

# Bilateral Climate Finance Programme Austria

A public funding programme of the  
Austrian Ministry for Climate Action,  
Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK)

Call for Proposals 1/2024

Vienna, March 2024

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## List of abbreviations

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
BMK	Austrian Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology
CfP	Call for Proposals
CEST	Central European Summer Time
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCD	Convention to Combat Desertification
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EGSIM	Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management
EU	European Union
EUR	Euros
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GHG	Greenhouse Gas Emissions
IT	Information Technology
IFC	International Finance Corporation
KPC	Kommunalkredit Public Consulting GmbH
LEDS	Low Emission Development Strategies
MWh	Megawatt hour
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning
NAP	National Adaptation Plans
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
NbS	Nature Based Solutions
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
tCO <sub>2</sub> e	Tonnes Carbon dioxide equivalent
TDBG	Transparenzdatenbankgesetz

## 1. Preface

### 1.1 Background

Climate change is one of the defining challenges of the twenty-first century. The impacts of a changing climate are already felt around the world at a current temperature increase of around 1.2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. In Austria, average temperatures have already increased over 2 degrees Celsius, with individual months in recent years already showing an increase beyond 4 degrees Celsius. To limit the further increase in global average temperature, it is imperative that greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) will be reduced to net-zero globally by 2050 the latest.

The future costs of inaction far outweigh the costs of taking quick and decisive action now. Developing countries – and poor and vulnerable population groups within these countries – are particularly hard hit by the effects of the climate crisis. The most vulnerable countries – including the Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States – face recurrent and particularly adverse situations. In these countries, the climate crisis is already negatively affecting economic activities, population health, water availability, food production, and ecosystems in general. These impacts deepen inequality, poverty as well as hunger; they cause and aggravate conflicts and are top drivers of humanitarian needs and suffering. Hence, combating and adjusting to climate change and its impacts is imperative to save lives and livelihoods and essential for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG) and its 17 Goals, in particular SDG 13 (Climate Action).

The Austrian Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK) recognizes its role and responsibility within the international community to assist those who are most in need of support in dealing with the adverse effects of climate change and supporting viable pathways for low-GHG emission development. To this end, Austria has elaborated its Strategy for International Climate Finance<sup>1</sup>.

In light of the above, the BMK is publishing its second Call for Proposals (CfP) within the Bilateral Climate Finance Programme.

Kommunalkredit Public Consulting GmbH (KPC) has been contracted by the BMK to serve as the Programme Management Office for the Bilateral Climate Finance Programme. The templates for the submission of project proposals as well as updates and further information concerning the Programme and this call are available on the website of KPC: [www.climatefinance.at](http://www.climatefinance.at).

### 1.2 Legal basis for the funding programme

The legal basis for the Bilateral Climate Finance Programme is the Directive for International Climate Finance<sup>2</sup>, which is based on paragraphs 13 and 48c of the Environmental Support Act (Umweltförderungsgesetz)<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The Austrian Strategy for International Climate Finance is currently undergoing review and updating. Refer to [https://www.bmk.gv.at/themen/klima\\_umwelt/klimaschutz/int\\_klimapolitik/finanzierung/klimafinanz\\_strategie.html](https://www.bmk.gv.at/themen/klima_umwelt/klimaschutz/int_klimapolitik/finanzierung/klimafinanz_strategie.html) for more information.

<sup>2</sup> Richtlinien der Bundesministerin für Klimaschutz, Umwelt, Energie, Mobilität, Innovation und Technologie für die internationale Klimafinanzierung (Juni 2022): [https://www.umweltfoerderung.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/umweltfoerderung/betriebe/Bilateral\\_Climate\\_Finance/Richtlinien\\_BM\\_K\\_internat\\_Klimafinanzierung.pdf](https://www.umweltfoerderung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/umweltfoerderung/betriebe/Bilateral_Climate_Finance/Richtlinien_BM_K_internat_Klimafinanzierung.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Bundesgesetz über die Förderung von Maßnahmen in den Bereichen der Wasserwirtschaft, der Umwelt, der Altlastensanierung, des Flächenrecyclings, der Biodiversität und zum Schutz der Umwelt im Ausland sowie über das österreichische JI/CDM-Programm für den Klimaschutz (Umweltförderungsgesetz – UFG), BGBl. Nr. 185/1993 idGF.

## 2. Objectives of the Programme

### 2.1 Main objectives

The aim of this Cfp is to select and support projects aligning financial flows with a low GHG emissions pathway and climate-resilient development. Projects should contribute to:

- **Objective 1: 1.Climate change mitigation:** reducing GHG emissions to limit global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius, including addressing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation;
- **Objective 2: 2.Climate change adaptation:** enhancing adaptive capacity, resilience, and reducing vulnerability to climate change impacts, including responding to loss and damage;
- **Objective 3: Cross-cutting:** projects can combine mitigation and adaptation elements (objectives 1 and 2), clearly identifying both aspects in their approach.

