

Environment, Climate Change and Low Carbon Economy Programme

CALL FOR TENDERS

Call for Tenders #2 – Projects for promoting the Circular Economy in the Construction Sector

Within the scope of the EEA Grants 2014-2021, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, in the capacity of Donors, have financed initiatives and projects in 15 European Union Member States with the aim of reducing social and economic disparities and strengthening bilateral relations with beneficiary states.

The Secretary General of the Environment and Energy Transition (SGMATE) was appointed Operator of the Environment, Climate Change and Low Carbon Economy Programme in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), signed in Lisbon on 22 May 2017 with a total allocation of €28,235,294 (€ 24,000,000 EEA Grants + €4,235,294 from SGMATE).

Through this Programme, innovative and structuring projects in the areas of Environment, Climate Change and Low Carbon Economy shall be financed, with the aim of promoting the good environmental state of the eco-systems and reducing the adverse effects of pollution and other human activities, being the transition toward a circular economy one of the main concerns expressed in the MoU. Specifically the construction sector is one of the sectors to be favoured in this program, in line with the Plan of Action for the Circular Economy ([PAEC](#)). The PAEC identifies priority sector areas, taking into account either the intensity the resource use, as is the case in the construction sector, or the export oriented sectors (tourism, textile, footwear), or even the weight of the sectors in terms of impact on the consumer (public purchases, retail and distribution).

Construction is a key sector in terms of the transition toward a Circular Economy and toward reduction of CO₂ emissions associated with the whole production chain. It holds an important place in the economy of the European Union. It generates almost 10% of GDP and is responsible for 20 million jobs, namely at micro, small and medium companies. The construction and demolition waste (CDW), accounts for the largest amount of waste in the EU, representing approximately one-third of the total amount of waste produced.

In this context, the European Commission, through its Plan of Action for the Circular Economy, concentrated its efforts on adopting the protocol and guidelines applicable to construction and demolition waste, with the aim of strengthening the trust of the sector on both the waste management the process and the quality of the recycled materials. In addition, the companies have agreed to improve the performance of the buildings in terms of use of resources and are testing *LEVEL(S)*,¹ the

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/buildings.htm>

first set of indicators to the assessment of the sustainability of the sector in over 130 projects throughout all Europe.

In Portugal, according to data from 21 December 2018 from the National Statistics Institute, Domestic Consumption of Materials ² “increased 6.2% in 2017, significantly above the GDP growth rate in terms of volume (2.8%). This evolution translated into a decrease in the productivity associated with use of materials (-3,2%). Naturally, this result partially reflects the change in the components of GDP, namely due to the greater contribution of construction. In 2017, the domestic consumption of materials per capita was 15.9 tonnes in Portugal, having deviated from the European average (13.6 tonnes) and having dropped one position in the EU28 ranking (went from the 13th country with the lowest consumption in 2016 to the 14th in 2017). It is estimated that in 2016 the material footprint was 15.3 tonnes per capita, 7.7% above that of the EU 28.”

Despite clear efforts to improve the recycling of CDW, it is a fact that that such an approach is still limited to larger companies, and does not include the vast majority of the sector’s corporate fabric. The sector consumes 40% of the resources with one of the lowest material efficiency. Therefore, it is particularly important to guarantee better management of materials recovered while preserving their maximum value and utility, as well as guaranteeing adequate management of the waste and recycled materials of the CDW, with obvious benefits for the sustainability and quality of life of citizens.

The projects selected within the scope of this call will contribute to achieving the Programme’s Outcome 1: “Increased application of circular economy principles in targeted sectors” and Output 1.4 “Increased resource efficiency in the construction sector” which indicators and targets are listed on the table below, in accordance with Annex I of the Programme Agreement, signed in Lisbon on 27 May 2019.

