ASCENT PPF Private Sector Support Window Clarifications 1

#	Question	Answer
1	Will you be distributing the presentation afterwards?	Yes. The webinar slides and recording will be uploaded to the application portal and available to all registered users.
2	When will questions submitted during today's webinar be answered?	Questions submitted during the webinar will be treated as part of the formal clarification process. The deadline for clarification questions is Friday 7 August, and responses are expected to be published on Monday 17 August, together with the TA Catalogue resulting from the RfEOI process. This ensures all applicants receive the same information at the same time.
3	what's the maximum grant amount can a company apply for?	Grants under this window will generally range from USD 50,000 to USD 200,000 per company. Requests above USD 200,000 may be considered, but they will be subject to enhanced scrutiny, including a more detailed review of the proposed budget, implementation capacity, and the credibility of the financing milestone. The PPF Manager may also make partial awards where only part of the proposed scope is eligible, where activities can be delivered through the Roster of Experts, or where resources are limited.
4	Will questions be answered individually by email?	No. To maintain fairness and transparency, substantive questions will be consolidated and answered publicly through the clarifications document. Administrative or technical portal issues may be handled directly where they do not affect the substance of the CfP.
5	The TOR allows for individual and firm submission. If a firm submits the EOI, could the individuals of this firm also submit EOI even if they are also listed on the firm's submission?	This is addressed in the published RfEOI clarifications. A company and individuals associated with that company may apply in parallel, provided the applications are distinct, accurate and transparent. Any affiliation between the individual and the firm should be disclosed, and the applications should not double-count the same availability or present inconsistent

		commitments. Individuals named in a company application should ensure that any separate individual application is compatible with their role, employer approval and actual availability. COMESA and the PPF Manager may seek clarification where parallel applications create ambiguity or potential conflicts of interest. Please note that the formal clarification period for the RfEOI has now closed. Applicants should rely on the published RfEOI and clarification responses when preparing or interpreting their submissions.
6	Can we still submit questions after the webinar?	Yes. Applicants may submit clarification questions after the webinar, but they must be received by the published clarification deadline of Friday 7 August to be included in the formal clarification response.
7	Please share the link for first time registration on the Smart ME platform.	https://smartme.adalia.fi/A-PPF/applicant
8	Should we wait for the clarifications and TA Catalogue before submitting?	Applicants may submit at any time once the portal is open, but those intending to request TA may wish to review the TA Catalogue when it is published on 17 August. Applicants should remember that the first batch deadline is 31 August, and once an application is submitted it cannot be amended.
9	Can a company make an application in the 1st round and 2nd round consecutively?	A company may submit a new application in a later review round after it has received formal notification of the outcome of its previous application, provided it does not have more than one active application under review at the same time. The restriction is intended to prevent duplicate or parallel applications in the same review cycle, not to prevent companies from reapplying after an earlier application has been concluded. Any reapplication should be a complete new submission and should address any gaps, changes, or weaknesses in the previous application.

		If a company is approved for support, it may not submit another application while it has an active PPF grant or TA support package. A supported company may apply again only after completing its initial support period and submitting its final report, and the new application must relate to a new, distinct financing transaction.
10	What is the TA Catalogue?	The TA Catalogue will summarise the technical assistance services expected to be available through the PPF's Roster of Experts. It will help applicants understand which types of support may be delivered in-kind through pre-qualified experts rather than through direct grant funding. The guidelines already indicate that TA may cover areas such as technical studies, market assessments, financial modelling, transaction advisory, ESHS, gender, carbon finance, productive use of energy and related investment-readiness support.
11	Could you please show again how to access this part of the online form with all the company-related information?	The webinar recording will be made available through the application portal after the session, so applicants can review the full walkthrough of the online form at their convenience. Once logged into the portal, applicants should open the ASCENT PPF company application and proceed through the relevant sections of the form. The company-related information is captured across the main application sections, including organisation details, ownership, business maturity, technology, fundraising, proposed PPF support, and impact and compliance. Applicants can save progress and return to the form before final submission.
12	Can we apply for both TA and grant funding?	Yes. Applicants may request TA, grant funding, or a combined package. However, grant funding should not duplicate services available through the Roster of Experts. Where a need can be met through TA, the PPF may structure support accordingly.
13	Can a company make a request for a specific expert	Companies may indicate the type of technical assistance they require and may express a

