

# Call for proposals „Reine“

on the implementation of informational and educational activities in  
environmental protection

**Number of the call: SGS-4**

The Programme „Environment, Ecosystems and Climate Change“  
financed from Norway Grants 2014 – 2021

The State Environmental Fund of the Czech Republic

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In the framework of the Environment, Ecosystems and Climate Change Programme (hereinafter referred to as the "Programme") four areas of support were selected on the basis of stakeholder consultations and public discussions. Projects will be implemented in these areas and supported by the Norway Grants.

Environmental education and enlightenment of society is an important part of the protection of all areas of nature and landscape. Therefore, **Call No. SGS-4 "Reine"** which is focused on the support of educational and awareness-raising activities, was launched within the Programme. The call covers all four areas supported under the Programme. Applicants can therefore implement projects focused on educational and awareness-raising activities focused on the protection of ecosystems, air, water or climate change. **The total allocation of the "Reine" call was set at 31,200,000 CZK (1,200,000 EUR)**, with 7,800,000 CZK (300,000 EUR)<sup>1</sup> allocated to each of the four areas of the support. More information on all areas of support can be found in the Programme information manuals, [here](#).

#### *What are the essential legal documents and methodological guidelines?*

The main regulations and guidelines based on relevant EU and national legislative rules and other documents related to this Call include in particular:

- Regulation on the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism (FM) 2014-2021 (hereinafter referred to as the "Regulation")
- The Programme agreement including Annexes
- Methodology of financial flows, control and certification of programmes financed from the EEA and Norwegian FM 2014-2021
- Results Guideline – Rules and Guidance on How to Design, Monitor and Evaluate Programmes, Manage Risks, and Report on Results
- Guideline of the National Focal Point for eligible expenditures under the EEA/Norwegian FM 2014-2021 (hereinafter the „Guideline for Eligible Expenditure“)

These documents, including their current versions and other related methodological instructions, can be found on the website of the State Environmental Fund of the Czech Republic (hereinafter referred to as the "SEF"), [here](#).

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<sup>1</sup> The exchange rate for this call is: 1 EUR = 26 CZK

## 1. Who is an eligible project promoter and who can be a project partner?

Any entity, public or private, commercial or non-commercial and non-governmental organisations, established as a **legal person** on the territory of the Czech Republic are considered **eligible project promoters** under the Call "Reine" from the Programme. This project promoter shall not be in bankruptcy, liquidation, has no overdue liabilities to state and public budgets, tax arrears and has not been issued a recovery order after a previous decision of the European Commission (eligibility conditions are part of the solemn declaration in the application form). This also applies to their project partners, which shall be entities established as a legal person either in Norway, the Czech Republic or another beneficiary state or any international organisation or body or agency thereof, *actively involved in and effectively contributing to, the implementation of a project*. Partnership with foreign entities (mainly from Norway) **is not obligatory for the implementation of the project**, but with regard to the possibility of sharing experience and good practice, such partnerships are encouraged.

In the case of the existence of a partnership in the implementation of the project, the mandatory annex to the application is the **Partnership Agreement** (Partnership Agreement Template available [here](#)), its proposal or notification of the intention to cooperate (Letter of Intent). The final Partnership Agreement must be submitted to the SEF no later than in the phase before signing the contract with the SEF. The Partnership Agreement must specify at least the following particulars (acc. Article 7.7(2) of the Regulation):

- a) provisions on the roles and responsibilities of the parties;
- b) provisions on the financial arrangements between the parties, including, but not limited to, which expenditure the project partners can get reimbursed from the project budget;
- c) provisions on the method of calculating indirect costs and their maximum amount;
- d) currency exchange rules for such expenditure and its reimbursement;
- e) provisions on audits on the project partners;
- f) a detailed budget;
- g) provisions on dispute resolution;
- h) and other provisions relating to the implementation and administration of the project, including the condition of archiving accounting documents.

*Expenditure incurred under a valid partnership agreement is not considered a supply-customer relationship and can be claimed by a summary accounting document for a given period (e.g. in the form of an invoice or payment request) in accordance with the budget specified in the partnership agreement and according to the procedure described in ch. 2.3 of this call. The project promoter has the overall responsibility for the correct and efficient use of the awarded grant and has legal and financial responsibility to the Programme Operator based on the legal act (project contract).*

## 2. What projects and activities are supported by the Call?

This part of the Call describes in detail the types of projects supported by the Call. The chapter sets out what the eligible costs of the project are, and how they are determined, and the possible procedures for reimbursing the eligible costs to the project partner.

### 2.1. Types of supported projects and activities

Supported activities under this call "Reine" No. SGS-4 from the Programme are the *creation of media outputs, professional and popular science publications, organization of trainings, seminars, workshops and other awareness-raising activities and educational campaigns* that correspond to areas of support under the Programme:

- Improving the state of the environment in ecosystems
- Reducing the negative impact of human activities on air quality
- Reducing the negative impact of human activities on water quality
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation at local level

Educational and awareness-raising activities implemented under the Programme must focus on the following topics (areas of support under the Programme):

*a. Improving the state of the environment in ecosystems*

innovation in environmental protection, presentation of scientific research projects in the field of environment, protection of biodiversity in ecosystems, protection of endangered species of plants and animals (especially in those habitats listed in the Red List of habitats).

*b. Reducing the negative impact of human activities on air quality*

sources of pollution in municipalities and regions, prevention of air pollution and minimizing the impacts of air pollution on the environment and health, local air pollution and the implementation of action plans, capacity building on issues of proper household heating, suitable types of fuels and the necessary maintenance of furnaces, innovation in air protection.

*c. Reducing the negative impact of human activities on water quality*

identification of new pollutants in the aquatic environment, pharmaceutical water pollution, pharmaceutical management, water pollution by micropollutants, reduction of pollutants in the aquatic environment, innovations in water protection.

*d. Climate change mitigation and adaptation at local level*

climate change, mitigation of its effects and manifestations and adaptation to this change at the level of regions and municipalities, adaptation and mitigation measures, innovations in the field of climate change.

Support can be given to educational and awareness-raising projects that increase the environmental awareness of the population, so that it is not possible to combine several areas of support within one application for support. The Programme focuses on the following types of activities:

- Creation of professional and popular-science outputs for the purpose of their presentation through the media with a large number of addressed recipients (mass media) - radio programs, documentaries;
- Creation of popular science publications in printed or electronic form;
- Implementation of courses, workshops, trainings, seminars and lectures for the professional public, lectures for schools and school facilities, environmentally oriented school projects and similar activities in which there is demonstrable active involvement of participants and their training (public administration and self-government especially in municipalities, employees small and medium - sized enterprises, farmers, nature rangers, etc.);
- Realization of workshops, seminars, lectures or competitions for the general public with a focus on its specific groups that come into contact with selected thematic areas (specific groups of the public);
- Other awareness-raising activities and awareness-raising campaigns and their various forms (incl. digital), in addition to those mentioned above, which focus on the above thematic areas

All supported activities should contribute to the implementation of relevant strategic documents<sup>2</sup> in the field of environmental protection.

## **2.2. Eligible project expenditures**

The Programme may support projects that comply with applicable legislation, the rules of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021, Guideline for Eligible Expenditure and the conditions of support set out in this Call.

**Expenditures** incurred within the project must be *proportionate* (corresponding to the usual prices in given time and place), *necessary* and in accordance with the *3E principles* (economy, efficiency and effectiveness), where appropriate, in accordance with the procurement rules (for basic information see [A Practical Guide to the Guidelines of the State Environmental Fund of the Czech Republic for Public Procurement](#) under the Programme. All costs must be clearly *identifiable, verifiable and documented* (i.e. by supplier invoices or other documents of equivalent probative value) and must be incurred and recorded in bank accounts or must be supported by cash receipts and properly kept in the accounts of the final beneficiary and its potential partners. It must be clear from the accounting documents (invoices, receipts, contracts, etc.) that they relate to the EEA/Norway Grants 2014-2021 (e.g. by providing information in the text of the accounting document or by stamping the text "Financed from EEA/Norway Grants 2014-2021" or by indicating the name of the accounting center or another clearly identifiable code of the EEA/Norway Grants on the accounting document, etc.).

