

# ECHOES

# Call 1: FAQ



**Funded by  
the European Union**



**UK Research  
and Innovation**

ECHOES is a project funded by the European Commission under Grant Agreement n.101157364, with the support of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) under the UK government's Horizon Europe funding guarantee n.10110142 & n.10110466.

# Introduction

Below provides a list of Frequently Asked Questions and their answers.

This is offered as an accompaniment to the Guide for Applicants that can be downloaded from the **ECHOES First Call page**. Please also read the Guide as it provides further details.

## *FAQ Topics*

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# 1. About the ECHOES Cascading Grants Programme

## Q. What is the ECHOES Cascading Grants Programme?

**A.** ECHOES funds up to 50 projects from Cultural Heritage Institutions (CHIs) across three calls (2025–2027), to support CHIs in engaging with the Cultural Heritage Cloud. The focus is on digital engagement, data sharing, and collaboration.

- **Call 1: Data** (2025) supports the contribution, enhancement and reuse of digital heritage data.
- **Call 2: Engagement and Collaboration** (late 2025): focuses on capacity building and promotes sector-wide digital skills and awareness.
- **Call 3: Data and Vertical Applications** (2026–2027): encourages innovative integrations with the ECHOES Cloud including (workflows, tools, full integration)

Projects must support the FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) and describe practical use scenarios for heritage datasets.

## Q. How many proposals from Call 1 will be funded?

**A.** A maximum of twelve projects will each receive up to **€60,000** for Call 1.

From Stage 1, a maximum of 24 projects will be invited to Stage 2, within which the final 12 will be selected.

## 2. Eligibility

### **Q. Who can apply as Lead Applicant (Coordinator)?**

**A.** Only **CHIs** can be coordinators for ECHOES Cascading Grants. In this context, we define CHIs as mission-driven organisations dedicated to the preservation, management, research, and dissemination of cultural heritage, ensuring its accessibility for present and future generations. Any type of CHI (e.g., museums, libraries, archives, heritage centres — including those that exist within larger institutions such as universities — or other public institutions dedicated to cultural heritage conservation, preservation and outreach) may apply.

The coordinator (and any consortia members) must be from eligible countries under **Horizon Europe** (EU Member States and associated countries).

### **Q. How does ECHOES define a Cultural Heritage Institution?**

**A.** ECHOES defines CHIs as mission-driven organisations dedicated to the preservation, management, research, and dissemination of cultural heritage, ensuring its accessibility for present and future generations. Any type of CHI (e.g., museums, libraries, archives, heritage centres (including those that exist within larger institutions such as universities) or other public institutions dedicated to cultural heritage conservation, preservation and outreach) may apply.

### **Q. Can smaller, medium-sized and lesser resourced CHIs apply?**

**A.** Yes, smaller and medium-sized or lesser resourced CHIs are especially encouraged to apply.

### **Q. Can consortia apply?**

**A.** Yes. Submissions by consortia and especially by interdisciplinary consortia (that include CHIs, researcher, small and medium-sized enterprises, civil society actors, etc.) are encouraged. All partners in the consortium receiving funding should be located in an eligible country under Horizon Europe. The project coordinator must be a CHI.

**Q. Can a university, NGO, or SME apply as Coordinator or as part of a consortium?**

- **Universities:**

- Coordinator: Yes, they can apply as Coordinator if the specific department functions as a CHI (e.g., archaeology, conservation).
- Consortium Member: Yes they can be part of a consortium.

- **NGOs:**

- Coordinator: Yes, they can apply as coordinator if their mission is cultural heritage-related and they meet the CHI definition shared above.
- Consortium Member: Yes they can be part of a consortium.

- **SMEs:**

- Coordinator: They can act as lead long as they qualify as a CHI as defined above.
- Consortium Member: Yes they can be part of a consortium.

**Q. I work within a smaller centre, institute or lab within a larger organisation. Can I apply as the smaller unit that I work within, or do I have to apply as the larger organisation?**

**A.** Larger organisations that are made up of individual centres, institutes or labs, are **not considered as a single entity for this call**. The individual centres, institutes or labs are entitled to apply as independent from the larger organisation.

