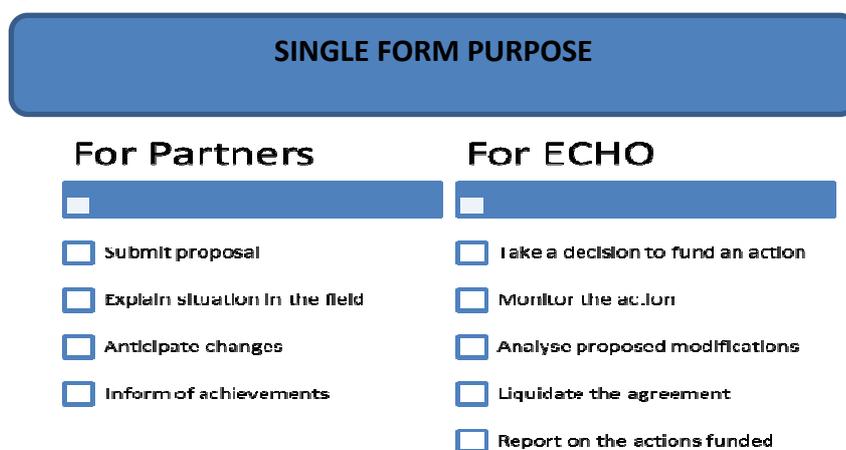


## 6. PREPARING AN ACTION

The **Single Form** is the form which the partner has to use to request funding for its actions.



The Single Form is a living document: It is the same form that is used during the action's life cycle to **amend** the action or to **report** on its achievements.

Single Form guidelines are available on ECHO Partners' website. The SF guidelines assist partner in filling in the Single Form. [http://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/reference\\_documents/start](http://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/reference_documents/start)

### 6.1 HOW TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL?

The partner will send the Single Form to ECHO using the **electronic exchange system, APPEL**<sup>34</sup>.

ECHO **will not accept** other forms of communication. action proposals submitted by email or by other means to an ECHO staff will not be taken into consideration for appraisal and will not be considered as received by ECHO.

APPEL not available?

The obligation to use APPEL can only be derogated from in situations of urgency where, **for technical reasons**, APPEL cannot be immediately accessed by the partner. The partner will send the PDF version of its proposal by e-mail to the desk officer responsible for the agreement.

The official submission of the proposal via [APPEL](#) to ECHO HQ will trigger the appraisal phase (see [section 7.2](#)).

### 6.2 WHO CAN SUBMIT A PROPOSAL?

The partner can submit a proposal **on its own** or **in cooperation** with other humanitarian organisations<sup>35</sup>. The latter is often referred to as the consortium approach.

Consult [section 9.2](#) on consortium for more information.

<sup>34</sup> FPA NGO Article 10.2 & General Conditions for Specific Grant Agreements, Article 4.

6.3 WHEN TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL? <sup>36</sup>

	By an indicative date	From a <i>[date]</i> onwards	At any time
Frequency	Majority of cases	In few cases	In response to sudden crisis or ad-hoc decision
Type of crisis	HIP <sup>37</sup>		Emergency decisions, or ad-hoc decision
Where to find info?	Date published in section 3.1 of the HIP technical annex		At partner's own initiative or ECHO request
Appraisal?	From this date, ECHO will start appraisal process (although ECHO may in principle consider Single forms transmitted after this date)	Appraisal starts at reception of proposal	Appraisal starts at reception of proposal



[http://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/action\\_proposal/start](http://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/action_proposal/start)



- General questions: <http://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/contact/start>
- Specific: Consult the HIP or decision document for the address of ECHO staff

<sup>35</sup> FPA – article 4.1

<sup>36</sup> FPA – article 4.1

<sup>37</sup> Funding opportunities available at <http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding>

## 7. ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSALS BY ECHO

ECHO will analyse the action proposal against a set of criteria; these criteria are mentioned in Article 5 of the FPA and summarised in this chapter. They are also outlined in the Financing Decisions, the HIPs and/or the technical annexes.



### 7.1 ELIGIBILITY AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- **Humanitarian principles:** Funded actions must comply with the fundamental principles of *Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality and Independence*. In situations of armed conflict, they should also comply with *International Humanitarian Law*.<sup>38</sup>
- **Minimum standards:** actions should also respect the following minimum standards :
  - **Well prepared** action: in particular with clear objective and SMART indicators using Key Result Indicators<sup>39</sup> when applicable;
  - Action in line with Humanitarian Aid Union policy<sup>40</sup>, including **sectorial and thematic** standards and guidelines;
  - Action respecting the highest **ethical standards** and best practices in the sector and the specific operating environment;
  - Action **culturally** appropriate and adequate for the specific needs of different groups of affected persons ;
  - Action including **clear analysis** of the beneficiaries' situation.
- **Assessment criteria:** Each action will be assessed against a set of criteria according to the specific context of intervention. These criteria include:
  - Relevance to ECHO strategy and operational requirements specified in the financing decision/HIP;
  - Quality of the needs assessment and of the logical framework;
  - Relevance of the intervention and coverage of the crisis;
  - Feasibility;

Read Art.5 of the FPA to find out more about those minimum standards

<sup>38</sup> FPA NGO Article 3.2

<sup>39</sup> For more details on the Key Result Indicators, consult the Single Form guidelines.

