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**Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF): Advancing Circular Economy (ACE) Facility
Call for Proposals (CfPs) 2**

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. Grant amounts range from USD 400,000 to USD 2,000,000 per project and need to be complemented by grantee co-financing as outlined in Section 2 below.

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, demonstrate 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**, which can be downloaded 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:** Project Title and Summary
- **Part B:** Applicant Organisation(s) Profile
- **Part C:** 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 demonstrate 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 D:** 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 required 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 E: Project Estimated Budget**
 - Kindly be advised 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) of the total project value
 - Government Institutions; Statutory Bodies or Quasi-government Institutions - 25% co-financing (cash only) of the total project value
 - Regional Organisations - 50% co-financing (25% cash and 25% in-kind) of the total project value
 - For-profit private SMEs, NGOs, CBOs - 50% co-financing (25% cash and 25% in-kind) of the total project value
- **Part F: 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 of 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. However, consortium members are strongly encouraged to align with the thresholds applicable to their respective categories, taking into account the current state of their operations.

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.

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

"I, the undersigned, being the person responsible in the Applicant's organization for the proposed Project, do hereby declare that, to the best of my knowledge, neither I nor my organization have any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest in relation to the proposal process under the ACE Facility. I further certify that no persons within the Applicant's organization have been involved in the strategic development or technical oversight of the ACE Facility within the past two (2) years. I confirm that the information provided herein is true and correct at the time of submission", with signature, name, position, place, date.

- ✓ Certificate of registration of the applicant organization and demonstration of local partnerships for each project intervention country, or evidence to operate in the project intervention country(ies).
- ✓ 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

⁴ The leading company is responsible for upload all the documentation

to the proposed timeline considering a start date in Q2 of 2026”, with signature, name, position, place, and date.

- ✓ In the case of cofinancing, all co-financers⁵ must submit a signed declaration on appropriate letterhead, including the following:

“We have read and confirm that we commit to providing co-financing to the amount of (USD xxx cash and/or USD xxx in-kind) as detailed in this project proposal. We confirm that the co-financing can be mobilised according to the proposed timeline considering a start date in Q2 of 2026”, 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-second-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) November 26, 2025.**

5. Selection Process:

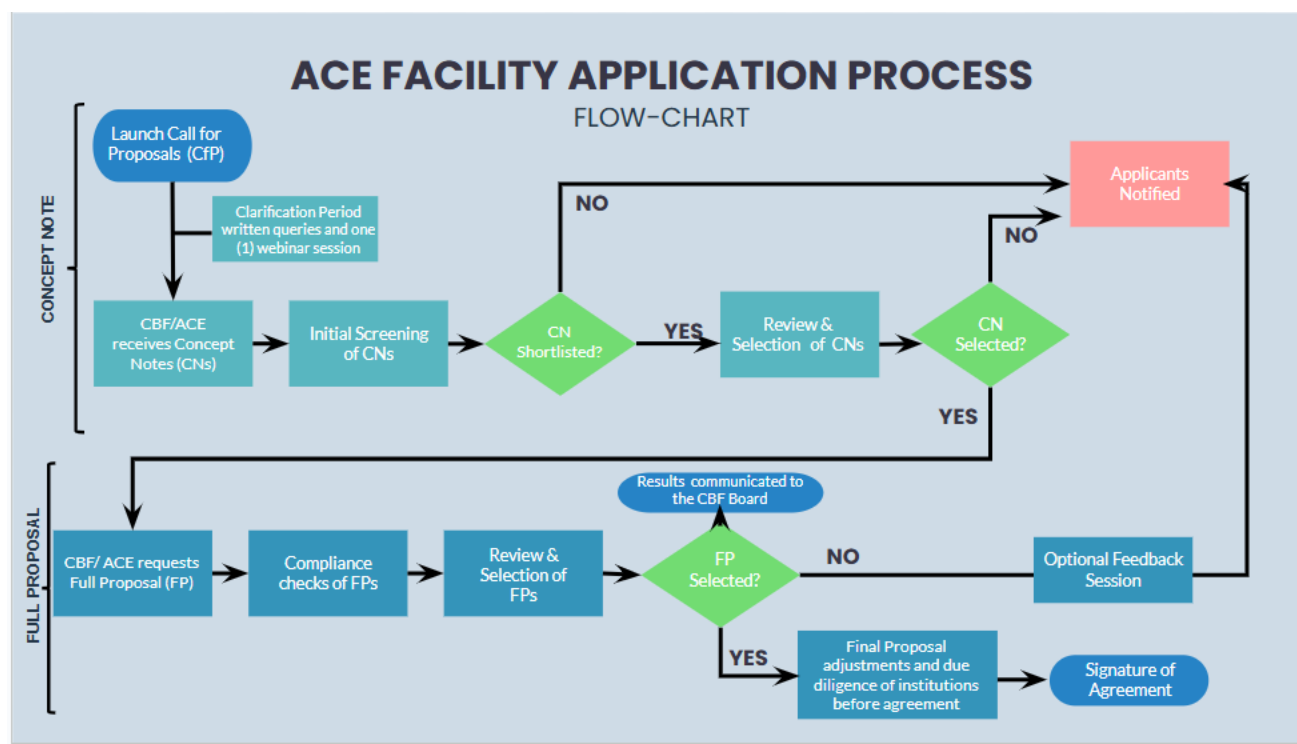
A two-step application process will be followed. In the first step, concept notes will be evaluated and selected according to the aspects required in the Concept Notes template. In the second step, applicants of selected concept notes will be invited to submit a full proposal. The scoring of concept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

⁵ If a member of the consortia is also a co-financier, one letter can suffice, provided it includes both the consortia and co-financing declarations

Applicants with selected Concept Notes will be provided with a Full Proposal template and may⁶ 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**.



⁶ 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	October 14, 2025
Deadline for Questions on ACE Call for Proposals	October 31, 2025
Submission of Concept Notes	November 26, 2025
Decision on selection of Concept Notes and invitation to selected applicants to submit Full Proposals	Mid-December 2025
PPG Grant application	Week 1-2 January 2026
Deadline for submission of Full Proposals	Q1 2026
Decision on selection of Full Proposals to be awarded	Q2 2026
Grant agreement signature	Q2 2026

7. Questions & Answers:

General FAQs are available [HERE](#).

Applicants may also submit questions to the ACE Facility up to October 31, 2025, 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/call-for-proposal/advancing-circular-economy-ace-facilitys-second-call-for-proposals/>.

The CBF ACE Facility will be hosting a **Clarification Session on the 2nd Call for Proposals on Tuesday, October 28th from 10:00am to 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://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/aTEAkZaYSIuB99DIEYEjTw>

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