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

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Setting up Livings Labs & developing smart solutions to face geohazards and climate change

Date of issue: 13 October 2022 – **Closing Date:** 12 December 2022

GEOACT is a project collaboratively implemented by:

This project has received funding from the European Union (grant agreement no. FED/2020/421-373) under the ACP Innovation Fund (Ref. EuropeAid/166663/IH/ACT/Multi), which is part of the OACPS R&I Programme. Contracting authority: Secretariat of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS).

Summary

Call 4 – Setting up Livings Labs & developing smart solutions to face geohazards and climate change	
General and specific objectives of the Call for proposals	**GO.** Design and deploy smart, frugal, and user-centered solutions to cope with natural hazards and support coastal economy. **SO1.** Structure Living labs, i.e. consortia of public-private stakeholders following an open innovation approach (user-centered, with a major input of researchers, and with a sustainable and self-sustained model). **SO2.** Promote the development, maturation and deployment of solutions/innovations helping to address natural hazards. **SO3.** Foster public/private partnerships around the R&I capacity developed in academic laboratories. **SO4.** Ensure solutions that are frugal, respective of the environment, and have significant prospect for broad-scale adoption by the various stakeholders.
Activities funded & expected results	• **Topic 1. Climate change adaptation** – Develop new sensors and sensor networks that are citizen-oriented (seismic, meteorologic, air quality, etc.). – Engage citizens, communities, etc. in the design of information content, flow, display, and usage. – Use virtual reality — games, etc. as a tool to engage specific stakeholders such as youth, low-income population, etc. – Test the level of ownership of these solutions and the possible behavioural changes (e.g., increased resilience). • **Topic 2. Disaster and risk management** – Develop smart, real-time, sensor networks for rapid post-disaster diagnostics. – Use crowdsourcing approaches to gather relevant information on risks and disasters. • **Topic 3. Coastal area management** – Develop smart solutions for artisanal fisheries. – Develop smart solutions for the tourism industry. – Optimize coastal management for disaster risk reduction agencies. – Foster the acquisition of business-relevant environmental data under the leadership of local agencies or micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). • **Deliverables:** ✓ Living Labs formed by regional public/private consortia that tackle Caribbean geohazards and climate change issues and have the potential to become long-term and self-sustainable. They develop/deploy innovations that are adopted by intended users. One of the Living Labs could play the role of Living Labs' Hub.
Eligible countries	**Applicants (legal entities) from the following OACPS Caribbean Countries are eligible to apply as Lead Applicant or Partners:** Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.
Eligible applicant types (legal entities)	Academic and research institutions/organisations; spin-off companies; VET providers; organisations representing indigenous and local communities; agencies and associations working for gender equality in research and innovation; national science, technology and innovation agencies; non-governmental organisations; innovation support organisations (technology clusters, innovation labs and technology transfer offices); incubators and start-ups; and other similar organisations.

