RERIPA

Strengthening Research and Innovation ecosystems to address the Impact of climate change in the Pacific

GRANTS OPERATIONS MANUAL

RERIPA is a project collaboratively implemented by:

Enhancing research and innovation ecosystems to tackle climate change in the Pacific (RERIPA)

This Grants Operations Manual is a reference document for RERIPA Partners (IRD, PIDF, PIANGO, VMGD) and stakeholders targeted by RERIPA Calls for proposals, in line with the general and special conditions of the Grant contract number FED/2020/421-373 signed between IRD, the European Union and the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) (contracting authority), and in line with IRD internal procedures.

This Manual covers all aspects and procedures involved in the implementation and management of the competitive grants scheme of the RERIPA Project including the thematic scope, intended beneficiaries, objectives and expected results, award process (project evaluation and selection), financial management, reporting and overall grants' project monitoring.

The Manual will be updated if necessary, as the RERIPA Project progresses.

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Glossary / List of Acronyms

AC	Advisory Committee
ACP	Africa, Caribbean and Pacific
C&D	Communication and Dissemination
CCI	Climate change impacts
CFP	Call for Proposals
CMT	Coordination and Management Team
CSO	Civil society organisation
EU	European Union
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
IRD	Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development)
KPI	Key Progress Indicators
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OACPS	Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States
PIANGO	Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
PIDF	Pacific Island Development Forum
R&I	Research and Innovation
RERIPA	Renforcement des écosystèmes de Recherche et d'Innovation face aux enjeux climatiques dans le Pacifique
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
VMGD	Vanuatu Meteorology Geohazards Department

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1. The RERIPA Project

1.1 Project overview

The RERIPA Project **"Renforcement des écosystèmes de Recherche et d'Innovation face aux enjeux climatiques dans le Pacifique"** (*Strengthening Research and Innovation Ecosystems to Address the Impact of Climate Change in the Pacific*) in the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) is an initiative selected under the call for projects of the **ACP Innovation Fund**, a component of the R&I programme of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) with financial contribution from the European Union.

The ACP Innovation Fund (https://oacps-ri.eu/en/innovation-fund/) is a key component of the OACPS Research and Innovation (R&I) Programme, aimed at strengthening R&I capacity in its African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) member countries, to unlock their innovation potential and support their transition into knowledge-based economies for sustainable development. Investments in R&I capacity are likely to pay a higher dividend, if embedded in an effective and inclusive innovation ecosystem and combined with efforts to constitute a critical mass of skilled people adapted to the labour market demand.

The ACP Innovation Fund provides financial support for the implementation of projects advancing solutions in the following areas:

- increasing access to digital literacy, knowledge, and use of emerging technologies;
- creating or strengthening effective links between R&I skills development and labour market demand;
- establishing or enabling effective synergies in the research and innovation ecosystem, including with the private sector; facilitating conditions for technology transfer; promoting R&I uptake;
- promoting local and indigenous knowledge and its use in combination with formal knowledge systems and practices.

Four Project consortium members: IRD (Research Institute for Sustainable Development), Pacific Islands *Association of Non-Government Organisations (PIANGO - Fiji), Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF - Fiji), Vanuatu Meteorology & Geo-Hazard Department (VMGD - Vanuatu)*

RERIPA General objective: Inclusive R&I environment across the Pacific region to face climate change impacts (CCI)

The original approach of RERIPA is to support the co-design and deployment of solutions around climate issues by academic actors, companies, NGOs, users' representatives and public authorities, in order to respond to identified needs.

RERIPA Specific objectives:

- **SO1**. R&I stakeholders collaborating across the Pacific region through a regional network to develop and apply innovative R&I strategies, in particular to introduce CCI solutions

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- **SO2**. R&I stakeholders able to generate, apply and transform knowledge to innovate for sustainable development
- **SO3**. Increased uptake in the region of innovative, inclusive and sustainable solutions to face regional climate change impacts tested, developed or adapted by the Living Labs

Geographical scope: RERIPA will be implemented in one or more of the 15 SIDS in the Pacific Region: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

Grant amount: €4,199,213 - Project duration: 48 months (March 2021-February 2025)

Context

The consequences of climate change on the terrestrial and marine environments of the Pacific islands and on their populations are already strongly felt. The IPCC's projections point to a short-term acceleration of the negative impact of climate change in the Pacific (rising sea level, ocean acidification, enhanced erosion, increasing temperatures and overall loss of biodiversity). The serious consequences of these changes and disasters on the life and livelihoods of Pacific countries led the leaders of the Pacific Forums to place greater emphasis and a higher priority on a well-informed and coordinated regional and national response. This is based in particular on the acquisition and appropriation of robust scientific knowledge that must be shared by the populations, from the design stage to its application via inclusive and innovative solutions.

It is crucial to build R&I capacity and networks between regional and intra-regional stakeholders in order to deal with climate change challenges and its effects on the vulnerability of resources. This will allow Pacific Islands states to strengthen R&I in the region which will underpin sustainable regional development objectives.

Policy Background: Research and Innovation (R&I) on Climate Change

The problem shared by all those involved in the R&I ecosystems of the SIDS is to make knowledge accessible, establish clear dialogue between stakeholders (science brokers) and put in place contractual tools to ensure innovations can be developed and implemented. The absence of work processes between these stakeholders prevents them from maximising the desired impact (with a lower degree of risk, notably technological) and from the assurance of equitable development partnerships, for a measurable socio-economic impact.

Cooperation methods between the various stakeholders of the ecosystems, through collective intelligence, capacity building and the implementation of living labs, take into account the heterogeneous nature of R&I ecosystems in the vast Pacific region as well as the asymmetry between countries, aggravated by differences in development and long distances. **RERIPA focuses on 3 key topics**: **the issues of coastal vulnerability, ocean health and rising sea level**, linked with the priorities of the target territories, to which the

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beneficiaries of RERIPA and their partners contribute to skills, methodologies and robust and complementary knowledge to put in place strategies, R&I networks and inclusive and sustainable innovative solutions.

This is consistent with the new European consensus on development insofar as it creates and reinforces actual interactions between all players in the innovation value chain: the populations, civil society, businesses or research institutions, so that they can draw on their knowledge and skills for the joint design of innovative, inclusive and sustainable solutions.

The purpose of RERIPA is to have a structuring effect on R&I ecosystems through an integrated, inclusive approach, knowledge sharing and capacity building.

Expected results of RERIPA

The expected impact is the implementation of better-structured and adaptable research and innovation modalities both in terms of general programming and concrete and targeted actions where each stakeholder (public decision-makers, economic actors, civil society organisations, NGOs, and individual actors) can find useful resources for their project:

1. National R&I ecosystems on target themes are mapped and diagnosed in a participatory manner (innovation strategies, funding, needs, opportunities, actors, interactions, know-how, knowledge, existing innovations, jobs/skills, etc.), and a shared vision of future strategies and challenges is built.

2. Strengthen the capacities to mobilise civil and business society around their representatives and to contribute to strategies and actions to combat CCI.

3. The skills of actors (including political leaders) in the field of research valorisation (contracting, intellectual property, maturation and technology transfer, etc.) and project engineering (setting up, responding to calls for proposals, monitoring/evaluation, etc.) are reinforced.

