

GEOACT

Georisks and climate change in the Caribbean region
based on a transdisciplinary and trans-sectorial approach:
Integrating science and end-users needs for innovative
and sustainable mitigation and adaptation solutions

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Capacity building in innovation

Date of issue: 20 February 2023 – Closing Date: 24 March 2023

GEOACT is a project collaboratively implemented by:



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Summary

| CALL 2 - Capacity building in Innovation and valorisation | |
|--|---|
| General and specific objectives of the Call for proposals | <p>GO: Strengthen capacities of stakeholders in innovation and valorisation</p> <p>SO1: Train stakeholders (e.g., GEOACT’s partners, Living Labs, students, users) on project engineering, open innovation, impact pathway, intellectual property, innovation brokering, digital tools, participatory approaches, etc., to help structure Living Labs and R&I ecosystems.</p> <p>SO2: Train innovation “users/beneficiaries” to foster the adoption/diffusion of innovations within the society.</p> |
| Activities funded & expected results | <p>1. Capacity building in innovation and valorisation (Month 1 – Month 6):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Training of trainers in the issues and appropriate skills in terms of R&I strategies and exploitation of research results (contracting process, IP, Project engineering); – Preparation of teaching material/tools (along with the experts) for training sessions, workshops and publication on the website of GEOACT – Seminars involving the partners of the Living Labs funded and open to the public, to share experiences, skills and solutions <p>2. Capacity building and structuration of the Living Labs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Preparing training materials, and training/mentoring Living Labs partners and other stakeholders on project engineering, open innovation, R&I brokering, impact pathway, Intellectual property, contracting, writing up project proposals, and the Living Lab/open innovation approach; – Support for funded Living Labs, in their structuring & development, implementation of training and labelling/certification, business development. – Training of users on the innovations to foster their broad appropriation/use <p>3. Products/results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Training materials and courses for stakeholders (project engineering, open innovation, impact pathway, intellectual property, innovation brokering) – Tools to contribute to the design of LL – A follow up of the structuration of the LL and of the transfer to the local authorities and other stakeholders, of LL innovative productions to address climate change issues in the region (with a positive social and economic impact) |
| Eligible countries | <p>Applicants (legal entities) from the following OACPS Caribbean Countries are eligible to apply as Lead Applicant or Partners: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.</p> |
| Eligible applicant types (legal entities) | <p>Academic and research institutions/organisations; spin-off companies; VET providers; organisations representing indigenous and local communities; agencies and associations working for gender equality in research and innovation; national science, technology and innovation agencies; non-governmental organisations; innovation support organisations (technology clusters, innovation labs and technology transfer offices); incubators and start-ups; and other similar organisations.</p> |
| Consortium characteristics | <p>At least 2 Applicants from the eligible applicant types listed above (1 Lead Applicant and its Co-applicants) from 1 or more different OACPS Caribbean countries (from the list above).</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| Applicants/partners' profile | Expertise in territory diagnosis, stakeholder mapping, knowledge of and able to analyse R&I ecosystems and to disseminate the results of the analysis + expertise/experience in the field of facilitation of multi-actor projects, networking, collective intelligence, etc. |
| Project duration | Expected start: 01/05/2023 - Expected end: 31/12/2024 (final report included). |
| Funding | 1 project (multi-actor consortium) will be funded. The Lead Applicant should propose an offer not exceeding a requested funding of 300,000 Euro. |
| Call Schedule | Launch: 20/02/2023, Submission Deadline: 24/03/2023, Evaluation: 27-31/03/2023, Publication of results: 07/04/2023, Contract Signature: april 2023, Project Start: 01/05/2023, Project End: by 31/12/2024 |
| How to prepare and submit a proposal | <p>To access all the administrative and financials rules and requirements, please read and follow the GEOACT Grants Operations Manual (Annex 4 of this document)</p> <p>Proposals must be written in English and must use the following templates (Annexes attached to these Guidelines):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annex 1. Project proposal Template • Annex 2. Project proposal Logical Framework & Schedule • Annex 3. Project proposal Budget Template <p>Proposals must be accompanied by supporting documents (as listed in these Guidelines):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official letter of support from the head of the applying institution (Lead Applicant) and from each Co-applicant, stating the project title, the activities carried out by each Applicant, the funding requested by each Applicant, and the overall Project budget. • Official documents certifying the creation, registration and status of the Lead Applicant and Co-applicants (among others, it should indicate the date of creation and address of the organisations). • For the Lead Applicant, activity and financial reports, demonstrating experience and responsibility in the preparation and management of funded activities (evidence of having managed at least two grants for research and innovation projects, of at least €75,000 each between 2018 and 2021). • CV of the Project coordinator (Lead Applicant) and evidence of his/her position in the Lead Organisation. • CVs of the Co-applicants' coordinators and evidence of his/her position in the Lead Organisation |
| Additional information | A successful Applicant in this Call for Proposals will be allowed to apply in other GEOACT Calls for Proposals (as Lead Applicant or Co-applicant) but the cumulative amount of the different grants it may receive will not exceed in any case 400,000 Euros (cf. GEOACT Grants Operations Manual). |

