

REGIONAL TEACHERS INITIATIVE FOR AFRICA

ANSWERS TO APPLICANTS QUESTIONS, 15.11.2024 (UPDATED ON 18.11.2024)

If you do not receive an answer by the 15th of November, please contact EDUFI. Contact information can be found on the call website at edu.fi/call2024.

Many inquiries raised similar questions, which have been consolidated. Furthermore, most institutional and individual names have been removed for privacy reasons.

Several applicants have asked whether specific organizations are eligible. Unfortunately, at this stage, EDUFI is unable to take a position on individual cases, as we do not have all the necessary details. EDUFI kindly encourages you to carefully review the call document at www.edu.fi/call2024.

CLARIFICATIONS: A small clarification has been made to the eligibility criteria. To be eligible for grants, the applicant must be a legal entity. Previously, the term "legal person" was used on page 11 (please see the eligibility criteria starting on page 11 of the Call document at edu.fi/call2024).

The proposal must have minimum one European partner and two African partners. The partners can be from one or several countries. Maximum number for partners is 7 (one lead and 6 co-applicants).

Filling Instructions for Annex 5: EDUFI requires only one previous project reference, as this is used to evaluate the organization's capacity to manage funds. However, you may include up to five references. If you choose to add more than one reference, please use a separate template (a different page) for each. Kindly avoid fitting multiple references onto the same page and ensure that all pages are combined into a single document.

In case there are any questions submitted on time (by November 8th, 2024) that are not answered in this document, a separate Q&A document will be published on the call website at edu.fi/call2024.

1. Q: Where can I find information about the call?

A: You can find all information on the call website at www.edu.fi/call2024.

2. Q: Where can I find the webinar recording?

A: The recording of the webinar can be found on the call website: edu.fi/call2024.

3. Q: I am unable to install the Finnish Authenticator App. What should I do?

A: Questions related to the Finnish Authenticator Application are answered by telephone +358 295 53 5115 or by [organisaatiopalvelut\(at\)dvv.fi](mailto:organisaatiopalvelut(at)dvv.fi). Before contacting the authorities, please see the video on how to install the Finnish Authenticator app (How to submit your application, www.edu.fi/call2024).

4. Q: Could I submit my application to you via email?

A: No. To submit your application, please use the Applyforgrants.fi service. The name of the call is Regional Teachers Initiative for Africa: Call for Research Proposals. Questions related to technical issues regarding the database can be sent to [antti.seppanen\(at\)valtiokonttori.fi](mailto:antti.seppanen(at)valtiokonttori.fi).

5. Q: Does the lead partner need to be a Finnish institution, or can a Swedish partner also lead the consortium? Our Finnish colleagues are currently busy and may not be able to participate, so I'd appreciate your guidance on how to proceed in this situation.

A: None of the applicants need to be from Finland. A Swedish partner can be part of the consortium team and may act as either the lead applicant or a co-applicant. The consortium shall consist of partnerships of eligible actors between Africa and Europe. One of the partners (lead or co-applicant) shall be from Europe and two of the partners (lead or co-applicant) shall be from Africa (see the Call document at edu.fi/call2024).

6. Q: I have a question on the call for proposal about cofinancing. When stated the programme will finance 90% of eligible expenditures, that means that projects requiring less % of funds from the programme will be not accepted? For instance a project financed at 75% by other funding and 25% requested to the Initiative?

A: The programme will finance 90% of eligible expenditures presented in the final financial report submitted. The government grant recipient shall bear the remaining 10 %. Co-financing can exceed 10%, but you must also follow the project guidelines when using funds counted as part of the co-financing.

7. Q: My issue has to do with the definition for the 10% contribution grantee contribution. Can you please help with explanation?

A: We are requesting a min. 10% own financing from the grantee institution(s). This is typically a cash contribution in the form of salary payments (the working hours are billed e.g. 90% from the donor, leaving 10% covered by the institution receiving the grant). Other ways are also possible. Yet, in-kind contributions, such as voluntary work, are not acceptable for covering the own financing.

8. Q: Does anything prevent an entity from the United States participating once the number of European plus African entities satisfy eligibility?

A: In this call, we can only accept proposals from European and African countries, this excludes the US unfortunately. All staff that is to be funded through the grant, has to be affiliated with the applicant institutions that are to be based in Europe or Africa.

9. Q: The Call text says: The lead applicant and/or co-applicant may not submit more than one application and be awarded more than one Grant Agreement under this Call for Proposals. Does this mean that the person(s) mentioned in one proposal can only submit one proposal? Can institutions submit several proposals if the persons involved are different?

A: This criterion refers to institutions, that means that e.g. University of Helsinki can only submit one proposal to the call. We understand the problematic of this criterion, but the RTIA has a strong focus on regionality and hence we aim to avoid a situation in which we end up funding several projects from one strong university.

10. Q: I read the call text to the Regional Teachers Initiative and could not find if this call could apply to teachers at all levels or only specific? Could the call be directed to University teachers?

A: The focus of the call is improving the teacher governance and teacher training in early childhood, primary and lower secondary education. Hence, you can propose a research project that works with university teachers that educate future teachers for these levels. Other university teachers unfortunately do not fall within the theme of the call.

11. Q: Would it be acceptable to have only African countries in the consortium without a European partner, if Helsinki is unable to join?

A: The proposal has to have minimum one European partner and two African partners. The partners can be from one or several countries. Maximum number for partners is 7 (one lead and 6 co-applicants).

