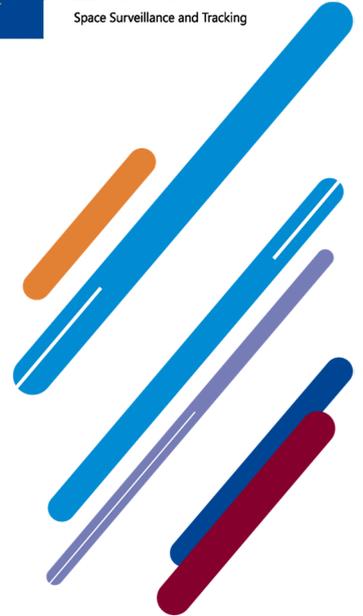




PROGRAMME OF THE
EUROPEAN UNION



EU SST
Space Surveillance and Tracking

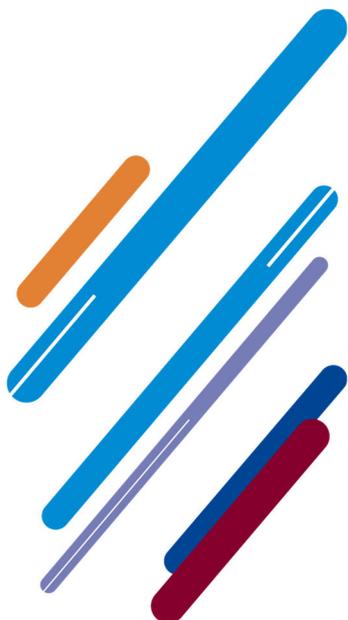


Innovative Commercial Sensors

Call for Proposals

Financial Support to Third Parties

Update batch 2



Cascading Grant – EUSST2023-26 GA
ID S.2.2_04
ORARPI202400068

#EUSpace



Document Control Information

| Settings | Value |
|-----------------------|---|
| Classification Level: | <i>Unclassified</i> |
| Distribution remark: | <i>NA</i> |
| Document Title: | <i>Call for Proposals "Innovative Commercial Sensors"</i> |
| Project Title: | <i>EU SST GA 2023-26</i> |
| Document Author: | <i>Cassien Jobic Maaïke Doorn</i> |
| Project Owner: | <i>Cassien Jobic</i> |
| Project Manager: | <i>Monique Moury</i> |
| Document Version: | <i>V1.0</i> |
| Sensitivity: | <i>Internal</i> |
| Date: | <i>01/02/2024</i> |

Document history

| Revision | Date | Authors | Short Description of Changes |
|----------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| | <i>01/02/2024</i> | <i>Cassien Jobic Maaïke Doorn</i> | <i>Initial version for publication</i> |
| | <i>01/06/2024</i> | <i>Cassien Jobic Maaïke Doorn</i> | <p>Update batch 2 :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Section 2 - Scope - Section 4 – Funding - Section 5 – Proposal submission <p>Modification of call calendar and project implementation timeframe.</p> |





Applicable and Reference Documents

Table 1: Applicable documents

| Reference | Document title |
|-----------|--|
| [AD-1] | <i>Technical Specification (updated version)</i> |
| [AD-2] | <i>Annex 1 : Proposal Template</i> |
| [AD-3] | <i>Annex 2 : Financial / Budget forms</i> |
| [AD-4] | <i>Annex 3 : Sub-Grant Agreement Template</i> |
| [AD-5] | <i>Annex 4 : Participant Conditions Assessment Forms</i> |
| [AD-6] | <i>Annex 5 : Declaration of Honour</i> |

Table 2: Reference documents

| Reference | Document title |
|-----------|--|
| RD-1 | Regulation (EU, EURATOM) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rule applicable to the general budget of the Union (Art. 204) |
| RD-2 | Decision No 541/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 establishing a Framework for Space Surveillance and Tracking Support |
| RD-3 | Regulation (EU) 2021/696 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing the Union Space Programme and the European Union Agency for the Space Programme |

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Table 3: List of used abbreviations

| Acronym | Description |
|---------|--|
| ASI | Agenzia Spaziale Italiana |
| CNES | Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales |
| EC | European Commission |
| ECSS | European Cooperation for Space Standardisation |
| EISF | European Union Industry and Start-Up Forum |
| EU | European Union |
| EU SST | European Union Space Surveillance and Tracking |
| DoH | Declaration of Honour |
| FSTP | Financial Support to Third Parties |
| GEO | Geostationary Orbit |
| LE | Large Enterprise |
| LEO | Low Earth Orbit |
| MEO | Medium Earth Orbit |
| SME | Small and Medium Enterprise |





| | |
|-----|---------------------------------|
| SST | Space Surveillance and Tracking |
| TRL | Technical Readiness Level |
| VLA | Very Large Area |





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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

This is a call for proposals for projects in order to finance **the development of sensors or upgrades of sensors** owned by EU companies, through **financial support to third parties (cascade funding)** under the 2023-26EUSST grant of the EU SST Partnership.

This call is managed by the french space agency, **Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales (CNES)**, on behalf of the EU SST Partnership.

Interested parties are invited to read carefully this call for proposals in order to ensure that applications are complete and compliant with the call for proposal's terms and conditions when submitted.

