



Information Day Joint Cluster Initiatives (EUROCLUSTERS)

SMP-COSME-2021-CLUSTER

20 October 2021

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Send your questions on the Call to:
EISMEA-SMP-COSME-ENQUIRIES@ec.europa.eu

Indicative timeline

[Apply on the Funding and Tenders Portal](#)

Timetable and deadlines (indicative)	
Call opening:	29 September 2021
<u>Deadline for submission:</u>	<u>30 November 2021 – 17:00:00 CET (Brussels)</u>
Evaluation:	December 2021 -March 2022
Information on evaluation results:	April 2022
GA signature:	July 2022

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Budget

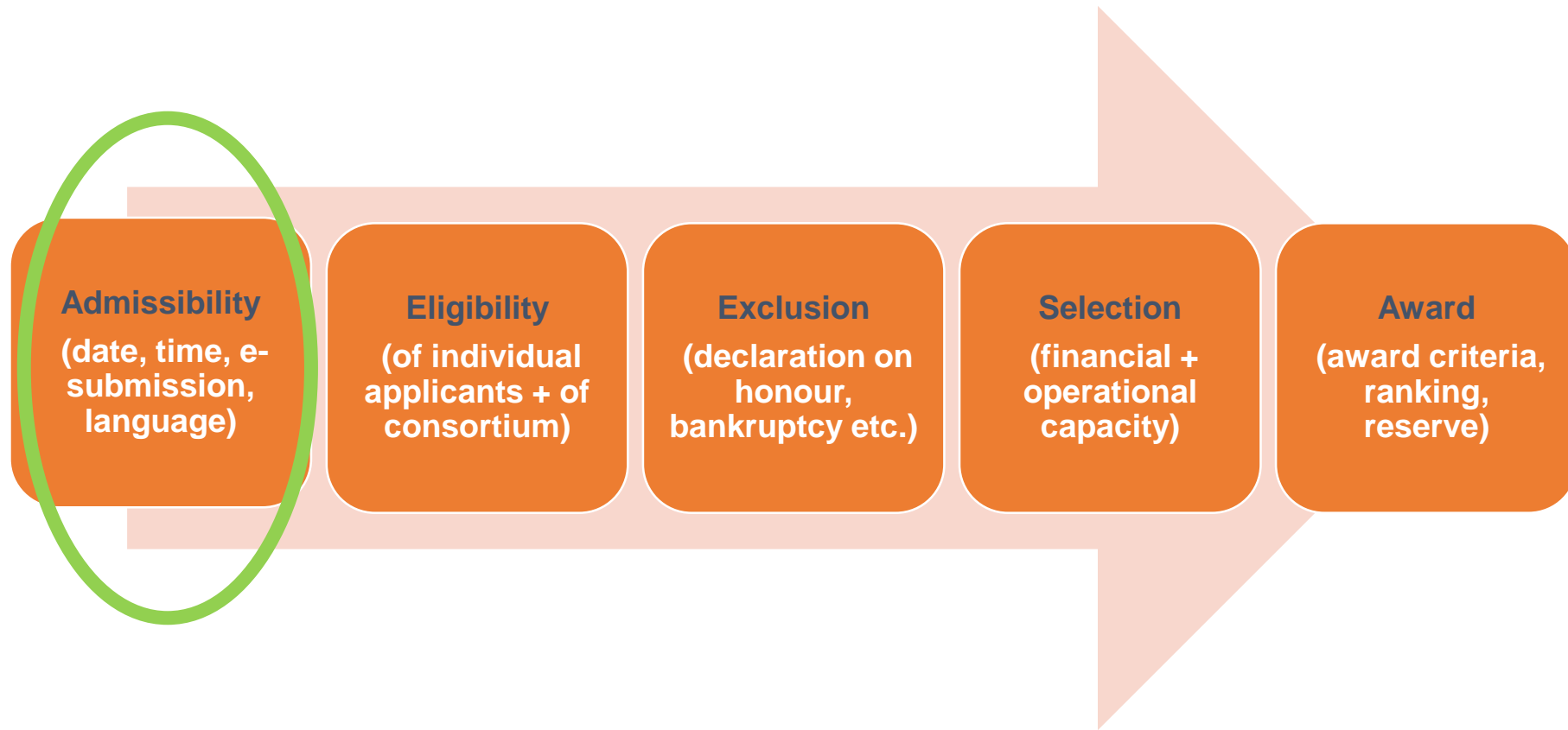
- Call budget: EUR 42 000 000.
- Maximum grant amount: EUR 1 400 000 per project.
- The project budget split:
 - 25% will cover joint activities between cluster organisations and other Eurocluster partners.
 - 75% will be directed to SMEs, to finance services in support of their resilience, green and digital transformation.
- Reimbursement rates:
 - 100% for the costs for providing financial support to third parties
 - 90% for all other costs categories