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List of acronyms

| | |
|---------|---|
| ABS | Access and Benefit-Sharing |
| AC | Advisory Committee |
| ACS | Association of Caribbean States, Trinidad |
| AUF | Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie |
| C&D | Communication and Dissemination |
| CC | Climate change |
| CDEVS | Communication, Dissemination, Exploitation and Visibility Strategy |
| CMT | Coordination and Management Team |
| CSF | Caribbean Science Foundation, Barbados |
| CSO | Civil society organisation |
| EU | European Union |
| FOKAL | Fondation Fokal, Haiti |
| GEOACT | Georisks and climate change in the Caribbean region based on a transdisciplinary and trans-sectorial approach: Integrating science and end-users needs for innovative and sustainable mitigation and adaptation solutions |
| GDPR | General Data Protection Regulation |
| IPCC | Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change |
| IPR | Intellectual Property Rights |
| IRD | Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development) |
| KPI | Key Progress Indicators |
| NGO | Non-governmental organisation |
| OACPS | Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States |
| PMC | Project Monitoring Committee |
| PSC | Project Steering Committee |
| RERIPA | Strengthening Research and Innovation Ecosystems to Address the Impact of Climate Change in the Pacific |
| R&I | Research and Innovation |
| SALCC | Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, St. Lucia |
| SIDS | Small Island Developing States |
| SIV | Innovation and Valorisation Service of IRD |
| ITPGRFA | International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture |

1 Background: ACP Innovation Fund and GEOACT Project

The GEOACT project “**Georisks and climate change in the Caribbean region based on a transdisciplinary and trans-sectorial approach: Integrating science and end-users needs for innovative and sustainable mitigation and adaptation solutions**” is an initiative selected under the call for projects of the ACP Innovation Fund, part of the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States’ (OACPS) Research and Innovation (R&I) Programme with financial contribution from the European Union (EU).

The ACP Innovation Fund (<https://oacps-ri.eu/en/innovation-fund/>) is a key component of the OACPS R&I Programme, aimed at strengthening R&I capacity in the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) member countries to unlock their innovation potential and support their transition into knowledge-based economies for sustainable development. Investments in R&I capacity are likely to pay a higher dividend, if embedded in an effective and inclusive innovation ecosystem and combined with efforts to constitute a critical mass of skilled people adapted to the labour market demand. The ACP Innovation Fund provides financial support for the implementation of projects advancing solutions in the following areas (<https://oacps-ri.eu/en/innovation-fund/>):

- increasing access to digital literacy, knowledge, and use of emerging technologies;
- creating or strengthening effective links between R&I skills development and labour market demand;
- establishing or enabling effective synergies in the R&I ecosystem, including with the private sector; facilitating conditions for technology transfer; promoting R&I uptake;
- promoting local and indigenous knowledge and its use in combination with formal knowledge systems and practices.

