



Transforming
Energy
Access



**Call for Expression of Interest
Powering Opportunities Partnership (POP)
Local Value Addition and Employment Creation (VA&EC) demonstration projects in sub-Saharan Africa**

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
30 April 2019**

Thank you for your interest in participating in this call for proposals.

As stated in [The Expression of Interest \(Eoi\) document](#) & [Terms of Reference \(ToR\) document](#), below are the guidelines for the questions/clarifications process for this competition:

- 1.1** The Carbon Trust's channel for all communications related to this call is:
TEA-POP-VAEC@carbontrust.com

All questions relating to this competition must be submitted by email. Please insert **"Competition: POP - VA&EC Expression of Interest"** in the email title line for all communications.

- 1.2** The Carbon Trust's portal for this competition is
<https://www.carbontrust.com/tea/news/2019/04/tea-pop-vaec/>
- 1.3** Questions may include queries relating to the ToR, the Conditions of Contract or if you have difficulty in providing the information requested. Questions should clearly reference the paragraph in the document to which the question relates. To the extent possible, questions should be sent in one email rather than individually in separate emails.
- 1.4** Please note We are unable to opine on the particulars of any proposal at this time. Proposal eligibility, evaluation and scoring will be as described in
- 1.5** There will be two periods in which we welcome interested applicants to submit questions during the Eoi phase. Please refer to the question/answer timeline below:

Stage	Description	Date (if applicable, time)
Eoi	First round of Eoi questions	Last questions to be received by: 24/04/2019 Carbon Trust's response to be expected by: 30/04/2019
	Second round of Eoi questions	Last questions to be received by: 06/05/2019 Carbon Trust's response to be expected by: 09/05/2019

No.	QUESTION	RESPONSE
1	Minimum requirements on applicants.	<p>All applicants must make themselves familiar with the Carbon Trust's Anti- Bribery Code of Conduct http://www.carbontrust.com/terms. See page 9 section 6.3.</p> <p>Applicants are required to declare in their Eol submissions any conflict or potential conflict of interest and provide clear details of their plan for managing this. See page 9 section 5.4.</p> <p>Applications must fulfil the required structure of the Eol submission; please refer to The Expression of Interest (Eol) document & Terms of Reference (ToR) document page 7 section 4.3 and complete the Application template in full.</p> <p>The minimum co-funding requirements as set out in The Expression of Interest (Eol) document & Terms of Reference (ToR) document page 15 section 9.4. Please also note that other funds received from DFID via any of its other programmes, including the Shell Foundation's TIME programme, are not acceptable as match funding</p> <p>We welcome all organisations to apply, especially those with a stake in developing rural economies.</p>
2	How many proposals can one organisation or group submit?	<p>There is no limit to the number of proposals an organisation or group can submit, each proposal will be evaluated on its own merit.</p> <p>Proposals will be subject to evaluation, for more information please refer to The Expression of Interest (Eol) document & Terms of Reference (ToR) document page 7 section 4.4 and 4.5.</p> <p>The Carbon Trust is not bound in any way to accept the lowest or any application. Unless any Applicant makes a formal statement in its proposal to the contrary, the Carbon Trust reserves the right to accept a proposal either in whole or in part. The Carbon Trust reserves the right to accept more than one proposal.</p>
3	Can the same organisation be involved in several proposals with different partners?	<p>There is no limit to the number of proposals for which an organisation may be partner.</p> <p>See at least RESPONSE No. 2 for further guidance.</p> <p>Also consider RESPONSE No. 4 for further guidance.</p>
4	Is there limit to the number of partners per proposal?	<p>There is no limit to the number of partners per proposal.</p> <p>This Call for Expressions of Interest is intended for organisations (including innovative partnerships and joint ventures between organisations). For more information please refer at least to The Expression of Interest (Eol) document & Terms of Reference (ToR) document page 11 section 6, and further section 9 for a description of the types of projects.</p>

