



WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE PRIMACY OF PROGRESSIVE POLITICS IN EUROPE

Call for Projects &
for Expression of Interests

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FEPS WORK PLAN 2024

Deadline: Monday 27th November 2023 at 12:00

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I. WHY – BACKGROUND FOR THIS CALL

1.1. GENERALITIES

On 30th September 2023, FEPS submitted its annual grant application for 2024 to the European Parliament. Beyond administrative and financial documents, it included the [2024 Framework Activity Programme \(FAP\)](#), which is a strategic compass that defined priorities, the thematic fields and flagship initiatives for the year to come.

In line with its annual management cycle, FEPS is now entering the process of building its Work Plan (WP) – i.e. the concrete list of activities that will be implemented in 2024.

The 2024 Work Plan will consist of the following 4 building blocks:

1. Multiannual projects that are still ongoing
2. Annual activities that FEPS and partners run with success since years
3. Projects proposed by member foundations in line with the FAP2024
4. Activities identified by FEPS on which members are invited to collaborate

The usage of the grant from the European Parliament by FEPS is subject to specific regulatory provisions, one of them being that all activities funded or co-funded by FEPS must be genuine FEPS activities. Accordingly, FEPS is forbidden to issue grants to its Members for their own activities.

The present call serves the purpose of opening the process for point 3 and 4 in a transparent and programmatic manner. It is to be understood as a way for Member Foundations to **(1)** join forces with FEPS on key European projects and **(2)** to put forward proposals for initiatives to be run jointly. This Call.

1.2. DETAILS

Status: Open

Publication Date: 18.10.2023

Deadline for submissions: 27.11.2023

Overall tentative / projected budget available for new FEPS activities in 2024: 1M EUR

Tentative / projected average¹ co-funding rate: 40%

¹ NB : The co-funding rate indicated here is the average one, **not the one that will be applied to each individual project** jointly run with FEPS' Members. It is to be understood as a managerial reference point for FEPS' entire 2024 Work Plan Budget to comply with FEPS' financial strategy as endorsed by FEPS' Bureau in September 2021.

II. WHAT – THE 2024 PRIORITIES

2.1. 2 WAYS TO ENGAGE

Two distinct ways to engage with European projects and contribute to building FEPS 2024 Work Plan (WP 2024) are proposed to FEPS' Members:

- i) **Submit their own CONCRETE PROJECT PROPOSALS** that will be screened and evaluated according to their adherence to the 2024 FAP, to their financial soundness and quality of the project design.

Member Foundations who intend to put forward a project proposal are invited to do so via the following **online form**: <https://submission-platform.feps-europe.eu/>

Through this platform, you will be able to introduce the details of a concrete project proposal (objective, potential output, provisional budget, etc.).

For the submission of more than one project, the procedure shall be repeated.

NB: before being able to submit one or several project proposals, Members are to submit basic administrative information by way of an "organization form" (i.e. Form I). Should you have already filled out this form in the context of previous calls: please double check available data and confirm. Should this not be the case: please complete.

- ii) **EXPRESS AN INTEREST TO JOIN FEPS TOWARDS THE REALIZATION OF A SPECIFIC PROJECT** that is already under development. Member Foundations are presented with a preliminary idea of the projects that FEPS intends to realize and are invited to join forces to strengthen the political, the research and the financial potential of the initiative. The design of the project and its budget will be carried out in consultation with foundations that will decide to cooperate with the initiative.

Member Foundations who wish to respond to the Call for Expression of Interest on the projects listed below are invited to email the corresponding FEPS Director (cf. table at the end of section 2.3).

2.2. 2024: 3 OVERARCHING STRATEGIC DIMENSIONS

To ensure that FEPS and its Members work together towards the construction of a comprehensive and coherent 2024 Work Plan, FEPS bases the present call on a series of 3 jointly identified overarching strategic orientations. They form the substantial backbone of the 2024 Framework Activity Programme and will taken as key points of reference for the selection of proposals submitted by FEPS' Members.

