



Terms of reference for the European Topic Centre on Air pollution, Transport, Noise and Industrial pollution (2019-2021)

Reference: Open call for proposals No OCP/EEA/ACC/18/001-ETC/ATNI

Closing date: 30.4.2018

1. Background information

1.1 The European Environment Agency and the European Environment Information and Observation Network

The European Environment Agency (EEA) is a main source of information of the European Union (EU) and its Member States (MS) in developing, implementing and evaluating European environment policies. The EEA aims to support sustainable development and to help achieve significant and measurable improvement in Europe's environment through the provision of timely, targeted, relevant and reliable information to policy-making agents and the public.

Established in 1990 and operational in Copenhagen since 1994, the EEA is the hub of the European Environment Information and Observation Network (Eionet) ⁽¹⁾, a partnership network consisting of the EEA itself, six European Topic Centres (ETCs) and a network of around 1000 experts from 39 countries in over 350 national environment agencies and other bodies dealing with environment information. These are the National Focal Points (NFPs) and the National Reference Centres (NRCs). Through Eionet, the EEA collects environment-related data and information, which is made available through various report series, briefings and the EEA website ⁽²⁾. The European Commission, the European Parliament, national and regional authorities in the member countries, the scientific world and a wide range of non-governmental organisations are among the regular users of the databases and information products.

Institutionally, the EEA is one of the Agencies of the EU. The functioning of the EEA and Eionet are described in the EEA regulation ⁽³⁾. The EEA, which is open to all nations sharing its objectives, has currently 33 member countries ⁽⁴⁾ and 6 cooperating countries in the West Balkans ⁽⁵⁾, jointly referred to as the EEA39.

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.eionet.europa.eu/>

⁽²⁾ <https://www.eea.europa.eu>

⁽³⁾ (EC) Regulation No. 401/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the EEA and Eionet (codified version, OJ L126 of 21 May 2009, p13, see: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32009R0401>).

⁽⁴⁾ These are the 28 MS of the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey.

⁽⁵⁾ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, as well as Kosovo under the UN Security Council Resolution No 1244/99.

The EEA and Eionet contribute to the European Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS), a distributed, integrated, web-enabled information system based on a network of public information providers sharing environmental data and information. It builds on existing e-infrastructure, systems and services in the member countries, EU institutions, and main international and regional partner organisations.

As stated above, part of Eionet are currently six European Topic Centres (ETCs) covering the following topics: 'Air pollution and Climate change Mitigation', 'Climate Change impacts, vulnerability and Adaptation', 'Inland, Coastal and Marine waters', 'Urban, Land and Soil systems', 'Biological Diversity', and 'Waste and Materials in a Green Economy'.

Having regard to the expiry of the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) concerning the ETC on Air pollution and Climate change Mitigation on 18 August 2018, the EEA launches this call with a view to identifying the consortium which will continue the work in the topic area of air pollution, transport, noise and industrial pollution, from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2021.

1.2 Role of European Topic Centres (ETCs)

ETCs are, according to the EEA regulation ⁽⁶⁾ and in practice, an important instrument supporting the EEA through the execution of sizeable, continuous, well-defined tasks with the involvement of EEA countries. Tasks focus on the harmonisation of monitoring of the environment in EEA countries, the compilation of the resulting data in databases, the processing of the information including the use of models to describe and analyse the present and future state of the environment, and the production of indicators to communicate the findings to various users.

ETCs are a part of and support to Eionet. Their activities have an important networking-component involving experts in EEA countries in the harmonisation, quality assessment and exchange of data and/or information, capacity-building in EEA countries through country visits and meetings with all Eionet country experts. ETCs are sparring partners for countries discussing options for improving national information systems. Networking with EEA countries also includes their involvement in indicator analysis and assessment. Under the overall guidance of the EEA, leading, steering and supervising their work, ETCs are also expected to cooperate amongst themselves on crosscutting projects.

The role of ETCs in supporting EU legislation implementation has been also a key element of EEA activities towards its support to Commission work. In some cases some capacity building with MS is involved in these reporting and assessments activities.

In order to assume this role, ETCs are expected to assemble the best expertise in Europe covering the full geographical area of EEA member countries, to handle data in their topic areas and analyse environmental and climate change data with regard to societal and economic developments relevant to environmental, climate change and sectoral policies and achieving sustainable development.

⁽⁶⁾ The EEA regulation, see footnote 3, describes in Article 4(4)-(6) European Topic Centres and their tasks as part of Eionet.

1.3 Agreements

The successful consortium will be awarded a FPA for a maximum period of 36 months, starting from the date of signature and not exceeding 31 December 2021. The FPA will be implemented through specific grant agreements (SAs), which shall be valid for a period of 12 months. Annexes to such SAs will include detailed description of the tasks to be performed and of the deliverables to be provided which shall be decided upon by the EEA and ETCs taking into account the requirements of all parts of Eionet and other stakeholders.

The estimated total value of the FPA ranges between EUR 3,960,000.00 and EUR 5,700,000.00 over a maximum period of 36 months. However, the total value of the annual budget for each SA will be subject to available funds from the general budget of the EU and the priorities set in the EEA annual work programme.

All grants are subject to co-financing by the consortium concerned (minimum 10% of the total eligible costs ⁽⁷⁾).

The FPA will be signed between the EEA and the appointed coordinator of the consortium to whom the other consortium partners confer power of attorney for the purposes of submission of the proposal and signature of the FPA and SAs and any subsequent amendments thereto

For further details, reference is made to the draft FPA and draft SA attached as annex 5.

2. Future demands on EEA work in the area of air pollution transport, noise and industrial pollution 2019-2021

2.1 General context

Within the European Union, the 7th Environment Action Programme ⁽⁸⁾ recognises the need that air pollution, transport, noise and industrial pollution policy commitments are properly addressed and implemented.

