

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR THE SELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE EXPERT GROUP "SUPPORT TO CIRCULAR ECONOMY FINANCING EXPERT GROUP"

1. Background

The transition to a circular economy requires substantial change in regulatory policies and business, and considerable public and private investments. This is fully recognised in the 2015 European Commission's Circular Economy Package which states that in 2016 the Commission will assess the possibility of launching a platform together with the EIB and national banks to support the financing of the circular economy."¹

As part of the platform, the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (hereafter referred to as DG RTD) has set up a group of experts. The Support to Circular Economy Financing Expert Group, hereinafter referred to as "the group", is an informal Commission expert group operating in accordance with the horizontal Rules for Commission Expert Groups² and registered in the Commission's Register of Commission expert groups and other similar entities ('the Register of expert groups').³

The group's tasks shall be to provide the Commission with advice and expertise to support the generation and financing of circular economy in the Member States. It will provide recommendations regarding concrete measures to facilitate circular economy (CE) project financing. Further information regarding the group's objectives, structure and operation can be found in the Terms of Reference attached (Annex IV).

The Commission is calling for applications with a view to selecting members of the group other than Member States' authorities and other public entities.

2. Features of the Group

2.1. COMPOSITION

The group shall consist of up to 60 members representing public and private sectors according to the following categories:

1. European Investment Bank (Type E member - EIB);
2. National promotional banks or institutions (depending on their status, Type D or C members);⁴

¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Closing the loop – an EU action plan for the Circular Economy - COM(2015)614

² Commission Decision C(2016)3301

³ <http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm>

⁴ As defined in Article 2(3) of the Regulation (EU) 2015/1017 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 June 2015 on the European Fund for Strategic Investments, the European Investment Advisory Hub and the European Investment Project Portal

3. Organisations in the broad sense of the word (Type C members), with expertise in circular economy practice, project generation and financing including companies, associations, Non-Governmental Organisations, financial institutions such as private institutional investors, trade unions, universities, research institutes, law firms and consultancies;

4. Other public entities (Type E members), i.e. EU bodies and EU agencies (the European Committee of the Regions, the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Environment Agency);

By means of this call, the Commission is seeking applications in order to select members referred to in categories 2⁵ and 3.

In order to contribute effectively to the Platform's work, members shall be represented at senior-level. DG RTD may refuse the nomination of a representative by an organisation if it considers this nomination inappropriate in light of the requirements specified in chapter 4 of this call. In such case, the organisation concerned shall be asked to appoint another representative.

2.2. APPOINTMENT

Members shall be appointed by the Director General of DG RTD in consultation with DG ECFIN, after consulting SG, DG GROW and DG ENV⁶ from applicants complying with the requirements referred to in chapter 4 of this call.

Members shall be appointed for 2 years. They shall remain in office until the end of their term of office. Their term of office may be renewed.

Registration in the Transparency Register is required in order for organisations to be appointed.

In order to ensure continuity and the smooth functioning of the group, a reserve list of suitable candidates shall be established that may be used to appoint replacements. DG RTD shall ask applicants for their consent before including their names on the reserve list.

Members who are no longer capable of contributing effectively to the group's deliberations, who in the opinion of DG RTD do not comply with the conditions set out in Article 339 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union or who resign, shall no longer be invited to

⁵ Entities referred to in category 2 will be selected through this call for applications (different from the H2020 continuously open call for experts (OJ C342/03 of 22 November 2013) where they qualify as type C members as defined in Article 7.2 (c) of Commission Decision C(2016)3301 governing the creation and operation of Commission expert groups. Further definitions of type C members are available in Annex I to the present call for applications. Entities referred to in category 2 will not be selected through this call for applications, but they will be invited by the European Commission to join the group as members where they qualify as type D members as defined in Article 7.2 (d) of Commission Decision C(2016)3301. Please note that Type D members represent the views and position of their Member State. Entities which qualify as Type D members are kindly requested to inform the European Commission on their interest to join the group in order to be invited, using the contact details information available in section 3 of the present document.

⁶ DG Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN), Secretariat-General (SG), DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW), DG Environment (DG ENV)

participate in any meetings of the group and may be replaced for the remainder of their term of office.

2.3 RULES OF ENGAGEMENT AND OPERATION OF THE GROUP

The group shall be chaired by a representative of DG RTD. Representatives of SG, DG ECFIN, DG GROW, DG ENV and potentially other DGs with interest in circular economy shall be part of these meetings.

The group shall act at the request of its chairman with the agreement of DG RTD, in compliance with the Commission's horizontal rules on expert groups ('the horizontal rules')⁷.