The design of projects must be informed by and well aligned with the needs of the targeted communities, ecosystems, local businesses, or value chains. Proposals must evidence a comprehensive context analysis stating the problem(s) or challenge(s) the proposed project is aiming to tackle and highlight the geographic, environmental, political, economic, and social context relevant to the proposed project.

Stakeholder analysis and effective stakeholder engagement are the basis for building constructive and responsive relationships and successfully delivering a project. Proposals have to specify relevant stakeholders and show a sound understanding of their needs and interests in relation to the project.

In general, the Bilateral Climate Finance Programme focuses on projects which aim to generate tangible impacts at the local level. Hence, projects engaging meaningfully with local and indigenous communities, local level administrations, community-based organisations, and small and medium enterprises are encouraged.

Climate Change Mitigation projects and Cross cutting projects (in relation to the mitigation component of their project) will be required to monitor and assess their impact at project goal, outcome, and output level building on suitable (SMART<sup>4</sup>) quantitative and qualitative indicators. For mitigation and cross-cutting projects applicants shall seek to integrate at least one of the following three indicators into their impact monitoring:

- Greenhouse gas emission avoidance or removal (tCO<sub>2</sub>e per year)
- Amount of renewable energy produced (MWh/year)
- Reduction in energy consumption (MWh/year)

If none of the indicators stated above can be applied within the context of the proposed project, alternative indicators linked to climate change mitigation, as well as low-greenhouse gas emissions and environmentally friendly project delivery shall be proposed. Moreover, applicants are encouraged to align their indicators with the indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

As part of the proposal, projects will outline their proposed Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL) procedures. Projects should take into account and use climate risk and vulnerability assessments, if available.

Notably, projects should demonstrate a strong climate rationale in accordance with the OECD-DAC Climate Markers to be eligible for grant funding under this programme<sup>5</sup>. Proposals that do not sufficiently meet this criterion will not be considered.

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<sup>4</sup> SMART refers to Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound.

<sup>5</sup> For details refer to the Handbook on the OECD-DAC Climate Markers. Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/48785310.pdf>

## 2.2 Environmental, Gender, and Social Safeguards

Environmental, Gender, and Social Safeguards appropriate to the nature and scale of the project are vital to create the desired impact, lead to improved environmental and social performance, and enable a contribution towards the achievement of the SDGs. As such, all projects funded under the Bilateral Climate Finance Programme are expected to include appropriate Environmental, Gender, and Social Safeguards to recognise, prevent, and address any potential and actual negative impacts, as applicable.

Importantly, the “Do No Harm” principle shall be applied in the design and project planning. Consequently, no unintentional negative environmental or social impacts should occur due to the project interventions. Existing access to and user rights of livelihood resources must be taken into account, whereby ideally everybody should have equal opportunities. A conflict-sensitive approach in the project planning and implementation is essential. Finally, possible diverging or incompatible interests must be considered and addressed in order to avoid potential conflicts.

Doing so, applicants shall align their analysis, project design, and implementation approach throughout the life of the project with an appropriate safeguard standard, such as the Austrian Development Agency’s (ADA) Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management (EGSIM) Manual<sup>6</sup> or the International Finance Corporation’s (IFC) Sustainability Framework<sup>7</sup>. At a minimum, proposals must address the cross-cutting topics of environment, gender, human rights, local communities, and indigenous people, as well as others as applicable to the specific context of the project.

Annex I to this document contains relevant guidance relating to the implementation of safeguards for activities in rural areas, particularly, but not limited to agriculture and forest-related projects.

## 2.3 Examples of activities (scope)

In achieving the main objectives of this CfP as referred to in section 2.1, the following examples of activities may be considered for eligible projects; however, other project concepts may be equally eligible for funding:

### Community-based projects with climate rationale

- Building up knowledge and capacities about climate change, its causes, consequences, and respective mitigation and adaptation activities;
- Strengthening capacities and expertise in Natural Resource Management at local level considering traditional and local knowledge;
- Strengthening of food sovereignty through sustainable agroecological and agroforestry practices;
- Creation of climate friendly income opportunities and promotion of green skills and green jobs for the local population;
- Increasing access to finance for local climate action initiatives;
- Promoting the participation of local and indigenous communities and civil society in relevant national policy processes, e.g., the development of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) and National Adaptation Plans (NAP), including through policy dialogue and advocacy;
- Promoting Disaster Risk Reduction, including early warning systems and preparedness.