12. Q: With respect to the clause: 'The applicant may not be at the same time a co-applicant in another application', does this refer to this funding call or another funding opportunity?

A: This refers to institutions applying to this call. There can be only one proposal to this call by one institutions (e.g. a university).

13.Q: I am seeking help to be connected to a European Union collaborator who may be interested in this call and theme.

A: Unfortunately, due to very limited time and resources, we are unable to assist applicants in finding new networks. We sincerely apologize for not being able to provide this support.

14.Q: How can individuals apply?

A: Please note that this grant is for institutions and not for individuals. If you apply on behalf of your institution, please look at the instructions on the call website (www.edu.fi/call2024).

15.Q: Can you clarify that the United Kingdom can participate in this call?

A: UK institutions are eligible to apply for the call both as lead applicant and co-applicant. The call is not restricted to EU Member states but allows for proposals from all European countries.

16.Q: Can you please confirm if an applicant from the UK is eligible to lead an application to the ‘Regional Teachers Initiative for Africa: Call for Research Proposals’? I note the guidance states the lead applicant must be “established in either Europe or in an African country” but the UK flag is not available as an option on the application portal. If UK applicants are eligible, I will support the lead in registering for the Finnish Authenticator app.

A: UK is eligible to act both as lead and as co-applicant in the proposal for the RTIA call. The call is not restricted to cover only the EU Member States.

Please note that the flags do not refer to eligibility but to national digital id systems that work together with the service provider of the database. If you do not find your own flag in the page, please use the Finnish authenticator application to identify yourself. The guidance for the application can be found on the website: www.edu.fi/call2024.

17. Q: I have a question regarding the co-financing component. Could you clarify what is meant by “the government grant recipient shall bear the remaining 10%”? Specifically, is this amount required to be available upfront, or can it be pledged to be covered over the course of the project?

A: The co-financing in practice will be calculated at the end of the project. We will pay a pre-financing of 40% after the signing of the contract and 40% after the approval of the interim report in case 70% of the previous funding has been disbursed and rest will be paid after the approval of the final report. In

the final payment, the 10% co-financing will be calculated. Hence, it does not have to be an upfront payment.

18. Q: I had a quick inquiry about requirements for participating applicants. If our team consists of 3 Africa-based investigators and 1 EU-based investigator, can we also include an investigator from the US? All are located at established institutions in their respective countries.

A: The national eligibility regulation applies to all institutions that are either lead or co-applicants in the proposal. Hence, we are not looking into the nationalities of the individuals suggested as researchers/staff in the proposal but only at the national registration of the institutions applying for the funding. For all institutions, the eligibility rule states that these have to be either European or African. US institutions on the other hand are not eligible to receive funding from the RTIA Facility.

19. Q: I want to propose a research project focusing on TVET education; is this eligible?

A: Unfortunately not; the call is aimed to improve and strengthen teacher governance and teacher education at early childhood, primary and lower secondary levels.

20. Q: I want to propose a project involving a consortium of many institutions, including an institution in Europe. Are all European countries eligible?

A: All European countries mentioned [under NDICI instrument \(a2a1 ecprogrammes eligibility2021_2027 en.docx\)](#) are eligible. The call is not restricted for EU Member States only.

21. Q: The call guidelines indicate that “The lead applicant may not be at the same time a co-applicant in another application”. By “applicant”, do you mean an institution or an individual person within an institution? In a big institution, for example, a big university, there are many people who do not know each other, so, it is likely that many people within the same institution may participate in many different proposals. If by “applicant” you mean an institution through which a proposal is submitted, there would be a problem because many people from the same institution could submit many different proposals, either as principal investigator or co-investigator.

A: Unfortunately, there can only one application per legal entity (university), hence, the regulation applied to institutions. The institutions need to coordinate among themselves and agree which faculty/department submits the proposal.

22. Q: The partners should be an individual or institution?

A: Applicants should be institutions (please see the eligibility criteria starting on page 11 of the Call document at edu.fi/call2024).

23. Q: An institution applying for (Lead applicant), must be a teacher training provider?

A: No (please see the eligibility criteria starting on page 11 of the Call document at edu.fi/call2024).

24. Q: Are international organizations, namely UNICEF, eligible to be applicants?

A: No, multilateral organizations are not eligible.

25. Q: Can one university that is public university apply for this call?

A: We cannot comment on individual situations in advance. In general, public universities meet the eligibility criteria as public actors (please see the eligibility criteria starting on page 11 of the Call document at edu.fi/call2024).

26. Q: What do you mean by "both single country and multi-country proposals are eligible for the call?"

A: African applicants and co-applicants may come from the same African country. Geographically, both single country and multi-country proposals are eligible for the call, a minimum of 2 single country and 2 multi-country proposals will be funded. No activities can take place in Europe, but the activities shall occur in Sub-Saharan African countries where the project is being implemented.

27. Q: Who is preferred lead applicant between African based institution and European based ones?

A: There is no difference; lead applicant can be from either Europe or Africa.

28. Q: It is mentioned that trade unions organisations can be eligible. Are employers organisations also eligible to be a lead/co-lead? (NGO status)

A: We would evaluate this only at the phase of contracting and cannot hence give prior decisions in the application phase. Generally, NGOs are eligible to apply for this grant. NGOs can also be lead applicants.