In principle, the group shall meet at least twice a year on Commission premises in order to discuss its work. DG RTD shall provide secretarial services.

Members' representatives should be prepared to attend meetings systematically, to contribute actively to discussions in the group, to be involved in preparatory work ahead of meetings, to examine and provide comments on documents under discussion, and to act, as appropriate, as 'rapporteurs' on ad hoc basis.

Working documents will be drafted in English and meetings will be also conducted in English.

The group shall adopt its opinions, recommendations or reports by consensus. In the event of a vote, the outcome of the vote shall be decided by simple majority of the members. The members that voted against or abstained shall have the right to have a document summarising the reasons for their position annexed to the opinions, recommendations or reports.

The group's discussions are confidential. In agreement with the Chair, the group may, by simple majority of its members, decide to open its deliberations to the public for specific meetings or discussions.

Participants in the activities of the group shall not be remunerated for the services they offer. Travel and subsistence expenses incurred by participants in the activities of the group shall be reimbursed by the Commission. Reimbursement shall be made in accordance with the provisions in force within the Commission and within the limits of the available appropriations allocated to the Commission departments under the annual procedure for the allocation of resources.

The members of the group and their representatives, as well as invited experts and observers, are subject to the obligation of professional secrecy, which by virtue of the Treaties and the rules implementing them applies to all members of the institutions and their staff, as well as to the Commission's rules on security regarding the protection of Union classified information, laid down in Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/443⁸ and 2015/444⁹. Should they fail to respect these obligations, the Commission may take all appropriate measures.

⁷ Article 13.1 of C(2016) 3301 final

⁸ Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/443 of 13 March 2015 on Security in the Commission (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 41).

The working modalities of the CE expert group shall be laid down in its Rules of Procedure, adopted by the group on the basis of a proposal from the Chair and in compliance with the horizontal rules.

The Chair may invite other experts on an ad hoc basis, including representatives from non-EU Member States, academics and researchers where appropriate or necessary, to participate in the work of the CE expert group.

Further information on the operation of the group is available in the attached Terms of Reference (Annex IV).

2.4. TRANSPARENCY

The group shall be registered in the Register of Commission expert groups and other similar entities ('the Register of expert groups').

As concerns the group composition, DG RTD shall publish the following data on the Register of expert groups:

- the name of member organisations; the interest represented shall be disclosed;
- the name of other public entities;
- the name of Member States' authorities;

DG RTD shall make available all relevant documents, including the agendas, the minutes and the participants' submissions, either on the Register of expert groups or *via* a link from the Register to a dedicated website, where this information can be found. Access to dedicated websites shall not be submitted to user registration or any other restriction. In particular, the DG RTD shall ensure publication of the agenda and other relevant background documents in due time ahead of the meeting, followed by timely publication of minutes.

Exceptions to publication shall only be foreseen where it is deemed that disclosure of a document would undermine the protection of a public or private interest as defined in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) N° 1049/2001¹⁰.

Personal data shall be collected, processed and published in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001.

3. Application procedure

Interested organisations and, where appropriate, national promotional banks, are invited to submit their application to the European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation.

Applications must be completed in one of the official languages of the European Union.

⁹ Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444 of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53).

¹⁰ These exceptions are intended to protect public security, military affairs, international relations, financial, monetary or economic policy, privacy and integrity of the individual, commercial interests, court proceedings and legal advice, inspections/investigations/audits and the institution's decision-making process.

However, applications in English would facilitate the evaluation procedure. If another language is used, it would be helpful to include a summary of the application in English.

Organisations shall indicate the name of their representative(s) in the group as well as their respective function(s) in the organisation.

An application will be deemed admissible only if it is sent by the deadline and includes the documents referred to below. All documents submitted by applicants should be duly filled in, legible, signed and numbered sequentially.

Supporting documents

Each application shall include the following documents:

- a cover letter explaining the applicant's motivation for answering this call and stating what contribution the applicant could make to the group;
- a classification form duly filled in specifying the member category for which the application is made (Annex I).
- a selection criteria form duly filled in documenting how the applicant fulfills the selection criteria listed in chapter 4 of this call (Annex II).

For representatives nominated by organisations, a *curriculum vitae* (CV) shall also be provided, preferably not exceeding three pages. All CVs shall be submitted in the European format (<https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae/templates-instructions>).

Additional supporting documents (e.g. publications) may be requested at a later stage.

