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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Call for small projects of the RISTANC project

Translation disclaimer

This document has been translated from Slovenian into English using the LeeBuddy AI translation tool. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the translation, the Slovenian version shall prevail in case of any discrepancies or differences in interpretation.

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Can a natural person apply to the Call and can their work be an eligible project cost? How are labour costs and the payment of financial support treated?

Yes. Natural persons of legal age with permanent residence in an EU Member State may apply to the Call, as defined in point 2 of the Guidelines for applicants and section A.2 of the application form.
The work of a natural person as applicant is an eligible project cost (point 6 of the Guidelines for applicants). In the financial plan, this is stated under item A.3 SME owners and natural persons as applicants, together with the estimated scope of work (e.g. number of hours or months) and the cost per unit. The labour cost must be stated as a total cost, including all taxes and contributions (total gross or gross 2). The tax treatment of payments to a natural person is settled in accordance with the applicable Slovenian tax legislation. The maximum amount of financial support per project is EUR 12,000, whereby all associated taxes and contributions are included in this amount.
Funding is based on the principle of lump sum financing (point 5.1 of the Guidelines for applicants). The funds are paid out in three instalments:

- 20% upon signature of the agreement,
- 30% following the approval of interim results or milestones,
- 50% following the approval of final results,

as specified in point 8.2 of the Guidelines for applicants.
Disbursement is based on the activities carried out and results achieved; therefore, the applicant does not prove actual costs by submitting accounting documents (point 9 of the Guidelines for applicants).

Is it possible to include other colleagues, partners or external experts in the project? Which forms of cooperation are envisaged and does the RISTANC consortium provide professional support in the implementation of projects?

Yes. It is possible to include other colleagues, partners and external experts in the project. The financial plan in the application form envisages several forms of cooperation:

- Partners involved in the project implementation and listed in section C.7 of the application form. The applicant remains the project lead and is responsible for its

implementation, including financial responsibility. An individual partner may participate in only one application under this Call (point 2 of the Guidelines for applicants).

- Natural persons under direct contract, for example sole traders or persons engaged on the basis of a copyright or work contract (item A.2 of the financial plan).
- Subcontractors performing external services, for example diving or engineering services or professional environmental impact assessments (item B.1 of the financial plan).

When procuring goods and services, the principles of transparency, equal treatment of bidders and ensuring competition must be observed, as set out in point 11 of the Guidelines for applicants.

The RISTANC consortium does not provide experts for the implementation of small projects. The inclusion of experts with relevant skills and experience is therefore welcome. The competencies and experience of the applicant and partners will be taken into account during the evaluation under criterion 6 (Evaluation criteria).

How is intellectual property on results created within the project regulated under the call, and which information about the project or its results is publicly disclosed?

All economic copyright and other intellectual property rights in the work created within the project shall remain with the applicant or the author, as stated in point 12 of the Guidelines for applicants. Point 12 also allows the contracting parties to agree otherwise by means of a subsequent written agreement. The provisions of point 12 refer to the work created by the applicant within this contract; the Call does not regulate rights to solutions developed prior to the project.

A description of the selected project, the date of the award of funds, the project duration and the name and country of the recipient shall be published (see points 8.1 and 14 of the Guidelines for applicants). Furthermore, communication and visibility obligations apply, including a potential field visit by the communication team involving photography and filming (points 10 and 10.1 of the Guidelines for applicants). The principle of open science applies to announcements, publications and data: announcements and publications must

be open access, while data is shared according to the principle of 'as open as possible, as closed as necessary' (Chapter 1 of the ethical aspects document).

Can an association with its registered office in Ljubljana apply for the call, even if the project content relates to the conservation of the Slovenian sea, and the activities would be carried out primarily in the hinterland and partly in the Slovenian sea area? Are awareness-raising, educational and community projects also eligible under the call?

The association's registered office being in Ljubljana is not an obstacle, as legal entities must have their registered office in an EU Member State (point 2 of the Guidelines for applicants).
Awareness-raising, educational and community activities are among the eligible activities of the Call (point 3 of the Guidelines for applicants). Activities may also be carried out in the hinterland, but in accordance with point 2 of the Guidelines for applicants, they must contribute to addressing challenges in the Slovenian sea area, including the coast.
Applicants must therefore clearly define and justify in their application how their project contributes to one or more of the challenges defined in point 1 of the Guidelines for applicants (Key challenges).

Is an application eligible if an individual involved in the preparation or project implementation is professionally linked to a partner of the RISTANC consortium?

A professional link between an individual involved in the preparation or project implementation and a partner of the RISTANC consortium does not in itself mean that the applicant is ineligible to apply.

In accordance with point 2 of the Guidelines for applicants, applicants who are personally, professionally, economically or otherwise linked to the RISTANC consortium partners must disclose such links in Section B of the application form (Disclosure of conflict of interest and compliance with ethical aspects).

Disclosing a connection does not in itself mean that the application will be excluded. The Commission takes this into account when preventing conflicts of interest, including by ensuring that Commission members who are linked to the applicant or the disclosed connection do not participate in the evaluation of that application.