PA Number	Expected programme results	Indicator	Unit of measurement	Source of Verification	Frequency of reporting	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value
PA11 Outcome 1	Increased application of circular economy principles in targeted sectors	Construction and demolition waste avoided by the supported sectors	Percentage	APA data	Annually (APR)	48.6%	2017	70.0%
		Number of jobs created (disaggregated by gender, age)	Number	Payroll records, employment agreements	Annually (APR)	0	N/A	25
		Tons of plastic recycled through all supported schemes/measures	Number	Project promoter’s records	Annually (APR)	0	N/A	20000
		Use of secondary materials increased in the supported sectors	Percentage	Project promoter’s records	Annually (APR)	0.0%	N/A	15.0%

² https://ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_destaques&DESTAQUESdest_boui=314608029&DESTAQUESmodo=2

PA Number	Expected programme results	Indicator	Unit of measurement	Source of Verification	Frequency of reporting	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value
Output 1.4	Increased resource efficiency in the construction sector	Number of SMEs Supported	Number	Copies of contracts signed with Project Promoter's Project Promoter's records, Partnership agreements	Semi-annually	0	N/A	5
		Number of demonstration buildings constructed ³	Number	Project promoter's records	Semi-annually	0	N/A	3
		Number of Innovative solutions for increased resource efficiency piloted	Number	Project promoter's records	Semi-annually	0	N/A	5

This Call for Tenders establishes the specifications applicable to the submission of the applications.

The electronic application form of and the respective annexes can be found on the website at <https://www.eeagrants.gov.pt/en/programmes/environment>.

PROGRAMME OPERATOR: Secretary General of the Environment and Energy Transition (SGMATE)

DONOR PROGRAMME PARTNER: Innovation Norway (IN)

1. PRIORITY AREAS:

Within the scope of the present call for tenders, the applicant entity can submit applications covering one or more areas.

- A. Development and implementation of construction projects that highlight the economic and environmental advantages of concepts which incorporate zero waste concepts, energy efficiency and material productivity, namely through technological innovations on construction solutions, such as modularity. Projects developed within this scope shall take into account all the environmental and economic advantages observed and take into account the life cycle approach, including the deconstruction phase and the re-use and recycling of the materials and components recovered.
- B. Projects that promote performance and the environmental profile of materials, components and products developed in Portugal, including buildings through application and promotion of innovative methodologies and technologies, namely:
 - i. Circularity passports for buildings and components;
 - ii. Development and application of environmental declarations for products;

³ Fulfilling a minimum of 50% circular materials and /or components constructed.

- iii. Projects that demonstrate the application of the European Commission *LEVEL(S)*⁴.
- C. Projects that promote cooperation between companies towards the reduction of construction and demolition waste and promotion of materials and products which incorporate materials recovered from waste, namely through the following:
 - i. Promotion of cooperative systems, especially those targeted to small and medium sized construction companies, in order to apply specific protocols and guidelines⁵ for reducing production of construction and demolition waste and recycling material, communicating the associated competitive advantages (environmental, economic and social);
 - ii. Promotion of cooperative systems for removing, repairing and re-using components in construction sites and communication of the associated advantages (environmental, economic and social);
 - iii. Development of materials and/or products that incorporate materials from waste (CDW or other), promote demonstration of their application in building and communicate the associated advantages (environmental, economic and social).

2. PERIOD FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS:

(in accordance with Article 7.3, no. 2.b. of the of the “Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021”

Applications must be submitted using the electronic application form and the annexes available on the EEA Grants website <https://www.eeagrants.gov.pt/en/programmes/environment> between 18.07.2019 until 12:00:00 (GMT) of 31.10.2019.

3. TOTAL AMOUNT AVAILABLE: €3,500,000

Minimum amount of financing for each project: €200,000.

Maximum amount of financing for each project: €500,000.

4. DURATION OF THE PROJECTS:

Between 12 and 24 months. Final date of eligibility is 30 April 2024.

5. TERRITORIAL APPLICATION:

The Programme shall finance projects in mainland Portugal and in the Autonomous Regions of the Azores and Madeira, without prejudice to the activities that are developed in the Donor States (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) under partnerships established in the selected projects.

⁴ <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/buildings.htm>

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/growth/content/eu-construction-and-demolition-waste-protocol-0_en

6. PROJECT GRANT RATE:

The eligible costs of the selected project shall be financed up until a maximum of 85%, except when the entities that promote the project are non-governmental organizations, henceforth referred as NGOs, or social partners in accordance with article 1.6 (n) and (y) of the “Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021”, in which case eligible costs shall be financed up until a maximum rate of 90%.