Deadline for application

The duly signed applications must be sent by **9th May 2017** at the latest. The date of sending will be established as follows:

- Where applications are sent by e-mail to the following e-mail address: RTD-ENV-Circular-Economy-EG@ec.europa.eu, the date of the e-mail will be the date of sending.
- Where applications are sent by post to the following address: European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Unit Eco-Innovation secretariat – Office CDMA 03/010, Rue du Champ de Mars, B-1049 Brussels, the postmark will be considered the date of sending.
- Where applications are hand-delivered to the following address: European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Unit Eco-Innovation secretariat – Office CDMA 03/010, Rue du Champ de Mars, B-1049 Brussels, the date on the receipt given upon delivery will be considered the date of sending.

4. Selection criteria

DG RTD will take the following criteria into account when assessing applications:

- proven and relevant competence and experience, including at national and/or European and/or international level, in areas relevant to circular economy practice, project generation and financing, and in particular:
 - the specific characteristics of circular economy projects and their financing;
 - existing challenges, barriers and gaps for circular economy financing; existing risks and how these can be mitigated;
 - preparation and structuring of circular economy projects (e.g. in terms of technical design, business models, financial and economic analysis, risk sharing, legal set-up, etc.);
- willingness and capability to commit to the work of the group over the foreseen period (24 months);
- competence, experience and hierarchical level of the proposed representatives;
- good knowledge of the English language allowing active participation of the proposed representatives in the discussions.

5. Selection procedure

The selection procedure shall consist of an assessment of the applications performed by DG RTD against the selection criteria listed in chapter 4 of this call, followed by the establishment of a list of the most suitable applicants, and concluded by the appointment of the members of the group.

When defining the composition of the group, DG RTD shall aim at ensuring, as far as possible, a high level of expertise, as well as a balanced representation of relevant know how and areas of interest, while taking into account the specific tasks of the group, the type of expertise required, as well as the relevance of the applications received.

For any further information please contact Ms Severina Markova, Telephone: (32-2) 296 74 38, e-mail: severina.markova@ec.europa.eu.

ANNEXES:

- Classification form (Annex I)
- Selection criteria form (Annex II)
- Privacy statement (Annex III)
- Terms of Reference (Annex IV)

Annex I - Classification form¹

To be filled in by all applicants

This application is made as: (*please select only one option*)

- An organisation (Type C member).**

Transparency Register identification number: [...]

To be filled in by organisations applying to be appointed as Type C members

This application is made as the following **type of organisation**: (*please select only one option, taking into account the definitions indicated below*).

- a) Academia, research Institutes and Think Tanks
- b) Banks/Financial institutions
- c) Companies/groups
- d) Law firms
- e) NGOs
- f) Professionals' associations
- g) Professional consultancies
- h) Trade and business associations
- i) Trade unions
- j) Other (please specify):

Definitions for organisation types

Academia, Research Institutes and Think Tanks

Universities, schools, research centers, think tanks and other similar bodies performing academic and/or educational activities.

Banks/Financial institutions

¹ This form must be filled in, signed and returned with the application.

Banks and other similar bodies providing financial services, including financial intermediation. All sorts of banks should be classified within this category, including national central banks.

Companies/groups

Individual companies or groups of companies operating in the business sector, whether they are national companies or multinational ones.

Law firms

Business entities formed by one or more lawyers to engage in the practice of law. The primary service rendered by a law firm is to advise clients (individuals or corporations) about their legal rights and responsibilities, and to represent clients in civil or criminal cases, business transactions, and other matters in which legal advice and other assistance are sought.

NGOs

Non-profit organisations which are independent from public authorities and commercial organisations. Some NGOs are organised around specific issues, such as environment, consumer affairs, health and human rights.

Professionals' associations

Non-profit organisations seeking to further the interests of individuals engaged in a particular profession, such as physicians, nurses, architects, engineers and lawyers. Professionals' associations are different from business associations, as they promote and defend the interests of individuals carrying on a specific profession, not the interests of companies operating in the business sector.

Professional consultancies

Firms carrying on, on behalf of clients, activities involving advocacy, lobbying, promotion, public affairs and relations with public authorities.

Trade and business associations

Private bodies representing the interests of its members operating in the business sector.

Trade unions

Organisations of workers. The most common activities performed by trade unions include the negotiation of wages, work rules, rules governing hiring, firing and promotion of workers.

Other organisations

Organisations which are not possible to classify in any other category.

To be filled in by organisations applying to be appointed as Type C members

The applicant shall represent the following **interest**: (*please select one or more options, taking into account the definitions indicated below*):

- a) Academia/Research
- b) Civil society
- c) Employees/Workers
- d) Finance
- e) Industry
- f) Professionals
- g) SMEs
- h) Other (please specify):

Definitions for interests represented

Academia/Research

Universities, schools, research centers, think tanks and other similar bodies performing academic and/or educational activities.