4. Strengthen actors' capacities in the field of climate change-related activities, tools and services.

5. Livings Labs mobilising different actors around innovative and sustainable solutions (smart, frugal, and user-centred solutions) to cope with CCI and support SIDS (coastal) economy.

1.2   RERIPA Call Governance

IRD and its consortium partners were competitively selected by the 2019 ACP Innovation Fund financed by the European Union and managed by the OACPS Secretariat as the contracting authority under Grant contract number FED/2020/421-373 to implement the RERIPA Project.

IRD, as the Lead Coordinator of RERIPA, is responsible for the overall project implementation in line with the approved proposals, management, and accountability of funds to the OACPS Secretariat in accordance with the and terms and conditions of the signed contract

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agreement. IRD provides the necessary technical and administrative support, including human resources management, financial, legal and other services required for the successful implementation of the Project.

The Call governance involves the following parties:

❖ **Coordination and Management Team (CMT)**
  – it will produce, approve and disseminate call documents and procedures.
  – it will give administrative support to applicants regarding the call procedures.
  – it will analyse and synthesize the evaluation of expert reviewers and will approve the final ranking lists.
  – it is the primary contact point of the Grantee and will accompany it for all general matters in relation to the call and during the implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the funded projects (contractual issues, monitoring, evaluation, finance, etc.).

❖ **Independent Expert Reviewers**
A pool of independent expert reviewers will be created progressively, as requested for the different calls. They will actively take part in the scientific/technical review and evaluation of the projects' full proposals that will be received by the RERIPA consortium. Expert/peer reviewers are recognized individuals with skills, background and experience in several of the following areas, among others: climate change (adaptation/mitigation), agricultural, marine resources and environmental science, social science, innovation policy and innovation brokering, co-construction and valorisation of research findings, ICTs, competitive projects evaluation, multi-actors/trans-disciplinary/transnational project, research oriented towards problem solving in climate change, etc.

❖ **Grantees (Third Parties)**
Grantees are legal entities that receive grants competitively awarded to implement the projects they will have proposed to the different Calls for Proposals. They fulfil the requirements of the Call. They are responsible for effectively delivering on the expected outputs. Each Grantee will propose and provide the contact of a Project coordinator, who will be the person in charge of the project implementation for the agreed duration.

The Grantee(s) and Project coordinator are responsible for:
  – Ensuring the proper management of the project so that the proposed activities are implemented in line with the agreed budget, and the agreed deliverables and expected results are reached, thereby contributing to the overall objectives and outcomes of RERIPA.
  – Preparing project work plans, as well as technical and financial progress reports, and ensuring timely submission to the CMT.
  – Recording project meetings' minutes and decisions.
  – Communicating about their project and disseminating their activities, in tight coordination with IRD and RERIPA Partners to ensure harmonized actions.
  – Addressing challenges within the project by applying appropriate corrective measures.

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– Performing any activity needed to ensure the smooth operation of their project.

2. RERIPA Calls for Proposals (CFP)

2.1 Call for proposals overview

RERIPA partners will **launch 4 Calls for Proposals (CFP)** between 2021 and 2022. **Table 1** presents the Calls and provides the provisional schedule. The partners will prepare specific **Terms of Reference** (ToR) for each call and will decide collectively upon their **selection and evaluation procedures**.

- **CALL 1**: Mapping & diagnosis of R&I ecosystems, networking facilitation, shared R&I vision and strategy (with a focus on climate change)
- **CALL 2**: Capacity building in innovation and valorisation
- **CALL 3:** Setting up Livings Labs & developing smart solutions to face climate change impacts
- **CALL 4:** Strengthening higher and vocational education and training on climate changeimpacts to foster the adoption of living labs' outputs

The objective of the **CFP** is to fund excellent **multi-partner projects**, involving consortia composed of public and private entities[1], exclusively based and active in the ACP Pacific Region[2] (the participation of entities outside the ACP Pacific Region will be possible but on their own funding only).

The ToR and the selection and evaluation modalities will be in accordance with the ToR of the ACP Innovation Fund, and will comply with the principles of proportionality, sound financial management, equal treatment and non-discrimination. We will ensure transparency and avoid conflicts of interest throughout the award procedure. The ToR and the selection/evaluation modalities will be validated by the Steering Committee and OACPS Secretariat before their publication.

Granted projects will be led by **Lead Applicants** (considered as THIRD PARTIES with regards to the EU ACP Call guidelines) to strengthen R&I ecosystems at the national and regional levels. This will push stakeholders to collaborate and pool their skills to address needs in a more integrated way, to ensure capacity building and learning-by-doing through collaboration.

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[1] The following entities are eligible for financial support: academic and research institutions/organizations; spin-off companies; VET providers; organizations representing indigenous and local communities; agencies and associations working for gender equality in research and innovation; national science, technology and innovation agencies; non-governmental organizations; innovation support organizations (technology clusters, innovation labs and technology transfer offices); incubators and start-ups; and other similar organizations with specific experience in the priority areas covered by this call.

[2] ACP Pacific Countries eligible: Cook Islands, East Timor, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu

For each Call for Project Proposals, RERIPA plans to grant a minimum of 200 k€ and maximum of 350 k€ per project. The funding of an individual proposal will depend on the nature and duration of the proposed activities and must be justified in terms of the resources needed to achieve the objectives of the project. The funding requested should therefore be realistically adjusted to the actual needs of the proposal, taking into account any other funds available.

Eligible costs will include the following:
- Personnel costs of the research staff and other personnel (according to local rates and currency).
- Mobility costs (travel and subsistence expenses).
- Costs related to organising seminars and workshops within the project.
- Costs for attending the kick-off, mid-term and final workshops of all funded projects.
- Capacity building, Knowledge Sharing and Research Uptake, and dissemination.
- Acquisition of material and small-scale research/innovation equipment.
- Intellectual property, publications, certification, etc.
- Visibility and communication costs.
- Subcontracting costs (up to 20% of overall budget).
- Overheads (up to 4%).

Reminder on RERIPA's on-going activities:

RERIPA will publish four Calls for proposals. Full details of these calls are given in Table 1.

Call 1 "Mapping and Diagnosis of R&I ecosystems, networking facilitation, R&I general vision/strategy with a focus on climate Change" and Call 2 – "Capacity Building in innovation and valorisation" have been published. Two separate consortiums were successful in their respective grant applications and are now in the process of undertaking activities.

RERIPA was designed with a wholistic approach, thus the activities from Call 1 and 2 will run in parallel with Call 3 and will all contribute towards the creation of "Living labs" and the sustainability of their outputs.