The project rate shall in all cases be set at a level that complies with state Aid rules in force and takes into account any and all other forms of public support granted to projects. Any remaining costs of the project shall be provided or obtained by the project promoter.

7. ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS:

In accordance with Article 7.2.1 of the “Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021”, public or private entities, whether commercial or non-commercial, and NGOs that have been legally established in Portugal are considered eligible.

Article 7.2.3 of the “Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021” is not applicable to this call.

8. PROJECT PARTNERS:

According to Article 7.2.2 of the “Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021”, a project partner shall be any public or private entity, commercial or non-commercial, along with NGOs that have been legally established as a legal person in the donor states, in the beneficiary countries, as long as it has a border in common with the beneficiary state, or any international organization that is actively involved in implementing the proposed project.

9. ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURE:

(According to Articles 8.2 and 8.3 of the of the “Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021”)

9.1 Eligible project costs

9.1.1. Eligible project costs must meet the following criteria:

- (a) they are incurred between the first and final dates of eligibility of a project as specified in the project contract;
- (b) they are connected with the subject of the project contract and they are indicated in the detailed budget of the project;
- (c) they are proportionate and necessary for the implementation of the project;
- (d) they must be used for the sole purpose of achieving the objective(s) of the project and its expected outcome(s), in a manner consistent with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness;

(e) they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular through being recorded in the accounting records of the Project Promoter and/or project partner and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the Project Promoter and/or project partner is established and according to generally accepted accounting principles; and

(f) they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation.

9.1.2. Expenditures are considered to have been incurred when the cost has been invoiced, paid and the subject matter delivered (in case of goods) or performed (in case of services and works). Exceptionally, costs in respect of which an invoice has been issued in the final month of eligibility are also deemed to be incurred within the dates of eligibility if the costs are paid within 30 days of the final date for eligibility. Overheads and depreciation of equipment are considered to have been incurred when they are recorded on the accounts of the Project Promoter and/or project partner.

9.1.3. Where new or second hand equipment is purchased, only the portion of the depreciation corresponding to the duration of the project and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the project may be considered eligible expenditure.

9.1.4. The Project Promoter's internal accounting and auditing procedures must permit direct reconciliation of the expenditures and revenue declared in respect of the project with the corresponding accounting statements and supporting documents.

9.2 Eligible direct expenditure in a project:

9.2.1. The eligible direct expenditures for a project are those expenditures which are identified by the Project Promoter and/or the project partner, in accordance with their accounting principles and usual internal rules, as specific expenditures directly linked to the implementation of the project and which can therefore be booked to it directly. The following direct expenditures are eligible provided that they satisfy the criteria set out in 9.1.1:

(a) the cost of staff assigned to the project, comprising actual salaries plus social security charges and other statutory costs included in the remuneration, provided that this corresponds to the Project Promoter's and project partner's usual policy on remuneration. The corresponding salary costs of staff of national administrations are eligible to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the project concerned were not undertaken;

(b) travel and subsistence allowances for staff taking part in the project. Having regard to the principle of proportionality, travel costs, including subsistence allowance, may be calculated as a lump sum, on the basis of defined rules approved by the Programme Operator;

(c) cost of new or second hand equipment. In case the Programme Operator determines that the equipment is an integral and necessary component for achieving the outcomes of the project, the entire purchase price of that equipment may, by way of exception from the rule contained in 9.1.3., be eligible;

(d) costs of consumables and supplies, provided that they are identifiable and assigned to the project;

(e) costs entailed by other contracts awarded by a Project Promoter for the purposes of carrying out the project, provided that the awarding complies with the applicable rules on public procurement and

“Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021”;

(f) costs arising directly from requirements imposed by the project contract for each project.

9.2.2. Where the entire purchase price of equipment is eligible in accordance with point (c) of paragraph 9.2.1., the Programme Operator shall ensure that the Project Promoter:

(a) keeps the equipment in its ownership for a period of at least five years following the completion of the project and continues to use that equipment for the benefit of the overall objectives of the project for the same period;

(b) keeps the equipment properly insured against losses such as fire, theft or other normally insurable incidents both during project implementation and for at least five years following the completion of the project; and

(c) sets aside appropriate resources for the maintenance of the equipment for at least five years following the completion of the project.

