

Q&A from the Informational Webinar held on 4 February 2022

Please click this [link](#) to listen to the recording of the webinar.

In addition the following questions and answers were provided in writing at the request of applicants:

Questions and Answers:

Question 1. From all the CEPF guidance it was (and is) very clear that the RIT consortium needs to have physical presence (preferably organisations) in all 4 countries. That is clear. However there was no condition mentioned in the call texts, that the lead applicant must be based in one of the 4 countries. If the lead applicant is based outside of the 4 countries, but it has local presence through its consortium members, the lead applicant's bank account will also be outside of the 4 countries. Please can you confirm that this is OK within the CEPF rules.

Answer 1. Indeed what you are proposing is within the CEPF rules.

Question 2. It is mentioned in the request for proposals "All applicants must budget for a mid-term evaluation and for a final evaluation. Budgeted costs should cover rental of the meeting venue, meals and refreshments for participants, hotel and transportation of participants from their country to the retreat location, and per diems (meals only) not covered directly. One or two representatives per beneficiary should be invited, as well as any other stakeholders (donors, experts, etc.) that you consider appropriate. ". In this context, does the consortium have to budget the costs related to the parties involved in the mid-term and final evaluations (meeting place, participants' meals, hotel and transport, etc.) as well as those related to the international consultants in responsible for conducting mid-term and final evaluations (fees, per diem, travel, etc.)?

Answer 2. The RIT will have to cover the costs related to grant recipients. For the other parties concerned (donors, experts), only meals are covered and possibly travel allowances. The mid-term and final evaluations are designed by the RIT and facilitated by the RIT and the CEPF Secretariat. We generally do not use consultants for mid-term and final evaluations. Secretariat costs are covered directly by CEPF.

Question 3. The RFP states "For the purposes of the ITB proposal, assume there will be 40 small grants and 40 large grants. The actual number may vary, depending on the size of the grants awarded...Applicants should assume that they will receive up to five applications for each grant awarded, so a large number of applications will need to be reviewed (approximately 400 applications for 80 grants awarded). **Is it possible to specify the frequency recommended by CEPF for the launch of calls for applications for grant applications? Is it monthly, quarterly or semi-annually?**

Answer 3. There is no recommended frequency. However, to limit the number of applications for a given call for proposals and thus provide the means for rapid analysis and contractualization of the selected proposals, we recommend geographically and/or thematically targeted calls for proposals. With this method, calls for proposals are likely to be relatively frequent.

Question 4. When after receipt of funds on the RIT account should the first applications be selected?

Answer 4. There will be two separate contracts: firstly a contract between CEPF and RIT as administrator of the investment phase with management funds available immediately (July) and secondly (September) , the operating funds for the Small Grants mechanism will be made available to the RIT.

Question 5. Does the RIT have time to carry out a systemic analysis upstream via a collective intelligence process in the target regions of the program before the launch of the calls for applications?

Answer 5. Yes for the Smalls Grants (the RIT can decide when to launch the calls for projects and it does not have to be in 2022). No for Large Grants, because the CEPF Secretariat (responsible for calls for proposals for large grants) wants to launch a call for proposals quickly enough so that at least the restoration work can begin as soon as possible.

Question 6. At this stage of the RFP, **does CEPF agree with holding regional workshops? If we consult the actors upstream, does that create a problem of conflict of interest?**

Answer 6. We see no problem with this, quite the contrary.

Question 7. It is mentioned in the RFP "Candidates must propose, by name, a unique and dedicated Team Leader with appropriate managerial and technical experience and fluency in written and spoken English...Team Leader as as primary point of contact for the CEPF Secretariat, strategic lead for the portfolio, primary contact for national governments and senior members of civil society. **Is it possible to have more details on the expected profile of the Team Leader?**

Answer 7. Ideally the Team Leader is the primary contact for the CEPF Secretariat, strategic leader for the portfolio, primary contact for national governments and senior members of civil society. In any case, the Team Leader will be the main contact for the CEPF Secretariat and the strategic leader for the portfolio at the RIT level. The RIT could consider a team within which there would be a focal point for external relations. Typically, project managers share portfolio grants for day-to-day management.

Question 8. The Biotope company appears twice through its headquarters and its representation in Madagascar. Being one and the same company, I wonder about the presence of the same entity under two names and therefore its ability to respond with two different strategies. Perhaps it is simply a coordination error between the Madagascar and France teams, in which case my question is irrelevant.

Answer 8. Regarding your question about Biotope, it is indeed the same organization and they could have applied with a single application. However, I assume that they have decided to apply separately for the Expression of Interest to allow more time to decide whether it is the headquarters or the representation in Madagascar that will apply as Lead Partner. In any case, if it is indeed a single legal entity, only one application from Biotope will be admissible in response to the Call for Proposals.

Question 9. Concerning IUCN Netherlands: although it is not a country program attached to IUCN International and manager of grants, this entity is nevertheless linked to regional representations through its funding and membership of the same network. Can the presence of IUCN NL, in the event of a contract being won, create a conflict of interest vis-à-vis IUCN ESARO?

Answer 9. If the relationship with IUCN ESARO is not clearly defined in their application (if they apply for the Proposal) we will be sure to ask them for clarification and ensure that there is no conflict of interest and, on the contrary, a strong collaboration. In any case, IUCN NL and IUCN ESARO are two separate legal entities and will be considered as such in the context of this RIT recruitment process.

Question 10. For small grants, is it confirmed that the ConservationGrants platform will be used as for Large Grants?

Answer 10. Yes, until further notice. In any case, there are no changes planned. However, small grants do not use CG ***like*** large ones. The small grantees do not have access to the portal, it is the RIT who enters the information into the database.

Question 11. How frequent is the external audit of RIT accounts carried out?

Answer 11. Typically every 2 years, after that depends on each ITB and can be annual.

Question 12. Should this audit be included in the RIT budget or is it part of the CEPF annual external audit?

Answer 12. This must be included in the RIT budget.

Question 13. Does CEPF's annual external audit "go down" to small grants (or what is its specific scope of investigation)?

Answer 13. Yes, the audit (typically every two years) should include the operations of the RIT as well as that of the Small Grants Facility – The TOR for the audit are attached.

Question 14. Is the agreement for the operation of the RIT signed between the RIT and Conservation International Madagascar or Headquarters?

Answer 14. RIT and CI Headquarters.

Question 15. Can the role of C.I. in the institutional structure (functional, hierarchical) of the RIT be clarified in relation to that of CEPF?

Response 15. The CEPF Secretariat ensures that the RIT adheres to the ToRs and oversees the implementation, monitoring and evaluation, administration and finances of the entire portfolio. The Secretariat works jointly with the RIT for the awarding and supervision of the Large Grants and is the principal responsible, while the RIT is the principal responsible for the Small Grants which it manages autonomously.

Question 16. At this stage of the call for proposals, we have noted that it is necessary to produce a descriptive memorandum, CV and budget (according to the template provided). Are there other items needed?

Answer 16. Only what is requested in the call for proposals should be produced. Before contracting, other documents may be requested from the finalist lead organization.