Duration

- Projects should normally last maximum 36 months
- Extensions possible, if duly justified and via amendment.

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Selection process



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Admissibility requirements

**Upload
only
PDFs!**

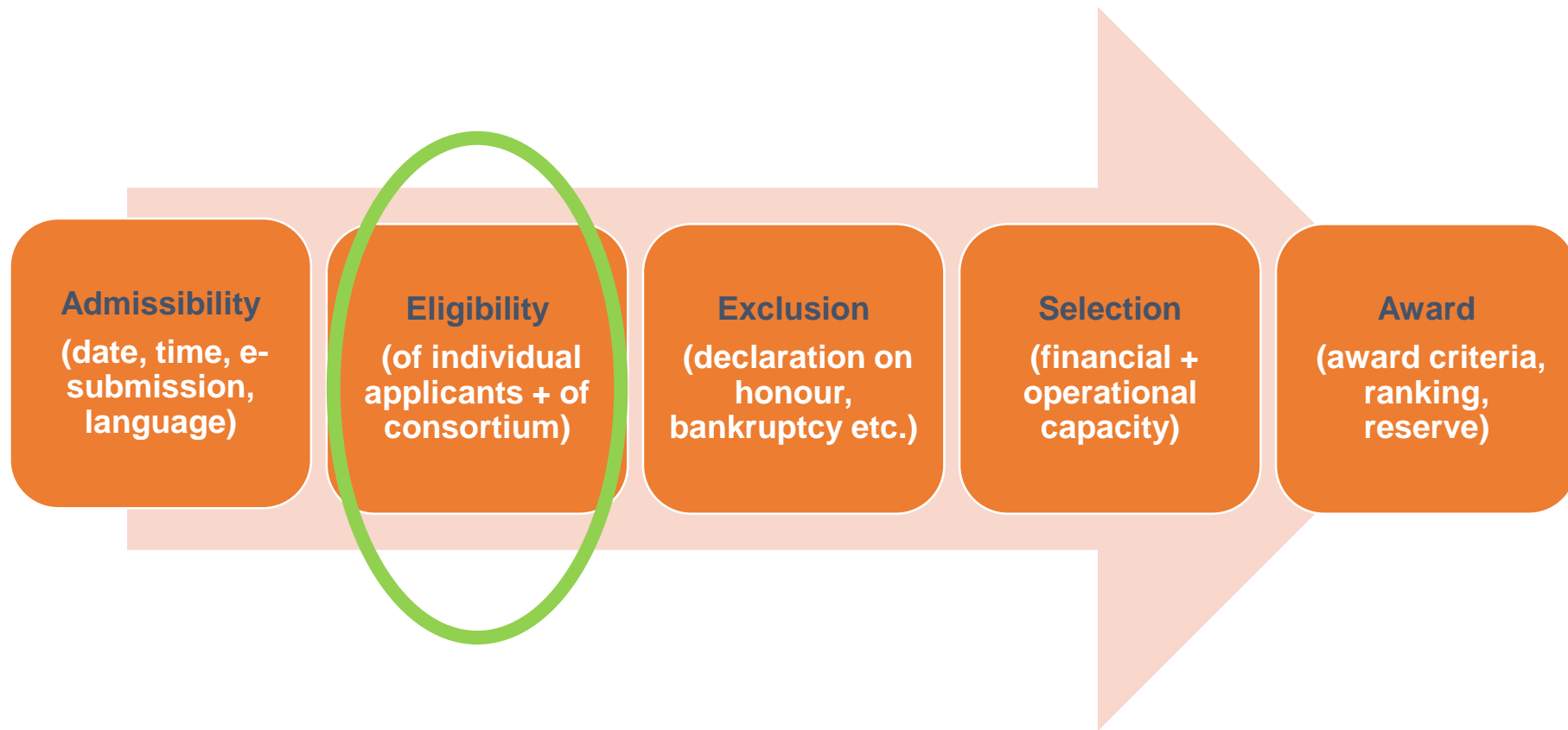
- Submit before the call deadline (section 4).
- Submit electronically via the [Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System](#).
- Proposals must be complete with required annexes:
 - Application Form Part A (no template, filled directly online)
 - Application Form Part B (template available in the Submission System; **to assemble with Annex 5**).
 - Annex 5 to Part B - Eligibility checklist (template available in [EISMEA's page](#)).
 - Detailed budget table (template available in the Submission System).