**Q. From what countries can participants be located?**

**A.** The coordinator as well as any consortia members must be from eligible countries under **Horizon Europe** (EU Member States and associated countries).

**Q. Can institutions from outside Horizon-eligible countries participate?**

**A.** Yes — but only if they don't receive funding. All funded partners must be from Horizon Europe-eligible countries.

**Q. How many proposals can my organisation Coordinate?**

**A.** In each of the three ECHOES calls organisations can coordinate one project proposal and participate in up to two additional project proposals. Organisations can receive an accumulated total of 60k € maximum funding across all three calls.

**Q. How many Calls can my organisation participate in?**

**A.** In each of the three ECHOES calls organisations can coordinate one project proposal and participate in up to two additional project proposals. Organisations can receive an accumulated total of 60k € maximum funding across all three calls.

**Q. My organisation is involved in ECHOES, can I participate in a proposal?**

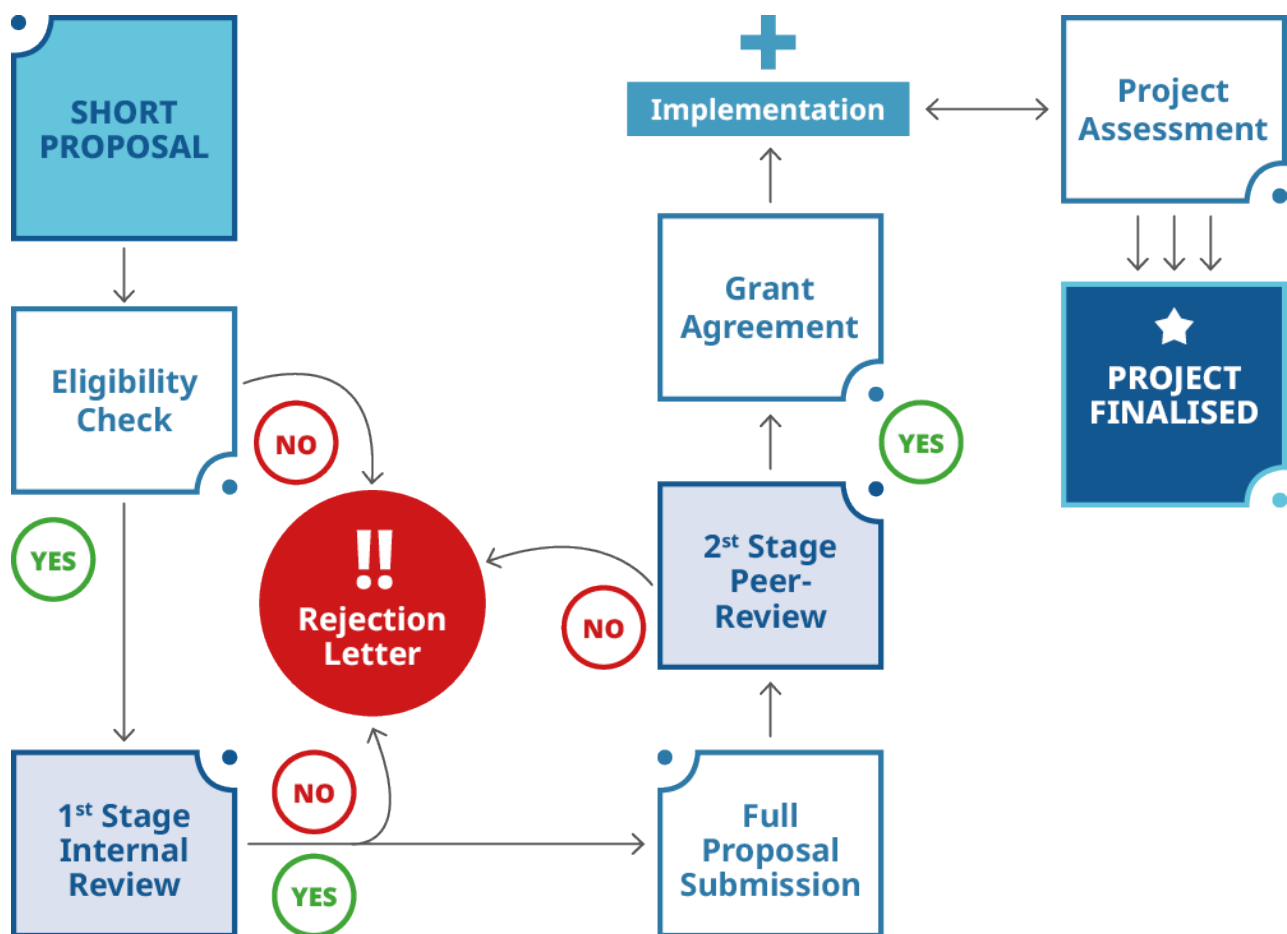
**A.** Organisations involved in ECHOES can join and prepare proposals, but not the individual centres, institutes or labs and people from these organisations that are actively involved in the ECHOES project. In the proposal, organisations need to express their relation to the ECHOES consortium in detail. An independent evaluator assigned by the ECHOES Consortium will assess if there is a potential conflict of interest.

