



## 2022 Joint Transnational Call

“Management of water resources: resilience, adaptation and mitigation to hydroclimatic extreme events and management tools”

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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## 1. **CALL TEXT (themes, scope, methodological approach)**

### 1.1. **Should the proposal address one of the topics or sub-topics specifically?**

Research & innovation proposals submitted under the Water4All 2022 Joint Transnational Call are required to address at least one of the following main topics:

- Topic 1. Resilience, adaptation and mitigation to hydroclimatic extreme events
- Topic 2. Tools for water management - in the context of hydroclimatic extreme events
- Topic 3. Improved water governance in the context hydroclimatic extreme events and international contexts

Addressing at least one of the topics implies addressing at least one of the subtopics as well but can also be several.

More information concerning the topics and sub-topics may be find in the [Call Announcement](#). It is also strongly recommended to read the [Water4All Strategic and Innovation Research Agenda \(SRIA\)](#).

### 1.2. **Does the proposal have to include extreme events?**

The call focuses on solutions for hydroclimatic extreme events. Please refer to chapter 2.2 in the [Call Announcement](#) for more information.

### 1.3. **Can a new tool to monitor water quality be part of topic 2 (sub-topic 2.2)?**

The tool must have a clear contribution to improved management in the context of hydroclimatic extreme events.

### 1.4. **Sub-topic 1.3 focuses on urban infrastructures, but 1.2 says that the proposed approaches should focus on regional and river basin level solutions. Are sub-topics separate and can be addressed alone?**

Yes. It is not compulsory to address all sub-topics within a topic in the proposals. The applicants can address one sub-topic alone.

### 1.5. **Is a proposal about waterways eligible for this call? Or is this call reserved for the projects on water as a food/agricultural resource?**

The proposal should be clearly framed in the topic of the call: Management of water resources: resilience, adaptation and mitigation to hydroclimatic extreme events and management tools. The call is not restricted to specific resources and uses of water.

### 1.6. **Is there a geographical focus that needs to be considered in developing the proposals? Should the proposal have a clear link to work carried out within the EU region or could the proposal develop work outside the EU region?**

Both in and outside Europe project approach is envisaged in the call. In both cases, approaches should avoid focus on local cases and solutions that cannot be used or scaled-up elsewhere.

### 1.7. **Consortia should also crosscut scientific disciplinary boundaries (multi- or interdisciplinarity), combining exact sciences with social sciences and humanities. If we combine only two disciplines, we will not be eligible?**

Mutidisciplinarity is encouraged, and there are no eligibility restrictions regarding it on the general call level. Some national/regional funding organisations might have their specific rules about the type of activities (disciplines) they are funding.

**1.8. There seems a lot of focus on real-world impact. Does that mean that societal impact is weighted higher than academic impact? Is transdisciplinary research thus a must?**

The call pursues going beyond academic impact. Multidisciplinarity is strongly encouraged, but there are no eligibility restrictions regarding it.

**1.9. The call insists on improving resilience of European citizens. Is the impact of the call considered only regarding Europe?**

No, the impact is not limited to Europe. In any case, the impact on a wide scale is encouraged.

**1.10. Which types of results are preferred / expected in this call: scientific (published papers) or applied (stakeholder involvement, decision support tools, actions...)?**

All of them acceptable provided that they contribute to impact and knowledge transfer is demonstrated.

**1.11. Where do technical solution and innovation will best fit? Is there a TRL level required?**

No, there is no restriction in the TRL of the proposals if the objectives of the call are clearly addressed on the general, call level. Nevertheless, some national/regional funding organisations might have their specific rules about the TRL level of research they are funding.

**1.12. Sub-topic coverage in percentage is required in the proposal template. Does it refer to the planned budget proportion allocated to a sub-topic or rather to the extent of focusing on a sub-topic within the entire proposal?**

It refers to the focus on this sub-topic within the entire proposal. The budget distribution may also be reflected in this distribution, although not necessarily.

