

Call for Proposals for Financial Assistance to Joint Investigation Teams (2024/5)

Objectives and scope

1. Providing technical and financial support to joint investigation teams (JITs) is part of Eurojust's mission to stimulate and improve the coordination of investigations and prosecutions in cross-border criminal cases, as provided by Articles 2 and 4 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1727 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 November 2018 on the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust), and replacing and repealing Council Decision 2002/187/JHA¹ (the Eurojust Regulation). According to Article 48 of the Eurojust Regulation, the Secretariat of the Network for Joint Investigation Teams is located at Eurojust. This action grant will enhance the use of JITs by ensuring that financial and other organisational constraints linked to the cross-border nature of the case do not hinder the establishment and operational needs of a JIT. A further benefit comes from the ability of Eurojust, through its involvement in JITs and funding applications, to gain valuable information on the operation, needs and effectiveness of JITs as a whole.
2. Eurojust will financially support JITs with a maximum total amount of EUR 470,000 between 16 August 2024 and 15 November 2024.
3. To comply with the co-financing principle, Eurojust will reimburse 95% of the total eligible costs under this call for proposals. This means that the amount stipulated in the Award Decision will be reimbursed fully only in the event that this amount is less than or equal to 95% of the total eligible costs. An amount of at least 5% of the total eligible costs shall be borne by the national authorities of the Member States.
4. Through these grants, support may be provided to the following actions:
 - meetings of the JIT, and/or participation in investigative measures carried out in the territory of another State;
 - the JIT's evaluation or actions in relation to investigative or judicial procedures directly deriving from the JIT in which its result is to be used;
 - interpretation during activities of the JIT, including during investigative measures, and translation of evidentiary material or procedural or case-related documents;
 - cross-border transportation of seized items, evidentiary material, procedural or case-related documents;
 - specialist expertise costs incurred for the purpose of the JIT;

¹ OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 138 (as amended by Regulation (EU) 2022/838, OJ L 148, 31.5.2022, p. 1-5; and Regulation (EU) 2023/2131, OJ L, 11.10.2023, p. 1-14).

- purchase of low-value equipment² to be used for the purpose of JIT activities; and
- hire of IT/electronic equipment and/or licences and software for the purposes of JIT activities.

5. Eligible costs related to these actions shall be the following:

- travel and accommodation costs (including domestic costs³);
- interpretation (including during investigative measures) and translation costs (including of evidentiary material or procedural or case-related documents);
- transportation costs for transferring items;
- specialist expertise costs;
- low-value equipment purchase costs;
- IT/electronic equipment/licences/software hire costs; and
- indirect costs (7%).

6. Travel and accommodation costs will be reimbursed on the basis of the following unit costs, following the principles set out in Article 181 of [Regulation \(EU, Euratom\) 2018/1046](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014 and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 (OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1).

Nature of travel/accommodation (*)	Applicable unit costs for <u>cross-border travel</u>	Applicable unit costs for <u>domestic travel (distance exceeds 200 km per one-way journey)</u>
Return flight within EU	EUR 280 per person	EUR 168 per person***
Return flight to/from/within non-EU countries	EUR 340 per person	EUR 168 per person***
Return flight to/from/within overseas countries/territories	EUR 880 per person	EUR 168 per person***
Return trip by car (**)	EUR 180 per vehicle(**)	EUR 108 per vehicle(**)
Return trip by train/bus	EUR 230 per person	EUR 138 per person

² "Low value equipment" is to be understood as defined in the applicable Terms and Conditions

³ Domestic travel costs (i.e. travel costs incurred by persons involved in JIT activities within their own State) may only be reimbursed if related to a JIT activity with the actual participation of the other participating State(s). Such costs are eligible when the travel distance exceeds 200 km per one-way journey. No reimbursement will be made for any travel under 200 km per one-way journey.

Domestic accommodation costs (i.e. accommodation costs incurred by persons involved in JIT activities within their own State) may only be reimbursed if related to a JIT activity with the actual participation of the other participating State(s).