Civil society

Civil society can be defined as the aggregate of non-governmental organisations and institutions that manifest interests and will of citizens or as individuals and organisations in a society which are independent of the government.

Employees/workers

Individuals working part-time or full-time under a contract of employment whether oral or written, express or implied, and having recognized rights and duties.

Finance

The management of revenues or the conduct or transaction of money matters, as in the fields of banking, insurance and investment.


Industry

Companies and groups of companies whose number of employees and turnover or balance sheet total are higher than the ones of SMEs (see below).

Professionals

Individuals operating in a particular profession, such as physicians, nurses, architects, engineers and lawyers.

SMEs

"SME" stands for small and medium-sized enterprises – as defined in EU law: [EU recommendation 2003/361](#) .

The main factors determining whether a company is an SME are:

1. **number of employees** and
2. either **turnover or balance sheet total**.

Company category Employees Turnover or Balance sheet total

Medium-sized < 250 ≤ € 50 m ≤ € 43 m

Small < 50 ≤ € 10 m ≤ € 10 m

Micro < 10 ≤ € 2 m ≤ € 2 m

These ceilings apply to the figures for individual firms only. A firm which is part of larger grouping may need to include employee/turnover/balance sheet data from that grouping too.

Other interest

Interest which is not possible to classify in any other category.

To be filled in by organisations applying to be appointed as Type C members

Please select one **or more policy areas** in which your organisation operates:

- Agriculture
- Archaeology
- Architecture
- Audiovisual and media
- Audit
- Banking
- Biodiversity
- Civil protection
- Civil service
- Climate
- Competition
- Conservation
- Consumer affairs
- Culture
- Cultural Heritage
- Cultural Landscape
- Customs
- Development
- Disaster Risk Reduction
- Economy
- Education
- Employment and social affairs
- Energy
- Engineering (chemical)
- Engineering (civil)
- Engineering (infrastructure)
- Engineering (IT)
- Engineering (maritime)
- Engineering (space policy)
- Engineering (space research)
- Enlargement
- Environment
- Equal opportunities
- External relations
- External trade
- Finance
- Fisheries and aquaculture
- Food safety
- Forestry
- Fundamental rights
- Humanitarian aid
- Industry
- Information society

- Innovation
- Insurance
- Labour
- Land management
- Law (civil)
- Law (corporate)
- Law (criminal)
- Law (taxation)
- Linguistics and Terminology
- Livestock
- Medical profession
- Migration
- Natural resources
- Plant production
- Public affairs
- Public health
- Public relations
- Raw materials
- Research
- Science
- Science diplomacy
- Security
- Smart specialisation
- Social service
- Space and Satellites (policy)
- Space and Satellites (research)
- Sport
- Statistics
- Sustainable Development
- Systemic eco-innovation
- Tax
- Trade
- Training
- Transport
- Urban development
- Water
- Youth
- Other

For organisations applying to be appointed as Type C members

Name of the organisation²:

Surname of the representative proposed:

First name of the representative proposed:

Surname of the person applying on behalf of the organisation:

First name of the person applying on behalf of the organisation:

Date:

Signature

² It is mandatory to use exactly the same name used when registering in the Transparency Register.

Annex II: Selection criteria form¹

Organisation (Type C member)

Applicants are requested to describe how they fulfil the selection criteria listed in the call.

Name of Expert Group: "Support to Circular Economy Financing Expert Group"

<p>– Proven and relevant competence and experience, including at national and/or European and/or international level, in areas relevant to circular economy practice, project generation and financing, and in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the specific characteristics of circular economy projects and their financing; • existing challenges, barriers and gaps for circular economy financing; existing risks and how these can be mitigated; • preparation and structuring of circular economy projects (e.g. in terms of technical design, business models, financial and economic analysis, risk sharing, legal set-up, etc.); 	
<p>– willingness and capability to commit to the work of the group over the foreseen period (24 months);</p>	
<p>– competence, experience and hierarchical level of the proposed representatives;</p>	
<p>– good knowledge of the English language allowing active participation of the proposed representatives in the discussions.</p>	

¹ This form must be filled in, signed and returned with the application.

Name of the organisation²:

Surname of the representative proposed:

First name of the representative proposed:

Surname of the person applying on behalf of the organisation:

First name of the person applying on behalf of the organisation:

Date:

Signature

² It is mandatory to use exactly the same name used when registering in the Transparency Register.