Call 4 – Setting up Livings Labs & developing smart solutions to face geohazards and climate change	
Consortium characteristics	**At least 2 Applicants (**one Lead Applicant and one or more Co-applicants) **from at least 2 different OACPS Caribbean countries: at least 1 academic / research institution and 1 other type (from the list above)**.
Applicants profile	Expertise in developing projects relative to participatory science and coastal area issues and being able to develop innovative solutions and new technologies with regional consideration, and disseminate the results and expertise/experience in the field of facilitation of multi-actor projects, networking, collective intelligence, etc.
Project duration	Expected start: 01/01/2023 - Expected end: 31/12/2024 (final report included).
Funding	**6 Living Labs**: 2 for each topic **Grant: EUR** 300,000 per Living Lab
Call Schedule	Launch: 13/10/2022, Submission Deadline: 12/12/2022, Evaluation: 12/12/2022 – 22/12/2022, Publication of results: 23/12/2022, Contract Signature: 26 – 30 /12/2022, Project Start: 01/01/2023, Project End: by 31/12/2024
How to prepare and submit a proposal	Interested parties are encouraged to contact the coordination team via email as soon as possible to edwenson.toussaint@auf.org for all information needed. To access all the administrative and financials rules and requirements**, please consult the GEOACT Grants Operations Manual** (Annex 4 of this document). Proposals must be written in English and use the following templates (Annexes attached to these Guidelines): •**Annex 1. Project proposal Template** •**Annex 2. Project proposal Logical Framework & Schedule** •**Annex 3. Project proposal Budget Template** Proposals must be accompanied by the following supporting documents: • Official letter of support from the head of the applying institution (Lead Applicant) and from each Co-applicant, stating the project title, the activities carried out by each Applicant, the funding requested by each Applicant, and the overall Project budget. • Official documents certifying the creation, registration and status of the Lead Applicant and Co- applicants (among others, it should indicate the date of creation and address of the organisations). • For the Lead Applicant, activity and financial reports, demonstrating experience and responsibility in the preparation and management of funded activities (evidence of having managed at least two grants for research and innovation projects, of at least EUR 75,000 each between 2018 and 2022). • CV of the Project coordinator (Lead Applicant) and evidence of his/her position in his/her organisation. • CVs of the Co-applicants' focal points and evidence of their position in their organisations.
Additional information	GEOACT has already launched 2 Calls for Proposals with submission deadlines of 07/10/2022 (https://l.auf.org/geoact-call-proposals2022). In case an Applicant (as Lead Applicant or Co-applicant) is successful in one or more GEOACT grants, the accumulated grants amount will not exceed **EUR 400,000.**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to read this guidance document in full before completing and submitting a proposal for this Call.

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List of acronyms

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

1 Background of GEOACT

GEOACT **"Georisks[1] and climate change in the Caribbean region based on a transdisciplinary and trans-sectorial approach: Integrating science and end-users needs for innovative and sustainable mitigation and adaptation solutions"** is one of the projects funded by the ACP Innovation Fund, part of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States' (OACPS) Research and Innovation (R&I) Programme with financial contribution from the European Union (EU).

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

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

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

General objective: An inclusive R&I environment across the Caribbean region to face regional effects of natural hazards and climate change

Specific objectives (SO):

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

The original approach of the GEOACT project is to support the co-design and deployment of solutions around Geohazards[2] and Climate Change issues by academic and research partners, companies, NGOs, users' representatives and public authorities, in order to respond to identified needs.

[1] GEORISKS Potential effects of geohazards and climate change given a population / economic exposure and vulnerability.

[2] GEOHAZARDS Geomorphological, geological, or environmental processes, phenomena, and conditions that are potentially dangerous or pose a level of threat to human life, health, and property, or to the environment

Geographical scope: GEOACT is implemented in the ACP countries of the Caribbean Region: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.
Grant amount: EUR 4,174,350 - Project duration: 48 months (March 2021 - February 2025)

Context & Policy Background

Island nations of the Caribbean region, large or small, share a common physiographic domain exposed to similar environmental threats: rising sea-level, enhanced extreme weather phenomena (hurricanes, floods, etc.), coastal erosion, ocean acidification, earthquakes and tsunami, or volcanic activity. In a changing global climate, and at a time when urbanization increases exposure and vulnerability to natural hazards, the development of innovative solutions to diagnose, understand and adapt to these threats is paramount in order to contribute to the development of a sustainable social and economic framework for the future of these territories.

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

1. If university structures are present in Caribbean countries, they are rarely backed by research laboratories and, therefore, have a limited ability to develop scientific research and innovation programs at the highest level and to orient their best students towards these programs.
2. Even though some Caribbean countries have a good level of R&I, international exchanges of data, models, innovative solutions, or students within the region are very limited. Enhancing such exchanges and sharing solutions is key to elevating the capabilities of the region as a whole, as the challenges posed by natural hazards and climate change are common to most Caribbean nations.
3. R&I in general – in the area of natural hazards and climate change in particular – rarely involve multi-stakeholder interactions. The involvement of end-users through the R&I process, in the spirit of "living labs" has the potential to increase the effectiveness of the research and solutions developed.