29. Q: Are social enterprises ineligible to apply as either lead or sub applicants?

A: A social enterprise / public entity with corporate form applicants can be eligible for this call for proposals if the for profit and non-profit activities are clearly separated in the bookkeeping and in the finance of the company.

We would evaluate this only at the phase of contracting and cannot hence give prior decisions in the application phase. But generally, if the non-profit is

clearly separate from the for profit activities, then we do not see a reason to exclude these kinds of companies in this call for proposal.

30. Q: The lead institution should be located in France, Finland or Belgium?

A: No. Lead applicant can be from either Europe or Africa.

31. Q: Could you kindly confirm whether institutions from Somaliland are eligible to apply?

A: According to the call document, applicant must be effectively established in either Europe or in an African country (establishment is determined on the basis of the organization's articles of association which must show that the organization has been founded under an act of law of the country in question and that its registered office is located in an eligible country). All European countries mentioned under NDICI instrument ([a2a1 ecprogrammes eligibility2021 2027 en.docx](#)) are eligible.

32. Q: Can higher institutions from Switzerland (together with partners from South Africa) also submit an application?

A: Yes, the call is not restricted to EU Member states but allows for proposals from all European countries (please see the eligibility criteria starting on page 11 of the Call document at [edu.fi/call2024](#)). Lead applicants and co-applicants can be from either Europe or Africa.

33. Q: Is it possible for the sub-Saharan African countries (like two countries) only to team up and make an application?

A: The proposal has to have minimum one European partner and two African partners. The partners can be from one or several countries. Maximum number for partners is 7 (one lead and 6 co-applicants).

34. Q: In terms of consortium formation. If there are 2 organisations/partners from Europe does it mean we will balance it with 4 organisations/partners from the Sub-Saharan African partner countries? I am looking for the ratio within the partners according to geographical location. Thanks!

A: The proposal has to have minimum one European partner and two African partners. The partners can be from one or several countries. Maximum number for partners is 7 (one lead and 6 co-applicants).

35. Q: In the case of a Consortium of 3 it is clearly specified the proportion of European and African members (1:2). Is there any clear expectations in terms of proportion for Consortia comprising 4 to 7 members?

A: No. The proposal has to have minimum one European partner and two African partners. The partners can be from one or several countries. Maximum number for partners is 7 (one lead and 6 co-applicants).

36.Q: For the 7 key research staff, do they all have to work for one of the members of the consortium ? or can we recruit researchers from universities not part of the consortium to contribute to the project ?

A: They need to work for one of the members of the consortium.

37.Q: Where do we find partners to collaborate on the call?

A: Unfortunately, due to very limited time and resources, we are unable to assist applicants in finding new networks. We sincerely apologize for not being able to provide this support.

38.Q: We are a group of researchers currently working on a grant but not completed grants yet (ending mid 2025). Can we still be considered?

A: To be eligible for grants, the **lead applicants** must have already managed at least one grant (of public funds) that has already ended (not longer than five years ago) and that amounts to 50% of the amount applied for. However, as mentioned in the document, "the co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria which apply to the lead applicant itself, except that they do not need to prove that they have already managed a grant amounting to 50% of the amount applied for."

39.Q: Please is the clause of 50% grant criteria that must have ended, applicable to institutions or persons who is applying?

A: This refers to the institution.

40.Q: For the previous project experience, are there a minimum and maximum numbers of examples per applicant and co-applicants?

A: Minimum is one. Please select the most relevant and recent references. No need to list more than 5 references.

41.Q: The duration of projects, can projects be shorter than 18 months?

A: Maximum length is 18 months. The term of a project may not exceed 18 months, and it shall be completed by 31 August 2026.

42.Q: In the Call document on p.18 (and also on the timeline available on Regional Teachers Initiative for Africa: Call for Research Proposals ends 25.11.2024 it is stated that the notification of final decision is February 14 2025, and the start of the project is March 2025. However, on p. 19 it is stated that the notification of final decision is on January 16 2025, and start of the project is February 2025. Can you please confirm the former is the correct?

A: The final decision notification will be on February 14, 2025. The implementation period of the projects starts from March 1, 2025. We apologize for the error. The correct date has been updated in the call document available at edu.fi/call2024.

43. Q: Can a lead applicant submit for both themes separately? That is, make two separate applications?

A: Unfortunately, there can only one application per legal entity.

44. Q: Does the eligibility criteria of "only one application by one applicant" mean that, for instance, large universities can only submit total of one proposal, even if there could be multiple faculties and departments with relevant collaborations?

A: Yes. Unfortunately, there can only one application per legal entity.

45. Q: Are the deliverables of the project also to be produced in English? For French speaking African countries it could be an obstacle and would imply having a budget dedicated to translation.

A: The project can be implemented in French. However, communication with EDUFI and all reports and official documents required to be submitted to EDUFI must be in English. It is important to take this into account when preparing budgets.

46. Q: Can the proposal be submitted in PORTUGUESE?

A: Unfortunately, proposals can only be submitted in English.

47. Q: What do you expect from the submitted proposal that will cover an objective for strengthening research capacities in sub Saharan Africa?

A: It can be for example SSA experts participating in the research and their capacity in conducting research and in writing publications is strengthened. As the implementation period for the project is limited, we do not expect this to cover institutional capacitybuilding.

48. Q: Can the proposal cover all teachers specialisation (e.g. science, language, social science and mathematics education)?

A: Yes, it can.