**2. ELIGIBILITY (general call eligibility criteria and funding rules on a national/regional level)**

**2.1. Who is funding the projects?**

In a funded project, each national/regional funding organisation participating in the call will fund “their” national applicant in accordance with their funding rules and funding limits. For example, in a consortium of France, Spain and Italy, ANR would fund the French research group, AEI and/or CDTI the Spanish one and MUR and/or MISE the Italian ones.

**2.2. Which countries/regions can participate in this joint call?**

The call is open to partners from the countries/regions with a funding organisation participating to the call. Please, consult the Call Announcement, §3.1 for the updated list of participating funding organisations. Each funding organisation participating to the call will fund its national/regional research groups.

**2.3. Who can apply?**

The call is open to any organisation that complies with the national/regional eligibility criteria and rules of the funding organisations from countries participating in the call. This may include public research organisations as well as private sector organisations (profit and non-profit).

The applicants that are not eligible for funding or coming from countries not participating in the call may still join the consortia using their own funds or may be subcontracted by another eligible partner. The applicants are strongly advised to approach their respective funding organisation contact point to make sure they respect all the eligibility criteria and rules. Only eligible pre-proposals and full proposals will be evaluated.

Find here the [contact list](#) and [funding organisations' national rules](#).

#### **2.4. What is the difference between the general eligibility call rules and the funding organizations' rules?**

For the projects to be considered eligible for funding, they need to comply with a set of general eligibility rules of the call (see Call Announcement, §4.1). In addition, each project partner must be eligible according to the rules and criteria of their funding organisation.

**IMPORTANT:** if one partner in the consortium is declared ineligible by its funder, this may lead to the ineligibility of the whole proposal, for example, if they consequently fail to comply with the general rules (such as a minimum of 3 eligible partners in the consortium).

#### **2.5. What is the minimum /maximum size of the consortium (the number of eligible partners)?**

The project must be a transnational project involving eligible research partners from **at least three different countries participating in the call**. In addition, **at least two eligible partners must be from different [EU Member States or Horizon Europe Associated Countries](#)** participating in the call. In this call, the only participating countries that are currently NOT EU Member States or HE Associated Countries are: Brazil, Switzerland, South Africa and United Kingdom.

Consortia of a maximum of 7 partners (including a potential self-funded partner) are allowed.

##### **Example:**

> Consortium with Poland, Turkey and Brazil: this consortium is eligible (includes partners from 3 different countries participating in the call and requesting funding to three different funding organisations AND includes 2 different EU MS and AC (Poland & Turkey.)

#### **2.6. Is it possible for a proposal to be submitted by 3 eligible partners, 2 from same country requesting funding to different funding organisations and 1 from a second country?**

No. A proposal submitted by 3 partners is eligible only if the 3 partners come from different countries participating in the call.

#### **2.7. Can two different organisations from the same country participate as partners in the same consortium if other eligibility rules are met?**

Yes, as long as this is in line with the funding rules of the funding organisation(s) of that particular country and the general criterion on 3 eligible partners from 3 countries is met.

#### **2.8. Some countries like Italy have two national organisations. How do we select the funding organization?**

Applicants need to contact the Funding Organizations to check their eligibility. Two partners from the same country may be funded by two different national funding organisations, depending on the type of research /organisations they fund.

**2.9. If we have the minimum of eligible partners in a consortium, how many non-eligible (self-funded) partners can we invite to participate?**

Maximum 1 self-funded partner may be included in a consortium.

**2.10. Who is a self-funded partner?**

Applicants coming from countries not participating in the call or those that are not eligible for funding may join the consortium as **self-funded partners** if they can bring a secured budget from their own source of funding. This can be another grant (from the EU, international or national scheme) or a private source. Self-funded partners must provide evidence that their organisations will support their activities. They should send a duly signed official letter of commitment to their project coordinator who will upload the commitment letter and submit it as part of the full proposal by the proposal deadline (see Call Announcement, §4.1).

The letters of commitment are only requested for self-funded partners in the Step2 (full proposal). While some of the general eligibility criteria takes into account the participation of self-funded partners (the e.g. the maximum number of partners per consortia), these partners are not subject to any national eligibility check.

