

EUROPEAN FOREST INSTITUTE

Grant submission guidelines

G-02-2022

**Development of forest monitoring capacities in
Ukraine**

1. ACTIVITY TO BE SUPPORTED BY THE GRANT

Forests in Europe provide a range of ecosystem services, playing a vital role in fighting climate change. However, the lack of consistent and comprehensive pan-European forest information products and a coordinated monitoring system currently hampers the effective use of all available forest information. While National Forest Inventories are the main source of data, these face several limitations: disparate methodologies, high data collection costs, and difficulties to access data. Moreover, many remote sensing resources that have only recently become available are not optimally integrated into Europe-wide-forest information products.

The importance of a comprehensive and reliable forest data is reflected also in the number of European projects that are currently implemented in this field. For example, the EFI Network Fund is funding the EFINET project, which is developing a conceptual framework to derive pan-European forest information products and close-to-real-time monitoring of forest changes, forest structural variables, forest biodiversity and forest health at European level. A system which combines remote sensing and auxiliary inventory-based data is of particular interest for countries where no national forest inventory data is available.

In this context, EFI is offering up to five grants of 30,000 EUR to Ukrainian researchers (for complete eligibility requirements, please see section 3 below) to develop their capacities in the field of forest monitoring and explore the suitability and robustness of different monitoring procedures in the context of Ukraine.

The supported activities will be implemented in the frame of various projects currently implemented by EFI and its Associate Members (organisations), and will address the following topics:

Topic 1: Evaluation of forest disturbances in Ukraine through remotely sensed data

In the framework of the activities of the [EFINET project](#) the potential evaluation of disturbances in Ukrainian forests through the automatic analysis of temporal trajectories from optical and radar remotely sensed data (Landsat and Sentinel). In such a context the activities of the grantee will also consist of the acquisition of local data for the validation of the analysis and for supporting the local algorithm optimization. The activities will focus on the evaluation of forest disturbances in Ukraine in terms of loss of ecosystem services.

Foreseen work supervisor: Prof. Dr. Gherardo Chirici

Foreseen location of implementation: University of Florence

Topic 2: Mapping core forests in Europe

In the frame of the [ForestPaths project](#), an analysis of forest disturbance maps will be conducted to identify core forests (i.e., undisturbed in the past four decades, minimum size to harbour forest-dwelling species) and characterize their composition and configuration (i.e., form and shape, species composition and structure, distance to human pressures). The activities will involve the handling and analysis of spatial data using geoinformation-systems and the documentation and presentation of results. The activities will be in collaboration with researchers from the Technical University of Munich and the Transylvania University of Brasov.

Foreseen work supervisor: Dr. Cornelius Senf

Foreseen location of implementation: Technical University Munich

Topic 3: Monitoring the effects of restoration interventions on biodiversity and ecosystem services

In the frame of the [SUPERB project](#), the grantee will participate in the organization and implementation of a cost-efficient systems of monitoring, reporting and verification for quantifying the effects of restoration interventions on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Field methods will include traditional forest inventory of forest structure and composition, using iNaturalist app, DNA metabarcoding techniques and bioacoustics with fieldwork procedures following LIFEPLAN ([Lifeplan | University of Helsinki](#)), soil carbon and soil biological activity data from soil augers, and collection of multispectral and laser remote sensing from the ground and drones.

Foreseen work supervisor: Prof. dr. Ruben Valbuena or Prof. dr. Bart Muys

Foreseen location of implementation: Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences or KU Leuven

Topic 4: Forest data infrastructures supporting the ForestWard Observatory to secure the resilience of European forests

In the framework of the FORWARDS project, a cloud-based data systems (ForestWard Observatory) will be developed. The system will collect, integrate and process several types of data, including forest data networks, large scale estimations from remote sensing, climate-smart forestry and restoration pilots, and their associated social science indicators and stakeholder engagement results. The system will include a geospatial data browser where the end-user can see information on maps, application dashboards where data and tools can be used for personalised queries and analyses, and an interface for download of datasets. The grantee will participate in the development and establishment of the system.

Foreseen work supervisor: Dr. Alexandre Changenet

Foreseen location of implementation: Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

Topic 5: Ecosystem service monitoring in Ukrainian forests

The INFORMA project is focusing on establishing the relation between forest management and ecosystem functions. In this respect, the project will quantify differences in major ecosystem functions between managed and unmanaged forests across Europe, by applying state-of-the-art spatial data approaches. The grantee will apply the methodology in relation to the provision of ecosystem services in selected forest areas in Ukraine.

Foreseen work supervisor: Dr. Koenraad Van Meerbeek

Foreseen location of implementation: KU Leuven

Each applicant can apply only for one topic.

A maximum of one grant per topic (in total five grants) will be awarded.

The grants must be implemented by the end of 2024. The duration of the grant period is between 6 and 12 months.

2. QUESTIONS

Questions regarding the grant process may be sent only to the following address:

questions.grantsprocess@efi.int

EFI is not bound to reply to questions received later than the following deadline:

25 September 2022

Questions and answers for this tendering process will be published at <https://efi.int/grants-training/grants/G-02-2022> on:

29 September 2022

Individual questions will not be replied to separately.

Potential applicants are advised to visit <https://efi.int/grants-training/grants/G-02-2022> regularly before the deadline for the submission of applications for any updates or modifications regarding this grant process.

