Frequently Asked Questions
EU Aid Volunteers Initiative
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Chapter 1 - What is the EU Aid Volunteers initiative?

What is the EU Aid Volunteers (EUAV) initiative?
The EU Aid Volunteers initiative (EUAV) contributes towards increasing and improving the capacity of the European Union to provide needs-based humanitarian aid and support the strengthening of capacity and resilience of vulnerable communities in disaster affected countries outside the EU. It also works towards strengthening the capacities of sending and hosting organisations intending to participate in the initiative through the provision for funding for technical assistance and capacity building.

The EU Aid Volunteers initiative offers:

- Opportunities for European citizens to become EU Aid Volunteers in humanitarian projects worldwide, showing solidarity with those who most need it;
- Professional support by trained and well-prepared volunteers to communities affected by disaster;
- Capacity building for local staff and volunteers of organisations in countries hit by disasters;
- Technical assistance for organisations based in Europe to strengthen their capacity to participate in the EU Aid Volunteers initiative.


Who does what in the EUAV initiative?
The European Commission:

- Sets out the priority areas for the deployment and the capacity building activities to be funded each year, based on an assessment of need.
- Manages the EUAV Platform, the network, and communication activities to promote the initiative.

The Executive Agency EACEA:

- Manages calls for proposals and tenders and the resulting grants;
- Manages the certification process;
- Manages the training programme through an external service provider;
- Manages the insurance covering for all providers.
What is the role of sending and hosting organisations within the EUAV initiative?

Sending organisations are entrusted with all the aspects of identification, selection, preparation, deployment and management of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative. They shall ensure that the hosting organisation is consistently involved throughout the entire project life-cycle. Sending organisations are responsible for the duty of care of deployed volunteers.

Hosting organisations work in partnership with sending organisations throughout the entire project life-cycle.

Sending and hosting organisations jointly undertake the volunteer recruitment process, with hosting organisations proposing the volunteer task assignment based upon identified needs in the field. In addition, hosting organisations receive and manage the deployed volunteers, and furthermore, are responsible for the deployment induction phase, designating mentors and ensuring the provision of adequate accommodation and working conditions throughout.

Where can I find the detailed rules of the EUAV initiative?

There are three legislative acts defining the different aspects of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative. Regulation (EU) No 375/2014 has established the EU Aid Volunteers initiative and provides the framework for the initiative. Standards and procedures for the EU Aid Volunteers initiative can be found in the Implementing Regulation 1244/2014 and the Delegated Regulation C(2014) 7725.

a. Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

➤ What is the difference between Technical Assistance and Capacity Building actions?

**Technical assistance** provides support for actions aimed at strengthening the technical capacity of prospective sending EU-based organisations to participate in the EU Aid Volunteers initiative and to ensure compliance with the standards and procedures regarding candidate volunteers and EU Aid Volunteers in order to apply for certification which is required in order to deploy EU Aid Volunteers.

**Capacity building** is aimed at strengthening the capacity of prospective third-country-based hosting organisations to prepare and respond to humanitarian crises and to ensure compliance with the standards and procedures regarding candidate volunteers and EU Aid Volunteers in order to apply for certification which is required in order to deploy EU Aid Volunteers.

➤ How do I apply for the Technical Assistance/Capacity Building Call for proposals? How to access the eForm on your website?

Applications must be submitted in writing, drafted in one of the official languages, using the electronic application form (eForm). This must be accompanied by all the required annexes.

Please refer to the EACEA website which provides further guidance on the call, e-form and annexes. [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eu-aid-volunteers/funding_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eu-aid-volunteers/funding_en)


➤ Is it possible for the same organisation to lead on 2 separate applications?

An organisation applying as coordinator may submit one project for each action (Technical Assistance and Capacity Building). In this case, it shall indicate in each application that it will apply for both actions. In case of selection of both projects, two separate grant agreements will be issued.

An organisation wishing to apply for both technical assistance and capacity building must use 2 different application forms.
The organisation which acts as coordinator in a maximum of 2 applications can also be part of other projects as a partner within different consortia. Each project proposal is evaluated on its merits; however, please note that double funding of an activity is not permitted.

What happens to my application once I have submitted it?

All applications received by the Executive Agency undergo an evaluation procedure. The Executive Agency will appoint an Evaluation Committee to oversee the management of the whole selection process. Independent external evaluators are used to support the work of the Evaluation Committee.