### 3. Application & Submission Process

**Q. How does the application process work and what is the timeline?**

**A.** The ECHOES Cascading Grants Programme for Call 1 has 2 stages:

- **Stage 1:** Concept Note (short application) due 15 May 2025
- **Internal Evaluation of Stage 1 Proposals:** announced July 2025
- **Stage 2:** Full Proposal (only for shortlisted applicants) due September 2025
- **Communication of Final Results to Applicants:** Until Mid-October 2025
- **Project Start date:** Preferably December 2025 or January 2026, but must begin within Q2 of 2026 if more setup time is required.



### **Q. What is the submission deadline?**

**A.** Each Call has a specific deadline, which will be published on the ECHOES website. Proposals must be submitted by 23:59 CEST on the cut-off date.

- **Call 1:**
  - **Stage 1:** 15 May 2025 by 23:59 CEST.
  - **Stage 2:** July 2025, date to be determined

### **Q. How many applicants will be invited to Stage 2 of Call 1?**

**A.** In the first call, twenty-four successful applicants from Stage 1 will be invited to submit a full proposal in Stage 2.

### **Q. Where do I submit my application?**

**A.** ECHOES has setup a dedicated application platform via the FundingBox. This is an online application form where you answer a series of questions online and upload some documents. You can access the ECHOES FundingBox application platform via the **ECHOES website** under the specific call.

### **Q. Can multiple people edit the application on the application platform?**

**A.** Yes. multiple people can edit the application. However, to prevent loss of work done we recommend that:

- Participants develop their application content in a separate word processing programme to collaboratively write and edit there. Then a single participant copies and pastes the information into the online application form.
- Single collaborators work on an application at a time. If one person hits save on a particular section while another person is working in a different section their work will be lost.



## Q. What content and documents need to be included in my application?

**A.** For each Stage of the different ECHOES Cascading Grants Calls, we require different information. The FundingBox platform we are using will prompt you for all required information. Below is an overview of information required for the upcoming Call 1.

- **Call 1:**

- **Stage 1: Eligibility and Relevance to the Call**

- **Concept Note:** Explaining the project's objectives, proposed dataset and methodology, anticipated impact, and alignment with Cultural Heritage Cloud, team composition and expertise.
- **Evidence of Organisation's Legal Status:** Document illustrating legal status of the organisation.
- **Initial Budget Sheet:** Illustrating a general understanding of the overall proposed budget and how it will be distributed across consortium partners.

During this stage, applications will be reviewed for eligibility and relevance to the call. Proposals will be assessed based on their alignment with the respective funding call, sustainability considerations, and potential long-term impact.