The 3 overarching strategic orientations for 2024 are:

1. Addressing the cost-of-living crisis, strengthening the resilience against recessions and moving on with the green, digital and social transformation: For a Resilient, Transformed and Fair Europe
2. Focusing on stronger democracy and the rule of law, bringing peace and hope to the wider Europe, preparing EU enlargement and internal institutional reform: For a Democratic and Enlarged Europe
3. Boosting the global role of the European Union with a focus on peace, climate and SDGs, while upholding multilateralism and ensuring strategic autonomy: For a Stronger Europe shaping the New Global Order

2.3. THEMATIC AREAS FOR THIS CALL FOR PROJECTS

The 2024 FAP is the comprehensive reference document for FEPS' Members to submit their proposals.

The 3 overarching priorities are designed to guide the work of FEPS and its Members' across FEPS' 10 thematic fields. Their aim is to rationalize the efforts when it comes to research, publications, training, policy consultancy, and communications.

Accordingly, FEPS Members are invited to propose projects that contribute to the work on the 3 priorities listed above, while also correspond to the political and policy questions identified in FEPS' 10 thematic fields.

The content of the 10 Thematic Fields is as follows:

2.3.1. SOCIAL EUROPE

- a. Monitor the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and the related Action Plan
- b. Deepen the debate on public health, decent work and social protection
- c. Support the fight against poverty and inequalities

2.3.2. ECONOMY AND FINANCE

- a. Design a resilient and sustainable economic development model
- b. Forge policy proposals towards a job-rich recovery, fair transitions and more investment-friendly European fiscal and governance rules
- c. Improve the tax and investment capacity of the Union

2.3.3. CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

- a. Address the climate emergency in its internal and external dimensions
- b. Support implementation of the European Green Deal also from a territorial viewpoint
- c. Search for equitable ways to attain ambitious climate targets, create green new jobs and better mainstream climate objectives

2.3.4. DIGITAL ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

- a. Assess the nature and effects of accelerated digitalization of European societies and economies with specific reference to data governance, artificial intelligence and new digital infrastructures and their impact on democracy, employment and the public sector
- b. Explore how Europe can pick up an autonomous and progressive path towards technological development that serves broader social and economic goals and equip our continent with the capacity and competitiveness needed to win global competition

2.3.5. GENDER EQUALITY

- a. Strengthen the commitment to the feminist and gender equality agenda with a focus on preventing backlash
- b. Deliver substantive equality through transformative and gender mainstreamed policies both at national and EU level in the field of welfare, employment, health, care and business

2.3.6. POLITICAL EUROPE

- a. Examine the functioning of and potential for reforms within the institutional architecture of the European Union
- b. Inspire the transition to a new model of integration that will allow for further deepening and enlargement
- c. Enable further political cooperation within the transnational dimension and forge further civic involvement, building on the legacy of the Conference on the Future of Europe

2.3.7. DEFENDING AND DEEPENING DEMOCRACY

- a. Analyse the main threats to democracy (nationalism, right wing extremism and authoritarian tendencies) inside and outside of the European Union, as also those coming from technological progress
- b. Identify ways to foster participatory, deliberative and representative democracy
- c. Inclusion and empowerment of underprivileged groups

2.3.8. MIGRATION

- a. Define the features of efficient and humane management of migration
- b. Develop fair and balanced relations with the countries of origin and transit
- c. Analyse the nexus between demographic changes in Europe and migration dynamics

2.3.9. EUROPE IN THE WORLD

- a. In a multipolar global order nurturing transatlantic relations but also stronger ties with the Global South: analyse the European Union's role in striving for peace and development
- b. Enhance the EU's foresight capabilities, Strategic Autonomy and commitment to the reconstruction of Ukraine

2.3.10. FUTURE OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

- a. The progressive values and their translation to offer progressive political answers to the challenges ahead
- b. Organisational modernisation of the progressive forces, a place of social democracy within the pluralist left and its capacity to build alliances
- c. Rebuilding centre-left electoral appeal, the potential to govern, and power to act (including the attention to the specific regional and national context within which its parties operate)