Eligible applications/projects will be assessed on the basis of the following award criteria:

- Relevance of the project (maximum 30 points)
- Quality of the project design and implementation (maximum 30 points)
- Quality and relevance of the partnership and cooperation arrangements (maximum 20 points)
- Impact and dissemination (maximum 20 points)

For more information, please refer to the Guidelines of the specific call of proposal

https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eu-aid-volunteers/funding_en

Projects scoring less than 60 overall points will not be considered for funding.

All projects, regardless whether they cover capacity building or technical assistance will be ranked according to the number of points they receive.

All applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the selection process.
Do all participants to a project training event or workshop have to come from an organization that is part of the project consortium? Or is it possible to have 'external' participants not coming from a partner organisation?

Only participants from organisation part of the project consortium will be considered eligible.

Are only the costs for the trainers, the training venue etc. covered? Or do training participants also get some form of allowance in case that it's a long term training programme?

No allowances are foreseen for training participants.

Is a budget line description modification considered as a minor change? Is it possible to add or cancel budget lines without an official request for amendment to the Grant Agreement signed? Should we inform EACEA or DG ECHO?

An amendment request relating to an adjustment to the budget breakdown is only necessary when the transfer between budget headings exceeds 20% of the amount of the heading of eligible direct costs for which the transfer is intended. A new Excel budget sheet needs to be attached to the Amendment Request form.

An amendment request relating to an adjustment to the budget breakdown is therefore not necessary when the transfer between budget headings of eligible direct costs does not exceed 20% of the amount of the heading of eligible direct costs for which the transfer is intended.

The EACEA should be informed of any budgetary change (major or minor) per email, as your Grant Agreement was signed with the Agency.

Is it possible to request an extension to the eligibility period of the project?

If you want to extend the eligibility period you will be able to do it through an amendment request once your grant agreement is signed. However the maximum eligibility period cannot exceed 24 months. Costs incurred within the new eligibility period are considered eligible if:

- They do not exceed the total grant awarded.
- Do not require an official amendment request (≤ 20%).
If some visa or other costs had to be incurred before the actual start of the project, would these costs be eligible?

No, if these costs occur before the project starting date they are not eligible.

For Capacity Building proposals, one eligibility criterion mentions that “the applicant OR one EU partner active in the field of volunteer management for at least 3 years”: how do you evaluate this criteria?

Volunteer Management capacity will be evaluated through the "operational capacity" statement that all organisations need to complete (Excel table with the budget).

b. Deployment

What is a Deployment project about?

The general objective of the Call for Deployment is to strengthen the capacity and resilience of vulnerable and disaster-affected communities in third countries.

What type of organisations are eligible to apply for the Call for Deployment?

Organisations must form consortia and, in partnership, submit a joint proposal for the deployment of volunteers.

Organisations eligible to be members of the consortia include:

- **Certified** sending and hosting organisations.
- Other organisations specialised in any area relevant to the objectives or the actions of the project in order to contribute with their specific expertise (Article 8(3) Delegated Regulation)
- **Associates** (other organisations specialised in any area relevant to the objectives of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative. These associates have no contractual relationship with the Commission. Organisations may have for example a statute of a "private for profit company".

In the consortium, only certified sending and hosting organisations may deploy EU Aid Volunteers. Furthermore, only sending organisations can act as the lead applicant for the consortium when submitting a project proposal.
How can I apply for the Call for deployment?
Calls for proposals for the deployment of EU Aid Volunteers are published on an annual basis. Information on the application procedure is available via the EACEA website. [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eu-aid-volunteers/funding_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eu-aid-volunteers/funding_en)

Where can EU Aid Volunteers be deployed?
Each year an indicative list of third countries for deployment is published on the EACEA website. Deployment countries are to be defined for each volunteer assignment on the basis of real needs on a local level. Volunteers will be deployed in countries outside the EU where humanitarian aid operations take place. EU Aid Volunteers will not be deployed to countries or regions with international or non-international armed conflicts.

Our organisation has a fully comprehensive insurance policy providing coverage for our own humanitarian staff in our HQ and the field, can we extend this coverage to EU Aid Volunteers deploying under our project?
All EU Aid Volunteers shall be covered by a complete insurance policy specifically designed to protect them during the entire duration of their deployment. This insurance coverage is provided for by the European Commission and is free of charge for the organisations participating in a Deployment project. Supplementary insurance will not be financed under the initiative.

Concerning the budget, how has the rate of subsistence lump-sum payments been calculated?
Subsistence lump-sum payments have been calculated based on a monthly consumption basket of regular expenses of an EU Aid Volunteer (including food, toiletries, household products, clothing, local transport and in-country transportation). Accommodation costs are not part of the subsistence lump sums. The lump sum rates are monthly rates. Special needs linked to disability or other duly justified exceptional circumstances, may be financed, in addition to the subsistence payment.