49. Q: Is the budget comparable to actual costs grant model?

A: Final costs are paid based on the actual costs.

50. Q: Are the EU per diem rates the only rates to be used or are they just a maximum to respect? For example my institution has its own official per diem rates, and they are lower than the EU per diem rates. In that case, can we use our own rates?

A: EU per diem sets the maximum amount to per diems. You can use lower rates as long as they will be feasible for you.

51.Q: Can the required match funding be in-kind ?

A: Contributions in-kind, is not accepted for the co-financing of the eligible costs. (i.e. non-financial resources made available free of charge by third parties to the beneficiaries, voluntary work).

The beneficiary's own resources (for example, staff costs) that are directly linked to the action are considered eligible as project co-financing.

52.Q: The required financial statements, are those for the institution the applicant is from, or for the previous projects the applicant led?

A: Statements are required from the applicant's institution.

53.Q: Will the approved budget be paid into the individual's account or into the institution's account? Most of our institutions give us tough time when it's time to release money for the project.

A: The approved budget will be paid to the lead partner organization's account.

54.Q: An example was given of a workshop and an amount of 2,000. The presenter said you need to provide a breakdown of how that 2,000 is used. Is this breakdown to be provided in the budget or later, when reporting?

A: The breakdown is to be provided in the financial report.

55.Q: Will the project regional meeting for 2026 be budgeted for in the program budget?

A: The Facility for the Regional Teachers Initiative for Africa will organize a high-level knowledge sharing event in Africa in spring 2026 (venue not yet decided). The projects funded by this research call are invited to present their work in that event. RTIA will cover the costs of one participant from each project to the event, but it is recommended that the projects will budget own funding to provide more staff to participate in the event, up to 3 persons from each project.

56.Q: Do all members of the consortium have to be a non-profit based in Europe or Africa?

A: All members need to fulfill the eligibility criteria mentioned in the call document (please see the eligibility criteria starting on page 11 of the Call document at edu.fi/call2024). For profit organizations are not eligible in this call.

57.Q: One of the objectives of the call is to strengthen research capacities in Africa. Does this mean that the project may fund Masters/PhD students as part of their studies (scholarships)? Our institution only recently started focusing on grants thus we have not managed a grant until completion. We are currently part of a grant that will only be concluding in June 2025. Is it possible to consider our application based on this information?

A: Due to the short period for implementation that the project has (18 months), PhD thesis and Master's thesis cannot be funded through the project funding. The reference from the previous project implementation should be concluded by the start of the project. However, as mentioned in the call document, "The co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria which apply to the lead applicant itself, except that they do not need to prove that they have already managed a grant amounting to 50% of the amount applied for."

58. Q: Would you have a list or link to Finnish institutions seeking partner African institutions to form a consortium Interested in the Regional Teachers Initiative for Africa Call?

A: Unfortunately, we do not have the resources for assisting in partnership building. Yet, maybe it helps you that the eligibility rules allow you to partner with any European university / research institutions. This entity does not have to be Finnish. As the funding originates from the EU, there is no preference for a Finnish institution as partner, but all European institutions are equally appreciated.

59. Q: I have two questions about eligibility: 1) I am an English academic working in an English university. Would I be eligible as a PI (Principal Investigator/team leader) on this call please? And: 2) In terms of having previously managed a project of up to half the value of the sought amount, who is the person/ agent who needs to have managed such a project before please? Is it me as an individual or is it my institution?

A: 1) Yes, you are. The call is not restricted to EU Member states but UK institutions and citizens are equally eligible. 2) This refers to the institution, the legal entity signing the contract.

60.Q: "The lead applicant and/or co-applicant may not submit more than one application for this Call for Proposals and be awarded more than one Grant Agreement under this Call for Proposals."

Question 1): Does the limit of maximum one application refer to an individual applicant (legal person) or to an institution (legal entity)?

Question 2): If the limit of maximum one application refers to an institution (legal entity), in what way is this limit controlled at application stage? In the RTIA Call for Research Proposals, how is the institution's legal representative notified when an applicant is submitting an application (to prevent multiple applications from the same institution and/or to prevent unauthorized applications from the institution)?

A: 1) This refers primarily to the institutions. All individuals suggested as staff / researchers in the project should be affiliated with the lead or co-applicants. 2) This is controlled in the eligibility check. The faculties within a university should coordinate among their own university and agree which faculty is submitting the proposal or find ways to cooperate among the interested faculties to avoid multiple proposals from the same legal entity. The RTIA has a strong focus on regionality and through this rule we aim to ensure that one or two strong universities would have several RTIA grants to manage.

61. Q: "Provisionally selected applications: A copy of the lead applicant's most recent financial statements (income statement and balance sheet for the last financial year), public bodies being exempted of this." Can you give an example of what kind of financial statements would be required from a higher education institution in EU (university-wide statements? Faculty-wide statements? applicant's personal income statements? Or other, please clarify?) or are higher education institutions exempted of this?

Is this required from a higher education institution in EU or are higher education institutions exempted of this?

A: This requirement applies to the institution, that is, the legal entity signing the contract. Hence, it would be the financial statements of the institution.

62. Q: Public law legal entity form (public actor): is this required from a higher education institution in Finland or are higher education institutions exempted of this?