Should you have content related questions, please write to the Director overseeing the Thematic Field:

	David Rinaldi	Ania Skrzypek
	David.rinaldi@feps-europe.eu	Ania.skrzypek@feps-europe.eu
Sections	2.2.1; 2.2.2; 2.2.3; 2.2.4; 2.2.5 b); 2.2.9 a)	2.2.5 a), 2.2.6, 2.2.7, 2.2.8, 2.2.9 b), 2.2.10

2.4. EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

With the present invitation to express interest, FEPS offers Member Foundation the possibility to join forces on projects that have already been approved and included in the 2024 Work Plan.

Some of these project ideas are still in the design phase or still have to be launched; there is now a window of opportunity to join forces with FEPS and help scale up these projects or make them relevant for your national context. If these project ideas are in line with the priorities and interests of your organisation, you are very much encouraged to partnering up by contacting the FEPS team member that coordinates the given activity.

Uniting forces for the realization of the projects presented here would allow:

- A sharper design of the project in order to more precisely meet the objectives of the different foundations involved;
- Scaling up of the ambitions and impact of the project activities;
- A possibility to ensure a truly European dimension and outreach;
- Enlarge the network of experts, allowing more of the academics and politicians from the national and regional level to take part in the European debate;
- Better sharing of the financial implications, as co-financing needs can be split among participating members.

By specifying your interest in collaborating with FEPS on a given project, your organisation does not engage into a specific budgetary commitment, though we remain interested to understand if there is a potential for joint financing. If you express your interest in a given project, FEPS team members will involve you in the planning of the project and will discuss with you the project design and objectives, the activities that may involve your organization and the budget related to it.

2.4.1. UNited for a New Global Deal

Already in 2023, FEPS, in collaboration with several member foundations, has launched an ambitious research and advocacy project to investigate political avenues and policy actions needed to reform global governance, attain a more impactful United Nations system underpinned by a reinvigorated capacity to boost and finance SDGs and climate justice. Studies and report are being finalised in 2023 but the work on the topic shall continue in 2024, not only to disseminate the work and contributions jointly produced but also to keep influencing the talks and reflections about the UN Summit of the Future on the related talks about SDGs financing; it will remain crucial to engage the global south and EU actors in a constructive dialogue leading to a stronger multilateral system and more international solidarity. To this end several initiatives are planned for 2024, including a participation to the Global Futures Forum event in Kenya, side events to the UN Summit of September 2024 and high-level events in different European capitals.

For inquiries or to confirm interested and partner up, member foundations can contact Dr. Christian Salm, Head of Office of FEPS President at christian.salm@feps-europe.eu

2.4.2. New Actions for Tax Justice: Tax the Rich campaign & capital income tax research

Several partners around FEPS are working on tax justice and in 2024 FEPS work plan will include initiatives in support tax reform. Lately, thanks to a deal at G20 level, there has been progress towards the harmonization of corporate income tax and a global minimum rate has been agreed. Though the work towards modernising, upgrading and making more just the tax systems in Europe is still very much a political issue to be solved.

Two areas around which member foundations are invited to join forces with FEPS concern:

The Tax the Rich campaign, which is officially a European Citizens' Initiative ([link](#)) led by the Belgian Socialist Party in collaboration with Oxfam, FEPS, Thomas Piketty and others. 8.000 signatures have been collected so far, in favour of establishing a EU wealth tax to finance the social and ecological transition; but we need 1 million signatures by October 2024 from citizens across the EU, to have the European Commission legislating on the issue. More info [here](#). In order to support this campaign, FEPS invites Member Foundations to collaborate to run events and disseminate the campaign nationally.

A policy-research project on capital income taxation in the EU, with a comparative approach looking at the different treatment in member states, outlining the loopholes used by high income earners, and setting out ideas for more European harmonization towards less taxes for labour and more taxes for capital gains and financial markets speculation.

