

Sample revision questions from previous UK LIFE applications

Please note these are a small selection of revision questions from the UK from recent LIFE Calls. Some queries refer to the previous LIFE programme and specific requirements may have changed but hopefully this will provide future applicants of what will get picked up upon during the revisions phase.

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Nature & Biodiversity

Queries about the budget

Cost originally foreseen for action D.3 seem to be overestimated. Please provide further justification for such costs or review and reduce accordingly, confirming that you are willing to continue the project under the new conditions.

Please present the basis of calculating the costs for production of social media templates and applications.

Please explain how the community engagement activity in Action C.1 will be undertaken without incurring costs for venue hire etc. No such costs are included in the F forms.

Personnel cost (Form F1): approximately 300 days are allocated to specialists who are not part of the core project team. Please explain the roles and tasks of these specialists in the project context and justify their involvement.

Please explain why xx personnel days are needed for E.3.

External assistance cost (Form F3): the funding of a PhD (€xx) in action E.2, does not seem to represent value for money regarding the direct contribution to the project results. Please, describe in detail the advantages of the PhD sponsorship compared to hiring an external expert in terms of cost-effectiveness (provide a detailed description of the costs). Note: if your justification is deemed to be insufficient, you may be asked to remove this element from the project. Please confirm your willingness to continue the project if this cut is requested at a later stage.

Please confirm that the audit costs for the Coordinating Beneficiary also covers audit costs for the associated beneficiaries too or include those costs. Note however, that the total Requested EU contribution submitted for the project cannot increase.

Please also revise the cost description (Supply of independent external auditor) to Audit costs.

The availability of co-financing is vital to the viability of the project. However, two of the Commitment Forms (A6) state that this money is contingent on OFWAT determinations. Please provide an update on the status of these determinations, and assurances around the availability of the water companies' co-financing or alternative funding sources if these are not secure.

Please justify the need for 24 laptops and the high cost for each laptop. Please also justify the purchase of 12 iPads. Please reduce those costs substantially.

Please confirm how many sets of protecting clothing are to be purchased and the unit price for a set of clothing for each relevant action.

Please note that in accordance with the eligibility conditions in the grant agreement (Art. II.19.1), costs should be "... reasonable, justified and comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency", so costs that are not in line with this condition may be considered non-eligible at the payment stage even if they have been budgeted.

The budget allocated for project management (F.1) represents a significant proportion of the total project amount. Please provide justification for the time resources and salary level of the individuals allocated for this action or reduce accordingly.

Queries about techniques / best practices used

The use of a hydraulic excavator for the removal of sediment is noted. It would be interesting to know if the use of sediment pumps or other extraction methods were explored. In particular it would be useful to know about the potential for disturbance of the sediment and resultant spike in release and re-suspension of nutrients and other contaminants, and how you intend to manage this.

Under the assumptions listed for action C.2, you state that there is some uncertainty as to how much nutrient cycling can be reduced through sediment removal. Please clarify the level of this of uncertainty and whether this undermines the first objective of the project.

The proposal states that Actions C.1 and C.2 are not ongoing recurring activity as they represent a step change in level of activity. Please describe in detail the current level and costs of activity at each site, the additional proposed work (and costs) which raise the level significantly, and how this increased level will benefit the species. The increased activity includes additional wardening. Please include detailed descriptions of the work of the wardens and how the increased wardening will benefit the species.

Please fully explain the methods to be used for improving bio-security under Action C.2.

Please explain the extent of the area that will be subjected to interventions outside the SAC.

Queries about dissemination/reach

Please provide a detailed description of the communication tools (in particular leaflets, videos and events) to be produced, including quantitative and qualitative details: leaflets – how many copies/pages, size, colour, to whom they will be addressed; videos – number of copies, duration, topic; events - how many, where, when, how many persons will participate, etc.

Please specify the number of participants expected to attend the trainings organized as part of action E.2.

Please identify the LIFE projects that you expect to network with.

This action involves compiling information in collaboration with relevant organisations including in the other Member States. Please confirm whether the relevant organisations in these countries are aware of the project and support the development of a conservation strategy covering the whole NW European meta-population of the species.

