



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

FOR THE SELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE JUST TRANSITION PLATFORM WORKING GROUPS ON CHEMICALS, STEEL, CEMENT AND HORIZONTAL STAKEHOLDER STRATEGY

1. Background

The Just Transition Platform (JTP) aims to assist EU Member States and regions to unlock the support available through the Just Transition Mechanism (JTM), a new support instrument introduced by the European Commission in 2020. The objective of the JTM is to address the specific social, economic, and environmental challenges in the regions most affected by transition to a sustainable and climate-neutral economy. It focuses on territories that are heavily dependent on fossil fuels and on carbon-intensive industries. The JTP provides comprehensive technical and advisory support for stakeholders from those territories¹. Authorities and beneficiaries can access it to find information on funding opportunities, relevant regulatory updates or sector-specific initiatives.

In order to ensure comprehensive stakeholder involvement throughout the activities of the JTP, four working groups are to be established². Three of these have a thematic focus on a carbon-intensive sector (steel, cement, chemicals) with the objective of exchanging and developing practical solutions to ensure that the decarbonisation of the respective industry happens in a fair way, leaving no one behind. The fourth working group on horizontal stakeholder strategy will be of cross-cutting nature and will focus on the identification and assessment of approaches and good practices to engage all stakeholder groups.

Each group's tasks shall be to support the work of the Commission on development of the strategic approach of engaging and involving different stakeholder groups at the level of the implementation of the Just Transition Fund, as part of JTP, a new tool established by the Just Transition Fund Regulation³.

Each working group is to gather relevant and varied groups of stakeholders around the dedicated sector undergoing transition with a view of developing a common just transition vision with local and social partners, civil society, NGOs, industrial and economic actors and academia.

The working groups will act as a forum for exchanging and tackling various challenges that are common to stakeholders involved in the transition process. The common objectives are problem-solving, advocacy and stakeholder inclusion to achieve the wider goals of the JTP, which will be implemented through a multi-level and multi-stakeholder governance approach. The members of each working group will be allowed to share their personal views.

¹ The JTP works closely with the already existing Platform for coal regions in transition: [Coal regions in transition | Energy \(europa.eu\)](https://energy.europa.eu/coal-transition/)

² The working groups will not have the status of Commission expert groups.

³ Regulation (EU) 2021/1056 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021R1056>

The specific tasks to be performed by each group are outlined in the relevant Working Groups' Terms of Reference.

2. Features of the Groups

2.1. COMPOSITION

Each Working Group shall consist of three circles of members:

1. **First circle of core members.** They will actively participate in all the phases and activities of the Working Group. They will both shape and perform the work carried out by the group. They will also be involved in the steering of the group. Core members will support one or more actions of the Working Group during the implementation phase. Each group shall consist of up to 20 core members which will be selected via this call for application. The Commission may decide to publish additional calls in the future to extend the core membership of the groups.
2. **Second circle of close observers.** Observers will take part in some of the work of the Working Group on an ad hoc basis and will be kept informed of the ongoing work of the group. They will not be responsible for the overall steering of the group. There is no maximum number of observers in the second circle. Applicants for the second circle will need to demonstrate that their activities fall within the scope of concerned Working Group via this application form.
3. **Third circle of other stakeholders** who will be informed on the mid-term and final results of the Working Group activities. Stakeholders of the third circle will not have to pass any selection process but must be eligible.

Members of the Working Groups shall be Member States' authorities, organisations at Union level, including those representing regional authorities and cities, and other public entities.

Member States' authorities and other public entities shall nominate their representatives and shall be responsible for ensuring that their representatives provide a high level of expertise in the field of just transition in the specific sector.

Public entities shall be:

A) **Member States authorities :**

Member States authorities shall be national authorities from the EU27, such as ministries or national agencies.

B) **Local and Regional Authorities :**

Local and Regional authorities shall be regional authorities, national representatives of local authorities, local authorities representing cities and urban areas, or other bodies organised at national, regional or local level and authorities representing the territories covered by Territorial Just Transition Plans (TJTP) with relevance for the specific carbon-intensive sector(s).

