

Request for Proposals

Independent Evaluation of the Initiative ‘Delivering an advocacy agenda for a circular EU economy’ implemented by European Environmental Bureau and funded by Laudes Foundation.

Laudes Foundation seeks an Evaluation Team for undertaking external end-of-initiative evaluation of ‘Delivering an advocacy agenda for a circular EU economy’ implemented by European Environmental Bureau and funded by Laudes Foundation Built Environment and Financial and Capital Markets Transformation programmes. **Complete proposal must be submitted to Laudes Foundation by February 7, 2022.** More details are given below in the terms of reference.

I. Introduction

Laudes Foundation is an independent foundation here to advance the transition to a just and regenerative economy. We do this by supporting brave action that will inspire and challenge industry to harness its power for good. Action that inspires industry, to work collaboratively to create solutions and tools. And action that challenges industry, holding it to account and incentivizing change. Founded in 2020, Laudes Foundation is part of the Brenninkmeijer family enterprise and builds on six generations of entrepreneurship and philanthropy. In particular, we advance the industry-changing work of C&A Foundation. Learning from these experiences, we to work persistently and collaboratively to influence capital and transform industry, starting with the built environment and fashion industries. Laudes Foundation. Redefining value for the good of all.

Laudes Foundation is commissioning a final external evaluation of the initiative titled *Delivering an advocacy agenda for a circular EU economy* to arrive at an objective assessment of how initiative met its intended goals till date, to document the missed opportunities and provide a focused set of recommendations and lessons that will enhance learning and inform the strategies and programmatic decisions of similar advocacy related initiatives.

The objective of the *Delivering an advocacy agenda for a circular EU economy* initiative was to develop a circular economy policy as a systemic transformation of the EU economy able to progress the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To do this the initiative has built on existing policy frameworks and helped to initiate new advocacy instruments to apply them in priority on fashion and built environment sectors.

The request for proposals present a brief description of the initiative; scope and objectives; evaluation methodology; stakeholder involvement; roles and responsibilities; evaluation process; deliverables; audience and dissemination; consultant qualifications and projected level of effort.

The external evaluation is required to be completed and submitted to Laudes Foundation by April 29 2022.

II. The Initiative

The initiative has focused on three essential levers of a circular economy which are able to contribute to a systemic change and can best be performed at European Union (EU) and European national level:

1- Setting an advocacy transformative pathway for a EU circular and inclusive economy

The ultimate objective of this line of work is to develop a circular economy policy as a systemic transformation of the EU economy able to progress the SDGs. To get there, the EEB project during the first two years aimed to promote a combination of different circular economy related approaches that will mutually reinforce to achieve a systemic transformational impact. While many policies and approaches could be considered, the initiative will focus on four essential levers of a circular economy: product policy initiative, fiscal reform approaches, narratives setting and trade/corporate responsibility & due diligence which are expected to be able to contribute to a systemic change and can best be performed at EU and national level. The initiative will build on existing policy frameworks and help emerge new advocacy instruments to apply them in priority on fashion and built environment sectors.

2- A transformative agenda for the fashion sector taking advantage of the announced comprehensive EU strategy for Textiles

The fashion sector offers a unique opportunity to develop and apply the approaches mentioned in the section above. The EU strategy will help the initiative to design policy options and activate policy instruments for a sector still poorly addressed by sustainable policy. The emotional dimension of fashion, its linkages to identity and life styles, will provide the relevant hooks to create new narratives towards sustainability, fairness, the possibility to take control of how and what is consumed, as well as how clothes are to be produced.

3- A transformative agenda for the built environment taking advantage of the announced comprehensive EU strategy on Sustainable built Environment

The construction sector represents nearly 50% of EU material consumption by weight and 35% of the CO2 emissions (without taking into account embodied emissions). The EU strategy will enable to identify and activate the main levers for a sustainable built environment system ('housing'), beyond the existing policy framework, still mostly limited to energy performances of new buildings and recycling. The prominent climate change angle for this sector will be pushed further towards total decarbonization, including embodied emissions, to drive sustainable (public) procurement, heavy industry investments and local job potentials. The total decarbonisation entry point will also pave the way for a more comprehensive built environment strategy, taking into account health and social dimensions.

Laudes Foundation has provided approximately EUR 1.262 million from 2020 onwards for implementation of the initiative which was initially awarded to European Environmental Bureau as key implementor. Additional grant related details will be provided to the evaluation team by the EEB team and Laudes Foundation.

For Laudes Foundation, the initiative sits within the Built Environment, Materials and Financial and Capital Markets Transformation programmes.

III. Scope and Objectives

The evaluation should assess the design, progress and impact of the initiative. The evaluation will also generate actionable and strategic lessons learned and recommendations for similar initiatives.

