

Call for Tender:

EVALUATION OF FEBEA OPERATING GRANT 2023

This Call is published within the framework of the ESF Operating Grants Framework Partnerships: “Operating grants to support networks active in the areas of social enterprise finance and microfinance”.

Consultants are herewith invited to present their application for the external evaluation of the project “FEBEA - Taking Social Enterprise Finance in Europe to the next level through the contribution of Ethical financiers” for the year 2023.

A – BACKGROUND

1. FEBEA and EC support

Created in 2001, FEBEA, the European Federation of Ethical and Alternative Banks and Financiers is a not-for-profit association based in Brussels and governed by Belgian law. Open to member countries of the European Union as well as other non-EU countries in Europe, it gathers financial institutions whose aim is to finance the social and solidarity-based economy. FEBEA was created by 6 financial institutions and nowadays federates 33 members (banks and other types of financial institutions, associations and organisations dedicated to promotion and development of social finance) based across 16 European countries (14 countries of the European Union, Norway and Switzerland), serving more than 700,000 people between customers and shareholders, with aggregated balance sheet assets of over 30 billion €. FEBEA members are part of (and in many cases were funded by) citizens-led transformative movements and can mobilise different resources and different tools to achieve their societal and environmental goals.

FEBEA engages its members through a variety of activities such as:

- Facilitating exchange of information and best-practices among social economy organisations and networks and ethical financiers in Europe and the European Economic Area.
- Representing its members towards the EU institutions, other European networks and key financial stakeholders.
- Facilitating access to financial instruments and other forms of EU financing by supporting the efforts of our members in developing their finance offer for social economy organisations and social enterprises.



- Supporting and promoting cooperation between national networks, social economy and finance practitioners in Europe.
- Providing training, advice and technical assistance to its members
- Spread ethical and solidarity-based finance throughout Europe:
 - i. FEBEA advocates on the economic, social and environmental contribution of ethical finance;
 - ii. FEBEA communicates on the role of ethical and solidarity-based finance in the development of the social economy sector;
 - iii. FEBEA communicates on the impact of solidarity-based finance on communities.

FEBEA activities are implemented by directly involving its members, who take part also in several working groups (such as Advocacy Group, EU Funding Group, FEBEA Communication community).

For more information visit FEBEA's website at: febea.org

This project is financed under the Employment and Social Innovation ("EaSI") strand of the ESF+ which is a European-level financing instrument managed directly by the European Commission. It provides financial support to achieve high employment levels, fair social protection, a skilled and resilient workforce ready for the future world of work, as well as inclusive and cohesive societies aiming to eradicate poverty. The overall political priority underpinning the activities under the EaSI strand of the ESF+ Programme is the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

In line with the objectives of the EaSI strand, this project aims to support networking at Union level with and among relevant stakeholders and contribute to building up the institutional capacity of social enterprise finance institutions. The call also supports the development of a market ecosystem for microfinance and the emergence of social investment markets.

Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) with selected social finance networks were signed in December 2021 - FEBEA was selected and signed a FPA with the Commission for 4 years hereinafter referred to as the EC project. While the yearly grant 2022 was not awarded to FEBEA due to budget restrictions, the 2023 grant was awarded in November 2022.

2. The Strategic Objective (SO) of the FEBEA EC Project for the period 2023 - 2025

- SO1. Support the Commission in its outreach activities and its mission at EU, national and local levels, in order to increase awareness about, and enable the implementation of, current and future EU policies and funding in the social economy and social finance sector.
- SO2. Reinforce the capacity of FEBEA and its members, through the offering of training and capacity-building activities, as well as a platform for the exchange of good practices and raising their awareness about relevant EU policies and opportunities in the social economy and social finance sector.
- SO3. Provide input for policy design and implementation in the social economy and social finance sector, by voicing the concerns and expectations

of FEBEA members, social economy and social enterprise finance stakeholders in the various European countries.

- SO4. Provide data and research on developments in the field of social enterprise finance, which can serve as input for evidence-based policy making at EU, national and local levels.

