



European  
Commission

Executive Agency for  
Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

# EIC Accelerator pilot (SME Instrument) Green Deal

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Frequently Asked Questions for experts  
participating in the Evaluation

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The document contains a list of frequently asked questions by the experts involved in the evaluation of the EIC Accelerator pilot (SME Instrument) Green Deal proposals. Please consult this document before writing to [EASME-SME-EXPERTS@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EASME-SME-EXPERTS@ec.europa.eu).

**Table of Contents**

- 1.1 What is the EIC Accelerator ‘Green Deal’ ..... 2**
- 1.2 How many cut-off dates are there? ..... 2**
- 1.3 How is this cut-off different from other EIC Accelerator (SME Instrument) cut-offs? ..... 2**
- 1.4 Will applications from women-led SMEs be treated differently in the evaluation? How will the Commission verify that a woman is holding the CEO or equivalent position? ..... 3**
- 1.5 Which are the documents I have to assess for an EIC Accelerator pilot (SME Instrument) Green Deal proposal? ..... 3**
- 1.6 Practically, what is different in the IER for Green Deal proposals? ..... 4**
- 1.7 How should I approach the evaluation of the ‘Green Deal’ criteria? ..... 4**
- 1.8 Do I have to evaluate a proposal that I believe is out of scope of the Green Deal call? ..... 4**
- 1.9 Is there a specific methodology to quantitatively estimate the contribution of a proposal to the sustainability goals? ..... 4**
- 1.10 Is the rate of pay for evaluations the same as for the March and October cut-offs of the EIC Accelerator (SME Instrument)? ..... 5**
- 1.11 How many times may I claim the ‘briefing’ payment? ..... 5**

## 1.1 What is the EIC Accelerator ‘Green Deal’

Starting on March 18 until May 19 2020, applicants will be able to apply for the **Green Deal topic** specifically concentrating on those innovations that fuel the societal transition towards sustainability while supporting EU’s competitiveness and leadership in clean technologies. The topic targets high-risk, high- potential small- and medium- sized enterprises (including startups) from any sector provided that they contribute to one or more of the Green Deal goals below:

- Increasing the EU’s climate mitigation and/or adaptation ambition;
- Supplying clean, affordable and secure energy;
- Transitioning of industry to a clean and/or circular economy (including waste prevention and/or recycling);
- Building and renovating in an energy and resource efficient way;
- Accelerating the shift to sustainable and smart mobility;
- Transition to a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system;
- Preserving and restoring ecosystems and biodiversity;
- Realising a zero pollution ambition and a toxic-free environment.

Projects dedicated to increase the efficiency of fossil fuels technologies or fossil fuels use are ineligible. Simultaneously, projects shall do no significant harm to any of these objectives and should enhance European Union’s competitiveness and leadership in clean technologies.

Applicants will be asked to select in Part A of the submission template the European Green Deal goal(s) that correspond to the expected impact of the proposal.

## 1.2 How many cut-off dates are there?

For the period of your contract, there is **one** cut-off for the EIC Accelerator pilot (SME Instrument) **Green Deal**. The specific date for 2020:

	<b>EIC Accelerator Green Deal</b>
<b>2020</b>	<b>19<sup>th</sup> May</b>

## 1.3 How is this cut-off different from other EIC Accelerator (SME Instrument) cut-offs?

The EIC Accelerator (SME Instrument) is a ‘bottom-up’ call, meaning that there are no set topics but negative impacts on climate and the environment shall be avoided.

However, the EIC Accelerator (SME Instrument) Green Deal **topic** is a ‘**top-down**’ call with a specific challenge:

“If your company aims to deliver a meaningful impact towards sustainable development, the Green Deal topic of the European Innovation Council (EIC) pilot Accelerator may support your endeavours.

This Green Deal topic specifically concentrates on those innovations that fuel the societal transition towards sustainability while supporting EU’s competitiveness and leadership in clean technologies.”

#### **1.4 Will applications from women-led SMEs be treated differently in the evaluation? How will the Commission verify that a woman is holding the CEO or equivalent position?**

The European Commission aims to contribute towards a more gender balanced European innovation ecosystem. Therefore, for the cut-off deadlines of 7 October 2020 and for the EIC accelerator Green Deal of 19 May 2020, when inviting the best applicants who passed all the quality thresholds to face-to-face interviews, the aim is to have in the pool of the best applicants invited to interviews at least 25% of applications submitted by SMEs (including start-ups) led by women CEO (or equivalent position)

Applications submitted by women-led SMEs (including start-ups) **will be treated in exactly the same way as all other applications during the evaluation process**, including both the Step 1 (remote evaluation) and Step 2 (face-to-face interview). Applicants will be requested to indicate the name and gender of the CEO, or equivalent position, in the application form (Part A). Applicants may also decide not to specify the gender of the CEO (or equivalent) in which case they will not be treated as women-led SMEs.