Organisations shall be umbrella organisations with a specific interest in a just transition to a climate-neutral Europe, i.e.:

C) Associations representing regional, local, urban and other public authorities:

- Associations representing higher educational institutions, educational and training providers, think tanks and research organisations, active and knowledgeable in the field of just transition;
- Associations representing other public authorities having an active role or expertise in just transition matters, including public procurement offices, and bodies for the promotion of equal treatment established in accordance with Directives 2000/43/EC, 2004/113/EC and 2006/54/EC.

D) Organisations representing economic and social partners⁴:

- Social partners' organisations, in particular those active in just transition, associations representing stakeholders;
- Association of chambers of commerce, associations representing business, financial sector actors, consultancies representing the general interest of industries and branches, active in the field of just transition, as well as representatives of the social economy;
- Associations representing thematic networks representing specific economic sectors.

E) Bodies representing civil society, such as non-governmental organisations⁵:

- Bodies involved in the development of just transition. Representativeness, geographic and thematic coverage, management capacity and expertise will be taken into account;
- Organisations or groups that are significantly affected or likely to be significantly affected by the implementation of the just transition strategy.

Organisations shall each nominate one representative and may appoint an alternate representative. Organisations shall be responsible for ensuring that their representatives provide a high level of expertise. DG REGIO may refuse the nomination of a representative by an organisation if it considers this nomination inappropriate in light of the requirements specified in chapter 4 of this call. In such case, the organisation concerned shall be asked to appoint another representative.

⁴ Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) wishing to join the Working Group of their choice as core member of the first circle shall be represented by an umbrella organisation. To that end, we advise SMEs to reach out to the business organisation of their choice. SMEs wishing to join the Working Group of their choice as a member of the second or third circle of members can apply individually, without being represented by an umbrella organisation.

⁵ NGOs and other civil society group wishing to join the Working Group of their choice as core member of the first circle shall be represented by an umbrella/network organisation. To that end, we advise individual NGOs or other groups to reach out to their umbrella/network organisation. Individual NGOs/groups wishing to join the Working Group of their choice as a member of the second or third circle of member can apply individually, without being represented by an umbrella/network organisation.

2.2. APPOINTMENT

Members shall be appointed for the duration of the working group. They shall remain in office until replaced / until the end of their term of office.

Members who are no longer capable of contributing effectively to the group's deliberations, who in the opinion of DG Regional and Urban Policy do not comply with the conditions set out in Article 339 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union or who resign, shall no longer be invited to participate in any meetings of the group and may be replaced for the remainder of their term of office.

DG REGIO shall establish a reserve list of suitable candidates that may be used to appoint members' replacements. DG REGIO shall ask applicants for their consent before including their names on the reserve list.

2.3 RULES OF ENGAGEMENT AND OPERATION OF THE GROUP

Each group shall be chaired and managed by an external contractor.

In principle, each group shall meet twice a year in digital or hybrid format in order to discuss matters related to the tasks of the working group. The external contractor will be responsible for the secretariat of the JTP under supervision of DG Regional and Urban Policy unit G1.

Members and members' representatives should be prepared to attend meetings systematically, to contribute actively to discussions in the group, to be involved in preparatory work ahead of meetings, to examine and provide comments on documents under discussion, and to act, as appropriate, as 'rapporteurs' on *ad hoc* basis.

As a general rule, working documents will be drafted in English and meetings will be also conducted in English.

The group shall adopt its strategic documents (Scoping paper and Final Implementation Plan), opinions, recommendations or reports by consensus.

The members of the group and their representatives, as well as invited experts and observers, are expected to respect the professional secrecy, laid down in Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/443⁶ and 2015/444⁷.

The group shall adopt its rules of procedure.

The group may invite participants with specific expertise with respect to a subject matter on the agenda to take part in the work of the group or sub-groups on an *ad hoc* basis.

For further details about the operation and meetings of the Working Groups, please refer to the Working Groups' Terms of Reference.

⁶ Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/443 of 13 March 2015 on Security in the Commission (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 41).

⁷ Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444 of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53).

2.4. TRANSPARENCY

As concerns the group composition, DG REGIO shall publish the following data on European Commission websites:

- the name of Member States' authorities;
- the name of public entities other than Member States' authorities;
- the name of member organisations; the interest represented shall be disclosed;

Personal data shall be collected, processed and published in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 2018/1725.