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.mzp.cz/cz/strategicke\\_dokumenty\\_v\\_gesci\\_prehled](https://www.mzp.cz/cz/strategicke_dokumenty_v_gesci_prehled)

In **general terms**, the eligible costs under this Call will be those that:

- a) comply with the legal framework and conditions of the Programme and this Call;
- b) are directly and exclusively linked to the implementation of the project and are included and approved within its budget;
- c) are proportionate (in accordance with 3E principles and/or procurement rules);
- d) incurred after the date of the grant award decision (acceptance of application for the Organizational Unit of State (hereinafter referred to as the "OUS");
- e) were incurred no later than the project completion date, but no later than 30 April 2024; (expenditure is eligible even if it has been paid no later than 30 days from the final date of eligibility of expenditure, if the invoice for the related cost was issued in the last month of eligibility of expenditure);
- f) were spent in the form of volunteer work (for project or project partners such as NGOs or social partners only), they fulfill the conditions of ch. 5.4 of the Guideline for Eligible Expenditure;
- g) were incurred for the project the purpose of which is to implement measures in the Czech Republic (including partnership projects);
- h) comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation.

In addition, for expenditures meeting the general eligibility conditions defined above, **specific conditions** are set out within the different categories of expenditure described in more detail, while other expenditures are not considered eligible.

### **2.2.1. Direct costs**

*Direct costs are expenditures that directly and exclusively serve to achieve the objectives, purpose of the project and are in accordance with ch 3.1. points a) to g) of the Guideline for Eligible Expenditure. Expenditures must be used to finance and implement supported activities (according to the ch. 2.1 of this call).*

#### A) Purchase of supplies, services, fixed assets and consumables

Direct costs refer to expenditure on services and supplies, fixed assets and consumables that **directly and exclusively serves to achieve the objectives and purpose of the project** (see above).

#### B) Wage personnel costs

Wages and salaries of personnel related to staffing of activities related to the implementation of the supported project, which are not provided through supplies or services by suppliers. These are eligible under the following conditions:

1. the activities are carried out in the **form of agreements on work** performed outside the employment relationship (contract for work activity/agreement to complete a job), where such agreements cannot be concluded with existing employees of the applicant or project partner who are simultaneously employed or have a similar contractual relationship. Such agreements shall also include the type and description of the action taken to implement the project, including its title. The amount of remuneration (income) must be the usual amount at the place and time, i.e. it should be derived

- **For Czech applicants/project partners:** in the case of Czech applicants and their Czech partners, wage (personnel) expenses amount to max. 1.5 times the average gross wage set by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs for 2020.<sup>3</sup>
  - **In the case of foreign project partners,** from the average national annual wage increased by max. 25 %, issued by Eurostat<sup>4</sup>, converted at the relevant exchange rate to CZK or NOK, according to the average annual exchange rate presented by the European Central Bank.<sup>5</sup>
2. the activities are **carried out by the existing staff of the applicant or project partner**, who are **simultaneously employed** or have a similar contractual relationship. For the calculation, the amount of nominal wages specified in the Guideline for Eligible Expenditure is considered, in proportion to the working time in which the employee participates in the implementation of the project according to the concluded employment contract or amendment to the existing contract with the employer. The individual workloads cannot overlap, they can only be complemented and can total up to 1.5 workloads and the basis for calculating the salary up to the permitted length of 1.5 is the amount of the employee's current nominal salary.

The applicant will be invited to submit an employment contract, concluded amendment or agreement on work performed outside the employment relationship, before signing the support contract. The reporting of overtime work by the beneficiary's staff as a project implementation work is not allowed and is therefore not considered as eligible expenditure. The wage expenditure of the final beneficiary during the project implementation is documented and verified by means of wage sheets on which the reported activities, their scope and a brief description are recorded. The wage expenditure of part-time or fixed-share employees specified in the contract or in the job description shall be verified in the course of the project in accordance with the Guideline for Eligible Expenditure.

Wage costs are eligible in the amount of nominal wages/salaries under the above conditions, including supplements and remunerations, statutory health insurance and social security contributions paid by the employer according to the Guideline for Eligible Expenditure.

#### C) Travel expenses

Travel expenses, under this call, are considered as objective, substantively correct expenditure of the Final Beneficiary or his partner(s) incurred in direct connection with the fulfillment of the subject and project and to fulfill its requirements. Expenditure may be in accordance with the applicable legislation of your country (foreign and foreign participants) and in accounting documents or for those that can only be used for foreign entities on foreign trips. This expenditure is eligible to the extent specified in ch. 3.1.2. Travel expenses, in the Guideline for Eligible Expenditures.

#### D) Promotion of the project

Eligible expenditure for the project promotion and public information that has to be included in the project application and its budget are eligible up to a maximum of 3 % of its own eligible expenditure.

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<sup>3</sup> For 2020, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic has established an average gross wage of CZK 34,835.

<sup>4</sup> The average annual net wages published by Eurostat are available on the website [http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=earn\\_nt\\_net](http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=earn_nt_net).

<sup>5</sup> The average annual exchange rates can be obtained on the website of the European Central Bank <https://sdw.ecb.europa.eu/browse.do?node=1495>

The conditions and specifications for the creation and funding of publicity tools are set out in the separate *Publicity Manual for Applicants and Final Beneficiaries in the Environment, Ecosystems and Climate Change Programme*, which can be found [here](#). All promotional activities shall be stated in the **Project Communication Plan**.

### **2.2.2. Indirect costs**

*Indirect costs are all eligible costs that cannot be identified by the project promoter and/or the project partner as being directly attributed to the project but which can be identified and justified by its accounting system as being incurred in direct relationship with the eligible direct costs attributed to the project. **They may not include any eligible direct costs.***

*Indirect costs of the project shall represent a fair apportionment of the overall overheads of the project promoter or the project partner. Such costs may relate to running the beneficiary organization according to the Guidelines for Eligible Expenditure – ch. 3.2 letters b.), c.) or e.) such as renting an office, purchasing water, fuel, energy, cleaning, maintenance, insurance, office supplies, internet and telephone services provider's payment, postage, operating a company car and spending on cross-cutting activities such as human resources management, book keeping and administration, trainings, legal advice, etc.*

Project promoters and project partners may identify their indirect costs according to one of the following methods:

- **a flat rate of up to 25 % of total direct eligible costs** excluding direct eligible costs on subcontracting (on the basis of a contract/order) including costs on resources provided by third parties not used by the beneficiary on his premises. Third parties are those organizations or persons that are involved in the project but are not a party to the legal act on the allocation of funds. The use of this method is conditional on the calculation of a rate based on a reasonable and verifiable method of calculation or one of the methods that are applied to similar types of projects and beneficiaries under grant schemes fully funded by the Beneficiary State. The calculation method must be maintained throughout the project / (incl. Final accounts and any follow-up audit). The calculation methodology serves as a supporting accounting document and the beneficiary must be able to document it during and after the end of the project;
- **a flat rate of up to 15% of direct eligible staff costs** without there being a requirement for the Programme Operator to perform a calculation to determine the applicable rate; or
- in the case of project promoters or project partners that are international organisations or bodies or agencies thereof, indirect costs may, in line with specific provisions in the programme agreement, be identified in accordance with the relevant rules established by such organisations.

### **2.2.3. Other information for eligible costs**

#### Value Added Tax (VAT)

*It is advisable to assess or consult with experts on a case-by-case basis with regard to the individual operating conditions of the project promoter.*

In general terms, the financial support for the implementation of a project does not in itself affect the amount of VAT applied by the project promoter of the taxable supplies subsequently received. The grant plays a role as a "source of funding" and only the purpose of its use (specific performance) is decisive for the amount of the VAT claim. As regards the support of activities falling within the provisions of Article 72 (2a) of Act No. 235/2004 Coll., on VAT, as amended, taxpayers arises full right to deduct VAT on the input, and in this case the deduction claim must be reduced according to Article 76 of the Act, i.e. not included in the required amount of the grant. In the case of grants for action, not being taxable transactions (e.g. non-commercial research and development) the taxpayer is not entitled to deduct VAT, thus VAT is included in the required amount of the grant.

### Voluntary work

In case of projects where the project promoter is an NGO or a social partner (employers' associations and trade unions), in-kind contribution in the form of voluntary work may constitute up to 50% of the co-financing required for the project. In that case, both the project promoter and its partner (if the partner is also an NGO or a social partner) can report this volunteer work also as a non-governmental non-profit organization or a social partner (see ch. 5.4. in the Guideline for Eligible Expenditure).