Please note that this call for proposals has been updated with regards to the call procedure calendar and the project implementation timeframe for the purpose of the second batch of applications. Updates are indicated in **red** (sections 2,4 and 5).

1.2 Context

For the last decades, the number of objects in orbit has highly increased, encouraging the provision of services related to achieving space surveillance and tracking (SST) activities such as, conjunctions and re-entry, analysis and fragmentation detections.

In 2014, the "Decision of the European Parliament and the Council Establishing a Space Surveillance and Tracking Support Framework" n°541/2014/EU [RD-2] ("SST Decision" hereinafter), established the SST Support Framework 'to contribute to ensuring the long-term availability of the European and national space infrastructure, facilities and services which are essential for the safety and security of the economies, societies and citizens in Europe.'

The EU SST activities were carried out by the SST Cooperation under successive projects of the SST Support Framework funded by both the Copernicus, Galileo and Horizon 2020 programs.

This consortium used a sensors network (composed of on-ground optical sensors, tracking and surveillance radars and laser stations) to locate space objects (spacecraft or debris), in order to determine latest orbits first, predict future trajectories then, and finally, assess consequences and risks on environment (in orbit by means of a conjunction analysis, on earth using a re-entry analysis).

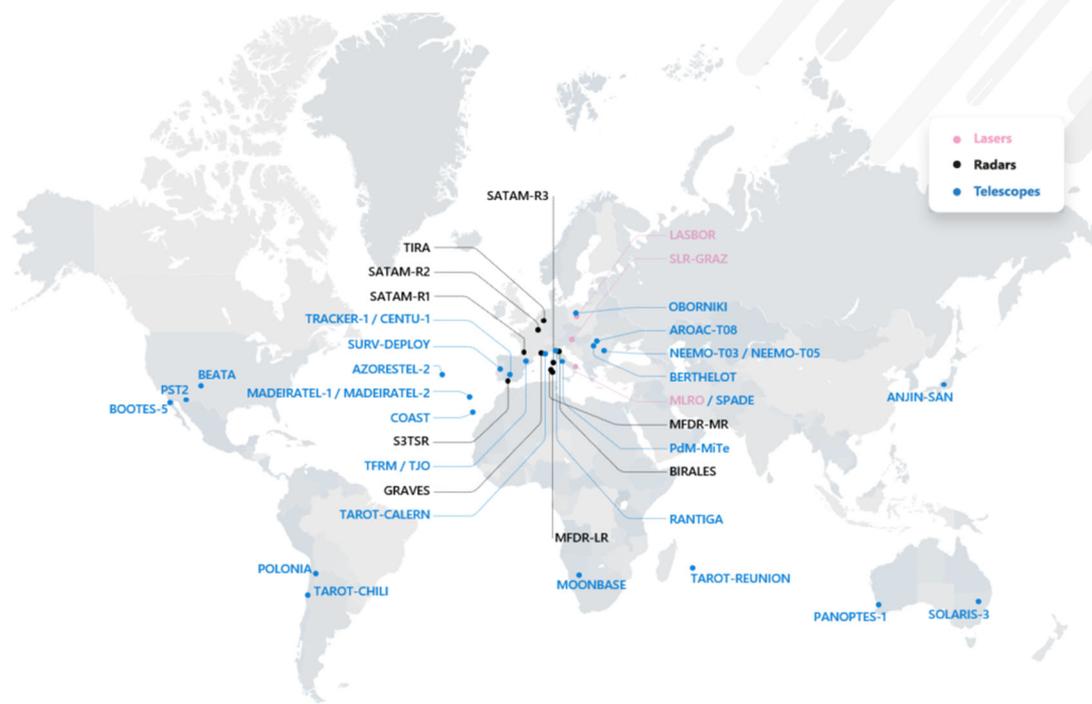


Figure 1: EU SST Sensors Network (July 2022)

In 2021, the European Parliament and the Council adopted Regulation (EU) 2021/696 ('Space Regulation'). Building on the SST Support Framework, the Space Regulation, stressing the importance of further developing the performance and autonomy of SST sub-component capabilities, elevates Space Situational Awareness (SSA), of which SST is a crucial part, to a full-fledged component of the EU Space Programme akin to Copernicus and Galileo. Pursuant to the Space Regulation, the European Commission adopted an Implementing Decision ('SST Implementing Act') which outlines the rules and procedures for the participation of EU Member States in the SST sub-component and through the conclusion of a Partnership Agreement.

Building forward on its good operating results, the initial consortium has since 11th November 2022 turned into a Partnership in which 15 delegations (Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain and Sweden) cooperate to improve EU SST operating results and science around space situational awareness¹.

The current activities of the EU SST Partnership are funded under both the Space Program of the European Union as Horizon Europe : An operative part on one hand, and a R&D part on the other hand, which combine into a strong cooperation, as R&D activities are performed as long-term development strategy, comprise this partnership.