*Please download and read the Guide for Applicants from the **ECHOES First Call page** for a detailed overview of the different requirements for each section of the Stage 1 Proposal (page 10)*

- **Stage 2: Full Proposal Submission**

Applicants advancing to Stage 2 will need to submit a comprehensive proposal (maximum 5,000 words), which must include:

- **Project Objectives and Methodology:** Describe how the project will be implemented (steps) within the course of its duration. Also, provide an indicative budget breakdown (personnel costs, travel, equipment, etc.) for the requested funding. Include a table of expected results at mid-term and at the end of the project. At this stage, applicants will need to provide detailed information on how their projects align with the Cultural Heritage Cloud. Those who progress beyond the first stage will receive training materials and guidelines to help ensure their projects are compatible and interoperable with the Cloud. Additionally, mentoring support will be available if needed.

- **Expected Impact and Sustainability Plan:** Description of the project's expected contribution to Cultural Heritage Cloud, plans for long-term sustainability, and potential sector-wide influence.
- **Team Composition and Expertise:** Information on the project team, including relevant experience (incl. past projects), skills, and gender balance considerations.
- **Milestones and Timeline:** Specification of at least three (minimum) and up to five (maximum) major milestones.

Separately, applicants are also required to submit a budget alongside their proposal:

- **Budget Breakdown and Justification:** A detailed explanation of how the requested funds will be allocated across different project activities. Including: number of PMs requested, personnel costs requested, other costs (consumables, travel). Indirect costs: max. 25% flatrate.

**Q. What is an “evidence of legal entity status document” that I have to provide, and why do I have to provide it?**

**A.** A legal entity status document is a form of evidence that illustrates to evaluators that your organisation does actually exist. For example, a form of evidence could be a chamber of commerce registration, it could be an official journal listing, a deed of incorporation, a notarial deed etc. We are aware that evidence of the legal status of organisations often differ between countries. We recommend you contact your organisation's administration department to understand what they can provide to prove the legal status of your organisation. If you are unclear about whether the document you have is enough, please reach out to us at [grants@echoes-eccch.eu](mailto:grants@echoes-eccch.eu) and we can help assess this.

## Q. Is there a specific budget template I need to use?

A. Yes, once you sign up and access the ECHOES Call 1, Stage 1 application platform and navigate to the Budget section, you can download the provided budget sheet to use.

Partner No.		Partner Name	Role in Project	Type of Organisation	Total Budget Allocated to Partner	% of Overall Budget
1			Project Coordinator	CHI		
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
etc.						
<b>TOTAL REQUESTED BUDGET:</b>					0 €	0%
Total amount should sum up to amount listed in cell C12						

## Q. What language can the proposal be submitted in?

A. Proposals must be submitted in English.

## 4. Project Basics

**Q. If my proposal gets accepted, when does the project have to begin?**

**A.** Call 1 accepted proposals will be communicated to recipients until Mid-October 2025. Ideally projects commence by December 2025 or January 2026, however we understand that more time might be needed for set-up, hiring personnel etc and allow for projects to begin in Q2 of 2026. Projects must end within 12 months.

**Q. How long does my proposed project have to be?**

**A.** Proposed projects can be up to 12 months long. Shorter projects are also allowed.

## 5. Project Scope & Cloud Alignment / Integration

### **Q. How do we align with a Cloud that doesn't yet exist?**

**A.** In Stage 1 you provide a **conceptual scenario** around alignment:

- How your data could be used within the Cloud ("use case")
- Technical standards, formats, vocabularies you already use
- Any tools, APIs, or repositories already in place or you envision using
- If already using a repository or platform, explain how it aligns with FAIR standards

For further details on **Integration and Interoperability**, please see the **ECHOES project FAQ page** under the Integration and Interoperability section.

### **Q: How should projects be designed to integrate with the evolving ECHOES platform?**

**A.** For answers to this question and further details on Integration and Interoperability, please see the **ECHOES project FAQ page** under the Integration and Interoperability section.