**2.11. What are the rules for self-funding partners? How much do they have to fund?**

Self-funded partners join consortia at the same condition of other partners, therefore they have to carry out project activities according to the project description and an overall distribution of effort which shall be balanced among all the partners. Self-funded partners cannot assume the project coordinator role and cannot expose more than the 50% of the overall person months declared in the workplan (same condition applies to all the partners anyway). In this frame, self-funded partners shall ensure that all the costs needed for carrying out their own share of the project are secured, either from own resources or from external resources.

**2.12. The call text mentions the need to have stakeholders and SMEs involved. Under what contractual forms can they participate in a project?**

It will depend on the national regulation of the country where the company is established. If the Funding Organisation can fund companies and other stakeholders, they can be partners of the project. If not, they can be subcontracted or participate self-funded partners.

**2.13. We are an organisation that would need to be subcontracted by an eligible research organisation. Would this research organisation need to be in the same country or would another EU/funding member suffice?**

Organisations can be subcontracted by partners in any country, as long as their Funding Organisation allow it.

**2.14. Is it required to have stakeholders' organisations as a project partners?**

No, it is not required. The only mandatory conditions for the consortia are described in the eligibility criteria in the call text.

**2.15. Are Letters of Support from stakeholders/beneficiaries recommended (or even required) for the proposal submission?**

Letters of support are NOT requested and won't be considered for the evaluation.

**2.16. Is there a maximum or minimum in terms of a total project budget?**

At the level of the call, there are no rules regarding a minimum or maximum budget per proposal. Please note, however, that some funding organisations have defined a minimum and/or maximum amount per partners or per project in their funding organisation rules.

The projects will be evaluated on their general coherence and on the adequacy of the funding requested compared to the scientific objectives and activities planned.

**2.17. Does this call cover 100% of the expenses or there is any co-funding required?**

Each Funding Organisation applies its own national/regional funding rules. The document “List of National/Regional Regulations” is available on the call website and it summarises the funding schemes (eligibility, cost and funding rate) of all the Funding Organisations participating in this call.

**2.18. Is the maximum budget per project the same as the maximum contribution to the call of the country?**

Usually this is not the case. Many funding organisations intend to fund several projects and thus impose a maximum budget per project/per researcher that can be requested. These amounts are usually lower than the total committed amount to the call by a funding organisation.

**2.19. Can a researcher or organisation participate in several proposals submitted?**

The Principal Investigator of the entity acting as Consortium Coordinator can only participate in one proposal (i.e., if the principal investigator is the Consortium Coordinator of a proposal, he/she cannot participate in any other proposal, neither as a Consortium Coordinator nor as Principal Investigator of a partner). No other limits apply to Principal Investigators of organisations acting as partners, meaning they can be involved with several proposals as long as the national/regional rules allow it.

**2.20. What are the key requirements for a consortium coordinator? Are all career stages, including early career researchers, welcome to coordinate? Is a PhD a requirement? Is the experience of the coordinator included in the evaluation criteria?**

The call on a general level does not specify any restrictions with regard to the coordinator’s experience or profile. The rest is in the domain of the funding organisations and their eligibility rules – different countries may have different conditions and require a certain level of experience/profile for the coordinator.

**2.21. Can a private company be the coordinator of the consortium?**

Yes, if eligible for funding with the relevant Funding Organisation.

**2.22. Can organisations from non-EU member states (e.g. South Africa or UK) but from countries participating in the call coordinate the project?**

Yes.

**2.23. Should the project coordinator or PIs be permanent staff or are temporary contracts allowed?**

At the level of the call, there are no rules regarding the duration of contract for each project team members. Members of the scientific evaluation committee will evaluate the proposals following the

criteria defined in the Call Announcement. Thus, projects will not be disqualified by the evaluation committee because of the work contract.

Nevertheless, the funding organisations may have specific restrictions regarding the work contract/position of the researchers they fund and the proposal may be declared ineligible if the applicants do not follow their national rules.

#### **2.24. Are co-coordinators allowed?**

No.

