

TOTAL BUDGET	DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS
€32.000.000 (12 grants)	November 4 th 2022 23:59 (Brussels time)

CALL GOALS

Background

NetZeroCities (NZC) is a four-years project funded under the Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme in support of the European Union’s Green Deal. NZC has been designed to help cities overcome the current structural, institutional and cultural barriers they face in order to achieve climate neutrality by 2030.

NZC supports the EU’s Mission of “100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities by 2030” launched as part of the Horizon Europe programme. The project recognises the need for cities to develop specific strategies that are tailored to suit local and regional contexts, and will support them by developing, promoting, and integrating new and existing tools, resources, and expertise into a one-stop platform accessible to all cities through an online portal (Mission Platform). The project tailors advanced capabilities related to systemic change, citizen engagement and democratic, participatory governance, capital and financial structuring, and social innovation, to ensure cities have access to expertise needed to address their challenges in becoming climate-neutral.

Aim of the Call

The NZC Pilot Cities Programme will identify 30 European cities or districts to test and implement innovative approaches, exploiting Research&Innovation towards rapid decarbonisation over a two-year pilot programme, working across thematic areas and functional silos in support of transforming systems. The selection of Pilot Cities will seek to address all urban systems, including mobility, energy systems, and the built environment, material and resource flows, health and well-being, natural areas, cultural/ social/ financial/ institutional systems, and accessible public spaces. Any one Pilot City might target all, or a combination of, these urban systems, depending on their context and the scale of the proposed pilot activities.

BENEFICIARIES AND CONDITIONS

This call is open to cities based in EU Member states or Horizon 2020 Associated Countries. The definition of the persons or categories of persons which may receive financial support are: local authorities or city administrations; other local partners, such as research institutions/universities, SMEs, NGOs/associations, citizen groups or other relevant stakeholders involved by the local authorities or city administrations in the implementation of their climate ambitions.

Eligibility requirements for the call include, but are not limited to, each proposal being led by the relevant local authority or city administration, and the presence of at least two legal entities (one of which must be the local authority or city administration), as part of the Pilot City consortium. Any city can apply, whether or not selected as one of the 100 Mission Cities (undertaking the Climate City Contract (CCC) process).

A group of cities (national or trans-national) is allowed to apply together, however one of the cities will have to be designated as the consortium leader for all administrative and process-

related purposes. In the case of a group of cities applying together in one application, the size of the requested grant must follow the award amounts as stated above (1.3 Funding). The logic behind a joint application will need to be explained in the introductory section of the application form, and addressed in the subsequent, relevant sections of the form, particularly the impact section.

With reference to the eligibility criterion referring to a minimum of 50,000 inhabitants, for countries with a lower number of larger cities this population threshold is lowered to 10,000 inhabitants. This applies specifically to cities from countries with less than 5 cities of more than 100,000 inhabitants. However, each application should represent at least 50,000 inhabitants. Therefore, where applicable, joint applications are expected to fulfil this eligibility criterion.

In the case of a grouped application, please note that references to “city” in this document, and the associated Pilot Cities Programme Guidebook, will imply the group of cities or each city involved in that group.

FUNDING CONDITIONS

The total funding available for the NZC Call for Pilot Cities is €32 million, and the estimated number of grants will be: 12 grants for a maximum grant amount of €1.5 million; 10 grants for a maximum grant amount of €1.0 million; 8 grants for a maximum grant amount of €0.5 million.

The reimbursement rate is 100% of the total eligible costs. The maximum grant amount can NOT be exceeded.

Financial support is provided in the form of grants based on, and reimbursed against, actual costs incurred and submitted in interim and final reporting. Only indirect costs are calculated on the basis of a flat rate (25% - as per H2020 rules).

In order to be eligible for funding, eligible costs must meet the following criteria:

- a) be incurred by the beneficiary during the duration of the project, with the exception of costs relating to final reports and audit certificates,
- b) be indicated in the estimated overall budget of the action attached to the award agreement,
- c) be necessary for the implementation of the project which is the subject of the grant;
- d) be identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiary is/are established and according to the usual cost-accounting practices of the beneficiary,
- e) comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation,
- f) be reasonable, justified and comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

Value added tax (VAT) is considered as eligible where it is not recoverable under the applicable national

VAT legislation and is paid by a beneficiary other than a non-taxable person as defined in Article 13 of Council Directive 2006/112/EC13 of 28 November 2006 on the common system of value added tax.

The successful applicant/s must take care to avoid any unnecessary or unnecessarily high expenditure.

The beneficiary's internal accounting and auditing procedures must permit a direct reconciliation of the costs and revenue declared in respect of the project with the corresponding accounting statements and supporting documents.

Documentation justifying costs must be kept by the beneficiary for five years following the closure of the NetZeroCities project.

Eligible costs may be direct or indirect.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Applications will be submitted online via <https://netzerocities.app/>
- Further information: <https://netzerocities.eu>