*Voluntary activity means a publicly beneficial activity organised pursuant to Act No. 198/2002 Coll., on voluntary service and amending some other acts (the Voluntary Service Act), as amended, and a publicly beneficial activity that is carried out by a volunteer who has reached at least 15 years of age, based on their free will, in their free time and without receiving any remuneration, reciprocal service or other advantage<sup>6</sup>.*

Appropriate unit prices for voluntary work which shall be in accordance with salary normally paid for such work in given time and place are based on gross monthly wage for the region.

For determining the unit price for volunteer work, the level of the tariffs shall be based on the amounts at the usual time and place where:

- *in the case of Czech applicants and their Czech partners*, when determining the unit price for volunteer work, we recommend based on the median gross monthly wage<sup>7</sup> in the wage sphere for the previous calendar year. To calculate the hourly price of a volunteer's work, this median is divided by the average number of hours worked in a calendar month and then rounded up to whole crowns.
- for foreign project partners, average national gross annual wage increased by max. 25 %, issued by Eurostat<sup>8</sup>, related to the year preceding the year of implementation, converted at the relevant exchange rate to CZK or NOK (or other currencies), according to the average annual exchange rate given by the European Central Bank.<sup>9</sup>

The records of voluntary work are not part of the accounting records under the project because they represent neither costs nor expenditures.

### Extra work up to the maximum of project grant

All eligible costs can only be increased assuming that all other conditions of this chapter 2.2 are fulfilled. The costs incurred must be objective, factually correct, serving to fulfill the objectives and purpose of the project, incurred by the beneficiary, and are not included in the original price of the contract (order, etc.) for the work concluded between the project promoter and the supplier. These additional costs are further eligible provided that, when included in the total eligible costs of the project, the **amount of financial support up to the maximum determined by the Decision to grant** a grant, respectively by the Grant Agreement (acceptance of an application with the OUS – Organization Unit of the State) will be respected. They must be approved by the Fund and their implementation must comply with other rules and regulations for their application (in particular in accordance with the SEF CR Guidelines for Public Procurement within FM Norway 2014-2021).

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<sup>6</sup> Does not apply to food and accommodation provided.

<sup>7</sup> According to the information system on the average monthly gross wage of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic.

<sup>8</sup> The average annual gross wages published by Eurostat are given on the website

[http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=earn\\_nt\\_net](http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=earn_nt_net)

<sup>9</sup> Average annual exchange rates can be obtained on the website of the European Central Bank

<https://sdw.ecb.europa.eu/browse.do?node=1495>

#### **2.2.4. Non-eligible expenditures**

The following costs, in accordance with the Guideline for Eligible Expenditure, shall not be considered eligible (acc. to Article 8.7 (2) of the Regulation):

- a) interest on debt, debt service charges and late payment charges;
- b) charges for financial transactions and other purely financial costs, except costs related to accounts required by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Focal Point or the applicable law and costs of financial services imposed by the project contract;
- c) provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- d) exchange losses;
- e) recoverable VAT (ie VAT with the right to deduct input tax);
- f) costs that are covered by other sources;
- g) fines, penalties and costs of litigation, except where litigation is an integral and necessary component for achieving the outcomes of the project; and
- h) excessive or reckless expenditure.

The detailed description of the non-eligible expenditures may be found in the [Guideline for Eligible Expenditure](#).

In order to avoid double funding, the applicant may only use funds under this Call for implementation of eligible project expenditures. The applicant is not allowed to draw any other subsidy funds for specific items of eligible project costs stated in payment request (except of the use of resources for securing the Applicants' own resources). In this case, the applicant is obliged to ensure that these funds are consistently separated both in the relevant accounting documents and in the projects accounting and it can be demonstrated at any time that there is no concurrence of aid for a specific expenditure item.

### **2.3. Reimbursement of project partner expenses**

Only incurred, reported and documented expenditure of the project partner can be claimed as eligible expenditures of the project.

Based on the partnership agreement a project promoter may provide an advance payment to the project partner but such payment is not eligible expenditure.

In the partnership agreement, it is possible to agree on one of the following **methods of reimbursing the expenditures of a project partner**:

- a. The partner's expenditure is reported by submitting a copy of the accounting document, a document proving its non-cash payment or by submitting an audit report. After checking and verifying the eligibility of the partner's expenditure the project promoter includes it among eligible expenditures in the relevant list of documents/payment requests. As the payment request is issued in CZK, the conversion of foreign currency to CZK is carried out using the monthly rate of ECB valid for the month in which the expenditure was paid<sup>10</sup>. After the reimbursement by the SEF to the project promoter's bank account, the project promoter is obliged to transfer the amount for the relevant eligible expenditure to the partner (according to the conditions and methods laid down in the partnership agreement);
- b. Unlike point a), the project promoter directly reimburses the expenditure to the project partner after checking and verifying the eligibility of expenditure. The partner reports the incurred expenses by submitting a copy of the accounting document and the document proving the reimbursement of the expenses. The project promoter shall subsequently include this expenditure in the relevant list of documents/payment requests (as expenditure of project promoter, evidenced with a copy of the document proving the reimbursement of the expenditure to the partner);
- c. In justified cases (e.g. payment of invoices issued to the partner) the costs of project partner can be directly paid by the project promoter;
- d. If the Czech project partner is a contributory organisation financed only by the project promoter's organization who is its founder, the founder shall increase the contribution for the project partner that will be used for financing of the project's eligible expenditures and subsequently the founder will include such expenditures in the list of documents/payment requests.

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<sup>10</sup> [https://www.ecb.europa.eu/stats/policy\\_and\\_exchange\\_rates/euro\\_reference\\_exchange\\_rates/html/eurofxref-graph-czk.en.html](https://www.ecb.europa.eu/stats/policy_and_exchange_rates/euro_reference_exchange_rates/html/eurofxref-graph-czk.en.html)

### 3. What outcomes and outputs shall the project contribute to and what indicators shall be reported?

*Environmental protection cannot be effective without the involvement of a society as a whole in everyday life. The aim of the environmental education in the Czech Republic is the development of the competencies (knowledge, skills and attitude) needed for environmentally responsible behavior. This is an action that is as favourable as possible for our environment in the given situation and given possibilities. Environmental education and education of the public prepares and motivates such actions.*

The contribution of the projects specified in more detail in ch. 2.1. The main challenge is to raise awareness and the interest of the professional and non-professional public in the areas of support of the Programme, which are the protection of Ecosystems, Air Quality, Water pollution by micropollutants and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation. The Programme also aims to build professional capacity in these areas.

**Mandatory indicators**, which are part of the application and will also be the subject of a project contract, help to identify and measure the achievement of the set outputs of the project itself. The fulfillment of mandatory indicators is under the direct control of the project and must be achieved within a predetermined time frame and in compliance with the approved budget.

**Monitored indicators**, which are also stated in the application, are not under the direct control of the project and the fulfillment is not mandatory. These indicators are used for monitoring of the results of the project and the entire programme.

The mandatory and monitored indicators are obligatorily set by the applicant within the preparation of the application directly in the electronic Agenda Information System of the State Environmental Fund of the Czech Republic (hereinafter referred to as „AIS SEF“), in **the list of project indicators**. Taking into account the purpose and planned objectives of the project, the applicant shall select the initial and target status of mandatory indicators. Their reporting is also an obligatory part of every interim or final monitoring report.