	that is shortlisted on the Panel of Experts?	preference for a specific expert or provider from the Roster, where relevant. However, final matching and appointment of experts will be managed by the PPF Manager, taking into account the scope of work, availability, suitability, value for money, conflicts of interest, and applicable procurement requirements. A company preference will therefore be considered, but cannot be guaranteed. The PPF provides in-kind TA through a prequalified Roster of Experts across defined investment-readiness areas.
14	If a service appears in the TA Catalogue, can we still request grant funding for it?	In general, grant funding is expected to cover eligible project preparation activities that fall outside the available Roster of Experts support. If an applicant proposes grant funding for something similar to a TA service, they should clearly justify why grant funding is required and why use of the roster would not be appropriate.
15	Would a company receiving separate project preparation support still be eligible for support for a different workstream?	Yes, potentially. Receiving project preparation support from another facility does not automatically make a company ineligible. However, applicants must disclose any other TA or grant funding they are receiving and clearly explain how the ASCENT PPF support is additional to, and distinct from, existing support. The PPF will not fund duplicate activities, but may support a clearly separate workstream if it is eligible, not already funded, and directly linked to unlocking a financing transaction.
16	Are grants paid upfront?	Grants are milestone-based. A mobilisation tranche may be provided after grant agreement signing and satisfaction of pre-conditions, with later tranches paid after verification of agreed milestones.
17	Could you please specify the period that can be covered by the request, particularly for milestones (e.g., end of 2027 at the latest)?	There is no blanket requirement that all milestones must be completed by the end of 2027. Applicants should propose a realistic implementation period and milestone schedule that is directly linked to the financing transaction they are trying to unlock.

		As an indicative guide, implementation and delivery may run for 6–24 months, depending on the scope, complexity and timing of the proposed support. Milestones must be clearly defined, measurable, achievable within the proposed grant period, and subject to verification before disbursement. Post-support outcome tracking may continue beyond the grant implementation period, including tracking of financial close and impact outcomes.
18	How will you look at applicants with a holding company outside of the priority countries but subsidiaries/operations in the target countries?	A holding company outside the ASCENT-eligible countries does not automatically make an applicant ineligible. However, the applicant must demonstrate that the proposed activities are implemented in one or more ASCENT-eligible countries and that the applicant, or the relevant operating subsidiary, is registered as a private company or equivalent legal entity in at least one eligible ASCENT country. The group structure, relationship between the holding company and local operating entities, and the entity that would enter into any grant or TA agreement should be clearly disclosed. Applicants should submit one consolidated application covering the relevant operating countries and should not submit duplicate applications through multiple subsidiaries of the same parent company.
19	When will the window open for the national agencies and the early stage companies?	The current Call for Proposals is for established private-sector DRE and clean cooking companies. Separate PPF support routes for national agencies, publicly available resources, industry associations and investors will be announced separately when available. Very early-stage companies are not eligible for direct TA or grant support under this company window, but may benefit from publicly available resources, from support delivered through industry associations or investors receiving PPF support, or through future targeted company windows.
20	Are companies or developers from other regions seeking to	Yes, potentially, but only where the proposed activities are in one or more ASCENT-eligible

	expand to the listed beneficiary countries eligible to apply?	countries and the applicant, or relevant operating subsidiary, is registered as a private company or equivalent legal entity in at least one eligible ASCENT country. Expansion plans alone are not sufficient; the applicant must meet all other eligibility criteria, including operating history, revenue, management capacity and investor engagement.
21	Explain whether the TA's are remunerated.	Technical assistance is provided **in-kind** to approved companies through the PPF Roster of Experts. The experts or service providers delivering TA are remunerated through their arrangements with the PPF Manager; the beneficiary company does not receive the TA amount as cash.
22	Can the grant fund the pilot of a new project at the company level?	A pilot may be eligible only where it is a commercial, market-entry, validation or scale-up activity for an established company and is directly linked to unlocking a defined financing transaction. The grant cannot fund primary technology development, proof-of-concept work, general working capital, or inventory financing as a standalone purpose.
23	When will the national agencies and early stages windows be opened?	No separate launch date has been announced through this company CfP. National agency support and any other PPF delivery mechanisms will be communicated separately. Very early-stage companies should monitor publicly available resources, support offered through industry associations or investors, or future targeted company windows.
24	Is the application project or company based?	The application is submitted by a **company**, but the requested support must be linked to a specific financing transaction and a defined package of project preparation or business development activities. Eligibility is assessed at company level, while the proposed support is assessed based on the specific activities, milestones, budget, additionality and link to financial close.
25	Can one company submit more than one application?	Each applicant may submit only one application per call window and should not have more than one active application under review at the same time. A company may submit a new application in

