

23/02/2026

National Policy Labs Q&A | Version 4.0 Updated on 23.02.2026

Introduction

This Q&A document has been prepared to support applicants in understanding the requirements, procedures, and expectations of the **National Policy Labs Call for BEDA Member Applications**. It complements the official call text and aims to clarify the most common questions that applicants may have while preparing their submissions.

The content of this Q&A will be **regularly updated** throughout the duration of the call, with the latest version being published 10 days prior to the call deadline, by max. All questions received by the MADres Secretariat —whether through email, or during the Info Session— will be reviewed, and the answers will be incorporated into this document to ensure transparent and equal access to information for all applicants.

Applicants are therefore encouraged to **consult the Q&A frequently**, particularly in the days leading to the closure of the call, to ensure they have the most up-to-date guidance.

Link to the application form: [Call for National Design Policy Labs](#)

Please read the call first.

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1. General Questions

Q1.1 What is the purpose of the National Policy Labs Call?

Answer: The call supports BEDA members in establishing four National Policy Labs—one in each macro-region of Europe—with the goal of testing the Living Design Policy Framework Materials (LDPFM) in national contexts and providing insights that will refine the Living Design Policy Framework (LDPF) at European level.

Q1.2 What is a National Policy Lab (NPL)?

Answer: An NPL is a national platform that convenes policymakers, public authorities, designers, researchers, and societal stakeholders to examine how design can be integrated into public policy through two structured workshops and the co-creation of a National Design Policy Umbrella.

Q1.3 How many Labs will be funded?

Answer: A total of **four Labs** will be selected, one per macro-region (North, South, East, West).

Q1.4 How long is the implementation period?

Answer: Each National Policy Lab runs for **17 months**, from May 2026 to September 2027.

Q1.5 What is the role of the LDPF Materials?

Answer: NPLs must use the Living Design Policy Framework Materials exactly as provided, unless instructed otherwise, to ensure methodological consistency across countries.

Q1.6 Do applicants need to select policy areas that were analysed in the Design Policy Mapping Report and how should this be interpreted in countries where the relevant policy domains are largely organised at regional level (please read first Q2.5)?

Answer: Applicants are expected to select policy areas **informed by** the Design Policy Mapping Report and the Design Policy Spectrum. It is fully acceptable to select policy areas that are organised at regional level, as long as

- an informed decision based on prior research into the needs in the respective policy area has been made
- the policy areas are clearly defined,
- the competent public authorities are engaged, and

→ you explain how the Lab will contribute to integrating design into those areas and produce actionable outputs (Mission Statement & Roadmap).

You are not expected to focus on policy domains with low feasibility for design integration. The key is to select areas where design integration can be meaningfully explored and advanced with the competent authorities.

Please bear in mind that in case of multi-regional application from federalised countries, the abovementioned requirements are relevant to each region involved (please also consult Q2.6)

Q1.7 Can we have an offline version of the application to use when drafting our proposals?

Answer: An offline template including the questions of the application form is now available in the call's [webpage](#).

Q1.8 How much research do you think has to be done BEFORE the workshops (see Q1.6)?

Answer: You will have to do research into societal (national/regional) needs, policy needs, your domain needs, and the relevant design ecosystem incl. a stakeholder mapping. The research can be done, based on existing data (desktop research) – primary research (developing own data) isn't mandatory.

2. Eligibility

Q2.1 Who is eligible to apply?

Answer: Eligible applicants include legal entities such as public bodies, universities, research organisations, design councils, NGOs, and professional associations that are **official BEDA members** at the time of application and are situated in Creative Europe eligible countries.

Q2.2 Must applicants provide a Letter of Support?

Answer: Yes. Applicants must submit a Letter of Support from a national authority. It is mandatory at the time of application.

Q2.3 Can a consortium apply?

Answer: Yes, national consortia are eligible. The **lead applicant must be a BEDA member**, and all consortium partners must provide Letters of Intent.