Please explain whether you have taken into consideration the possibility that the general public will show resistance to the eradication of said species, and how the project will tackle this issue?

Queries about stakeholder engagement

The proposal's text states that the majority of the project sites are managed and leased by XX however, there is no map attached to the proposal indicating the ownership. Please provide a map clearly indicating the ownership of the project sites.

A Wider Stakeholder Forum is included in the project structure chart, but no information on this is provided. It is not clear how the key stakeholders will be engaged throughout the project. Please provide all relevant details and describe how key stakeholders will be informed and involved in the project.

The composition of the steering group for the project is not clear. According to action A.1 this will be comprised of representatives of the two beneficiaries and the owner of the site, but elsewhere the proposal suggests it may involve other stakeholders. Please clarify the composition of the project Steering Group.

Please provide a declaration of support and participation in the project's actions from XX. Please add a brief description of other NGOs and/or stakeholders who could be involved in the project.

Please explain how the project will liaise with relevant bodies/initiatives in Scotland to maximise the effectiveness.

Queries about the afterLIFE

In the description of action C.4, the proposal states that monitoring and further removal of fish will continue for 5 years after the end of the project, and that funding is being sought for this. Please explain the source of funds, the likelihood of obtaining the funding and the implications if funding is not obtained.

Please explain how continuation of the results of the action proposed outside the SAC will be guaranteed in the long term, necessary for this action to be eligible for LIFE funding.

Environment & Resource Efficiency

Queries about the budget

The daily rate of 'senior manager' (no further specified) is €xxx, greater than the average foreseen for experienced staff (€ xxx). Please justify the reason why and provide us with the following information: total yearly salary cost and the total productive working days per year of the employee (not only for the project; i.e.: xxx w/days minus holidays and average sickness days).

Please break down and detail all lump sums for travel costs in form F2. All travel costs must clearly specify the purpose of travel, number of trips and persons travelling, and duration of trip (in days) in order to assess value for money.

For more expensive actions (e.g.: Actions B.1. and B.2.), under the section 'How was the cost of the action estimated?' please appropriately describe and justify how costs have been built up. In many cases there is no clear and sufficiently detailed justification.

Please justify the high budget allocation for the implementation Action B.8 (€ XXX) and provide clear details in the sections "how was the cost of the action estimated" in order to assess value for money. Please note that in accordance with the eligibility conditions in the grant agreement (Art. II.19.1), costs should be "... reasonable, justified and comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency", so costs that are not in line with this condition may be considered non-eligible at the payment stage even if they have been budgeted.

Queries about techniques used

It is not clear how the 5% target for improvement in xxx will be achieved by 2020. Please ensure that the targets set are viable and are reflected in the project actions, and that indicators of success towards these targets are clear and measurable.

Please revise the progress indicators for Actions B.1 to B.4 which must be clearly quantified, even as estimates. As currently presented, indicators of progress relative to these actions rather take the form of the action methodology with no quantification or measurable targets.

Please clarify any possible overlaps with current activities in UK, e.g. activities promoted and carried out through the UK Group XX (as communication campaigns and dissemination activities). In particular, the answer should explain that costs for activities planned in the proposed framework are not already funded by a Member State and propose specific actions to ensure the added value of the LIFE programme.

Please clearly explain what your role in the H2020 Project XXX consists of and confirm that double funding from EU sources will not be incurred for any action of the present project, should you be granted funding.

Please indicate where the main environment savings will be made (in European consumer countries, or shared with producer countries outside of the EU).

Queries about project management

Please consider adding additional buffer time (e.g. 6 to 12 months) since the project is assessed to be ambitious but with limited duration to achieve the proposed project outcomes. Consequently, please modify the timeline for the actions in the C1-forms and add the new actions C.2 and E.4.

Please reduce the number of milestones in form C2. Milestones are significant or important events to check the project's progress. They should be limited in number.



Project management is listed as an item under External Assistance. Please provide further details or remove.

Queries about dissemination/reach

Please clearly indicate in Form B3, under the section "EU added value of the project and its actions", which project actions and/or planned activities will target replication of project results and how this will be addressed.

It is noted that there are no letters of support from organisations in Spain, despite this being one of the key countries for the trials. Please confirm your intended approach in Spain and how you will ensure stakeholder engagement.

