

Frequently Asked Questions

Version December 6th 2019 (Final)

Note: the present document offers answers to questions addressed during the public meetings in Addis Ababa, Semera, Sodo, Dire Dawa, Sekota, Yabello, Jinka, Filtu and Robe. In order to make the document readable, the repetitive questions were condensed and grouped under themes. See questions asked after November 25th at the end of the document.

Please also note the [amended version of the Guidelines for Applicants](http://www.innovation4resilience.org) published on www.innovation4resilience.org.

1. Fund Distribution

How is the distribution of the funds among regions, zones(clusters) and woredas going to be decided? How you ensure the balanced share of the grant among the target regions/clusters? How many partners will apply for one cluster?/How many projects per cluster? How do you manage possible overlap of woredas by different partners? How do you manage similarity of thematic areas within one cluster and same woredas? How do you manage overlap of target population?

The RESET Plus Innovation Fund focuses on innovative ways to tackle resilience of target communities to the challenges they face. Therefore the selection will be done based on the qualitative innovative aspects of the proposals and no specific distribution is foreseen among regions or woredas. The projects selected might not be equally distributed among clusters or woredas, there's no minimum or maximum number of entities to apply for a cluster and an overlap of woredas by different proposals is not an issue. If there will be similarity of thematic areas within one cluster and same woredas and overlap of the target population, the applicants who pass all selection phases will be invited to ensure coordination between their projects.

2. Purpose and beneficiaries for the grant

What is the definition of resilience under this program?

The Innovation Fund uses the definition of resilience given by the European Union in https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/resilience/eu_resilience_compendium_en.pdf

According to this document resilience is *"the capacity of vulnerable households, families and systems to face uncertainty and the risk of shocks, to withstand and respond effectively to shocks, as well as to recover and adapt in a sustainable manner"*.

Is the grant an extension of existing/previous RESET projects? Any consideration of that? / Are RESET Partners at a better position in the process of application and evaluation? / Is there an intention to make a special consideration for RESET II partners?

The Innovation Fund is one of the four components of RESET Plus, which is part of larger resilience building program called RESET implemented by the European Union in Ethiopia since 2014. However, the Innovation Fund is independent from any other projects in actual or previous phases and it is open to all eligible applicants to test innovative ideas on the defined thematic and geographical areas. In the evaluation process all concept notes will be evaluated based on the criteria anonymously and there will be no special consideration for entities involved in other RESET phases or components. In the same time, as mentioned in the section 3.1 of the Guidelines,

proposals have to ensure "Clear link and complementarity with the EU RESET programme, PSNP and other relevant resilience building initiatives".

3. Number of Projects per Applicant

How many proposals by a single organization? How many proposals can a single entity apply for? In how many applications can a single applicant appear – both as an individual applicant and in consortium? How many applications can an entity be part/involve? Can an individual applicant be involved in more than one application?

One eligible entity can be part of maximum three proposal (one alone or as lead in consortia and in two different consortia as a co-applicant).

Can an entity go for more than one applications (like 2 or 3 themes) in the same cluster? Can an entity individually apply for more than one concept note with in the cluster? Can an applicant be part of 2 different proposals in the same cluster but different woredas?

As the Applicant Guidelines states "In a specific cluster, it is not allowed to be part of more than one application (alone, as lead or as co-applicant)." There's no limit to the number of themes an application can cover. The limitation of applications by one entity in one cluster also applies if the proposals are planned in different woredas.

4. Geographical coverage of the projects

Is the Call limited to the specific woredas that are listed under the clusters? Can town administration in the woreda be included in the target woredas? Is it possible to go beyond the already targeted woredas?

RESET Plus Innovation Fund target woredas are pre-defined as stated in the application guidelines and covers the respective woreda town / capital. Town administrations with similar names as the RESET targeted woredas that are separate administrative entities (i.e. Sekota woreda and Sekota town are two separate administrative units) are not part of the eligible areas. However, as stated in the Applicant Guidelines "There is the possibility of outreach in the neighbouring woredas, if duly justified".

Is it possible to apply for more than one cluster in consortia? How many woredas in one cluster can be targeted by one project?

Any proposal by eligible entities, including consortia can cover a flexible area from one to several woredas, located in the same cluster or in different clusters.

The region where I live is not mentioned on the geographic focus, can I apply for this fund? I represent a national university outside the targeted woredas and I have an innovative idea, can I propose a concept note?