3. KPIs for 2023

FEBEA has set out the following key results for 2023 to be achieved through the implementation of the program:

SO	Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline Value 2022	Target 2023
SO1.1	Financial organisations informed on EU policies and initiatives in the field of social finance	n. of organisations	33	40
SO1.2	Relevant social economy stakeholders informed on EU policies and initiatives in the field of social finance (EU level)	n. of organisations	15	24
SO1.3	Relevant national and local stakeholders informed on EU policies and initiatives in the field of social finance	n. of stakeholders/year	20	30
SO1.4	General public informed on EU policies and initiatives in the field of social finance (i.e. via social media)	n. of people/followers	700	1,400
SO1.5	Attendance to Annual Conference organised by FEBEA presenting EU policies and initiatives in the field of social finance	number of registered people at events/year	120	140
SO1.6	External public presentations/speeches given by FEBEA representatives on EU policies and initiatives in the field of social finance	n. of events/year	10	15
SO1.7	Podcast including information on EU policies and initiatives in the field of social finance	average n. of listenings/	50	100

		podcast episode		
SO1.8	Public newsletter including information on EU policies and initiatives in the field of social finance	n. of subscribers	280	400
SO1.9	Website access	n. of accesses/month	n/a	100/month
SO1.10	Partnerships with strategic stakeholders	n. of cooperation agreements	1	5
SO2.1	Pre-conference training/workshop delivered in the field of social finance	n. of trainings/year	0	1/year
SO2.2	People trained	n. of registered attendees/year	0	20/year
SO2.3	Exchange workshops on EU policies and initiatives in the field of social finance	n. of webinars/year	1	3/year
SO2.4	People participating in Exchange workshops	n. of registered attendees/year	25	60
SO2.5	Good practices in the field of social finance identified & shared	n. of good practices shared/year	1	3
SO2.6	Study visits between social finance practitioners	n. of study visits/year	2	3
SO2.7	People participating in study visits	registered attendees/visit	8	15
SO2.8	Access to the Exchange platform and Helpdesk	n. of registered users	n/a	30
SO2.9	Members-only Newsletter	n. of subscribers	103	120

SO2.10	EU funding Group meetings	n. of meetings/year	2	3
SO2.11	One-to-one Technical Assistance to members & new/prospective members	Days of technical assistance / year	0	5 sessions
SO2.12	Training workshops/webinars in the field of social finance	workshops/webinars/year	0	4
SO2.13	People participating in Training workshops /webinars	n. of registered attendees /year	0	100
SO3.1	Policy papers	n. of policy papers/year	2	3
SO3.6(new indicator)	Consultations	N. of consultations/year	n/a	n/a
SO3.2	Policy briefs	n. of policy briefs/year	1	3
SO3.3	Policy webinars on EU policies and initiatives in the field of social finance	n. of workshops/year	1	3
SO3.4	People participating in policy webinars	n. of registered attendees /workshop	30	60
SO3.5	Members consultations, including working groups	n. of meetings/year	6	8
SO4.1	Organisations consulted in research activities	n. of letters of support	0	2

SO4.2	Partnerships with Universities/research institutions created	n. of cooperation agreements	0	2
SO4.3	Research events/presentations	n. of presentations/year	0	3
SO4.4	Contributions to background/research publications (possibly based on the trainings)	n. of (co-)authored/published publications/year	0	3

B – THE EVALUATION (2023-2025)

The overall objective of the planned evaluation is to ensure objectiveness by external review of the program effectiveness as well as internal program monitoring and evaluation system in place. The evaluation is planned annually (pending the EC approval of the yearly financial support) and should also support FEBEA program planning for the following year.

1. Objectives and questions

As stated in the Grant Agreement, “*The external evaluation to be put in place during the framework partnership will be carried out by an external, independent consultant with the aim of providing an independent evaluation of the progress and quality of the roadmap implementation, in relation to the strategic objectives of the Federation and of the framework partnership with the Commission*”.