In terms of environmental stressors, within Europe emissions of air pollutants have decreased in recent decades and ambient air quality has been improving with respect to certain air pollutants. Nevertheless, recent assessments confirm there is still a long way to go before long-term targets to protect human health and the environment are met. Substantial impacts on human health, ecosystems, crops and forests still occur due to particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), nitrogen dioxide, ground-level ozone, and other hazardous pollutants in ambient air and the deposition of a variety of substances.

Environmental noise is recognised as a growing environment and health challenge. Scientific understanding of its impact upon our environment has increased significantly in the last decade and noise is now regarded as being a pervasive and harmful anthropogenic pollutant affecting human health as well as causing adverse impacts upon animals and marine life.

A significant part of EEA's annual activities focuses on supporting the implementation of current EU and international legislation in the fields of air pollution and noise. Regular activities are also performed to support sectoral legislation and assessments in areas such as transport and industrial pollution. In addition, over the past few years a number of key European and international legislative instruments addressing these areas have been, or will

⁽⁷⁾ The 10% rule of minimum co-financing is applied towards the consortium as a whole. To what extent partners contribute to this co-financing is an internal consortium matter.

⁽⁸⁾ <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/action-programme/>

continue to be, subject to EU regulatory fitness (REFIT) checks ⁽⁹⁾, revisions, and further development.

EEA supports reporting obligations under the following EU and international legislation:

- **air quality:** the Ambient Air Quality Directives 2004/50/EC; 2008/50/EC and associated implementing provisions 2011/850/EC. The European Commission is presently undertaking a fitness check of the two air quality directives ⁽¹⁰⁾. This is scheduled for completion by the end of 2019;
- **air pollutant emissions:** the new National Emission Ceilings (NEC) Directive 2016/2284 agreed in December 2016, and the UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP) including the 2012 amended Gothenburg Protocol;
- **road transport:** Regulations on reporting of CO₂ from new passenger vehicles (443/2009) and light duty vehicles (vans) (510/2011), as well as future reporting foreseen under the currently-proposed regulation on CO₂ from new heavy duty vehicles ⁽¹¹⁾. Proposed revisions to the two former regulations to monitor progress toward (stricter) targets for CO₂ from new passenger vehicles and vans are also expected;
- **environmental noise:** the Environmental Noise Directive (2002/49/EC), for which the European Commission published the results of its REFIT check at the end of 2016 ⁽¹²⁾;
- **industrial pollution:** streamlined data flows under the Regulation on the European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (E-PRTR) 166/2006 and Large Combustion Plant Directive 2001/80/EC, including the planned EU Registry on Industrial Sites supporting implementation of the Industrial Emissions Directive 2010/75/EU ⁽¹³⁾.

Thus many of EEA's future activities across the areas of air pollution, transport, noise, and industrial pollution are taking place against a substantial and changing policy background. Many of the developments will lead to changes in the environmental information reporting requirements and assessment needs for countries and the European Union as a whole. Both the EEA and its ETC will therefore need to adapt to these changing requirements in the years ahead.

In this context, substantial upgrades of Reportnet, the current online infrastructure used by the EEA's member countries to report electronically environmental data and information flows are therefore scheduled to take place between 2017 and 2020. These will also contribute specifically to the establishment of an e-reporting platform under the Energy Union, as foreseen under the proposed Energy Union Governance.

Finally, given the increasing scientific and political understanding that several air pollutants are also climate forcers, there is an increasing policy recognition that air quality and climate change can – to a certain extent - be addressed together by defining policies and measures developed through an integrated approach. Thus assessment work relating to mitigation of both climate change and air pollution will continue to be an important element in EEA's

⁽⁹⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-making-process/overview-law-making-process/evaluating-and-improving-existing-laws/reducing-burdens-and-simplifying-law/refit-making-eu-law-simpler-and-less-costly_en

⁽¹⁰⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/initiative/40557/attachment/090166e5b40536f3_en

⁽¹¹⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52017PC0279>

⁽¹²⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/noise/pdf/staff_working_doc_refit_evaluation_environmental_noise.pdf

⁽¹³⁾ http://cdrtest.eionet.europa.eu/help/ied_registry

work over the coming years, linking to work on developments in and the resulting pressures from e.g. the transport and industrial pollution (and energy) sectors.

2.2 Evolving policy context and implications for EEA and ETC/ATNI priorities

EEA's Multi-Annual Work Programme (MAWP) ⁽¹⁴⁾ 2014-2020 establishes the agreed framework of EEA's activities supporting policy implementation across the strategic areas:

- SA1.1 Air pollution, transport and noise
- SA1.2 Industrial pollution

The EEA's strategic work area for the year 2021 will be defined in the context of the EEA's next MAWP, which will cover the period from 2021 until 2025.

Within this framework, EEA's main operational objectives include supporting the implementation of legislation and tracking progress towards the achievement of short- and long-term targets as defined in relevant EU and international policies for issues such as air pollutant and greenhouse gas emission reductions, ecosystems, air quality standards, and human health impacts arising from exposure to air pollutants and noise.

In order to do this, EEA carries out a broad range of activities aimed at ensuring the best possible access at the European level for decision-makers and the general public alike to quality-assured data and outlooks for air pollutant emissions, concentrations and exposure to air pollutants, on the driving forces behind the observed trends including analysis of developments in the energy, industrial and transport sectors, and on the effectiveness of policies in addressing the issues.

An essential tool supporting these activities, the EEA's e-reporting platform Reportnet has been used successfully for more than 15 years for handling reporting obligations in the field of air pollution and climate change mitigation, under international and EU obligations. Reportnet allows the collection, quality assessment and compilation of data and information flows and helps improving their harmonisation and standardisation.

