



## Guidelines for applicants V6

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## Disclaimer

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# 1 What is the Capacity-Building Programme of PROSPECT+

## 1.1 Background and overall objective

From June 2017 to November 2020 the EU-funded H2020 PROSPECT project implemented a peer learning programme in which almost 200 local and regional authorities exchanged knowledge and experience on innovative financing schemes for their sustainable energy and climate actions. The programme built upon successful innovative financing schemes implemented in 31 cities and regions, who acted as mentors in the PROSPECT learning journey. Participants came from 29 European countries and exchanged knowledge on 18 innovative financing schemes through 4 learning cycles and 45 learning groups.

Built on this success and the many lessons learned from this experience, the H2020 project « PROSPECT+ - From learning to action! » has launched in 2021 a new capacity-building programme for local and regional authorities. The programme focuses on innovative financing for energy and climate actions with a particular attention in the crucial aspects of capacity building, decision-making, and replication processes.

By **innovative financing schemes**, PROSPECT+ refers to non-traditional ways of raising funds and facilitating sustainable energy and climate investments by mixing different sources (own funds, public and private funds) or engaging different partners (e.g., citizens, private sector). These innovative financing schemes include:

- Energy Performance Contracting (working with ESCOs)
- Internal contracting (Intracting)
- Revolving funds
- Guarantee funds
- Citizen financing (crowdfunding, cooperatives)
- Soft loans
- Third-party financing
- Green Bonds

The PROSPECT+ capacity-building programme is delivered upon **5 thematic areas**, namely: **public building, private building, public lighting, transport, and cross-sectoral topics**.

The learning programme aims to engage a total of 200 local and regional authorities, directly participating in one of its four learning cycles, either as mentors or mentees. A special focus will be made to ensure that beyond this direct participation in learning groups, trained participants will spread the acquired knowledge within their organisations and with other stakeholders in their local ecosystem.

In each learning cycle, PROSPECT+ aims to create at least 12 learning groups, each of them gathering from 2 to 6 participants.

## 1.2 Engagement process and calendar

PROSPECT+ will launch four calls for applications to engage public authorities in its four learning cycles starting respectively in:

- February 2022
- November 2022
- August 2023
- May 2024

**The fourth call for applications will run from January to March 2024.**

Applications will be selected according to eligibility and evaluation criteria described in Section 3 of this Guidelines. Selected participants from the different regional and local authorities acting as mentors or mentees will be matched to create the most effective learning groups.

Beside the development of a community of practice, the PROSPECT+ capacity-building programme will run online and physical meetings between mentors and mentees, as well as common online sessions for all participants from each learning cycle, and in addition two masterclasses in Brussels in 2023 and 2025 for the most-advanced mentees.

## 1.3 Participation modalities

Regional or local public authorities can participate in the PROSPECT+ capacity-building programme either as **mentors** or **mentees**.

A **mentor** is an individual representing a local or regional authority who has had direct experience with or have specific expertise in financing a sustainable energy and climate action through an innovative scheme and is willing to share insights to a mentee.

A **mentee**, on the other hand, is an individual representing a local or regional authority who wants to learn from an experienced or expert peer on financing a sustainable energy project using an innovative scheme and is interested to apply what they learned in their own context.

**Peer-learning methods:** peer mentoring, study visit, and local mentoring are the three methods adopted in the PROSPECT+ capacity-building programme, and are summarised below:

- **Peer mentoring** is a one-to-one relationship between a mentor and a mentee that enables deep learning exchanges, joint problem solving, and counselling.
- **Study visit** allows a group of mentees to learn from the mentors how they have implemented their projects, getting first-hand insights and recommendations.
- **Local mentoring** is a study group consisting of participants from the same country (or region), who speak the same language and have common backgrounds and plans.

Depending on the level of maturity of their projects, selected mentees can join either a peer-mentoring (1 mentor and 1 mentee) or a study-visit group (1 mentor and up to 6 mentees).

In peer mentoring, the mentor travels to the mentee's locality, whereas in the study visit, the group of mentees travels to the mentor's locality.

In each of the 4 learning cycles, there is a possibility for some participants to join a local group in their own country, working in their local language, with 1 mentor and up to 6 mentees.

Two masterclasses will be proposed to participants with the most advanced projects. They will take place in Brussels, after the learning cycles 2 and 4.

In addition, before each learning cycle starts, mentors can benefit from a dedicated online training session, where they receive all necessary information on the PROSPECT+ methodology, to be fully equipped for the exchanges with their mentees.