Organisations with existing policies regarding subsistence allowances may apply the terms of their own policy, however, any additional increase in lump sums will not be financed under the EU grant.

What is the best way to get in touch with certified sending and hosting organisations and build a consortium?
You will find the list of certified organisations on the EACEA website following this link: [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eu-aid-volunteers/selection-results/selection-results-certification-mechanism-for-sending-and-hosting-organisations_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eu-aid-volunteers/selection-results/selection-results-certification-mechanism-for-sending-and-hosting-organisations_en)
You can also go to the EUAV platform and find all certified organisations as well as the "Find Partners" tool. [https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/echo/eu-aid-volunteers_en/](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/echo/eu-aid-volunteers_en/)

➢ **Is it possible to form a partnership with our field offices?**
Certified EU sending organisations may submit or participate in project proposals in partnership with their field offices in third countries, provided that all organisations in the consortium are certified under the EU Aid Volunteers initiative.

➢ **What does "countries participating in the programme" refer to?**
"Countries participating in the programme" currently refers to the 28 Member States of the European Union, involved in establishing the EU Aid Volunteers initiative. Furthermore, these countries contribute to the annual funding of the programme.
The possibility for certain countries outside the EU to participate in the programme is available; however it is dependent on the establishment of bi-lateral agreements between these countries and the EU and provision of annual financial contributions to the EU Aid Volunteers initiative.
Organisations based in "countries participating in the programme" can apply for certification to become sending organisations.

➢ **Does EACEA have specific guidance on how to undertake a needs assessment?**
A needs-based approach to the provision of humanitarian aid is essential to ensure aid is provided in different disaster-affected countries according to their respective needs, independent of any external pressure. Furthermore, this approach guarantees the credibility and transparency of EU humanitarian aid.

While no specific guidance on how to conduct a needs-assessment is provided, the following elements must be included in any needs assessment undertaken in the context of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative, as a minimum:
I. A vulnerability and risk assessment of the country of deployment, including assessment of security, travel and health risks relevant for EU Aid Volunteers;
II. Consideration of the current capacity of the hosting organisation to host an EU Aid Volunteer;
III. An analysis of the competences and capacities currently lacking within the hosting organisation and the local community, identifying needs and analysing how they can best be addressed;
IV. An analysis of the expected added value from the EU Aid Volunteer and, where relevant, from the envisaged capacity building support to the hosting organisation and local community.
Why do all members of the consortium, including 'associated' partners have to outline their operational capacity?
All organisations in the consortium are requested to describe their operational capacity by completing the relevant excel sheet. This information will be used to evaluate the quality of the partnership.

Does a guide exist on how to fill-in the electronic application forms, including budget guidance?
Instructions for completing the application package are available on the EACEA website, under the 'guidelines' page located in each call.

These instructions provide insight into how to complete the application form, including budget allocations, indicators etc. More information can be found at the following link: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eu-aid-volunteers/funding_en

We need to submit a financial capacity form with our application. Should each partner in the consortium do the same or it's only the lead organisation/applicant that does so?
The financial capacity form is only requested for the Lead applicant of a consortium.

Can the entire co-funding come from one participant only?
All participants in a project proposal must have a co-funding capacity. However, the project proposal budget does not examine detailed information on the co-financing.

When are the results of a selection procedure published?
The results of the certification process and the calls for proposals are made public on the EACEA website. The results are published as soon as the awarding decision has been made and the respective organisations have been notified. More information can be found at the following link: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eu-aid-volunteers/selection-results_en
Which minimum conditions should be granted for a child with the accompanying parent/ volunteer living in the host country with her/ him during the volunteer service? Who would cover basic expenses for the child (insurance, journey, accommodation, any eventual allowance...)?

Under the regulation it is not foreseen that family members enter into the EU Aid Volunteers Scheme.

As a consequence, the consortium (hosting and sending) is responsible to discuss the conditions with the volunteer and evaluate if the circumstances of deployment allow the presence of children.

Please note that all additional expenses linked to the child must be supported by the consortium or the volunteer as the EU Aid Initiative does not foresee any additional subsistence allowances, travel costs etc. for dependants.

In addition, it is highly recommended to subscribe to a private insurance package for the child including an evacuation policy in case of emergency. Indeed, it is impossible to add children under the EU Aid Volunteers insurance contract as this covers exclusively the volunteers themselves.
Chapter 3 - Certification Mechanism

What is the Certification Mechanism about?
Certification is a process whereby organisations are assessed to ensure they meet the high standards and procedures of volunteer management that have been established by the EUAV initiative. It is obligatory for all organisations to be certified before deploying and hosting EU Aid Volunteers.

