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**Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF): Advancing Circular Economy (ACE) Facility
Call for Proposals (CfPs) 1**

Concept Note Application Guidelines

***This document provides applicants with an outline of how to apply for the funds under the
ACE Facility and a checklist of the required documentation.***

1.Introduction

The Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF), through its Advancing the Circular Economy Facility (ACE Facility), is seeking applications for projects that utilize circular economy principles to support marine ecosystem protection and marine pollution reduction in the marine and coastal zones of the insular Caribbean.

The ACE Facility fund was initiated with an initial contribution of EUR 25,700,000 (USD 28,270,000) from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development ("BMZ") through KfW Development Bank ("KfW"). The Facility was developed to contribute to the reduction of marine pollution in the Caribbean through the promotion of sustainable circular economy interventions.

The activities and projects to be supported by the ACE Facility will include those that address the:

- Minimization and/or prevention of marine litter, from entering the marine environment.
- Removal of marine litter (where the waste is further utilized, reused, recycled, repurposed, or proposed for proper disposal) successfully implemented by the end of the project.

The above will be complemented by activities that support knowledge and data generation on the topics of the circular economy and marine pollution in the Caribbean region.

All projects will need to have a direct and measurable impact on sustainably reducing marine litter, promote a sustainable approach to ensuring they operate financially independently by the end of the project grant funding period, and formulate new and/or strengthen existing partnerships that promote the circular economy in the Caribbean.

2. How to apply:

A two-step application process will be followed: (i) the submission of Concept Notes, and (ii) applicants with selected Concept Notes will be invited to submit Full Proposals.

Applicant organizations must complete the **Concept Note template** downloadable from the CBF Website. The Concept Note template includes guidance on how to complete the form and it is recommended that they are followed, and the form be completed in its entirety. Late submissions will not be accepted.

The Concept Note template consists of 5 parts which are detailed below:

- **Part A:** Applicant Organisation(s) Profile
 - **Part B:** The Project Description
 - Successful project applications need to show Circular Economy principles that address:
 - ✓ Marine waste prevention or minimization, and/or
 - ✓ Marine litter removal, and/or
 - ✓ Complemented by activities that support knowledge and data generation on the topics of the circular economy and marine pollution in the Caribbean region.
 - All projects will need to have a direct and measurable impact on reducing marine litter, promote a sustainable approach to ensuring they operate financially independently by the end of the project grant funding period, and formulate new and/or strengthen existing partnerships that promote the circular economy in the Caribbean.
- **Part C:** Environmental and Social Safeguards
 - In alignment with the CBF's vision of a Caribbean region where both its natural environment and people thrive, the proposed projects should yield significant environmental and social net benefits to the region. Proponents applying to this Call for Proposals should demonstrate that they are capable of effectively identifying, assessing, and managing environmental, social, pollution control, and waste management risks and impacts associated with their projects.
 - Applicants are encouraged to consult the reference document "CBF Environmental and Social Policy and Exclusion List" on the CBF's website to ensure that their Concept Notes are aligned with the CBF's requirements.

- **Part D: Project Estimated Budget**
 - Kindly remember that under the ACE Facility, grantees are required to contribute to their projects from their own or third-party resources. The threshold for co-financing^{1,2} is dependent on the type of grant recipient³ as presented below:
 - Non-profit organizations (CBOs, academia, local and regional NGOs) - 25% co-financing (in-kind and cash inclusive)
 - Government Institutions; Statutory Bodies or Quasi-government Institutions - 25% co-financing (cash only)
 - Regional Organisations - 50% co-financing (25% cash and 25% in-kind)
 - For-profit private SMEs, NGOs, CBOs - 50% co-financing (25% cash and 25% in-kind)
- **Part E: Additional Due Diligence**
 - In order for the CBF to ascertain the capacity of applicants to administer funds received, all applicants are required to answer all the questions contained within this section of the Concept Note Template.
 - All information submitted will be treated confidentially and will not be disclosed to any third parties unless required by law. It will be used exclusively to determine your organization's capacity and eligibility to receive grant funding from the CBF.

Concept Notes will be accepted in English, Spanish, or French.

¹ Cash cofinancing can include operational cost offsets; equity investments or other projects/grant funding.

² In-Kind contributions can include technical assistance; equipment, materials and services; human resources; infrastructure and facilities.

³ If your project will be implemented by a consortium of organisations, there must be one leading organisation that will be the applicant and the requisite co-financing requirements should be in accordance with the categorisation of that lead organisation.

3. Other Required Documentation:

The following documents are required to be submitted as attachments with the Concept Note:

- ✓ A signed declaration by the applicant organization on an organisation's letterhead, including the following:

"I, the undersigned being the person responsible in the Applicant's organization for the proposed Project, do hereby certify that the information given is true and correct at the time of submission.", with signature, name, position, place, date.

- ✓ Certificate of registration of the applicant organization.
- ✓ Audited financial statements prepared and signed by an independent, external auditor from two recent fiscal years (most recent available). In lieu of updated approved audited financial statements and/or where separate audited financial statements are not produced or available, Government Ministries can provide draft audited financial statements, management accounts and/or parent ministry financial audits.
- ✓ In the case, of consortia⁴, all members must submit a signed declaration on appropriate letterhead, including the following:

"We have read and approved the content of this application to the ACE Facility and agree to comply with the roles and responsibilities detailed in this project concept. We confirm that the project can be executed according to the proposed timeline considering a start date in Q1 of 2025", with signature, name, position, place, and date.