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

Expected results of GEOACT

The expected impact is the implementation of better-structured and adaptable research and innovation modalities, both in terms of general programming as well as concrete and targeted actions where each stakeholder (public decision-makers, economic actors, CSOs, NGOs, and individual actors) can find useful resources for their initiatives. GEOACT will result in:

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

Reminder on GEOACT's on-going activities:

None of a project's objectives can be achieved while working in separate silos. Therefore, GEOACT aims to work closely with all relevant stakeholders to co-construct its different actions. GEOACT provides an opportunity for interested parties to request for a Grant under several published calls:

Call 1 – Mapping & diagnosis of R&I ecosystems, R&I strategy and innovation brokering.
The main objective is to improve our knowledge and understanding of R&I ecosystems at the national and regional levels and facilitate R&I interactions throughout the innovation chain, from user to scientists, to build up a shared R&I vision and strategy in the Caribbean Region.

Call 2 - Capacity Building in innovation and valorisation
The main objective is to strengthen capacities of stakeholders in open innovation.

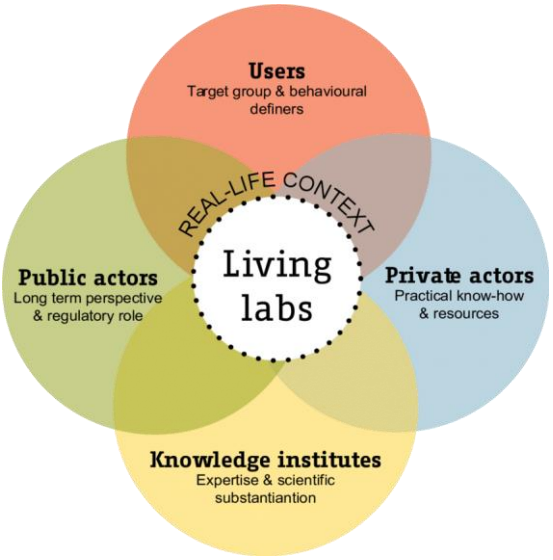
Both Calls are set to be implemented in parallel with **Call 3 (Strengthening education on natural risks at secondary and higher levels) and Call 4 (Setting up Livings Labs & developing smart solutions to face geohazards and climate change)**, in order to strengthen the capacities of R&I stakeholders (incl. Living Labs partners) and of intended innovation users.

Proposals submitted in the first two calls are currently being evaluated.

2 Terms of reference of the Call for Proposals: Setting up Livings Labs & developing smart solutions to face geohazards and climate change

The goal of this Call for Proposals (CFP) entitled **"Setting up Livings Labs & developing smart solutions to face geohazards and climate change"** is to fund **six excellent Livings Labs (2 for each topic)** aimed at designing and deploying smart, frugal, and user-centred solutions to cope with natural hazards and support coastal economy.

Living Labs (LLs) are user-centered multi-actor projects co-designed and co-implemented by different stakeholders (e.g. research and innovation support organizations, CSOs, NGOs, private companies, policy makers). They follow an open-innovation approach fostering the co-creation and integration of R&I processes in real life communities and settings, in order to address concerns of social interest. They do so by co-creating new services, products, technological solutions, practices, governance approaches, organizational methods and models in business and R&I practices, societal infrastructures, market mechanisms, etc.



In GEOACT we support the set-up of LLs founded on research-based evidence, deeply rooted in the Caribbean context, and dedicated to address Georisks and Climate Change through innovative and sustainable user-centered solutions.

LLs will boost R&I networking and collective intelligence throughout the Caribbean Area, and will thus help strengthen ACP countries' R&I policies and ecosystems, ultimately contributing to SIDS livelihood generation and sustainable development.

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

- **SO1.** Structure Living labs, i.e. consortia of public-private stakeholders following an open innovation approach (user-centered, with a major input of researchers, and with a sustainable and self-sustained model).
- **SO2.**Promote the development, maturation and deployment of solutions/innovations helping to address natural hazards.
- **SO3.** Foster public/private partnerships around the R&I capacity developed in academic laboratories.
- **SO4.** Ensure solutions that are frugal, respective of the environment, and have significant prospect for broad-scale adoption by the various stakeholders.