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<sup>6</sup> [\\*EGSIM Manual Juni2018.pdf \(entwicklung.at\)](#)

<sup>7</sup> [PS English 2012 Full-Document.pdf \(ifc.org\)](#)

**Ecosystem projects with climate rationale**

- Identification and delivery of Nature Based Solutions (NbS);
- Sustainable management, rehabilitation, and protection of ecosystems including important local carbon sinks and reservoirs;
- Reducing and avoiding deforestation and forest degradation.

**Applied research projects with climate rationale**

- Studies in relation to energy transition, climate neutrality, and resilience in recipient countries;
- Tracking and monitoring of GHG emissions and climate relevant finance in developing countries.

**Technology / value chain projects with climate rationale**

- Low GHG emission technology, products, and services, excluding nuclear energy and fossil fuels;
- Promotion of renewable energy sources and the use of renewable energy, e.g. for climate-friendly mobility;
- Technological cooperation.

Please note that activities linked to carbon markets / off setting programmes do not present eligible projects in this CfP as they do not contribute to a net reduction of GHG emissions.

## 3. Eligibility

### 3.1 Eligible applicants

Applicants can be any Austrian legal entities who have the expertise and the technical and human resources to implement the proposed project. The grant contribution should only support not-for-profit activities within the proposed project. Applicants are encouraged to plan and implement their projects in collaboration with one or more local partner organisation(s), which is/are registered in the country/ies where the project is implemented, if applicable.

Categories of eligible applicants are:

- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs);
- Universities and other academic institutions;
- Research institutes and think tanks;
- Private sector companies.

Applicants must have been operative for at least three years prior to the proposal submission date.

As part of the proposal, the applicant and its partner organisation(s) will have to demonstrate their track record, expertise, and the technical and human capabilities to manage public grants and deliver projects of comparable size.

Consortia of more than one eligible applicant as well as sub-contracting arrangements are eligible. For consortia, the role and contribution of each organisation must be clearly stated in the proposal. A consortium agreement may be prepared between the applicant and its partner(s) at their own discretion, yet it will not be required as a mandatory attachment to the proposal.

Only the applicant (consortium lead) will become a signatory to the Grant Agreement. The applicant as the

contracting party bears the sole responsibility for the implementation of the funded project and must ensure the adequate performance and compliance of its partner organisation(s).

### 3.2 Target countries and communities

Eligible projects can be implemented in all countries listed in the OECD DAC list of ODA recipients (as per 1 January 2024) that have ratified the Paris Agreement. Whilst not being limited to those, in particular countries classified by the United Nations as Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States (as per 1 January 2024) will be in the focus of the funding programme.

Single and multi-country/regional projects are eligible. For multi-country and regional projects, the added value of this targeting approach must be clearly stated in the proposal.

If applicable to the project, specific consideration shall be given to activities targeting:

- the most vulnerable communities, especially local and indigenous communities, who are particularly exposed to the threats of climate change; and
- women, girls, and youth as integral agents in tackling climate change.

### 3.3 Project duration

The implementation period of projects must not exceed 5 years. The project start date is the date of the final signature of the Grant Agreement unless otherwise specified. The project implementation must start no later than six months after the final signature of the Grant Agreement.

### 3.4 Eligible budget and costs

#### 3.4.1 Available funding

Projects can apply for grants ranging from EUR 150.000 to EUR 2.000.000. The current call has an overall budget of EUR 10 million.

Whereas an applicant may choose to submit more than one proposal, only one grant per applicant can be awarded within this call. If no sufficient number of adequately qualified proposals are submitted, the BMK in its sole discretion reserves the right to withhold part of or the full amount of the overall budget.

#### 3.4.2 Eligible costs

Funding eligibility is restricted to proposals demonstrating the essential need for requested funds in order to execute the project successfully.

Eligible costs must be directly related to the implementation of the project.

**Eligible costs must meet the following criteria:**

- Costs must be incurred by the grant recipient(s) during the project period;
- Costs must be indicated in the project budget as referenced by the Grant Agreement;
- Costs must be identifiable and verifiable;
- Costs must meet the requirements of the applicable tax and social legislation;
- Costs must be reasonable and justified and comply with the principle of sound financial management,

in particular economy and efficiency.

**Eligible costs may include the following cost categories:**

- **Investment costs necessary for the implementation**
  - Costs for buildings and facilities;
  - Costs for machines and equipment;
  - Planning services.
  
- **Operating and material costs necessary for the implementation**
  - Services and short-term consultancy required for the implementation of planned activities;
  - Costs for operating resources.
  