#### **2.25. Does the project have to be the same for the involved countries in the consortium? Can each partner submit their own project?**

The call aims to fund collaborative projects with a strong transnational added value. The proposals should not be a collage of individual national projects but demonstrate integration and collaboration between partners involved in the proposal.

#### **2.26. In which language(s) should the pre-proposals and full proposals be written?**

Proposals must be written in **English** only.

#### **2.27. What is the project duration in this call?**

The project duration is **3 years**.

#### **2.28. Does gender balance in the research teams have any role in evaluation of the project?**

This is not an evaluation criterion per se; nevertheless, the applicants are encouraged to take gender balance into account when setting up the proposals.

#### **2.29. What are the benefits or constraints, if any, of the Water4All partnership members applying to this call?**

The participation of Water4All members in the proposals are limited to maximum 2 Water4All members in consortia with up to 5 partners and maximum 3 Water4All members in consortia with more than 5 partners. The list of Water4All members that may apply in this call are listed in the ANNEX D of the Call Announcement.

The Water4All members are participating under equal rules and conditions as any other applicant.

### **3. BUILDING A CONSORTIUM**

#### **3.1. I am looking for a Partner for my project or a project to join. What should I do?**

Water4All has developed a [Partner Search Tool](#) that allows you to look for a partner for a project you would like to submit; or look for a project to join.

#### **3.2. Is cooperation between universities, other research institutes, and utilities encouraged?**

Yes, it is encouraged, although there is no prescribed composition of the consortium in terms of the partners' profiles. The funding and eligibility will depend on national regulations for each participating country.

#### **3.3. Are proposals involving developing countries/countries out of the EU welcome?**



Such proposals are welcome but not obligatory and will not be given extra points for that.

#### **4. CALL PROCESS (call calendar, evaluation procedure and criteria, changes between Steps 1 and 2)**

##### **4.1. When is the deadline for pre-proposal submission?**

The deadline to submit pre-proposals is **31/10/2023, 15.00 CET (Rome time)**.

##### **4.2. When is the deadline for full proposal submission?**

The deadline to submit full proposals will be **20/03/2023, 15.00 CET (Rome time)**. Deadline to be confirmed after STEP 1.

##### **4.3. How will my project be evaluated and according to which criteria?**

A two-step procedure will be organised:

1) Step 1 procedure will consist in an **administrative eligibility check** according to criteria reported in §4 of the Call Announcement.

All eligible pre-proposals will be subject to a **scientific evaluation by at least three remote evaluators** based on two criteria - **'Excellence' and 'Impact'**.

The Call Steering Committee (CSC, i.e., all funding organisations) will decide on the number of projects to be invited to Step 2, following the ranking based on the evaluations by external evaluators and taking into account the financial pressure.

2) The Step 2 will also foresee an **administrative eligibility** check and an **evaluation of full proposals by the external experts** which will evaluate full proposals against the following assessment criteria: **'Excellence', 'Impact' and 'Quality and Efficiency of Implementation'**.

Each proposal will then be reviewed by the Evaluation Panel (EP), taking into account the results of the remote evaluation. The Evaluation Panel will be composed by an adequate number of experts independent of any funding organisation involved in this call. The EP meeting will complete the evaluation procedure, agreeing the final individual score for each criterion, which shall be an integer value, and the overall score for each proposal. The threshold on the final score is 10/15: no project with a lower score will be funded. A ranked list of proposals will be produced based on the final scores.

The CSC will take the final decision on the funding of the projects, strictly adhering to the order of the ranking list established by the EP until the committed funds are exhausted.

For more detailed information about the evaluation procedure, please consult the Call Announcement (§6.1).

##### **4.4. When is the eligibility check performed?**

Eligibility checks will be performed AFTER pre-proposal submission. The Call Secretariat will perform an eligibility check of the proposal against the main administrative requirements of the Call Announcement (countries of applicants and composition of consortia, accomplishment of the submission procedure). Each Funding Organisation then will check the formal eligibility of their own applicants based on the main requirements of national/regional funding schemes. After that, eligible pre-proposals will be sent to the reviewers for scientific evaluation.