The Living Labs proposed should address one or more of the following topics:

- **Topic 1. Climate change adaptation**
  - Develop new sensors and sensor networks that are citizen-oriented (seismic, meteorologic, air quality, etc.).
  - Engage citizens, communities, etc. in the design of information content, flow, display, and usage.

- Use virtual reality — games, etc. as a tool to engage specific stakeholders such as youth, low-income population, etc.
- Test the level of ownership of these solutions and the possible behavioural changes (e.g., increased resilience).

- **Topic 2. Disaster and risk management**
  - Develop smart, real-time, sensor networks for rapid post-disaster diagnostics and responses.
  - Use crowdsourcing approaches to gather relevant information on risks and disasters.

- **Topic 3. Coastal area management**
  - Develop smart solutions for artisanal fisheries.
  - Develop smart solutions for the tourism industry.
  - Optimize coastal management for disaster risk reduction agencies.
  - Foster the acquisition of business-relevant environmental data under the leadership of local agencies or MSMEs.

Deliverables:

✓ Living Labs formed by regional public/private consortia that tackle Caribbean geohazards and climate change issues and have the potential to become long-term and self-sustainable. They develop/deploy innovations that are adopted by intended users. One of the Living Labs could play the role of Living Labs' Hub.

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

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

Expected deliverables of granted projects, among others:

✓ Training materials and courses for stakeholders (project engineering, open innovation, impact management, intellectual property, innovation brokering).

✓ Tools to contribute to the design of LL.

✓ A follow up of the structuration of the LL and of the transfer to local authorities and other stakeholders of LL innovative products to address climate change issues in the region (with a positive social and economic impact).

✓ Final overall activity report.

3 Call Schedule

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

Action	Scheduled
Launching the Call (Website and other means)	13 October 2022
Deadline for submission of proposals	12 December 2022
Eligibility check	13 December 2022 14 December 2022
Scientific/Technical review	14 December 2022 21 December 2022
Validation by the GEOACT Steering Committee	22 December 2022 20 December 2022
Call Results publication	23 December 2022
Signature of Grant Agreement between IRD and the Lead Applicant	26 December 2022 30 December 2022
Expected start of the project	1 January 2023

4 Eligibility requirements

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

Project consortium (Lead Applicant and its Co-applicants):

- **The Call for Proposals must be answered by consortia of several legal entities** (public and private legal persons), and each consortium will have to be coordinated by a Lead Applicant, and the Lead Applicant will involve other organisations (Co-Applicants) in its consortium.
- A successful Applicant in this Call will be allowed to apply in other GEOACT Calls for Proposals, as Lead Applicant or Co-applicant, but the cumulative amount of the different grants it may receive will not exceed EUR 400,000 (cf. GEOACT Grants Operations Manual).
- All participating organisations in a bidding consortium must check their eligibility, and the Lead Applicant is responsible for checking and guaranteeing the eligibility of the Co-Applicants; if one of the Co-Applicants appears to be ineligible, this may lead to the exclusion of the whole consortium/project during the evaluation process.
- The following entities are eligible for financial support as Lead Applicant or Co-Applicants: academic and research institutions/organisations; spin-off companies; VET providers; organisations representing indigenous and local communities; agencies and associations working for gender equality in research and innovation; national science, technology and innovation agencies; non-governmental organisations; innovation support organisations (technology clusters, innovation labs and technology transfer offices); incubators and start-ups; and other similar organisations with specific experience in the priority areas covered by this Call.
- A consortium answering the Call for Proposals must include **at least 2 Applicants (including the Lead Applicant) from at least 2 different countries**: at least 1 academic / research institution and 1 other type (from the list above).

