signed by the Authorised Representative).

With the Application Form, the supporting documentation needs to be submitted.

Annex I – Technical Description

This is the part where the Proposal is described under main sections: It is mandatory for all Applicants to use the template provided by ECMWF. No changes can be done to the template. Guidelines – in red text – are also provided in all the sections and sub-sections of the template. Applicants are asked to remove the guidelines from the final Proposal they will submit. One Annex I per Proposal shall be submitted.

Formatting requirements

In Application Form 'Annex I – Technical Description', Applicants are asked to follow the formatting requirements below:

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

Applicants may add 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 25 pages, excluding the cover (with the list of applicants and abstract of the Proposal) and 'Appendix 1 – Operational Capacity of Project Applicants' and 'Appendix 2 – Applicant Checklist for the Tier Assignment'. All

tables, figures, references and any other element of the Technical Description - must be included as an integral part 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.

Annex II – Estimated Budget

For lump sum grants, a very detailed budget is required at application stage, because no cost reporting is required at Project Implementation stage. So, the budget is assessed and approved during the evaluation. Please note that, the budget requested in the proposal will not, in itself, determine the final grant amount. For proposals recommended for funding, the final grant amount will be determined during the Grant Agreement Preparation (GAP) phase, taking into account the entity's capacity level and its assigned Tier. During this phase, the proposed activities and their scope may be adjusted, as necessary, to ensure that they are proportionate to the entity's capacity level and the corresponding grant amount. One Annex II per Proposal shall be submitted.

Annex III – Administrative Information

In this file, all the relevant information is 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. Applicants are asked to remove the guidelines from the final Proposal they will submit. One Annex III per Proposal shall be submitted.

Annex IV – Letter of Commitment

This is a template of the Letter of Commitment which needs to be prepared on the official letterhead of the prospective Regional Centre of Excellence on Climate Change Resilience and signed by the Authorised Representative. This is only required from the Coordinator of the Proposal.

Supporting Documents

Each proposed Participant (Coordinator; Beneficiaries; Associated Partners and Subcontractor if involved in the Proposal) will have to submit:

- The 'Legal Entity Form' with official documentation specified in the form (one per proposed Participant);
- Provide the required information for the ArcX Restrictive Measures Form to the Coordinator (one form per Proposal must be submitted, regardless of the number of proposed Participants).

In addition, the Coordinator and, if applicable, the other Beneficiaries will have to submit:

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

Submission Portal and clarification questions

The Coordinator must register on the Submission Portal at: https://procontract.due-north.com/register (this can be done at any time). Please note that this Call aims to award six grants. Once the Call is open, one link will be available on https://procurement.ecmwf.int. The Coordinator must register interest to participate via the link.

Applicants are asked to consult the document 'ECMWF ProContract Submission Portal - Instructions for Applicants' which provides guidance to Applicants on how to submit a Proposal via the Submission Portal available on: ArcX 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" and uploading it via the Submission Portal's messaging board.

Please note that all clarification questions must be received by 25 November 2026. 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.

Once Applicants have registered their interest in the Call for Proposals via the Submission Portal, clarifications deemed to be of general interest will be shared with them through the Portal, particularly where they concern overarching aspects of the Call for Proposals (e.g. conditions, terms, requirements, scope, roles and responsibilities of Applicants, or funding provisions). Clarifications related to Project-specific aspects (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 grant procedure, ECMWF may request proposed Participants (Coordinators, Beneficiaries, Associated Partners, or Subcontractors) to provide updates, additional information, supporting documents, or clarifications regarding the submitted Proposal. Failure to comply with such requests may result in the exclusion of the concerned entities from the grant procedure and/or the rejection of the entire 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 participants 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.

ECMWF will take into consideration the measures - if any - to promote diversity and inclusion in the Proposal (please see sub-section 5.5 in Annex I – Technical Description).

8. Code of conduct

The proposed Participants (i.e. Coordinators/Beneficiaries, 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 Proposal.