#### 4.5. What will be the scientific background of reviewers?

An evaluation panel will be set up to cover the required skills and the projects will be carefully allocated among the reviewers with adequate profiles to evaluate individual project proposals. External reviewers will also be mobilized at Step 2 to make sure that the proposals are evaluated by experts with the proper background.

#### 4.6. Will the applicants receive feedback/assessment after the evaluation in step 1?

Yes, the Coordinator of the proposal will receive an evaluation summary report.

#### 4.7. How is the funding of the best projects guaranteed if the national financing is limited? Does the EC come up with the missing funds? Can the national financing agencies decide if they will fund a certain project or not?

In each call, the ranking list of projects is established by independent evaluation experts. The Funding Organisations are obliged to follow this ranking list, funding the projects following the top-down principle and with each country funding their own part in the ranked projects.

The participating countries aim at funding as many of the top-ranked proposals as possible. The EC contributes with a % of cash to the call, which is used to fill in the funding gaps in the top-rated proposals and maximize as much as possible the number of projects that can be funded.

Once the funding resources run out for one country (including the EC contribution), the ranking list is cut off and no more projects are funded below that point, even if some countries below that point haven't used all their financial resources.

#### 4.8. Will all proposals above the threshold in Step 1 go to Step 2 or is there a further reduction to a certain number of proposals?

The decision on the list of pre-proposals that are invited to go to Step 2 will be taken by the Funding Organisations based on the eligibility checks and scientific evaluation ranking list. The eligible pre-proposals will be divided in 3 groups, according to their scores in the ranking list: Group A (highest evaluation scores), Group B (medium evaluation scores) and Group C (low evaluation scores). All pre-proposals in Group A will be invited to Step 2. Among the pre-proposals in Group B, proposals will be invited to Step 2, following the ranking list and taking into account the financial pressure (acceptable oversubscription ratio per countries) and representativeness of countries. Not all proposals in Group B may be invited. Proposals in Group C will not be invited to Step 2.

#### 4.9. What kind of changes are allowed in the proposals between Steps 1 and 2?

The information given in the pre-proposals is binding. No major changes regarding the proposals' content will be allowed. However, a limited number of administrative changes may be allowed (minor budget modification, changes of Partners (legal entities), provided they are in line with the general rules of the call and the rules of the Funding Organisations. In some cases, it will be the Funding Organisations who will suggest the modification following the eligibility check.

**IMPORTANT:** Participant shall contact the Call Secretariat via e-mail and their Funding Organisations to inquire about the possibility of modifying the project proposal. Any kind of change should be checked against the eligibility rules PRIOR to submission of full proposal in Step 2. **No change should change the substance of the proposal!**

#### 4.10. Are partners allowed to change between pre-proposal and full proposal stage?

No changes of coordinator (i.e., Principal Investigator of the coordinating entity) will be allowed, except in case of force majeure. A request of change of coordinator must be submitted to the Call Secretariat, at least one week before the deadline for submitting full proposals and it will be discussed on a case-by-case basis by the CSC.

Changes in the consortium composition are allowed (maximum 2 changes of Project Partners in proposals with more than 5 partners; maximum 1 change of project partner in proposals with 5 or less partners), provided approval by the concerned Funding Organisations. Please note that the following actions are considered as changes: addition, removal or replacement of a Partner (incl. subcontracted and self-financed partners). Please note that the maximum number of changes applies to **“Partner”, i.e., the independent legal entity** participating in the Transnational RD&I project.

Applicants should contact the Call Secretariat or their Funding Organisation in order to inquire about the possibility of modifying the project proposal.

#### **4.11. Does adding a partner after Step 1 refer to adding a new institution with an extra budget or adding a person to a research team of an existing partner?**

Adding or changing a person in a research team is not considered a change of partner (except in the case of a coordinator), nevertheless, it should be consulted with and allowed by the relevant funding organisation. Adding a new institution to the consortium is possible but it should be approved and checked for eligibility by the Funding Organisation PRIOR to submission of full proposal. This does not imply an extra budget but is done rather as a replacement of another partner under exceptional circumstances or adding a partner with redistribution of the existing budget.