#### **1.5 Which are the documents I have to assess for an EIC Accelerator pilot (SME Instrument) Green Deal proposal?**

The documents provided by applicants remain the same as for the main EIC Accelerator Call.

**Part A:** the administrative form:

Includes structured data and contains general information, administrative data of the applying organisation, the budget for the proposal, ethics issues and call-specific questions including which Green Deal goal(s) correspond to the expected impact of the proposal.

**Part B:** the project proposal:

Dedicated to the project proposal where applicants should detail all elements related to the innovation for which they are requesting funding. It is composed of four different documents including the following elements:

**Document 1** – Proposal template (provided in .pdf):

- Introduction ;
- Section 1 – Excellence;
- Section 2 – Impact;
- Section 3 – Implementation;

**Document 2** – Annexes 1 – 3 (provided in a single .pdf):

- Annex 1 - Ethics and Security;
- Annex 2 - CVs ;
- Annex 3 - Other supporting documents;
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**Document 3** - Annex 4 - Financial and corporate information Excel file (provided as .pdf and .xls);

**Document 4** – Annex 5 - Pitch-deck (provided in .pdf).

## 1.6 Practically, what is different in the IER for Green Deal proposals?

An additional sub-criterion will be included in the Individual Expert Report (IER) under the Main Criteria ‘IMPACT’. Experts will be required to evaluate:

“Assessment of the contribution to the Green Deal implementation in terms of delivery of at least one of the sustainability goals described under ‘expected impact’ of the topic description. Proposals must quantitatively estimate this contribution.”

## 1.7 How should I approach the evaluation of the ‘Green Deal’ criteria?

In evaluating this additional criterion for the ‘Green Deal’ call, experts must determine whether:

- the proposal actually responds to the sustainability goal(s) which have been indicated by the applicant in Part A of the application form and;
- Whether a quantitative estimate of the contribution has been provided.

If the proposal does **NOT** respond to the applicant’s indicated goal(s), experts should **score this additional sub criterion below 5** and declare the proposal ‘**Out of Scope**’ by clicking on the radio button at the end of the IER and **adding supporting comments**.

## 1.8 Do I have to evaluate a proposal that I believe is out of scope of the Green Deal call?

**Yes.** You must complete the entire evaluation of the proposal even if you believe it is out of scope of the Green Deal call objectives.

This is because four experts are evaluating each proposal and it is possible that other experts will not agree that the proposal is out of scope. Only in the event that three or more experts agree that a proposal is out of scope will it be declared as such by the Call Coordinator.

## 1.9 Is there a specific methodology to quantitatively estimate the contribution of a proposal to the sustainability goals?

Applications must contribute to one or more of the eight European Green Deal goals mentioned in the call text. Given the diversity in these goals and the wide range of relevant innovations, the Commission does not prescribe any specific methodology to quantify the contributions to achieve these goals. It is therefore up to the applicants to identify the methodology/ies they believe are most relevant and provide the most reliable quantification.

In the application forms, applicants are requested to specify:

- Which of the eight European Green Deal goals their innovation addresses (multiple goals may be addressed).
- The methodology/ies selected to quantify the contribution of the innovation to the relevant goal, including a justification for the choice of methodology(ies). In cases where several goals are relevant, the quantification may be limited to the one or two most relevant ones.
- The quantification of the contribution to the relevant goal(s) using the identified methodology.

Evaluation will take into account that methodologies will differ and may be at different levels of maturity/ robustness across the eight goals.

By way of illustrative examples, projects contributing to climate mitigation could quantify the contribution to CO<sub>2</sub> eq. emissions avoided compared to a reference scenario or to existing products/solutions on the market; projects contributing to the supply of clean energy could quantify the contribution to additional clean energy installed capacity; projects contributing to sustainable mobility could quantify the contribution on the modal shift from fossil-fuels based transport to sustainable transport modes. Data and indicators provided by the Sustainable Development Indicators and the European Environment Agency, may be of relevance in some cases.

These examples serve illustrative purposes, and the Commission acknowledges that projects are often very much targeted, producing impacts that are context dependent. In this sense, specific indicators and the corresponding methodologies may be developed in order to capture projects' benefits and impacts as regards the Green Deal as rigorously as possible.

### **1.10 Is the rate of pay for evaluations the same as for the March and October cut-offs of the EIC Accelerator (SME Instrument)?**

**Yes.** The reimbursement rate for evaluation tasks remains the same as the other two cut-offs for which you are contracted in 2020. Please see the main set of FAQs for information on payments and how to make a reimbursement claim.

### **1.11 How many times may I claim the 'briefing' payment?**

**Once.** You are contracted as an expert evaluator for 2020 covering the EIC Accelerator (SME Instrument) cut-offs of March and October **as well as** the 'Green Deal' cut-off of May.

Regardless of whether you evaluate proposals in one, two or all three of the cut-offs, you may only claim reimbursement for the briefing task once. **You should claim this payment together with your first reimbursement claim for undertaking evaluation tasks.**