		<p>All proposals should clearly and in full identify the lead partner and all other partners in the Application template.</p> <p>The Application template requests an OVERVIEW OF IMPLEMENTING ORGANISATIONS, including a description of the capabilities and know-how each partner brings to the project that increases the likelihood of success</p>
5	Is a partner needed? I.e. may a single organisation without further partners apply?	<p>We welcome all applications. Whilst formal partners are not required, we remind applicants of some of the programme objectives documented in The Expression of Interest (Eoi) document & Terms of Reference (ToR) document, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects proposed for this VA&EC Call for Expressions of Interest, should consider and articulate how they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ align with regional, national or local action plans and programmes relating to valueaddition and employment creation in the OGE sector; (As described on page 14 section 9.1).
6	Is there an opportunity to be awarded more than one grant?	<p>Each application will be evaluated individually on its own merit.</p> <p>Proposals will be subject to evaluation, for more information please refer to The Expression of Interest (Eoi) document & Terms of Reference (ToR) document page 7 section 4.4 and 4.5.</p> <p>There is no specific stipulation preventing an award or awards concerning projects that engage/involve the same partner or partners or other related parties.</p> <p>The Carbon Trust is not bound in any way to accept the lowest or any application. Unless any Applicant makes a formal statement in its proposal to the contrary, the Carbon Trust reserves the right to accept a proposal either in whole or in part. The Carbon Trust reserves the right to accept more than one proposal.</p>
7	What type of organisation can apply?	<p>There are no exclusions for type of organisation that can apply or may be a partner (either as lead partner or other partner). There is no minimum requirement on applicants regarding, for instance, years in operation, jurisdiction of company registration, for-profit or not-for-profit, start-up etc.</p> <p>The Application template requests an OVERVIEW OF IMPLEMENTING ORGANISATIONS, including a description of the capabilities and know-how each partner brings to the project that increases the likelihood of success.</p> <p>Proposals will be subject to evaluation, for more information please refer to The Expression of Interest (Eoi) document & Terms of Reference (ToR) document page 7 section 4.4 and 4.5.</p> <p>. Do note, the evaluation includes consideration of skill/experience and whether the response/answer/solution gives real confidence that the supplier will add real value.</p>

8	<p>What is total project budget, matching grant budget and funding percentages that can be given?</p>	<p>There is no limit on the total project size/budget.</p> <p>There is no limit on the match grant or other co-funding size/budget.</p> <p>Regarding the limit on requested funding from TEA-POP-VAEC, please refer to The Expression of Interest (Eoi) document & Terms of Reference (ToR) document page 6 section 3. Funding to be requested from TEA-POP for each project should not exceed £250,000.</p> <p>Regarding the thresholds for percentage of funding requested from TEA-POP-VAEC, please refer to The Expression of Interest (Eoi) document & Terms of Reference (ToR) document page 15 section 9.4. A minimum of 50% co-funding (either financial or in-kind) is a prerequisite for proposal consideration. The partnership model should therefore extend to also include financial partnership to support the delivery of the proposed project. The company must provide matching funds on at least a 1:1 basis. This means if an applicant is requesting £50,000, it must be prepared to put in £50,000 of its own or from another source towards the project, making a total project size of £100,000</p>
9	<p>Are there limitations for co-funding that would be considered eligible?</p> <p>Can co-funding come from a larger regional intervention?</p> <p>Must co-funding come from one or multiple partners?</p>	<p>TEA-POP-VAEC seeks to support organisations (including innovative partnerships and joint ventures between organisations) that propose locally situated, high potential, replicable and scalable opportunities in upstream off-grid energy segments.</p> <p>Matching funds can be proposed from a variety of sources, including cash and equity, in-kind contributions, other grants, commercial sources such as venture capital, impact loans and debt.</p> <p>There is some flexibility in what will be considered for matching funds. In principle, evaluation considerations will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) to what extent the applicant is sharing the project costs and risks (ii) are the proposed matching funds directly relatable to the project being proposed and contributing to its realisation? (iii) are the proposed matching funds additional? <p>All matched funding must be clearly linked to the action research project proposed.</p> <p>There is no requirement concerning the co-funding contribution, as to whether from a single partner or multiple partners.</p> <p>Financial co-funding should be evidenced (e.g. a statement from the cofounder guaranteeing the fund). Please consider RESPONSE 12.</p> <p>In kind co-funding should be clearly described in the application. Please consider RESPONSE 10.</p> <p>Please also consider RESPONSE 11.</p>