		a later review round after receiving formal notification of the outcome of its previous application. If approved for support, the company may apply again only after completing its initial support period and submitting its final report, and the new application must relate to a new, distinct financing transaction.
26	Are companies or developers from other regions seeking to expand to the listed beneficiary countries eligible to apply?	Companies or developers from other regions may be eligible only if the proposed activities are in eligible ASCENT countries and the applicant, or relevant local operating entity, meets all eligibility requirements.
27	Is this opportunity open only to companies registered in the listed countries? or are international companies without a business presence in those countries also eligible to participate?	The opportunity is not limited to companies headquartered in the eligible countries, but the applicant, or relevant operating subsidiary, must be registered as a private company or equivalent legal entity in at least one ASCENT-eligible country and must be operating in one or more eligible countries. International companies without any business presence or eligible-country operating entity would not be eligible under this window.
28	Is an NGO eligible when implementing a project in consortium with a private-sector company?	Yes. An NGO, association, research institution or similar organisation may participate as a partner where relevant to the proposed project. However, the lead applicant and primary grant recipient must be an eligible private-sector company. NGOs, research institutions, government ministries, UN agencies and public-sector entities are not eligible to apply as lead applicants under this private-sector company window.
29	If one company has 100000$ for turnover and another for 50000$ can they do a consortium?	No, not for the purpose of meeting the minimum revenue threshold by adding together the turnover of separate companies. The eligibility criteria apply to the lead applicant. A consortium or group may collaborate on implementation, but the lead applicant must independently meet the eligibility criteria. If a consortium is formally established as an SPV, partnership or equivalent legal entity, that legal entity may apply as lead applicant, but it would be assessed against the eligibility criteria in its own right.

30	Will a feasibility study be done by a staff from the panel of experts?	If the approved support is provided as in-kind TA, a feasibility study would normally be delivered through a suitably matched provider from the PPF Roster of Experts. The final selection of the expert or firm will be managed by the PPF Manager based on the scope, expertise required, availability, value for money, conflicts of interest and applicable procurement requirements. An applicant may nevertheless request grant funding to engage its own preferred provider where there is a strong and clearly documented justification. This could include, for example, the need for highly specialised expertise, continuity with an existing advisor, investor requirements, local knowledge, or circumstances in which the required service is not suitably available through the Roster. Any such request would be assessed on its merits, including eligibility, additionality, value for money, avoidance of duplication and the strength of the link to the proposed financing transaction. Approval of the applicant's preferred provider would not be automatic.
31	When will the national agencies and early stages windows be opened?	No separate opening date has been announced for national agency or early-stage company support through this private-sector company CfP. Interested parties can register for updates via https://tinyurl.com/4punvpm8
32	What would you advise for enabling technologies such as dMRV and PAYGo providers who supply across SHS / e-cooking/ PUE? Specifically, would there be a conflict of interest if the dMRV experts (who provide TA to recipient companies) belong to a company that also itself needs Grant funding eg. working capital or market development support?	Enabling technology providers, such as dMRV, PAYGo, MIS or data-system providers, may be eligible if they meet the company eligibility criteria and the requested support is directly linked to unlocking a financing transaction in one or more eligible ASCENT countries. However, any potential conflict of interest must be fully disclosed. A company should not be in a position to provide TA to itself, influence the evaluation of its own application, or benefit from privileged information gained as a TA provider. The PPF Manager may apply conflict-of-interest safeguards, restrict the role of the provider, or determine that one of the roles is not compatible. Grant funding for working capital would not be