In the framework of this Call for proposals „Reine; SGS-4“ the **mandatory (obligatory) and monitored indicators in individual areas are:**

### 1. Improving the state of the environment in ecosystems

The list of indicators	Description of the indicator
<b>Number of awareness raising campaigns carried out (mandatory)</b>	<p>The indicator determines the number of implemented awareness-raising and educational campaigns / activities that increase the awareness of the professional and lay public about environmental problems in ecosystems.</p> <p>The initial value of the indicator is always 0.</p>
<b>Number of people reached by awareness-raising campaigns (mandatory)</b>	<p>The indicator determines the total number of people addressed by the awareness-raising or educational campaign implemented within the project.</p> <p>The initial value of the indicator is always 0.</p> <p>The achieved value of the indicator must be demonstrable through lists of participants in events, number of students involved in school projects, number of distributed copies, visits to websites, people reached on social media with the campaign posts or other monitoring tools used in conducting similar campaigns.</p>

### 2. Reducing the negative impact of human activities on air quality

The list of indicators	Description of the indicator
<b>Number of awareness raising campaigns and capacity buildings carried out (mandatory)</b>	<p>The indicator determines the number of implemented awareness-raising and educational campaigns/activities that raise the awareness of professionals and the general public about the problems of air pollution.</p> <p>The initial value of the indicator is always 0.</p>
<b>Number of people completing training (mandatory)</b>	<p>The indicator determines how many people have been demonstrably trained in seminars, trainings or workshops.</p> <p>The initial value of the indicator is always 0.</p>
<b>Number of people reached by awareness-raising campaigns (mandatory)</b>	<p>The indicator determines the total number of people addressed by the awareness-raising or educational campaign implemented within the project.</p> <p>The initial value of the indicator is always 0.</p> <p><i>Achieved values of indicators must be demonstrable through lists of participants, events, number of students involved in school projects, number of distributed copies, visits to websites, people reached on social media with the campaign posts or other monitoring tools used in conducting similar campaigns.</i></p>
<b>Number of people in the targeted area with increased knowledge regarding air quality issued and measures for improvement (monitored)</b>	<p>The indicator determines the total number of persons for whom there was an increase in knowledge of air quality issues and measures to improve air quality.</p> <p>The initial value of the indicator is always 0.</p>

### 3. Reducing the negative impact of human activities on water quality

<p><b>Number of awareness raising campaigns carried out (mandatory)</b></p>	<p>The indicator determines the number of implemented awareness-raising and educational campaigns activities that increase the awareness of the professional and lay public on the issue of water protection in connection with the occurrence of micropollutants (pesticides, pharmaceuticals, personal care products, etc.).</p> <p>The initial value of the indicator is always 0.</p>
<p><b>Number of people completing training (mandatory)</b></p>	<p>The indicator determines how many people have been demonstrably trained in seminars, trainings or workshops.</p> <p>The initial value of the indicator is always 0.</p>
<p><b>Number of people reached by awareness-raising campaigns (mandatory)</b></p>	<p>The indicator determines the total number of people addressed by the awareness-raising or educational campaign implemented within the project.</p> <p>The initial value of the indicator is always 0.</p> <p><i>The achieved value of the indicator must be demonstrable through lists of participants, events, number of students involved in school projects, number of distributed copies, website visits, people reached on social media with the campaign posts or other monitoring tools used in conducting similar campaigns.</i></p>
<p><b>Number of people in the targeted areas with increased knowledge regarding water quality issues and measures for improvement (monitored)</b></p>	<p>The indicator determines the total number of persons whose knowledge of water quality has increased in connection with the occurrence of micropollutants and measures to improve water quality.</p> <p>The initial value of the indicator is always 0.</p>

### 4. Climate change mitigation and adaptation at the local level

The list of indicators	Description of the indicators
<p><b>Number of awareness-raising campaigns (mandatory)</b></p>	<p>The indicator determines the number of implemented awareness-raising and educational campaigns/activities that increase the awareness of the professional and lay public about the problems of climate change and related adaptation and mitigation measures at the local and regional level.</p> <p>The initial value of the indicator is always 0.</p>
<p><b>Number of people completing training (mandatory)</b></p>	<p>The indicator determines how many people have been demonstrably trained in seminars, trainings or workshops.</p> <p>The initial value of the indicator is always 0.</p>
<p><b>Number of people reached by awareness campaigns (mandatory)</b></p>	<p>The indicator determines the total number of people addressed by the awareness-raising or educational campaign implemented within the project.</p> <p>The initial value of the indicator is always 0.</p> <p><i>The achieved value of the indicator must be demonstrable through lists of participants, the number of students involved in school projects, the number of copies distributed, website visits, people reached on social media with the campaign posts or other tools used in conducting similar campaigns.</i></p>

In case of involvement of Norwegian entities in the project, the following bilateral indicators are also monitored:

### The list of bilateral indicators

### Description of the indicators

<p><b><i>Number of training courses co-organised by donor and beneficiary state entities (monitored)</i></b></p>	<p>The indicator determines the number of conducted trainings, seminars and educational workshops, in the preparation and implementation of which entities from the Czech Republic and Norway actively participated.</p> <p>The initial value of the indicator is always 0.</p>
<p><b><i>Number of projects involving cooperation with a donor project partner (monitored)</i></b></p>	<p>The indicator determines how many projects have been implemented in cooperation with a partner from Norway.</p> <p>The initial value of the indicator is always 0.</p> <p>The target value at the project level is usually 1.</p>
<p><b><i>Number of international networks where partners from Beneficiary States and Donor States participate together (monitored)</i></b></p>	<p>The indicator determines the number of international networks focused on environmental issues, in which partners from the Czech Republic and Norway jointly participate in the activities carried out within these networks.</p> <p>The initial value of the indicator is always 0.</p>

#### 4. What is the amount of project grants?

Financial support for the projects specified in ch. 2.1 of this Call will be provided in the form of a grant. Maximum project grant rate may be up to 90% of eligible expenditure of the project, whereas the amount of grant assistance applied for *shall not be less than 130,000 CZK (5,000 EUR) and not more than 1,300,000 CZK (50,000 EUR) according to the course settled for this call.* Any remaining costs of the project shall be provided or obtained by the project promoter.

## 5. How is the application administered?

### 5.1. The submission of the application

The applications may be **submitted from December 15, 2020 at 9:00, until February 15, 2021 at 12:00 at the latest**, electronically via the AIS SEF which is available from the website:

<https://zadosti.sfzp.cz/>

The procedure for application submission in the AIS SEF is described in detail [here](#).

*To register the applicant, it is necessary to have a data box or qualified certificate enabling the creation of qualified electronic signatures. Afterwards, the applicant provides information and submits a complete application, including the required annexes, electronically in the AIS SEF.*

The application must be processed in the Czech language accompanied by a brief description in English. The estimated budget must be stated in Czech crowns (CZK), while the total budget of the project will also contain an aliquot amount in Euro (according to the EUR/CZK exchange rate set out in this Call).

When submitting an application for support, the applicant chooses the area of support corresponding to the focus of activities. Only one application may be submitted by one applicant per area. Applications submitted separately to other areas of support must not overlap (combine) in order to avoid double funding of the same action.

Mandatory attachments of the application:

- proof of bank account maintenance;
- the project's Communication Plan;
- list of references to implemented projects;
- if relevant, the authorization of the statutory representative to submit the application;
- if relevant, the Partnership Agreement, its proposal or letter of intent in accordance with the ch. 1 of the Call.

### 5.2. Evaluation of the application

The submitted application is first assessed in terms of formal requirements (administrative criteria) and justification (eligibility criteria) of the application. Within the control of **formal requirements** the application will be assessed according to the following list of criteria

- the application has been processed via AIS SEF;
- the application is processed in Czech and accompanied by a brief description in English;
- the application is complete;

Within the control of **overall eligibility** the application will be assessed according to the following list of criteria:

- the application is submitted by an eligible applicant according to this call (eliminating criterion);
- there is only one application per project (eliminating criterion);
- potential project partner is eligible;
- the application contains a list of any consultant involved in preparation of the application;
- the budget of the project is given in CZK.

No modification to the application is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. However, if there is a need to clarify certain aspects or for the correction of clerical mistakes,

the PO may contact the applicant to ensure their correction or complete a request for additional information or documents within a specified period, usually 5 working days (unless for objective reasons otherwise agreed). The application is then made available to the applicant for editing directly in the AIS SEF. If the application does not meet the overall eligibility and formal requirements even after correction made by the applicant, the administration of the application is terminated and the termination decision is sent to the applicant. The applicant is given 5 working days to appeal that decision to SEF.

Once the formal requirements and overall eligibility are met, the application is accepted and forwarded to the evaluation process. During this process the applicant may be required to provide additional technical, financial or factual details of the accepted application including, where appropriate, reconciling the budget changes regarding the eligibility of expenditure under the project in accordance with the eligibility principles of the Programme. **The additional specifications required during the evaluation of the application must not change the substance and purpose of the project!** The application is evaluated in the form of a cross-evaluation by two independent evaluators (the so-called four-eye check)<sup>11</sup> according to the list of evaluation criteria below<sup>12</sup>. For each criterion fulfilled, the application gains the appropriate number of points according to the score in the table below. If the application does not meet a given criterion, the scoring is zero in that criterion.

