



Pilot and Demonstration Programme

2023 call for projects

« Relief of the power grid through appropriate use of Energy »

Questions et answers (Q&A)

1. **Does the pre-proposal serve as a sandbox draft when a sandbox is required for the implementation of the project and mentioned in the pre-proposal (c.f. Figure 3 "Evaluation procedure for sandbox projects" in the implementation guideline (version of 21.12.2022))?**

Yes, if a Sandbox exemption is required for the implementation of the P+D project and requested during the P+D call process then an assessment of the chances of obtaining said authorization will be given during the pre-proposal feedback.

2. **Is there a SFOE budget cap for sandbox applications and P&D applications, and if so, how high is this per sandbox application and per P&D application?**

There is no financial support linked to a sandbox authorization. Within the framework of this call for projects, each selected project may be financed up to a maximum of CHF 1,000,000, provided that this does not exceed 40% of the non-depreciable additional costs in comparison with the conventional solution.

3. **Is there a maximum number of funded sandbox and P&D projects?**

There is no maximum number of projects that will be supported nor a fixed number of sandbox authorizations that will be given. However, as indicated in the web page related to the sandbox, these authorizations are exceptions and will only be issued if all the sandbox authorization criteria are met. Among other things, it is necessary that the project can contribute to the development of the relevant regulatory framework through the expected results

4. **Are the grant amounts subsidies, i.e. settlement without VAT?**

Yes, P+D support is a subsidy subject to the relevant law: RO 1991 857 Subsidy Act.

5. **Does a project that needs a sandbox exception have to submit a separate application in addition to the full proposal?**

No, the full-proposal form will ask for all the information necessary for the evaluation of the P+D project within the framework of this call for tenders but also, if applicable, of the sandbox project application.

6. **If an application contains a P+D application and a sandbox application, are they linked in their decisions? If not, what happens if the sandbox application is rejected while the P+D project is accepted and vice versa?**



The applications are combined in terms of content, but the subsequent decisions are different because the evaluation criteria are different. The decision on the authorisation of a sandbox is taken at DETEC level on the basis of the evaluation criteria given in the corresponding directive and then based on an ad-hoc ordinance to be established. The decision about P+D projects is made by the SFOE on the basis of the criteria given in the call text. A P+D project for which a sandbox is required for its implementation can only be accepted if the sandbox is also accepted. On the contrary, a sandbox application can be accepted while a P+D project is not. In latter case the financing of the project must be fully ensured by the partners and it is up to them to decide whether they wish to maintain a sandbox application without financial support.

7. Is it correct that in the pre-proposal template in chap. 1.6, "project costs" means the non-amortizable additional costs

No, in point 1.6. of the pre-proposal form of the call for P+D projects, it is requested to fill in the entire costs of the project and to indicate the partners who finance the entire project. The SFOE's contribution may not exceed 40% of the additional costs that cannot be amortized in comparison with the conventional solution.

8. How many law articles (Energy supply act articles) may a sandbox request concern?

There is no limit on the number of articles in the legal framework that can be bypassed in a sandbox project. The restriction mainly refers to the articles concerned (i.e. Art. 6, 8, 10-20a Energy supply act).

9. What will happen next if only some of the exceptions requested in the sandbox are accepted while others are denied?

The answer will probably depend on the particular case. But if the implementation of the project is only possible and relevant if all requests for deviations from the legal framework are accepted, then the project cannot be accepted as a whole in such a case. Once the sandbox decision is obtained, a discussion on the content of the project is not excluded.

10. Do the legal exemptions granted for one sandbox project apply to all sandbox projects?

The number of ad-hoc ordinances to be issued will depend on the content of the applications and it is not possible to indicate this here. Each project will then be authorized separately by DETEC decision on the basis of the relevant ordinances. It is possible for several projects to be authorized on the basis of the same ordinance, provided that each project can demonstrate a clear added value. The sandbox project authorization decision will form the authoritative document for each project as to what it is allowed to do and not allowed to do and to what extent with reference to the relevant ordinance.

11. Is it possible to expand the project consortium during the project? If not, is it possible to involve further partners in the project implementation via agreements between the organization with overall project responsibility?

During the implementation of an accepted project, bilateral agreements may be made between the signatories of the SFOE contract and other partners, provided that this serves the objectives of the project. Any changes to the project must be communicated to and approved by the SFOE. The cost ceiling defined in the SFOE's decision generally cannot be changed, and if the involvement of other partners entails additional costs, these are to be borne in full by the project initiators or the new partners.

12. Is it possible to expand the region(s) affected by a Sandbox exception during implementation, in the sense that one or more likely regions are described in the Sandbox Pre-Proposal and these are later supplemented by other regional modules or alternative regions are defined? If so, what is the latest point in time for the final regional limitation: in the Full-Proposal, at project launch, or during implementation?

The scope of the project is an aspect that will be considered in the context of the sandbox authorization and will be determined at the latest in the authorization decision issued by DETEC. Sandbox projects should be as large as necessary to deliver significant quality results, while being as small as possible to limit market distortion effects. Information on the scope of the project must therefore be included in the final proposal in order for the sandbox application to be evaluated.



13. By when at the latest can other project partners participate in the project and are there formal conditions for this? In other words, can private individuals, for example, participate with their EV via app during the course of the project?

The partners necessary for the implementation of the project must be listed in the full-proposal at the latest and have signed it. Participants in the experiments conducted do not have to be signatories to the request and may potentially enter/contribute to the project during its implementation.

14. Is a small-scale demonstration on a research platform sufficient to test the flexibility and the contribution to the relief of the power grid ? The system is designed in such a way that it can be scaled up to industrial size.

The call text is as follow: "*The primary objective is to test solutions at scale, for example in an industrial complex, a neighbourhood, a city or an entire region.*"

If the facility is able to produce results that can be considered equivalent, for example by the power of the facility or the type of flexibilities chosen, to what could be found in the type of projects sought named in the call-text, then the choice to conduct an experiment using a research facility is not in itself an eliminatory criterion.

15. Is knowledge transfer also taken into account during project evaluation?

The transfer of knowledge is an aspect that is taken into account in the criterion related to the added value of the project.

16. Are letters of intent from partners outside the project a way to demonstrate their interest in the project and, for example, help to show the multiplication potential of the solution?

Letters of intent are a good way to confirm the interest or involvement in the project of a partner who does not sign the full proposal.

17. Can the amount of the grant be changed during the project?

If the project is approved, the grant awarded is a maximum limit. In principle, additional costs must be borne by the partners themselves. An increase of the SFOE contribution during the course of the project is rather the exception and would require the creation of additional substantial added value in the form of new knowledge. If, at the end of the project, the final costs are lower than expected, the financial support will be reduced to a level corresponding to 40% of the actual non-amortizable additional costs (NAC).

18. Is it allowed to submit additional documents with the Full Proposal?

The documents that must be submitted with the Full Proposal are listed in the Full Proposal form. All other documents submitted with the Full Proposal will not be considered in the evaluation.