Consortium: GEOACT involves 6 partners: IRD (Research Institute for Sustainable Development) (Project coordinator); Association of Caribbean States (ACS), Trinidad; Caribbean Science Foundation (CSF), Barbados; Fondation FOKAL, Haiti; Sir Arthur Lewis Community College (SALCC), St. Lucia; Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF).

General objective: Inclusive R&I environment across the Caribbean region to face geohazards and climate change (CC) impacts.

Specific objectives (SO):

- **SO1.** R&I stakeholders collaborating across the Caribbean region through a regional network to develop and apply innovative R&I strategies, in particular to introduce CCI solutions
- **SO2.** Increased uptake in the region of innovative, inclusive and sustainable solutions to face regional climate change impacts tested, developed or adapted by the Living Labs
- **SO3.** R&I stakeholders able to generate, apply and transform knowledge to innovate for sustainable development

The original approach of the project is to support the co-design and deployment of solutions around Geohazards and climate issues by academic partners, companies, NGOs, users' representatives and public authorities, in order to respond to identified needs.

Geographical scope: GEOACT is implemented in the ACP countries of the Caribbean Region: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.

Grant amount: €4,174,350 - Project duration: 48 months (March 2021 - February 2025)

Context & Policy Background

Island nations of the Caribbean region, large or small, share a common physiographic domain exposed to similar environmental threats: raising sea-level, enhanced extreme weather phenomena (hurricanes, floods, etc.), coastal erosion, ocean acidification, earthquakes and tsunami, or volcanic activity. In a changing global climate,



and at a time when urbanization increases exposure and vulnerability to natural hazards, the development of innovative solutions to diagnose, understand, and adapt to these threats is paramount in order to contribute to the development of a sustainable social and economic framework for the future of these territories.

The development of smart and sustainable solutions to tackle natural hazards and climate change must obviously rely on a strong R&I framework, a challenge for most Caribbean countries that have limited capacity to practice science and innovation locally. As a result, they often tend to import this know-how when, paradoxically, many of them host university structures with quality curricula. Haiti is a particularly striking example, with good undergraduate university training, but a local practice of high-level R&I totally undersized in relation to the challenges. Regional progress on smart and sustainable solutions to adapt to natural hazards and climate change face three key roadblocks:

1. If university structures are not absent from Caribbean countries, they are rarely backed by research laboratories and, therefore, have a limited ability to develop scientific research and innovation programs at the highest level and to orient their best students towards these programs.
2. Even though some Caribbean countries do have a good level of R&I, international exchanges of data, models, innovative solutions, or students within the region are very limited. Enhancing such exchanges and sharing solutions is key to elevating the capabilities of the region as a whole, as the challenges posed by natural hazards and climate change are common to most Caribbean nations.
3. R&I in general – in the area of natural hazards and climate change in particular – rarely involves multi-stakeholder interactions. The involvement of end-users through the R&I process, in the spirit of “living labs” has the potential to increase the effectiveness of the research and solutions developed.

We propose to overcome these roadblocks by co-building a regional platform focused on research-based innovative solutions to mitigate the effects of natural hazards and climate change that are common to Caribbean nations. This objective cannot be met without involving, from the outset, all the stakeholders of the innovation value chain: from populations to the civil society or private sector, and of course research universities. Co-designing the solutions of tomorrow requires understanding everyone’s capacities and needs, as well as mobilizing everyone’s knowledge. Also, these actions must take advantage of the opportunities offered by digital technologies to enhance exchanges and strengthen the skills of the target territories.

Expected results of GEOACT

The expected impact is the implementation of better-structured and adaptable research and innovation modalities both in terms of general programming and concrete and targeted actions where each stakeholder (public decision-makers, economic actors, civil society organizations, NGOs, and individual actors) can find useful resources for their project:

1. **National R&I ecosystems on target themes are mapped and diagnosed** in a participatory manner (innovation strategies, funding, needs, opportunities, actors, interactions, know-how, knowledge, existing innovations, jobs/skills, etc.) and a shared vision of tomorrow's strategies and challenges is built.
2. A **federated, committed multi-stakeholder community** aware of the importance of science-society collaboration in the co-design of realistic innovations/solutions.
3. Livings Labs mobilizing **actors from research, civil society, industry and decision-makers/authorities and developing, testing and transferring innovative/sustainable NHCC solutions** (including digital) are created.
4. **Innovative and sustainable solutions** in natural hazards and climate change **are transferred to users**, with positive social and economic benefits.
5. **The hard and soft skills of the stakeholders** (including political leaders) in the field of research valorisation (contracting, intellectual property, maturation and technology transfer, etc.), collective intelligence, and project engineering (setting up, responding to calls for proposals, monitoring/evaluation, etc.) are reinforced;
6. **Capacities of the actors are reinforced** on NHCC and related innovative solutions, tools and services.

2 Terms of reference of the Call for Proposals: Capacity building in open innovation

The goal of this Call for Proposals (CFP) entitled “**Capacity building in open innovation**” is to fund **one excellent multi-partner project** aimed at strengthening innovation capacities of the Caribbean R&I ecosystems at the national and regional level.

The project will have to perform activities to address the following Specific Objectives:

- SO1: Train stakeholders (e.g., GEOACT’s partners, Living Labs, students, users) on project engineering, open innovation, impact pathway, intellectual property, innovation brokering, digital tools, participatory approaches, etc, to help structure Living Labs and reinforce R&I ecosystems.
- SO2: Train innovation “users/beneficiaries” to foster the adoption/diffusion of innovations within the society.

The approach proposed should cover the following aspects:

- ✓ **Preparation of teaching material/tools and syllabus** (along with the experts) for training sessions, workshops and publication on the website of GEOACT, on project engineering, open innovation, R&I brokering, impact pathway, Intellectual property, contracting, writing up project proposals, labelling/certification, business development, etc.
- ✓ **Training of trainers** (ex. for the services of public R&I bodies), based on an in-person class format, with approximately 25 students per class; training will cover the challenges and skills required for the exploitation of research results (contracting process, IP, Project engineering), and the Living Lab/open innovation approach
- ✓ **Training/mentoring of Living Labs partners/stakeholders** by previously trained trainers and other experts, on project engineering, open innovation, R&I brokering, impact pathway, Intellectual property, contracting, writing up project proposals, labelling/certification, business development, etc. Training will be in the form of face-to-face training sessions and distance training through access to training materials.
- ✓ **Ongoing support to Living labs in their structuring & development**, notably prior to and during the preparation of Living Lab specifications, during the project period and innovations/solutions development phases. Activities will allow a follow up of the structuration of the LL and of the transfer to the local authorities and other stakeholders, of LL innovative productions to address climate change issues in the region (with a positive social and economic impact)
- ✓ **Training of Living Labs’ solutions/innovations’ users** to foster their broad appropriation and use.

Training activities should include at least the following workshops, which have been pre-identified by GEOACT. **These workshops must be budgeted for in the project proposal and their organization (contents, targets, format, etc.) can be adjusted if relevant:**

- Training workshop to raise capacities and awareness of the Living Labs and open innovation approach (estimated budget 35000 € / at least 20-25 persons)
- Training of trainers workshops on project engineering (estimated budget 35000 € / at least 20-25 persons).
- Training of trainers workshop on research valorisation (contracts, intellectual property, negotiation, etc.). Estimated budget 35000 € / at least 20-25 persons.

Applicants should demonstrate that they will engage/collaborate with key beneficiaries or R&I actors involving academia, industry, CSO and government agencies. Actors that will need to be consulted and engaged should be clearly identified in the proposal. Proposed activities must demonstrate their ability to develop south-south exchanges and knowledge sharing. Proposals are welcome to propose a methodology that enriches the terms of reference of the Call, as long as it fulfils the Call's objectives.

Overall, the proposal should demonstrate how it will contribute to strengthen knowledge and processes dedicated to reinforce R&I ecosystem abilities to stimulate, follow and support innovation.