- **Travel costs necessary for the implementation**
  - Costs (including accommodation, mobility, rations, per-diems) incurred by project staff;
  - Costs (including accommodation, mobility, rations, per-diems) incurred by project stakeholders;
  - Costs must not exceed the entitlement of a comparable Austrian civil servant under the regulations for Austrian civil servants on travel expenses (Reisegebührenvorschrift für Bundesbedienstete) and the respective ordinances of the Austrian Ministry of Finance.
  
- **Costs for monitoring, evaluation & learning (MEL)**
  - Costs incurred for data collection, analysis, and reflection;
  - Costs may cover professional fees, travel, IT, etc.;
  - Costs may also cover external monitoring, if applicable.
  
- **Personnel costs (immaterial costs)**
  - Project staff with employment contract;
  - Long-term consultants engaged in the project.
  
- **Administrative costs (max. 10%)**

Administrative costs can constitute a maximum of 10 percent of the total project costs. Their share of the total costs must be necessary to implement the project and appropriately justified. Costs accounted for as direct project costs must not be included simultaneously in the administrative costs.

Only costs for which a proof of expenditure can be provided will be taken into account for disbursements of the Grant.

### 3.4.3 Non-eligible costs

Costs not eligible for funding are:

- Costs that are not directly connected with the funded project;
- Costs that were incurred before the start of the project;
- Costs that are not considered eligible costs due to EU competition law regulations;
- Costs that are covered by other funds;
- Provisions for possible future losses or liabilities;
- Costs associated with return on investment;
- Costs reimbursed under other EU measures or EU programmes;
- Obligations through debt and debt servicing;

- Costs for devices operated with fossil energy, including vehicles, if it cannot be proven that these are absolutely necessary for the implementation of the measure and replacement with renewable energy is not possible.

### Amount of funding

Standard Grants can cover up to 100 percent of the total eligible project costs. Such contribution may be comprised of the applicant's own resources, private or public co-funding, or in-kind contributions as well as combinations of those.

In the proposal, applicants must disclose all sources and amounts of funding received or applied for to fund the project. The applicant must ensure that other funding sources acquired for the project do not cover the same budget items presented in this proposal.

## 4. Submission process

### 4.1 Submission

Proposals must be submitted to the Austrian Climate Finance platform [www.climatefinance.at](http://www.climatefinance.at).

The submission deadline is May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 12:00 noon (CEST Central European Summer Time). The complete project proposals must be uploaded before the submission deadline. After successful submission, applicants will receive an automatically generated confirmation of receipt. Proposals submitted after the specified deadline will not be considered.

Submission of project proposals in paper copies or on electronic data storage media is not permissible and will be considered as a formal error.

### 4.2 Additional Information

Any question, communication or request for additional information concerning the CfP will only be accepted in writing (via e-mail) to [climatefinance@kommunalkredit.at](mailto:climatefinance@kommunalkredit.at). Such requests should be sent no later than April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024. All requests for clarification will be considered and the answers will be communicated simultaneously on [www.climatefinance.at](http://www.climatefinance.at) within five working days after the deadline for receiving requests for clarification.

Publication of the CfP	March 18 <sup>th</sup> , 2024
Deadline for Request of Clarification	April 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2024
Last Deadline to issue Clarifications	April 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2024
Submission Deadline	May 17 <sup>th</sup> , 2024 at 12:00 noon (CEST)
Grant awards (tentative)	End of August / early September 2024

### 4.3 Application documents

Project proposals must be submitted using the official templates for a proposal under Austria's Bilateral Climate Finance Programme. Applicants must use the templates in the latest available version. Incomplete proposals will not be considered.

A proposal consists of the following mandatory documents:

- Grant Request (duly signed), including Log Frame and Time schedule;
- Budget;
- Administrative documents (in English):
  - Copy of the relevant register of the Applicant (e.g., association register, commercial register);
  - Proof of authority to sign the Grant Request (e.g., statutes);
  - Signed partner mandate (if applicable);
  - A minimum of 3 reference projects of comparable size and scope;
  - CVs of key project staff;
  - Audited financial statements from the last three fiscal years of the Applicant.

The complete set of templates is available at: [www.climatefinance.at](http://www.climatefinance.at).

### 4.4 Language

Project proposals must be submitted in English. All further communication after the submission of the Grant Request, including for selected projects the Grant Agreement and reporting, will also be in English.

### 4.5 Additional guidance

Additional guidance on terminology, word limits, and the description of activities can be found in the Grant Request template. Only complete applications complying with the requirements will be considered for appraisal.

Project proposals that have not been chosen in a previous CfP may be re-submitted. However, these projects need to be substantially improved. Such proposals underlie the same Grant Selection process as other applications.

Project proposals that follow-up on finalized projects or projects that will be finalized within six months of the end of the CfP may be submitted.