9.3 Indirect eligible costs in projects (overheads): indirect costs shall be eligible in accordance with Article 8.5 of the “Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021”.

9.4 Non-eligible costs: the costs mentioned in Article 8.7 of the “Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021” are not eligible.

10. SUBMISSION OF THE APPLICATION:

10.1 Applications must be submitted using the electronic application form and the annexes available on the EEA Grants website <https://www.eeagrants.gov.pt/en/programmes/environment> between 18.07.2019 until 12:00:00 (GMT) of 31.10.2019.

10.2 It shall be noted that one of the annexes required when filling the application form is the Term of responsibility duly signed, using digital signature, and initialled by the person who has powers to legally bind the company.

Exceptionally, in case the applicant entity is not capable of using digital signature shall instead send one copy of the electronic application form (in Portuguese or in English) and the original copy of the Term of responsibility duly signed and initialled by the person who has powers to legally bind the company, to the Programme Operator via registered mail with acknowledgement of receipt, no later than 10 consecutive days after the closing date of this call, post stamp date.

Address: Secretary General of the Environment and Energy Transition (SGMATE) – EEA Grants 2014-2021, Rua de "O Século" n.º 63, Piso 3, 1200-433 Lisbon, PORTUGAL.

10.3 Only fully completed applications including the Term of Responsibility shall be considered for assessment and selection purposes.

10.4 The applicant entities are responsible for the veracity and authenticity of all the submitted documents and are expressly informed that they may be obliged to submit the original documents to the Programme Operator during any phase of the application process.

11. PROJECT SELECTION:

The project selection procedures follow Chapter 7 of the *'Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism 2014-2021'* and the *'Applicants Guide for Financing of Projects Supported by Environment, Climate Change and Low Carbon Economy Programme'*.

11.1 Administrative and eligibility criteria:

Applications must be accompanied by the following documents:

- a) Statement containing the name of the entity, tax number, taxation address, name of the legal representatives and copy of the statutes;
- b) Statement attesting to the fact that there are no debts to the Taxation Authorities or Social Security Authority;
- c) VAT situation of the applicant entity;
- d) Copy of the latest Annual Report.

11.2. The application shall contain the following information:

- a. Title of the project;
- b. Activities, including execution indicators (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, relevant and timely defined);
- c. Geographic coverage and partnerships, particularly between local authorities (individually or in the form of public associations) leveraging the geographic expression of the applicant projects;
- d. Expected results and forecast of the impact on the organization, territory and/or target group, as applicable, including impact indicators (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, relevant and timely defined) and proposed targets;
- e. Plan guaranteeing financial sustainability of the project;
- f. Communication Plan;
- g. Project and activities timeline;
- h. Budget (included in Part D of the electronic form);
- i. Summary (Part B of the electronic form);
- j. Please indicate if there were any external consultants involved in the preparation of the initiative application. If yes, who.
- k. Annexes, with supplementary information to the application:

- a) Part A – Administrative Information (including CV of the members of the team allocated to the project);
- b) Part B – Description and Summary of the project, in Portuguese and in English, maximum 500 words (including a brief description of the entity's experience and the team of the project in the priority areas of this call for tenders, along with the identified needs, including objectives and results;
- c) Part C – Detailed Technical Description;
- d) Part D – Financial Information (including the detailed version of the Budget, by year, and a statement attesting to the fact that the amounts stated are those that are normally practiced by the entity, e.g., salaries that correspond to the average remuneration of the Promoters; statement pertaining to the partnership commitment between the applicant entity and the respective partner entities, and the Term of Responsibility).

11.3 The Programme Operator will review the applications for compliance with administrative and eligibility criteria. Applicant entities whose applications are rejected during this phase may file a complaint in accordance with article 121 and 122 of the Portuguese Administrative Code of Procedure.