Admissibility requirements

- Applications must be readable, accessible and printable - **Attention to Excel Detailed Budget document when transformed into PDF!**
- Submit proposal in any official EU language (project abstract/summary should always be in English).
- At proposal submission, you will have to confirm that you have the mandate to act for all applicants.
- Proposals are limited to maximum 50 pages (Part B). Evaluators will not consider any additional pages.

Failure to comply with these requirements will lead to the rejection of the application !

Selection process



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Eligibility criteria (individual Partners)

Individual applicants must be:

- legal entities (public or private bodies)
- be established in one of the eligible countries, i.e.:
 - EU Member States (including overseas countries and territories (OCTs));
 - non-EU countries: listed EEA countries and countries associated to the COSME part of the Single Market Programme or countries which are in ongoing negotiations for an association agreement and where the agreement enters into force before grant signature (list of participating countries in the Call).
- be or represent a cluster organisation, a Single Market Programme (SMP) cluster network, or other types of organisations supporting green and digital transitions and build EU resilience (Section 6 of Call).

Eligibility criteria (individual Partners)

- Applicants can participate in several Euroclusters under this call for proposals, but **cannot participate in more than one Eurocluster** (applicant consortium) **per Strand**.
- If such a case is detected, it will lead to the ineligibility of the organisation concerned from all proposals in the respective Strand. The consortium affected by the exclusion of (a) partner(s) must still fulfil the eligibility criteria as stipulated in section 6 of this Call in order to be considered eligible.
- Also applied to clusters without legal personality.

Eligibility criteria (consortium)

Proposals must be submitted by a consortium (Eurocluster) which has:

- **minimum 3** applicants (beneficiaries; not affiliated entities);
- **minimum 3** cluster organisations (as defined above) or cluster networks from **at least 3 different EU Member States**;
- **at least one** partner established in a **less advanced region** of a EU Member State (as defined in Cohesion policy regulation 2021-2027).
 - The name of the less advanced region needs to be indicated in ***Annex 5 to Part B - Eligibility checklist***.
 - The name of this region must be coherent with the region that appears in the legal address (as per provided PIC number) of this partner.

Eligibility criteria (consortium)