## 5. Grant selection

### 5.1 Grant selection process

After the call has closed, submitted proposals will undergo a three-step selection process. The decision whether a project will be offered a grant or not will be based on the outcome of the formal eligibility check performed by the Programme Management Office, the proposal evaluation performed by the Advisory Board for the Bilateral Climate Finance Programme, and finally, the funding decision taken by the BMK. The Advisory Board will be comprised of an inter-agency panel of designated members. The Advisory Board will issue recommendations for grant awards.

The eligibility check will be based on the eligibility criteria for the programme as outlined in section 5.2. The proposal evaluation will be based on the evaluation criteria for the programme as outlined in section 5.3. Please note that a cascading approach will be taken to review the proposals. Hence, proposals that do not meet all the established eligibility criteria will not proceed to the second step of the evaluation.

## 5.2 Eligibility criteria

**To pass the formal eligibility check proposals must meet the following criteria:**

- The correct templates have been used (without modification);
- The proposal is complete (refer to section 4.3) including all mandatory documents;
- Applicant(s) belong to the list of eligible grant recipients (refer to section 3.1);
- Applicant(s) have adequately demonstrated their relevant track record, expertise, and technical and human capabilities (refer to section 3.1);
- The proposal observes the maximum word limits;
- The project aligns with the objectives of this CfP and clearly demonstrates its anticipated climate impact;
- Start and end of the project align with the provisions made under this CfP;
- The requested grant fits within the stipulated range of EUR 150.000 to a maximum of EUR 2.000.000 per project.

## 5.3 Project evaluation criteria

**Proposals must align with the evaluation criteria outlined below:**

### Criterion 1 – Applicant Capacity

- Capacity of the applicant and its partner organisation(s);
- Impact achieved through previous projects, which the proposal is building upon (if applicable).

### Criterion 2 – Alignment with Objectives

- Contribution to the objectives of the CfP as outlined in section 2.

### Criterion 3 – Policy Alignment

- Alignment with Austria's Strategy for International Climate Finance in its current version;
- Consistency with the relevant climate-related national plans and strategies in the targeted countries, such as Low Emission Development Strategies (LEDS), NDCs, national plans and strategies for adaptation (NAPs and NAS);
- Consistency with relevant international policy frameworks, in particular with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement;
- Fostering of synergies with other policy objectives, including goals and targets under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD).

### Criterion 4 – Project Design

- Sound problem, context, and stakeholder analysis drawing on the best available science and use of traditional and local knowledge; if applicable, proposals shall make use of climate risk and vulnerability assessments;
- Appropriate design of activities, outputs, and outcomes in regard to the project's objectives, target groups, and context;

- Realistic and plausible time schedule and budget.

#### Criterion 5 – Cross-cutting Themes

- Full and effective participation and inclusion of relevant stakeholders, in particular local and indigenous communities, especially vulnerable groups, and women and girls;
- Appropriate consideration and mainstreaming of safeguard measures with reference – at least – towards the following aspects: environment, Do No Harm, and social safeguards (e.g., gender, human rights);
- Positive and tangible effects in regard to the SDGs beyond “Climate Action”.

#### Criterion 6 – Project Management

- Appropriate design of impact indicators and MEL procedures;
- Adequate analysis and measures in place to foster sustainability beyond the end of the project;
- Adequate project management and risk management set-up.

#### Criterion 7 – Financial Management

- Comprehensiveness and clarity of the proposed budget;
- Efficient, effective, and transparent use of funds, in particular taking into account possible multiplier effects and additional benefits from cooperation with other donors and contributions and support services by the host countries;
- Co-funding (if applicable);
- Potential for leveraging private financing streams, if applicable.

The Advisory Board will evaluate each project proposal based on the criteria stated above using a 1 to 5-points scoring system.

## 6. Grant award and contract

### 6.1 Award notification and publication

The submission of a project does in no case constitute a binding legal entitlement to funding. The result of the evaluation of an eligible project proposal will be communicated to the applicant by e-mail through the Programme Management Office.

By participating in the CfP 2024, applicants acknowledge and agree that, in the event of their project being selected, Kommunalkredit Public Consulting GmbH/BMK reserve the right to publish the following details without requiring additional consent:

- Project Title
- Lead member and partners if applicable
- Country of Implementation
- Duration of the Project

These details may be utilized for informational purposes, including but not limited to, publication on the Climate Finance official website.

### 6.2 Grant Agreement

The proponents of successful proposals will be offered a Grant Agreement. The Grant Agreement concluded between BMK, represented by KPC, and the applicant has to be sent to KPC prior to the project start. The

implementation should start within six months after the final signature of the Grant Agreement.

Grants under this CfP cannot be awarded to projects which have already received support from other federal grants for the same activities.