For inquiries or to confirm interested and partner up, member foundations can contact Dr David Rinaldi, FEPS Director of Studies and Policy at david.rinaldi@feps-europe.eu

2.4.3. The profits-prices spiral: measures to avoid inflation

In summer 2023, FEPS, in partnership with TASC and Fondazione Nenni, has launched a project to assess supply-side factors of inflation in the EU and to propose solutions to deal with such inflation presently and in the future. The project is meant to consolidate and reinforce the narrative that links the crisis of living cost to capitalism and shareholder greed and not to expansionary demand-side measures. Putting the accent on “greedflation” and excessive profits in several industries as a key determinant of inflation, thanks to the support of fresh data, helps to generate support towards unconventional measures to address inflation besides monetary policy. The study will present a variety of measures that can be used to contain inflation by limiting excessive profits and market dominance.

The invitation to Member foundations interested in the topic is to collaborate for the dissemination of the findings and the promotion of a narrative and concrete ideas to fight against the economy for the shareholders and excessive profits. Thanks to the engagement of member foundations, it could be possible to generate informed public discussion about policies to curb inflation, engage national political parties on the topic and pass them concrete policy advice or create engaging material for the broader public, such as infographics or videos.

For inquiries or to confirm interested and partner up, member foundations can contact Dr Anna Kolesnichenko, FEPS Economic Policy Analyst at anna.kolesnichenko@feps-europe.eu

2.4.4. Building an intra-EU dialogue for a more effective EU foreign and security policy in Africa

Africa is more and more a strategic geopolitical priority for the European Union and its Members States. The recent new impetus towards Africa comes at a time when the continent is proved by conflicts, military coups and instability. These elements, together with an increasing multipolar

competition, have challenged the EU's ability to implement its strategies on the continent and to act in a coherent and cohesive manner to foster democracy, peace and development. In addition to fragmentation and multipolar competition, intra-EU competition, with a vast array of different stances vis-à-vis Africa across member states, has undermined the EU's ability to act effectively in the continent and also make some of the member states policies ineffective.

The project “Building an intra-EU dialogue for a more effective EU foreign and security policy in Africa” aims to organise a series of dialogues between member states experts and officials, progressive decision-makers and party people working on foreign policy towards Africa. That should be useful to understand what the EU and its MS should do to attain a more effective and coherent EU foreign and security policy in the continent. The project should also involve voices from the African continent to better anticipate the perceptions and implications of different EU and national attitudes and measures.

For inquiries or to confirm interested and partner up, member foundations can contact Dr Andriy Korniychuk, FEPS Policy Analyst on International Relations at andriy.korniychuk@feps-europe.eu

2.4.5. Investing in Digital Public Infrastructure and EU tech capacity

In a digitalised world, the online public space is largely privatised. We rely on US-based Big Tech platforms for our online social life, to search online, and for our daily work when sending emails or making video calls. This reliance raises questions on the EU's strategic autonomy, especially now that the digitalised economy in this fourth industrial revolution will depend on data.

The data of the EU citizens is harvested and used by foreign companies. That is why the EU and its Member States should consider investing more in digital public infrastructure. All over the technology stack, from complex infrastructure like cables and data centres to the software solutions we use daily. An access point for working on an alternative European digital transformation is to look at public services and the digital infrastructure in the semi-public sector. The challenge is developing a working system of (EU-)subsidies and other measures to build this public digital infrastructure. The track record on public IT projects could be better, so we need to rethink how we organise this on a European scale, bringing together the public services with digital needs, with the open source, civic tech and academic sector to work on value-driving projects.

On December 6 and 7 this year, FEPS in collaboration with the FES Competence Centre on the Future of Work will gather civil society, scholars and policy makers in Brussels at the European Parliament to discuss this topic in depth, but more activities and research will be organised in 2024, hopefully with the involvement of several member foundations.