- The Lead Applicant as well as the Co-applicants must be legal persons.
- Only the Lead Applicants and Co-applicants with their headquarters and activities in an ACP Country from the Caribbean region, since 2017 at least, are eligible and can receive a grant under this Call. Organisations or individuals (scientists, researchers, entrepreneurs, policy actors, among others) from outside the ACP Caribbean Region can participate as "Collaborators" if their participation is duly justified in the project proposal, i.e., if they bring specific skills or added value to the project. However, they will have to provide their own financial contribution to participate in the project, as they cannot benefit from the grant. Collaborators are not counted as part of the minimum of three eligible applicants.
- Lead Applicants applying to this Call must have the financial and technical capacity to manage the grant and will have to demonstrate this capacity: they must carry out / contribute to research and innovation activities and must have managed **at least two R&I granted projects of at least €75,000 each between 2018 and 2022**. They will be required to demonstrate adequate organisational capacity to implement and monitor the project in terms of human resources, as well as the ability to share and disseminate the results regionally through their networks.
- The Lead Applicant will submit the application on behalf of the consortium (One application per consortium) and will be directly responsible for the preparation, management and implementation of the project funded by the Call.
- Lead Applicants, Co-applicants and Collaborators should not be affected by any of the exclusion criteria referred to in section 2.6.10 of the Procurement and Grants for European Union external actions – A practical Guide (PRAG). GEOACT will keep records of evidence and supporting documentation that Lead Applicants and their Co-applicants do not meet any of the exclusion criteria.
- The Lead Applicant and Co-applicants should have the adequate organisational capacity to implement and monitor the project in terms of human resources, as well as the ability to share and disseminate the results regionally through their networks.

Project Coordinator:

- The Project Coordinator (an individual) must be a staff member from the Lead Applicant (he/she can be of any nationality). He/she should have a bachelor's degree or equivalent + 5 years of experience, or a higher-degree diploma with 2 years of experience, in a domain related to the project. Prior project coordination/management experience will be appreciated.

The Project Coordinator will have the following roles:

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

Project:

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

5 How to prepare and submit a full proposal?

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

5.1 Proposal contents and submission

- Download from the AUF website (http://www.auf.org) all the necessary documents and information, including guidelines for applicants, templates, FAQs, etc. For more information on GEOACT, please see the GEOACT Grants Operations Manual.

- If you wish to submit a project proposal, please send an email to edwenson.toussaint@auf.org to inform us about your intention to submit. The GEOACT Coordination and Management Team (CMT) will send you a personal link to upload your files once your application is complete.

- Prepare carefully the following documents that will make up your full proposal and that will all have to be sent at the same time (by email):
  - Project proposal using the template in Annex 1.
  - Project proposal Logical Framework in Annex 2.
  - Project proposal Budget using the template in Annex 3 (See section 5.3 below).
  - Official letter of support from the head of the applying institution (Lead Applicant) and from each Co-applicant, stating the project title, the funding requested by each Applicant to GEOACT, and the overall Project budget.
  - Official documents certifying the creation, registration and status of the Lead Applicant and Co-applicants (among others, it should indicate the date of creation and address of the organisations).
  - For the Lead Applicant, activity and financial reports, demonstrating experience and responsibility in the preparation and management of funded activities (evidence of having managed at least two contracts of at least EUR 75,000 each between 2018 and 2022).

- CV of the Project coordinator (Lead Applicant) and evidence of his/her position in the Lead Organisation.
- CVs of the Co-applicants' focal points and evidence of their position in their organisation.

- The documents of the full proposal **must be written in English**.
- The documents should be in PDF or XLS format (for the budget).
- Applications should be submitted using the link provided by the GEOACT Coordination and Management Team, no later than **12 December 2022, 23:59 (Haiti's time).**

5.2 Budget guidelines

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

6 Evaluation process and criteria

6.1 General considerations

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

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

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

Essential criteria for review and selection of projects shall include:

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

6.2 Evaluation process

6.2.1 Evaluation process overview

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

according to the following steps.