ANNEX III - PROTECTION OF YOUR PERSONAL DATA

Table of Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Why do we process your data?**
- 3. Which data do we collect and process?**
- 4. How long do we keep your data?**
- 5. How do we protect your data?**
- 6. Who has access to your data and to whom is it disclosed?**
- 7. What are your rights and how can you exercise them?**
- 8. Contact information**
- 9. Where to find more detailed information**

1. Introduction

This privacy statement explains the reason for the processing, the way we collect, handle and ensure protection of all personal data provided, how that information is used and what rights you may exercise in relation to your data (the right to access, rectify, block etc.).

The European institutions are committed to protecting and respecting your privacy. As this service/application collects and further processes personal data, Regulation (EC) N°45/2001¹ of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data, is applicable.

This statement concerns the Register of Commission Expert Groups and Other Similar Entities ('Register of expert groups') undertaken by the European Commission, Secretariat-General, Head of Unit B.2 (Institutional Affairs). The Register is a database containing a list of Commission expert groups and other similar entities and their sub-groups. For each expert group, the Register provides valuable information including on the Commission department which is running the group, as well as on the group members, mission and tasks. The Register also includes relevant documents which are produced and discussed by expert groups.

Personal data submitted to Commission departments as part of rejected applications are not published on the Register of expert groups. The competent Commission departments keep these data for six months and do not process them for other purposes.

¹ [Regulation \(EC\) N° 45/2001](#) (OJ L8 of 12/01/2001).

2. Why do we process your data?

Purpose of the processing operation: The European Commission, Secretariat-General, Head of Unit B.2 (Institutional Affairs) ('the Data Controller') collects and uses your personal information to ensure transparency on expert groups' membership and activities.

The processing and publication on the Register of expert's personal data is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest, since it increases the transparency on Commission expert groups (article 5 (a) of Regulation (EC) N° 45/2001).

As regards, in particular, the declarations of interests filled in by experts appointed in a personal capacity, the processing of personal data of these experts serves the public interest of enabling the Commission to verify the experts' independence in providing advice to the Commission. Furthermore, the public disclosure of declarations of interests allows for public scrutiny of the interests declared by experts appointed in a personal capacity, which is necessary in order to ensure public confidence in the independence of these experts. The public disclosure of declarations of interests also ensures a high degree of transparency with respect to the membership of expert groups and aims at contributing to fostering the integrity of the experts in question.

Art 27 of Regulation (EC) N° 45/2001 is not applicable.

3. Which data do we collect and process?

The personal data collected and further processed may be:

- Name;
- Professional title;
- Professional profile;
- Nationality;
- Gender;
- Interest represented (only for individuals applying to be appointed as members of expert groups or sub-groups representing a common interest and for the designated representatives of organisations applying to be appointed members of expert groups or sub-groups);
- Information included in the declarations of interest (only for individuals applying to be appointed as members of expert groups or sub-groups in a personal capacity).

4. How long do we keep your data?

The Data Controller only keeps the data for the time necessary to fulfil the purpose of collection or further processing.

When an individual is no longer participating in a group listed in the Register of expert groups, all personal information related to this individual is removed from the Register. The

competent Commission departments keep personal information for 5 years after the date where relevant individuals cease to participate in the work of the group.

Declarations of interests of individuals appointed as members or alternate members in a personal capacity of expert groups or sub-groups are published on the Register as long as they are members.

When a group is closed down, it remains published in the Register of expert groups for five years, with the indication 'Closed'. During such time, personal information other than the above-mentioned declarations of interests is visible on the Register.

An XML file is created daily with all the information regarding active groups. All versions of this file, showing the situation of the Register as of the day it was created, are stored in a file server for 5 years.

5. How do we protect your data?

All data in electronic format (e-mails, documents, uploaded batches of data etc.) are stored either on the servers of the European Commission or of its contractors, the operations of which abide by the European Commission's security decision of 16 August 2006 [C(2006) 3602] concerning the security of information systems used by the European Commission.

The Commission's contractors are bound by a specific contractual clause for any processing operations of your data on behalf of the Commission, and by the confidentiality obligations deriving from the transposition of Directive 95/46/CE.

6. Who has access to your data and to whom is it disclosed?

Information collected is publicly available on the Register of expert groups.

The XML files referred to in point 4 are not available neither via the internal application of the Register or the public version of the Register, and are only accessible to a reduced number of users in the System Owner and System Supplier's teams.

7. What are your rights and how can you exercise them?

According to Regulation (EC) n°45/2001, you are entitled to access your personal data and rectify and/or block it in case the data is inaccurate or incomplete.