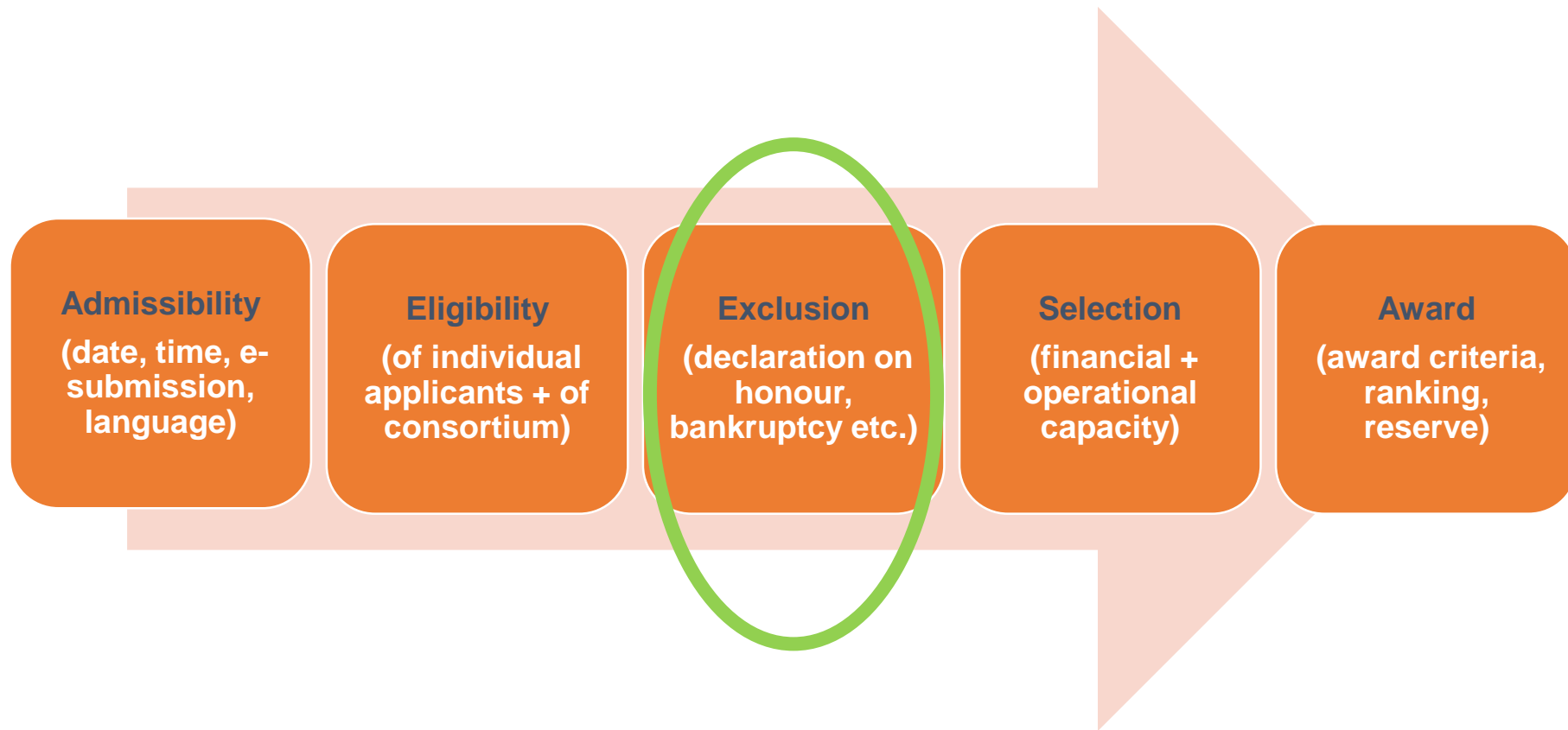
- **at least half** of the partners in each consortium (Eurocluster) must be **cluster organisations** or **cluster networks** registered or having submitted a registration on ECCP **by the submission deadline** + completed *Annex 5 to Part B - Eligibility checklist*.
 - If registered in ECCP: to provide the link to the **cluster organisation profile** for **each applicant** registered on the Platform; or
 - If not registered in ECCP: for **each applicant**, a declaration on their honour that they represent a cluster organisation or a business network organisation offering or channelling innovative support services to businesses (in compliance with the definition of 'innovation clusters'), and that a **cluster profile** has been submitted to the ECCP for registration.

Not concurrent submission

- One Eurocluster (applicant consortium) **cannot submit more than one proposal under this call.**

If such a case is detected by the funding body, it will lead to the ineligibility of all proposals of that consortium.