The geographical focus does not apply to the residence of the applying entity but to the implementation area / benefiting communities. Therefore proposals can be submitted by eligible entities registered in Ethiopia regardless of the place of registration, as long as they cover the RESET target woredas.

5. Eligibility

Is an individual person can apply for the grant? (Are non registered startups eligible to apply?) Are new non-governmental organizations (those established this year) eligible for this fund? Does Brexit (Ex British) have an influence on this fund management? Can international entities with global offices in non-EU countries apply for the Innovation Fund?

As the Application Guidelines states "Eligible entities to apply are:

- Non-governmental organisations at local, national or international level;

- *Civil society organisations, including grassroots community based organisations such as cooperatives, women's associations or youth associations/clubs,*
- *National universities or research institutions.*

Partnerships are highly encouraged. Private sector organisations can apply, but only in partnership with non-profit organisations or institutions as listed above. [...] All types of persons or categories should be legally registered to operate in Ethiopia.

Therefore:

- individual persons are not eligible to apply;
- new organisations are not excluded from the call, however, they are encouraged to partner with experienced entities to increase their chances to be selected, especially with regard to implementation capacity;
- all entities listed above can be part of consortia;
- UK / non-EU based international organisations are eligible to apply as long as they are legally registered in Ethiopia.

Which other organization apart from the ones that are dealing with women and youth are eligible to apply? Why only women and youth? Resilience should be inclusive of people with disability, old age, children etc.

There is a difference between eligibility of applicants and targeted beneficiaries.

In a separate section the Applicant Guidelines state: *“The changes to be brought about by funded innovations are expected to particularly benefit youth and women from the EU RESET’s target woredas”*. Therefore:

- all entities that fulfil the eligibility criteria can apply; organisations having as primary focus other groups than youth and women are eligible to apply. However, priority is given to these two groups.
- The target population is larger than women and youth and categorically can include people with disability, old age, children, etc

Can research institutes apply for the innovation? Can NGOs apply for component 2 (Research)? Can a concertia apply for both Component 1 and Component 2 grants?

Research institutes are eligible to apply for both the innovation and the research component. The Call for the Research component will be launched after the selection of Component 1 projects is completed. This Call will have specific terms of reference, related to related to the selected innovations. Only research institutes will be eligible for the Component 2.

Is there a difference between local and national non-governmental organization? If so under which lot is the local ones are categorized?

Please refer to the amended version of the Applicant Guidelines. Local organisations are to be considered Lot 3 and the funding amount has been revised, ranging now from 25.000 to 300.000 EUR.

6. Size and members in Consortia

Who is setting up a consortia? Which entities are eligible to be a member of the consortia? Up to how many partners can be eligible to for a consortia? Is there a limit on member size of a consortium? Member size per consortium – already limited or for free? Is the consortia expected to be formed or the consortia formed for this specific purpose can be valid too? Do all eligible entities have equal possibilities/opportunities to be a lead applicant? Are consortia specific to a certain lot? Is the grant size proportional to the size of consortium members?

Please refer to the revised version of the Applicant Guidelines:

“A consortium can be agreed between any eligible type of applicant or partner described above. Application in consortium between different types of eligible entities (NGOs co-applying with CBOs or/and private sectors or/and research institutes or/and universities) is encouraged. A partnership arrangement can be agreed between a lead applicant with minimum of one co-applicant and a maximum for applicant to decide. At the same time the applicants should pay attention to efficiency and coordination and consortia of large numbers of entities are not advised”.

Therefore the minimum number of applicants in consortia is two while there is no upper limit as far as there is a clear division of roles and responsibilities. Setting up a consortia is up to the applicant partners, and it can be a combination of any of the eligible applicants and partners listed in the guidelines. Consortia formed for this specific purpose of this Call are accepted. All applicants except private sectors have equal eligibility to be a lead in a consortium. Consortia generally fall under Lot 4 but partnerships of similar types of entities (for example two NGOs) or between an eligible entity and a private partner (for example a CBO and a registered company) can also apply under their respective lot. The grant size is proportional to the financial capacity of the consortium members (see the 60% rule for lots 2-5)

7. Involvement of private sector

What is the operational definition of private sector – with regard to this fund?

Private sector entities are considered all business entities recognised under the Ethiopian law.

What are the terms for the private sectors for partnership? What is the role of the private sector in the project, if they are not making a profit? Private sector involvement versus profit making out of the investment? How can the private sector get involved without generating benefit? How can private applicants can scale up, disseminate and make a profit?