The EEA also uses the data itself to maintain and further develop a comprehensive set of indicators in the field, including many of the EEA Core Set of Indicators, produces regular thematic assessments, and also covers the topics in cross-cutting reports of the EEA such as its 5-yearly European Environment State and Outlook reports.

The sections below present the main future policy-relevant priorities in strategic areas 1.1 and 1.2.

Air pollution

- Continued support to the reporting of air quality information by countries via the AQ eReporting- system, including improved dissemination of data to key stakeholders, and associated products such as the forthcoming European Air Quality Index;
- Supporting implementation of the new NEC Directive, including to the annual detailed emission inventory review process;
- Support the annual compilation of the EU's submission to the UENEC LRTAP Convention;
- Ensuring the continuing policy-relevance of the annual Air Quality in Europe report, associated indicators and other relevant assessments in the air quality area;

⁽¹⁴⁾ <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/multiannual-work-programme-2014-2018>

- Continue cooperation with WHO, in particular ensuring the appropriate use of methods used to determine the burden of disease caused by exposure to air pollution, including updating existing methods where relevant based on the latest scientific reviews being performed by the WHO;
- Increasing links with the Copernicus Atmospheric Monitoring Service (CAMS), in the areas of data exchange and potential joint activities;
- Consider the potential wider use of modelled and citizen science data for environmental assessment purposes to complement traditional data reporting e.g. use of air quality sensors for monitoring of air quality.

Transport

- Continuing support to European Commission, countries and vehicle manufacturers for the monitoring and reporting of CO₂ from new passenger cars and vans, including supporting development of future proposals for monitoring and reporting of emissions post-2021/2020;
- Establishing the monitoring and reporting framework for future reporting of CO₂ emissions from new heavy duty good vehicles;
- Supporting higher quality of reporting of aviation and shipping emissions data in national inventories submitted under the National Emissions Ceilings Directive, and GHG monitoring Mechanism reporting regulation;
- Ensuring the continuing policy-relevance of the annual Transport and Environment reporting Mechanism (TERM) report, and associated indicators;
- Conducting additional assessments looking at environmental impacts caused by the transport sectors (i.e. on GHG emissions, air quality, noise, biodiversity, landscape fragmentation) as well as foreseen changes arising from technological and societal shifts within the sector such as the environmental impacts associated with a future uptake of electric vehicles, etc.

Noise

- Supporting the 5-yearly reporting of strategic noise maps at the end of 2017, including the quality checking and public dissemination of reported data;
- Support to the Environmental Noise Directive Committee and Expert Group;
- Incorporating updated scientific information in EEA assessments that determine the burden of disease caused by exposure to specific noise levels following the latest scientific review of the health effects of noise currently being performed by the WHO;
- Assessing progress by the EU towards achieving its 7th Environment Action Programme objectives ⁽¹⁵⁾ to significantly decrease noise pollution in the Union, moving closer to levels recommended by the World Health Organisation, by 2020;
- Support countries with implementation of the CNOSSOS common noise assessment framework, sharing of best practices etc.;
- To undertake a major re-design of the existing environmental noise data reporting mechanism, to shift to an INSPIRE compliant reporting system.

⁽¹⁵⁾ ['Living well, within the limits of our planet'](#)

Industrial pollution

- Supporting countries and the European Commission with the implementation of, and reporting to, the centralised EU Registry on Industrial Sites;
- Supporting the integration of, and the reporting to, the E-PRTR and LCP inventories, including the transfer of historical data, re-design of data reviews, performing quality assurance and facilitating public dissemination of reported data;
- Support to relevant Committees and Expert Groups under the E-PRTR Regulation, Industrial Emissions Directive, etc.;
- Assisting the Commission and Member States with future reporting foreseen under the Medium Combustion Plants Directive and sectoral spotlights in the context of IED;
- Strengthening EEA assessment capacity in the area of industrial pollution, including developing cross-links to other topic areas of water releases, waste generation and transfers, waste to energy, nontoxic environment and chemicals, etc.;
- Supporting the EEA in conducting additional assessments on industrial emissions looking at the European situation in the broader global context, and the interface with transitioning to new policy paradigms such as circular economy or decarbonisation.

3. Specific tasks of the European Topic Centre on Air pollution, Transport, Noise and Industrial pollution

3.1 Organisation of the work

The ETC will be required to support the work of the EEA across the MAWP strategic areas SA1.1 to 1.2 as outlined above, i.e.:

- SA1.1 Air pollution, transport and noise;
- SA1.2 Industrial pollution

More specifically, ETC support is required within the following work package areas:

Work package 1: Data reporting, review and support

- Assisting as required with the internal processing, quality review and dissemination of datasets reported by countries and companies to EEA in accordance with EU or international legislative requirements. Each reporting obligation comprises varying frequencies and quantities of reported data, textual and spatial information according to the specific legislative requirements. The extent to which ETC support is needed for each data flow(s) varies across the different reporting obligations. Support shall be required for, but not be limited to, all data flows described in Sections 2.1 and 2.2.
- Supporting internal advanced IT processes and data management activities at the EEA in relation to design of internal data structures, and specification of automatic queries and routines for data processing, QA/QC and extraction/dissemination routines;
- Compiling the draft EU data submissions required under international legislation, including EU emission inventory datasets and inventory reports under UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP). These activities require close coordination with member countries and European Commission services;

- Supporting the improvement of data quality by performing and documenting quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC) checks on the information reported by member countries, ensuring that QA/QC procedures and documentation remains updated;
- Participating in external (CLRTAP) emission inventory reviews, and assisting EEA with the implementation of annual emission inventory reviews under the NEC Directive;
- Assisting EEA member countries with their data deliveries by providing assistance with data exchange, expert and training workshops, and including potential country visits to provide on-site training and capacity building;
- Supporting EEA activities on the implementation of new or revised EU and international legislation, especially concerning changes in monitoring and reporting requirements, including updates to reporting guidance and supporting material e.g. the EMEP/EEA Air Pollutant Emission Inventory Guidebook ⁽¹⁶⁾;
- Contribute to initiatives aiming to improve the future consistency and streamlining of reporting between the GHG and air pollution inventories as well as installation-specific emission data under IED, E-PRTR etc.;
- Supporting the use of Copernicus services both by EEA and by Eionet where relevant, including reviewing the potential for new applications and uses for Copernicus information;
- Supporting EEA contributions to European Union participation in international bodies, e.g. CLRTAP task forces, as well as to European Union working groups, expert groups and committees.