Q2.4 Can an organisation submit more than one application?

Answer: No. Each organisation may submit or be part of **only one application**.

Q2.5 In federalised countries (e.g., Belgium or Germany) where many policy competencies sit at regional level, what is considered a ‘national authority’ for the purposes of this Call?

Answer: In federalised governance systems —namely in Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, and Austria— policy competences may be primarily held at the regional (or devolved) level. **In these cases, for the purposes of this Call, applicants may interpret regional governments** (indicated through a parliament or legislative institution) as the “national authority”.

In practical terms, this means that regional ministries/secretariats, regional parliaments, or equivalent top-level regional public bodies that hold the formal mandate for the selected policy area may be considered an appropriate “national authority”.

Q2.6 Can the “national” scope be demonstrated through structured collaboration across multiple regions within one country (e.g., Flanders and Wallonia, potentially Brussels), resulting in a shared Mission Statement and Roadmap that competent authorities commit to adopt? (related to Q2.5)

Answer: Yes. A cross-regional approach within the same country is an appropriate way to demonstrate “national” scope in **multi-level governance systems**. If you propose a Lab that brings together multiple regions (and approaches local governments), the proposal should clearly explain:

- how the collaboration will be structured (governance, co-ownership, decision-making),
- how the shared Mission Statement (Design Policy Umbrella) will be agreed,
- how the Roadmap will be designed to enable **regional adoption / implementation**, and
- which public authorities are engaged in the selected policy areas.

Applications from the aforementioned (Q2.5) federalised countries, are highly encouraged to combine forces between stakeholders of different regions, given they share strategic interest on the domains under focus in the application.

Q2.7 Is it acceptable for a National Policy Lab to be implemented within one region, where that region holds full competence for the selected policy areas? (related to Q2.5)

A single-region implementation can be acceptable where the region is the competent authority for the selected policy areas. In such cases, the proposal should still explain

how the Lab's outputs will be positioned as a country-level contribution (e.g., as a scalable model, transferable roadmap structure, or a Design Policy Umbrella that can be extended/adopted by other regions or national stakeholders over time).

Q2.8 For the required public authority involvement (Letter of Support / Letter of Intent and the draft agreement), can regional public authorities or agencies sign when the policy competences are regional, or is a federal signature required? (related to Q2.5)

Answer: In the case of federalised governance settings, where policy competences are regional, the required letters and draft agreement can be signed by **regional public authorities (or their competent agencies)** responsible for those policy areas. A federal authority signature is **not required** if the federal level does not hold competence for the selected domains.

What matters is that the signing authorities:

- has a clear mandate in the selected policy areas, and
- confirms support/engagement aligned with the Call's requirements (public authority involvement; movement toward integrating design into the selected areas).

3. Application Process

Q3.1 How must applications be submitted?

Answer: Applications must be submitted electronically via the official online form at [Call for National Design Policy Labs](#).

Q3.2 What Information must be included in the application?

Answer: Applicants must submit:

- Completed application form
- Proposal narrative
- Letter of Support
- Letters of Intent (if consortium)
- Declaration of Honour
- Biography of Project Manager
- Supporting documentation such as surveys, reports, or previous work can be provided

Q3.3 Can applications be modified after submission?

Answer: No. Once submitted, applications cannot be reopened or edited.

Q3.4 Will applicants receive feedback?

Answer: Yes. Applicants will receive their evaluation scores and short comments during the results notification process.

4. Evaluation

Q4.1 How are applications evaluated?

Answer: Applications undergo an eligibility check and are then evaluated by the MADres Core Team and Advisory Board. They are scored 1–5 across four criteria.

Q4.2 What is the minimum required score?

Answer: Proposals must score at least 15 out of 20 and meet the individual threshold for each criterion.

Q4.3 How does regional selection work?

Answer: Proposals are ranked within each macro-region. The top-ranked eligible application per region is selected for funding.

Q4.4 How are ties resolved?