Return trip by boat	EUR 80 per person	EUR 48 per person
Accommodation	State-specific rate, according to the list published on Eurojust's website (Reimbursement section).	State-specific rate, according to the list published on Eurojust's website (Reimbursement section).
<p>(*) For the purposes of applying travel unit costs, both the point of departure and final destination will be taken into account.</p> <p>(**) For the purposes of calculating this unit cost, one car shall be deemed to carry up to three passengers. As such, the unit cost of EUR 180 will be reimbursed on the basis of multiples of three passengers (with four to six passengers being reimbursed EUR 360, etc.).</p> <p>(***) All domestic return flights on the territory of EU Member State, non-EU countries and overseas countries will be reimbursed on the basis of one unit rate EUR 168.</p> <p>Remark: in case the means of transport are combined (e.g. flight for one trip and train for the return trip), half of each unit cost will be reimbursed.</p>		

7. Logistical support is provided through the lending of equipment (mobile telephones with communication costs included, and laptops) for the duration of the JIT, including possible extensions.
8. The total amount requested for purchase of IT/electronic low-value equipment shall not exceed EUR 7,500 per application. The purchase cost shall be between EUR 75 and EUR 1,000 (excluding VAT costs) per equipment item.
9. Eurojust does not seek to finance the entirety of a JIT, but only those costs arising from the cross-border dimension of the investigation⁴.
10. Any financing is necessarily subject to the limited availability of funds. To enable reasonable distribution and achieve the objectives of JITs funding described above, a ceiling of EUR 50,000 has been set for each application.
11. Actions of JITs for which financial assistance is sought should take place between 16 August 2024 and 15 November 2024.
12. The action period may be extended for an additional three months through a request for an extension submitted to the JITs Network Secretariat. The request, using the [official template](#), must be submitted at least one working day⁵ before the end date of the action period indicated

⁴ For example, the following JIT costs are excluded: staff expenditure, insurance for seconded members of the JIT, expenditure on communication interception, expenditure arising from seized assets (except transport costs), and expenditure on office accommodation.

⁵ Working days are defined as Monday to Friday except for public holidays adopted pursuant to Article 61 of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union and Articles 16 and 91 of the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union (CEOS), laid down by Council Regulation (EEC, Euratom, ECSC) No 259/68.

in the Award Decision. The submission of a request for an extension precludes the submission of a new funding application for the same action period (to prevent double funding).

Submission of applications and admissibility criteria

13. Any application for financial assistance must be submitted using Eurojust's Joint Investigation Teams Portal and electronic application system⁶, accessible from Eurojust's website (hereinafter referred to as the 'JITs-PS').
14. An application submitted via the JITs-PS is considered received by Eurojust when it reaches its server and the receipt is confirmed by the automatic message from the JITs-PS.
15. The application must be complete - including description of the JIT, planned activities and foreseen costs.
16. The application must identify at least one bank account of a public institution of a State involved in the JIT that is already known and acknowledged by Eurojust⁷.
17. The application must be received by Eurojust on the day of the deadline at the latest. Applications will be acknowledged by Eurojust by e-mail, indicating the date of receipt.
18. Only one application for the same JIT will be sent within one application deadline. In case of submission of multiple applications from the same JIT, Eurojust invites the applicant(s) to confirm which of the applications is relevant and withdraw the other application(s) within the given deadline. If no confirmation is received within the given deadline, only the latest application of the JIT will be accepted for further evaluation, and the other application(s) will be rejected.
19. JITs are not allowed to be awarded a grant in two consecutive calls.
20. Applicants can seek support in the application process by sending an e-mail to jits@eurojust.europa.eu. Please be aware that to enable a smooth processing of submitted applications, support cannot be guaranteed on the last day of the application deadline.

⁶ Should the applicant encounter technical difficulties with the electronic system, s/he should contact the JITs Network Secretariat at jits@eurojust.europa.eu.

⁷ Should the communicated bank account prove not to be already known and acknowledged by Eurojust in accordance with the applicable financial rules, the applicant will be requested to provide a completed Financial Identification Form for this account within a set deadline. In such case, award of a grant will only be made once this condition is fulfilled.

Exclusion criteria

21. The applicant shall, by way of submitting the application, declare that none of the entities or participants to the JIT fall under one of the situations listed within the exclusion criteria. Exclusion criteria are listed in the Annex.

Eligibility criteria

22. The applicant must prove the existence of a JIT by providing a copy of the signed JIT agreement (edited to exclude any identifying data), including possible extensions⁸ (unless a copy of the signed JIT agreement with an extension covering the action period of this call for proposals have already been provided for in a previous application).
23. National members, their deputies or their assistants shall be invited to participate in any JIT involving their Member State, and for which Eurojust funding is provided. Financial support is subject to such invitation. A Eurojust case ID number shall be required and thus indicated in the application.