Applicants **must** submit their Concept Notes and other required documentation to the ACE Facility, via the Concept Note Application Portal on the CBF website here: <https://caribbeanbiodiversityfund.org/call-for-proposal/advancing-circular-economy-ace-facilitys-first-call-for-proposals/>.

4. Deadline for Application:

Applicants must submit their Concept Notes and other required documentation to the ACE Facility on or **before 11:59 pm (AST) September 20, 2024**.

⁴ The leading company is responsible for upload all the documentation

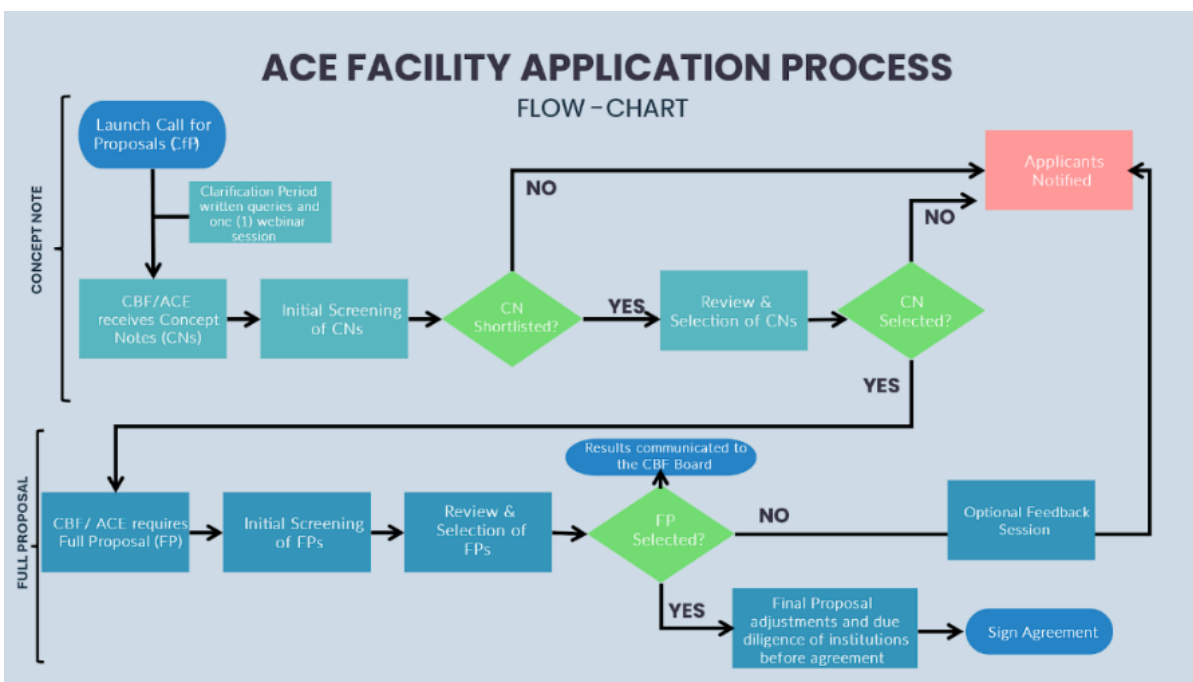
5. Selection Process:

A two-step application process will be followed. In the first step, concept notes will be evaluated and selected according to the aspects required in the Concept Notes template. In the second step, applicants of selected concept notes will be invited to submit a full proposal. The scoring of concept notes will be guided by the **Concept Note Evaluation Scoring Sheet**.

Applicants with selected Concept Notes will be provided with a Full Proposal template and may⁵ be provided with a preparation grant to a maximum value of 10,000 USD. If awarded an ACE Facility Project Preparation Grant (PPG), applicants will be required to enter into a PPG agreement with the CBF. Additional technical support may be accessed on a structured and pre-determined basis during the Proposal Development Phase.

The process for the selection of full proposals will follow a similar approach to the selection of concept notes.

This process is visualised in the **ACE Facility CfP Application Process Flow-Chart**.



⁵ To be determined via an application from potential grantees based on the Concept Note design and resources required to elaborate a Full-Proposal

6. Timelines:

The timeline for the complete selection process is estimated to follow the following timelines:

Concept Note selection process phases	Proposed Deadline
Posting of Call for Proposals	August 12, 2024
Deadline for Questions on ACE Call for Proposals	August 30, 2024
Submission of Concept Notes	September 20, 2024
Decision on selection of Concept Notes and invitation to selected applicants to submit Full Proposals	Week 4 October / Week 1 November 2024
PPG Grant application	Week 1-2 November 2024
Deadline for submission of Full Proposals	Q1 2025, to be confirmed with grantees that advance to this phase
Decision on selection of Full Proposals to be awarded	Q2 2025
Grant agreement signature	Q2 2025

7. Questions & Answers:

Applicants may submit questions to the ACE Facility up to August 30, 2024, for this Call for Proposals. Questions must be submitted **only** through the following emails: secretariat@caribbeanbiodiversityfund.org and acefacility@caribbeanbiodiversityfund.org. Questions received and the answers provided will be published on the CBF website at <https://caribbeanbiodiversityfund.org/faq/ace-call-for-proposals/>.

The CBF ACE Facility will be hosting a **Clarification Session on the 1st Call for Proposals on Wednesday 28th, August 2024 from 10:30AM -12:00PM.** Prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to attend, as we clarify the preparation of the Concept Note template and key DO's and DON'T's.

Please see the registration link to the Clarification Session here: <https://shorturl.at/8fPlf>

NOTE: The webinar will be held in English and provisions will be made for simultaneous interpretation in Spanish and French.