Each group is accompanied by a member of the PROSPECT+ project consortium, who organises and facilitates the exchanges and make sure the capacity-building programme runs smoothly.

## 1.4 Course and duration of a learning cycle

Each learning cycle will be implemented in a maximum duration of eight months and will consist of the following steps:

- **Step 0 “Warming Up”**: Online meetings to prepare the mentors and mentees for the exchanges in groups before starting the CBP. This step provides information on project proposal development and assessment of finance readiness, as well as training for mentors.
- **Step 1 “Getting started”**: an online meeting of about 2-4 hours, where participants in a group will get to know each other and mentors will present their good practices.
- **Step 2 “Working Together”**: an online meeting of about 1-4 hours, to better understand mentee's projects and needs, and how the mentor can further support the mentees on the physical meeting (Step 3). Mentor and mentee(s) define together the learning objectives to be achieved in the physical meeting.
- **Step 3 “Meeting Up”**: a two-day physical meeting (+ one day for travel), where the mentor and mentees meet and work further together to achieve the learning objectives through in-depth mentoring sessions and site visits.
- **Step 4 “Moving Forward”**: an online meeting of about 2-4 hours, on the question of replicability (how the mentees will integrate the acquired knowledge in their projects and increase their financial readiness).
- **Bonus step “Masterclass”**: a masterclass in Brussels for mentees with the most advanced projects.

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NOTA BENE: due to the Covid-19 pandemic and depending on how the sanitary situation evolves, the planned physical meeting in Step 3 might be replaced by online meetings. Each group will decide in due time with their facilitator if the physical meeting can take place or should be replaced by online meetings.

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## 1.5 In what language will the Capacity-Building Programme be carried out?

The PROSPECT+ capacity building programme and all related exchanges and materials will be carried out in English. Participants must have a B2<sup>1</sup> command of English to be able to communicate easily within their group, in all activities of the programme.

An exception will be made for mentees in local groups, where activities can take place in the local language, with the services of an interpreter for the exchanges with the mentor (if the latter is not from the same country).

## 1.6 What costs will be covered?

Participation to the PROSPECT+ capacity-building programme and all related activities is free.

Mentors will receive a lump sum of 1.400 euros to compensate their working time and contributions.

Participants' travel and accommodation costs will be covered as indicated in the table below<sup>2</sup>:

	Maximum costs reimbursement for the mentor	Maximum costs reimbursement per mentee
In peer-mentoring groups (Mentor travelling to the mentee's locality)	500 euros	160 euros
In study-visit groups (A group of mentees from different countries travelling to the mentor's locality)	460 euros	500 euros
In local groups (Mentor visiting a group of mentees in a same country)	500 euros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Host mentee: 2430 euros (including 1800 euros for interpreting services)</li> <li>– Visiting mentee: 270 euros</li> </ul>

## 1.7 Where to find more information on the Capacity-Building Programme?

More information on the capacity building programme can be found on the PROSPECT+ website:

<sup>1</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/9\\_languages\\_common\\_european\\_framework\\_of\\_reference\\_en.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/9_languages_common_european_framework_of_reference_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> For further information and details on the reimbursement of costs, please refer to [https://www.h2020prospect.eu/sites/default/files/reports/PROSPECT%2B\\_D3.2\\_Detailed\\_structure\\_and\\_plan\\_for\\_the\\_CB\\_P\\_July22\\_2.pdf](https://www.h2020prospect.eu/sites/default/files/reports/PROSPECT%2B_D3.2_Detailed_structure_and_plan_for_the_CB_P_July22_2.pdf)

- In the dedicated page of the project website <https://h2020prospect.eu/learning-programme>
- and in the FAQ section <https://h2020prospect.eu/faqs-terminology>

Informative webinars are organised at the beginning of each call for applications. The fourth informative webinar will take place on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January 2024. The webinar announcement and link for registration will be published on <https://h2020prospect.eu/get-involved>

## 2 What types of participants are targeted?

### 2.1 Mentors

We look for local or regional authorities that have successfully designed and implemented innovative financing solutions in sustainable energy or climate projects in their territories, and in one or several of the 5 thematic areas of PROSPECT+.

The persons taking part in the capacity-building programme of PROSPECT+ as mentors have a sound knowledge of how those projects were designed and implemented. They can liaise with other experts within their organisation and local ecosystem, to gather all elements of information that will help mentees in increasing their knowledge and capacities.

Mentors have a strong motivation to share their knowledge with their peers in other EU cities and regions. Ideally, they have a former experience in mentoring activities, but this is not compulsory as, when joining PROSPECT+, new mentors will benefit from a training session on the mentoring methodology.