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Table 1. Overview of the Calls for Proposals

Call for Proposals General objectives, specific objectives results	Activities to be carried out by Third Parties & expected results/deliverables	Consortium composition / criteria + Funding
CALL 1 **Mapping & diagnosis of R&I ecosystems, networking facilitation, R&I strategy (with a focus on climate change**). **GO:** improving our knowledge and understanding of R&I ecosystems at the national and regional level, and facilitating R&I interactions throughout the innovation chain to build a shared vision and strategy of R&I for the Pacific Region. **SO1:** identify stakeholders and their skills, relationships, interests, and activities. **SO2:** determine R&I ecosystems strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.	• **Diagnosis & mapping of R&I Ecosystems:** – Participatory mapping and diagnosis of national and regional R&I ecosystems (stakeholders, expertise, relationships, interests, positioning; technologies/solutions, initiatives/projects, R&I ecosystems SWOT...). – Analysing local and regional knowledge on climate change impact, including teaching material & curricula. – Performing a regional socio-economical survey on climate change impact (users/citizens perceptions, expectations, engagement...). • **Facilitating networking and open innovation:** – Workshops in animation and collective intelligence – Facilitating networking and R&I brokering activities during the RERIPA Project to federate a multi-stakeholder community (joint design of realistic and useful innovations/solutions / especially CCI) – To discuss R&I processes and results, while developing a shared vision of R&I priorities and territorial, regional, inclusive and sustainable R&I strategies / consolidate a shared vision of R&I priorities and strategy in the Region – To contribute to draft project specifications (ToRs) for potential Living Labs, to be submitted to the LL Call for Projects – To contribute to the follow up of LL's and support R&I strategy (special ref. to CCI) – The activities aimed at mobilising and networking stakeholders will continue for the entire duration of RERIPA to guarantee a consistent work dynamic and optimise exchanges and sharing among stakeholders, thereby maximising the impact in terms of the structuring and enhancement of ecosystems.	**Launched:** 17/12/2021 **1 consortium funded** **Grant:** 272,282 EUR **Project** end by 30/11/2024

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SO3: boost R&I brokering by bringing stakeholders to exchange and collaborate following open innovation and participatory approaches. **SO4:** contribute to a shared regional strategy in R&I with a special reference to CCI	• **Expected deliverables:** – An analysis (map/baseline) of R&I ecosystems (including teaching/training) in the Pacific Region. – An analysis (map/baseline) of R&I stakeholders (including teaching/training): locations, capacities, expectations, relationships, etc. – An analysis of local knowledge and perception of climate change impact (CCI). – An analysis of R&I priorities & strategies in the Pacific Region. – Report on the shared/co-constructed R&I Strategy (and sub strategies at national level when relevant). – Recommendations for structuring the Living Labs and teaching/training activities (R&I and CCI). – Assessment of the evolution of the R&I ecosystem/network in the Pacific Region during RERIPA to inform on the impact of the Project (near the end of the project). – Final activity report. • **Expected results:** – A consolidated network of stakeholders/a shared vision and strategy of R&I in the Pacific Region. – A continuous follow-up and support to the LL regarding R&I strategy and CCI. – People more involved in collective intelligence and concertation processes and tools.	

CALL 2 **Capacity building in Innovation and valorisation** **GO:** Strengthen capacities of stakeholders in innovation and valorisation **SO1:** train stakeholders (e.g. RERIPA's partners, Living Labs, students, users) on project engineering, open innovation, impact pathway, intellectual property, innovation brokering, digital tools, participatory approaches, etc., to help structure Living Labs and R&I ecosystems. **SO2**: train innovation "users/beneficiaries" to foster the adoption/diffusion of innovations within the society.	• **Capacity Building in innovation and valorisation** – Training of trainers in the issues and appropriate skills in terms of R&I strategies and exploitation of research results(contracting process, IP, Project engineering). – Preparation of teaching materials/tools (along with the experts) for training sessions, workshops and publication on the website of RERIPA. – Seminars involving the partners of the Living Labs funded and open to the public, to share experiences, skills and solutions. • **Capacity Building and structuration of Living Labs** – Preparing training materials, and training/mentoring Living Labs partners and other stakeholders on project engineering, open innovation, R&I brokering, impact pathway, Intellectual property, contracting, writing up project proposals, etc. – Support for funded Living Labs, in their structuring & development, implementation of training and labelling/certification, business development. – Training of users on the innovations to foster their broad appropriation/use. • **Products/results:** – Training materials and courses for stakeholders (project engineering, open innovation, impact pathway, intellectual property, innovation brokering). – Tools to contribute to the design of LLs. – A follow up of the structuration of the LLs and of the transfer to the local authorities and other stakeholders, of LLs innovative productions to address climate change issues in the region (with a positive social and economic impact).	**Launch:** 17/12/2021 **1 consortium** **funded Grant:** max. 335,555 EUR **Project** end by 30/11/2024

CALL 3d Setting up Livings Labs & developing/deploying smart solutions to face climate change impact **GO:** design and deploy user-centred, science-based solutions to cope with CCI and support SIDS (coastal) economy. **SO1:** structure Living labs, i.e., consortia of public-private stakeholders following an open innovation approach **SO2:** promote the development, maturation and deployment of solutions/innovations helping to address CCI. **SO3:** foster public/private partnerships around the R&I capacity developed in academic laboratories. **SO4:** ensure solutions that are frugal, respective of the environment, and have significant prospect for broad-scale adoption by the various stakeholders.	**Depending on the proposed approach, several impacts of climate change could be challenged** by the proposed Living Labs such as: 1. The stresses on coastal ecosystems and resources. 2. The effects of increased temperatures and decreased pH and dissolved oxygen on lagoon and ocean health. 3. The related increase of marine/coastal invasive species. 4. The consequences of CC on water resources (quantity, quality), soil salinization, etc. 5. The Impacts on coastal infrastructures and mobility. 6. The consequences on dwellings and related social impacts: access to resources, impacts on land availability/ownership, management of populations displacements/resettlements (at different scale local to regional). 7. Mobilization / transformation of traditional/local knowledge in livelihood adaptation. 8. Etc… **Elements for the implementation approach:** Traditional knowledge, the large panel of available scientific tools, and/or technology transfer could contribute to LL building. This could for example consist of: • Developing/adapting new tools and observatory networks to survey social impacts of CC (land use, population mobility, livelihoods systems, etc.). • Developing/adapting new tools and sensor networks to survey environmental impacts of CC (meteorology, ground water, sea level, water temperature, ocean colour, acidification, decreased oxygen, chemical and algal pollutions, toxicity, coastline change, etc…) • Improving interfaces between environmental data and resources management (decision/management tools, resource management tools). • Manufacturing prototypes with different stages of maturity (from the proof-of-concept to the operational solution); • Develop tools/instruments for process monitoring and assessment of solutions/policies. - LL will organise the transfer of knowledge "to and from" the different actors to cope with and adapt to environmental vulnerability and trends resulting from CCI. - They will evaluate the level of ownership of the proposed solutions and the possible behavioural / organisational changes.	**Launch:** 19/09/2022 **5 consortia (Living Labs) funded** **Grant:** Max. 350,000 EUR per Living Lab. **Project** end by 30/11/2024

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| | - They will facilitate the engagement of the youth (rising stars, entrepreneurs, future leaders, etc.).
 In this context, the LL are expected to:
 • Structure consortia of public-private stakeholders around the R&I capacity, following an open innovation approach.
 • Propose user-centred solutions designed to cope with CCI and support SIDS economy (livelihood and sustainable development)
 • Propose solutions that are respectful of the environment and could have significant prospect for broad-scale adoption by the various stakeholders.
 • Foster the acquisition of business-relevant environmental data under the leadership of local agencies or MSMEs.
 • Develop observation networks that are citizen-oriented (climate relations with food, health, sustainability, economy etc).
 – Encourage stakeholders at various levels in the design of information content, flow, display, and usage / contribute to exchange platform(s) where data, knowledge, experience can be shared. | |

| CALL 4
Strengthening higher and vocational education and training on climate change impacts to foster the adoption of living labs' outputs

GO: strengthen a Pacific-based framework for education / knowledge and R&I on climate change impact (CCI) and prevention

SO1: enhance innovation "users/beneficiaries" capacities to foster the adoption/diffusion of Innovations

SO2: contribute to higher education and vocational training on CCI, in a Pacific Islands context.