Please add a mandatory Networking action under section E of the proposal (Action E.4). Indeed, according to the Guidelines for applicants 2014, "each proposal must include an action entitled "Networking with other LIFE and/or non-LIFE projects," which "should be presented as one distinct E-category obligatory action with a separate budget". In your proposal, although relevant activities are planned, this obligatory action, with its separate budget, is missing. Please note that any increase to the overall budget would need to be met by increasing your own contributions, since the EU contribution cannot be increased.

Please confirm whether the online training will be available in a variety of European languages, particularly those in target countries and reflect this in the proposal.

Please provide additional information regarding notice boards and layman's report under section D of the proposal. According to the Guidelines for applicants 2014, "*the following dissemination activities are considered obligatory and shall be included as D-category actions: Notice boards describing the project shall be displayed at strategic places accessible to the public. (...) A layman's report shall be produced in paper and electronic format at the end of the project. It shall be presented in English and in the project's language (...)*". Both these items are only scarcely mentioned in your proposal with no quantification and the budget allocated to them is either very limited or unclearly presented.

Please improve the quantification of the project actions such as Action B.7 on the number of young consumers to be reached.

Queries about the afterLIFE

Please explain how the actions foreseen to continue after the LIFE project has finished will be paid for. Please clarify if some of the stakeholders that submitted letter of support would be willing to provide financing.

Environmental Governance & Information

Queries about techniques used

Please explain if building a new network is sufficient to provide a solution to the identified problem, or a multi approach (e.g. strengthening structures or analysing the procedures and making proposals for improvement) may also be necessary. Integrate your reply, as appropriate under the relevant form B3.

Please further explain how stakeholders will be involved in the project implementation. Please consider setting up in the project structures a platform for stakeholders' involvement, and, include the necessary provisions in the form B4.

The action B.2 lacks sufficient information about members of the working groups, countries of origin, expertise as well as outputs of the working groups (e.g. how it adds on existing curricula, what new curricula will be developed, content, etc.). Please set clear outputs for each working group and quantify them.

Please explain the involvement of the XXX in Actions B.5; B.6; B.14 and D.3.

Queries about the budget

Some personnel costs budgeted in form F1 (€ 700,089) appear to be high. For instance, action B.2 (4 working groups, 15 workshops in total) is budgeted with xx working days, with staff daily fees of € xx, € xx and € xx and insufficient explanation is provided for these high daily rates. Please justify these daily rates and provide the following data in case they are employees: total yearly salary cost in EURO; total productive working hours per year of the employee (not only for the project i.e. 261 days minus holidays, average sickness days). In case they are other personnel, please confirm the daily rate in the employment/consultancy contract and certify that this type of personnel fulfils the criteria listed in the model grant agreement and Annex X. Revise any daily rate that is not based on employment cost calculation basis, if necessary and update the relevant financial forms.

Please confirm you agree to delete costs for "gifts for speakers" from Form F6.

Queries about dissemination/reach

Please provide details of the outputs of the annual conferences and their subsequent distribution.

Action D.1 fails to describe an outline of the website, what relevant information will be shared, what different types of visitors are envisaged, the number of expected visitors per months, the number of page visits etc. Please provide this information and integrate your reply, as appropriate, in the content of the action D.1.

The willingness of voluntary participation of the main sources of information, industry and law enforcement agencies, is not guaranteed. Please explain what contingency measures would be put in place to ensure their timely cooperation in project interventions where necessary.

Please reduce the number of notice boards (only 4 partners are involved resulting in 16 notice boards not 20 mentioned in the proposal) and justify the need for four for each beneficiary since the number proposed seems unnecessarily high. Reduce costs accordingly.

Queries on project monitoring

Please include a deliverable reporting on the results of contacts/surveys of target audiences (details on interests, expectations, input provided).



The monitoring provisions are not sufficiently elaborated with regard to the socio-economic impact of the project, as required.

Please provide details of the additional monitoring activities that will be carried out leading up to the Mid-Term and Final Reports. Please also clarify what the material outputs of this monitoring will be.

Please review the number of deliverables in form C2. Deliverables are concrete products of the project, which is not necessarily the case with the current list. Please review and refine.