In peer-mentoring and local groups, mentors pay a special attention to the mentee(s) local/national context (energy and climate laws or regulations), so that the knowledge transferred is best suited for future replication.

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Being a mentor in PROSPECT+ strengthens the perception of their local or regional authority as an expert on innovative financing scheme for sustainable energy and climate action projects. Moreover, mentors represent their city or region at the European level, and they will have the chance to showcase their activities and achievements. PROSPECT+ will feature such city or region as a good practice on innovative financing and give it visibility in the project materials, events, and communication channels.

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### 2.2 Mentees

We seek local or regional authorities that are interested in learning from an experienced peer-mentor on how to finance a sustainable energy and climate project using innovative financing schemes.

The person participating as mentee is directly involved in the financing and implementation of a local sustainable energy and climate project for which they are seeking the expertise of a mentor. This project is part of a local or regional sustainable energy and climate action plan or similar and is at least in the preparatory stage. The mentee can liaise with other experts and political representatives within their organisation to gather all elements of information related to the local project and to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and replication of the innovative financing scheme on the territory.

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Mentees will have the opportunity to learn from other projects implemented in Europe and apply what they learned in their own context. Also, they will get tailor-made assistance adapted to their learning objectives and needs, and to confront ideas with peers, and finally share their experience and challenge their knowledge to come up with new solutions.

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### **2.3 What commitments are expected from participants?**

When applying to the PROSPECT+ capacity building programme, participants commit to follow the full mentoring/learning cycle and to undertake the necessary preparation and follow-up tasks, according to the instructions and recommendations provided by the group facilitator.

If you are selected to be a mentor or mentee in one of the learning cycles, you will dedicate approximately 7 days for mentors and 5 days for mentees throughout the whole cycle. The duration of a learning cycle is flexible, ranging from 6 to 8 months, depending on the availability of participants and the work plan and time plan of each group.

### 3 How to apply?

The PROSPECT+ application forms are submitted on the EUSurvey platform. This allows you to download a PDF version of the form. You can also save your application at every step to come back to it at a later stage.

#### 3.1 Timeline of the fourth call for applications

**The call for mentees will be open from the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January 2024 to the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2024.**

An informative webinar for applicants will take place on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January 2024.

The links to the online application forms for mentors and mentees will be published on <https://h2020prospect.eu/get-involved>

#### 3.2 Who is eligible to apply?

PROSPECT+ will accept applications from:

- Staff members of regional or local authorities or their energy/climate agencies, in the eligible countries.
- Staff members of other local or regional organisations (e.g., development agencies, municipal companies, energy cooperatives, ...), in the eligible countries.
- External consultants working for a local or regional public authority in the eligible countries.

Eligible countries are EU-27, the United-Kingdom and H2020 associated countries: Albania, Armenia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Iceland, Israel, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, and Ukraine.

Applicants should demonstrate their capacity to manage or contribute directly to local or regional projects in the fields of sustainable energy and climate actions.

One participant can be both mentor and mentee in different learning cycles and thematic areas.

Former participants as mentors or mentees in PROSPECT (2017 – 2020) or in the previous learning cycles of PROSPECT+, can apply again but returning mentees must apply with a different project.

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All applicants are asked to provide a letter of support from the mayor or another political representative of the public authority they will represent in PROSPECT+. A template letter is available for a download from the application forms.

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### 3.3 What information should be included in the application?

#### For mentor applicants

The application form for mentors includes 3 main sections:

- One section to provide information on their organisation
- One section to provide information about the applicant, including their eventual former experiences in peer-mentoring, and their preferences for one or the other of the PROSPECT+ peer-learning methods
- One section about the applicant's expertise in implementing innovative financing schemes for energy or climate actions, allowing them to become a mentor in PROSPECT+. Here, applicants can choose up to two thematic areas and financing schemes and describe for each of them the successful project/good practice they have implemented. The description is guided by a list of items (see below). In addition, applicants can upload documents to provide further information on their actions, e.g., an already published case study.