SO3: promote programs that include a strong socio-economic component and emphasize how adaptation or mitigation solutions can guide R&I efforts.

SO4: contribute to intra-Pacific exchanges of data, knowledge, and experience versus CCI

SO5: use digital technology to increase research and innovation capacity in the large Pacific region | • **Valorisation of living labs' outcomes (Researchers +NGOs Citizen + Politics + Associations + companies)**
– Design and implement teaching educational content materials in different languages for different audiences (NGOs, citizens, politics)
– Implement teaching and learning workshops and material for NGOs, citizens, Politics, associations, companies.
– Design and/or support an institutional framework that fosters public / private partnerships in the R&I chain
– Implement programs of learning by doing activities, field work, etc. with the living labs consortia of public-private stakeholders

• **Education and research**
– Design educational content from living labs activities and implement into existing training programs
– Implement teaching and learning workshops and material for teachers of university and higher school
– Optimize / make the best use of / digital technology for innovative learning approaches
– Contribute to Pacific Islands - based Climate & Environmental Science curriculum
– Design and implement a high-level, multi-national, training framework for young scientists

• **Products/results:**
– Training users/beneficiaries on innovation (cf. call 2 outputs / project engineering, open innovation, impact pathway, intellectual property, innovation brokering)
– Educational and workshop content/programs on CCI
– Inventory, improvement and promotion of digital technology for innovative learning approaches
– Design of an institutional framework to reinforce R&I partnerships | **Launch:** October 2022

1 consortium

Grant:

Max. 300,000 EUR

Project end by 30/11/2024 |

2.2 Eligibility criteria for the applicants to the Calls for Proposals

All participants in a bidding consortium should **refer to the call-specific eligibility criteria which will be published in the Guidelines for Applicants of that specific call**.

The Lead Applicant is responsible for checking and guaranteeing the eligibility of the Co-applicants, and if one of the applicants appears to be ineligible, this may lead to the exclusion of the whole consortium/project before the evaluation process.

2.3 Process and procedure for the publication of calls for proposals and the selection of proposals

Applicants will be required to submit a full proposal (See the Guidelines for Applicants for a given Call for Proposals) in response to the specific Call they wish to apply for.

The proposals will first be screened for eligibility and compliance by the RERIPA Coordination and Management Team (CMT). Then, proposals fitting the eligibility requirements will be assessed by independent experts who will evaluate the project quality and relevance, according to a set of pre- established criteria. During the grant award phase, applicants of projects selected for funding might be asked to further adjust their proposals and the corresponding workplans and logical framework and the proposed budgets, in line with the terms and conditions of the grant. The final negotiated proposal and its annexes will be part of the Grant Agreement signed between IRD and the Lead Applicant and part of the Consortium Agreement signed between the project partners.

CALL LAUNCH + PROPOSAL WRITING & SUBMISSION

- Call Publication
- Proposal writing
- Proposal submission

PROPOSAL REVIEW/EVALUATION

- Completeness & eligibility screening
- Independent expert evaluation
- Review, evaluation and ranking by RERIPA Steering Committee
- Oral examination of the best ranked projects
- Final ranking of the projects
- Confirmation of commitment from granted project coordinators

GRANT APPROVAL

- Approval of the granted projects by the Steering Committee
- Publication of the evaluation results

GRANT AGREEMENT SIGNATURE

- Review, adjustment, and validation of the workplan and budget
- Preparing and agreeing on the Consortium Agreement
- Preparing and signing the Grant Agreement

Figure 1: Overview of the processes followed for RERIPA Calls for proposals

2.3.1 Announcement of the Calls for Proposals

A broad public launching on RERIPA's website and other media, and a broad public announcement of the Call for Proposals will be made at the time of the launch: the dissemination will be done on RERIPA's website and on partners' websites (with links to the RERIPA Projects and partner's websites), as well as in various national and regional media.

Interested parties are encouraged to send an expression of interest via email as soon as possible to "contact@reripa.com". The EOI should have the following information: Project title, ACP Countries involved, Applicants/co-applicants, main topic, objectives, expected innovative results (see Annex 1).

2.3.2 Steps from preparation to implementation of a project proposal

The main steps are as follows:

1. Choosing a Lead Applicant that will receive and manage the grant and appoint a project coordinator.
2. Selecting the Partners that will be part of the Consortium (they will be able to receive/manage part of the grant to run the activities they are responsible for).
3. Verifying the eligibility of each partner and of the Consortium as a whole (topic, number and type of partners, funding, etc.).
4. Drafting the project proposal (incl. technical and financial aspects) following the guidelines and evaluation criteria, and using the templates provided by the CMT.
5. Project coordinator to submit the proposal following the online submission procedure.
6. Eligibility and Evaluation process (by the CMT and Steering Committee)
7. Final validation of the ranking by the Governing Board
8. Negotiation phase between RERIPA Coordinator (IRD) and awarded Applicants.
9. Grant Agreement signature between RERIPA Coordinator (IRD) and awarded Applicants.
10. Official Start of the project (a kick-off meeting will be organized)

2.3.3 Evaluation and selection procedure of the project proposals

2.3.3.1 General considerations

Projects will foster linkages among the various innovation actors in providing inclusive innovative solutions and policies that deliver gender-responsive positive results. To be successful, project proposals will be required to clearly demonstrate how they will closely collaborate and incorporate the key innovation actors within the region in the implementation of their projects.

The rules followed for the selection and evaluation process comply with the following principles:

- Proportionality.
- Sound financial management.
- Transparency (the process for reaching funding decisions will be clearly described and available to any interested party).
- Equality of treatment and non-discrimination (all proposals shall be treated alike, irrespective of where they originate or the identity of the proposers).
- Ethical considerations. Any proposal that contravenes fundamental ethical principles of aFunding Party may be excluded from being evaluated/selected by decision of the CMT.

Essential criteria for review and selection of projects shall include:

- Partnership & Coordination Quality.
- Relevance of the Project.
- Design, coherence, and feasibility of the Proposal.
- Implementation Approach.
- Sustainability of the Proposal.
- Budget and cost-effectiveness of the Proposal.

2.3.3.2   Step 1. Eligibility check by the CMT

After the deadline, the CMT will conduct an eligibility check within 2 weeks: the CMT will evaluate the completeness of the proposals and eligibility of the Third Parties, consortia, and project proposals as a whole.

Criteria considered for the eligibility check:

- Consideration of complete applications only, a reminder in case of missing document(s).
- Verification of the eligibility and operational capacity of the Third Party (experience, previous management of large grants/projects, management capacity, human resources, external funding sources, etc.).
- Verification of the conformity of proposals with the terms of reference of the call (thematic, budget, status/eligibility of partners and sponsors, institutions, etc.).
- Analysis of conflicts of interest, etc.