Answer: Tie-breakers are resolved by the MADres Advisory Board.

Q4.5 Is there an appeals procedure?

Answer: Yes. Applicants may file an appeal for procedural shortcomings until 13 April 2026 (updated in Call for Applications | Version 2.0, as updated on 26.01.2026).

Q4.6 Does diversity matter in evaluation?

Answer: Yes. One of the criteria (4 points) examines gender balance, inclusion, diversity, and representativeness in the applicant organisation and proposed team.

Q4.7 Is it acceptable to describe ecosystem readiness as strong at regional level but fragmented at country level, and to position the Lab as a bridging mechanism that builds a coherent national-level umbrella and roadmap?

Answer: Yes. It is acceptable to describe readiness as strong at regional level but less coherent at country level, and to position the Lab as a bridging mechanism. If you use this framing, it will help to clearly show:

→ what “readiness” looks like in each region (infrastructure, networks, experience influencing policy),

- what the “gap” is at country level (coordination, shared direction, common evidence base),
- and how the Lab will translate regional strengths into a coherent Mission Statement and Roadmap (governance model, stakeholder involvement, and mechanisms for alignment).

This framing can strengthen your proposal when coupled with a practical plan for coordination and adoption by competent authorities.

Q4.8 Who is evaluating the proposals?

Answer: Applications are initially evaluated by the **MADres Core Team**, in line with the Call’s award criteria and evaluation process.

To avoid any conflict of interest, if an application is submitted from a country where a member of the MADres Core Team is based/originates from, that team member will be **excluded from the evaluation process**, ensuring an impartial and transparent assessment.

5. Activities & Deliverables

Q5.1 What activities must National Policy Labs implement?

Answer: National Policy Labs must implement two national workshops using LDPFM, alongside pre-workshop research, stakeholder engagement, network integration, and documentation.

Q5.2 What documentation is required for each workshop?

Answer: Each workshop requires:

- Preparation report
- Video recording
- Transcribed audio
- Photos
- Digitalised participant input
- Completed questionnaires
- Written documentation

Q5.3 What are the European-level contributions?

Answer: Each Lab’s Lead and Project Manager must participate in two to three MADres focus groups, contributing insights into the refinement of the LDPF.

Q5.4 Are GDPR consents required?

Answer: Yes. GDPR-compliant consent forms must be secured from all NPL activities' participants.

6. Funding & Contracting

Q6.1 What is the funding amount per Lab?

Answer: Each selected Lab receives a €34,000 lump-sum grant.

Q6.2 How is the lump sum paid?

Answer: Payments occur as follows:

- 20% at contract signature
- 30% after Workshop 1
- 30% after Workshop 2
- 20% after the final report

Q6.3 Is financial reporting required?

Answer: No. As a lump-sum grant, payments depend on deliverable acceptance rather than cost reporting.

Q6.4 Are travel and meeting costs allowed?

Answer: Yes. These are included among eligible activities within the lump-sum scope.

Q6.5 Can the implementation period be extended?

Answer: No. The 17-month period is fixed and cannot be extended.

7. Communication, Rights & Obligations

Q7.1 Who owns the outputs created by the Labs?

Answer: Labs retain ownership but must grant MADres the right to use outputs for related outcome synthesis, reporting, communication and dissemination.

Q7.2 Does MADres have communication rights over Labs' activities?

Answer: Yes. MADres has prior communication rights and must approve dissemination material related to the Labs.

Q7.3 What visibility rules must Labs follow?

Answer: Labs must comply with Creative Europe branding rules and MADres communication guidelines, which will be provided at contracting.

Q7.4 Can Labs disseminate outputs nationally?

Answer: Yes, but only after coordination and approval from the MADres communication team.

Contact

For questions, please address the National Policy Lab call's secretariat:

Fleur Fisher & Dimitris Kaboukos: npl@beda.org

We are looking forward to your application!
Join **#impactbydesign**

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