A: The form is required because EDUFI receives applications from different countries. Finnish universities do not have to fill in the legal entity form as there is a law on universities in Finland. Legal entity form is mandatory attachment. You can attach the legal entity form and write on it "As agreed by email with EDUFI, attachment of registration documents is not necessary for Finnish universities".

63. Q: Proving the financial capacity: can you give a detailed example of the university-wide financial statements which the applicant from an institution such as a university would need to provide if provisionally selected?

A: We will ask in the contracting phase the financial statement of the institution. In case we will need more information, we will be asking this separately.

64. What happens in case a organization submits two applications?

A: In case there will be several applications by the same legal entity, we will contact the institution and ask them to name that proposal that shall be evaluated. We will give 7 days for the institution to do this. We encourage all

institutions to share information within themselves to avoid such situation and will share this advice on our website.

65.Q: Where can I find the Standard terms and conditions?

A: You can find them on the ApplyForGrants service at:

<https://www.haeavustuksia.fi/en/haku/va-oph-2024-52/hakuilmoitus/perustiedot>.

66.Q: Must a Finnish university as the lead applicant also fill in Annex 3 "Legal Entity form" and Annex 5 "Previous project experience"? If so: In addition to Annex 3, the applicant also needs to provide "A COPY OF THE RESOLUTION, LAW, ORDER OR DECISION ESTABLISHING THE ENTITY CONCERNED". Would any of the attached document, Finnish universities act or a copy of the registration document from YTJ, suffice for a university such as Hanken School of Economics?

A: Finnish universities do not have to fill in the legal entity form as there is a law on universities in Finland. Legal entity form is mandatory attachment, but Finnish applicant can attach the legal entity form and write on it "As agreed by email with EDUFI, attachment of registration documents is not necessary for Finnish universities".

For Annex 5, please select the most relevant and recent references. No need to list more than 5 references. Only lead applicant shall submit the Annex 5.

67.Q: Will the co-applicants also become government grant recipients and thus their part of the awarded funding is paid directly to them? We found the below two paragraphs in the call text and the interpretation is not completely clear to us.

"If the grants are awarded to them, any co-applicants will become the government grant recipients in the project, with the lead applicant"

"If the grant is awarded to it, the lead applicant becomes the government grant recipient. The government grant recipient is the main point of contact for the contracting authority. It shall design and coordinate the project implementation."

After the final awarding of the grant, will there be a contracting phase? Will the contract be signed by all partners or only the lead partner?

A: Yes, there will be a contracting phase. Funding is paid to the lead applicant. According to the [standard terms and conditions](#), the process is as follows:

Terms concerning the forwarding of a government grant: Obligation to conclude an agreement

A discretionary government grant may be redistributed to another organisation (co-applicant) only if this has been mentioned in the grant

agreement. The government grant main recipient and the project partners (co-applicants) must then conclude an agreement on the use of the grant that will be redistributed in such a manner that all the conditions and restrictions concerning the recipient will also obligate the other partners (co-applicants).

The agreement between the government grant main recipient and the partners (co-applicants) as well as an account on the use of the redistributed grant must be submitted for information to the Finnish National Agency for Education upon request. The government grant main recipient is responsible for the use of the discretionary government grant also for the part redistributed to the partners (co-applicants).

Please also review the full terms at <https://www.haeavustuksia.fi/en/haku/va-oph-2024-52/vakioehdot/yleista>.

68. Is teaching buy-out an eligible cost for lead applicants and / or co-applicants?

A: Primarily the funding is for research, but if teaching is directly linked with the project outcomes, contracting teaching is allowed according to the procurement rules outlined in the general conditions.

69.Q: For the 10% co-funded portion of the budget, would a 'Chair contribution' and / or funding from 'Chair projects' be eligible. For example, financing sourced from academic posts such as a Chair in Early Years Education at a European University (university located in Ireland) and or a University located in South Africa?

A: The positions to be funded by the project have to directly contribute to the project outcomes and research to be carried out by the project.

70. For the 10% co-funded portion of the budget, can you please provide an example of what the beneficiaries own contribution in terms of staff costs might include?

A: This can be e.g. part of the salaries of the staff. Please note that voluntary work does not qualify as co-funding.

71.For the 10% co-funded portion what would be an example of an eligible third party financial contribution?

A: The 10% co-financing should come from the lead applicant or co-applicant(s) or from the lead and co-applicants jointly.

72. Are the structure costs i.e. 7% overhead (indirect costs) eligible for the lead applicant and all co-applicants (partners) in the consortium?

A: Each partner in the consortium (lead and its co-partners) is eligible for 7% indirect budget.

73. What is the sign-off process on the partner mandate forms? Does the form need to be approved centrally by the University's Research Office and signed by the University's Vice-President for Research or equivalent?

A: Each organization has its own process. Please follow the specific procedure that each organization has for signing such documents.

74. Q: In Research Plan template, Guidance for section 5 states “to provide a detailed open access dissemination plan”. Can you please confirm that: 1) This must be provided as part of the application process? Or can it be produced during inception phase? Can this document be provided as an annex?

A: As the project implementation period is quite short (max 18 months), we wish to see clear ideas on how the dissemination is planned to be carried out. Due to the focus on policy-relevance in this call, this is a crucial part of the work besides the research. Hence, this cannot be produced during the inception, but it can surely be amended during that period. Additionally, it cannot be provided as annex but has to be part of the narrative proposal.

75. Q: In Research Plan template, how many references are needed? Are there specific requirements to follow? For example, do they have to be from donors, for projects delivered in a specific sector/country, within a specific timeframe etc.? Are references required for lead applicants only or for co-applicants as well?