		eligible as a standalone request, and development of a new dMRV product would need to be clearly distinguished from ineligible primary technology development or proof-of-concept activities.
33	Is this opportunity open only to companies registered in the listed countries? or are international companies without a business presence in those countries also eligible to participate?	International companies may be eligible only where they have an eligible-country presence through the applicant or operating subsidiary and meet all other criteria.
34	Will you be distributing the presentation afterwards?	Yes. The webinar slides and recording will be uploaded to the application portal and made available to all registered users. The application portal may be accessed via https://smartme.adalia.fi/A-PPF/applicant
35	Please share the link for first time registration on the Smart ME platform.	First-time registration can be accessed through: https://smartme.adalia.fi/A-PPF/applicant
36	Could you please show again how to access this part of the online form with all the company-related information?	The webinar recording will be made available through the application portal after the session, so applicants can review the full walkthrough of the online form. The company-related information is captured across the main application sections: organisation, ownership, business maturity, technology, fundraising, proposed PPF support, and impact and compliance. The application portal may be accessed via https://smartme.adalia.fi/A-PPF/applicant
37	Why is Zimbabwe not a priority country?	Zimbabwe is not included in the list of ASCENT-eligible countries for this Call for Proposals. The country scope is determined by the ASCENT programme and this specific Private Sector Support Window. Projects solely in Zimbabwe are therefore not eligible under this window.
38	What's the maximum grant amount can a company apply for?	Grants under this window will generally range from USD 50,000 to USD 200,000 per company. Requests above USD 200,000 may be considered, but will be subject to enhanced scrutiny, including

		review of the budget, implementation capacity and credibility of the financing milestone.
39	Can a company make a request for a specific expert that is shortlisted on the Panel of Experts?	Companies may express a preference for a specific expert or provider from the Roster, but final matching and appointment will be managed by the PPF Manager, taking into account scope, expertise, availability, value for money, conflicts of interest and applicable procurement requirements. A company preference may be considered but cannot be guaranteed.
40	The TOR allows for individual and firm submission. If a firm submits the EOI, could the individuals of this firm also submit EOI even if they are also listed on the firm's submission?	This question relates to the RfEOI, not the company CfP. It is addressed in the published RfEOI clarifications. A company and individuals associated with that company may apply in parallel, provided applications are distinct, accurate and transparent, affiliations are disclosed, and the same availability is not double-counted. The RfEOI application window has now closed.
41	Can a company make an application in the 1st round and 2nd round consecutively?	A company may reapply in a later review round after receiving formal notification of the outcome of its previous application, provided it does not have more than one active application under review.
42	Can a company make a request for a specific expert that is shortlisted on the Panel of Experts?	Companies may express a preference for a specific expert or provider from the Roster, but final matching and appointment will be managed by the PPF Manager, taking into account scope, expertise, availability, value for money, conflicts of interest and applicable procurement requirements. A company preference may be considered but cannot be guaranteed.
43	Would a company receiving separate project preparation support still be eligible for support for a different workstream?	Yes, potentially. Receiving project preparation support from another facility does not automatically make a company ineligible. However, applicants must disclose other TA or grant support and explain how ASCENT PPF support is additional and distinct. The PPF will not fund duplicate activities, but may support a separate eligible