The specific terms of reference for the evaluation are:

1. Propose the evaluation framework for 3-years of the program implementation
2. Evaluate the methodology to deliver the project activities:
 - a. Has the methodology planned for 3-years and used by FEBEA been appropriate for producing the outputs?
 - b. Is the internal monitoring and evaluation system adequate and effectively applied?
3. Evaluate the efficiency in carrying out the activities throughout the project:
 - a. Were outputs produced as planned? If not, why not?
 - b. How was the overall project management of FEBEA? Were monitoring tools adequate?



4. Evaluate the quality of these activities:
 1. Do the project activities and documents produced have added value compared to what already existed?
 2. Assess the effects and outcomes as related to objectives.
 3. Draw lessons and recommendations:
 - a. What recommendations or suggestions are there to follow up on the work undertaken in this project, in terms of approach, content, methods?
 - b. What conclusions and recommendations can be drawn about/for FEBEA, FEBEA Members and the European Commission?

2. Methodology

The evaluator will have the possibility to:

1. Interview the FEBEA Board, FEBEA Steering Committee members and Staff;
2. Consult all relevant project documents;
3. Interview selected FEBEA members and partners (e.g. MFC);
4. Interview individuals from the European Commission and other interested European institutions (e.g. EIF).

FEBEA will support evaluator(s)' communication with required interviewees in terms of helping to establish contacts, enabling online platform for interviews (Zoom or similar). Interviews can be conducted on distance (through video conference tools).

3. Expected output

The evaluation report will be submitted to FEBEA in English, and will include:

1. An executive summary highlighting the report's main findings and recommendations.
2. The main report itself (max 20 pages), including conclusions and recommendations.
3. Annexes including supporting data (processes), tables, work schedule, list of interviewees, documents consulted and other information and sources as appropriate.

4. Human and financial means

Those carrying out the evaluation are expected to have:

1. Experience of conducting evaluations;
2. Experience and access to know how in the field of social finance, access to finance, especially in the European context;
3. Expertise and access to know how about networks;
4. Expertise of the EU's policies (know how about social finance policies and EU management systems will be an advantage);



5. A professional working level in English.

Maximum billing: The maximum available budget for this consultancy is EUR 5.000, all costs included. Belgian 21% VAT will apply (in case of providers not based in Belgium, VAT amounting to 21% of the net amount will be directly paid through the *reverse charge* mechanism by FEBEA in Belgium as required by the Belgian VAT authorities).

FEBEA will sign an agreement with the selected evaluator for 2023 and the following years - however the service for the years 2024 – 2025 is conditioned depending on EC approval of FEBEA planned budget for the following years.

5. Time frame for 2023 evaluation

Start: **8th January 2024**

Submission of draft evaluation report: **29th February 2024**

Final report: **29th March 2024**

C. APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested parties are required to submit their application by e-mail to recruitment@febea.org **before 15th November 2023** including at least the following items:

- a. Outline of work-plan for the evaluation (maximum 4 pages);
- b. The curriculum vitae of the consultant(s) who will undertake the work;
- c. Examples of previous work (can be references or web-links – maximum 4 pages);
- d. Proposed breakdown of the budget.

For any clarification about this call please refer to: recruitment@febea.org

C. SELECTION PROCESS

A final decision will be announced **before 30th November 2023**.

FEBEA has the right to request further information if deemed necessary. An interview with the candidate is optional.

The criteria for awarding will be based on the following criteria:

- Tender documents sent on time
- Documents in line with TOR
- Amount offered within limit
- Work to be executed within set timetable
- Reporting format proposed according to TOR
- Experience with evaluations
- Staff proposed with experience with evaluations

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- Knowledge of the social finance sector in Europe
- Knowledge of social finance networks
- Quality of proposed research methods
- Reporting expertise (and command UK English)
- Suggestions made valuable to evaluation
- Knowledge about EC (procedures/ working methods/ financing mechanisms/ policies related to social finance)



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