Work package 2: Integrated assessments, policy effectiveness and indicators

EEA regularly performs integrated assessment activities relevant to the areas of air pollution, transport, noise and industrial pollution. The ETC is required to support the work of the EEA within the following technical areas:

Environmental status and trends

- Drafting assessments addressing the status and trends of air pollution, environment pressures arising from industrial activities and environmental noise at European, regional and local scales. This includes where relevant preparation of required concentration and exposure maps, quantified estimates of the impacts on human health and effects on the environment, and associated external costs;
- Preparing assessments of air pollution emission trends, including application of advanced statistical methods to determine explanatory factors for past changes in emissions;
- Contributing to specific assessments relevant to the transport and industrial pollution sectors (e.g. the annual Transport and Environment Reporting Mechanism (TERM) report ⁽¹⁷⁾) including assessing progress with the integration of environmental considerations into these sectors and environmental progress achieved;

⁽¹⁶⁾ https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications#c14=EMEP CORIN AIR&c12=&c7=en&c11=5&b_start=0

⁽¹⁷⁾ https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications#c14=ENVISSUENo12&c12=&c7=en&c11=5&b_start=0

- Contributing to address the linkages between industrial pollution policies and other broader policy frameworks e.g. circular economy, decarbonisation, chemicals and human health, freshwater and marine policies, etc.
- Compiling and assessing third-party policy scenarios and outlooks in the field of air pollution and the main transport and industrial pollution sectors in order to inform specific analyses;
- Maintaining and updating EEA Core Set Indicators and other relevant indicators ⁽¹⁸⁾ across the relevant thematic areas;

Progress towards policy targets

- Performing in-depth and robust assessments of the progress of the EU, its Member States and other EEA member countries towards meeting relevant targets and objectives, including e.g. air pollution mitigation targets under the amended Gothenburg protocol and new NEC Directive, EU air quality limit and target values, and population exposure objectives for environmental noise;
- Strengthening the understanding on how European policies on industrial emissions contribute to curbing pollutant releases and to decoupling resource use from economic output, in the context of other drivers;
- Assessing progress of the EU and its Member States toward meeting its specific transport-related policy objectives.

Policy evaluation

- Assessing the environmental impacts and modelled interactions, trade-offs and synergies between climate change mitigation and air pollution policies including those addressing environmental pressures arising from the transport, industrial pollution (and energy sectors) (including impacts on GHG emissions, air pollution, impact on biodiversity and marine environment, land-use, noise, socio-economic impacts etc.) at European, national and local scales;
- Reviewing information on reported mitigation strategies, action plans, and policies and measures in the air pollution, transport, noise and industrial pollution areas including assessing their estimated effectiveness;
- Preparing assessments describing potential future technological and societal transformations that will help mitigate environmental pressures such as emissions of air pollutants, releases to all media from industrial sources, noise, etc. across the economic sectors.

3.2 General activities

Work package 3: ETC management, capacity-building and cross-ETC cooperation

The organisational set-up and management procedures of the ETC consortium must meet the special and general conditions of the FPA. To ensure this, the management of the ETC requires, for example, clear decision and communication structures within the consortium for the regular reporting of required quarterly progress and financial information, and well-functioning links to the EEA, which leads on networking with countries, and coordinating with the European Commission and other relevant organisations as required. In addition,

⁽¹⁸⁾ <https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators>

close cooperation with the European Topic Centre on Climate change Mitigation and Energy (ETC/CME) is required to ensure effective synergies and coordination of activities across the respective topic areas.

The ETC management must provide a robust risk management structure and procedures, and maintain procedures for quality assurance – including language-checking and management-level sign-off – of all its deliverables.

Overall, the size of the consortium needs to be small enough to ensure budgetary distribution that enables some senior staff to work on content-related tasks for the EEA at least 50% of their time.

In order to enable international networking, the consortium should include partners with experience in EU and regional level work and international networks, without necessarily representing all EEA member countries.

As the ETCs are part of Eionet, close link to other Eionet members (EEA countries and other ETCs) is instrumental. This needs to be realised through:

- strong communication efforts with the countries, including networking and country visits within defined processes;
- in dialogue with the EEA and the countries, identifying barriers preventing them from optimally performing their tasks (e.g. monitoring and reporting capacities, flows of data, knowledge gaps, indicators developments), developing proposals to solve any issues that may emerge, and providing training and capacities building in the countries as appropriate;
- helping organising regular Eionet workshops and seminars to discuss the outcomes of the work and plan future activities with the countries;
- gathering feedback on the effectiveness of networking and training and acting on that feedback;
- engaging actively in co-operation with other ETCs to strengthen the coherence of EEA data and information, in particular regarding geographical reference data sets, cross-cutting topics and synergies between policy areas, and integration in an ecosystem-based management approach. Cooperation could be integrated into the on-going content work and should provide synergies rather than additional workload. Work among ETCs has to be complimentary;
- establishing the relevant interfaces with other key partners, as relevant and defined in the action plans, including the research and scientific communities active in the relevant domains via appropriate projects or networks.