For inquiries or to confirm interested and partner up, member foundations can contact Gerard Rinse Oosterwijk, FEPS Digital Policy Analyst at gerard.oosterwijk@feps-europe.eu

2.4.6. Annual Autumn Academy 2024, Open Progressive University and Pool of Trainers

After almost 2 years FEPS has arrived to a point at which it can report a close to completing successful implementation of the Training Strategy. The next months will see its further consolidation and in this context, FEPS would welcome cooperation with the Member Foundations, especially in regards to the Annual Autumn Academy (which flagship event will celebrate its 6th edition), Open Progressive University (which innovative tool is now being put into further use with a hope of creating a new set of 3 educational modules available to participants as full-online learning path) and Pool of Trainers (which new instrument will allow Members adhering to learn from one another about the best methodologies for non-formal learning and civic education, as also help them create a toolkit with methods and materials that can be then used also for their own activities).

For inquiries or to confirm interested and partner up, member foundations can contact Dr Ania Skrzypek, FEPS Director for Research and Training at ania.skrzypek@feps-europe.eu

2.4.7. Progressives Beyond 2024

This initiative is newly launched in anticipation of the upcoming European elections. As a project, it aims to create a space and a network of analysts, who will be able to explain the trends and issues within the European campaign, identify the lessons to be learnt from the outcome of the vote and provide an assessment of the political situation in the aftermath – which knowledge should be instrumental for forging an understanding and the potential to act within the next mandate. The underpinning logic behind this initiative is to offer a possibility for all to cooperate and mutually strengthen one another, which creates an output of national summaries and European comparative studies.

For inquiries or to confirm interested and partner up, member foundations can contact Dr Ania Skrzypek, FEPS Director for Research and Training at ania.skrzypek@feps-europe.eu

III. HOW – THE CALL FOR PROJECTS IN PRACTICE

Member Foundations who intend to put forward a project proposal are invited to do so via the following **online form**: <https://submission-platform.feps-europe.eu/>

3.1. PROJECT PROPOSALS' ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Priority will be given to projects aligned to the 2024 FAP in line with the type of activities and areas of interest identified in this call.

FEPS will carry out an assessment of the submitted proposals based on three quality criteria:

1. **Output Value:** the potential of the project to impact public debate and the political process or its educational potential;
2. **Input Value:** the quality of the proposed methods in terms of scientific relevance and excellence of the actors involved
3. **Value for Money:** budgetary and human resources aspects and COMMs context

Furthermore, during the project approval phase, with the intention to promote cross-network collaborations as well as sustainability, relevance, and impact of 2024 activities, FEPS will favor:

- Projects that are submitted jointly by two or more Member foundations
- Projects that promote innovation in the methods or in the content of the projects
- Projects that deliver materials proving useful for political debates and policy action
- Projects that contribute purposefully to disseminating FEPS research produced in 2023 (for instance dissemination opportunities on topics for which relevant material has been produced)
- Projects that bear the potential of delivering materials which can be used for training purposes
- Projects that bear the potential of engaging with new and/or specific audiences, for instance by partnering up with local or national universities, media, interest groups or civil society that can help amplifying the progressive message linked to the project or can help FEPS reach new audiences

Besides quality and joint work, FEPS shall take into consideration: i) the allocation of budget per foundation and per country, with no specific annual targets but with the clear goal of providing a balanced approach to FEPS financial commitments; ii) the allocation of budget per thematic block and strategic priority, following an operative target that can ensure the link between political priorities and operations.

3.2. SELECTION PROCEDURE AND THE WAY FORWARD

- Deadline for submissions: 27.11.2023
- Information about results of the call: by Tuesday 18.12.2023

At this occasion, FEPS will clarify whether the submitted project has been:

- ⇒ **Accepted** – so that the Member Foundation can start defining a collaboration agreement with the FEPS team member in charge of the project.
- ⇒ **Accepted with conditions** – which can pertain to the budget, to the content or the format of the project and requires further adaptation including the potential clustering with other similar initiatives and the creation of a consortium of foundations.
- ⇒ **Declined** – a short written explanation shall be provided.

The official communication will specify the member of FEPS team that will follow up on the implementation of the project.