### **Method of evaluating applications (evaluation criteria)**

The evaluation of the project will be **based on the calculation of the cost-effectiveness of the project, according to the formula below**, and by assigning further evaluation criteria according to the nature and focus of the project:

$$\frac{C_{real}}{C_{mod}} * 50 = \text{number of points (rounded to an integer)}$$

where:

$C_{real}$  direct implementation costs of the project in thousands of CZK (rounded to 2 decimal places), when

$$C_{real} = C_{total} - OC - C_{pub} - IC$$

$C_{total}$  total eligible costs of the project in thousands of CZK (rounded to 2 decimal places),

$OC$  other direct costs of the project in thousands of CZK (rounded to 2 decimal places),

$C_{pub}$  costs for project promotion in thousands of CZK (rounded to 2 decimal places),

$IC$  indirect eligible costs in thousands of CZK (rounded to 2 decimal places),

$C_{mod}$  adjusted effective costs for setting points

$$C_{mod} = C_{real} + 3*(OC + C_{pub} + IC)$$

<sup>11</sup> If the difference between the scores given by the two evaluators is more than 30% the project application shall be scored by a third evaluator (the average score of the two closest scores shall be used for the ranking of the project application).

<sup>12</sup> The fulfillment of the evaluation criteria of the application will also be subject to the final evaluation of the project.

NAME OF THE EVALUATION CRITERION	THE DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATION CRITERION The projects will be evaluated:	SCORING CHART
<b>CHARACTER OF AWARENESS-RAISING OR EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY (max. 14 pt. in case of one measure implemented only)</b>		
The type of measures implemented for the purpose of raising awareness, informing the public and educating the public in accordance with the supported areas described in Article 2.1, while the following types of activities will be assessed separately:		
a)	<p><i>the production of professional and popular-science outputs for the purpose of their presentation through the media with a large number of addressed recipients (mass media):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>the production of the feature-length film/radio programmes or a series of short films/radio programmes if their total transmission time exceeds 40 minutes</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>the production of the short-length film/radio programmes or a series of short movies/radio programmes if their total transmission time is between 10 and 40 minutes</i></li> <li>○ <i>in case of adding of English version or English subtitles</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>+ 12 pt.</p> <p>+ 8 pt.</p> <p>+ 2 pt.</p>
b)	<p><i>the production of professional and information outputs and their publication with a view to reaching a wide range of readers, as regards:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>the production of the professional book publications with a considered cost:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>over 5,000 copies</i></li> <li>○ <i>2,500 to 4,999 copies</i></li> <li>○ <i>1,000 to 2,499 copies</i></li> <li>○ <i>500 to 999 copies</i></li> <li>○ <i>up to 500 copies</i></li> <li>○ <i>in case of release also the English version</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>row of minimum 3 professional or popular science articles, published in periodicals with a nationwide (or foreign) scope</i></li> </ul>	<p>+ 10 pt.</p> <p>+ 8 pt.</p> <p>+ 6 pt.</p> <p>+ 4 pt.</p> <p>+ 2 pt.</p> <p>+ 2 pt.</p> <p>+ 6 pt.</p>
c)	<p><i>carrying out informational and awareness-raising activities concerning:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>courses, trainings, seminars for the professional public, lectures for schools and school facilities, school projects and similar activities, where there is a demonstrable active involvement of participants and their training with the considered scope:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>for 500 and more participants</i></li> <li>○ <i>for 250 to 499 participants</i></li> <li>○ <i>for 100 to 249 participants</i></li> <li>○ <i>for less than 100 participants</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>workshops, trainings and lectures for the general public, conferences for the professional and lay public with the considered scope:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>for 2,000 and more participants</i></li> <li>○ <i>for 1,000 to 1,999 participants</i></li> <li>○ <i>for 500 to 999 participants</i></li> <li>○ <i>for 100 to 499 participants</i></li> <li>○ <i>for less than 100 participants</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>+ 5 pt.</p> <p>+ 4 pt.</p> <p>+ 3 pt.</p> <p>+ 2 pt.</p> <p>+ 5 pt.</p> <p>+ 4 pt.</p> <p>+ 3 pt.</p> <p>+ 2 pt.</p> <p>+ 1 pt.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>other awareness-raising activities and awareness-raising campaigns, in addition to the above, with the expected impact – number of people addressed::</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>to more than 10,000 inhabitants</i></li> <li>○ <i>to 5,000 to 9,999 inhabitants</i></li> <li>○ <i>to 1,000 to 4,999 inhabitants</i></li> <li>○ <i>for less than 1,000 inhabitants</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>+ 4 pt.</p> <p>+ 3 pt.</p> <p>+ 2 pt.</p> <p>+ 1 pt.</p>

**THE APPLICANT'S EXPERIENCE WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECTS AND ITS EXPERTISE(max. 8 pt.)**

<p><i>Number of references to implemented projects of comparable scope and character in the field of enlightenment, awareness-raising and educational activities and capacity building:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 10 and more</li> <li>○ 4 – 9</li> <li>○ 1 – 3</li> <li>○ of which references of educational and training projects are demonstrably from the field of the environment</li> </ul>	<p>+ 6 pt.</p> <p>+ 4 pt.</p> <p>+ 2 pt.</p> <p>+ 2 pt.</p>
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**APPROACH TO COOPERATION (max. 4 pt.)**

<b>Project partner from Norway</b>	<i>Direct cooperation of the applicant with a project partner from Norway</i>	+ 2 pt.
<b>International project partner</b>	<i>A direct cooperation of the applicant with another international project partner (especially in the case of transfer of good practice examples or innovative projects)</i>	+ 1 pt.
<b>National project Partner</b>	<i>A direct cooperation of the applicant with another national project partner</i>	+ 1 pt.
<b>Link between the application and other projects and bilateral initiatives supported by the EEA and Norway Grants</b>	<i>The projects follows its focus on other already supported/implemented projects or bilateral initiatives within the EEA or Norway Grants. The project follows on:</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>supported / implemented bilateral initiative between the applicant and another foreign entity (entities) from EEA countries (outside the EU).</i></li> </ul>	+ 1 pt.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>the partner entity (entities) from the supported / implemented bilateral initiative is (are) also the partners of the submitted application</i></li> </ul>	+ 1 pt.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>supported project financed from EEA and Norway Grants (same and different applicant) in the current (2014-2021) and previous programming periods</i></li> </ul>	+ 1 pt.

The evaluated application proceeds further into the process of its assessment and final approval or rejection.

### **5.3. Project selection and approval process**

The application is after the evaluation process subject to assessment by the **Selection Committee**. The Selection Committee shall review the list of projects recommended for the grant award from the Programme, based on ranking of these projects, and may request verification of the ranking in justified cases. The list of ranked project is submitted to the SEF Advisory Board and subsequently to the Minister of the Environment.

*The Selection Committee, based on information provided from previous evaluation of each application, statement of each member of the committee, respectively observer's recommendations, votes on the ranking of submitted applications, with:*

- a) *The applications that meet **the minimum required score of 25 points** and at the same time don't exceed the total allocation of the Call, are recommended by the Selection Committee for support.*
- b) *The applications, that meet **the minimum required score of 25 points**, but their rank exceeds the available allocation, may be added to the reserve list. The Selection Committee decides on the creation of a reserve list, which also defines the conditions under which the applications can be submitted to the approval process. In case of submitting the application from the pool, the formal requisites of the submitted application (deadlines, contact persons) will be updated, but at the same time the changes that would affect the substance of approved projects/applications are prohibited.*
- c) *The applications that do not reach the minimum required score (set in ch. 5.2 of this Call), will be proposed for rejection and will be issued a Decision of the Minister not to provide support from the Programme funds.*

*The applications will then be ranked according to the achieved score, while the applications recommended for support will be proposed in the order of their success for each of the 4 priority areas of the Programme (selection of applications recommended for support corresponds to the amounts determined for each priority area of support, ie. 7,800,000 CZK.) In the case that the allocation determined for the given 4 priority areas of the Program is not fulfilled, projects included in other priority areas will be proposed for support, in the order according to the achieved overall point evaluation.*

After consideration of the recommended applications by the **SEF Advisory Board** and after verification of the evaluation process, the applications are submitted to the **Minister** for approval. The Minister shall issue a **Decision on the provision of financial support**, which is subsequently entered into the AIS SEF, always for the respective project, and the applicant will receive the original Decision with a cover letter „Information on approval of the application/rejection of the application“<sup>13</sup>. The PO shall publicise the results.

In the case the application is proposed **to be rejected** by the Selection Committee, which is also confirmed by the Council of the SEF, the applicant is announced in writing and has the opportunity to appeal within 5 working days of delivery. The negative opinion of the Council of the SEF, including the applicant's statement, is submitted to the Minister to release the Decision.