Priority areas for cross-ETC cooperation could include:

- Urban assessments including impacts of air and noise pollution on urban populations in Europe;
- Maritime activities, including improving information of air pollutant emissions from shipping;
- Ecosystem assessments including the impacts of air pollution on crops and other sensitive ecosystems via atmospheric deposition;
- Assessments exploring the cross-links and synergies between reporting on industrial pollution and other data collection mechanisms (e.g. WFD and WISE-SoE activities, REACH, Waste Statistical Regulation);
- Exploring the links between the industrial pollution policies and other policy frameworks such as circular economy or human health.

4. General guidance on the organisation and structure of the European Topic Centre on Air pollution, Transport, Noise and Industrial pollution

The present and earlier ETCs are consortia of government, research and non-profit organisations, as well as commercial firms. Based upon EEA experience, some general guidance can be given on the structure of a consortium:

- The ETC consortium shall comprise one coordinating organisation and several partners.
- A structure needs to be in place to ensure efficient communication and coordination between and among the ETC coordinator and all partners. This can e.g. be through organisation in teams or with dedicated core staff at the coordinating organisation and/or one of the key partners.
- The consortium should be organised around the following administrative functions:
 - an ETC manager, and a deputy ETC manager or similar function ensuring continuity of services, both having appropriate management and networking capabilities;
 - administrative support, able to work in English and organise European meetings and consultations; and,
 - accounting support, in order to ensure proper financial management.
- The ETC manager, deputy manager and key experts organising and leading on the thematic content should have a high level of senior management expertise, good knowledge of the policy setting, strong integration into the respective scientific community, and interdisciplinary expertise across the different relevant topics. At least 50% of their time should be made available to the work of the ETC.
- The ETC manager, deputy manager, core staff and key experts develop the annual action plans together with the assigned EEA Head of Group and project staff responsible for managing the tasks, in mutual understanding and the agreed iterative process, based on the priorities set by EEA in its multiannual programming documents and annual work programme for the year in question.
- As it can be difficult to manage many small partners (e.g. with contracts of less than EUR 50 000 per year) in a consortium, fewer partners and a dedicated coordination structure can facilitate management and coherence of delivery. However, this has to be balanced against the need to cover the required fields of expertise and to ensure good geographical coverage across Europe.
- The consortium as a whole needs to cover the main work areas with the expertise listed under 5.2 below. It is important to show a wider European expertise, using a consortium spread over different member countries and different national experiences (see also eligibility criterion under 6.1 below). This is particularly important where specific skills are needed, e.g. for certain methodologies, modelling or for wider sector integration etc.
- Therefore, the ETC needs to be structured in a way to ensure the necessary flexibility to be able to adapt to changing needs and to be able to provide experts for specific projects.
- It should also have the capability to network and communicate with countries and with relevant Commission services and/or other international policy and scientific communities.

5. Minimum requirements

In order to deliver high quality products and services the future beneficiaries shall comply with the following Minimum requirements:

5.1 Organisation and Governance

- As the working language of the EEA is English, it will also be the working language of the FPA and SAs. More particularly, the ETC is expected to deliver documents requiring minimal further language checking prior to publication and following the requirements as stated in the EEA Corporate Identity Manual ⁽¹⁹⁾ and the EEA writing manual (see annex 7). Future beneficiaries are required to have a quality control procedure to this effect (see also the award criteria under section 6.5 below).
- Without exception, the ETC shall report solely to the EEA, the main contact points being the ETC manager and/or the deputy ETC manager, the Heads of Group for Air pollution, transport and noise, and Industrial pollution and the assigned EEA project managers.
- Subject to guidance from the EEA, the ETC shall carry out the necessary checks in accordance with the terms and arrangements laid down in the FPA and the respective SA or in the consortium agreement in order to ensure the quality and regularity of the implementation of the annual action plans.
- Subject to guidance from the EEA, the ETC shall ensure coherence and integration of its work with the work carried out by the EEA. To this effect and as far as specific tasks are concerned, the EEA project managers will have close contact with the future beneficiaries (ETC manager and partners as needed).
- The ETC is also expected to provide input to EEA concerning proposals for the continuous development of the working areas.
- While cooperation amongst ETCs is subject to respective requests and coordination from the EEA, ETCs shall be structured in a way which ensures proper linkages with other ETCs, as cross-sectoral and cross-thematic cooperation and integration needs increasing attention. Such integrated cooperation needs highly transparent ETC management in order to avoid duplication or disintegration of tasks across partners.
- Maintaining and improving the links to Eionet, in particular the Primary Contact Points (PCP) and National Reference Centres (NRC) appointed by the countries, is important for the work of the ETCs. This means, e.g. providing *ad hoc* technical support to countries, reflecting the specific needs of all countries, to enable them to contribute to the reporting of required data flows. The ETC shall also assist the EEA in organising annual meetings with the Eionet partners.
- The EEA is committed to an internal Environmental Policy to ensure that the EEA operates in an environmentally sound manner. Since March 2005 the EEA is EMAS certified. It is thus required that the future beneficiaries take into consideration the reduction of environmental impact of ETC activities and develop environmental policies for the ETCs (see also section 7 below).