12. SELECTION CRITERIA:

Applications shall be scored in accordance with the criteria on the table below ranking from 0 points (min.) to 100 points (max.). The overall score of each application is obtained by the following formula:

$$\text{Overall Score (OS)} = [(A \times 0.15) + (B \times 0.05) + (C \times 0.25) + (D \times 0.10) + (E \times 0.10) + (F \times 0.30) + (G \times 0.05)] \\ = 100$$

where: A – Technical expertise of the project team;

B – Inclusion of partner entities of the Donor State(s);

C – General quality of the submitted application;

D – System of indicators to implement and targets to be reached;

E – Financial sustainability of the project

F – Specific criteria and

G – Bonus if the applicant entity can submit applications covering one or more areas

Only applications whose A, C, D, E and F value is, at least, 50 points shall be eligible for allocation of financing. The Overall Score (OS) shall be equal to or greater than 50 points.

12.1 The **selection criteria** and their **weighting** shall be as follows shall be as follows:

Selection criteria	Weighting	Score
<p>A – Technical expertise of the project team: Project promoter and partner entities involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority Area A: partnership with entities from the national scientific and technological system, public and private entities, namely in the construction and construction materials sector, will be valued. • Priority Area B: partnership with private entities, namely small and medium companies in the architecture, construction and construction materials sectors will be valued. • Priority Area C: partnership with private entities with particular emphasis on small and medium companies and related economic activities (e.g., construction and construction materials sector, waste management, among others), entities from the national scientific and technological system will be valued. 	15	0-100
B- Inclusion of partner entities from the Donor State(s)	5	0-100
<p>C – General quality of the submitted application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities (5 points), • Budget (5 points), • Communication Plan (10 points) and • Proposed timeline (5 points) 	25	0-100
D – System of indicators to be implemented and targets to be reached, including an estimate of the number of jobs created (if applicable) and a balanced representation of women and men in the project team (2 points)	10	0-100
E – Financial sustainability of the project	10	0-100
F – Specific criteria*	30	0-100
G – Bonus	5	0-100
TOTAL	100	

For the C Criterion (Communication Plan component), E and F the respective score shall be as follows:

C – General quality of the submitted application: project Communication Plan

Description	Score
There is not enough information to assess this sub-criterion.	0
The Communication Plan does not comply with the requirements established in the Promoter Manual and graphic norms, namely the use of logos.	10
The Communication Plan complies with the requirements, but does not meet the communication objectives of the Environment Programme established in the Promoter Manual, nor identifies correctly the target audience and the means of communication and dissemination.	30
The Communication Plan complies with the requirements and meets the communication objectives of the Environment Programme defined in the Promoter Manual, but does not correctly identifies the target audience and groups of the project, nor does it correctly identifies the means of communication and dissemination.	50
The Communication Plan complies with the requirements and meets the communication objectives of Environment Programme established in the Promoter's Manual and correctly identifies the target audience and groups of the project, but does not provides adequate means of communication and dissemination.	80
The Communication Plan complies with the established requirements and meets the communication objectives of the Environment Programme defined in the Promoter's Manual and the graphic norms, as well as correctly identifying the target audience and groups of the project and provides adequate means of communication and dissemination.	100

E – Financial sustainability of the project:

This criterion is used to assess whether the capacity for proper execution of the project has been demonstrated

$$E = [(E1 \times 0.5) + (E2 \times 0.5)]$$

This criterion is assessed on the basis of the following sub-criteria:

E1. Capacity to support the Project's financing;

E2. Financial indicators.

In which:

E1. Capacity to support the Project's financing

Description	Score
Does not demonstrate capacity to finance the non-co-financed component (cannot be assessed due to incomplete information or non-verifiable information)	0
Lacks financing beyond the promoter's funds	50
Financing guaranteed (demonstration)	80
Own funds (demonstration)	100

E2. Financial indicators

Description	Score
Does not offer a provisional plan of income and costs	0
Offers a provisional plan of income and costs	100