If the latter is approved directly or conditionally, the (Senior) Policy Analyst in charge, with the support of the respective Director, interacts with the project promoters to work on the development of the project, towards the satisfaction of the conditions or towards building up a cluster of foundations around the project idea.

When the project proposals have been evaluated, consortia created, a 2024 Work Plan outline will be compiled and submitted to the attention of FEPS' Bureau at the occasion of its meeting scheduled January 2024.

3.3. GENERAL RULES APPLYING TO THIS CALL

3.3.1. Project Proposals' Promoters

- Only FEPS Full and Observer Members can propose project proposals.
- Organisations other than Member foundations can feature as partners of the submitted project, but collaborations with corporations cannot be part of this call
- If two or more Member foundations wish to cooperate on a joint project, just one submission is necessary with the indication of the project manager in charge for all the organisations involved.

3.3.2. Project Proposals' Descriptions

- Projects will be first and foremost assessed on the basis of the submitted form. Project promoters can annex as many documents as deemed adequate, but these will be considered complementary information. Accordingly, once submitting a project proposal, please provide as many information as possible. It is essential that it contains a rather clear identification of:
 - The objectives of the project proposed
 - The type of outputs foreseen (events, publications, videos, etc.)
 - The parties involved (other organisations, stakeholders, policymakers, etc.)

- The provisional budgetary requirements with an indication of the share that project promoters can cover
- Among the project deliverables that can be included in the project proposals: policy briefs, policy studies, research, books, training, consultancy, online events, publications, videos, podcasts, infographics, surveys, online public debates.
- Multiannual projects can be considered, accompanied by an indication of annual budgetary needs.
- Projects accepted with conditions (see paragraph on the “Selection Procedure”) remain valid for a period of two months, after which FEPS reserves the right to prioritize other submitted projects.

3.3.3. Regulatory impositions

- As all European Political Foundations (EUPFs), FEPS cannot use its budget for any other purpose than for financing its tasks as enshrined in Article 2 of EU Regulation 1141/2014. These are essentially threefold: (1) observe, analyse and contribute to the debate on European public policy issues and on the process of European integration, (2) develop activities linked to the European public policy issues between relevant stakeholders, (3) serve as a framework for national political foundations, academics and other relevant actors to work together at European level. Accordingly:
 - Any activity (co-)funded by FEPS must be first and foremost branded FEPS activity
 - FEPS is forbidden to transfer funds in the form of grants to its Members
- FEPS is strictly forbidden to fund directly other foundations (including its Members). Accordingly: the following expenditures are not eligible in the framework of FEPS’ (co-)funded projects:
 - Partners’ staff costs (staff being understood as individuals who are benefitting from a working contract with the partner involved and who are on the payroll of said partner)
 - Overheads (e.g. standing infrastructure costs such office rental contract, phone, electricity, water, non-project specific website/s’ costs, etc.)
 - Differences in exchange rates (e.g. the exchange rate to be applied is the one valid on the day the invoices were generated)
- FEPS is strictly forbidden to fund directly or indirectly parties, candidates or campaigns. This is a permanently valid rule which applies at any point in time, not only in the framework of European elections. Accordingly:
 - FEPS cannot fund projects which aim at promoting candidates or campaigns
 - FEPS cannot fund campaign related polling

3.3.4. Expressions of interest

- Expressions of interest do not commit Member Foundations to any specific budgetary commitment; FEPS Team will discuss project design and budget with project partner and if the interest persists a financial negotiation will follow

3.4. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND INFO SESSION

A dedicated info session with explanations and Q&A concerning this call for expression of interest and project proposals will take place on Friday 27 October at from 09:00 to 12:30 (Brussels time).

All member foundations, full members and observers are invited and will be able to interact with FEPS leadership and management to exchange on this call and the planning for 2024.

To join the Info Session, please connect via Zoom at the following link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83954155884>

FEPS staff remains available to respond to answers that Member Foundations might have concerning the objectives of this call, the submission and evaluation process.

Additional information and questions can be requested and addressed to FEPS Director of Operations Johan Robberecht at: johan.robberrecht@feps-europe.eu.