Expected deliverables, among others:

- ✓ Training materials and courses for stakeholders (project engineering, open innovation, impact pathway, intellectual property, innovation brokering)
- ✓ Tools to contribute to the design of LL
- ✓ A follow up of the structuration of the LL and of the transfer to the local authorities and other stakeholders, of LL innovative productions to address climate change issues in the region (with a positive social and economic impact)
- ✓ Final overall activity report of the project granted through this Call.

3 Call Schedule

This Call follows a “One stage procedure” that implies direct submission of full proposals, using the proposal templates provided.

| Action | Scheduled |
|---|------------------|
| Launching the Call (Website and other means) | 20 February 2023 |
| Deadline for submission of proposals | 24 March 2023 |
| Eligibility check | 27 March 2023 |
| Scientific/Technical review | 28-31 March 2023 |
| Validation by the GEOACT Steering Committee | 3 – 5 April 2023 |
| Call Results publication | 7 April 2023 |
| Signature of Grant Agreement between IRD and the Lead Applicant | April 2023 |
| Expected start of the project | 01 May 2023 |

4 Eligibility requirements

To be eligible for funding the following eligibility criteria must be met by the Applicants.

Project consortium (Lead Applicant and its Partners):

- **The Call for Proposals must be answered by consortia of several legal entities** (public and private moral persons), and each consortium will have to be coordinated by a legal entity referred to as Lead Applicant, and the Lead Applicant will involve Partner Organisations in its consortium.
- A successful Applicant in this Call will be allowed to apply in other GEOACT Calls for Proposal, as Lead Applicant or Co-applicant, but the cumulative amount of the different grants it may receive will not exceed in any case 400,000 Euros (cf. GEOACT Grants Operations Manual).



- All participating organisations in a bidding consortium must check their eligibility, and the Lead Applicant is responsible for checking and guaranteeing the eligibility of the partners; if one of the partners appears to be ineligible, this may lead to the exclusion of the whole consortium/project during the evaluation process.
- A consortium answering the Call for proposals must include **at least 2 Applicants from the eligible applicant types listed above (1 Lead Applicant and 1 Co-applicants) from 1 or more different OACPS Caribbean countries (from the list above).**
- The following entities are eligible for financial support as Lead Applicant or Partners: academic and research institutions/organisations; spin-off companies; VET providers; organisations representing indigenous and local communities; agencies and associations working for gender equality in research and innovation; national science, technology and innovation agencies; non-governmental organisations; innovation support organisations (technology clusters, innovation labs and technology transfer offices); incubators and start-ups; and other similar organisations with specific experience in the priority areas covered by this Call.
- The Lead Applicant submitting the proposal as well as the Partners which belong to its consortium, should be moral persons.
- Only the Lead Applicants and Co-applicants with their headquarters and activities in an ACP Country from the Caribbean region, since 2017 at least, are eligible and can receive a grant under this Call. Organisations or individuals (scientists, researchers, entrepreneurs, policy actors, among others) from outside the ACP Caribbean Region can participate as “Collaborators” if their participation is duly justified in the proposal, i.e., if they bring specific skills or added value to the project. However, they will have to provide their own financial contribution to participate in the project, as they cannot benefit from the grant. Collaborators are not counted as part of the minimum of three eligible applicants.
- Lead Applicants applying to this Call must have the financial and technical capacity to manage the grant, and will have to demonstrate this capacity: they must carry out / contribute to research and innovation activities and must have managed **at least two R&I granted projects of at least €75,000 each between 2018 and 2022.** They will be required to demonstrate adequate organisational capacity to implement and monitor the project in terms of human resources, as well as the ability to share and disseminate the results regionally through their networks.
- The Lead Applicant will submit the application on behalf of the consortium (One application per consortium) and will be directly responsible for the preparation, management and implementation of the project funded by the Call.
- Lead Applicants, Partners and Collaborators should not be affected by any of the exclusion criteria referred to in section 2.6.10 of the Procurement and Grants for European Union external actions – A practical Guide (PRAG). GEOACT will keep records of evidence and supporting documentation that Lead Applicants and their Co-applicants do not meet any of the exclusion criteria.
- Project Partners should have the adequate organisational capacity to implement and monitor the project in terms of human resources, as well as the ability to share and disseminate the results regionally through their networks.