The objective of the financial support under this Innovation Fund is to promote social innovation in the resilience-building sector in Ethiopia. The private sector can be part of the application process and their benefit will be the coverage of full costs of project related activities such as research / testing / expanding to new markets. Immediate profit is not allowed to be billed to the project but the grant can be a stepping stone towards scaling-up for profit in the future.

Is it a must to have private sector partnership?

As stated in the Applicant Guidelines *“Private sector organisations can apply, but only in partnership with non-profit organisations or institutions as listed above.”* As stated under the answer referring to consortia, their composition is flexible, therefore it is encouraged but not compulsory to include private sector entities.

8. Budget issues

Is there flexibility for the ceiling of the grant (above 500,000 Euros)?

The minimum and maximum grant size for the different types of organizations are not subject to change. Any budget request beyond the set maximum will automatically result in rejection of the respective concept note.

What are the requirements/policies on co-funding? Please confirm that there is no cost share/co-financing requirement.

Co-funding is not a requirement, proposals may request up to 100% of the budget. Contributing towards cost lines (eg. uncovered overhead costs) is not forbidden either.

What is the consideration behind setting the 60% limit? A reference year to apply a 60% rule? Does the 60% rule applies for each consortium members or as a consortium? We draw attention that the current requirements do not accommodate small local organizations with annual turnover of less than 100,000 EUROS (min. for lot 3).

The 60% limit was set to correlate size of awarded grants to proven financial capacity of the potential applicants. The 60% of the total annual turnover of a single applicant or of a consortia member is to be calculated based on the most advantageous of the last 3 fiscal years before the application fiscal year (preferably based on an audited budget). The 60% rule applies to each consortia member under lots 2, 3 and 4 (i.e. the budget share for one member should not be higher than its financial capacity). The 60% limit does not apply to CBOs as an incentive to build their portfolio, however, the applicants shall correlate the requested grant with their implementation capacity.

There is no limit set for admin/program for this grant, but the CHSA rule can be applied when it comes to salaries of staff directly involved in the project. There is a change in the guideline for the range of the budget to accommodate applicants with minimal annual turnover. The Applicants Guidelines were amended and the minimum size of the grants has been lowered for all lots and local organisations are included under Lot 3.

Is overhead cost eligible? "Lump-sum overhead costs...are not eligible." what does it mean? What is the clear cut of eligible Admin cost types and size (salaries, Car rental)? What is the percentage of the admin./program ratio? Can EU grant procedure be applied-40/60 for admin/program respectively? Is it allowable to use organizational cars and charge the RESET Project? What is the ceiling of the budget for learning and monitoring?

Please refer to the amended text in the Applicants Guidelines: "Lump-sum overhead costs (administration costs that are not defined and justified) and purchase of vehicles are not eligible. Administration costs directly related to the project are eligible to include in the budget. There's no percentage limit with regard to salaries of the staff directly involved in the implementation or the transportation costs (i.e. hire or use of own vehicles)".

Therefore:

- Justified, project-related overhead costs are eligible; lump sums are not.
- There's no recommended percentage of the admin-program ratio for the project but entities benefiting the grants under the Innovation Fund shall comply to recent regulations set by Ethiopian laws for their overall activity.
- Use of existing cars is allowed.
- There's no ceiling imposed for learning and monitoring activities.

Salaries of staff for state research institute is covered by government, what can be planned for the budget instead?

For public organizations where the salaries are paid through government, the time investment can be calculated as put as a cost share and related transportation and fuel costs as well as per diem can be planned.

9. Capacity

How the fund management team verify capacity of the applicants? – both lead and co-applicant?

Projects that are successfully selected concept notes will detail in the full proposal stage the capacity of the applicants and supportive documents of the successfully selected full proposals will be thoroughly checked before contracts will be signed.

Does this fund invite new (having no experience) local/national NGOs established this year?

As stated above, new organisations are not excluded from the call, however, they are encouraged to partner with experienced entities to increase their chances to be selected, especially with regard to implementation capacity.

How are CBOs supported – particularly in concept note preparation? (because there is capacity limitation).

During the concept note stage, in order to adhere to the principle of fair and transparent competition, the fund management team does not offer technical assistance for the development of proposals for any type of applicants. However, those concept notes that are selected for the next stage will benefit from orientation workshops to support the development of quality full proposals.