Selection criteria

24. The application must be submitted by the JIT leader(s) or JIT member(s) of an EU Member State with delegated authority, in his/her professional capacity, to demonstrate the professional competencies required to participate in a JIT. The JIT leader may delegate the submission of an application to another person with relevant professional competency (i.e. JIT National Expert, Eurojust College Member, Europol Liaison Officer).

Award criteria

25. Eligible applications will be evaluated by the Evaluation Committee. Eligible applications will be ranked, taking into account the following award criteria:
 - 1) investigation of a terrorist offence, genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, a crime identified as a priority in the [Council conclusions setting the EU's priorities for the fight against serious and organised crime for 2022-2025](#), or other serious cross-border crimes which Eurojust is competent to deal with;
 - 2) number of States involved;

⁸ If the JIT has already expired and funding is sought for the purposes of the evaluation or in relation to investigative or judicial procedures directly deriving from the JIT in which its result is to be used, a copy of the last extension available before the closure of the JIT shall be provided. If the JIT expires before the end of the relevant action period, it should be indicated in the application whether the JIT will be extended or whether funding is requested also for purposes of the evaluation or in relation to investigative or judicial procedures directly deriving from the JIT in which its result is to be used.

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- 3) number of previous successful applications submitted to Eurojust by the JIT;
 - 4) complexity of the JIT⁹; and
 - 5) purpose of the actions and justification of estimates¹⁰.
26. Each application is assessed on the merits of the requests and information contained therein. The application shall be assessed independently from any prior applications (including annexes) received within previous funding Calls for proposals. Therefore, applicants must provide sufficient information for the Evaluation Committee to be able to make an informed assessment.
27. A maximum of 10 points can be awarded for each of the five criteria. Each application can receive a maximum total of 50 points. Proposals attaining an individual score of 2 points or less for criterion 4 or 5 will not be considered for the award of a grant.
28. Applications requesting a grant in the amount lower than EUR 1.000, might be awarded the requested amount in full.
29. Eurojust will decide upon the actual amounts and equipment awarded for each application, taking into account the ranking, available funds, number of applications received, availability of equipment and the amount sought in each application. The decision is then communicated to the JIT (i.e. to the contact person mentioned in the application).

Timeframe

30. The deadline for applications is 8 July 2024.
31. All applicants will be informed of the outcome of the evaluation of their application not later than 26 July 2024.
32. If the application is successful, a specified amount will be reserved pending the submission of a request for reimbursement within the fixed deadline. A request for reimbursement must be submitted, together with the supporting evidence, by a competent authority of a State involved in the JIT, in accordance with the terms and conditions applicable to Eurojust's financial support to JITs activities, no later than 15 December 2024. No reimbursement will be made if the request for reimbursement arrives after the published deadline for submission, except for duly justified exceptions as stated below.
33. Claims after the deadline may be accepted by way of an exception provided that:

⁹ The complexity of the case is assessed in relation to several aspects, such as level of organisation of the criminal network, number of suspects/victims possibly involved, number and difficulty of investigative measures carried out by the JIT, number or value of assets to be recovered, importance of financial damages resulting from the offences.

¹⁰ The importance of the action is assessed in relation to several aspects, such as justification of the action to be funded in view of operational needs of the JIT, the importance of the expected outcome of the action, clear relation of costs to the described actions.



- the award is not yet fully consumed by other JIT party(ies) that submitted claims within the deadline;
- the financial commitment is not yet closed (de-committed)¹¹;
- the claimant provides a valid justification¹² as to why the claim is submitted after the deadline.

34. For all queries, please e-mail: jits@eurojust.europa.eu.

35. **For additional information on the Terms and Conditions applicable to this call for proposals, please see the *Terms and conditions applicable to Eurojust's financial assistance to the activities of Joint Investigation Teams (JITs)*, accessible on Eurojust's [website](#).**

¹¹ The claimant may contact the JITs Network Secretariat to verify whether the financial commitment is closed or not.

¹² Valid justifications are only those falling beyond the control of the claimant(s).