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<sup>13</sup> OUS applicants, whose projects are recommended by the Selection Committee for support and which were submitted to the SEF Advisory Board, are informed by a letter from the SEF.

#### **5.4. Project contract**

The project contract for the grant from the Programme is concluded after verification of the evaluation process and after the issuance of Ministry's Decision (except SOU applicants<sup>14</sup>) between the SEF and the project promoter, usually within 2 months of issuing the Decision. The project contract contains the maximum amount of provided financial support, specifies the purpose and objective of the supported project, the rights and obligations of both contracting parties, including possible financial corrections.

The successful applicant is obliged, upon request of the relevant project manager of the Fund, to update the Documents for the agreements on the provision of subsidies from the Programme funds in the AIS SEF. The applicant will update the expected start and completion date of the project on profile, if relevant the applicant the submitted budget and sources of funding of the contract and documents other relevant annexes set out in the call. The financial payment calendar will be updated automatically after pressing the field "Provide documents for the contract".

Before signing the contract the project promoter is obliged to provide *necessary documents and information*, in particular:

- proof of authorization to negotiate with the SEF (if the authorized person acts as the project promoter);
- if needed, necessary documents updating the situation compared to the documents submitted in the application;
- employment contracts, wage assessments, possible amendments to the original employment contract, agreements on work performed outside the employment relationship (Contract for work activity/Agreement to complete a job), concluded prior to the occurrence of the relevant personal expenses;
- signed partnership agreement on both sides (if relevant for the project).

#### **5.5. Project amendment request**

The project amendment request may be submitted at the earliest after the Decision has been issued and no later than the date of submission of the Final monitoring report. The Project promoter/partner is obliged to immediately notify the SEF of any changes (e.g. identification and contact data, project parameters, project implementation conditions, facts and conditions contained in the contract, etc.) to the relevant project manager through the AIS SEF.

The project manager assesses the project amendment request in particular in terms of its eligibility, other conditions of the call and the Decision or the project contract. The SEF shall issue a standpoint on the submitted request. If the standpoint contains the conditions for the change of a Decision or conclusion of an amendment to the project contract, the final beneficiary shall provide the relevant project manager with the required documentation and all cooperation for the implementation of the required change. If the SEF's standpoint is negative, no change to the project is possible and all the expenditures related to the project amendment are considered as ineligible.

Any changes, in particular the budget and the scope of the planned activities, which may affect the evaluation and ranking of applications are not allowed.

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<sup>14</sup> In the case of OUS, the grant is awarded to the applicant on the basis of the Registration of the Action/Determination of expenditures for the financing of the OUS which are issued after receiving the letter of acceptance from the SEF.

## 6. What is the implementation period of approved projects?

There is no minimum duration of project implementation under this call, but projects **must be completed by June 30, 2023**, which is the deadline for eligibility of project expenditures in this call.

### 6.1. Procurement within the project

The procurement rules within the projects implemented within the supported project are in a separate document called *A Practical Guide to the Guidelines of the State Environmental Fund of the Czech Republic for Public Procurement under the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014 – 2021*, which is part of the Programme's basic information documents and which you can find [here](#).

A comprehensive summary of these guidelines, including the English version, is included in the *Practical guideline of the State Environmental Fund of the Czech Republic for Public procurement under the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014 – 2021*, which is part of the Programme's basic information documents and which you can find [here](#).

*The contract for the execution of some supplies, services or works included in the application may be initiated before its approval, but the subject matter of the contract and the related payment must be made after the initial date of eligibility of expenditures. The contract with the winning contractor may be signed earlier on condition that the subject-matter of the contract will be executed only if the support was approved.*

### 6.2. Monitoring and implementation of the project

Project implementation/realization and its progress is monitored by **interim monitoring reports**. The final status and all financial, factual and others issues related to project implementation, the project promoter shall show in **the final monitoring report**, submitted at the stage of project finalization/completion and overall the finance settlement.

The report may also include *the payment request*, which is the basis for payment of actually incurred expenditures on project implementation (see ch. 6.3). The project promoter submits the reports each six months from the time the contract becomes effective and a **final report** after the end of implementation of the project;

- for projects with an implementation **up to 6 months**, the project promoter **submits 1 final report** after the end of implementation of the project;
- for projects with an implementation period **longer than 6 months**, the project promoter submits **an interim report each six months and a final report** after completion of the project<sup>15</sup>.

The interim monitoring reports, respectively the final monitoring report, are submitted electronically (via AIS SEF) no later than 1 month after the end of the reference period.<sup>16</sup>

The submitted reports are checked for *factual, financial and formal correctness*, including eligible expenditures and overall compliance with the project contract and its annexes.

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<sup>15</sup> If the project is planned for a period longer than 6 months, the final beneficiary may submit a request to merge the monitoring periods, but the monitoring period of the final report may not exceed 8 months. In exceptional cases, if the final beneficiary does not carry out any activities or expenditures in the standard six-month monitoring period, the monitoring period may be extended to 12 months upon request of the final beneficiary and subsequent approval of the SEF. The minimum monitoring period is 3 months.

<sup>16</sup>The project expenditures are eligible until 30 April 2024, and expenditure incurred up to this deadline must be reimbursed no later than 31 May 2024.

The checked documents are:

in the **text part** of the report:

- correctness of submitted monitoring report from the project schedule
- correctness and completeness of project implementation description in the reference period
- initiation of any changes of differences from the approved version of the application
- the outputs quantification (the indicator fulfillment) and the description of the results achieved in the reference period
- indication of the existing financial performances in the settled terms (according to the AIS SEF), i.e. for total amount for the relevant reference period
- indication of the assumption of financial performance for next period, i.e. May-October and November-April for relevant years of the project implementation

if the **payment request** is also part of the monitoring report, there are further checked:

- the list of actually incurred expenditures, including annexes (certified copies of invoices, bills, etc.) and their consistency with the approved budget
- a statement from the accounting system proving realization of payments from bank account of the project promoter or his/her partner (submission of the bank statement to the submitted invoices)
- a statement from the accounting system proving that all requested expenditures are recorded under the specific accounting cost centre for EEA and Norway Grants in the project promoter's accounting system.

In case of detected deficiencies, the project promoter is obliged to ensure their correction within 5 working days of being called.

### **6.3. Project financing**

Funds are paid to final beneficiaries in accordance with Act No. 388/1991 Coll., On the State Environmental Fund of the Czech Republic, and the Statute of the SEF on the basis of a concluded contract on the provision of support (subsidies) except OUS, where the procedure is in accordance with Act No. 388/1991 Coll. and 218/2000 Coll., On budgetary rules, as amended.

The support (subsidy) can be drawn exclusively non-cash in CZK to the account of the final beneficiary<sup>17</sup> specified in the contract (and registered in the AIS SEF). Finances provided by the SEF CR within the Programme are according to their character registered under special purpose features (CA):

- 90003 Norway Grants - non-investment
- 90500 Norway Grants - investment
- 90006 Norway Grants - co-financing - non-investment
- 90503 Norway Grants - co-financing - investment

The final beneficiary may reimburse the project expenditures (supplier invoices) at the earliest after the Decision has been issued (see ch. 5.3), after the Contract is concluded (see ch. 5.4) the **advanced payment**<sup>18</sup> is always provided to the final beneficiary's account, due to conditions stated in the Contract (usually not more than 10 days after signing the Contract) and the following parameters:

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<sup>17</sup> In accordance with Act No. 218/2000 Coll., On budgetary rules, Territorial self-governing units, voluntary associations of municipalities, state funds, public research institutions, public universities, the Railway Infrastructure Administration and the General Health Insurance Company are obligated to keep the bank accounts for receiving subsidies with Czech National Bank (CNB).

<sup>18</sup> The advanced payment is not relevant for the State Organizational Units and State Contributory Organizations in accordance with Act No. 218/2000 Coll., On budgetary rules.