2.3.3.3   Step 2. Evaluation of the proposals

The projects retained after the 1st Step – Eligibility Check by the CMT – will undergo a scientific/technical evaluation. During the evaluation procedure, applicants may be asked for clarifications and/or complementary information.

- The proposals retained for the second eligibility check will be evaluated by a pool of independent expert reviewers (at least 3 experts by project), avoiding potential conflicts of interests. These experts will be selected based on their skills/profiles, experience and

knowledge of the topic/fieldconsidered in the call and will have complementary profiles.

– The reviewers will score the proposals according to a set of pre-established criteria. The RERIPA Steering Committee will then review the results of the evaluation and will agree on a ranking of the proposals.

– The Steering Committee will summarize the evaluations, as a basis for scoring and ranking the proposals.

2.3.3.4   Step 3. Oral jury.

– Coordinators of the successful project proposals will be invited to present their project (by videoconference), in front of a jury comprising members of the RERIPA Steering Committee and external experts, for a questions and answers session.

2.3.3.5   Step 4. Final award decision.

– The Steering Committee will consolidate a final list of ranked projects, based on the written and oral evaluation.

– The coordinators of the projects selected for funding will be informed and will have to confirm their offer and willingness to run the project within 2 weeks. If they decline, Coordinators of projects in the waiting list will be contacted.

– The RERIPA Steering Committee will validate and publish the final decision.

– The projects selected for funding may be requested to make some adjustments to the proposals and budgets according to the feedback from the evaluation committee and the steering committee. These amendments will be part of the Grant Agreement to be signed between the IRD and the Lead Applicant.

2.3.3.6   Step 5. Contracting and implementation.

– The IRD will establish a Grant Agreement with the Project coordinator, establishing the conditions associated with the receipt of the funding.

– Each Consortium funded will have to contract a Consortium Agreement establishing the rights and duties of the partners and subcontractors, budget management modalities, intellectual property sharing modalities, reporting modalities between partners, etc.

– During their execution, the funded projects will be accompanied by RERIPA Partners to meet the objectives of capacity building, structuring of the R&I ecosystem and development of solutions/innovations.

2.3.4   Evaluation criteria

For each Proposal, we will evaluate both the Applicants and their Project proposals on the basis of the criteria below

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Table 2. Project proposals' evaluation criteria

CRITERIA	SCORE (/100)
Partnership & Coordination quality	15
Relevance of the project	15
Coherence and feasibility of the project	20
Implementation approach	20
Sustainability of the project	15
Budget and cost-effectiveness of the project	15
TOTAL	100

3. Grant Agreement

3.1 Grant Agreement for selected projects

A Grant Agreement will be signed between IRD and the successful Lead Applicant. It states the roles and responsibilities of each party in respect to the granted project. The Grantees review the agreement and if acceptable, sign and return it to IRD for signature. The Grant Agreement becomes effective with signatures from IRD and the Lead Applicant. The signatories to the Grant Agreement shall be the Director General of IRD and the authorized representative of the Lead Applicant organisation.

3.2 Project management and partnerships

A given organization may apply to a call for proposals as **Lead Applicant in partnership with other legally established organizations from the ACP Pacific Region**, which will be considered as "**Co- Applicants**".

The **Grant agreement**, signed between IRD (RERIPA Coordinator) and the Lead Applicants, will state the purpose of the grant, and the conditions for its use.

The grant, funded 100% by the European Union through RERIPA, will be transferred directly by IRD to the Lead Applicant.

The Lead Applicant will be allowed to transfer part of the funds to the Co-applicants to cover their participation in the project (see list of Applicants' eligible funds) in accordance with their project proposal and IRD and EU regulations. They will also have the possibility to subcontract some tasks to other public/private entities. The Lead Applicant will then be requested to monitor and justify all expenditures of its partners.

Together with IRD, the Lead Applicant will be jointly responsible for reporting on expenditure

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made by its partners and subcontractors.

IRD will monitor and justify the expenditures of the Lead Applicant and of their partners, through a financial dashboard and internal IRD procedures. All documents/invoices/time sheets related to these expenses will be scanned and stored by the Project coordinating entities, their partners and ultimately by IRD (RERIPA Coordinator).

If the Project Coordinator is unable to continue to carry out the project activities as agreed initially, for any reason (e.g., disease, retirement, resignation...), the Grantee will notify IRD immediately, and will be urged to propose a substitute Project Coordinator, whose profile, skills, and experience will have to be sufficient to manage successfully the project, in accordance with the outlined proposal and agreement terms and conditions. The designation of the new Coordinator will have to be approved by the RERIPA Steering Committee.

3.3   Ethical considerations

The Grantee is responsible for addressing ethical issues relating to the project including completing the necessary due diligence regarding ethical approval from a relevant regulatory body and securing free, explicit, and prior informed consent from any individuals who participate in the project. Ethical issues should be interpreted broadly and may encompass, among other things, relevant codes of practice, the involvement of human participants and any other issues in the conduct of the project that may result in damage to the environment and the use of sensitive economic, social or personal data.

In the process of preparing the project proposal, the Applicant is obliged to observe ethical principles and rules and describe how ethical issues in the application will be addressed. The Applicant should indicate plans to obtain ethical approval from relevant bodies if the project proposal involves human or animal subjects.

3.4   Communication & Visibility

IRD and its partners PIDF, PIANGO and VMGD, the European Union and the OACPS attach great importance to the communication and dissemination of results.

All grant recipients are expected to widely disseminate the results of their projects. Grant recipients must take all necessary measures to acknowledge the fact that the European Union has funded their project Tenderers must therefore provide for visibility and communication costs and report on their use.

Communication and Visibility activities should comply with the communication and visibility requirements which can be found at the following address:
https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/communication-et-visibilite-des-actions-exterieures-de-lue-lignes- directrices-lintention-des_fr

All information material, reports and publications and other media-related information produced as part of the implementation of RERIPA will indicate that the project received funding from the European Union (EU) under the ACP Innovation Fund, part of the OACPS R&I Programme, and will display the flags of the EU, the OACPS and the OACPS R&I Programme.

The OACPS R&I Programme is an initiative implemented by the Secretariat of the Organisation of African, Caribbean, and Pacific states (OACPS) and funded by the European Union (EU).

4. Grant Financial Management

4.1 Financial Management

Sound financial management is essential for the effective and efficient implementation of projects. RERIPA's financial management activities will be carried out within the financial and administrative framework of IRD and contractual provisions between the OACPS Secretariat and IRD. These provisions will, by extension, also apply to Grantees. It is incumbent upon IRD and the Grantees to ensure that the financial resources mobilized through RERIPA are correctly and effectively used for the implementation of the granted Project.

4.2 Project Budget

The proposed costs represent the best estimate of the necessary costs to achieve project results, and therefore must be well developed and realistic. Budget notes/justifications are included in the approved budget to further clarify what eligible costs or activities are being included under each item in the budget.

4.3 Budget Adjustments during the project

During project implementation, it may come to pass that planned activities may have to change or be rescheduled, cancelled, or altered, based on needs on the ground. Programmatic and activity changes may have corresponding budgetary implications, thereby necessitating revisions.