If you do not wish to have your name published on the Register of expert groups, you may submit a request to the relevant Commission department for a derogation from publication. A derogation shall be granted where justified on compelling legitimate grounds in relation to your specific situation, in particular where disclosure of the experts' name could endanger your security or integrity.

You can exercise your rights by contacting the secretariat of the competent Commission department or in case of conflict the Data Protection Officer and if necessary the European Data Protection Supervisor using the contact information given at point 8 below.

8. Contact information

If you have comments or questions, any concerns or a complaint regarding the collection and use of your personal data, please feel free to contact the secretariat of the competent Commission department, using the following contact information:

The Data Processor:

- *RTD-I.2 Eco-Innovation, DG Research and Innovation, European Commission*
- +32 2 29 94420
- RTD-ENV-CIRCULAR-ECONOMY-EG@ec.europa.eu

The Data Protection Officer (DPO) of the Commission: DATA-PROTECTION-OFFICER@ec.europa.eu

The European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS): edps@edps.europa.eu.

9. Where to find more detailed information?

The Commission Data Protection Officer publishes the register of all operations processing personal data. You can access the register on the following link : <http://ec.europa.eu/dpo-register>

This specific processing has been notified to the DPO with the following reference: DPO-2194.8.

Platform to support the financing of the Circular Economy
Commission expert group entitled "Support to Circular Economy Financing Expert Group"

Annex IV - Terms of Reference (ToR)

1. Background

The transition to a circular economy requires substantial change in regulatory policies and business, and considerable public and private investments. This is fully recognised in the 2015 European Commission's Circular Economy Package which states that in 2016 the Commission will assess the possibility of launching a platform together with the EIB and national banks to support the financing of the circular economy."¹

Following an assessment of needs and opportunities, a circular economy (CE) finance support platform will be set up that brings together the European Commission (EC), the European Investment Bank (EIB), National Promotional Banks (NPBs), potential institutional investors and other stakeholders to support financing of the circular economy.

The CE finance support platform will help stimulate the transition to a circular economy in the EU by facilitating and supporting the generation and financing of circular economy projects. Furthermore, it will maximise the use of existing instruments, including the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) and the InnovFin - EU Finance for Innovators programme, and, if justified, potentially develop new financial instruments for circular economy projects. The CE finance support platform will also raise awareness of circular economy needs, identify opportunities and best practices amongst potential project promoters and investors, analyse the characteristics of circular economy projects and their consequences for financing needs and provide advice on structuring and improving bankability of circular economy projects.

The CE finance support platform builds on the findings and the recommendations of the report 'Assessment of access to finance conditions for projects supporting circular economy', prepared by the EIB Innovation Finance Advisory in 2015.²

The CE finance support platform is composed of three pillars: Pillar I – Circular Economy Coordination and awareness raising, Pillar II – Circular Economy Advisory, and Pillar III – Circular Economy Financing. Pillar II - Circular Economy Advisory will support project promoters in structuring and improving bankability of circular economy projects. Pillar III - Circular Economy Financing will maximise the use of existing financial instruments, including the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) and the InnovFin - EU Finance for Innovators programme, to increase access to financing for circular economy projects. In addition to exploring the potential of available EIB and other financial instruments, if

¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Closing the loop – an EU action plan for the Circular Economy - COM(2015)614

² Assessment of access-to finance conditions for projects supporting Circular Economy, Innovation Finance Advisory European Investment Bank Advisory Services, Luxembourg, December 2015

justified, it will assess the possible need for new, dedicated financial instruments for circular economy projects.

The present ToR refers the CE finance support platform, creating a support to CE financing expert group (hereafter referred to as the **CE expert group**).

The CE expert group brings together representatives of the EC, the EIB, NPBs, investors and other key CE stakeholders.

The CE expert group will identify opportunities, raise awareness and share best practices amongst potential project promoters, investors and other stakeholders. Furthermore, it will analyse the characteristics of circular economy projects and their particular financing needs, provide general recommendations on structuring and improving bankability of circular economy projects, pointing out gaps and eventually proposing improvements, and coordinate activities regarding financing of the circular economy. Last, it will disseminate information on financing of, and investments in circular economy.

2. Role and objectives

As indicated in the Communication on Circular Economy,³ the overall mission of the CE finance support platform is to support the financing of the circular economy. The CE expert group, created in the context of the CE finance support platform, provides a forum where coordination, exchange of information and best practices take place between key CE stakeholders, thus identifying main challenges and obstacles for CE projects preparation and financing and proposing improvements to facilitate the transition to circular economy. Further, the CE expert group helps raise awareness towards circular economy financing.