A: One reference is enough, please select the one that you see as most relevant for the project you are proposing. References are required from the lead applicant.

There is a template for the reference, please use that. The template is available at www.edu.fi/call2024 (Annex 5, Previous Project Reference). We require only one previous project reference as this is used to evaluate the capacity of the organization to manage funds, but you can add couple of more (max 5) in case you wish to do that.

76. In budget template, what do “tasks” refer to? Is this outcomes? What do you mean exactly with Knowledge Management under cross-cutting activities? Is any guidance available on budget preparation beyond what is included in the call's guidelines?

A: This is the sub-subject and it can take the form you feel best suiting your project structure. E.g. an outcome, or research area.

Knowledge management refers to data, knowledge, information management, and links closely with the dissemination plan: how you plan to engage your stakeholders in your research and inform them on the results of the research.

No, unfortunately, we do not have any other guidance note on the budget

preparation.

77.Q: Is the funding aimed at schools only, or can this be extended to university undergraduate/postgraduate teachers (trainers)?

A: RTIA focus is on the improving teacher training and teacher governance in Sub-Saharan Africa, similarly as the research call. Hence, the research should focus on teacher related issues working in early childhood education, primary and lower secondary levels or teacher training that is aimed to educate teachers for early childhood education, primary and lower secondary levels. Unfortunately, the teacher training aimed to educate teachers to teach in other areas for other levels is excluded. Naturally, proposals focus on teacher trainers for the earlier mentioned levels are highly welcome.

78.Q: What costs can we charge for an audit? For EU projects, we have X company (name anonymized) as the auditor, can we also commission them or are we provided with an auditor? In what form must proof of costs be provided during the project period? e.g. timesheets, pay slips, invoices?

A: If you mean the maximum amount of an audit, it depends on your consortium size, more partners more expensive. X company is among top 4 the best International Accountancy firms in the world, definitely can be commissioned for the auditing. We will not provide a list of auditors, but the lead partner will decide this themselves.

79.Q: It is planned that we will take over the management of the consortium. Does each partner in a consortium invoice EDUFI directly or does the consortium leader have to take over the invoicing for all partners? And therefore also check the partners' receipts (e.g. salary statements etc.)?

A: The lead partner is responsible for collecting and managing their project partners' reports, both narrative and financial reports.

80.Q: How is the project billing structure organized?

A: Payments of the funding: the initial pre-finance payment 40%, once the partner agreement are signed, within few weeks time after the signing of the contract. 2nd 40% pre-finance payment will be made once the interim narrative and financial report have been approved and at least 70% expenses of the first payment has incurred. And the final 20% balance payment will be disbursed after the final reports have been audited and approved. Estimated time during December 2026. Please note that the funding includes a 10% co-funding from the lead applicant/co-applicants.

81.Q: Overheads policy: Could you please provide more detailed information about the overheads policy? Specifically, we would like to understand what types of indirect costs are allowed under the overheads allocation, as well as any percentage limitations or other restrictions that we should consider while planning our budget.

A: Overhead/Indirect costs are usually costs which are not directly linked to the specific activities or tasks within the project. For example, organizational operational costs, e.g., utilities, repairs, and staff members' phone bills. Overheads are calculated automatically, which will be 7% of your direct costs' total.

82.Q: Project focus and eligible educational levels: We understand the initiative is designed to support teacher preparation and development within the African education system. Could you clarify if the call is exclusively for secondary education, or if it could also encompass projects focused on the preparation and professional development of university-level teachers?

A: The focus of the call is improving the teacher governance and teacher training in early childhood, primary and lower secondary education. You can propose a research project that works with university teachers that educate future teachers for these levels. Other university teachers or VET teachers unfortunately do not fall within the theme of the call.

83.Q: The call consists of two themes. Can two different themes from the same institution/university apply for each themes? Specifically, one theme focusing on teacher wellbeing and the other on teachers' professional development.

A: No, this is not possible. Unfortunately, there can only one application per legal entity (lead or co-applicant), hence, the regulation applied to institutions.

84.Q: 1) Are all the sub-teams under the main teams be considered in the proposal or study? For example in TPD, pedagogical innovation, curriculum development, inclusiveness, mentorship programs. 2) Can comparative or experimental studies be allowed in the sub-Saharan African countries?

A: 1) No, this has been left for the applicants to decide. You can address one of the focus areas or all of them. There is no priority given on addressing them all. 2) Yes, no methodological regulations are set by us. Only restriction to consider is the time available for implementing the research. The research implementation period is maximum 18 months.

85. Q: Regarding the audit report, does it have to be an audit report for a specific project (previously funded project)? Or can it be the official annual financial statement of organisation, which has also been audited by an external partner?

A: The financial statements are requested from the lead applicant at the phase of the contract, where an audit report is required from the lead applicant when the requested funding from EDUFI is higher than 750 000 EUR. Thus, these requests refer to the institution and the purpose is to make sure that the organization has the financial capacity to implement and manage the project.

86. Q : Under the Eligibility point 2.1.1. it is written "have already managed at least one grant (of public funds) that has already ended (not longer than five years ago) and that amounts to 50% of the amount applied for.". However, under point 2.3 it is written "An external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the accounts of the lead applicant for the last available financial year where the total amount of the grant is above EUR 750,000."Can you please clarify the second point regarding the amount of 750,000 EUR and what exactly is meant by this? If we apply for a 800,000.00 EUR grant, then we only need to provide an audit report for a previous grant amounting to 400,000.00 EUR, right?