In the call's guidelines, page 7, its stated that lead applicant needs to have proven presence in the target cluster. In line with this eligibility criteria, should the lead applicant have operational presence and participation in the relevant RESET cluster to apply for this funding? Can you detail this?

In order to ensure smooth implementation of innovative projects in the target areas, due to the particularities of the local communities, those applicants who apply alone and, in the case of consortia the lead applicant are required to have proven presence in the target cluster. This can mean documented current or past projects / partnerships / activities carried in at least one community located in the target cluster. However, the project can address new communities in woredas that are part of the RESET Plus program.

10. Annexes/Support documents

Is it a requirement to attach letters/MoUs/TORs of partnership at concept note stage?

No agreement documents are required to be attached at the concept note at this stage.

Please note the amended Applicants Guidelines *"The application package will consist of the Concept Note - Annex 1 (max 5 pages) and Annex 2 (applicants information) accompanied by a scanned cover letter signed and stamped by the official representative of the (lead) applicant."*

Regarding patent, are applicants expected to own patent for the innovations?

For the Concept Note stage applicants are not expected to own a patent for the innovation they propose. At the same time projects should not violate or infringe patents owned by other entities and follow Ethiopian government regulations on patents.

11. Thematic areas for application/Flexibility

Are thematic areas flexible? Is it possible to add more and different ones? The project time frame may not be sufficient for some activities such experimental types in universities and research centers. Can be the implementation extended beyond 2022? Are there activities that are restricted not to be implemented by this fund? Is there a minimum number of beneficiaries to be addressed? Is there a limit on the number of beneficiaries to be addressed?

Thematic areas are indicative and any innovative ideas on similar or related themes are welcomed. Implementation of the fund period is indicated on the guideline and any proposal is expected to fit in to that timeframe (please note amended Guidelines for Applicants).

The RESET Plus Innovation Fund focuses on innovative ways to tackle resilience of target communities to the challenges they face and the projects proposed by universities and research

centers are expected to focus on applying innovative ideas in communities and not to exclusively develop new research. There are no minimum or maximum numbers of beneficiaries to be addressed but applicants are expected to work with numbers proportional to the requested grant.

12. Miscellaneous

How the fund management team ensures/verify the incoming project ideas are really innovative and not conventional ones?

Each Concept Notes will be evaluated by 3 different external evaluators with national and international expertise related to the thematic areas. The innovative aspects will be considered according to the published general evaluation grid.

Is it possible to see a list of past grantees and/or a summary of previously funded projects under the Innovation Fund?

The RESET Plus Innovation Fund is a new component under the RESET program and it did not have supported other projects under the current objectives and rules. Details about the general RESET program can be consulted here:

https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/region/horn-africa/ethiopia/resilience-building-and-creation-economic-opportunities-ethiopia-reset_en

Other documents related to the target clusters can be consulted here:

- Situation Analysis of the Eight Geographical Clusters under the EU Resilience Building Program in Ethiopia (RESET)

https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/resilience_ethiopia/documents/situation-analysis-eight-geographical-clusters-under-eu-resilience-building-program

- EU Resilience Building programme in Ethiopia (RESET) Strategic Options Paper by Ethiopian Development Research Institute (2017)

https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/resilience_ethiopia/documents/eu-resilience-building-programme-ethiopia-reset-strategic-options-paper-ethiopian

New questions and answers:

What exchange rate can we use for this concept note purpose?

The RESET Plus Innovation Fund team recommends using the exchange rate of the National Bank for the day the Concept Note is submitted.

We note that requirements mention all co-applicants must be legally registered to operate in Ethiopia. We wanted to ask for clarity on whether sub-grantees also needed to be legally registered at the time of concept note submission?

As the Applicant Guidelines states.

All types of persons or categories should be legally registered to operate in Ethiopia. [...]

In order to be eligible for a grant, an entity must:

- *be a legal person registered in Ethiopia and*
- *be non-profit-making organizations and*
- *be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the proposed innovative project action with the co-applicant(s) and partners (if the case).*
- *proven presence in the target cluster.*

The RESET Plus Innovation Fund does NOT recognise sub-grantees status as the applicants must be directly responsible for the implementation.

We didn't develop yet the innovation (prototype) that we can help us communicate with people/granting-organizations formally or scientifically. Can we apply with our current status to develop the prototype later?

There's no formal requirement for existing prototypes but the answer to the question 5 of Concept Note will count in the qualitative evaluation of the proposal.

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