The Evaluation Objectives are to:

- Review the initiative's design, implementation and partnership with EEB in achieving outcomes.
- Assess the relevance and value of the initiative towards advocacy effort for circular economy in EU.
- Examine EEB's ability to engage with some stakeholders and integrate their perspective.
- Identify missed opportunities and deepen knowledge and understanding of successes, failures, assumptions and potential for leveraging and building upon the initiative for all partners including both implementation partners and funding partners.

The evaluation will cover the grant made in 2020 till date. The objectives should be considered within the context of the non-linearity of systems level change, review the approach and the journey taken so far, to ensure that all of the lessons accumulated over the past two years can be integrated and built upon. This to ensure that the effectiveness of the initiative can be maximised going into their next phase of work.

Evaluation Questions: The evaluation questions¹ will be designed in order to allow a sound assessment of the relevant rubrics and may include, but are not limited to the following:

Initiative Quality:

- How well is the initiative aligned to Laudes Foundation's vision and mission and EEB's strengths, capacities and priorities?
- How well has the initiative been executed? Did the actions that the initiative undertake result in fulfilling its mission of progressing a circular economy in the EU?
- To what extent was the initiative engaged with the 'most appropriate and relevant' stakeholders who could facilitate impact?
 - How effective was the initiative in engaging and motivating relevant partners?
- What monitoring approaches were put in place to inform adaptive management? How was data and knowledge collected and used by EEB to evaluate momentum in the industry?
- How was communication conducted both internally and externally? What communicative products or approaches were useful to EEB and where were there gaps?

Outcomes / Results:

¹ Please refer to Annex A for additional questions to be addressed by the evaluation.

- How well has the initiative been able to contribute to influencing mindsets, beliefs and assumptions to create alignment with the vision for a circular EU?
- How well has the initiative been able to influence decision makers, including policymakers, to understand the root cause of the issues, the shared vision, and to inform positive changes in policies and practices?
- How has the initiative been able to support its partners in understanding the benefits of a circular fashion and built industry, and actions they can take towards accelerating the transition? What, if any, gaps in support can be observed and why?
- How has the initiative been able to connect and enable collaboration among a wide range of different organisations and stakeholders? What barriers did the initiative encounter, if any, why?
 - To what extent has the initiative been able to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion transformation?
- What unintended results (positive or negative) did processes employed by EEB's initiative produce?

Long Term Value:

- To what extent are there signs that the initiative is on track to promote a widespread and thorough implementation of circular economy practices, policies, and/or regulations?
- Where has the initiative been able to build the foundations for its financial sustainability?
- How likely is it that this initiative would be effective in other contexts?

IV. Methodology

The evaluation should employ a mixed methods approach to ensure sufficient data gathering. The evaluation design will be primarily based on a review of the existing documents and key informant interviews as well as any other data collection methodology deemed appropriate. The evaluation methods for assessing the effectiveness of initiatives working on systems change influencing narratives and advocacy are mixed leaning more towards qualitative methods. It is expected that evaluation methodological framework will draw on how to measure the outcomes of the initiative. Further the process should also test the initiative theory of change and if any adaptations are needed to made thereof.

The mixed-methodological approach will ensure that evidence gathered can be sufficiently triangulated to deliver aggregate qualitative judgments on the basis of a broad range of data; documentary; interviews with staff of EEB, Laudes Foundation, re-grantees and key actors and collaborators such as SAC Policy Hub, ECOS, BPIE and EU officials.

Qualitative data will be used to provide critical insight into health and effectiveness of the initiative, how it has contributed to results, and how it has supported the delivery of results or not. The evaluation will follow, but is not restricted to, the below mentioned data collection methods. Attention needs to be paid to triangulating feedback different actors in order to ensure validity. Rigorous qualitative approaches (e.g., content analyses) should be employed to analyse and examine data, causality and contextual influencing factors, where possible.

Portfolio and documentary review will be conducted based on all existing initiative related documents and data held by EEB. The review (alongside initial interviews) will be conducted first.

EEB will provide all information, documentation, data and access reasonably requested by the consultants and will not be required to disclose any confidential information (of itself or any third party) nor any information containing personal data.

Semi-structured Interviews will be conducted with informants including:

- Relevant EEB staff
- Laudes Foundation staff
- Core, affiliate and other partners as appropriate

Case studies will be explored to assess how the data featured in the MIB initiative has been used and highlight areas of success, drivers, challenges, risks and failures. The selection of case studies will be done in consultation with Laudes Foundation staff and initiative staff.

Rating system: In addition to this, the evaluation team will employ the [Laudes Foundation rubrics rating system](#) that rates the initiative's overall performance. The rating will be developed by the Evaluation Team in consultation with the Effective Philanthropy team at the foundation. The rating will be developed in consultation between EEB and the evaluators.