<i>Project implementation duration</i>	<i>Maximum Advance Payment</i>	<i>Interim payments</i>	<i>Final Payment</i>
<i>≤ 12 Months</i>	50%	≤ 40%	≥ 10%
<i>12-18 Months</i>	30%	≤ 60%	≥ 10%
<i>&gt;18 Months</i>	20%	≤ 70%	≥ 10%

*Payment requests annexed to interim/final monitoring reports should be composed of reporting on eligible expenditure incurred in addition to reporting on the consumption of previous pre-financings received.* The advanced payment must be included into the interim/final monitoring report and deducted from every interim/final payment request until the whole amount of the advanced payment has been exhausted<sup>19</sup>. If the advanced payment has not been fully booked in the first interim monitoring report, the same principle shall be applied for the next monitoring report. If the total amount of the advanced payment is fully posted and the payment request contains higher amount, the SEF shall pay the request amount of the finance to the final beneficiary based on approved incurred expenditures, respectively payment request.

The reimbursement of approved eligible expenditures takes place on an ongoing basis (and in accordance with conditions set above), according to progress reported and described in interim reports, up to a **maximum of 90 % of the grant provided. The remaining final balance of the grant, at least 10 %, must be part of the final report as a final payment request.** Through the final report, the final realization of the project takes place in terms of factual, financial and formal finishing of the project.

The funds are reimbursed to the final beneficiary usually no later than 1 month after the approval of the respective monitoring report, even in the case of the final report.

*State Organizational Units (SOU) and State Contributory Organizations (SPO) proceed the project financing in accordance with Act No. 218/2000 Coll., On budgetary rules, as amended. Particular details of financial flows are defined in the Methodology of financial flows, control and certification of programmes financed from the EEA and Norwegian FM 2014-2021.*

#### **6.4. On-site control of the project implementation**

For selected projects, progress is monitored by **on-site visits**. This monitoring can be provided by SEF CR representatives (programme manager) before the release of funds reported in the respective monitoring report, respectively payment request, and is focused on factual and financial on-site controls by comparing reality/facts with data and information from the report.

However, the on-site visits can also be provided by another representative of SEF, the Ministry of Finance, the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Prague and the Norwegian Environment Agency (Norwegian Programme partner), also the control may be provided by the Supreme Audit Office, the Financial Mechanism Office in Brussels, the Financial Mechanism Committee, EFTA Board of Auditors, Office of the Auditor General of Norway and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or commissioners authorized by the SEF, other bodies authorized by the abovementioned institutions, in particular in accordance with the relevant provisions of Act No. 320/2001 Coll., on Financial Control in Public Administration and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended, and Implementing Decree No. 416/2004 Coll., which implements the Act on Financial Control and in accordance with the relevant rules for the provision of funding from the EEA Funds and Norway.

*In case of detected significant deficiencies (e.g. through monitoring reports, during the review of supporting documents for payment request or on other suggestions raising doubts about the project's factual, legal or financial nature), the on-site monitoring visit will always be carried out.*

<sup>19</sup> If the total eligible expenditure actually incurred is lower than the amount of the advance payment, the final beneficiary is obliged to return the unused funds within 30 days of being invited to the SEF CR bank account specified in the Contract.

At the request of the control authorities, the project promoter shall cooperate with all of the subjects participating in the control, and provide all the relevant documents and information, demonstrating compliance with the obligations of the supported project.

#### **6.5. Irregularities in project implementation**

**Irregularity shall mean any infringement of the rules** governing the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021, European Union law or national legislation, if such a breach could affect or endanger any stage of the implementation of the supported initiatives financed by EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021.

Entities involved in the implementation of the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021 are required to **promptly notify** the SEF in any case of suspected irregularity. In cases of suspected serious irregularity, the SEF may suspend payments for a given initiative for the necessary time.

The SEF is entitled to withhold the grant or parts of it if it considers that the project promoter has breached legal obligations, failed to comply with the purpose of the grant or breached conditions under which the grant was awarded (§ 14e Law code no. 218/2000 Coll., as amended, and Act No.367/2017 Coll.). The amount of the unpaid part of the grant will be determined in accordance with the project contract.

*If the project promoter fails to implement remedial measures or does not return a grant or its part (which is understood as breaching of budgetary discipline), the SEF CR shall inform the Certification Unit, NFP and submit a request for the decision in the matter to the tax office.*

## 7. How to properly promote and inform about awarded project?

When submitting the application, the applicant is obliged to submit at the same time the Project Communication Plan, which must be in accordance with [the Publicity Manual for Applicants and Final Beneficiaries in the Environment, Ecosystems and Climate Change Programme](#) (hereinafter the Publicity Manual<sup>20</sup>). The supported project must meet the minimum publicity requirements during its implementation<sup>21</sup>.

Communication of all projects implemented within the Programme must be in accordance with the Publicity Manual, which specifies the basic requirements and recommendations for communication within the Programme, including the graphic documentation. All the final beneficiaries under the Programme shall:

- follow the Programme Publicity Manual;
- develop and implement the Project Communication Plan, which is part of the application and is in line with the Publicity Manual;
- provide project information to the general public at appropriate national, regional and local level;
- raise awareness of Norway's assistance through the Norway Grants;
- ensure project transparency;
- regularly inform the SEF CR on the fulfillment of the communication and information obligations of the project and provide statistical data on its activities;
- inform the SEF CR about all the events related to project propagation (opening ceremonies, seminars, open days, etc.) at the latest 3 weeks before the event;
- be obliged to use logos of the EEA and Norway Grants in all materials and documents developed within the approved initiative, in the appropriate extent and in an appropriate format, see the Publicity Manual;
- provide to the SEF CR continuously a photographic documentation related to the project implementation (preferably in print quality), especially in the case of realization of physical objects, workshops, seminars etc. This material will be used to promote the Programme and may be provided to a third party;
- enable the SEF CR to visit the project implementation and take a photographic and video documentation, provide it to a third party and use this material to promote the Programme;
- inform about their project on websites, social networks (if available), or create their own project website;
- mark all orders and invoices by text „*Funded from the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021 – CZ-ENVIRONMENT*“; without the designation, the expenditure will not be accepted as eligible;
- inform every project partner of its communication duties;
- to comply with other publicity obligations of the supported projects, as stipulated in the concluded project contract.

Publicity expenditures are eligible expenditures (see ch. 2.2.1. d). However, such expenditures must be in proportion to the total eligible expenditures of the project. Further details and communication requirements are also provided in the [Programme Publicity Manual](#).

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<sup>20</sup> Logos and Manual are available at: <https://www.sfzp.cz/dotace-a-puicky/norske-fondy/dokumenty/>

<sup>21</sup> These requirements follow from the Regulation, its ch. No. 3: Information and Communication, and Annex No. 3 to the Regulation.

## 8. Other elements or facts related to supported projects

During the preparation of the application for support, project implementation, and when the implementation is finished, there may be other facts that need to be taken into the whole administration process. Already in the preparation of the project plan, before compilation of the application for support, it is necessary to consider the answers to questions that are part of this chapter.

### 8.1. Public support within the project

Any aid provided by the State or by the State resources, which would distort or threaten to distort competition by favouring certain companies or production sector while affecting trade between Member States under article 107, (1) of the Treaty functioning of the European Union is prohibited. The form of such support is further defined by 4 basic definitions, where:

1. the support is provided by State or from public funds
2. the support favours certain companies/undertakings or certain sectors of business production and is selective
3. the trade between Member States is affected and
4. competition is or may be distorted.

If the project meets the above definition of public support, the applicant shall indicate the public support scheme in the application form and provide more details in the "Description of risks and project limitations". The support from the Programme can be provided only on the basis of exemption resulting from regulations, decisions, guidelines or another legal statements such as de minimis, regional aid or public service compensation in accordance with the relevant rules.

Individual applications for support will be assessed **individually in terms of possible fulfillment** of state aid and more information on this issue is available on the website of the Office for the Protection of Competition of the Czech Republic (<https://www.uohs.cz/cs/verejna-podpora.html>). For projects fulfilling the defining characteristics of State aid, with de minimis aid, the check if the applicant does not comply in any way with Commission Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014 (GBER) Article 2 point 18.

#### *State Aid compatible with the internal market (GBER)*

Areas of intervention compatible with the internal market are laid down in COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No. 651/2014 of 17 June 2014, in accordance with article 107 and 108 of the Treaty. The Regulation lays down the conditions horizontal or vertical providing of public support into defined areas, so-called categories of aid. Detailed methodological documents and relevant regulations can be found on website <https://www.uohs.cz/cs/verejna-podpora/obecne-narizeni-oblokovych-vyjimkach-gber.html>.