5.2 Technical and scientific expertise

The ETC is expected to have technical and scientific expertise that allows it to undertake tasks and provide the deliverables listed under section 3 above. In broad terms, technical and scientific expertise and experience in the following areas is specifically needed (which will be appraised by reference to the award criteria listed under section 6.5 below):

⁽¹⁹⁾ <https://www.europa.eu/publications/eea-corporate-design-manual>

- International, EU and national policies and policy analysis on air pollution, transport, noise and industrial pollution, and understanding of the associated reporting requirements and data flows;
- GHG and air pollution emission inventories including industrial emissions data covering releases to air, water, waste generation, etc., and associated guidance documents;
- Air quality and noise measurements and modelling;
- QA/QC of environmental data flows, indicators and assessments;
- Data-handling of large data sets including database development and management, and protocols for electronic data processing, QA/QC and data extraction and dissemination;
- Spatial data handling and analysis, including knowledge of, and experience working with, the requirements for environmental spatial data structures laid down by the INSPIRE Directive (2007/2/EC) and its implementing rules;
- Integrated assessments, including modelling, both within and across different policy areas including the use and analysis of projections and scenarios and policy effectiveness assessments performed using appropriate techniques and tools;
- Assessing health and ecosystem exposure and related impacts from air pollution and noise by application of internationally-recognised methodologies;
- Socio-economic analysis of air pollution, transport, noise and industrial pollution mitigation pathways, including experience in applying environmental externality frameworks, knowledge of market-based environmental instruments, etc.;
- Technological developments in the industry and transport sectors, including transport modelling, data sources, abatement technologies, vehicle type approval regimes, etc.
- Indicators of air pollution, noise exposure and transport;
- Networking and communicating with relevant national, EU and international policy and scientific working groups and conferences.

6. Criteria

The evaluation procedure will consist in three successive stages; only proposals meeting the requirements of one stage will be examined in the next stage. The procedure foresees

1. to check, in the first stage, whether applicants can take part in the award procedure (eligibility, legal capacity and exclusion criteria);
2. to check, in the second stage, the financial and operational capacity of each applicant who has passed the eligibility stage (selection criteria); and
3. to assess, in the third stage, the quality of each proposal which has passed the eligibility and selection stages (award criteria).

6.1 Eligibility

Consortia consisting of at least two partners (natural/legal persons, private or public), these partners being established in different EEA member countries (the 28 EU MS, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey), are eligible, subject to 6.2 and 6.3 below, for submitting proposals ⁽²⁰⁾. Consortia must identify one of their partners as coordinator who will interface with the EEA.

⁽²⁰⁾ For British partners: Please be aware that eligibility criteria must be complied with for the entire duration of the FPA. If the United Kingdom withdraws from the EU during the FPA period without

Entities which do not have legal personality under the applicable national law of one of the EEA member countries are also eligible under the same conditions, provided that their representatives have and can prove their capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf and assume financial liability.

A consortium may also include partners from other countries than the above mentioned, provided that the other eligibility requirements are respected and the share of partners from non-EEA member countries does not exceed 10 % of the estimated total value of the FPA as specified under section 1.3 above.

With a view to assess the fulfilment of the eligibility criteria, the *consortium's* coordinator is required to submit a proposal submission form (see annex 1) duly filled out and signed.

6.2 Ne bis in idem

While partners may participate in consortia aiming at FPAs concerning different ETCs ⁽²¹⁾, **no partner may participate in more than one consortium aiming at the FPA concerning the ETC of this Call for proposals**, i.e. the ETC on Air pollution, Transport, Noise and Industrial pollution (ETC/ATNI). Disregard of this rule leads to exclusion of all consortia concerned.

Similarly, it is prohibited for proposed staff to sign letters of intent to participate in more than one consortium aiming at the FPA concerning this ETC, i.e. ETC on Air pollution, Transport, Noise and Industrial pollution (ETC/ATNI). Disregard of this rule leads to exclusion of all consortia concerned.

6.3 Exclusion criteria

Apart from the situations under 6.2, consortia shall be excluded from participation in this procedure if any of its partners is in one of the situations referred to in Articles 106(1), 107 and 109(1)(b) of the Financial Rules applicable to the general budget of the European Union ⁽²²⁾.

When submitting their application, each consortium partner (including any subcontractor) must provide a declaration on their honour in accordance with the form attached as annex 2, duly signed and dated, stating that they are not in any of the situations specified in the abovementioned provisions.

The partners of the consortium with whom the EEA will enter into a FPA will be required, prior to the signature of the agreement, to provide the evidence specified in the penultimate paragraph of the declaration of honour mentioned above (see annex 2).

6.4 Selection criteria

The selection criteria will be assessed as a first step by the evaluation committee. Failure to comply with these criteria will result in the proposal not being evaluated further by the evaluation committee. Applicants may be asked to provide additional proof, or to clarify the supporting documents, related to the selection criteria within a specific time limit.

concluding an agreement with the EU ensuring in particular that British partners continue to be eligible, British partners will then cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the consortium on the basis of Article II.12.2(a) of the FPA.

⁽²¹⁾ See the parallel calls for proposals No OCP/EEA/ACC/18/002-ETC/CME, OCP/EEA/ACC/18/003-ETC/CCA, OCP/EEA/IEA/18/001-ETC/WMGE, OCP/EEA/NSS/18/001-ETC/BD, OCP/EEA/NSS/18/002-ETC/ICM and OCP/EEA/NSS/18/003-ETC/ULS, <https://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/tenders/calls-for-proposals/open>.

⁽²²⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25.10.2012, OJEU L 298/1 of 26.10.2012. This regulation is currently under revision.

(a) Legal capacity

> Requirement:

Any consortium partner is required to prove that it is authorised to perform the FPA under national law.

> Evidence to be provided:

Each consortium partner is required to submit a legal entity form (see annex 3) duly filed out and signed, accompanied by a copy of inscription in a trade or professional register and/or a copy of inscription in the VAT register, or a sworn declaration or certificate, or evidence of membership of a specific organisation, or express authorisation, or other statutory document allowing verification of the partner's legal status.

(b) Financial capacity

> Requirement:

Consortia must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period of the FPA (2019-2021) and to contribute to its funding.