Sampling: Purposive sampling will be done for identification of key stakeholders and business actors for surveys, interview and case studies. The evaluation is expected to employ a participatory approach providing for meaningful involvement of partners engaged in the initiative.

V. Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholder involvement is critical to the successful execution of the evaluation. The evaluation consultancy is expected to retain independence in coming to judgments about the initiative but employ participatory and collaborative approach providing for meaningful involvement of Laudes Foundation, EEB management and staff, and actors (government, business actors, NGOs, re-grantee) involved in the partnership.

The key stakeholders are:

- Relevant EEB staff both part of management and those involved in the initiative
- Key staff at Laudes Foundation involved with this initiative
- Re-grantees: E3G
- Relevant sectoral stakeholders including but not limited to the following:
 - Finance: SAC Policy Hub, WGBC
 - Built: ECOS, BPIE, WGBC
 - Fashion Materials: ECOS, Changing Markets, Policy Hub

The draft report will be discussed in a virtual meeting and also circulated to relevant EEB and Laudes Foundation staff and management for review and comments prior to finalisation.

A draft findings / sensemaking workshop will be facilitated by the consultants to allow for discussion of the findings and emerging lessons. It is anticipated that the workshop will be held virtually.

VI. Roles and Responsibilities

The Senior Evaluation Manager at Laudes Foundation² (the Evaluation Manager) is responsible for:

- Leading the selection process of the evaluation team.
- Overall responsibility and accountability for management and delivery of the evaluation up to and including approval of the final report.
- Technical guidance for the evaluation consultants in selection of initiative appropriate rubrics and throughout the implementation of the evaluation up to and including participation / observation of data collection.
- Leadership of the evaluation draft report review process including collating comments and facilitating discussion and management responses.
- In all of these roles, necessary support will be provided by other members of the Laudes Foundation Effective Philanthropy Team – Director of Effective Philanthropy.

The Senior Programme Manager at Laudes Foundation is responsible for:

- Participation in the selection process of the evaluation team,
- Facilitation on the evaluation including access to initiative related data, all documents, and access to stakeholders (internal and external).
- Reviewing and commenting on drafts of the inception and evaluation report.
- Preparing a management response, as and when necessary.

The Project Manager at EEB is responsible for:

- Facilitation and day-to-day assistance to the evaluation consultants including access to initiative data, all documents, and access to stakeholders.
- Reviewing and commenting on drafts of the inception and evaluation report;
- Preparing a management response, as and when necessary.

The evaluation consultants are responsible for:

- Defining the use of the initiative related rubrics in the evaluation.
- Conducting all necessary qualitative and quantitative assessments and data collection;
- Day-to-day management of the evaluation.
- Regular formal and informal reporting to the Evaluation Manager.

² The Senior Evaluation Manager at the Laudes Foundation is not involved in the management of the initiative or the day to day operations.

- Participation in key evaluation related meetings (kick off meeting, inception report meeting and draft findings meeting etc.).
- Production of deliverables (inception report and evaluation report) in accordance with the Terms of Reference and contractual arrangements.

The evaluation consultants will report to Ms. Savi Mull, Senior Evaluation Manager, Laudes Foundation on all issues related to the evaluation, contracts, fees and expenses, and deliverables and commenting / responses processes.

VII. Evaluation Process

The evaluation will be carried out in conformity with the principles and standards set out in Laudes Foundation [Minimum Standards for Monitoring and Evaluation](#).

The consultants will prepare an evaluation **inception report and work-plan** that will operationalise the Request for Proposals and outline the use of [rubrics rating system](#) in the evaluation. The inception report will be based on initial documentary review and preliminary interviews with different actors.

The inception report and work-plan will address the following elements: expectations of the evaluation; roles and responsibilities within the evaluation consulting team; elaboration or reconstruction of the initiative programme theory, as appropriate; any refinements and elaboration to evaluation questions; methods – qualitative and quantitative and data collection, including possible constraints; outline of the final evaluation report and an evaluation matrix linking questions – methods – data sources and indicators.

The inception report and work-plan will be approved by the Evaluation Manager and act as an agreement between the consultants and the Laudes Foundation on how the evaluation is to be conducted.

The consultants will prepare the **draft and final evaluation reports** that describe the evaluation methodology, findings, recommendations and key lessons.

If significant differences arise regarding the interpretation of evidence between Laudes Foundation, EEB programme management on the external evaluation report, an opportunity will be provided to formulate a management response to the findings and recommendations. This will be published with the final report.