A: These are separate issues. The lead applicant shall fill in the annex nr. 5 "previous project experience" to demonstrate that it has the capacity to manage a grant of 50% of the size applied for. The audit report requirement for grants applied from EDUFI that go over 750 000 EUR is for the institution not for the project, and the reference for 750 000 EUR is for a grant being applied from us – not what has been implemented previously.

87. Q: The recipient of the grant to have own contribution of 10% of total budget for 18 months need more explanation:

- Can this be covered by own work?
- How to mark this in the budget?

A: The 10% own funding can be covered e.g. by staff employment. You do not need to mark it specifically in the budget. The budget is drawn for the full amount (EDUFI contribution + 10% co-funding). At the end of the funding, EDUFI will calculate the final payment so that the 10% co-funding is taken into account.

88. Q: 1) Overhead is mentioned to be 5%, but our university uses 15 overheads in general. How to match these? 2) Is the remuneration of research stuff according to local rate or international rate? 3) Can we also hire some supporting / admins staff in addition to Research staff? 4) Is there a list of previously awarded projects?

A: 1) Overhead/Indirect for this call is 7% (instead of 5%), on top of that we have reserved 5% for contingency budget (which can be used to cover unpredicted eligible incurred project costs, note, HR costs are not eligible under this budget). Could you then budget the difference, e.g., under the "Operational Costs" which is also meant to cover the general operational related costs. Another possibility is to see if some of your overhead's costs can be budgeted under the Direct Costs categories, of costs which should be directly contributed to the project activities. 2) It is according to the payment scale of their own institutions (Finnish contract having → payment as typical in Finland, Kenyan contract → payment as typical in Kenya). 3) Yes you can. Please provide justifications for this in the narrative under workplan. 4) This is the first call under this funding instrument, hence, no previous awarded projects existing.

89. Q: Can we include a small travel budget for our *associate partners* in our RTIA project travel budget? I.e. if we wanted to invite a representative

of an associate partner to a project activity to be organised in another consortium member country.

A: travel costs are generally eligible costs in the call but unfortunately the costs of associates cannot be covered from the RTIA budget.

90.Q: In Annex 3, who is supposed to sign? Is it the Principal Investigator or someone like the Vice-Chancellor of the University? In Annex 4, who is supposed to sign the Annex 4 Mandate Statement of the co-applicants? Is it the team leader in the applying institution or a legal person such as Vice-Chancellor/Registrar?

A: the legal entity form and the mandate for co-applicants should be signed by a person that has the authority to sign for the organization. These are normally people in leadership positions.

91.What are the academic/professional qualifications required for the PI and Co-Applicants?

A: We have not set any minimum criteria for the PI (Principal Investigator/team leader) and the co-applicants (we assume here you refer to researchers and not to institutions). The CVs of the key staff are evaluated against the suggested project results. The staff should be competent and experienced to provide the results suggested in the proposal.

92.Q: 1) Should audit costs be budgeted in the Lead Applicant institution budget? 2) How much should be budgeted for the audit? 3) Will the auditor directly audit all partners in the project? 4) Or will the host institution have additional responsibilities during the audit process?

A: 1) Yes, the audit cost should be budgeted in the lead applicant's budget. 2) This varies from country to country, hence we cannot give you a sum. 3) It can be the same auditor, e.g. international audit companies operate all over the world, or the consortium identifies companies in each country that are able to do it. 4) We will provide an information note for conducting audits for those projects that are selected for funding which will outline the responsibilities.

93.Q: 1) We are in the processes of drafting a proposal to the call, and wanted to make sure that training pilots and/or other teacher professional development interventions can be included under proposal under theme 2: 1.4.2 THEME 2: Teacher professional development, Inclusiveness in Teacher Professional Development. Are that kind of activities allowed? 2) What if the proposed pilot activities would be essential to gather new evidence (quantitative and qualitative data) of effective ways to implement teacher professional development; thus the proposed interventions would be in-built to the proposed research activities, which are expected to feed into both practice and policy-making in collaboration with a multi-stakeholder group. Would this kind of approach be acceptable?

A: 1) The call is directed at research; hence it is not meant for creating training pilots or programmes etc. The results of the projects should be policy and practice relevant research that will be disseminated to stakeholders. 2) Generally, yes, if the pilot is directly linked with research (e.g. presented as part of the methodology). Primary concern is that the implementation period that we can give to the project is very short, only 18 months, hence, thinking will this be doable in the given timeframe. But, surely, this will be an issue that you will address in your narrative proposal. EDUFI unfortunately cannot give you a firm yes or no answer as the proposals are evaluated by an academic panel which will then assess the coherence of the research and its feasibility. In order not to misuse resources at your end or ours, it is important to keep in mind that this is a research call and not a action/ institutional capacity building call.

94. Q: 1) Could you confirm that a lead applicant located in the UK and eligible for the grant funding can utilise staff located in the US for this grant, where the US staff are directly employed by the non-profit parent company of the lead applicant? 2) Can you please confirm whether overheads should be counted as operational or structure costs? The explanation of operational costs are “necessary and indispensable costs for achieving the objectives and results of the project”, whereas structure costs are “costs related to the achievement of the social purpose of the government grant recipient”. We are a not-for-profit organisation so our costs are all “necessary and indispensable” as we don’t factor profit into our business planning assumptions, but a 7% cap isn’t financially viable for us as it doesn’t cover our direct costs.