- The main objectives of this strand are:
  - To support implementation of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative by establishing a certification mechanism for sending and for hosting organisations.
  - To ensure that sending and hosting organisations comply with the standards and procedures laid down in the Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1398/2014 and the procedures laid down in Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1244/2014.
  - To certify sending and hosting organisations that may participate in calls for proposals for deployment to deploy EU Aid Volunteers.
  - The sending organisations will deal with the selection, recruitment and deployment of volunteers, while hosting organisations will receive them and benefit from their work.

Is my organisation eligible for certification as a sending/hosting organisation?
The EU Aid Volunteers initiative is open to organisations based in Europe and other countries who comply with the following criteria:

**Sending organisations must:**
- adhere to the standards and procedures of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative.
- be active in the field of humanitarian aid.
- be legally established and belong to any of the following categories:
  - non-governmental not-for-profit organisations established in a EU Member State;
  - civilian public law bodies from a Member State;
  - the International Federation of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

**Hosting organisations must:**
- adhere to the standards and procedures of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative;
- be active in the field of humanitarian aid.
- be legally established and belong to any of the following categories:
  - non-governmental not-for-profit organisations operating or established in a third country under the laws in force in that country;
- public law bodies of a civilian character governed by the law of a third country;
- international agencies and organisations.

Why are organisations required to become certified under the EU Aid Volunteers initiative?

Each organisation wishing to take part in the EU Aid Volunteers initiative programme is required to commit to implement the high quality standards of volunteer management outlined in the EU Aid Volunteers initiative legislation. This is a quality assurance indicator of the management of the initiative.

Sending organisations need to complete an evidence-based self-assessment form, showing that they comply with and commit to all the standards and procedures of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative, in areas such as duty of care, health and safety, equality rules, amongst others.

Hosting organisations need to complete a self-assessment form and submit it together with three references, in order to demonstrate their capacity to comply with and commit to the requirements of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative.

How to apply for Certification?

1. Register in the Participant Portal and receive a Participant Identification Code (PIC).
2. Read carefully the accompanying guidelines.
4. Submit your self-assessment form and its annexes via email: EACEA-EUAID-Volunteers@ec.europa.eu

A complete application for Sending organisations contains:

- An evidence-based self-assessment form;
- Declaration on honour signed by the legal representative;
- Proof of experience in the field of humanitarian aid document;
- Self-assessment Security Checklist;
- Mandatory evidence documents for the following requirements:
  - Security policy and risk assessment
  - Equal opportunities and non-discrimination
  - Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
  - Health and safety
  - Data protection

A complete application for Hosting organisations contains:
- Self-assessment form
- Declaration on honour
- 3 references (at least from 2 different types of organisations)

➢ My organisation is based in a country outside the EU. Is my organisation eligible to apply as both a deployment sending and hosting organisation?
All organisations based outside the EU can participate in the EU Aid Volunteers initiative as hosting organisations only.

➢ Who can act as a reference for a hosting organisation?
Each application for hosting organisation must contain 3 mandatory references. These references shall be from a minimum of 2 of the following groups of stakeholders:

1. A certified sending or hosting organisation with which the applicant hosting organisation has already had, or envisages to set up, a partnership for participation in the EU Aid Volunteers initiative.

2. A humanitarian aid partner of the Commission with a framework (partnership) agreement in force, with whom the applicant hosting organisation has successfully worked on a humanitarian aid project. Please be aware that the third country offices cannot represent this category.

3. A relevant international organisation or not-for-profit organisation or public law body of a civilian character with which the applicant hosting organisation has successfully worked on a humanitarian aid project.

4. An accreditation or auditing organisation that has certified the applicant hosting organisation in areas relevant for the EU Aid Volunteers initiative, in which case the relevant accreditation or auditing documents should also be provided.

Please note: given that the Commission takes the decision to certify an organisation or not, DG ECHO’s field offices cannot provide references to interested organisations.

➢ Is it possible to have our third country offices applying for certification as hosting organisations?
Many European organisations have country offices in third countries. Where a certified sending organisation has a country programme office, registered in the third country, and with its own legal entity, that country programme office is required to undergo individually the full certification procedure for hosting organisations.
Where a certified sending organisation can prove that it operates in a third country and where this third country operation has **no separate legal entity**, the sending organisation can submit a **simplified form** for hosting organisation certification.

- **May a certified sending organisation that has country programme offices in third countries act as one of the required three references for that country programme office?**
  Yes, this is possible that the Headquarter provides one of the references.