The main activities and evaluation timetable for this consultancy is set out below:

Evaluation Process	Deadline	Responsibility
Selection and contracting of consultancy	20 February	Laudes Foundation (Senior Evaluation Manager)
Kick-off meeting	1 March	Consultant Team, EEB, Laudes Foundation

Inception report preparation	2 weeks after selection	Consultant Team
Completion of documentary review / interviews and data collection	2-3 weeks after inception report	Consultant Team
Draft findings / sensemaking workshop (online)	Upon completion of analysis (timed accordingly)	Consultant Team / Senior Evaluation Manager (facilitator)
Draft report for comment	2-3 weeks after workshop	Consultant Team (submitted to Effective Philanthropy)
Final report	29 April	Consultant Team
Preparation and copy-editing of report	tbd	Laudes Foundation (Effective Philanthropy Team)
Dissemination of the evaluation	tbd	Laudes Foundation (Effective Philanthropy Team)

VIII. Deliverables

The evaluation requires the consultant to submit the following deliverables:

- Inception report
- End of Data Collection – initial findings/sensemaking workshop or a virtual call with Laudes Foundation and EEB staff
- Draft evaluation report
- Findings/Sense-making Meeting (in person meeting/ virtual call with relevant Laudes Foundation and EEB staff)
- Final evaluation report, not to exceed 30 pages, with a two page executive summary

IX. Audience and Dissemination

Main audiences for the evaluation will be Laudes Foundation and EEB. The final evaluation report will be published by Laudes Foundation and EEB staff and disseminated through websites and social media.

Learning products including a lessons notes will be developed after the completion of the evaluation.

X. Consultant Requirements and Level of Effort

Applicants may be individual consultant, a group of individual consultants with a designated team lead, or consulting companies with relevant evaluation expertise. Applicants must have at a minimum the following qualifications:

- Substantial experience in conducting evaluations of a high standard (in Europe preferred), including using contribution analysis
- Proven experience in assessing innovative and systems change approaches;
- Knowledge of circular economy, circular fashion is an advantage;
- Programmatic / strategic evaluation experience to inform further development of operations related to advocacy;
- Additional experience is expected in:
 - Methods for evaluating systems change and collaborative initiatives;
 - Theory-based evaluation designs;
 - Application of rubric-based evaluative criteria
 - Qualitative methods;
- Strong facilitation skills and proven ability to lead participatory processes;
- Team composition must consider appropriate diversity and gender-balance;
- Fluency in English (spoken and written) is essential; and
- No conflict of interest with Laudes Foundation and European Environmental Bureau (EEB).

The expected level of effort for the evaluation is approximately 30-40 working days. This is an estimate – the level of effort proposed must be aligned with the proposed methodology.

Please submit the following to Ms. Savi Mull s.mull@laudesfoundation.org and Ms. Nazakat Azimli n.azimli@laudesfoundation.org by 7 February 2022.

A. Technical Proposal

- A narrative proposal (no more than 5 - 6 pages excluding annexes) and including the following sections:
 - a) Evaluation Methodology: Describe your overall approach and evaluation methodology including, and not limited to, evaluation questions, evaluation design and methodology.
 - b) Relevant Experience: Provide details of projects of similar scope, complexity and nature you have worked on previously. Please include any experience with summative evaluations in circular fashion and advocacy.
 - c) Specific Expertise: Describe your level of knowledge and expertise in advocacy related evaluations.
 - d) Key Personnel and Staffing: Describe the key personnel. Include CVs (no more than 2 pages each and attached as annex) of key personnel who would be part of the proposed plan.
 - e) Timeline: Include a detailed timeline of key activities.

- f) Sample reports: Two sample evaluation reports authored by the team lead (will be treated as confidential and used for purposes of selection)

B. Financial proposal

- The financial proposal should include a line-item budget and a budget narrative. The cost estimates used to prepare the budget should be presented in Euros.

Annex A: Other Questions to be Considered

- To what extent was the initiative (and its different workstreams) cost-effective?
- What were the results of EEB's initiative? To what extent did the initiative meet its targets overall and for the different workstreams, in the context of non-linear and adaptive systems change?
- How effectively did the initiative reinforce existing efforts to enable systemic change for circular adoption in the fashion and built industry, given the challenges that exist in the context?
- To what extent did the initiative leverage effects of other initiatives?
- What external and internal factors as well as challenges and risks influenced the implementation, successes and failures? And why?
- What were the main lessons learned from the initiative? What were the drivers (both positive and negative) that are influenced progress towards achieving the objectives?
- To what extent did Laudes Foundation enable EEB to achieve its results to date? What recommendations are there for an effective partnership between EEB and Laudes Foundation in the future?
- What are the main factors that are promoting and/or reducing the longevity and effectiveness of the initiative?
 - o To what extent can the initiative be scaled and / or replicated?
 - o What were the missed opportunities?
 - o What are the recommendations to improve continuity of results in the future