¹ The EU SST Partnership is constituted by the following EU SST constituting national entities : Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG), Ministry of Transport of the Czech Republic (MDCR), Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt e.V. (DLR), Air Command Denmark (ACD), Centro para el Desarrollo Tecnológico y la Innovación (CDTI), Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI), Centre National d'Études Spatiales (CNES), National Observatory of Athens (NOA), Agenzia Spaziale Italiana (ASI), Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia (IZM), Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy (MEZK), Polish Space Agency (POLSA), Ministry of National Defense (GP SST), Agenția Spațială Română (ROSA) and Swedish National Space Agency (SNSA)



A part of the EU SST activities implementing the 2023-26EUSST grant under the Space Program of the European Union, will be dedicated to promote and support commercial data providers (radars, optical sensors and passive ranging sensors, laser ranging and other suitable sensor types) either on-ground or space based located.

Setting up the conditions for commercial support is supported by an exchange with the European Union Industry and Start-up Forum (EISF).

In order to increase the quality and quantity of the population of the EUSST Database and the Catalogue and the provision of services, EU SST will thereby **contribute to the funding of the development of innovative commercial sensors through cascade funding (Financial Support to Third Parties)**. The main objective herein is to increase the proportion of commercial data up to 50% by 2026.

Hereto the EU SST Partnership will **open calls for proposals offering cascade funding opportunities for the development of innovative commercial sensors** :

- **Innovative optical commercial sensors (ID S.2.2_03)**, managed by the italian space agency ASI
- **Innovative commercial sensors (ID S.2.2_04)**, managed by the french space agency CNES

The present call (ID S.2.2_04) is therefore issued by CNES on behalf of the EU SST Partnership, in accordance with the rules laid down by the European Commission (EC) for cascading Grants and those imposed by Grant EUSST2023-26GA.

1.1 Composition of the call

This call for proposals is composed by the following documents :

- **Call for proposals „Innovative Commercial Sensors“**
 1. Introduction
 2. Funded projects
 3. Applicants
 4. Funding
 5. Proposal submission
 6. Evaluation and selection process
- **Technical Specification**
- **Annexes to Call for Proposals :**
 - o Annex 1 : Proposal template
 - o Annex 2 : Financial / budget forms
 - o Annex 3 : Sub-Grant Agreement Template & Annexes
 - o Annex 4 : Participant Conditions assessment form
 - o Annex 5 : Declaration of Honour



For the purposes of participation in this Call for Proposals, the documents referred above are required to be completed and submitted as described in section 5.

2 Funded projects

2.1 Scope

This call for project proposals covers one topic : **Financing of sensors or upgrades of sensors owned by EU companies.**

Excluded from the scope of this call are projects for new optical solutions related to ground sensors. Proposals for the development of **innovative optical commercial ground sensors** shall be submitted in response to the dedicated call for proposals issued by ASI (ID S.2.2_03).

EU SST Partnership intends to act as a public investor for innovative commercial sensors owned by European companies, under specific criteria of co-funding (minimum of 55%), in order to acquire, as an anchor customer, future data coming from those newly built commercial sensors at best conditions for the first years (virtuous circle). The commercial sensors selected to be funded have to be of interest both for the EU SST partnership and for the EU SST ecosystem, as for the tendering industry and start-ups. The EU SST Partnership has preliminarily identified the needs from the perspective of the service provision.

By promoting and supporting commercial data providers (radars, optical sensors and passive ranging sensors, laser ranging and other suitable sensor types) either on-ground or space based located, EUSST aims to **increase the proportion of commercial data from current 5% up to 50%, provided there is added value, by the end of the current partnership (June 2026).**

2.2 Eligible activities

The EU SST Partnership seeks to support the development of new solutions implemented by the European industry by supporting the following types of activities, which are eligible for financial support under this call for proposals :

- Already existing and operational sensor / network of sensors upgrades intending to improve performances (accuracy, detection capabilities, timeliness, ...)
- Development of a new cross-technology based sensor
- Improving an already existing and operational sensor / network of sensors, thanks to cross-technology features
- Deployment of sensors outside European VLA
- Development of solutions to decrease the price of data



2.3 Objectives

The main objectives the projects to be funded should aim are described in detail in the Technical Specification (See [AD-1]).

It is not mandatory for a project to cover all main objectives. A project must cover at least one of the following main objectives :

- LEO detection capabilities (OBJ-1)
- MEO detection capabilities (OBJ-2)
- GEO detection capabilities (OBJ-3)
- Transversal technology (OBJ-4)
- Location diversification (OBJ-5)
- Transversal technology (OBJ-6)

2.4 Project implementation

Projects to be funded shall be implemented in accordance the general workbreakdown structure (See [AD-1]):

Task 1 : Design

Task 2 : Manufacturing and Purchase

Task 3 : Transport

Task 4 : Construction, installation and integration

Task 5 : Commissioning and validation

Task 6 : Management

The expected outline, inputs and outputs per work package are detailed in the Technical Specification (See [AD-1]).

2.5 Technical specifications

Proposals shall be compliant with the technical specifications as described in chapter 3 of the Technical Specification (See [AD-1]).



3 Applicants

3.1 Eligible applicants

Parties' participation in the project will be subject to the requirements as laid down in this Call for Proposals. According to the 2023-26EUSSTGA, financial support is to be awarded to European companies compliant with the conditions under article 3.2.

The proposal shall clearly identify the entities (legal persons) to be involved in the project activities, being the recipient(s) (including coordinator and co-applicants) of the financial support as well as any third parties (such as subcontractors) and their contributions to the implementation of the project.