In all such cases, any change to the project budget must be reviewed and approved by the CMT and Steering Committee. The CMT must be notified in advance of any proposed changes and will advise on whether changes are allowable and the procedure by which they must be submitted for approval.

The reallocation of expenditures between expenditure categories in the project budget that

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are below 10% of the affected budget items are permitted without any requirement for pre-approval by the CMT. Such allocations affecting any item by 10% or more must be approved in advance by CMT.

4.4 Eligible Project Costs and Budgeting

Eligible costs are those that are budgeted, approved, and incurred as expenses in implementing the project and must meet the following criteria:

4.4.1 General cost eligibility criteria

a. They are incurred during the project duration, in particular:
   i. Costs relating to services and works that relate to project activities performed during the implementation period. Signature of a contract, placing of an order, or entering any commitment for expenditure within the implementation period for future delivery of services, works or supplies after expiry of the implementation period do not meet this requirement. Cash advances to Project Partners may not be considered as costs incurred.
   ii. Costs incurred should be paid before the submission of the reports. An exception is made for costs relating to final reports, including expenditure verification, audit and final evaluation of the project, which may be incurred after the implementation period of the project.
b. they are indicated in the estimated overall budget for the project.
c. they are necessary for the implementation of the project.
d. they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the Grantee and determined according to the accounting standards and the usual cost accounting practices applicable to the Grantee.
e. they comply with the requirements of social legislation.
f. they are reasonable, justified and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

4.4.2 Eligible direct costs

Eligible direct costs:
- **the cost of staff** assigned to the project, corresponding to actual gross salaries including social security charges and other remuneration-related costs (excluding performance-based bonuses); salaries and costs shall not exceed those normally borne by the organisation to which the staff member belongs unless it is justified by showing that it is essential to carry out the project.

- **travel and subsistence costs** for staff and other persons taking part in the project, provided they do not exceed those normally borne by the organisation to which the traveller belongs according to its rules and regulations. In addition, the per diem rates published by the European Commission at the time of contract signature may never be exceeded.

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NB. All Applicants are required to provision in their budget 5,000 € per consortium member, to cover the travel costs (transport, accommodation and incidental costs) for at least 1 representative of each consortium member, to participate in at least 3 RERIPA meetings in the Pacific Region (progress and capitalisation meetings).

- **costs of consumables**.
- **purchase costs for equipment** (new or used) and supplies specifically dedicated to the project, provided that ownership is transferred at the end of the project as per section 8.
- **rental or leasing costs for equipment** (new or used) and supplies specifically dedicated to the purposes of the project.
- **rental costs related to project office**, when a project office outside headquarters of the partners is foreseen, duly justified and described in the description of the Project budget.
- **costs of service, supply and work contracts** awarded by the grantee for the purposes of the project (subcontracting in the limit of 20% of total direct costs).
- **costs deriving directly from the requirements of the contract** (dissemination of information, evaluation specific to the project, translation, reproduction, insurance, etc.) including financial service costs (in particular the cost of transfers and financial guarantees where required according to the Grant Agreement.
- **duties, taxes and charges, including VAT**, paid and not recoverable (must be certified) by the beneficiary(ies), unless otherwise provided in the Grant Agreement...

Eligible Indirect costs:
- Indirect costs not exceeding 4% of the total direct costs.

4.4.3 Disbursement of Funds

Subject to the continued availability of grants funds from the EU for the support of RERIPA, IRD will disburse funds to the Grantee subject to continued compliance with the terms of all the grant documents and the continued satisfaction of all conditions precedent to disbursing the Grant fund under the Grant Agreement.

4.4.3.1 Initial Disbursement

Initial disbursement of funds by IRD to the Grantee will be contingent upon:
a. Disbursement to IRD from the OACPS Secretariat and upon approval of RERIPA yearly activity reports and plans and the budget thereof.
b. The Grantee's fulfilment of requirements, including:
   i. Signed project grant agreement.
   ii. Approved workplan and budget.
   iii. Valid bank account

4.4.3.2 Subsequent Disbursement

Subsequent fund disbursements will be contingent upon:

    a. Approved activity plan and budget for the implementation period, in line with the agreed project milestones.

    b. A satisfactory technical and financial report (including related supporting documents) to account for the previous advance.

4.4.3.3 Final Disbursement

IRD will make the final disbursement of funds upon receipt of the last progress report and a justified request for payment, considering the costs foreseen in the last Yearly Planned Activities necessary to complete the project. An amount equivalent to 5% of the total budget will be retained by IRD until satisfactory final technical and financial reports are submitted. The Grantee shall return to IRD any unused funds within one month of submission of the final report.

4.4.3.4 Withholding Fund Disbursements

IRD may withhold the disbursement, wholly or in part in the following circumstances:

    a. Loss of focus on the main objective(s).

    b. Occurrence of substantial deviations from the project plan and budget.

    c. Failure to deliver reports and to meet reporting schedules as agreed.

IRD shall initiate discussions with the concerned Grantee before taking such a decision. In case of substantial deviation from project plans and budgets presented in the grant agreement, IRD may recover the disbursed amount, wholly or in part, from the affected Grantee.

4.5 Interest earned on project funds

Any interest earned while project funds are in deposit at the Grantee's bank, whether in a separate project bank account or in a general account, shall be fully credited to the project and reported as earnings in project financial reports.

4.6 Transfer of funds to other collaborating organizations

Lead Applicants will be able to transfer part of the funding received to their Co-applicants, as-planned in the Project proposals approved for funding, to cover eligible costs (See Section 4.4. above).

4.7 Financial Reporting

The project's financial information will be reviewed regularly by the RERIPA Coordination and Management Team. Based on the financial and technical progress reports, the CMT will carry out periodic comparison of actual project activities against workplan, and actual expenses against budget, to assess the quality and performance of the projects.

4.7.1 Use of Project Funds

i. Management of project funds and authorization of expenditure are the responsibility of the Grantee. Expenditure of funds must comply with the terms of the Grant Agreement, and the Grantee's financial management policies and procedures.

ii. All funds for this grant received by the Grantee must be accounted for in a separate bookkeeping process as part the project financial records.

iii. The funds shall be used solely for the project, and in accordance with the approved budget. IRD may suspend any payments of funds if the Grant Agreement is not complied with.

iv. Funds allocated to a given budget category shall not be transferred to another category without the prior approval of IRD. Budget reallocations under 10% on each budget category are allowed without prior approval of IRD without exceeding the total budget allocation (see section 5.3).

v. The Grantee shall take every precaution against any unauthorized use of the funds and shall always keep up-to-date and full accounts of the expenditures incurred by the project. IRD may at any time request a financial statement accompanied by certified information on the balance.

vi. Funds remaining unutilized after the completion of the project shall be remitted to IRD in the contract currency within one month of the specified project completion date, and without separate request unless their use is otherwise approved by IRD.

4.7.2 Financial Reporting Requirements

Financial reporting will be carried out biannually by the CMT, based on the budget and activity plans for the reporting period, and financial reports sent by the Grantees will have to comply with all applicable accounting standards. Financial reports should be established in euros (exchange rates used for calculation of expenses in euro should be extracted from the official INFOR website).