### **Q: What are the key interoperability requirements for project integrating with ECHOES?**

**A.** For answers to this question and further details on Integration and Interoperability, please see the **ECHOES project FAQ page** under the Integration and Interoperability section.

### **Q: Can existing projects with commercial components be integrated into ECHOES?**

**A.** For answers to this question and further details on Integration and Interoperability, please see the **ECHOES project FAQ page** under the Integration and Interoperability section.

**Q: How are future projects integrated into the ECHOES ecosystem?**

**A.** For answers to this question and further details on Integration and Interoperability, please see the **[ECHOES project FAQ page](#)** under the Integration and Interoperability section.

## 6. Data

### **Q. What kinds of datasets are eligible/should the project provide?**

**A.** Any **digital cultural heritage data** can be proposed:

- Digitised or born-digital content (e.g. images, 3D, text, AV, web archives)
- Audio, video, images, 3D models, RDF, text, IIIF objects, authority data, thesauri
- Metadata and Metadata-only datasets are eligible: describe schema, ontologies, vocabularies used. See below for “metadata-only” datasets.
- You can also propose newly created, enriched, or curated existing data

### **Q: Can metadata-only datasets be submitted?**

**A.** Yes, but the use case must be compelling: e.g., enabling discovery, research, or enrichment. Describe schema, ontologies, vocabularies used.

### **Q: Are incomplete data eligible?**

**A.** Yes. Projects may digitise or enhance datasets during the grant.

### **Q. What if my data is sensitive?**

**A.** Sensitive or restricted data is acceptable. Please describe ethical/legal conditions clearly. Use the FAIR and CARE principles to manage ethical or community-sensitive datasets and to guide access decisions.. You may describe restricted access and still be eligible.

### **Q: Can I apply if my data isn't fully identified yet?**

**A.** Yes. Just describe what is known and how the remaining elements will be identified.

## 7. Data Access, Licensing

### Q. Where should the data live?

**A.** You may store it in an existing trusted repository or on your own infrastructure. Duplication to the Cloud is **not required** immediately: just outline intended steps for integration.

### Q. Are there format or license requirements?

**A.** There are no mandated formats, but open standards are preferred (IIIF, RDF, JSON, etc.). Open licenses are encouraged (e.g., CC-BY, CC0), and should be as open as possible, but restricted licenses are permitted if justified. At minimum, metadata must be openly accessible.

### Q. What is the long-term expectation for my data?

**A.** You must have a sustainability plan for your dataset. For example, storage in a trusted repository, long-term access strategy, open formats, etc.

## 8. Accessibility & Inclusivity

### Q. Are accessibility and inclusion important?

**A.** Yes. Projects must consider accessibility for disabled users (such as, screen reader support, alt-text etc.), and inclusive design should be part of planning.



## 9. Budget & Funding

### **Q. What is the funding amount for Call 1?**

**A.** The maximum grant per project within Call 1 is: €60,000.

### **Q. Is there a specific budget template I am meant to use?**

**A.** Yes, once you sign up and access the ECHOES Call 1, Stage 1 application platform and navigate to the Budget section, you can download the provided budget sheet to use for Stage 1. A Stage 2 budget template will be provided during Stage 2.

### **Q. What needs to be included in the Stage 1 Initial Budget Sheet?**

**A.** The Stage 1 Budget Sheet is meant to illustrate a general understanding of the overall proposed budget and how it will be distributed across consortium partners.

### **Q. What needs to be included in the Stage 2 Budget Breakdown & Justification?**

**A.** The Stage 2 Detailed Budget Sheet is meant to offer a detailed explanation of how the requested funds will be allocated across different project activities. Including: number of PMs requested, personnel costs requested, other costs (consumables, travel), subcontracting. Indirect costs: max. 25% flatrate.