Project Coordinator:

- The Project Coordinator (an individual) must be a staff member from the Lead Applicant (he/she can be of any nationality)

- The Project Coordinator must have a master diploma or equivalent + 5-year experience, or a PhD and 2-year experience, or any other diploma and 10-year experience in a domain related to the project. He/she should have preferentially a prior project coordination/management experience.

The Project Coordinator will have the following roles:

- Be the single point of contact between the GEOACT Call Secretariat and the consortium Partners from proposal submission to project end;
- Ensure that all the partners involved in the consortium are eligible;
- Submit the Application Form on behalf of the Consortium;
- Compile and submit reports/deliverables to the GEOACT Call Secretariat on behalf of the Consortium;
- Ensure the role of supervision of the project workflow with the help of WP leaders.
- Will be responsible for the management of the funds received, and will need to justify the expenditures, following OACPS R&I programme and IRD requirements.
- Inform the GEOACT Call Secretariat of any event that might affect the implementation of the project.
- Include/foresee in their budget the fees to cover their participation to the three follow-up meetings that will take place with the GEOACT consortium: Kick-off, mid-term and Final meetings.

Project:

- Proposals must be written in English, using the GEOACT Application Forms provided, must fit the formal requirements for proposal submission and must be submitted by the submission Deadline mentioned on the website.
- Projects must be aligned with the Call's scope/topic and must address its objectives and terms of references, and must be able to deliver the expected results/outputs.
- Expected start: May 2023 - Expected end: 31 December 2024 (final activity report included).
- The total requested funding of a project must be between 200,000 Euro and 300,000 Euro.
- The funding of an individual proposal will depend on the nature and duration of the proposed activities and must be justified in terms of the resources needed to achieve the objectives of the project. The funding requested should, therefore, be realistically adjusted to the actual needs of the proposal, taking into account any other funds available.

5 How to prepare and submit a full proposal?

The GEOACT Call Secretariat is the main body in managing the Call. It will produce and disseminate Call documents and procedures. The Call Secretariat will give administrative support to applicants regarding the Call procedures. The Call Secretariat is the primary contact point of the Lead Applicant for all general matters in relation to the Call and during the follow-up and evaluation of project proposals.

5.1 Proposal contents and submission

- Download from the AUF platform all the necessary documents and information, including guidelines for applicants, templates, FAQs, etc. For more information on GEOACT, please see the GEOACT Grants Operations Manual.

- If you wish to submit a project proposal, please send an email to edwenson.toussaint@auf.org to inform us about your intention to submit. GEOACT Coordination and Management Team will send you a personal link to upload your files once your application is complete.
- Prepare carefully the following documents that will make up your full proposal and that will all have to be sent at the same time (by email):
 - Project proposal using the template in Annex 1.
 - Project proposal Logical Framework in Annex 2
 - Project proposal budget using the template in Annex 3 (See section 5.3 below).
 - Official letter of support from the head of the applying institution (Lead Applicant) and from each Co-applicant, stating the project title, the funding requested by each Applicant to GEOACT, and the overall Project budget.
 - Official documents certifying the creation, registration and status of the Lead Applicant and Co-applicants (among others, it should indicate the date of creation and address of the organisations).
 - For the Lead Applicant, activity and financial reports, demonstrating experience and responsibility in the preparation and management of funded activities (evidence of having managed at least two contracts of at least €75,000 each between 2018 and 2022).
 - CV of the Project coordinator (Lead Applicant) and evidence of his/her position in the Lead Organisation.
 - CVs of the Co-applicants' coordinators and evidence of his/her position in the Lead Organisation.
- The documents of the full proposal **must be written in English**.
- The documents should be in PDF or XLS format (for the budget).
- Applications should be submitted using the link provided by GEOACT Coordination and Management Team, no later than **24 March 2023, 23:59 (Haiti's time)**.

5.2 Budget guidelines

Please refer to Section 4 of the GEOACT Grants Operations Manual (Annex 4).