#### *De minimis support*

Due to the wide scope of most projects envisaged for the Programme support, most of them could meet the definition of public support and whose support will not reach the limit 200 000 EUR, can be supported under the de minimis regime, i.e. small support. This limit is set in the light of the assumption that it will not distort trade or competition between Member States. However, this scheme is applicable only to one enterprise<sup>22</sup> and to the three-year period (i.e. the current period and two previous accounting years).

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<sup>22</sup> a link to the Methodological Manual for the definition of one undertaking can be found on the website of the Office for the Protection of Competition <https://www.uohs.cz/en/state-aid.html>

The granting aid will be registered in the Central de minimis register<sup>23</sup>, whereby the register records all the support provided in the same way from the different providers. Limit over reporting over the three-years period is prohibited/forbidden.

For projects fulfilling the defining characteristics of State aid, with the exception of de minimis aid, a check will be made that the applicant is not a firm in difficulty under Commission Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014 (GBER) Article 2 point 18.

## **8.2. Conflict of interest**

The applicant for the support from the Programme must comply with general conditions of transparency and avoidance of potential conflicts of interest. For this reason all the legal entities (except SOU), including potential project partners, **are obliged to identify their ownership structure** in the application, state their real owners in the sense of § 4 of Act No. 253/2008 Coll., on certain measures against money laundering, crime and terrorist financing, or provide the actual list of shareholders and document changes in the ownership structure during the administration of the application.

## **8.3. Accounting for the financial support**

All the expenditures incurred in implementation of projects supported by Programme must be supported by an **output** (report or reports) **from the accounting system** which will show the accounting of all project-related transactions and be clearly identifiable from which accounting system and when it was generated. The list from the accounting system should provide at least the following information:

- date of accounting
- the document number attributable to the documented primary document
- the amounts equal to or higher than stated in primary documents
- text definitions of individual items

*The project promoters' subjects whom are obliged to classify actual and budgeted revenues and expenditures shall **proceed according to the budget structure** laid down by Act No. 218/2000 Coll., on Budgetary Rules and by Decree No. 323/2002 Coll., on Budgetary Structure, as amended, and to compile financial statements according to Decree No. 449/2009 Coll., on The manner, dates and scope of data submitted for the evaluation of the state budget, state fund budgets, budgets of territorial self-governing units, voluntary unions of municipalities and regional councils of cohesion regions, amended and registered items related to the subsidy separately.*

*Beneficiaries who keep accounting in accordance with **Decree No. 563/1991 Coll., On accounting in full or in simple scope**, shall record double-entry records on the state and movement of assets, liabilities, costs and revenues and profit/loss relating to the subsidy.*

**Eligible project expenditures** must be managed by:

- I. In the accounting system of the beneficiary of the support in accordance with Decree No. 563/1991 Coll., On accounting, as amended.

*The beneficiary is obliged to keep separate accounting reports for monitoring and reporting of received and used subsidies in relation to the claimed eligible expenses.*

or

- II. The beneficiaries who do not keep accounting system in accordance with Act No. 563/1991 Coll., On accounting, are obliged to manage tax or operative evidence extended by the following requirements:

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<sup>23</sup> Information on the Central Register of De Minimis can be found at <https://www.uohs.cz/cs/verejna-podpora/registr-de-minimis.html>

- *The documents must be in accordance with predefined requisites of an accounting document with the meaning § 11 Act No. 563/1991 Coll., On accounting as amended, except point f);*
- *The documents in question must be correct, conclusive and comprehensible and kept in chronological order in a manner guaranteeing their performance;*
- *Incomes and expenditures are kept with a clear link to the respective project, to which they relate, that is, the documents – in particular invoices – must clearly state the number of the project to which they relate. Bank statements proving payment do not have to be marked with the project number, but it is necessary to follow the rules of separate evidence.*

#### **8.4. Document archiving**

The project promoter is obliged to archive all the documents related to the project preparation and implementation **for a 10 years period** from next year after the year when the Final monitoring report was approved, however at least until 31 December 2030.

#### **8.5. Termination of the project contract**

Through the whole process, from the receipt of the application for support until the project implementation process, there may be situations in which the project for support from the Programme is terminated. This happens especially in situations described below:

##### *Expiry of the Decision*

If the applicant does not submit required documents for the conclusion of the project contract within the deadline, or if he/she does not request extension of the set deadline in due time, or the deadline has not been extended, or other condition specified in the Decision is not met, the Decision shall expire on the date stated in the Decision. In this case it is not possible to conclude the project contract and the preparation of the project contract is terminated.

##### *Withdrawal of the application by the applicant or termination of the project contract before the start of financing*

The applicant is entitled to notify the SEF of the withdrawal of the application until the Minister's Decision is issued. If the Decision has already been taken or the project contract has been concluded, the applicant shall submit a **written proposal for termination of the contractual relationship**, on the basis on which the Decision is annulled or it shall expire upon its expiry date.

##### *Cancellation/Termination of contractual relationship*

In the case when the contractual conditions are not fulfilled, the SEF may file the proposal to cancel the project contract or make its modification subject to a reduction or non-granting of entitlement to the remaining part of the support. If the termination of the contractual relationship is required by the project promoter, it shall submit a written application containing a termination request, and a justification for that request. The project contract may be cancelled **by agreement of both parties in written form**, if the law allows it.

In the case where the reimbursement has been started, the project promoter is obliged to return the support to the SEF before the termination of the contractual relationship. If the support is not repaid, the SEF shall send to the beneficiary a request for repayment of the support within the 30 day period specified by the SEF. If the funds are not returned even after the deadline has expired, the SEF shall refer the case to the competent financial authority.

## **8.6. Settlement of dispute in the administration of applications or project implementation**

In the case where the *formal requirements have not been fulfilled* after the submitting, the applicant is invited to remedy their deficiencies by a written invitation. If the deficiencies are not remedied within the stipulated deadline, the applicant is informed, after the Selection Committee meeting, by the resolution of the SEF, on the negative statement of the procedure for granting of subsidy. The applicant is given the possibility of filing an appeal in 5 working days from the date of delivery. The applicant shall be informed of the outcome of the appeal by the SEF Director.

The Minister decides whether to approve or reject the application (except the SOU application). The recommendation is provided to the Minister by the Council of the SEF, whom is informed about the results from the selection and evaluation process carried out by the Selection Committee. In case the application is proposed by the Selection Committee to *be rejected*, and this is also confirmed by the Council of the SEF, the applicant is announced in writing and has the possibility **of filing an appeal** in 5 working days from the date of delivery. The negative statement of the Council of the SEF, including the applicants statement, is then submitted to the Minister, who will decide. In accordance with Article 14, § 2, of Act No. 218/2000 Coll., On Budgetary Rules and Amendment to Certain Related Acts (Budgetary Rules), as amended by Act No. 367/2017 Coll., no appeal is admissible.

If the applicant feels he/she has limited his/her rights in the framework of these decisions, he/she can claim that such a decision be annulled or declared void according to § 65, Act No. 150/2002 Coll., the Code of administrative Justice, as amended.

During the *project implementation*, each project promoter is regularly informed via the AIS SEF about the binding deadlines that must be respected and which also are settled in the legal act. The project promoter shall be informed 30 calendar days before the deadline expires. If the project promoter is unable to meet the deadline due to objective reasons, it can send a request for extension, however, no later than within the deadline. If the project promoter does not fulfill the set obligations during the project implementation, SEF will proceed in accordance with the relevant provisions of Act No. 218/2000 Coll., On Budgetary Rules and Amendment to Certain Related Acts (Budgetary Rules), as amended. Breach of obligations not exceeding a period of 30 calendar days will not be penalized and will not be considered a breach of the conditions for the provision of support.

If the project promoter during the implementation does not agree with the decisions set by the respective project manager, it may submit a maximum of **one review request** per case. The request can be submitted at least 2 weeks from the date of delivery or determination of such a decision, via AIS SEF. The SEF will assess the request (individually, depending on the severity of the project and any changes to the project, it will be assessed by the Selection Committee or it will be initiated by the Minister's Decision changing process). The Director of the SEF shall inform the applicant in writing on the outcome of any appeal.

***You can send any questions to the Call during the whole time from the launch of the call to the end of the receipt applications to [norwaygrants@sfzp.cz](mailto:norwaygrants@sfzp.cz). We will reply you by email within 10 days.***

***Frequently asked questions will also be posted [here](#).***

***Applications suspected of non-compliance with the principles of good governance in connection with the implementation of the Norway Grants may be submitted through the website National Focal Point of the Czech Republic, <https://www.eeagrants.cz/cs/stiznosti>.***