<sup>40</sup> See [section 2.2.5](#) for more information on policies

## 7 | Assessing proposals

- Implementation capacity; and
- Knowledge of the country/region.

In case of actions ongoing in the field, where ECHO is requested to fund a continuation, a visit to the ongoing action may be conducted by ECHO field expert (TA) to determine the feasibility and quality of the action proposed.

Depending on the characteristics of the crisis, other elements could be taken into account when assessing the proposals, such as:

- Security;
- Coordination;
- Access arrangements;
- Quality of monitoring;
- Sustainability, resilience, Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development;
- Cost efficiency; or
  - Comparative advantage of the action or the partners.

The Single Form guidelines present for each sections of the SF the criteria that will be used to assess the various elements of the action.

### 7.2 APPRAISAL PROCEDURE

The submission of the proposal through APPEL will trigger the appraisal procedure within ECHO. ECHO will base its assessment on the criteria mentioned above and will contact the partner for clarification if necessary.

ECHO has established for itself internal deadlines for the various stages of this procedure. These deadlines are indicative. The pre-selection and negotiations phases could be delayed for instance when the starting date of the action is planned for later than 60 days from the submission date.

For more information on the role of Desks and TA in the appraisal process, consult [section 2.3](#).

Appraisal procedure - stages	Communication Channel	Indicative Target date
Submission of the proposal in APPEL	<b>APPEL</b>	Day 1
✉ Acknowledgment receipt	<b>APPEL</b>	
Analysis – pre-selection – made by ECHO staff HQ/TA/RSO in parallel		+15 working days
✉ Invitation to submit revised proposal including comments to be integrated or (next row)...	<b>ECHO-&gt;Partner APPEL notification</b>	
✉ Refusal letter	<b>ECHO-&gt;Partner Email (pdf)</b>	
Negotiation: exchanges between the partner and the TA before the	<b>TA ↔ partner field</b>	+30 working days

submission of the official revised proposal.	(email)
Revised proposal	APPEL
Additional round of negotiation	ECHO ↔ Partner (normally not foreseen)
Decision to fund and preparation of agreement	ECHO -> Partner +11 working days Formal notification
In case the negotiation was not successful:	
Refusal letters	ECHO -> Partners Email pdf
Clarification on refusal	Partner-> desk/TA Email

As a result of the appraisal by ECHO, the partner might be requested to modify some aspects of its proposal (e.g. reduce amount, modify results, better coordination with other actions, etc.).

These requests might be necessary for ECHO to ensure a better coverage of the crisis and a more efficient assistance. **However, these requests should remain reasonable and should not hamper the effective support provided by the partner to its beneficiaries.**

The project belongs to the partner. Before accepting these requests the partner must ensure that it will still be in a position to implement the action. In such cases, an open dialogue with ECHO is paramount.

In case of difficulties to reach an agreement (e.g. deadlines for the revised proposals, nature of requests made during negotiation, etc), the partner can contact the desk or the Partner's Helpdesk for support.

	Consult the HIP or decision document for the addresses of ECHO staff: <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en/funding-evaluations/funding-decisions-hips">http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en/funding-evaluations/funding-decisions-hips</a>
	• Further questions: <a href="http://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/contact/start">http://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/contact/start</a>

### 7.3 HOW THE FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT IS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT?

The financial risks assessment carried out by ECHO<sup>41</sup> is particularly relevant at contracting stage. The main risk for ECHO is that the partner does not have sufficient capacity to implement the action.

Before launching the agreement signature procedure, ECHO will check whether the partner has a threshold and whether the partner's open amount<sup>42</sup> is superior to the indicative threshold of the concerned partner. If the open amount is above the threshold, ECHO desk officers will have to justify their choice to sign an agreement with that partner in that moment in time. ECHO will give its opinion on the justification based on the following criteria:

- The calendar of the ongoing actions: are the ongoing actions close to an end? Is ECHO expecting final reports soon?

<sup>41</sup> See details in [section 4.1.4](#)

<sup>42</sup> Open amount = the total amount of pre-financing relating to agreements for which a Final Report has not been submitted yet.

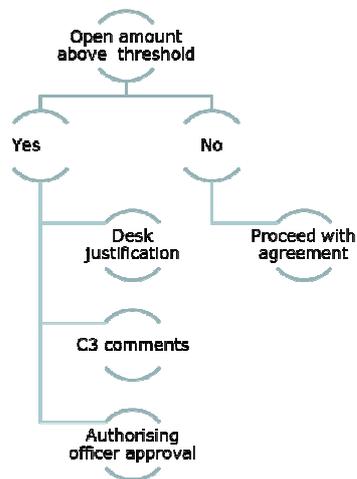
## 7 | Assessing proposals

- The character of the crisis covered by the new agreement - is it an urgent action? Forgotten crisis? Follow-up action, etc.
- Whether the Action is submitted as a consortium or not - if the lead partner has a threshold, what is its actual share in the action?<sup>43</sup>

For actions involving several FPA partners, ECHO will consider the share of each partner into the action individually .

Depending on this analysis, **mitigating measures** can be established, such as:

- Pre-financing the action in two instalments (50% and 30%) instead of one;
- splitting the action in order to reduce the amount;
- postponing the signature of the agreement.



The threshold is not a criterion limiting the partner's capacity to submit a proposal.

---

<sup>43</sup> If the partner with a threshold is an implementing partner in an ECHO Action, the threshold is not taken into account when signing the agreement.