#### **4.12. What happens if a partner changes during the project life?**

All changes occurring in the consortium once the project has been selected for funding will require the approval of the funding organisation of the partner in question. In addition, the coordinator of the affected project should duly inform the Call Secretariat tasked with the follow-up of the funded projects regarding any change in the consortium (partners change, change of PIs, requests for extension, etc.).

#### **4.13. Is the budget allowed to be changed between pre-proposal and full proposal stage?**

Minor change of budget may be allowed by the relevant Funding Organisation. Funding organisations may also request a budget modification following the eligibility check.

## **5. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION PLATFORM**

### **5.1. How do I apply for the call?**

**Pre-proposals and full proposals must be submitted via [Online Submission Tool](#) before 31 of October – 15:00 CET (Rome time).**

The **proposals must be submitted** in English.

Pre-proposals have to provide information about the project consortia, include a 7-pages description of the project and the required budget for each partner.

**Submission of pre-proposals is MANDATORY**; it will not be possible to enter the procedure at a later stage. The online form is the only format that will be accepted. NO application can be sent by email.

### **5.2. Which documents should be submitted for pre-proposal and full proposal?**

The application process consists of filling in the coordinator's, partners' data and project data through the Online Submission Tool. For the pre-proposal application, it is required to upload a brief project description (up to 7 pages). The system will block the upload of document with higher number of pages. The template for project description is available for download (.doc file) from the Online Submission Tool in the section "Topics and description".

The full proposal application will require the submission of a more extensive project description.

**Please note:** for both pre-proposals and full proposals, only one .PDF file can be uploaded. If you upload more than one file, the first file uploaded will be erased and will not be evaluated. Other file's types than .PDF are not accepted.

**Please note:** some of the partners will also need to submit an application directly to their respective national/regional FPOs. For further details about these procedures and schedule, please consult the national/regional regulations and/or your NCP.

**Letters of support are not requested** and won't be considered for the evaluation (except for self-financed partner in the full-proposal step who have to submit letters of commitment to provide evidence that their organisations will support their activities).

### 5.3. Is it necessary to provide a Consortium Agreement with the full proposal?

No Consortium Agreement need to be submitted with the full proposal form. It will only be mandatory for the projects funded in this call.

### 5.4. Should the coordinator submit the proposal, or should each partner submit the application separately?

The application procedure of the transnational proposals is unique. The project coordinator initiates the procedure on the Online Submission Tool by opening the proposal, then he/she invites the other applicants of the consortium in joining the proposal on the platform. Only the coordinator can submit the final proposal.

Each applicant must check the National Annexes and the related Funding Organisations whether a parallel national application is required

### 5.5. Is it possible to make multiple submission of the same proposal until the deadline?

Yes, the proposal can be modified and resubmitted at any time before the deadline. Please consider that the tool will enable the "Submit" button only once the application is fully complete.

### 5.6. Is it possible to change the project title & acronym before the pre-proposal submission?

The project title and acronym can be changed until the submission; however, they cannot be changed between the pre-and full proposal.

## 6. CONTACTS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

### 6.1. Whom can I contact if I have further question?

First and foremost, please read entirely the Call documents. Please also consult your [Funding Organisations' rules](#) and, if needed, contact your Funding Organisation Contact Points (FCPs).

- **For specific questions related to the budget, criteria and rules of your funding organisation,** please consult your FPO's contact point.
  - **For general information on the call,** please contact the Call Secretariat (Maria Bianco and Aldo Covello): [water4all2022\\_callsecretariat@mur.gov.it](mailto:water4all2022_callsecretariat@mur.gov.it)
  - **For technical questions regarding the Online Submission Tool,** please contact the technical helpdesk through the dedicated section of the Online Submission Tool.
- For GDPR questions, please contact your FPO. Please note that you can also consult the Online Submission Tool [General Data Policy](#) and the [Water4All Privacy and Data Policy](#).

### **Water4All Call Secretariat**

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