- **What if my organisation fails to be certified?**

  Organisations that have failed certification can apply with priority for capacity building/technical assistance project. Calls are published on the website of the EACEA.

  Unsuccessful organisations can resubmit an application for certification after 12 month
Chapter 4 - General Administrative questions

➢ What is a Participant Identification Code (PIC)?
In order to submit an application, applicants and associates must provide their Participant Identification Code (PIC) in the application form. The PIC can be obtained by registering the organisation in the Unique Registration Facility (URF) hosted in the Education, Audiovisual, Culture, Citizenship and Volunteering Participant Portal. The Unique Registration Facility is a tool shared by other services of the European Commission. If an applicant and associate already has a PIC that has been used for previous grant applications to EACEA or other programmes (for example the Research programmes), the same PIC is valid for the present call for proposals.

A PIC number is automatically generated. In case of selection, the applicants will be requested to submit relevant supporting documents relating to their legal and financial status. The Participant Portal allows applicants, to upload or update the information related to their legal status and attach the requested legal and financial documents.

Details on the supporting documents that need to be uploaded in the portal can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/participants/portal/desktop/en/organisations/register.html

➢ Do all the organisations participating in a consortium register in the Participant Portal, in order to receive the PIC number?
Yes, in order to apply as a consortium, each organisation should have its own PIC number corresponding to its legal entity.

➢ What is a LEAR?
A LEAR is the "Legal Entity Appointed Representative" nominated by the legal representative of the organisation and assigned in the system by the Commission. On receiving the PIC number, all organisations are requested to nominate a LEAR, who will responsible for managing your organisations information on the Participants Portal.

➢ Can I register other partner organisations in the Participant Portal with my own organisation account?
Each ECAS / EU account is a personal one and therefore each organisation should create its own account.
What is meant by "body governed by public law"?

The eligibility criteria of a public law body of civilian character which stems from the Regulation establishing the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (EU Aid Volunteers initiative) should be interpreted as requiring the beneficiary to be established as public body by national law or an international organisation and not perform any military activity. ‘Established as public body by national law’ means:

- incorporated as a public body in the act of creation or recognised as a public body by national law
- and
- governed by public law.

Public bodies may act under and be subject to private law for some or most of their activities. A legal entity that has a public service mission but which was established under private law is not considered to be a public body.

The beneficiary should therefore have the legal capacity to make binding amendments to its rights, duties and obligations (i.e. capacity to sign the grant agreements/mandates for the coordinator in its own name; the ability to legally sue and be sued in its own name).

Supporting national legislation to confirm the status of public law body of civilian character might be required.

What is considered as "active in the field of humanitarian aid"?

The European Commission defines humanitarian aid as:

‘activities and operations in third countries intended to provide needs-based emergency assistance aimed at preserving life, preventing and alleviating human suffering, and maintaining human dignity in the face of man-made crises or natural disasters. It encompasses assistance, relief and protection operations in humanitarian crises or their immediate aftermath, supporting measures to ensure access to people in need and to facilitate the free flow of assistance, as well as actions aimed at reinforcing disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction, and contributing towards strengthening resilience and capacity to cope with, and recover from, crises’ (Regulation 375/14 Art. 3(d))

In addition, the EUAV initiative seeks strong coherence and complementarity with other policy areas, notably development policy and the linkages of relief, rehabilitation and development. (Regulation 375 Art. 6(1)).
What evidence will be required to prove that my organisation is active in humanitarian aid?

The Organisations applying for the Capacity Building and/or Technical Assistance projects are requested to provide the operational capacity where they need to detail their humanitarian aid experience.

The Organisations applying as Sending organisations for the Certification mechanism are requested to provide the document called "Proof of experience in the field of humanitarian aid" where they need to highlight their experience in the humanitarian sector.

Annexes - Declaration of Honour/ Mandate letter. Does it have to be completed by all the partners of the consortium or only by the applicant coordinator?

The Declaration of Honour must be completed only by the Coordinating applicant organisation (leader) of the consortium. However, all the partners in the project proposal should sign a mandate letter with the consortium leader.

Each organisation has to sign its own mandate?

Yes, all the partners in the project proposal should have signed a mandate letter.

Would you have a word version of the online application form?

The E-form is an interactive PDF document. Once you create it, you can save it, and work on it offline. No word document is therefore available.

What would be the consequence of the Brexit decision for the projects which had planned to include UK leaders or partners?

While there is no immediate impact on the eligibility of British applicants, please be aware that eligibility criteria must be complied with for the entire duration of the grant. If the United Kingdom withdraws from the EU during the grant period without concluding an agreement with the EU ensuring in particular that British applicants continue to be eligible, they will cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the project.