Selection process

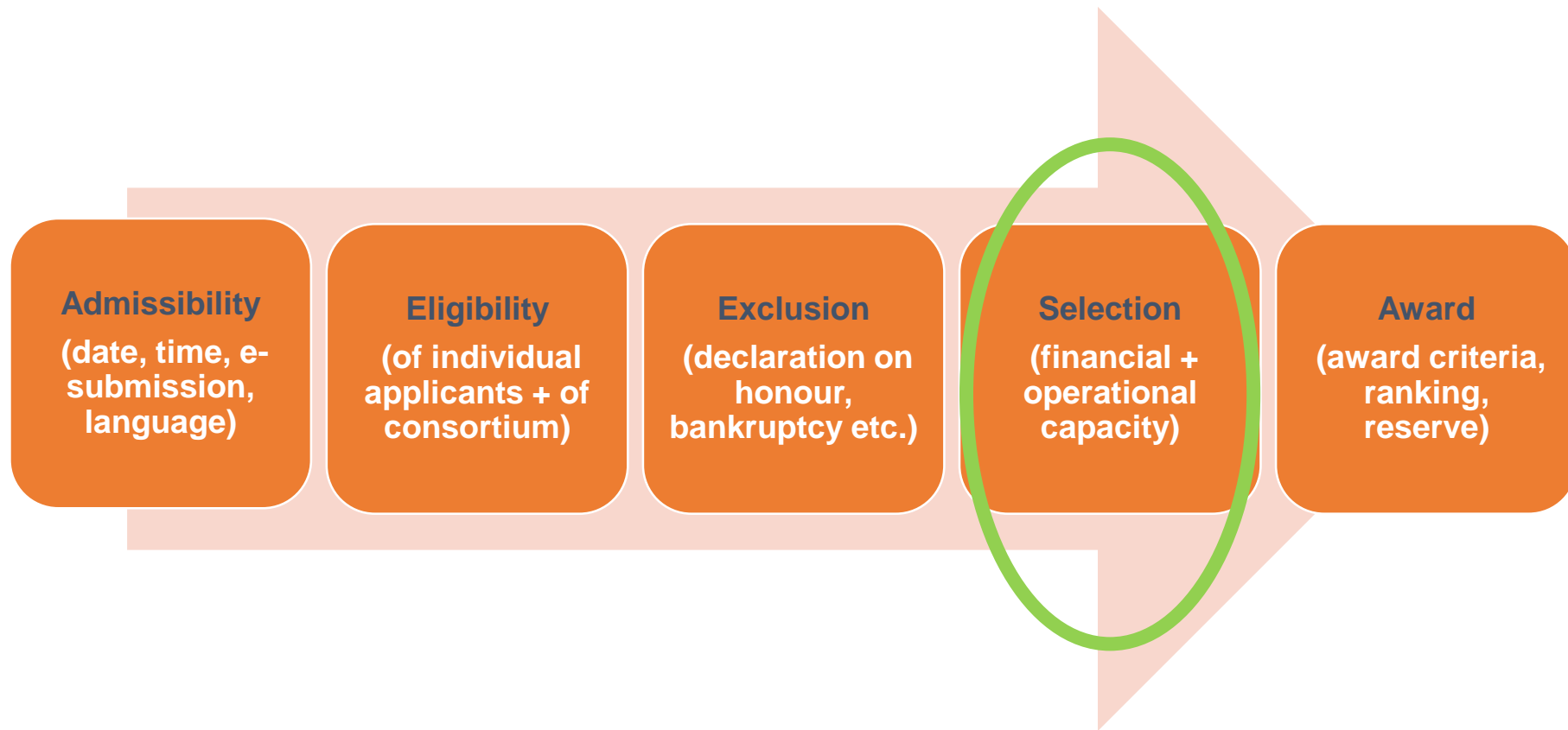


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Exclusion criteria

- See Section 7 of the Call.