The CE expert group facilitates enhanced coordination and cooperation between the EC, EIB, NPBs and other circular economy stakeholders. It fosters synergies and promotes the sharing of information and best practises related to circular economy financing amongst its members. The CE expert group helps to identify existing challenges, barriers and gaps for the successful identification, preparation, appraisal, financing and implementation of circular economy projects.

The CE expert group provides advice and expertise to the European Commission and the relevant circular economy stakeholders to support the generation and financing of circular economy in the Member States. It provides recommendations regarding concrete measures to facilitate CE project financing.

The CE expert group should provide advice and formulate recommendations regarding the following:

- Circular economy projects and their financing;
- Analysis of the characteristics of circular economy projects;

³ COM(2015)614

- Existing challenges, barriers and gaps for CE financing;
- Support and expertise needed for development and structuring of CE projects (technical, financial, institutional, etc.);
- Awareness raising: how best to make potential project promoters aware of CE financing opportunities ; including at relevant events, conferences, workshops, as well as through existing networks (e.g. Enterprise Network Europe, European Resource Efficiency Excellence Centre); The European Commission, supported by the European Investment Bank will organise events, conferences, and workshops to raise awareness and share CE- related information.
- How to improve the bankability of CE projects; Financial and technical expertise needed for potential CE project promoters;
- How to improve the CE business model and integrate circular principles in projects, where appropriate;
- How to facilitate the appraisal of CE projects (e.g. in terms of technical design, business models, financial and economic analysis, risk sharing, legal set-up, etc.); Provide guidance to help enhance lending and operational capacities regarding CE projects;
- How can the EC better support the financing of the CE economy (identify and prioritising actions at EU level to support the financing of the circular economy);
- How can the EIB and the national banks contribute to the financing of the CE economy;
- How to maximise and optimise the use of existing instruments, including for example EFSI and InnovFin, for financing CE projects;
- Need for new financing instruments to support CE projects financing.

The CE expert group will further support the analysis on whether existing financial instruments such as EFSI and InnovFin, as well as other financial instruments, cover the needs of CE project financing sufficiently or new, dedicated financing instruments for the circular economy projects are needed.

The CE expert group helps the Commission to raise awareness and disseminate CE-related information and best practices amongst potential project promoters and key stakeholders. To this end, it identifies relevant events, conferences, workshops where the Commission could promote the transition to a circular economy. It provides advice to the Commission on how to catalyse private financing to support the financing of circular economy. It explores synergies with similar CE awareness raising initiatives and networks such as the European Resource Efficiency Excellence Centre.

At the first meeting the CE expert group should define a work plan for its duration. The findings and the recommendations of the work performed by the CE expert group in the context of Pillar I of the CE finance support platform should be submitted in the form of an interim and final report. This work will also be used as input for the discussions on pillar III of the CE finance support platform. At its discretion the group might decide to produce further outputs. The findings and the recommendations of the group will feed into pillar II of

the CE finance support platform. The reports and the outputs of the work of the CE expert group will be made public.

The CE expert group should take into consideration the work of the high-level Circular economy stakeholder platform and report to it at least once per year, as well as other relevant stakeholders and initiatives related to circular economy financing.

The European Parliament shall be kept informed of the CE finance support platform's work.

3. Structure and membership

The CE expert group is an informal Commission expert group operating in accordance with the horizontal Rules for Commission Expert Groups⁴ and registered in the Commission's Register of Commission expert groups and other similar entities ('the Register of expert groups').⁵

The CE expert group shall be composed of a maximum of 60 members representing public and private sectors according to the following categories:

1. European Investment Bank (EIB);
2. National promotional banks or institutions;⁶
3. Organisations in the broad sense of the word, including companies, associations, Non-Governmental Organisations, financial institutions such as private institutional investors, trade unions, universities, research institutes, law firms and consultancies with expertise in circular economy practice, project generation and financing;
4. EU bodies and agencies (e.g. Committee of Regions, European Economic and Social Committee, the European Environment Agency);

In order to contribute effectively to the Platform's work, member organisations shall be represented at senior-level.

Entities referred to in categories 1 and 4 above shall be invited by the Commission to join the CE expert group as members.

Entities referred to in category 3 above shall be selected through an open call for applications on the basis of the criteria specified in the call.

Depending on their status, entities referred to in category 2 above will either be invited by the Commission to join the CE expert group as members or will be selected through an open call for applications on the basis of the criteria specified in the call.