The following will constitute a biannual financial report (see Table 3):

i. A summary financial report duly signed and as per the RERIPA Reporting Template attached to the Grant Agreement, including any additional funding secured for the project (where applicable).

ii. An expense listing of the amounts reported in the financial reports.

iii. Certified copies of supporting documents relating to all figures reported including additional funding secured (where applicable).

iv. An updated inventory list of assets procured under the project.

v. A copy of the bank statement reconciled showing funds received.

vi. Any variance explanations for a specific budget category requires explanations. They should represent the most accurate and transparent explanation for under- or over-spending in a particular budget category during the reporting period and an explanation

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of remedial action to be taken.

vii. Any other relevant documentation can be eventually requested by the CMT.

viii. Financial reports must be signed by the authorized officers of the Grantee.

All the Grantees will prepare and send by email their financial reports and supporting documentation to the CMT. Upon receipt of a financial report, IRD will notify the Grantee in writing, of any errors, omissions or clarification required, in which case any outstanding payment will be withheld until the report is deemed acceptable. Templates for financial reporting will be provided upon signing of the Grant Agreement.

4.8 Auditing

The Grantee should ensure the proper preservation of supporting documentation relating to expenses incurred to implement the project, including those of its Co-applicants and subcontractor partners. IRD will conduct audits at their own expense using own staff and an external auditor approved by theEuropean Union. A risk-based approach and assessment of the project will determine the scope, timeline, nature, and extent of the audit activities.

The Grantee shall allow and facilitate access by auditors appointed by either the EU or IRD to projectsites and to relevant records for the purposes of monitoring, evaluating and audit of the project.

IRD may request the Grantee's authorized representatives to confirm the total income and expenditure in respect to the Grant for a period as maybe requested by the IRD external auditors.

As part of the European Union grant contract requirements, all expenditure incurred by the grant will undergo an annual expenditure verification by an external auditor. The auditor shall examine whether the costs declared by IRD, RERIPA Partners, and third parties and the revenue of the project are real,accurately recorded and eligible under the signed contract. The expenditure verification process will be coordinated by IRD as the lead coordinator of the RERIPA project.

Following an audit, all costs classified as ineligible or questionable by internal or external auditors andinstructed by IRD or the EU, must be returned to IRD within 30 calendar days of receipt of the repayment notice in the either of the following forms:

- Deposit of equivalent amount of funds to IRD's bank accounts
- Adjustment of previously reported expenses by the project for an equivalent amount or deduction of similar amount from the next disbursement.

The following is a general guiding audit checklist:

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a. Reporting is in accordance with grant agreement conditions.
b. Activities for which funds were awarded have been implemented.
c. Costs stated in accounts agree with actual supporting documentation and/or examined reports from Grantee.
d. Costs do not state in the ineligible costs list (see below).
e. Reported expenses are adequately supported including adequate procurement procedures.
f. The matching funding (if applicable) component has been accounted for correctly.
g. The Grantee has a separate bank account for the project or an equivalent arrangement for managing funds and that transactions with it are signed by a minimum of two individuals from the Grantee.
h. Received and accrued interest on funds is accounted for correctly.

The following costs are not eligible:
- debts and debt service charges (interest).
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities.
- costs declared by the grantee and financed by another action or work programme receiving a European Union (including through EDF) grant.
- purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary for the direct implementation of the action, in which case ownership must be transferred in accordance with Article 7.5 of the general conditions of the standard grant contract, at the latest at the end of the action.
- currency exchange losses.
- credit to third parties or sub-contractors.
- salary costs of the personnel of national administrations.
- tuition fees or any similar fee for participation to workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses, training events, winter/summer courses, or research periods organised by one of the applicants.

4.9 Financial Records Management

The creation and maintenance of records is integral to the implementation of project activities. Proper documentation must be filed and made available to the CMT to support each transaction that is reported in the financial reports. These records must be preserved and classified for ease of access, reference, and to facilitate a paper trail (supporting documentation) and production of financial reports.

The Table below provides a breakdown of the minimum required supporting documentation for the various categories of eligible project costs

It is important to ensure the following in the above documents:

a) Legible narration of what the expense relates to
b) Relevant dates
c) Relevant requesting, approving, and authorizing signatures
d) Clearly stated amount
e) Relevant stampings, for example "PAID"
f) A numbering or reference in the payment vouchers that identifies the expense in the ledger and excel reporting template

Table 3. Supporting document of the different cost categories

Expense Category	Required Supporting Documentation
Project Personnel	• Signed letter of offer or contract, indicating salary, employment period, and paid and time off benefits • Timesheets supporting time claimed • Evidence of salary payments
Travel Costs	• Travel request form • Tickets, boarding passes, airport tax receipts and other proof of travel • Signed vehicle rental agreements and logbooks for vehicle usage • Disclosure of exchange rate used for currency conversion • Missions reports
Meals and Accommodation	• Travel request form or stay arrangement form • Accommodation invoices and receipts • Receipts/ per-diem as per Grantee travel policy provided, the rates don't exceed rates published by the European Commission on this link Documents library | International Partnerships (europa.eu)
Procurement of Goods and Services (including consultant costs)	• Procurement of goods and services request form • Documentation supporting an adequate procurement process, as applicable, e.g. quotations, procurement committee minutes, LPOs etc. • Invoices for goods or services, as applicable, with proof of payment • Consultancy report
Training Expenses/ Conference and Workshop Costs	• Documentation supporting the objective of the activity • A copy of the training/ workshop/ conference report • A list of participants • A record of attendance • Signed terms of employment of the trainer, if applicable • Original invoices for services provided, as applicable, with proof of payment
Other direct operational Costs	• Documentation supporting the cost allocation to this grant • Invoices for amount charged, as applicable, with proof of payment
Indirect costs	• Institutional Policy/ Document showing % charged on total eligible direct costs

4.10 Record Keeping

The Grantee shall keep all records, accounting and supporting documents related to the grant agreement for five years from the end date of the project and in any case until any on-going audit, verification, appeal, litigation, or pursuit of claim by IRD or the EU, if notified to the Grantee, has been finalized. The Grantee shall make available all relevant financial information (original or copies) related to the Grant Agreement and any procurement contracts and other agreements for financial support.

4.11 Foreign Transactions and Exchanges in Local Currency

IRD shall make payments to the Grantee's bank account as provided in the signed Grant Agreement, which allows the identification of the funds paid for purpose of the project. Payments will be made in the currency set in the grant agreement.

Reports shall be submitted in the currency set out in the grant agreement and may be drawn from financial statements denominated in other currencies, based on the Grantee's applicable legislation and applicable accounting standards. In such case and for the purpose of reporting, conversion into the currency set in the grant agreement shall be made using the rate of exchange at which each disbursement was recorded in the Grantee's accounts. If at the end of the project, a part of the expenses is pre-financed by the Grantee (or by other donors), the exchange rate of the last instalment received from IRD will be applied.

Unless otherwise provided for in the Grant Agreement, costs incurred in other currencies than the one used in the Grantee's accounts for the project shall be converted according to its usual accounting practices, provided they respect the following basic requirements: (i) they are written down as an accounting rule, i.e. they are a standard practice of the Grantee, (ii) they are applied consistently, (iii)they give equal treatment to all types of transactions and funding sources, (iv) the system can be demonstrated and the exchange rates are easily accessible for verifications.