A: 1) Yes, this is a workable arrangement, if the staff has a contract with the UK based institution. 2) Operational costs are those costs that are directly occurred DUE to the project; hence, these are e.g. activity costs. Structure costs are same as overhead; hence these are the costs that would occur to you also without the project, e.g. office, internet etc.

95. Q: Does this call (Theme 2) for research allow creating new teacher training programmes and testing/piloting/evidence creation of them? Or is it only for doing resresearch on existing programmes and policies?

A: The call is directed at research; hence it is not meant for creating training programmes etc. The results of the projects should be policy and practice relevant research that will be disseminated to stakeholders.

96. Q: An external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the accounts of the lead applicant for the last available financial year where the total amount of the grant is above EUR 750,000. Can you please confirm that the total amount above EUR 750,000 refers to the annual turnover and not to an individual grant?

A: EUR 750 000 refers to the grant size applied from EDUFI. In case you apply for a grant of 750 000 EUR or more (max. 800 000 EUR), then we will require to see an audit report before the contracting.

97. Q: 1) The budget template calculates the 7% indirect costs twice (i.e. in the partners' tab and the totals tab). Could you clarify if this is an error in the formula? Or does it mean that each partner gets 7% in indirect costs and then the lead gets an additional 7% for management costs? 2) Is EU providing 90% of the minimum/maximum budget or the full economic cost of projects can be over €800K (e.g. €880K)? In other words, we would like to know if, in the template, we should indicate figures at 100% FEC (i.e. maximum budget of €880,000 so EU awards 90% of that) or indicate 90% FEC (i.e. show a maximum budget of €800,000 and then EU awards 90% of this figure)? 3) There is a provision that 5% contingency can be included in the budget. Is this within the €800,000 mark or above?

A: 1) In case you meant for the Excel line 55 on the summary tab, it was calculations of administrative cost 7% for EDUFI's partner organization, which is based on the final grants for research projects. For research project's lead partner and its co-partners, each partner gets 1 time 7% indirect budget based on their total of the direct cost budget. 2) 90% is the maximum funding for this project call, which corresponds to the EUR 800 000 for one project, and the remaining 10% needs to be self-funded by the applicant organization and its co-partners. In this case, total budget for this project will be EUR 880 000. In budget application, full budget should be included in the budget template. 3) The 5% contingency is included in the budget, taking example of the abovementioned budget, it will be included in the total budget of EUR 880 000.

98. Q: Are there any formal requirements to the position and/or academic merits of the project leader? Is it possible to share leadership of the project between two participants? And lastly, if you can advise us on other issues concerning administration and leadership of the project, in regard to the short timeframe of the project, it will be highly appreciated.

A: we do not have any specific requirements for the team leader (PI) in this call. Naturally, the CV(s) or the team leader(s) would be good to provide as attachments and they are evaluated against the content of the project. Surely, the position can be divided between two team leaders. It would be good to explain this choice in the part explaining the work division in the consortium. The timeframe of the project is unfortunately quite limited. We suggest that the projects are designed so that they take this into account and aims for results which are achievable in this timeframe.

99. Q: I have two questions: In section 2.1.1 you refer to the lead applicant must "have already managed at least one grant (of public funds) that has already ended (not longer than five years ago) and that amounts to 50% of the amount applied for". How do you define public funds? E.g. is a grant from a Foundation allowed? Similarly, if a project was funded by the South African government (a commissioned project that we won the tender for) – is that allowed?

Secondly, Criteria 1 includes: "reference from a previous project from the lead applicant". However, it is not clear what format that reference

should be in. Annex 5 is Previous project experience template, but it does not appear to require endorsement by the project funder. Please can you clarify?

A: 1) References from both Foundations and tenders won from public funds are both accepted to prove the capacity to manage grants. 2) Yes, please use the template provided on the call website (www.edu.fi/call2024). We are not requesting for the endorsement by the project funder. In case of doubt, we'll be asking for more details (during the eligibility check).

100. Q: Please can I check my eligibility to serve as lead applicant for this fund? (Personal work experience described here.)

A: The requirement for the reference is for the institution primarily to show capacity to manage funds, hence, the reference does not have to be from the PI (Principal Investigator/team leader) him/herself. As such, the reference you have seems to provide proof for that purpose as long as the project was implemented by the organization you now represent / is the lead applicant in the proposal. The references from the PI would be good to list in the CV, they will then be evaluated as part of the thematic expertise in the CV evaluation.

101. Q: Please clarify these: 1) The lead applicant must have already managed at lead one grant (of public funds) that has already ended (not longer than 5 years ago) and that amounts to 50% of the amount applied for AND 2) the lead applicant must dispose of financial statements certified by an independent body (audit or statutory commissioner). Those statements must not be older than 2 years.

A: The lead applicant shall fill in the annex 5 "previous project experience" to demonstrate that it has managed a grant that is at least 50% of the amount applied for from EDUFI. Financial statements are required from the institution. So the first requirement is to prove capacity to manage projects, the second is to prove that the institution has financial capacity.

In case there are any questions submitted on time (by November 8th, 2024) that are not answered in this document, a separate Q&A document will be published on the call website at edu.fi/call2024.