### **Q. What kinds of funds can be included in my overall Budget?**

**A.** A variety of different costs can be included within your ECHOES budget. These calls need to be detailed in your Stage 2 Detailed Budget Sheet and justified. Such costs include:

- Personnel (incl. project management)
- Subcontracting (e.g., developers, translators, digitisation vendors)
- Equipment, consumables, travel, training, licenses
- Accessibility adaptations
- Temporary staff

- Indirect costs receive a maximum 25% flat rate.

**Q. Can we hire temporary staff for the project?**

**A.** Yes, hiring new or short-term staff specifically for the project is allowed. All expenses must be clearly justified in the detailed budget breakdown in Stage 2.

**Q. Can we include subcontracting costs in the project budget?**

**A.** Yes, costs for subcontracting are eligible. All expenses must be clearly justified in the detailed budget breakdown in Stage 2.

**Q: Can I use funding to digitise analogue assets?**

**A.** Yes. Digitisation and metadata enrichment are eligible activities.

**Q: Is co-financing required?**

**A.** No. ECHOES grants cover 100% of eligible costs up to the cap.

**Q. How is the funding in Call 1 dispersed?**

**A.** Funding is provided after successful conclusion of a Third-Party Project Agreement. It is provided in two lump-sum payments:

- 70% upon signing the subgrant agreement.
- 30% after successful project completion and submission of the final report.

**Q: Can the same organisation apply for funding across the different calls?**

**A.** Yes, but total funding cannot exceed €60,000 across all calls applied for.

## 10. Consortia & Partnerships

### **Q. Are consortia mandatory?**

**A.** No — single applicants (a CHI) are eligible. However, submissions by consortia and especially by interdisciplinary consortia (that include CHIs, researcher, small and medium-sized enterprises, civil society actors, etc.) are encouraged and positively evaluated.

### **Q: What types of partners are allowed in a consortium?**

**A.** The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of possible partners:

- Other CHIs, universities, SMEs, NGOs etc.
- Private companies (as contributors or subcontractors)
- Partners outside the list of eligible countries under **Horizon Europe** (EU Member States and associated countries) **if they do not receive funding**.

### **Q. Does a consortium have to be international in composition?**

**A.** No. Partners can be from the same country, though diversity may strengthen the application.

### **Q: Will matchmaking tools and events for finding consortium partners be offered?**

**A.** No. Applicants are advised to follow ECHOES channels to connect with potential partners.

## 11. Reporting

### Q. What are the reporting requirements?

A. ECHOES Grant Recipients are required to submit:

- An **interim report** that outlines progress relative to the project's milestones, to be submitted midway through the project.
- A **final report**, including a summary of results to be published on the ECHOES website and a detailed assessment of compatibility with the ECHOES Conceptual Model.
- A **concise presentation** of the methodology followed, results achieved, accessibility of data produced and sustainability of the results.

### Q. What measures are in place in case a project does not meet its milestones?

A. Failure to meet the agreed milestones within the specified timeline of the project may lead to the withholding of the final payment by the funding authority. If significant issues arise, the Grants Managing Partner (Netherlands Institute for Sound & Vision) can require the implementation of corrective actions to address these, which could include revising project objectives, adjusting timelines, reallocating resources, or other measures aimed at realigning the project with its original goals.

## 12. Evaluation & Selection

### Q. How are applications evaluated?

A. Applicants for Call 1 are evaluated across 2 Stages.

- **Stage 1 (Concept Note):**
  - Meets eligibility criteria
  - Relevance to call goals
  - Basic feasibility
- **Stage 2 (Full Proposal):**
  - Relevance (30%)
  - Impact (20%)
  - Team quality (20%)
  - Budget justification (15%)
  - Sustainability, accessibility, and inclusivity (15%)

*For further details and description of the different evaluation criteria see please download and the Guide for Applicants from the **ECHOES First Call page** and refer to the Evaluation section on page 13.*

## 13. Staying Informed & Getting Help

### Q. Where can I find updates or get support?

A. **ECHOES Grants Portal** for regular updates on the ECHOES Cascading Grants including dates, guides, FAQs, etc.

- **Subscribe to the newsletter**
- Contact: **grants@echoes-eccch.eu**