3.1.1 Nature of applicants

The applicants shall be European **companies** : Start-Ups, Small and Medium Enterprise (SME), mid-sized companies, Large Enterprises (LE), ...

Other entities (public entities, research entities or others) shall be implicated as sub-contractors.

3.1.2 Single Applicant

Applications submitted by a **single applicant** are admissible.

The single applicant shall be the (futur) **owner of the sensor to be upgraded or the new sensor**.

3.1.3 Co-applicant(s)

Applications submitted by **multiple applicants** are admissible.

If the proposal is submitted by a group of co-applicants they will form a consortium and will become consortium members. Joint participation in a consortium, which will be subsequently be formalised with the conclusion agreement, is permitted. The consortium members should nominate amongst them a lead organisation, referred to as the „Coordinator“.

The coordinator shall be the (futur) owner of the new sensor or the sensor to be upgraded.

The coordinator submits the application on behalf of the consortium and will be the intermediary for all communication between the co-beneficiaries CNES as well as responsible for supplying all documents and information to CNES in due time upon request.



The coordinator and all co-applicants forming the consortium must satisfy the eligibility criteria under paragraphe 3.2.

3.1.4 Subcontractors

Subcontracting refers to contracts concluded for the externalisation of specific tasks or activities which form part of the project.

The beneficiaries (recipients of financial support for thirs partied) must award the subcontract to the bid offering best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interests and retain the relevant documentation for the event of an audit.

The beneficiaries remain solely responsible for the implementation of the project. Subcontracting is not allowed among the co-applicants in the project.

Subcontracting of specific tasks or activities (i.e. the externalisation) which form part of the project must be clearly stated in the proposal. It is however not necessary to have already selected subcontractors at the time the proposal is submitted. Subcontractors must at all times satisfy the eligibility criteria under paragraphe 3.2 "Participation conditions".

3.2 Participation conditions

In order to protect the essential security interest of the European Union and its Member States, financial support to third parties shall be granted only to economic operators, or shall involve only economic operators (whatever their position in the subcontracting chain) which shall fulfil the following three cumulative conditions:

- a) being legal entities **established in an EU Member State with their executive management structures established in that EU Member State**. Economic operators are considered to be established in the EU when they are formed in accordance with the law of an EU Member State, and have their central administration, registered office and principal place of business in an EU Member State (if legal persons) or they are nationals of one of the EU Member States (if natural persons).

'Executive management structure' means the body of the legal entity appointed in accordance with national law and which, where applicable, reports to the chief executive officer or any other person having comparable decisional power, and which is empowered to establish the legal entity's strategy, objectives and overall direction, and oversees and monitors management decision-making;

- b) committing to **carry out all relevant activities in one or more EU Member States** ;
and
- c) **not being subject to control by a third country or third country entity**. For the purpose of this condition, 'control' means the ability to exercise a decisive influence over a legal entity directly or indirectly through one or more intermediate legal entities. These participation conditions shall be met by the operators throughout the whole



duration of the resulting period during which financial support to third parties is provided. In case of any changes related to the compliance with these participation conditions, the economic operator, which was granted financial support to third parties, or is involved in a project funded by financial support to third parties, shall inform the Commission about the changes without delay. The notification shall be made before contract signature, and no contract shall be signed without confirmation by the European Commission that the entity complies with the participating conditions defined in this paragraph. The outcome of the Commission's assessment shall be communicated to the requestor thereafter.

Participating conditions are applicable to the whole contractual chain and all **sub-contracting levels** should be compliant except:

- COTS providers of unspecialised hardware and software
- Non-sensitive activities such as communication and outreach activities, expert guidance on standardisation activities...

Please be aware that eligibility conditions must be fulfilled not only at signature of any EU SST sub-grant or contract, but throughout the entire duration of its execution.

In case of any changes related to the compliance with these participation conditions, the economic operator, which was awarded a sub-grant or contract, or is involved in a sub-grant or contract, shall inform the granting authority about the changes without delay.

To assess the compliance of the applicants (and other entities contributing to the project), a completed **Participant Conditions Assessment Form (Annex 4A)** shall be included in the proposal for each entity subject to the eligibility and participation conditions. Additional instructions how to complete this Annex are provided in the **Appendix to the Participation Conditions Form (Annex 4B)**.

NB :

- For entities not carrying out critical or security sensitive activities, as a minimum Section 1 and Section 2 of Annex 4A are to be completed.
- With regards to criterion c (non-EU Control), entities who have successfully submitted the information and supporting evidence requested in the Annex in the setting of another procedure of the European Commission or EUSPA (notably in the frame of EU Regulations 2018/1092, 2021/697 or 2021/696), or in the setting of a procedure of ESA (in Galileo, EGNOS, Galileo/EGNOS upstream R&D of Horizon Europe, GOVSATCOM) have no obligation to repeat the exercise, provided the time that has elapsed since the issuing of the information and supporting evidence **does not exceed one year at the time of submission** of the application and at the condition that the **information provided is still valid** at the date of submission. For those entities it is possible to declare „No Change in EU-Control“ under Section 3 of Annex 4A by referencing the date and name of the previous project/tender/grant subject to assessment.
- Even when an entity is not established in the EU (criterion a), a relevant activity is performed outside of the EU (criterion b), or when an entity has self-declared or has been assessed as being “non-EU controlled”, including for participants that are subject to control by a third country/third country entity (criterion c), participation may still be possible. In this case, the applicant shall submit a **request for waiver** for the criterion concerned (a template is provided



in sections 5 and 6 of Annex 4A) together with **guarantees** in place to ensure compliance. The completed request for waiver, signed by a legally appointed representative with powers to represent the company (section 7 Annex 4A), shall be submitted with the proposal. Please note that at proposal submission, the signature of the „relevant competent authority for the waiver requested“ (section 8 Annex 4A) is not requested as this procedure will be conducted by CNES and the competent authorities, if the proposal is selected for funding.