When describing the disclosure of a conflict of interest, please be as specific as possible: state the type of cooperation (e.g. lectures, leading workshops, or other contractual cooperation), the period of cooperation, and a statement as to whether you are participating in the project implementation of the RISTANC project with the consortium partner. If you are participating in the RISTANC project, please state this clearly.

Can the same organisation participate in multiple applications, for example as a partner?

An application may be submitted in partnership. In the case of a partnership application, the applicant or project lead remains responsible for the project implementation, including financial responsibility. In this regard, the restriction in point 2 of the Guidelines for applicants must be observed: each applicant may participate in only one application within this call, either as an applicant or as a partner. In the event that the same entity submits or participates in multiple applications, only the first application submitted will be considered, and the remaining applications will not be processed.

Is it possible to include the labour costs of an employee of a public institution (e.g. a teacher) who is directly involved in the implementation of project activities in the project budget? How is such work accounted for and what should be considered to prevent double financing?

Yes. Labour costs for persons directly involved in the implementation of project activities are eligible. In the financial plan of the application form, these are stated under item A.1 Employees (or equivalent staff), together with the estimated scope of work (e.g. number of hours or months) and the cost per unit.

Funding is based on the principle of lump sum financing. Funds are paid to the applicant based on the activities carried out and results achieved, not on the basis of proving actual costs. The applicant will therefore not submit payslips or accounting documents as evidence of actual costs, but rather substantive reports and other evidence of activity implementation.

The Call does not specify the method by which a public institution pays an employee for any additional work. The institution must arrange this in accordance with the applicable national legislation and rules governing work and salaries in the public sector. It is recommended that the applicant coordinates the payment method with the institution's management and accounting department in advance.
When planning the budget, the prohibition of double financing must also be taken into account. Work that is already funded by a regular salary or other public funds cannot be simultaneously funded by the project. Therefore, only the scope of work that represents additional project work and is not already covered by other public funds may be included in the budget.

If an employee's work is fully covered by their regular salary from public funds, the estimated scope of their participation in the project may be stated in the application, but the cost of this work is not claimed for funding. In this case, other eligible costs necessary for the implementation of project activities may be included in the financial plan, such as consumables, equipment, costs of workshops, communication activities or external contractors.

It should also be noted that indirect costs are charged at a rate of 25% of the sum of direct personnel costs (A) and direct purchase costs (C). If you do not claim labour costs, item A is zero; therefore, indirect costs are charged only on item C.
Activities for which support is claimed must therefore not be simultaneously funded by other European, national or local public sources.

Are non-governmental organisations from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) eligible to participate in the RISTANC call? Can a locally registered non-governmental organisation with its registered office in the DRC apply as a lead applicant or as a partner?

The eligibility of organisations is defined in point 2 of the Guidelines for applicants.

- Lead applicants: a legal entity applying as an applicant must have its registered office or business address in a Member State of the European Union, in one of the overseas countries or territories (OCTs) or in a country associated with the Horizon Europe programme. A non-governmental organisation that is registered and has its registered office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is therefore not eligible to apply as a lead applicant.
- Partners: applications may be submitted in partnership. In this case, the applicant remains the project lead and is responsible for its implementation, including the financial implementation of the project. An individual organisation may participate in only one application within this call, either as an applicant or as a partner.
- Geographical area of implementation: regardless of the forms of cooperation, the planned activities must be carried out in the Slovenian sea, including the coast, or must contribute to addressing challenges in this area.

When assessing eligibility, it is therefore necessary to consider the conditions regarding the registered office of the organisation, as well as the rules regarding partnership and the geographical area of implementation of activities, as defined in the Guidelines for applicants.

20 October 2026

How should student work costs be included in the financial plan? Are they considered external service costs?

Student work performed through a student employment service should not be included under personnel costs (budget category A) in the application form's financial plan, as the

student does not have a direct contract with the applicant. Instead, the student employment service issues an invoice for the work performed. The cost of student work should therefore be included as an external service cost under budget line B.1 – Direct subcontracting costs, in the full amount charged by the student employment service.

Please note that indirect costs at a rate of 25% are not calculated on subcontracting costs (budget category B), as they are calculated only on personnel costs and purchase costs (A + C), as indicated in the application form's financial plan.

Who owns the equipment and prototype components purchased with RISTANC funding after the project ends?

The call documentation does not provide for the transfer of ownership of equipment or prototype components to the call organiser. Equipment and components purchased with project funding remain the property of the recipient.

Can an applicant publish an illustrated book as part of a RISTANC project, with part of the preparation and printing costs covered by project funding, and sell printed copies? How should sales revenue be handled, and what are the requirements regarding its recording, reporting and use?

1. Copyright and open access

In accordance with point 12 of the Guidelines for Applicants, the economic rights and other material copyright rights to works created within the project remain with the applicant or author, including the right to commercial exploitation. However, the *Ethical Considerations* document stipulates that publications produced within the project must be openly accessible. The applicant must therefore ensure that a freely accessible electronic version of the book is deposited in a trusted open-access repository (e.g. DiRROS or Zenodo) no later than the book's publication date, under one of the Creative Commons

licences (CC BY, CC BY-NC, CC BY-ND or CC BY-NC-ND) specified in the funding agreement. The licence applies to the entire publication, including illustrations. Before publication, the applicant must obtain the necessary rights from all authors and illustrators for publication under the selected licence and for the possible sale of printed copies (point 12 of the Guidelines).