Selection process

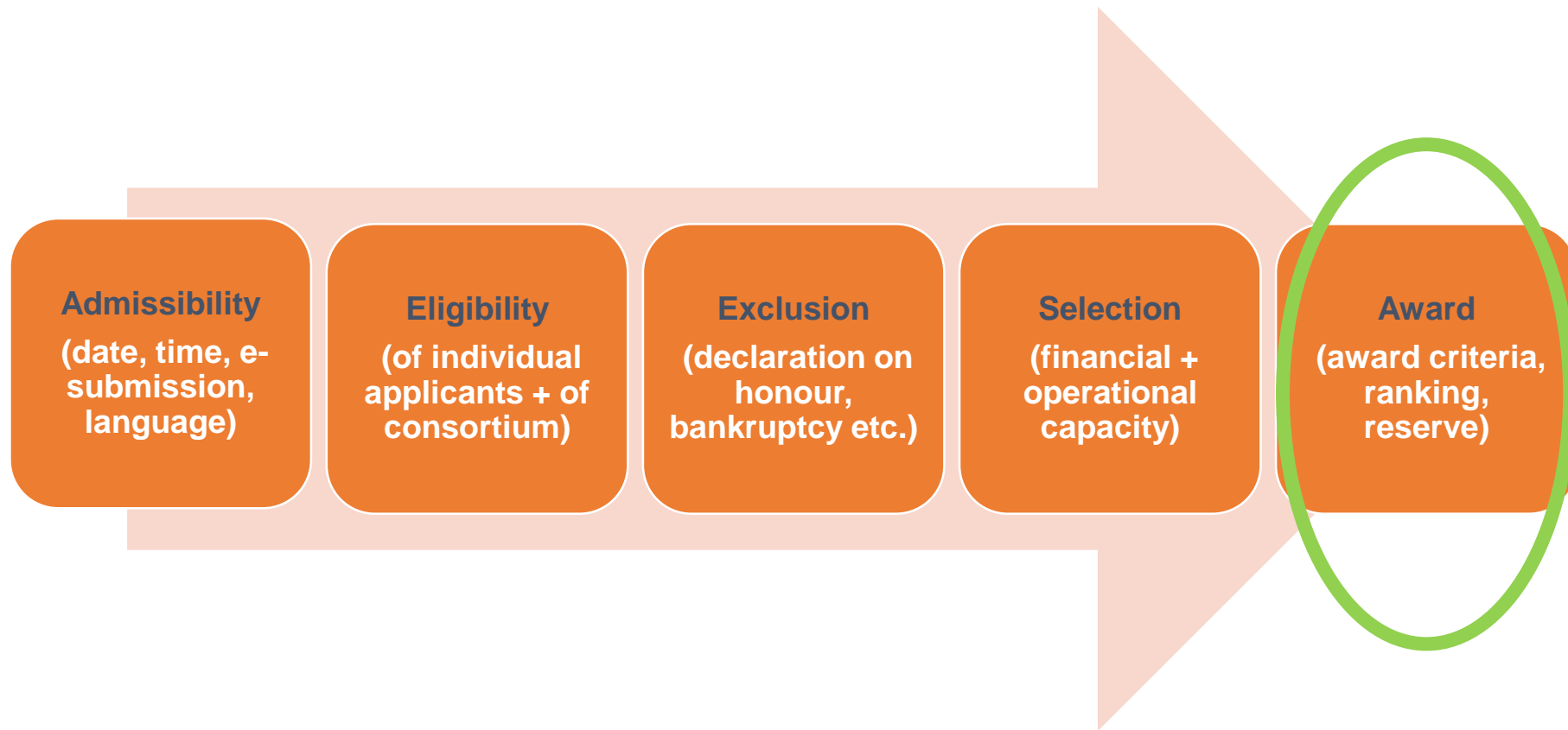


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Financial and operational capacity

- The **financial capacity** check will be carried out on the basis of the documents you will be requested to upload in the Participant Register during grant preparation.
- The **operational capacity** will be assessed together with the ‘Quality’ award criterion, on the basis of the competence and experience of the applicants and their project teams, including operational resources (human, technical and other) or, exceptionally, the measures proposed to obtain it by the time the task implementation starts.

Selection process



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Award criteria

- Minimum pass for funding:

individual thresholds AND overall threshold (70%)

within the limits of the available call budget. Other proposals will be rejected.

- Check award criteria in Section 9 of the Call.

Award criteria	Minimum pass score	Maximum score
Relevance	16	30
Quality — Project design and implementation	16	30
Quality — Project team and cooperation arrangements	16	30
Impact	6	10
Overall (pass) scores	70	100

Relevance

- How relevant is the proposed action to the objectives of the Call: to improve the resilience of the European supply and value chains and especially to better integrate SMEs within the industrial ecosystems, in order to improve the SMEs' social and economic resilience, while supporting their green and digital transition?
- How does the proposal fit with the policy context described in section 2 on contributing to the implementation of the updated Industrial Strategy and can deliver relevant results in that regard?
- How strategically chosen are the project partners (i.e. relevance and complementarities of each partner to the project)?
- How relevant is the proposed action to foster complementarities between consortium partners?

Quality – Project design and implementation

- To what extent are the proposed actions and is the work plan's methodology clearly defined and presented in terms of scheduled milestones, deliverables and a sound management structure?
- To what extent are the proposed actions and expected results linked to the identified needs and specific objectives? To what extent is this link well described and justified?
- How clear, coherent and realistic is the work plan?
- How clear, coherent and sound is the proposed support to third parties? How well the rationale behind the proposed support is explained, justified and coherent with the identified needs, intended objectives and expected results?