		workstream that is directly linked to unlocking a financing transaction.
44	If the webinar was recorded, I would be grateful if you could share the recording or advise where it can be accessed. I would also appreciate receiving any presentation materials or resources that were shared during the session.	The webinar recording, presentation materials and relevant application resources will be made available through the application portal. Final clarification responses are expected to be published on 17 August together with the TA Catalogue, with earlier publication of clarifications at the discretion of the PPF Manager.
45	Could you please confirm whether a company incorporated in Nigeria, with projects currently focused in Nigeria, is eligible to apply under the ASCENT PPF Private Sector Support Window?	A company incorporated in Nigeria with projects currently focused only in Nigeria would not be eligible under this window, because Nigeria is not one of the ASCENT-eligible countries. A Nigeria-headquartered company may be eligible only if the proposed activities are in one or more eligible ASCENT countries and the applicant, or relevant operating subsidiary, is registered and operating in at least one eligible ASCENT country and meets all other eligibility criteria.
46	This platform is not active: https://lnkd.in/e2sCm24m. It does not open when we want to check for Full application guidelines. Could you provide us with Application forms so that we can start gathering the required information for the application?	Applicants should access the application through the official SmartME application portal (https://smartme.adalia.fi/A-PPF/applicant). The application guidelines and form resources will be available through the portal. Applicants may also begin preparing the required information in advance, including company registration documents, tax registration, financial statements or management accounts, investor letters of intent where applicable, ownership and team information, revenue and customer data, proposed support activities, milestones, budget, co-financing plan, and impact/compliance information.
47	Kindly confirm: 1. The date on which the Call for Proposals will effectively open on the portal; 2. Whether we are looking in the right place, or if applications should be initiated through a different link or section of the portal;	The Call for Proposals launched on 13 July 2026, with applications accepted on a rolling basis and the first review indicatively expected to commence on 31 August. Applications should be initiated through the SmartME application portal (https://smartme.adalia.fi/A-PPF/applicant). In the

	and 3. Any preliminary steps we should take in the meantime (e.g., registration, pre-qualification, or preparation of supporting documents) so that we are ready to apply as soon as the call opens.	meantime, applicants should register, review the guidelines, prepare supporting documents, confirm investor engagement evidence, develop the proposed support package and milestones, and prepare the co-financing plan.
48	I noted that the criteria require applicants to have paying customers. DelAgua's model is one of free issuance, whereby we distribute improved biomass cookstoves to rural communities at 100% subsidy. I wanted to clarify whether free distribution models are eligible for grant support from this facility.	Free distribution models are not automatically excluded. However, the applicant must still meet the eligibility criteria for an established company, including verifiable revenue generation and the applicable annual revenue threshold. Where end-users do not pay directly, the applicant should clearly explain the revenue model, such as carbon revenue, RBF, institutional contracts, donor-funded distribution, or other paying customers, and demonstrate that the model is sustainable, scalable and linked to a financing transaction. A company with no verifiable revenue or no active investor/lender engagement would not meet the eligibility threshold for this window.
49	I am trying to access the application guidelines and eligibility requirements link for the ASCENT PPF Private Sector. The link does not work. Could you please supply some assistance.	Applicants should use the official application portal (https://smartme.adalia.fi/A-PPF/applicant) and, once registered, access the full application guidelines and eligibility requirements from the portal resources. If access issues persist, applicants should contact the ASCENT PPF team through the official contact email listed in the webinar materials.
50	I have been trying to access the website however, I have not been successful. Is there a problem with it?	If applicants are experiencing website or portal access issues, they should try the direct SmartME application link (https://smartme.adalia.fi/A-PPF/applicant) and ensure they are using the correct application portal. Persistent technical issues should be reported to the ASCENT PPF team with details of the issue, browser used, and any error message or screenshot.
51	Would a distributed energy project powering a mine (an industrial/commercial offtaker) be considered	A distributed renewable energy project serving an industrial or commercial offtaker is not automatically excluded, but it would be assessed

	eligible under the Distributed Renewable Energy (DRE) or Productive Use of Energy (PUE) categories referenced in the call? Related to this, does the PPF's definition of Productive Use of Energy extend to large-scale industrial loads such as mining operations, or is it primarily intended for smaller-scale productive use cases such as agro-processing, milling, or cold storage?	against the objectives of the ASCENT PPF and this Private Sector Support Window. The proposal must demonstrate that it is an eligible DRE or PUE-related activity in an eligible country, that it contributes to the programme's development and energy-access objectives, and that the requested support is directly linked to unlocking financing. A project whose primary purpose is only to serve a large mining load, with limited wider energy-access or development impact, may be less aligned with the window than PUE applications focused on productive economic activity such as agro-processing, milling, cold storage, MSMEs or community-level enterprise use.
52	The link to further information did not work for me, if you would be able to share it here that would be greatly appreciated.	Applicants should access further information through the official SmartME application portal (https://smartme.adalia.fi/A-PPF/applicant) and the ASCENT PPF application resources. The webinar slides and recording will also be uploaded to the application portal for registered users.
53	Request for the presentation and a link for the FAQs	The presentation and webinar recording will be made available through the application portal (https://smartme.adalia.fi/A-PPF/applicant).
54	Is the 200k funding limit per milestone or for the entire project?	The funding ranges quoted in the Call for Proposals and webinar relate to the total grant funding for the project, and not limits for individual milestones. Grants under this window will generally range from US$50,000 to US$200,000 per company. Requests above US$200,000 may be considered, but they will be subject to enhanced scrutiny, including a more detailed review of the proposed budget, implementation capacity, and the credibility of the financing milestone.
55	Could you provide some example milestones to achieve such a grant for a clean cookstove project?	Milestones will be tailored to each company, the proposed support package and the financing transaction being pursued. There is no standard set of milestones for clean cookstove projects.