2. Sale of printed copies and use of revenue

Copies printed using RISTANC funding are, in principle, intended for free distribution as part of the project. The applicant must provide at least **5 copies as evidence of project implementation and for the libraries and archives of the call organisers (ZRS Koper and PiNA)**, or **30 copies if the publication has a CIP catalogue record** (copies for the National and University Library of Slovenia (NUK) and as evidence of project implementation). If the applicant sells some of these copies, the selling price may not exceed the market price of comparable publications. The revenue from sales must be used for project activities until the project ends (e.g. additional workshops or distribution) and must be indicated in the application form's financial plan under the line "REVENUE (I)". Copies printed subsequently using the applicant's own funds or other funding sources may be sold without restrictions, and the applicant may retain the revenue from their sale.

3. Co-financing the project

The total value of the project may exceed the amount of funding requested, which is limited to a maximum of EUR 12,000 (point 5.1 of the Guidelines). Other sources of funding contributing to project implementation must be indicated under the line "REVENUE (I)".

4. Record-keeping and reporting

As projects are funded on a lump-sum basis, recipients are not required to report actual costs, but must report on the activities carried out and the results achieved (points 5.1 and 9 of the Guidelines). The final report must specify the number of copies printed using the financial support, their distribution (e.g. a list of recipients), any selling price and revenue generated, and how the revenue was used to implement the project. Accounting documents do not need to be attached. Revenue from the sale of copies printed

subsequently does not need to be reported. Further details will be specified in the funding agreement.

5 November 2026

Can we apply for the RISTANC call as individuals if we have permanent residence in the United Kingdom but temporary residence in Slovenia? Can we apply as sole traders (s.p.) and is there an age limit for applicants?

1. Application by a natural person with permanent residence in the United Kingdom

In accordance with point 2 of the Guidelines, the natural person applying must have a permanent residence address in a European Union Member State. Temporary residence does not satisfy this requirement. A natural person with permanent residence in the United Kingdom is therefore not eligible to apply as a natural person.

2. Application as a sole trader (s.p.)

Where the applicant applies as a legal entity, a sole trader or another registered form of business activity, their registered office or business unit must be located in a European Union Member State, its overseas country or territory (OCT), or in a country associated with the Horizon Europe programme. Where a natural person who does not carry out a registered activity applies, they must have a permanent residence in a European Union Member State.

3. Age limit

In accordance with the application form (Section A 2), applicants who are natural persons must be of legal age.

How should project partners be defined in the RISTANC call application, what documentation must be submitted for them, and how are their costs and funding handled?

Applications for the call may be submitted individually or in partnership. The call is designed to have one applicant (lead applicant) who is fully responsible for the project implementation and financial management, even when partners are involved in the project. For partners, it is sufficient for the applicant to define them in Section C.7 of the application form and describe their competences, role and responsibilities. There is no separate section for the administrative data of partners. In accordance with the applicable call documentation, no additional documentation, such as register extracts, statements, signatures or other evidence, needs to be submitted for project partners. Staff costs of project partners may be included in Category A – direct staff costs, provided the staff is directly involved in the implementation of project activities. The co-financing agreement is concluded between ZRS Koper and the lead applicant.

Can we hold an auction of paintings as part of the project's promotional activities and donate the funds raised to an organisation working in the field of marine conservation?

A charity auction where the proceeds would be donated to another organisation is not possible within the project. The lump sum only covers costs and activities directly linked to the project implementation and necessary to achieve its objectives (point 6.1 of the Guidelines for applicants). If the applicant sells anything produced with the financial support (e.g. paintings), the income from the sale must be allocated to the project implementation and used to increase the scope of project activities. Estimated income must be stated in the financial plan of the application form in the row "INCOME (I)".

Can companies owned by the partner municipalities (Piran, Izola, Koper and Ankaran) apply for the RISTANC call? How should personal, professional, economic or other links with consortium partners be handled?

According to point 2 of the Guidelines, RISTANC consortium partners are not eligible to apply, either as legal entities or as natural persons. The municipalities of Piran, Izola, Koper and Ankaran are consortium partners and therefore cannot participate in the call either as applicants or as partners in an application. The same applies to their bodies acting on their behalf. Public companies founded by the municipalities (e.g. municipal utility companies) are separate legal entities and are not RISTANC consortium partners; this restriction therefore does not apply to them.

Applicants who are personally, professionally, economically or otherwise linked to RISTANC consortium partners must disclose these links; in Section B of the Application Form, links of the applicant's partners, employees and proposed subcontractors are also disclosed (point 2 of the Guidelines). Service providers must be selected in accordance with the principles of transparency, equal treatment of bidders and ensuring competition (point 11 of the Guidelines).