6 Evaluation process and criteria

6.1 General considerations

The project will foster linkages among the various innovation actors in providing inclusive innovative solutions and policies that deliver gender-responsive positive results. To be successful, projects will be required to clearly demonstrate how they will closely collaborate and incorporate the key innovation actors within the region in the implementation of their projects.

The rules followed for the selection and evaluation process comply with the following principles:

- Proportionality;
- Sound financial management;
- Transparency (the process for reaching funding decisions will be clearly described and

- available to any interested party);
- Equality of treatment and non-discrimination (all proposals shall be treated alike, irrespective of where they originate or the identity of the proposers);
- Ethical considerations. Any proposal that contravenes fundamental ethical principles may be excluded from being evaluated and selected at any time by decision of the GEOACT Call Secretariat.

Essential criteria for review and selection of projects shall include:

- Partnership & Coordination quality
- Relevance of the project
- Coherence and feasibility of the project
- Implementation approach
- Sustainability of the project
- Budget and cost-effectiveness of the project

6.2 Evaluation process

6.2.1 Evaluation process overview

This Call will follow a **one-stage process** for selecting successful projects for award. Applicants will be required to submit full proposals comprising several documents (see section 5.2 on “Proposal Contents and Submission”). During the full evaluation procedure, applicants may be asked for clarifications and/or complementary information by the Call Secretariat. Proposals will be evaluated according to the following steps.

6.2.2 Step 1. Eligibility check by the Call Secretariat

After the submission deadline, an eligibility check will be operated by the Coordination and Management Team (CMT) within 2 weeks: the CMT will evaluate the completeness of the proposals and eligibility of the Project consortium (Lead Applicant and Co-applicants), Project Coordinator and Projects, following the eligibility criteria mentioned in these guidelines.

Criteria considered for the eligibility check:

- Consideration of complete application form only,
- Verification of the eligibility and financial and operational capacity of the Lead Applicant, Co-applicants and Collaborators (experience, previous management of large grants/projects, management capacity, human resources, external funding sources, etc.);
- Verification of the eligibility of the Project Coordinator;
- Verification of the conformity of the proposal with the terms of reference of the Call (thematic, budget, status/eligibility of partners and sponsors, institutions, etc.);
- Analysis of possible conflicts of interest (ex. links with GEOACT consortium members).
- Only the proposals meeting the eligibility criteria will enter the scientific/technical/financial evaluation process (Step 2).

6.2.3 Step 2. Evaluation and selection of the proposals

The proposals that successfully passed Step 1 will undergo a scientific/technical evaluation by a pool of **independent expert reviewers** (at least 3 experts per proposal). These experts will be selected based on their skills/profiles, experience and knowledge of the topic/field considered in the Call, and will have complementary profiles (academic and non-academic) (e.g., scientists, valorisation & innovation officers, education specialists, representatives of innovation developers and users, staff from national funding agencies, impact specialists, etc.).

- The expert reviewers will score the proposals according to a set of pre-established criteria (see GEOACT Guidelines for Applicants (Call 2)

Evaluation criteria below, Section 6.3). The GEOACT Steering Committee will then discuss the results of the evaluation, and will agree on a ranking of the proposals.

- Coordinators of the best three project proposals will be invited to present their project orally (by videoconference), in front of a jury comprising members of the Steering Committee and external experts, for a questions and answers session (20 min. presentation followed by a 20-30 min. discussion).
- The Steering Committee will consolidate a final list of ranked proposals, based on the written and oral evaluation.
- The granted project will be published within one month of the evaluation.
- The Project Coordinator of the selected proposal will be informed and will have to confirm its offer and willingness to run the project within 2 weeks. If he/she declines, the first Project Coordinator from the reserve list will be contacted.
- The proposal selected for funding may be requested to make some adjustments to the scientific/technical parts and budgets according to the feedback from the Steering Committee.
- During their execution, the projects will be accompanied by GEOACT Partners (IRD, AUF, FOKAL, SALCC, CSF, ACS) and linked to other Consortia funded by other GEOACT Calls, to meet the objectives of capacity building, structuring of the R&I ecosystem and development of solutions/innovations.
- Each proposal funded, led by a Lead Applicant, will have to draft and sign a Consortium Agreement establishing the rights and duties of the Partners and possible collaborators and subcontractors, budget management modalities, intellectual property sharing modalities, reporting modalities between partners, etc.
- The IRD will also establish a Grant agreement with the Lead Applicant, establishing the conditions associated with the receipt of GEOACT funds.