3.3 Exclusion criteria

Exclusion criteria are specified in the standard **Declaration of Honour (Annex 5)** of this call for proposals and apply to all applicants.

Applicants will not be granted financial support under the 2023-26EUSST grant of the EU SST Partnership, if in the course of the sub-grant award procedure, they:

- are in exclusion situation established in the Declaration of Honour form that bars them from receiving EU funding:
 - bankruptcy, winding up, affairs administered by the courts, arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or other similar procedures (including procedures for persons with unlimited liability for the applicant’s debts) –
 - in breach of social security or tax obligations (including if done by persons with unlimited liability for the applicant’s debts)
 - guilty of grave professional misconduct (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
 - committed fraud, corruption, links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
 - shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement, prize, expert contract, or similar (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
 - guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of EU Regulation 2988/95 (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
 - created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin or created another entity with this purpose (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant).



- have misrepresented the information required by CNES as a condition of participation in the financial support award procedure or fail to supply this information upon request by CNES ;
- were previously involved in the preparation of the call for proposal documents where this entails a distortion of competition that cannot be remedied otherwise;
- are a Restricted Person and falls under the scope of subject to EU Restrictive Measures in the list published at www.sanctionsmap.eu. In case of discrepancies between 'sancitonsmap.eu' and the restrictive measures published in Official Journal of the EU, the latter prevails. Administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants that are guilty of misrepresentation.

To prove compliance with the exclusion criteria above all applicants must sign and submit a Declaration of Honour (Annex 5). Please note that if deemed necessary, the successful applicants may be required to send a number of supporting documents related to aspects of the Declaration of Honour before the respective sub-grant can be signed.

3.4 Financial and operational capacity

3.4.1 Financial capacity

Applicants must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to implement the project and to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the project is carried out.

The financial capacity check will be carried out on the basis of the documents to be provided by applicants in their proposal (profit and loss account and balance sheet, business plan, audit report produced by an approved external auditor, certifying the accounts for the last two closed financial years). The analysis will be based on neutral financial indicators, but will also take into account other aspects, such as dependency on public or EU funding and deficit and revenue in previous years.

The results of the financial capacity assessment will be taken into account when evaluating applicant's ability to implement the project (and to take on the Coordinator role, if it is the case). If an applicant's financial capacity is considered to be not satisfactory, CNES may take appropriate measures during the sub-grant preparation (e.g. prefinancing paid in installments, guarantees, ...)

3.4.2 Operational capacity

Applicants must have the know-how, qualifications and resources to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share.

In their proposal (See [AD-2]), the applicant(s) shall demonstrate a balanced expertise in the areas needed to carry out the activities, in particular :

- The relevant experience



- The team responsible for the activities must have a relevant management competence to perform the activities included in this call, to be proven by provision of detailed profiles description.

In case of doubt, CNES can undertake an operational capacity check.



4 Funding

When preparing their proposal, applicants shall observe the elements described in the following sub-sections for calculating the required budget for the implementation of their project.

4.1 Maximum budget

The total amount made available by CNES for the co-financing of the projects submitted under this call for proposals as a maximum total of EUR 26 000 000 (outside the scope of VAT).

We expect to fund several projects. No maximum number of projects is fixed.

Part of the indicated total budget allocation will be used to finance projects selected in the first batch of this call for proposals. Even if at time of opening of the call for proposals for the second batch, the amount of remaining available budget is not known, it is considered to be sufficient for funding of a second batch of projects.

The EU SST Partnership reserves the right not to award all available funds depending on the proposals received and the results of the evaluation(s) taking into account the principle of consistency of the eligible proposals with the strategies of CNES, ASI and the EU SST Partnership.

In such a case, applicants will be asked either to increase their co-financing, propose other co-financing means or to decrease the total costs without altering the substance of the proposal.

Financial support will not be awarded for more than the amount requested.

Publication of this call places no obligation on the EU SST Partnership to award sub-grants to any applicant.

4.2 Co-financing

The maximum co-financing rate of eligible costs incurred under the Sub-Grant is 45%.

The sub-grant is calculated on the basis of a detailed estimated budget (in Euros) indicating clearly the costs that are eligible for funding. The maximum amount to be borne by CNES will be equal to a maximum of 45% of the total estimated cost of the project.

The beneficiaries must contribute to the implementation of the project for a minimum of 55% of the eligible costs, either by way of own resources or by financial contribution from third parties.

Co-financing of the action may take the form of:

- the awarded sub-grantees own resources,
- income generated by the project,
- financial contributions from third parties.