10	<p>Are there any limitations for in-kind contributions that would be considered as co-funding?</p> <p>Can ongoing projects that the TEA-POP-VAEC call builds on be considered as co-funding</p>	<p>For in-kind contributions, applicants are requested to clearly describe the nature and details of such co-funding, and be prepared to demonstrate the basis for quantification. In-kind matching funds will be evaluated on the basis of the project context and how they are additional to the project / leverage upon the grant funds. Taxes, importation costs, logistics costs and cost of land (amongst others) for elements to be deployed for the project, will not be considered as in-kind co-funding.</p> <p>Applications that include at least some financial co-funding will be favourably viewed.</p>
11	<p>Are there limitations on what the funds can be applied to?</p> <p>E.g. can the funds be used to purchase equipment or increase capacity?</p> <p>E.g. staff? travel? equipment? training materials? subcontracting?</p>	<p>There are no limitations on what the funds may be applied to</p> <p>In the Application template. PROJECT FINANCE section, applicants are requested to provide detail on the intended utilisation/deployment of funds; both the requested TEA-POP-VAEC budget and co-funding/match funding.</p> <p>Please also consider RESPONSE No. 9.</p> <p>Please also consider RESPONSE No. 15.</p>
12	<p>Can projects that have not yet secured funding be considered?</p>	<p>A minimum of 50% co-funding must have been secured by project commencement (either financial or in-kind). This is a prerequisite for project funding.</p> <p>Should an applicant consider co-funding as likely but not yet secured at date of EoI application, representation concerning progress securing such co-funding will be required and may be evaluated on its own merit.</p> <p>Should co-funding be contingent, representation concerning such contingencies and arrangements will be required and may be evaluated on its own merit.</p> <p>Such applications may however be rejected during evaluation at the discretion of the evaluators.</p> <p>The Carbon Trust is not bound in any way to accept the lowest or any application. Unless any Applicant makes a formal statement in its proposal to the contrary, the Carbon Trust reserves the right to accept a proposal either in whole or in part. The Carbon Trust reserves the right to accept more than one proposal.</p>

13	The timeframes of the proposed project do not align with or may fall outside the dates designated for TEA-POP-VAEC.	<p>Please refer to The Expression of Interest (Eoi) document & Terms of Reference (ToR) document page 15 section 9.2.</p> <p>Applications are welcome, even if they do not entirely overlap with or are contained within the indicative timeframes of active support: 18 – 24 months from commencement. This also applies for projects which could be implemented in less time.</p> <p>Proposals will be subject to evaluation, for more information please refer to The Expression of Interest (Eoi) document & Terms of Reference (ToR) document page 7 section 4.4 and 4.5.</p> <p>Applicants should consider TEA-POP-VA&EC’s Learning & Dissemination requirements (refer page 8 section 5.1), which might only be fulfilled by the programme during the anticipated actively-supported period.</p>
14	What portion of the budget should go to the intervention on the ground, and what portion should be reserved for research/evidence-collection?	<p>The budget deployment is to be proposed by applicants</p> <p>Project design and budgets should guarantee the existence of credible mechanisms to ensure that data and learnings from the action research are gathered in a manner which offers good value for money, whilst prioritising the realisation of the programme objectives.</p> <p>Please also see RESPONSE 11.</p> <p>Please also see RESPONSE 15.</p>
15	Is it expected that the impact assessment and economic analysis is completed within the 18-month time frame?	<p>The indicative timeframes of active support for the project are: 18 – 24 months from commencement.</p> <p>At commencement of the project(s) that are awarded under this Competition, it is expected that grantee(s) will work with Energy4Impact and Carbon Trust to refine and agree a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan and a logframe.</p> <p>In execution and for the duration of the project(s) that are awarded under this Competition, it is expected that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on-going / regular quantitative technical (specifically unit economics amongst others) and socio-economic data is to be collected by the grantee; • regular reporting is conducted by the grantee, including of technical and socio-economic interim results and other insights and according to the M&E plan; • the grantee is to support the development of case studies and other intermediate research/learning/insight products. <p>Toward and by project close, applicants should afford resources for final impact assessment and economic analysis. Carbon Trust and Energy4Impact anticipate also utilising this information in a subsequent period for uptake and dissemination of the learnings and insights.</p>