Should problems arise during the implementation that lead or could lead to a non-fulfilment of the contract, the grant recipient is obliged to contact both BMK and KPC promptly. Further steps will then be considered between the three parties respectively. The final decision on whether, and if so how, to proceed or to terminate the contract will lie with BMK.

Should an inflation-related adjustment of the contract be necessary due to unforeseeable events, the decision on the amendment of the contract shall be incumbent on BMK. Any other necessary changes to the Grant Agreement due to unforeseen events that affect the agreed budget will be subject to an evaluation process in line with the scale of adjustment needed.

## 7. Reporting and disbursement of funds

### 7.1 Reporting requirements

#### 7.1.1 Technical and Financial Reports

The grant recipient must report on the progress of the implementation to BMK and KPC on regular basis and prepare Technical and Financial Reports in accordance with the Grant Agreement. The regular reporting period covers six months. In well-founded cases, the reporting period can be extended to a maximum of 12 months. All reporting obligations will be specified in the Grant Agreement.

When preparing reports and publicly communicating about the project, funding recipients will use the logo of the BMK in all printed materials and other public references in accordance with the guidelines for use. The logo of the Federal Ministry is available in the following package as printable and web-usable files in the formats PDF, JPEG, PNG and SVG. The package also contains the usage guidelines for the use of the logo. <https://www.bmk.gv.at/service/foerderungen/logo.html>

The review of the Technical and Financial Reports allows for an assessment of the implementation of the activities. Technical and Financial Reports will be reviewed by BMK and KPC respectively. Approval of the reports can only be granted when all questions and comments raised by BMK or KPC have been adequately addressed. If deemed necessary, additional information can be requested from the grant recipient to assist the review of the reports. Negative reviews of Technical and Financial Reports may have financial implications and can lead to an early termination of the project.

#### 7.1.2 Impact reporting

Based on the indicators that have been defined to measure the level of achievement of the project goal, outcomes, and outputs, grant recipients must report on the impact generated or contributed to by the project. Relevant information regarding the execution of MEL processes and the status of indicators shall be included in the Technical Reports. If a Baseline Study, Mid-term Review, and/or a final Evaluation will be conducted and funded through the project budget, these documents must be submitted to BMK as part of the reporting requirements. If applicable, a Baseline Study should take place within six months of the project start and a final Evaluation should be conducted within the last six months of a project. Considering the relevant safeguard procedures, impact reporting should reflect the design and implementation of a gender-responsive,

participatory, and inclusive MEL system.

## 7.2 Modalities of grant disbursement

Upon signing the Grant Agreement, the first disbursement of funds will be released, provided the conditions specified in the Grant Agreement are met. Subsequent disbursements will be tied to the reporting schedule of the project and the reported level of expenditures. Disbursements will be made once at least 75 percent of previous disbursements have been utilised and approved.

## 8. Other information

### 8.1 Complaints mechanism

Complaints of any nature in relation to the Bilateral Climate Finance Programme can be lodged with BMK by sending an e-mail to: [kpc\(at\)kommunalkredit.at](mailto:kpc(at)kommunalkredit.at). Such complaints may include but are not limited to grievances concerning the grant selection, any information on corruption and bribery, and concerns about the executing entity's failure to respect applicable laws, principles, standards or procedures.

### 8.2 Intellectual Property Rights

The grant recipient declares that no copyright or intellectual property rights are infringed by implementation of the funded project. If the grant provided by BMK amounts to 75% or more of the total costs of the project, the grant recipient shall transfer the grantor - with respect to all kinds of use - an irrevocable, transferable, and non-exclusive right of use of all intellectual property rights, intellectual property applications, inventions, design documents, methods, documents, and results work that originated or were procured by implementing the project.

### 8.3 Data protection

#### 8.3.1 Data controller:

The grantor is the sole data controller for the processing of data collected in the course of the grant award and the processing of the Grant Agreement. If you have any concerns regarding your personal data, you can contact the Data Protection Officer. The contact address is: [datenschutz\(at\)bmk.gv.at](mailto:datenschutz(at)bmk.gv.at)

#### 8.3.2 Types of personal data and their source:

In principle, the personal data processed contains the information that the grantor has received on the basis of the grant application, or the reports and evidence provided by the recipient. Personal data include in particular personal information of the recipient and information about people involved in the project (name, address, contact details, date of birth, etc.), identification data (ID card), bank account details, financial situation, proof of qualification, data on the eligible project, documentation data (in particular documentation of the grant award, e.g. receipt of the grant application, expert opinions for the preparation of the funding decision, justification for the funding decision, documentation of inspections or of the acceptance of the proof of use), correspondence data, processing results generated by KPC (e.g. evaluation data and evaluation results, archiving), as well as personal data that are required for the fulfilment of legal requirements (e.g. data for the preparation of the grant report, data of the Grant Agreement including the grant application within the framework of the agreement).