In the event of an exceptional exchange-rate fluctuation, the parties of the Grant Agreement shall consult each other with a view to amending the grant agreement to lessen the impact of such a fluctuation. Where necessary, IRD may take additional measures such as terminating the contract. Grantees should closely monitor exchange gains/losses during implementation, exchange gains can be used to scale up project activities, after approval by IRD. Cases of adverse losses which may significantly affect delivery of project outputs and deliverables should be brought to the attention of IRD.

4.12 Procurement Guidelines

Procurement of goods, works, and services shall be in accordance with the Grantee's institutional procurement policies, guidelines, and procedures. These processes must be transparent, fair, cost- effective and allow for competition respecting the following basic principles:

- The Grantee shall fairly evaluate offers received against objective criteria and which takes into account the prices.
- Where the Grantee does not invite an open tender, it shall justify the choice of tenderers that are invited to submit and offer.
- The Grantee shall keep sufficient and appropriate records with regards to procedures applied, which justify the decision on the pre-selection and award decision.

Nationality rule: Participation in tender procedures managed by the Grantee is open on equal terms to all nationals or legal persons of Pacific ACP Countries[3]. Tenderers must state their nationality in the tenders and provide usual proof of nationality.

5. Project Monitoring and Reporting

IRD aims to ensure that funding provided under the RERIPA grants are used as efficiently as possible, to achieve the desired impact. Thus, it is necessary for all actors to implement a continuous and rigorous system of monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Each project will be required to have a logical framework that has clear outputs and outcomes, as well as indicators. IRD shall ensure that project outputs and outcome indicators are well structured and project performance monitored bi-annually. The results from the bi- annual monitoring exercise will inform IRD and the OACPS/EU on the project's continuity.

5.1 Project Monitoring and Review

5.1.1 Monitoring by Grantees

All project teams shall have an in-built monitoring system, to assess progress towards achieving their objectives. This may involve setting up a monitoring and evaluation unit. Implementing the monitoring system shall be part of the annual workplans and in accordance with the results-based management framework of the project. Results of the monitoring shall be incorporated in the progress reports submitted to IRD.

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3 Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

5.1.2 Monitoring by IRD

The projects funded under RERIPA will be monitored and evaluated by IRD/CMT and the RERIPA consortium, with the support of the advisory board.

Several Progress evaluation meetings will take place, at 6-month intervals, by videoconference or face-to-face whenever possible/feasible, between RERIPA and the funded project. Lead Applicants and Co-applicants will have to include the costs of the kick-off, mid-term and final meetings in their budget.

- Kick-off meeting at the beginning of the project, M2 (within 2 months from official starting date)
- 1st Progress evaluation meeting at M6
- 2nd Progress evaluation meeting at M12
- 3rd Progress evaluation meeting at M18.
- 4th Progress evaluation and final progress meeting 2 months before the official ending date of the project

For each of these meeting, Project coordinators will have to submit a Technical & Financial progress report to the RERIPA Consortium, at least 1 month before the meeting, following the Template (Template of Technical Progress Report + Excel File with the Budget follow up).

In addition to Progress evaluation meetings, we will plan several joint meetings to share and disseminate the results among all the projects funded by RERIPA, and with external stakeholders/the general public (part of the meetings will be open to the public).

IRD will complement regular meetings by on-demand meetings and will also make monitoring missions (where necessary), to collect relevant indicator data. These will include visits to, and interaction with, Project teams and heads of their organizations, as well as other R&I stakeholders. The aim of the monitoring mission is to assess progress with implementation of project activities, as per the approved project annual workplans and budgets. These missions cover technical and financial aspects of project implementation. Photographs and videos may be taken during visits, and may be used in RERIPA publications, to document success stories and for archiving in a photo library.

5.1.3 Project Reports

Drafting and submitting accurate, timely, informative, and results-based reports is a critical component of the management of the project. The reports may contain visual materials, e.g. graphs, diagrams, pictures, and audio-visual clips.
The main reports include:
- i. Progress reports.
- ii. Financial reports.
- iii. Final report.

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5.1.4 Progress Report

A Progress report is a structured, written presentation of activities, results and impacts. There are four primary purposes for the project technical narrative reporting:

- To communicate results achieved in terms of what has been planned and what has been achieved in a particular timeframe.
- To provide an organizational record of progress, results, budget, successes, challenges, and lessons learned.
- To validate requests for future funding.
- To serve as an audit and evaluation trail.

Progress reports **shall be prepared by the Grantee biannually (every 6 months) and submitted alongside the financial reports to IRD** according to the schedule set in the Grant Agreement established between IRD and the Grantee. A format for preparing progress reports will be provided by the CMT for each Call and attached to the Grant Agreement. The progress report shall provide sufficient information for IRD to determine the progress of the project, including appendices such as manuscripts, publications, images, or other technical information that explains the scientific results, findings, products, and so on, of a project.

5.1.5 Financial Report

A format for preparing the financial progress reports will be provided by CMT for each Call and attached to the Grant Agreement.

5.1.6 Final Report

The purpose of the end-of-project report is to record all the relevant information regarding the project. This completion report summarizes the main outputs of the project and the extent to which the objectives have been achieved. It also includes a summary of the resources used. The format for the end-of-project reports will be provided by the CMT/IRD. The project team may hold a final Project Results and Experience-sharing Meeting.

The Grantee shall submit the end-of-project report within one month after the end date of the project as per the grant agreement. A project is officially closed when IRD has accepted and approved the completion report. The financial closure is marked by the acceptance of the final financial report, and by the reimbursement of any unused funds and disposal/transfer of capital goods by the Lead Applicant.

5.1.7 Special Reports

If at any time the Grantee discerns that achievement of the project's objectives is significantly endangered by unexpected external events, or by failures in any part of the detailed work plan that the project team is not able to rectify, it shall immediately report the situation to the IRD with an analysis of the issues and recommendations. IRD shall commence a special review to assess the situation together with the Grantee; and, if necessary, with the representatives of the Steering Committee. If funds are committed, it will also promptly report the situation to the donor. Grantees have flexibility to adjust the format of the special report to accommodate their reporting needs. IRD may also request on a regular basis project updates as may be required before the biannual reportingtime to inform management decisions.

6. Project Suspension and Close Out

6.1 Project Suspension and Termination

In cases where there is clear violation of the Grant Agreement (fraud, waste, neglect, or mismanagement), or where it appears that the conditions surrounding the project have changed and the successful completion of the specific project is unlikely, IRD, in consultation with the OACPS/EU, may suspend project activities and disbursement of funds pending review. There shall be no further disbursement and/or use of funds during suspension. Furthermore, the Grantee shall compile a list ofoutstanding obligations as at the time of suspension and submit to IRD. The Grantee shall keep all assets acquired under the project in safe custody. The outcome of the review shall determine whether the suspension is lifted, or the project is terminated. The project may also be terminated and wound up in accordance with the relevant article in the grant agreement.

6.2 Project termination

IRD will initiate closure of the project after:
a. Approval of the end-of-project report.
b. Receipt of satisfactory final financial reports.
c. Receipt of the unused funds, if any, from the Grantee.
d. Payment of outstanding balances, if any, to the Grantee; and
e. Transfer of ownership of assets acquired under the project to the implementing organization.

7. Contact information and Support

Enquiries can be sent contact@reripa.com