F – Specific selection criteria	Score
Per Priority Area	100
Priority area A	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The consortium shows experience in projects pertaining to ecological design/architecture, namely application of concepts such as “zero carbon buildings,” “modular architecture,” “passive houses,” and “cradle to cradle” with specific references 	70
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project exhibits adequate geographic coverage through partnerships with local entities 	30
Priority area B	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The consortium exhibits the intention to apply methodologies/technologies to products that already exist on the market with a TRL⁶ at least above 6 	70
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The product to which the methodology and/or technology will be applied is innovative in the market 	30
Priority area C	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal of targets to be achieved, e.g., reduced production of CDW, raw materials replacement rate 	70
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills diversity of the consortium members 	30

⁶ Technology Readiness Level – see <https://www.cloudwatchhub.eu/exploitation/brief-refresher-technology-readiness-levels-trl>

G – Bonus

Description	Score
Applicant entity submit applications covering one priority area	0
Applicant entity can submit applications covering more than one priority area	100

13. SELECTION PROCEDURES:

13.1. The Programme Operator shall be responsible for evaluating the project and granting funding.

13.2. The Programme Operator shall establish a Selection Committee that shall recommend the projects to be funded within the programme. The Selection Committee shall consist of at least three environment experts, in the areas of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Environmental Engineering, two from Programme Operator and one from DPP. The FMC and the National Focal Point shall be invited to participate in the meetings of the Selection Committee as observers.

The Programme Operator shall review the applications for compliance with administrative and eligibility criteria. Applicants whose applications are rejected at this stage shall be informed and given a reasonable time to appeal that decision.

Each application that meets the administrative and eligibility criteria shall be reviewed by two experts appointed by the Programme Operator, who shall be impartial and independent of the Programme Operator and the Selection Committee.

The experts shall separately score the project according to the selection criteria published with the call for proposals. For the purposes of ranking the projects, the average of the scores awarded by the experts shall be used.

If the difference between the scores given by the two experts is more than 30% of the higher score, a third expert shall be commissioned by the Programme Operator to score the project independently. In such cases the average score shall be used for the ranking of the projects.

The Programme Operator shall provide the Selection Committee with a list of the ranked projects. The Selection Committee shall review the ranked list of projects. It may modify the ranking of projects in justified cases. The justification for the modifications shall be detailed in the minutes of the meeting of the Selection Committee. If such a modification results in a project's rejection, the affected applicant shall be informed in writing about the justification for the modification. The Selection Committee shall submit the list of recommended projects to the Programme Operator.

The Programme Operator shall verify that the selection process has been conducted in accordance with the "Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021" and that the recommendations from the Selection Committee comply with the rules and objectives of the programme, following such verification, the Programme Operator shall, based on the decision of the selection Committee, make a decision on which projects shall be

supported. If the Programme Operator modifies the decision of the Selection Committee, it shall inform the applicants affected and provide them with a justification.

The Programme Operator shall notify the applicants about the results of the selection process within a reasonable time and publicise the results.

13.3. In accordance with Article 21 of the 'Applicants Guide for Financing of Projects Supported by Environment, Climate Change and Low Carbon Economy Programme', notification shall be provided concerning the reasons, duly justified and substantiated, for rejection of applications based on the verification of the formal admissibility and eligibility requirements. The decision may be appealed within 10 working days.

13.4. Each application that meets the administrative and eligibility criteria will subsequently be reviewed by two experts appointed by the Programme Operator in accordance with Article 22 of the 'Applicants Guide for Financing of Projects Supported by Environment, Climate Change and Low Carbon Economy Programme'.

13.5. The experts will score the application separately according to the published selection criteria. For the purposes of ranking projects, the average of the scores awarded by the experts will be used. If the difference between the scores is more than 30% of the highest score, a third expert will be appointed by the Programme Operator. In these cases, the final ranking will consist on the average of the three scores.

13.6. In accordance with Article 23 of the 'Applicants Guide for Financing of Projects Supported by Environment, Climate Change and Low Carbon Economy Programme', after the technical assessment of the accepted applications, the Programme Operator will provide the Selection Committee with a list of projects classified for review. In duly justified cases, the Selection Committee may decide to change the ranking of projects and the ordering of applications. The justification for the changes will be detailed in the Selection Committee meeting minutes. If the change results in the rejection of a project, the applicant will be informed in writing. The Selection Committee will submit the list of projects recommended for funding to the Programme Operator.