Data will be submitted upon transparency portal queries pursuant to § 32 para. 5 TDBG 2012. If necessary, data will also be shared when contacting other funding agencies to find out whether the recipient has received any funding or intends to receive funding. If a funding agency has granted funding or intends to grant funding, further personal data, such as in particular the amount of the grant and the subject matter of the grant, can be collected. This personal data will also be disclosed to other funding agencies upon request.

### 8.3.3 Legal basis and purposes for the processing of data

- For the fulfilment of contractual obligations (Art. 6 para. 1 lit. b GDPR): The processing of personal data is carried out for the initiation and execution of grant agreements as well as all related monitoring activities;
- For the fulfilment of legal obligations (Art. 6 para. 1 lit. c GDPR): The processing of personal data may be necessary for the purpose of fulfilling obligations by law (e.g. Federal Budget Act 2013 in conjunction with General Framework Guidelines 2014, Court of Auditors Act or regulations under Union law), to which the funding agency is subject;
- For the protection of legitimate interests (Art. 6 para. 1 lit. f GDPR): In the following cases, personal data is processed for the purpose of safeguarding of legitimate interests:
  - Data exchange with credit agencies (e.g. Austrian Credit Protection Association 1870) and bodies and agents of other grant-granting bodies;
  - In the context of legal prosecution.

### 8.3.4 Addressees of the personal data

Within KPC, departments or employees receive the personal data necessary to meet their contractual and legal obligations and safeguard legitimate interests. In addition, any processors commissioned by the BMK or KPC and their service providers receive personal data if they require the data to fulfil their respective services.

Additionally, personal data may be transmitted to the Federal Ministry of Finance for processing within the framework of the transparency database if required. Furthermore, public bodies and institutions (e.g. the Federal Ministry of Finance within the scope of the legal obligations on the basis of the Federal Budget Act 2013, Court of Audit, State Financial Procurator's Office, EU, other bodies granting subsidies - in particular those named by the Recipient in the grant application) receive personal data. If necessary, also the authorities responsible for enforcing or defending against legal claims in connection with the processing of the grant award or the grant agreement will receive data. Data will be transmitted to courts, administrative authorities, and legal representatives of the funding agency.

### 8.3.5 Storage period

The personal data shall be stored by KPC, to the extent necessary, for the entire duration of the funding relationship (from the initiation and processing to the full termination of all claims in connection with the grant agreement) and, in accordance with the legal obligations to retain and document data, which result from the Federal Budget Act 2013, the Federal Budget Ordinance 2013, the General Framework Guidelines 2022 or requirements under Union law.

### 8.3.6 Data protection rights

The General Data Protection Regulation gives rise to a large number of rights for the recipient and other affected people in connection with their personal data.

In principle, the data subject has the right to information, correction, deletion, or restriction of the processing of the stored data and a right of objection in each case in accordance with the requirements of data protection law.

### 8.3.7 Obligation to provide data

The recipient must provide the personal data necessary for the initiation and execution of the Grant Agreement or which the Grantor is legally obligated to collect. If the required personal data is not provided by the recipient, the Grantor must refuse to conclude the Grant Agreement. Likewise, an ongoing grant agreement would have to be discontinued and grants already awarded would have to be repaid.

### 8.3.8 Right of appeal

Should the recipient have any concerns in connection with his/her personal data, he/she may contact the data protection officer. Otherwise, complaints in connection with personal data are to be addressed to the:

Austrian data protection authority  
Barichgasse 40-42, 1030 Vienna, Austria  
[dsb\(at\)dsb.gv.at](mailto:dsb(at)dsb.gv.at)  
[www.dsb.gv.at](http://www.dsb.gv.at)

### 8.3.9 Costs for preparing tenders

No costs incurred by the applicant for preparing and submitting the project proposal are reimbursable. These costs must be borne by the applicant.

### 8.3.10 Cancellation of the call

In the event of cancellation of the call, BMK will notify the applicants. Cancellation may occur, for example, where:

- the call has been unsuccessful, i.e. no suitable, qualitatively or financially acceptable project proposal has been received, or there is no valid response at all;
- there are fundamental changes to the economic or technical data of the call;
- exceptional circumstances or force majeure render normal performance of the call impossible.

In no event shall BMK be liable for any damages whatsoever including, without limitation, damages for loss of profits, in any way connected with the cancellation of the call, even if BMK has been advised of the possibility of damages. The publication of this CfP does not commit BMK to implement the programme.