3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applications shall, to be eligible for funding, comply with the following eligibility criteria:

| Criteria | Description of criteria |
|----------|---|
| E1 | Applicant works in Ukraine in an area related to the forest sector |
| E2 | Applicant has Ukrainian citizenship |
| E3 | Applicant has graduated with a PhD/Doctorate |
| E4 | Applicant has up to 5 years post-doc work experience in forest monitoring, forest modelling, or similar, after award of PhD/Doctorate |

Applications not fulfilling the above stated eligibility criteria will be rejected.

4. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All applications shall apply the following structure:

I. Administrative information

1. Cover letter, using template annex 1
2. Declaration – exclusion from funding, using template annex 2
3. CV of the Applicant, in English, clearly indicating:
 - degree awarded (PhD/Doctorate) and date of graduation
 - current position/affiliation of work
 - post-doc work experience, including dates
4. Passport copy showing Ukrainian citizenship of Applicant

II. Technical proposal

1. Motivation letter in English of no more than 800 words
 - Proposal of activities contributing to the chosen topic, addressing the link between the topic and Applicant's work in Ukraine
 - Proposal for duration (6-12 months)
 - Describing complexities and challenges in forest monitoring in Ukraine
 - Describing how to transfer the outcome of the activities implemented through the grant to other researchers and experts in the forest sector in Ukraine
2. Introduction video in English:
 - length of maximum 60 seconds
 - must address:
 - short introduction of the candidate
 - topic related work experience in Ukraine
 - complexities and challenges in forest monitoring in Ukraine
 - transfer the outcome of the activities implemented through the grant to other researchers and experts in the forest sector in Ukraine
 - format must be .mp4 or .mov
 - resolution must be 720p HD at 30 fps

- file size must not exceed 100 MB

III. Procedure to follow for applying

The Grant application shall only to be submitted to grants@efi.int.

The email with the application shall contain only the following heading in the subject line:

Application for Grant G-02-2022, Forest monitoring - Ukraine

The grant application must have been received by EFI by the following deadline at the latest:

30 October 2022, 23:00 UTC

5. SELECTION CRITERIA

Criteria that will be applied for awarding of the grant:

| | |
|----|--|
| A1 | Relevance of proposed activities |
| A2 | Understanding of the complexities and challenges in forest monitoring in Ukraine |
| A3 | Transfer of the outcome of the activities implemented through the grant to other researchers and experts in the forest sector in Ukraine |

Applications will receive a scores 0-5 for each of the criteria. Scores can be given in half points.

Applications must receive a score of at least 3 points in each of the categories A1, A2, and A3, to be considered for award of a grant.

The application with the highest total score $A1 + A2 + A3$ will be awarded the grant for each respective topic.

In case of equal scores the following will apply: Applications will be prioritised according to score under criteria A1, thereafter A3, and lastly A2.

6. TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION

- 6.1 In addition to what has been stated in the Call for grant and these Grant submission guidelines, EFI applies the EFI Grant rules which have been made available at <https://efi.int/grants-training/grants/efi-grant-rules>
- 6.2 By submitting an application for a grant, the applicant accepts all the terms and conditions set out in the Call for grant and these Grant submission guidelines (including its annexes), and waives all other terms.
- 6.3 EFI may reject an application that is not in compliance with the instructions in the Call for grant or the Grant submission guidelines.
- 6.4 No information communicated in this grant process, including the Call for grant and these Grant submission guidelines (including its annexes), bind EFI in any way to an award or a grant agreement. EFI shall only be bound by written grant agreements.
- 6.5 An applicant must be able to prove, to the satisfaction of EFI, any information given as part of its application. Failure to do so, within a time limit set by EFI, may result in rejection of the application.
- 6.6 EFI may ask the applicant for clarifications regarding any information submitted as part of the application. EFI may reject any applicant from the grant process that fails to submit the requested clarification.
- 6.7 Only applications sent to grants@efi.int will be considered.
- 6.8 Applications submitted after the deadline for submission will not be considered.
- 6.9 An Applicant may only submit one application. In case of multiple applications from the same economic operator EFI will only consider the last one received.
- 6.10 Withdrawal of an application shall be done in writing.
- 6.11 All applications shall be quoted in Euros.
- 6.12 Expenses incurred in the preparation and dispatch of an application will not be reimbursed by EFI.
- 6.13 Applications must be legible. EFI may reject applications that are not legible.
- 6.14 EFI will disregard any information given by an Applicant outside the format for submission as stated in the Call for Grant or Grant submission guidelines.
- 6.15 The application shall be complete when submitted. EFI will disregard additional documentation or information submitted separately from the application, where not requested by EFI.

- 6.16 EFI may at its own discretion disclose the contents of any application, as well as information on the Beneficiary awarded the grant as well as any other information of the grant awarded.
- 6.17 Unless otherwise stated in the Call for grant and these Grant submission guidelines, the Application and all correspondence related to it shall be in English. EFI retains the right to correspond in English with the Applicant even if the application may be submitted in a language other than English.
- 6.18 Applicants are not entitled to contact EFI staff members or any other person referred to in the EFI grant rules after the closing date of the receipt of applications to ask for information on the evaluation. EFI may eliminate from the evaluation any Applicant contravening this provision.

Annexes

- Annex 1 Cover letter
- Annex 2 Declaration – exclusion from funding
- Annex 3 Grant agreement