3. Application procedure

Interested organisations are invited to submit their application to the European Commission, DG REGIO via email: REGIO-JUST-TRANSITION@ec.europa.eu.

Applications must be completed in English.

Organisations shall indicate the name of their representative and the alternate, if any, in the group.

An application will be deemed admissible only if it is sent by the deadline and includes the documents referred to below. All documents submitted by applicants should be duly filled in, legible and signed.

Please note that applications to the first circle of members will be assessed based on the selection and assessment criteria of the present call. Applicants for the second circle will need to demonstrate that their activities fall within the scope of concerned WG. The 3rd circle of the WG will be open to all other applicants who are eligible.

Supporting documents

Application for the first circle of members shall include the following documents:

- a **cover letter** of maximum two pages explaining the applicant's motivation for answering this call and stating what contribution the applicant could make to the group;
- an **application form** duly filled in, specifying the member category and the Working Group for which the application is made, and explaining how the applicant fulfils the selection criteria listed in chapter 4 of this call(Annex I);
- for individuals indicated by organisations as their representatives, a **curriculum vitae (CV)** shall also be provided, preferably not exceeding three pages. All CVs shall be submitted in the European format (<https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae/templates-instructions>).

Applications for the second circle of members shall include the **application form** duly filled in and the **CV** of the representative.

Applications for the third circle of members shall only include the **application form** duly filled in.

Additional supporting documents may be requested at a later stage.

Deadline for application

The duly signed applications must be sent by 8 October 2021 at the latest.

- Applications shall be sent by e-mail to the following e-mail address:

REGIO-JUST-TRANSITION@ec.europa.eu

The date of the e-mail will be the date of sending.

4. Selection criteria

The external contractor will take the following criteria into account when assessing applications:

- proven motivation and relevant competence and experience, including at European level in particular, and at international level, in areas relevant to the tasks of the working group (evaluated via the motivation letter and application form);
- competence, experience and representativeness of the proposed representatives (evaluated via the CV and application form);
- good knowledge of the English language of the nominated representative allowing active participation in the discussions (evaluated via the CV).

5. Assessment of the applications

When defining the composition of the group, the external contractor shall aim at ensuring, as far as possible, a high level of expertise, as well as a balanced representation of relevant know how and areas of interest, while taking into account the specific tasks of the group, the type of expertise required, as well as the relevance of the applications received.

The following elements will be taken into account when assessing applications to select members of the first circle:

- Geographical distribution: the selected WG members should reflect the geographical diversity of the territories eligible for the support through the JTM.
- Stakeholder categories: all stakeholder categories (i.e. the five categories as described in chapter 2.1 of this call) should be represented in each of the working groups. For the Horizontal stakeholder strategy working group stakeholders representing other concerned groups of society should be represented (e.g. young people, local communities in rural areas, disadvantaged groups, etc).
- Sector-focus: WG members will be selected based on the focus on the different sectors. For the three carbon-intensive sector WGs, applicants will be considered eligible based on the relevance and expertise with regard to challenges and needs identified for the specific sectors. For the Horizontal stakeholder strategy working group, a balanced representation of all sectors should be ensured, including other carbon-intensive sectors where relevant.

- Gender: working group members will be selected also to ensure a balance in the representation of gender in the membership of the WGs.

Should an organisation not be selected to become a member of the first circle of the Working Group of its choice as a result of the selection procedure, the unsuccessful applicant will be offered observer status as part of the second or third circle of members.

6. Selection procedure

The selection procedure shall consist of an assessment of the applications performed by external contractor against the selection criteria listed in chapter 4 of this call and considering the assessment criteria detailed in chapter 5 of this call. Final decision on the appointment of the members will be taken by the DG Regional and Urban Policy unit G1. It will be followed by the establishment of a list of the most suitable applicants and concluded by the appointment of the members of the group.

The selection procedure will be carried out within three to four weeks after the closing of this call. All applicants will be informed of the results of the selection at the end of the procedure (indicatively in the first week of November). The first meeting of the working groups is planned in the week of 15th of November 2021.

For any further information please contact: REGIO-JUST-TRANSITION@ec.europa.eu

ANNEXES:

- Annex I: Application form
- Annex II: Privacy statement