These resources or contributions may not include EU directly or indirectly managed budget funds, Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) funds included.

In no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice by the EU budget.

The financial proposal shall clearly indicate the origin of the co-financing of the applicants.

A proposal with an EU co-financing beyond a the above-mentioned maximum will not be eligible.

4.3 Eligible costs

The financial support is limited to a maximum co-funding rate of 45% of eligible costs incurred in the implementation of the project, and in according to the modalities provided for in the Grant Agreement EUSST2023-26, and referred to in the Subgrant Agreement Template (See [AD-3]).

Eligible costs of the sub-grant are Costs actually incurred by the sub-grantee which meets all the following criteria:

- they are incurred during the duration of the project, as indicated in the specific sub-grant agreement, with the exception of costs relating to the preparation of the final reports and audit certificates;
- they are indicated in the estimated budget of the project (Annex 2 to Sub-Grant Agreement, See [AD-3]);
- they are necessary for the implementation of the project, in accordance with the project description (Annex 1 to Sub-Grant Agreement, See [AD-3]);
- they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiary is established and according to the usual cost accounting practices of the beneficiary;
- they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- they are reasonable, justified, and comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

The starting date of cost eligibility can not be prior to the date of submission of the project proposal. Costs eligible for (co-)financing may not have been incurred prior to this date.

No sub-grant may be awarded retrospectively and a proposal for projects that have already been completed will be rejected. A proposal for projects that have already started will be assessed on a case-by-case basis (in this case, no costs can be reimbursed for activities that took place before the project starting date/proposal submission).

The end date of cost eligibility can not be later than 31/03/2026 2027.

Please note that the EU SST partnership is currently in the process of formalizing an extension of the implementation period of the cascade funding activities with the European Commission. Therefore, applicants for batch 2 may propose projects with an



implementation period up to 31/03/2027 (end of project activities and end date of cost eligibility).

The budget categories and cost eligibility rules are fixed and detailed in Article 6 of the Sub-Grant Agreement (Annex 3 of this Call for Proposals, See [AD-3]) :

CNES can refuse to finance certain costs included in the proposal. The applicant can decide to maintain and finance these costs out of their own resources, but they will not be taken into account as eligible costs.

In addition to any other costs which do not fulfil the conditions set out above, the following costs shall not be considered eligible:

- return on capital or return generated by an investment
- debt and debt service charges
- provisions for future losses or debts
- interest owed
- doubtful debts
- currency exchange losses
- bank costs charged by the subgrantees bank for transfers from CNES
- costs declared by the subgrantees in the framework of another action receiving a grant financed from the EU budget (including grants awarded by a Member State and financed from the EU budget and grants awarded by the European Commission or other EU bodies than the EUSPA for the purpose of implementing the EU budget)
- contributions in kind from third parties
- excessive or reckless expenditure
- deductible VAT
- participation by any staff of the EUSST partnership members or (European Union) institutions

Please note that the exact scope of the eligibility of costs is defined in the Sub-Grant Agreement (See [AD-3]), which will be signed by the successful applicant(s).

4.4 No-profit rule

Financial support may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit for the subgrantee within the framework of the project. For this purpose, profit is defined as a surplus of the receipts over the eligible costs incurred by the beneficiaries, when the request is made for payment of the balance. Where such a surplus occurs, CNES is entitled to recover the percentage of the profit corresponding to the EU SST contribution to the eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiaries to carry out the action.

4.5 Balanced budget

The estimated budget of the co-funded project have to be attached to the application form following the template provided respectively in Annex 2 of the Call for proposals (See [AD-4]).



They must have revenue and expenditure in balance. The amounts must be expressed in Euro.

For awarded projects, the final payment will be based on the final financial report at the end of the project and supporting documents, taking into account any previous pre-financing and interim payment(s).

The reporting and payment arrangements are fixed in the Sub-Grant Agreement (See [AD-3]).

5 Proposal submission

5.1 Timetable

Applications can be submitted from the date of publication of this call for projects, continuously until **23/09/2024** 12:00 p.m. (Paris time) at the latest on the CNES submission platform (accessible at the address <https://marches.cnes.fr>).

The projects will be selected by 2 selection committees, respectively in June and December 2024.

For these selection committees, the **submission deadlines are 02/04/2024 and 23/09/2024** respectively (at 12:00 p.m. Paris time each time).

The call for proposals will be conducted according to the following indicative timetable :

| Step | Date |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Publication of the call for proposals | February 2024 |
| Deadlines for proposal submission : | |
| 1) 1st cut-off date | 02/04/2024, 12:00 p.m Paris time |
| 2) 2nd cut-off date | 23/09/2024 , 12:00 p.m Paris time |
| Closure of the call for proposals | 23/09/2024 , 12:00 p.m Paris time |

At the cut-off date the applications received will be evaluated as according to the following process:

- Deadline for submission
- Selection of eligible projects + 4 weeks
- Submission of final application + 5 weeks
- Award decision & start grant preparation + 4 weeks
- Grant signature + 4 weeks