6.2.2 Step 1. Eligibility check by the Call Secretariat

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

Criteria considered for the eligibility check:

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

6.2.3 Step 2. Evaluation and selection of the proposals

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

- The expert reviewers will score the proposals according to a set of pre-established criteria (see Evaluation criteria below, Section 6.3). The GEOACT Steering Committee will then discuss the results of the evaluation and will agree on a ranking of the proposals.
- Coordinators of the best six project proposals will be invited to present their project orally (by videoconference), in front of a jury comprising members of the Steering Committee and external experts, for a questions and answers session (20 min. presentation followed by a 20-30 min. discussion).
- The Steering Committee will consolidate a final list of ranked proposals, based on the written and oral evaluation.
- The granted projects will be published within one month of the evaluation.
- The Project Coordinator of the selected proposals will be informed and will have to confirm their offer and willingness to run the project within 2 weeks. If he/she declines, the first Project Coordinator from the reserve list will be contacted.
- The proposal selected for funding may be requested to make some adjustments to the scientific/technical parts and budgets according to the feedback from the Steering Committee.
- During their execution, the projects will be accompanied by GEOACT Partners (IRD, AUF, FOKAL, SALCC, CSF, ACS) and linked to other Consortia funded by GEOACT, to meet the objectives of capacity building, structuring of the R&I ecosystem and development of solutions/innovations.
- Each funded proposal, led by a Lead Applicant, will have to draft and sign a Consortium Agreement establishing the rights and duties of the Co-applicants and possible Collaborators and subcontractors, budget management modalities, intellectual property sharing modalities,

reporting modalities between partners, etc.
- The IRD will also establish a Grant agreement with the Lead Applicant, establishing the conditions associated with the receipt of GEOACT funds.

6.3 Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Max. Score (/100)
Partnership & Coordination quality	**10**
Quality/strength and sustainability prospects of the consortium	5
Skills/expertise/experience of the Project Coordinator/Manager	5
Relevance of the project	**15**
Relevance to the Call and to GEOACT objectives.	5
Relevance to the region, countries, sector	5
Relevance to stakeholders of the Caribbean Region	5
Coherence and feasibility of the project	**25**
Quality, innovativeness and added-value of the methodology proposed to reach the expected outcomes, beyond the terms of reference.	15
Cross-cutting elements (e.g., environmental/climate change, gender equality and equal opportunities, needs/rights of disabled people, minorities, youth)	10
Implementation approach	**20**
Is the work plan clear and feasible and is the timeline realistic?	4
Is the quality of the Governance and coordination/management approach adequate?	4
Does the proposal include an effective and efficient evaluation & monitoring system?	4
Does the proposal consider potential risks and proposes contingency measures?	4
Is the level of involvement and participation of the Applicants satisfactory?	4
Sustainability of the project	**15**
Is the project likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5
Is the project likely to have multiplier effects, including scope for replication, extension, capitalisation on experience and knowledge sharing?	5
Are the expected results of the Project sustainable financially, institutionally, at policy level, and environmentally	5
Budget and cost-effectiveness of the project	**15**
Is the budget coherent with the activities and ambitions of the project?	5
Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the results satisfactory?	10
TOTAL	**100**

7 Ethical Issues

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

For the project, the Consortium is responsible for addressing ethical issues relating to the project including completing the necessary due diligence in regard to ethical approval from a relevant regulatory body and securing free, explicit, and informed consent from any individuals who participate in the project. Ethical issues should be interpreted broadly and may encompass, among other things, relevant codes of practice, the involvement of human participants and any other issues in the conduct of the research that may result in damage to the environment and the use of sensitive

economic, social or personal data.

8 Additional Information

i. Letters of acceptance or rejection of proposals will be sent to the Lead Applicant within one month after the application deadline.

ii. Selected proposals are subject to further improvement and technical support as might be recommended by the Steering Committee.

iii. Summary of selected proposals will be published on the GEOACT website.

iv. Please, note that the submission of proposals does not establish any form of legal claim or responsibility of IRD as the coordinator of the GEOACT Project. All decisions made by the Steering Committee are final and are not subject to further claims or revisions, with exception of administrative mistakes.

v. Lead Applicants of selected proposals will be required to sign a Grant Agreement with IRD. The Agreement provides general and specific terms and condition for the efficient and effective management of the grant.

9 Contact information and Support

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

10 Annexes to the Call for Proposal

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