		Please see at least The Expression of Interest (Eoi) document & Terms of Reference (ToR) document page 8 section 5.1.
16	Can a company apply for the two stages indicated in the POP document? How many rounds will there be?	TEA-POP-VA&EC is a two-stage competition, consisting of an Expression of Interest stage, followed by Full Proposal stage. Only shortlisted applicants after the Expression of Interest phase will be invited to submit a Full Proposal. Applicants are recommended to apply for this round as the nature and timing of future rounds is not fixed.
17	What country scope is relevant?	Please see The Expression of Interest (Eoi) document & Terms of Reference (ToR) document page 15 section 9.3. The countries in scope for intervention can be located in any Sub-Saharan African country, excluding South Africa.
18	Would projects in ideation stage qualify to apply for this funding?	TEA-POP-VAEC seeks to support organisations (including innovative partnerships and joint ventures between organisations) that propose locally situated, high potential, replicable and scalable opportunities in upstream off-grid energy segments. Proposals are invited for projects that integrate with and stimulate regional off-grid energy value chains, which consequently realise a meaningful and sustainable increase in local employment and economic value creation. The project should serve to demonstrate the opportunity for upstream off-grid energy - linked economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa. Due to the action research and learning objectives, the proposed project should manifest as physical activity on-the-ground, therefore projects at ideation stage without concrete plans to manifest as physical projects for this Competition won't qualify for this funding.
19	Can we have a call to discuss this Competition?	Organisations may request a call (phone/skype) to discuss the competition. Women managed organisations / women owned businesses and models including women in their supply and distribution chains are particularly encouraged. We will be in a position only to respond on queries regarding process or documentation, we cannot comment on the specifics of any proposal.
20	Can you explain the details of the mechanism for disbursement of funds from the grant to the grantee and the timing from submission of documents requesting the release of funds	Milestones for disbursements will be project context dependent and negotiated with each project on an individual basis. We expect most disbursements to be made in arrears on a quarterly or semi-annual basis, depending upon the needs of the project and the project-specific negotiated disbursement schedule. A narrative progress report and a financial report will need to be submitted together with the disbursement request. Timings of disbursements from submission of documents to release of funds will be dependent upon satisfactory reporting and meeting of negotiated project milestones and deliverables.

	<p>and when funds are received?</p> <p>What happens if one of the two organisations fails, or wants to leave the partnership?</p>	<p>The funding agreement will be between the lead organisation and the Carbon Trust. The lead organisation has a contractual responsibility for implementation of the project. If their partner fails, the lead organisation has the responsibility to ensure project targets are completed. In the Application template, (Page 1, under ‘Key capabilities’), project applicants are encouraged to describe the nature of the partnership between organisations and provide evidence of potential for successful collaboration. The risk management section of the application may also be relevant.</p>
21	<p>Do you specifically accept only CVs or would a team overview of a larger team be acceptable?</p>	<p>Both are requested. The Application template requests and overview of the organisations (page 1, under ‘Lead organisation’ and ‘Partner organisation’. A document including brief CVs of key staff involved should also be attached (maximum 5 pages)</p>
22	<p>Are you paying particular attention to gender sensitive approaches?</p>	<p>The TEA Programme Gender Vision and Principles, which is part of the set of background information provided for this call, will apply to all projects. The Application template requests description of beneficiaries (page 3), including the gender sensitive approaches.</p>
23	<p>Which Off-grid energy technologies apply?</p>	<p>For this call we define off-grid energy as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar lanterns and other home solar products; • Solar home systems; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Small – basic lighting, phone charging, etc. ○ Large – multi-lighting and basic appliances (including cooking appliances) • Mini-grids; and • Highly efficient productive use technologies such as refrigerators, pumps and processing machines. • Call is also open to applications involving major components in the above, for example solar modules, inverters, batteries, control & instrumentation, compressors and/or pumps.
24	<p>Which sectors of the off-grid energy value chain will be supported through this competition?</p>	<p>This specific Call for Expression of Interest is focused on upstream elements of the off-grid energy value chain, which includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research & development, and testing products • Manufacture and assembly of products • Excluded from this call are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Marketing and sales of products; ○ Wholesaling and distribution of products; ○ Installation and servicing; ○ Repair, refurbishment and recycling (e-waste) of products¹.