> Evidence to be provided:

- each consortium partner shall provide a duly completed and signed simplified Financial Statement in accordance with the template provided as annex 6
- in addition for private partners: balance sheet, or extract therefrom, for at least the last two financial year for which the accounts were closed, where the publication of the balance sheet is required under the company law of the country in which the consortium partner is established

(c) Operational capacity

> Requirements:

Consortia must have the following professional competencies and qualifications required to complete the annual action plans:

- relevant experience in terms of human resources
- relevant experience in the provision of comparable services to similar clients over the past three years
- application of quality control processes
- application of environmental management measures

> Evidence to be provided:

The following documents or information shall be presented as evidence of compliance with the operational capacity criteria:

Human resources

1. Detailed CVs of the partner's managerial staff, as well as those of the staff designated to carry out the work indicating, *inter alia*, the educational and professional qualifications and statement of language skills and identification of relevant skills, expertise and experience
2. Signed letters of intent of:

- the ETC manager, deputy ETC manager and other core staff performing the administrative functions listed under section 4 above; as well as
- the key experts ⁽²³⁾ of **all** consortium partners

proving that the consortium as a whole has sufficient technical, scientific and management (including financial) experience to assume the role of an ETC;

3. Letters of intent of all consortium partners to participate and provide co-financing up to at least 10% of the total eligible cost of the annual work programme ⁽²⁴⁾;
4. For each partner established in an EEA member country, letters of confirmation from the respective Member of the EEA Management Board that the relevant partner is able to perform the function of an ETC partner within Eionet;

Past contracts

5. A list and brief account of work considered relevant and carried out by the partners forming part of the consortium in the last three years, indicating the value, dates and recipients of the services (public or private).

Quality control

6. For each consortium partner, proof and description of their Quality Assurance and Quality Control systems; namely, details of any accreditation that they hold; if no accreditation held, consortium partners shall provide an outline of any quality assurance policy, specifying the status of implementation and details of any quality assurance accreditations for which they have applied.

Environmental policy

7. For each consortium partner, proof and description of their environmental management measures or system, specifying the status of implementation.

6.5 Award criteria

The FPA will be concluded with the *consortium* whose proposal guarantees best that the EEA demands as described above are met. Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the documentation provided to demonstrate that the consortium meets the six award criteria set out below. The allocation of weightings to the six criteria is also given, corresponding to a maximum total score of 100 points.

⁽²³⁾ i.e. experts from the partners in the consortium who would be entrusted with the performance of activities in the main work areas should dedicate at least 50% of their time for that purpose. The letters of intent to be provided shall therefore cover at least the staff designated to carry out the work whose CVs have been submitted in accordance with point 6.4(c)(1).

⁽²⁴⁾ The 10%-rule of minimum co-financing is applied towards the consortium as a whole. To what extent partners contribute to this co-financing is an internal consortium matter.

No	Award criteria	Max. points
1	<p>General understanding of the task</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the policies and stakeholders that the EEA and the Eionet are supporting and cooperating with in the topic area; • how the different dimensions of the topic area (e.g. the links between air pollution and climate change mitigation, and the synergies and trade-offs between policies) are related, and related to thematic and cross-cutting issues outside the topic area; • how the environmental and policy issues in the topic area vary across the EEA39 and how this impacts on the tasks of the EEA and Eionet; • the roles of data, indicators and assessments in EEA work in the topic area, and the methodologies and frameworks, such as inventories, modelling and accounting, that underpin the work; • the importance of collaboration within and outside Eionet . 	15
2	<p>Data and information systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound knowledge of the availability and usefulness of data and information relevant to the topic area from official and non-official sources at (sub)national, EU and international levels, including sources such as research, citizen science and remote sensing; • Experience and expertise in supporting the design, management and quality control of data and information systems in the topic area, as well as different environmental accounting frameworks and data modelling and assimilation techniques. 	20
3	<p>Assessments</p> <p>Experience and expertise in supporting the definition, production, management and use of indicators in the topic area, and in contributing to thematic, sectoral and cross-cutting assessments.</p>	20
4	<p>Policy support</p> <p>Experience and expertise in providing technical and scientific support to the development and implementation of international, EU or national policy processes, including contributions to ex-ante and ex-post analysis of the effectiveness of strategies and policies, in the topic area.</p>	15
5	<p>Collaboration and communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound approach to collaborating with and providing capacity-building support to Eionet organisations in the EEA39; • Experience and expertise in accessing and working together with relevant expert networks and institutes external to the Eionet, including the scientific world; • Experience and expertise in preparing and facilitating workshops and similar; 	15

6	<p>ETC management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound arrangements for implementing transparent, effective and quality-assured management of the ETC consortium, including financial management; • Sound approach to managing different dimensions of the topic area individually and as a coherent whole, and to addressing geographical specificities in the topic area across the EEA39; • Sound environmental policy for the consortium; • Adequate level of manpower, resources and output corresponding to the indicative annual budget. • Completeness and quality of the proposed QA/QC procedures and standards that will be applied to ensure the proper quality of the work and deliverables. 	15
Total		100

7. Environmental considerations

The EEA runs a certified environmental management system (EMAS) and aims to minimise the environmental impact of all its activities, including those carried out under contract. The future beneficiaries will, therefore, be requested to consider the EEA environmental management guidelines in the implementation of the FPA, in particular, those relating to business travel, electronic means of communication, paper and energy consumption. Further information on the EMAS system can be found on the EEA website: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/emas/index.html>.

Moreover, it is strongly recommended that proposals are submitted in an environmentally friendly way, e.g., by choosing a simple and clear structure (list of contents and consecutive page numbering), double-sided printing, limiting attachments to what is required in the terms of reference (no additional material in paper) and avoiding plastic folders or binders.

8. Further information

8.1 Contractual terms and guarantees

In drawing up their proposal, applicants shall bear in mind the provisions of the draft FPA and draft SA attached as annex 5 to these terms of reference, particularly those on payment arrangements, performance of the agreement, confidentiality, and checks and audits. Any limitation, amendment or denial of the terms of the draft FPA and draft SA will lead to the automatic exclusion from the award procedure.