6.3 Evaluation Criteria

| Criteria | Max. Score (/100) |
|---|-------------------|
| Partnership & Coordination quality | 10 |
| Quality/strength and sustainability prospects of the consortium | 5 |
| Skills/expertise/experience of the Project Coordinator/Manager | 5 |
| Relevance of the project | 15 |
| Relevance to the Call and to GEOACT objectives. | 5 |
| Relevance to the region, countries, sector | 5 |
| Relevance to stakeholders of the Caribbean Region | 5 |
| Coherence and feasibility of the project | 20 |
| Quality, innovativeness and added-value of the methodology proposed to reach the expected outcomes, beyond the terms of reference. | 15 |
| Cross-cutting elements (ex. environmental/climate change, gender equality and equal opportunities, needs/rights of disabled people, minorities, youth...) | 10 |
| Implementation approach | 20 |
| Is the work plan clear and feasible and is the timeline realistic? | 4 |
| Is the quality of the Governance and coordination/management approach adequate? | 4 |
| Does the proposal include an effective and efficient evaluation & monitoring system? | 4 |
| Does the proposal consider potential risks and proposes contingency measures? | 4 |
| Is the level of involvement and participation of the Applicants satisfactory? | 4 |
| Sustainability of the project | 15 |
| Is the project likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups? | 5 |
| Is the project likely to have multiplier effects, including scope for replication, extension, capitalisation on experience and knowledge sharing? | 5 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Are the expected results of the Project sustainable financially, institutionally, at policy level ,and environmentally | 5 |
| Budget and cost-effectiveness of the project | 15 |
| Is the budget coherent with the activities and ambitions of the project? | 5 |
| Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the results satisfactory? | 10 |
| TOTAL | 100 |

7 Ethical Issues

In the process of preparing the application, the Applicant is obliged to observe ethical principles and rules and describe how ethical issues in the proposal will be addressed. The Applicant should indicate plans to obtain ethical approval from relevant bodies (as needed and if the proposed project involves human or animal subjects).

For the project, the Consortium is responsible for addressing ethical issues relating to the project including completing the necessary due diligence in regard to ethical approval from a relevant regulatory body and securing free, explicit, and informed consent from any individuals who participate in the project.

Ethical issues should be interpreted broadly and may encompass, among other things, relevant codes of practice, the involvement of human participants and any other issues in the conduct of the research that may result in damage to the environment and the use of sensitive economic, social or personal data.

In the process of preparing the project proposal, the Applicant is obliged to observe ethical principles and rules and describe how ethical issues in the application will be addressed. The Applicant should indicate plans to obtain ethical approval from relevant bodies if the project proposal involves human or animal subjects.

8 Additional Information

- i. Letters of acceptance or rejection of proposals will be sent to the Lead Applicant within one month after the application deadline.
- ii. Selected proposal is subject to further improvement and technical support as might be recommended by the Steering Committee.
- iii. Summary of selected proposal will be published on the GEOACT website.
- iv. Please, note that the submission of proposal does not establish any form of legal claim or responsibility of IRD as the coordinator of the GEOACT Project. All decisions made by the Steering Committee are final and are not subject to further claims or revisions, with exception of administrative mistakes.
- v. Selected Lead applicant will be required to sign a Grant Agreement with IRD. The Agreement provides general and specific terms and condition for the efficient and effective management of the grant.

9 Contact information and Support

Enquiries can be sent to edwenson.toussaint@auf.org



10 Annexes to the Call for Proposal

- Annex 1. Project proposal Template
- Annex 2. Project proposal Logical Framework & Schedule
- Annex 3. Project proposal Budget Template
- Annex 4. GEOACT Grants Operations Manual