Quality – Project team and cooperation arrangements

- How suitable and appropriate is the contribution of each partner to the activities proposed, per work package/task considering partners' skills and responsibilities?
- Is the level of effort (hours and budget) appropriate, per work package, per task and per partner considering their skills and responsibilities?
- To what extent can the methodology and management set up be effective and ensure the high quality of the action proposed?

Impact

- What are the expected outcomes, potential impact and the EU added value of the project?
- To what extent is the project likely to have a tangible impact on European SMEs benefiting directly from the supported action?
- How effective, innovative and convincing are the promotional and communication activities? Does the proposal contain a comprehensive communication strategy?
- To what extent does the project suggest ambitious, objectively verifiable and achievable SMART performance indicators to measure its outcomes and expected impact?

Impact

- How concrete, ambitious and realistic are the measures planned to ensure the project's continuity after the termination of the EU co-funding?
- Euroclusters are strongly encouraged to include in the application ideas on how they can leverage public funding and attract private funding sources such as business angels, seed/venture capital or private equity?

Projects to be funded

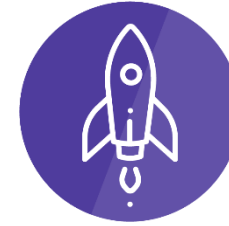
- Around 30 projects expected to be funded under:
 - at least one** project for each of the Industrial Ecosystem Strand and
 - at least 16** in the Open Strand.
- If there are no sufficient proposals passing the overall and individual thresholds of the award criteria in any of the Strands, the budget available can be used to support proposals in any other Strand.

Obvious but often forgotten



- **Read Call text & FAQs.** Familiarise yourself with the templates and Annexes.
- Check the **completeness** of your proposal and its corresponding **Annexes**.
Don't forget Annex 5!
- **What makes you special?** Do not only repeat what is in the Call/ Work Programme. Describe your proposal's **specific contribution!**
- Focus on **sub criteria** under the Relevance, Quality and Impact sections (Application Form) – you will be assessed on these!
- Do not subcontract **core activities**.

Be prepared



- Ask **experienced** former applicants.
- **Find your match!** Look for the right partners in the consortium.
 - Make the most of this afternoon at the matchmaking and “pitching” sessions!
 - On the F&T Portal you can find a [partner search database](#). Only add partners if they agree!
- **Ask your questions** to EISMEA-SMP-COSME-ENQUIRIES@ec.europa.eu
Answers to most frequently asked questions will be posted publicly a few days later.

Be kind to evaluators and EU colleagues..



- ...does **NOT** mean that you can be in touch with them.
- ...means that you put yourself **in their shoes**. They will read dozens of pages so look at the evaluation criteria. Focus on what basis you will be judged!
- **Maximum number of pages**. If you go beyond 50 pages, the remaining will be watermarked and disregarded by evaluators.
- Write in a **friendly reader manner**. Avoid endless sentences and abbreviations.
- Do not recycle (old proposals)! New Call with **new conditions, new legal basis**.

Final tips

- Your budget should be detailed and complete. The budget should reflect the deliverables/description in the proposal.
- The budget should be cost-effective. Items referred to in the budget should be necessary for the execution of the project.
- Clearly describe the **division of tasks and responsibilities** between partners in the project proposal.
- **Write as if there was no tomorrow!** We evaluate the proposals as they are. Write as if no further improvements could be made.
- Success is setting **ambitious but realistic goals**.
- Do not submit your proposal last minute!

Further information

- EISMEA website: [Joint Cluster Initiatives \(EUROCLUSTERS\) for Europe's recovery \(europa.eu\)](#)
- Funding & Tenders Portal application page: [Funding & tenders \(europa.eu\)](#)
- Frequently Asked Questions: [Funding & tenders \(europa.eu\)](#)
- Model Grant Agreement: [general-mga_smp_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)
- IT Helpdesk: [Funding & tenders \(europa.eu\)](#)
- EISMEA-SMP-COSME-ENQUIRIES@ec.europa.eu - For non-IT related questions (to be sent by 23 November 17:00 CET (Brussels time))

Thank you

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