Information to provide for the project/good practice description:

- Project/action title
- Status: completed or ongoing (if ongoing, what part of the work is remaining)
- Starting date of implementation
- Date of completion
- Objective (i.e., targeted problem)
- Solutions (an explanation of the measure outcome and output, i.e., energy refurbishment of public buildings with a paragraph describing it)
- Alignment with local (SEAPs/SECAPs/SUMPs) or regional, national plans and policies
- Budget
- EU or national/regional funding sources
- Departments involved within their organisation, other partnerships and stakeholders involved
- Annual energy savings (if appropriate)
- Targeted energy source (if appropriate)
- Yearly CO<sub>2</sub> reduction (tCO<sub>2</sub>/a) (if appropriate)
- RES production (MWh/year) (if appropriate)
- Other benefits or significant outcomes (i.e., annual revenues generated, new jobs created, public awareness raising, improvement of local governance)
- If the project was awarded at EU or national level
- Success factors (e.g., combination with subsidies, simplified tendering procedure, attractive feed-in-tariff scheme, pilot project)

- Specific local conditions for implementation (reference to regulations or support schemes on a regional or national level that helped implement this action)
- Level of transferability (whether the project was already replicated in other EU cities, and whether you estimate it easy to replicate and why)

In case of the selected applicants, this information will be used for the publication of good practices on the PROSPECT+ project website.

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Mentor applicants must fill-out the application form and especially their project description carefully, as it will serve the organisers to properly evaluate their ability to become a PROSPECT+ mentor. All details provided will also enable the best matching of participants.

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### For mentee applicants

The application form for mentees includes 3 sections:

- One section to provide information on the organisation
- One section to provide information about the applicant, including a question on their motivation to join PROSPECT+ as mentee.
- One section about the applicant's interest in the different learning opportunities offered by PROSPECT+. Here, applicants can choose up to two financing schemes (named Preference 1 and Preference 2) and describe for each of them the local projects for which they seek support from a mentor. People can apply for only one financing scheme (preference 1), but if possible and relevant, applying also for a second option (preference 2) will increase the matching possibilities. The project description is guided by a list of questions, that will help the organisers to evaluate inter alia the project financial maturity. In addition, applicants can upload documents to provide further information on their project.

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Mentee applicants must fill-out the application form and especially their project description carefully, as it will serve the organisers to properly evaluate their ability to join a PROSPECT+ learning group. All details provided will also enable the best matching of participants.

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## 3.4 How will applications be evaluated and matched?

### Evaluation criteria

Eligible applications will be evaluated by the members of the PROSPECT+ project consortium, according to the following criteria:

- Overall quality of the application (i.e., answers provided are clear, complete, detailed, and consistent).

#### Specific evaluation criteria for mentors:

- Motivation to share knowledge and expertise with peers in other cities, regions or agencies;
- Proven successful experience in implementing innovative financing schemes in at least one of the PROSPECT+ thematic areas. This will be evaluated through the elements provided in the project description;
- Previous experience in peer-mentoring (not mandatory but will be considered a plus).

**Specific evaluation criteria for mentees:**

- Clearly identified and described challenges and learning needs in innovative financing;
- Clearly identified and described project in at least one of the five PROSPECT+ thematic areas;
- Motivation to acquire new knowledge from an experienced peer in another city, region or agency;
- Ability to share the acquired knowledge with other colleagues in their organisation.

**Matching criteria**

Once all applications are evaluated, members of the PROSPECT+ project consortium will proceed with the matching of selected applicants, with the objective to create the most effective learning groups of mentors and mentees, according to the following criteria:

- Mentee's project and mentor's experience in the same thematic area;
- Interest from the mentee in financing schemes implemented by the mentor;
- Common challenges;
- Type of organisation;
- Population size;
- Gender-balance groups.

Additional criteria will be used to assign and match selected applicants in groups with different peer-learning methods (peer mentoring, study visit, and local mentoring):

- **In peer-mentoring groups** (one mentor with one mentee, with deeper learning exchanges, joint problem solving, and counselling), will be matched:
  - Mentors who declared a preference for this peer-learning method and were evaluated as able to do so;
  - Mentees with the most mature projects, based on their finance readiness.
- **In study visit groups** (allowing a group of mentees to learn how the mentor's project has been implemented, getting first-hand insights and recommendations), will be matched:
  - Mentors who declared a preference for this peer-learning method;
  - Mentees with common learning objectives.
- **In local mentoring groups** (study groups in which all mentees are in the same country), will be matched:
  - Mentors and mentees who declared a preference for this peer-learning method.

### **3.5 When and how applicants will be informed of the results?**

For the fourth engagement campaign:

Selected mentees will receive an email confirmation in the second week of March 2024.

All participants will be informed by email of the results of the matching process, i.e., to which mentor or mentees they have been matched, in the first week of April 2024. Facilitators will then contact participants in their groups to launch the learning cycle activities, starting in May 2024.



# PROSPECT+



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