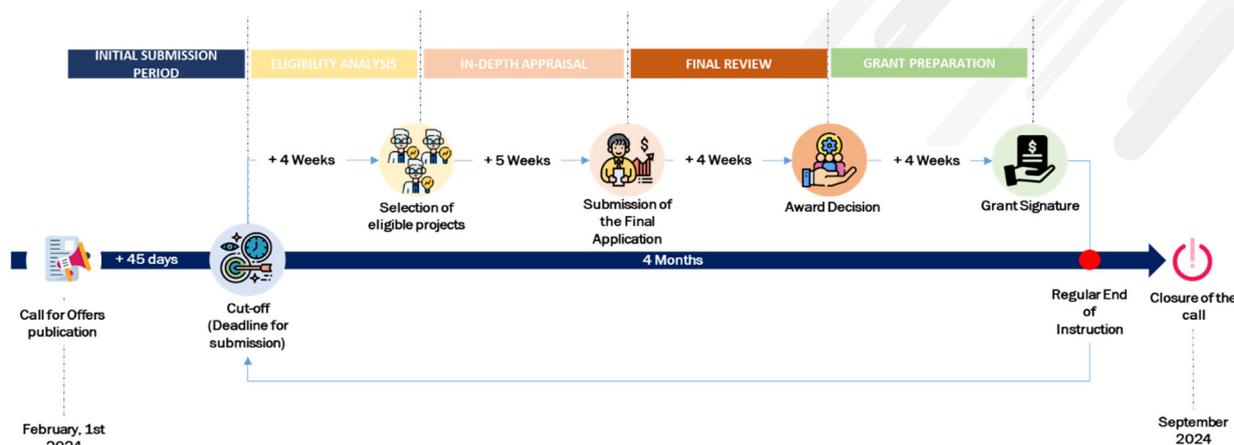


Figure 2: Selection & award time table

After each Selection Committee, its conclusions will be notified to the applicants and the sub-grant agreements are put in place.

Please note that projects deemed eligible but not selected for financial support by a committee will be systematically referred to the following committee (if any) to be considered for award.

Projects deemed ineligible will not participate in any Selection Committee.

In the event that the financial resources allocated to this call would be exhausted before the closure date of **23/09/2024**, CNES reserves itself the right to close the call at each earlier date.

In the event that the objectives of the call are not reached within the 2 first batches, the call for proposals can be extended with additional submission deadlines.

5.2 Proposal submission

To be considered for award by a Selection Committee, a proposal must be submitted **before the according deadline** (see timetable §5.1).

The declarations referred to in the administrative documentation and the technical and economic documentation must be **digitally signed by the legal representative of the company** or by its proxy (in which case a copy of the relevant power of attorney or other document evidencing powers of representation must be attached).

Proposals must be submitted electronically on the CNES tender portal, accessible via the link : <https://marches.cnes.fr>

All the communication between the EU SST Partnership and the applicants, such as **requests for clarifications**, and in particular the **submission of the proposal**, shall only be done using the **CNES tender portal**, accessible via the link: <https://marches.cnes.fr>.

Only if this platform is not accessible is the applicant authorised to contact:

CENTRE NATIONAL D'ETUDES SPATIALES
Directorate for Procurement & External Revenues



Address: 18, avenue Edouard Belin - 31401 Toulouse Cedex 9, France
 EU SST Cascade Funding
 For the attention of Maaïke DOORN
maaike.doorn@cnes.fr

The Candidate who uses this alternative means of communication must send with its request the proof that the CNES tender portal placed at its disposal is unavailable. Otherwise, CNES reserves itself the right not to respond to its request.

5.3 Content of the proposal

Proposals must be drawn up according to Annex 1 to this Call for proposals (Proposal Template & Annexes), and in conformity with its Technical Annex and Sub-Grant Template.

The proposal be complete and contain all the requested information and all required annexes and supporting documents.

| Proposal part | Documentation |
|------------------------------|--|
| Administrative documentation | Annex 1 – Proposal Template, section 1 & 2 Annex 4 – Participation Conditions Assessment Form Annex 5 – Declaration of Honour and <u>supporting documents</u> |
| Technical documentation | Annex 1 – Proposal Template, sections 1, 3 and 4 |
| Budget information | Annex 1 – Proposal Template, section 5 Annex 2 – Budget / Financial Forms |
| Contract | Annex 1 – Proposal Template, section 5 |

Applicants may be asked at a later stage for further documents (for legal entity validation, financial capacity check, bank account validation, etc).

In case of a project proposed by a consortium, the above requirements (administrative documentation) apply to each of the identified beneficiaires, but the coordinator must submit the proposal as one joint application on behalf of the identified applicants. At proposal submission, the coordinator will have to confirm that it have the mandate to submit the proposal for all applicants. Moreover, the coordinator will have to confirm that the information in the application is correct and complete and that the applicants comply with the conditions for receiving financial support (especially eligibility, financial and operational capacity, exclusion, etc).

Proposal must be submitted by a legal person.



Proposal must be in English language.

Proposals must be readable, accessible and printable. Administrative documentation in the version submitted to CNES in pdf format (Adobe Acrobat) and in the original MS-Office compatible formats, must be free of restrictions on printing and copy/paste of contents.

Proposals are not limited in terms of number of pages. However, details must be exhaustive and the content would be qualitative rather than quantitative.

Proposals must respect the requirements set for the **start date and end date of the project**. (§4.3).