13.7. The Programme Operator shall verify that the selection process has been conducted in accordance with the "Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021" and that the Selection Committee's recommendations are in accordance with the rules and objectives of the Programme. After such verification, the Programme Operator shall decide, on the basis of the decision of the Selection Committee, which projects will be selected. If the Programme Operator modifies the Selection Committee's decision, the affected applicants will be informed.

14. COMMUNICATION OF THE RESULTS:

14.1. The results of the selection process shall be communicated individually to each applicant entity by the Programme Operator within a period of 90 days and the final list of selected projects shall be disclosed.

14.2. When a project is approved, a contract proposal is sent to the promoter, specifying all the terms and conditions of the approved financing.

14.3. The contract proposal shall be returned to the Programme Operator duly signed and initialled by the entity's legal representatives, within a maximum period of 20 business days, counted from the date when the proposal was received, otherwise the approval decision shall be revoked.

14.4. All rejected applications shall be notified in order to respond within a maximum of 10 days, pursuant to the Portuguese Administrative Code of Procedure.

14.5. Projects must be initiated within a maximum of 30 business days after the project contract signature date.

14.6. After reception of all signed contracts, the Programme Operator shall prepare a final list of the selected projects and of the promoter entities and publish it on the EEA Grants website at <https://www.eeagrants.gov.pt/en/programmes/environment>.

15. PAYMENT METHODS

15.1. The Programme Operator shall be responsible for processing payment of the projects in a timely manner. Intermediate and final payments shall be made after approval of the respective project reports.

15.2. Payments to the promoter shall take the form of advance payments, interim payments and final payment. The level of advance payment shall be set out in the project contract. The maximum level of payment shall be as follows:

first advance payment, up to 25%,

interim payments, 65% and

final payment 10%.

The first advance instalment shall be paid following the signature of the project contract. Subsequent payments shall be paid after the approval of the interim reports. The final payment will be paid after the approval of the final report.

Upon approval of the final project report a balance payment, if applicable, shall be made within 1 month.

The approval of project interim and final reports take place 2 months from the submission of the required information.

15.3 Structure of the Final Report

The Final Project Report shall contain:

- i. Detailed description, namely: summary of the activities performed; information pertaining to the involvement of the partners, especially the partners of the Donor Countries; information pertaining to the Project participants;
- ii. Results achieved, namely: assessment of the Project results (at each moment of the report);
- iii. Description of the costs and assessment of the financial impact;

iv. Description of the contribution of the Project toward reaching the general objectives of the EEA Grants and the “Environment Program.”

15.4 The frequency and time period of all the reports (intermediate and final) to be submitted shall be annual and they must be sent no later than 30 days (consecutive) subsequent to the period that they pertain to.

16. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Before submitting the applications, please check the EEA Grants website (<https://www.eeagrants.gov.pt/en/programmes/environment>) and consult the information regarding the Environment, Climate Change and Low Carbon Economy Program, particularly the following documents:

- Electronic Application Form, Annexes and Promoter Manual;
- “Memorandum of Understanding on the Implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021”;
- “Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021”;
- ‘Applicants Guide for Financing of Projects Supported by Environment, Climate Change and Low Carbon Economy Programme’.
- Information contacts:

e-mail address: ambiente.eeagrants@sg.mate.gov.pt

Telephone: (+351) 213 231 644 (José Manuel Pinto) – Available from Monday to Friday, from 10:00 to 12:00 and 14:30 to 16:30.

- Any changes made to the contents of this call shall be announced on the website of the Programme Operator (<https://www.eeagrants.gov.pt/en/programmes/environment/calls/>)
- A section of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) will be published on the Website of the Program Operator (<https://www.eeagrants.gov.pt/en/programmes/environment/calls/>) and frequently updated based on the queries from the potential applicants and partners.
- All information regarding this call will be published in the EEA Grants Website within its specific area (<https://www.eeagrants.gov.pt/en/programmes/environment/calls/>)
- All questions shall be answered by email in a timeframe of 3 working days.

17. DATA PROTECTION

All data shall be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of 25 May 2018 and the Data Protection Law (DPL) – Law 67/98 of 26 October 1998.