The consortium partners shall have internal arrangements regarding their operation and coordination to ensure that the FPA and the annual action plan under a SA are implemented properly. These internal arrangements must be set out in a written consortium agreement between the partners, which may cover all aspects necessary for the management and internal organisation of the consortium, including the business continuity, the distribution of the EEA funding, the settlement of internal disputes, liability and confidentiality between the consortium partners, and, where appropriate, additional rules on intellectual and industrial property rights

Payments shall be made upon delivery and approval of the services requested, within the deadline stipulated in the SA and upon receipt and approval by the EEA of the relevant cost statements and any supporting documents relating to the tasks undertaken.

No financial guarantee will be required.

8.2 Subcontracting

A consortium partner may subcontract part of the services.

If a consortium partner intend to have recourse to subcontracting for performance of the action, it shall specify the name, address and legal status and provide a document containing a list of the professional qualifications of each envisaged subcontractor as well as a statement of the means of ensuring quality and confidentiality when subcontractors are used. Consortium partners shall bear in mind that subcontract may only cover the execution of a limited part of the action, and that they shall retain sole responsibility for carrying out the action and complying with the terms of the FPA and the corresponding SA.

For more detailed information, reference is made to Article II.10 of the draft FPA (see annex 5).

9. Timing

Deadline for submitting proposals: **30.4.2018**

Opening of proposals: **7.5.2018**

Evaluation of proposals: **From 8.5.2018 to 31.5.2018 (indicative dates)**

Following the decision of the EEA Management Board on the designation of the successful consortium (foreseen for **19 June 2018**) and prior to signature of the FPA all consortia will be notified of the outcome of this call.

Signature of the FPA: **by mid-September 2018 (indicative date)**

10. Presentation of the proposal

Proposals shall be submitted in accordance with the ***double envelopes system***:

The outer envelope or parcel should be sealed with adhesive tape and signed across the seal and carry the following information:

- The call for proposals reference No OCP/EEA/ACC/18/001-ETC/ATNI
- The call for proposals title ***“Framework partnership agreement concerning the European Topic Centre on Air pollution, Transport, Noise and Industrial pollution 2019-2021”***
- The name of the consortium’s coordinator
- The indication ***“Proposal – Not to be opened by the internal mail services”***
- The address for submission of proposals (as specified in the letter of invitation to submit proposals)
- The date of submission shall be legible on the outer envelope or parcel

The outer envelope or parcel must contain three inner envelopes, i.e. Envelopes No 1, 2 and 3, corresponding to the following three sections: Executive summary, Administrative section and Technical proposal.

(a) **Envelope No 1 – Executive summary** shall include the following information (max. 10 pages):

- ETC name as indicated in the title of these terms of reference
- Full contact details of the partner assuming the role of coordinator of the consortium
- Name and CV (abstract) of the proposed ETC manager and deputy ETC manager and other core staff performing the administrative functions listed under section 4 above
- Presentation of the proposed organisation of the consortium
- Full contact details of each other partners of the consortium
- For each partner, name and CVs (abstract) of key experts expected to contribute at least 50% of their time to the ETC
- Brief summary of the technical proposal (max 5 A4 pages)

(b) **Envelope No 2 – Administrative section** shall include the following information:

- The proposal submission form, drawn up in accordance with the template in annex 1
- For each partner, the declaration on exclusion criteria as required under section 6.3, drawn up in accordance with the template in annex 2
- For each partner, the legal entity form as required under section 6.4 (a), drawn up in accordance with the template in annex 3
- For each partner (other than the one assuming the role of coordinator of the consortium), the power of attorney as referred to under section 1.3, drawn up in accordance with the template in annex 8
- For the partner acting as coordinator of the consortium, the financial identification form, drawn up in accordance with the template in annex 4
- The evidence and documentation demonstrating the fulfilment of the selection criteria as required under section 6.4 (b) (financial capacity) and 6.4 (c) (operational capacity)

(c) **Envelope No 3 – Technical proposal** shall include the following:

The technical proposal addressing all the elements described under sections 2 and 3 above and providing all information requested under section 6.5 (award criteria). The technical proposal shall also be provided in PDF searchable format on a USB memory stick.

Proposal shall be drafted in one of the languages of the EEA member countries, **preferably in English** (supporting evidence does not need to be translated) and submitted in **duplicate** (one original unbound and one copy of the executive summary (envelope No 1) and the technical proposal (envelope No 3); the administrative section (envelope No 2) shall be submitted only **once** in original unbound).

It is important that proposals be presented in the correct format and include all documents necessary to enable the evaluation committee to assess them. Failure to respect these requirements will constitute a formal error and may result in the rejection of the proposal.

Consortia shall observe precisely the indications in points 2, 3, 4 and 6 of the letter of invitation to submit a proposal to ensure their proposal is admissible. Late delivery will lead to non-admissibility of the proposal and its rejection from the award procedure. Proposals sent by e-mail or by fax will also be non-admissible and discarded. Envelopes or parcels found opened at the opening session will also lead to non-admissibility of the proposal. Consequently, consortia must ensure that their proposal is wrapped in such a way to prevent any accidental opening during its mailing.

11. Confidentiality and protection of personal data

For the processing of this award procedure, the EEA observes the rules set in Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data (OJEU L 8/1 of 12.1.2001) ⁽²⁵⁾.

For further detailed information, please refer to the privacy statement available on the EEA website at the following address: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/tenders/privacy-statement>.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Proposal submission form

Annex 2 – Declaration and evidence of absence of situation of exclusion

Annex 3 – Legal entity form

Annex 4 – Financial identification form (only for the partner coordinating the consortium)

Annex 5 – Draft framework partnership agreement and draft specific grant agreement

Annex 6 – Simplified Financial statement form

Annex 7 – EEA writing manual (November 2017)

Annex 8 – Power of attorney template

⁽²⁵⁾ This regulation is currently under revision.