## 9. Contacts

For general information regarding the submission of proposals and processes regarding awarded projects, please contact:

**Kommunalkredit Public Consulting GmbH (KPC)**

Türkenstraße 9, 1090 Vienna, Austria

Phone: +43 1 31 6 31 - 768

E-mail: [climatefinance\(at\)kommunalkredit.at](mailto:climatefinance(at)kommunalkredit.at)

[www.climatefinance.at](http://www.climatefinance.at)

## ANNEX I

The following guidance relating to the implementation of safeguards applies to activities in rural areas, particularly, but not limited to agriculture and forest-related projects.

### Support for women

Rural women play a special role in promoting sustainability. They have a very close relationship with natural resources and have considerable knowledge of them and their management. In addition, they are instrumental as food security drivers. Women also promote collaboration, solidarity, conflict resolution, and self-sustaining collective action. Despite this, women are often marginalized and have very limited or even no participation in decision-making. They are even more affected by poverty and hunger than men are. In general, the specific female perspective could contribute to improving natural resource management if it were taken into account. Therefore, support for women, particularly for the most vulnerable among them, should deserve special attention in every cooperation project.

- **Participation:** in the initial workshops of the project as well as those that will take place during the implementation, applicants aim to have a female participation of at least 50 percent in these activities. In general, it should also be supported that women have an active role in decision-making in the initiative.
- **Women and climate and environmentally friendly activities:** the project includes at least one climate and environmentally friendly activity (e.g. agroecology in vegetable gardens, participation in local markets, reduction of firewood consumption, etc.) specifically aimed at supporting women.
- **Specific support for women:** the project includes an activity specifically dedicated to supporting rural women in areas such as for instance health, hygiene, education, etc.

### Direct cooperation with local and indigenous communities

Abundant scientific evidence demonstrates that local and indigenous communities manage their resources sustainably and can even, for example, halt deforestation. Moreover, smallholders produce 30-34 percent of the world's food, while indigenous peoples' food systems promote year-round food security. Despite their important contribution, local communities are often marginalized and victims of persecution and violence. Furthermore, in this regard, the UNFCCC urges to increase "efforts in relation to promoting sustainable agriculture, including by strengthening the role of indigenous peoples and local communities, and particularly women and youth, with a view to eradicating hunger and poverty while ensuring food security".<sup>8</sup> Direct cooperation with these groups at local level is therefore both fair and an efficient way to promote practical measures that are beneficial to the climate, environment, and society.

- **Cooperation with local and indigenous communities:** the proposed initiative in rural and forest areas supports the participation of local and/or indigenous communities and is based on the free, prior, and informed consent. Furthermore, a grievance mechanism should ensure that problems and issues are identified to avoid negative impacts on individuals or communities as well as recurrent disputes. The project aims to strengthen local resources and human capacities.
- **Social, climate and environmentally friendly practices:** practical measures should aim at sustainable and respectful management of natural resources (agriculture, forests, water, soils, biodiversity) that generate benefits for communities. Strengthening food sovereignty is also an appropriate measure. Forest management based on local and traditional perspectives as well as the practice of sustainable agroecology are preferable.

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<sup>8</sup> Joint Work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security, UNFCCC, COP 27 (2022).

- **Avoiding negative impacts at local level:** the initiative avoids the uncritical introduction of techniques and measures that are alien to the cultural and socioeconomic context of local and indigenous communities and that could cause conflicts or negative social or environmental impacts.

### Safeguards

In addition to the safety measures addressed above, cooperation projects shall include a series of "safeguards" to prevent the initiative from having negative social or environmental effects. By way of example, reference is made here to the safeguards highlighted by The Cancún Agreements.<sup>9</sup> The following criteria are based on them.

- **Respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities:** the proposed initiative is characterized by respect for the cultural and spiritual context and the rights of local and indigenous communities. The project makes priority use of local knowledge and strengthens it. Technologies, practices, and knowledge foreign to the communities are not introduced uncritically and not without prior consent of the communities targeted.
- **Participation:** cooperation projects must be based on a participatory process. At the beginning of each initiative, participatory workshops inform the communities about the project objectives and collect local proposals. It must be possible for the communities to contribute their own ideas to the project and to reject measures they do not consider appropriate. Proper measures should ensure that marginalised and vulnerable members of the communities can also participate. Overall, the design of the initiative must be aligned with the needs of the target communities.
- **Environmental impacts:** the project activities do not have a negative impact on the environment and are not likely to contribute to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions. The initiative is consistent with the conservation of natural resources and biological diversity and do not promote the establishment of monocultures. Measures in agriculture and forestry help to conserve carbon stocks or even increase them.

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<sup>9</sup> Decision 1/CP.16, The Cancun Agreements, Appendix I, UNFCCC (2010).

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The BMK supports companies and institutions through numerous subsidies in the area of environmental and climate protection.