ANNEX

The Applicant will be excluded from participating in a grant award procedure and from the Grant Award if (s)he is in any of the situations referred to in Articles 136 of the EU Financial Regulation¹³, i.e. one of the following situations:

- a) the person or entity is bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by a court, it is in an arrangement with creditors, its business activities are suspended, or it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under Union or national law;
- b) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the person or entity is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions in accordance with the applicable law;
- c) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the person or entity is guilty of grave professional misconduct by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the person or entity belongs, or by having engaged in any wrongful conduct which has an impact on its professional credibility where such conduct denotes wrongful intent or gross negligence, including, in particular, any of the following:
 - i. fraudulently or negligently misrepresenting information required for the verification of the absence of grounds for exclusion or the fulfilment of eligibility or selection criteria or in the implementation of the legal commitment;
 - ii. entering into agreement with other persons or entities with the aim of distorting competition;
 - iii. violating intellectual property rights;
 - iv. attempting to influence the decision-making of the authorising officer responsible during the award procedure;
 - v. attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon it undue advantages in the award procedure;
- d) it has been established by a final judgment that the person or entity is guilty of any of the following:
 - i. fraud, within the meaning of Article 3 of Directive (EU) 2017/1371 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹⁴ and Article 1 of the Convention on the

¹³ REGULATION (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012.

¹⁴ Directive (EU) 2017/1371 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2017 on the fight against fraud to the Union's financial interests by means of criminal law (OJ L 198, 28.7.2017, p. 29).

- protection of the European Communities' financial interests, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995¹⁵;
- ii. corruption, as defined in Article 4(2) of Directive (EU) 2017/1371 or active corruption within the meaning of Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of Member States of the European Union, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 May 1997¹⁶, or conduct referred to in Article 2(1) of Council Framework Decision 2003/568/JHA¹⁷, or corruption as defined in other applicable laws;
 - iii. conduct related to a criminal organisation as referred to in Article 2 of Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA¹⁸; EN L 193/94 Official Journal of the European Union 30.7.2018;
 - iv. money laundering or terrorist financing within the meaning of Article 1(3), (4) and (5) of Directive (EU) 2015/849 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹⁹;
 - v. terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities, as defined in Articles 1 and 3 of Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA²⁰, respectively, or inciting, aiding, abetting or attempting to commit such offences, as referred to in Article 4 of that Decision;
 - vi. child labour or other offences concerning trafficking in human beings as referred to in Article 2 of Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council²¹;
- e) the person or entity has shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations in the implementation of a legal commitment financed by the budget which has:
- i. led to the early termination of a legal commitment;
 - ii. led to the application of liquidated damages or other contractual penalties; or
 - iii. been discovered by an authorising officer, OLAF or the Court of Auditors, or the European Public Prosecutor's Office²² following checks, audits or investigations;

¹⁵ OJ C 316, 27.11.1995, p. 48.

¹⁶ OJ C 195, 25.6.1997, p. 1.

¹⁷ Council Framework Decision 2003/568/JHA of 22 July 2003 on combating corruption in the private sector (OJ L 192, 31.7.2003, p. 54).

¹⁸ Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA of 24 October 2008 on the fight against organised crime (OJ L 300, 11.11.2008, p. 42).

¹⁹ Directive (EU) 2015/849 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2015 on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purposes of money laundering or terrorist financing, amending Regulation (EU) No 648/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Directive 2005/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Commission Directive 2006/70/EC (OJ L 141, 5.6.2015, p. 73).

²⁰ Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA of 13 June 2002 on combating terrorism (OJ L 164, 22.6.2002, p. 3).

²¹ Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA (OJ L 101, 15.4.2011, p. 1).

²² Council Regulation (EU) 2017/1939 of 12 October 2017 implementing enhanced cooperation on the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office.

- f) it has been established by a final judgment or final administrative decision that the person or entity has committed an irregularity within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95²³;
- g) it has been established by a final judgment or final administrative decision that the person or entity has created an entity in a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or any other legal obligations in the jurisdiction of its registered office, central administration or principal place of business;
- h) it has been established by a final judgment or final administrative decision that an entity has been created with the intent referred to in point (g).

A financial contribution will not be granted to an applicant who is a natural or legal person:

- a) who is a member of the administrative, management or supervisory body of the person or entity referred to in Article 135(2) of the EU Financial Regulation, or who has powers of representation, decision or control with regard to that person or entity, and who is in one or more of the situations referred to in points (c) to (h) of paragraph 1 of this Article;
- b) that assumes unlimited liability for the debts of the person or entity referred to in Article 135(2) of the EU Financial Regulation, and who is in one or more of the situations referred to in point (a) or (b) of paragraph 1 of this Article;
- c) who is essential for the award or for the implementation of the legal commitment and who is in one or more of the situations referred to in points (c) to (h) of paragraph 1.

Administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants who are guilty of misrepresentation.

²³ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95 of 18 December 1995 on the protection of the European Communities financial interests (OJ L 312, 23.12.1995, p. 1).