		Milestones could include but are not limited to completion of a market assessment or customer validation study; completion of an investor-ready financial model and business plan; preparation of a carbon project feasibility assessment or carbon finance documentation; establishment or upgrade of data, sales, inventory, PAYGo or MRV systems needed for investor due diligence; completion of E&S, gender or impact reporting documentation; or execution of key commercial agreements required to support the financing transaction. Milestones must be measurable, verifiable and directly linked to project preparation or investment readiness.
56	It is mentioned that this grant funding and/or technical expertise provided can serve to unlock equity or debt financing. Could you expand further on this based on your experience with giving grants - do you mean the grant can serve to secure bridge financing to fund the upfront costs of the project (capped at 100% LTV loan)? Or is it more that your technical guidance will help to inform conversations with debt/equity partners? (Or both)	The grant is not intended to serve as bridge financing, a loan substitute, working capital, inventory financing, or upfront project finance. The purpose is to help companies overcome specific project preparation and investment-readiness barriers that are preventing financial close. This may include technical assistance and, where justified, grant funding for activities such as feasibility studies, due diligence, legal structuring, ESG and E&S documentation, financial modelling, market studies, carbon finance preparation, or systems needed to satisfy investor or lender requirements. In that sense, the support can help inform and advance conversations with debt and equity providers, and can reduce the company's burden of funding preparation costs itself, but it is not intended to finance the underlying project capex or provide bridge debt.
57	We are exploring an application focused on two areas: **1.** Development and registration of a carbon-credit project for our institutional clean cooking technologies and fuel-switching activities. **2.** Engineering design and development of a	These activities may be eligible, provided they are clearly linked to an identified financing transaction and meet all other eligibility requirements. Carbon-credit project development and registration may fall within carbon finance, environmental attributes and impact monetisation support. Digital MRV design may fall within digitalisation, MIS, data systems, analytics, impact measurement or ESG reporting support.

	digital monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) system to improve stove performance tracking and support carbon-finance generation. Both activities are intended to support a future financing transaction that will scale our operations across East Africa. Could you kindly advise whether these activities would be considered eligible under the project preparation and business development support window?	However, support must not be for primary technology development, proof-of-concept work, general operating expenditure or working capital. The applicant should explain the deliverables, financing link, additionality, and why the support is not duplicative of services available through the Roster of Experts.
58	The date on which the Call for Proposals will effectively open on the portal?	The Call for Proposals launched and opened for applications on 13 July 2026.
59	Are we looking in the right place, or if applications should be initiated through a different link or section of the portal?	Applications should be initiated through the SmartME application portal (https://smartme.adalia.fi/A-PPF/applicant). Applicants should register or log in, open the ASCENT PPF company application, and complete the online form through the portal.
60	Preliminary steps we should take in the meantime (e.g., registration, pre-qualification, or preparation of supporting documents) so that we are ready to apply as soon as the call opens?	Preliminary steps include registering on the application portal (https://smartme.adalia.fi/A-PPF/applicant), reviewing the application guidelines, preparing company registration and tax documents, preparing financial statements or management accounts, gathering investor letters or other evidence of investor/lender engagement, preparing CVs for senior team members, developing the proposed TA/grant scope, preparing milestones and budget, confirming co-financing, and identifying any E&S, gender, impact or compliance issues that need to be disclosed. The Call for Proposals launched and opened for applications on 13 July 2026.