Proposals must include a **preliminary proposal for an agreement on Data Fee** in accordance with the Sub-Grant Agreement Template, See [AD-3]).



6 Evaluation and selection process

All applications will be examined and assessed by an Evaluation Committee composed of several experts of the EUSST Partnership. The assessment of each proposal will be based on the information provided by the applicants in the proposal submitted in reply to this call for proposals. The Evaluation Committee may ask an applicant to provide additional information or to clarify the supporting documents submitted in connection with the application, in particular in the case of evident material errors.

The proposal will be assessed in light of the admissibility, eligibility, exclusion, and award criteria set out in this Call for Proposals.

6.1 Admissibility and eligibility evaluation

The proposals will first be reviewed against the admissibility and eligibility requirements. This evaluation will be conducted during 4 weeks after the cut-off date.

Admissibility requirements

1. The proposal must be submitted before the deadline/cut-off date (see time-table section §5.1), electronically via the CNES submission portal
2. The proposal must be complete and contain all the requested information according to the list of documents of the Call for Proposals. The proposal including annexes and supporting documents must be submitted using the templates thereto provided in the Call for Proposals

Eligibility criteria

- 1. Regarding the applicant(s) :**
 - a. Legal persons shall be established in one of the EU Member States, and compliant with the conditions on eligibility and participation as per §3.2
 - b. Applicants must correspond to the target organizations as per §3.1
 - c. In case the applicant is a consortium, the coordinator and all co-applicants forming the applicant consortium shall satisfy the same eligibility criteria
 - d. The applicant (single application) or coordinator (consortium) shall be the (futur) owner of the sensor to be upgraded or the new sensor
 - e. The entities should not be in an exclusion situation as per §3.3



- f. The entities should not be subject to a decision of the European Commission pursuant recovery of illegal or incompatible aid.

2. Regarding the application/project :

- a. The project must be in line with the SST strategy and contribute to the main objective of the call which is the increase of the proportion of commercial data from current 5% up to 50%, provided there is added value, by the end of the partnership (30th June 2026). The project should thereto propose (at least) one of the following activities:
- i. Already existing and operational sensor / network of sensors upgrades intending to improve performances (accuracy, detection capabilities, timeliness, ...)
 - ii. Development of a new cross-technology based sensor
 - iii. Improving an already existing and operational sensor / network of sensors, thanks to cross-technology features
 - iv. Deployment of sensors outside European VLA
 - v. Development of solutions to decrease the price of data
- b. The technical proposal shall respect the technical input and output-levels as specified in Technical Annex (See [AD-1])
- c. The requested financial support must respect the maximum rate for co-financing
- d. The requested financial support shall be compatible with the budget allocation for cascade funding (< 26 M€).

Upon examination of the applications against above admissibility and eligibility conditions, a selection is made of eligible projects which are admitted to the appraisal phase.

The Evaluation Committee formulates recommendations for the eligible applications.

6.2 Final application and selection

The eligible applications are informed and invited to enter into further preparation of their proposal in order to submit their final project that takes into account the recommendations of the Evaluation Committee.

On this base, a dialogue will take place between CNES and each applicant. All aspects of the project may be discussed (technical specifications, plans, development plan and value analysis of the proposed project, etc.) in order to converge towards a project that meets the selection criteria.

The equal treatment of applicants shall be respected and these iterations cannot lead to distort the project initially presented.



After these iterations, the applicant is invited to **submit their final proposal** for evaluation on the selection criteria and decision of award of funding.

Selection criteria :

The final proposal will be assessed against the following selection criteria. When assessing the below criteria, the evaluation committee shall use the elements indicated for each criterion.

| Selection Criteria | Weight |
|---|-------------|
| <p>1. Performances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic Autonomy - Detection capabilities (Number of objects, Min size of objects, Limitating magnitude, etc) - Quality of the data - Reactivity - Timeliness | 40 % |
| <p>2. Added-value regarding the EU SST needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location diversification - Orbit regime diversification - Contribution to catalogue - Contribution to services | 30 % |
| <p>3. Project viability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Input / Output TRL with respect to the working period duration - Quality assurance strategy - Co-funded period - Backgrounds - Development plan | 15 % |
| <p>4. Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-funded period - Co-funded rate requested - Cost model - Clear budget allocation | 10 % |
| <p>5. Ecology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate Environmental Charter - Impact (positive or negative) of the project on the environment and compliance with the applicable environmental and sustainability regulations | 5 % |

Upon examination of the proposals against all selection criteria:

- the best proposal(s) will be selected for the award of financial support,



- if a proposal is not ranked amongst the best proposals selected for funding it will be placed on the reserve list, and will be considered for award in a following batch.
- proposals that do not meet the minimum score of 5/10 are rejected.

After the completion of the evaluation, applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the evaluation and award decision.

In the event of financial support awarded by CNES on behalf of the EU SST Partnership, a sub-grant agreement, drawn up in Euro and detailing the conditions and level of funding, will be sent to the applicant/coordinator, as well as the information on the procedure to formalise the agreement of the parties.

The applicants understand that submission of an application for cascade funding implies acceptance of the conditions attached to this Call for Proposals (Sub-Grant Agreement template, See [AD-3]). A proposal that does not comply with all the call conditions will be rejected. This applies also to applicants.