⁴Commission Decision C(2016)3301

⁵<http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm>

⁶ As defined in Article 2(3) of the Regulation (EU) 2015/1017 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 June 2015 on the European Fund for Strategic Investments, the European Investment Advisory Hub and the European Investment Project Portal

Members shall be appointed by the Director General of DG RTD in consultation with DG ECFIN, after consulting SG, DG GROW and DG ENV for 24 months. Members' term of office may be renewed.

Registration in the Transparency Register is required for interested organisations to be appointed as members. Applicants will be required to provide the Transparency Register identification number at the time of submitting an application for a membership in the group. The applicants who meet the membership criteria but are not appointed as members may be placed on a reserve list.

Members who are no longer capable of contributing effectively to the group's deliberations, who resign or who do not comply with the conditions set out in Article 339 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union shall no longer be invited to participate in any meetings of the group and may be replaced for the remainder of their term of office.

4. Operation

The CE expert group shall be chaired by a representative of the European Commission (Directorate-General for Research and Innovation). Representatives of SG, DG ECFIN, GROW, DG ENV and potentially other DG's with interest in circular economy shall be part of these meetings. It shall meet according to the arrangements and timetable set by the Commission services, including possible virtual meetings.

In principle, the CE expert group shall meet at least twice a year at the premises of the Commission and whenever the Commission considers a meeting necessary.

Member organisations shall be asked to designate a permanent representative to participate in the CE expert group. Depending on the agenda of a given meeting, members may, on an ad hoc basis, ask to be accompanied by an expert(s) specialised in a given issue who will provide particular evidence on a subject. The Commission shall consider such requests, taking into account the overall balance in the representation of interests and in accordance with the CE expert group's rules of procedure.

The Chair may invite other experts on an ad hoc basis, including representatives from non-EU Member States, academics and researchers where appropriate or necessary, to participate in the work of the CE expert group.

Members' representatives should be prepared to attend meetings systematically, to contribute actively to discussions in the group, to be involved in preparatory work ahead of meetings, to examine and provide comments on documents under discussion, and to act, as appropriate, as 'rapporteurs' on ad hoc basis.

Working documents will be drafted in English and meetings will be also conducted in English.

The group shall adopt its opinions, recommendations or reports by consensus. In the event of a vote, the outcome of the vote shall be decided by simple majority of the members. Members

who have voted against shall have the right to have the reasons for their position recorded in the relevant opinions, recommendations or reports.

The group's discussions are confidential. In agreement with the Chair, the group may, by simple majority of its members, decide to open its deliberations to the public for specific meetings or discussions.

Minutes on the discussion on each point on the agenda and on the opinions delivered by the group shall be meaningful and complete. Minutes shall be drafted by the secretariat under the responsibility of the Chair.

The working modalities of the CE expert group shall be laid down in its Rules of Procedure, adopted by the group on the basis of a proposal from the Chair and in compliance with the horizontal Rules for Commission Expert Groups. DG RTD shall provide secretariat to the CE expert group.

The members of the group and their representatives, as well as invited experts, are subject to the obligation of professional secrecy which, by virtue of the Treaties and the rules implementing them, applies to all members of the institutions and their staff, as well as to the Commission's rules on security regarding the protection of Union classified information, laid down in Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/443⁷ and 2015/444⁸. Should they fail to respect these obligations, the Commission may take all appropriate measures.

5. Transparency

The CE expert group shall be registered in the Register of expert groups. The membership in the CE expert group shall be published in the Register; the interest represented by organisations shall be disclosed. All relevant documents related to the work of the group (such as the agendas, the minutes and the participants' submissions) shall be made available on the Register of expert groups or via a link from the Register to a dedicated website, where this information can be found.

Exceptions to publication shall be foreseen where it is deemed that disclosure of a document would undermine the protection of a public or private interest as defined in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001.⁹

Personal data shall be collected, processed and published in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001.

6. Meeting expenses

⁷ Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/443 of 13 March 2015 on Security in the Commission (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 41)

⁸ Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444 of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53)

⁹ These exceptions are intended to protect public security, military affairs, international relations, financial, monetary or economic policy, privacy and integrity of the individual, commercial interests, court proceedings and legal advice, inspections/investigations/audits and the institution's decision-making process.

Participants in the activities of the CE expert group shall not be remunerated for the services they offer.

Travel and subsistence expenses incurred by participants in the activities of the group shall be reimbursed by the Commission in accordance with the provisions in force in the Commission and within the limits of the available appropriations allocated to the Commission services under the annual procedure for the allocation of resources.