Frequently asked questions – Post Eoin

Q: How can I become an ICC city?

A: Unfortunately, applications for the new edition of the ICC closed on 31 May 2023, all applications that were received from cities by this date are currently under assessment. Cities will be contacted in due course and the results will be announced soon.

However, if your city is still interested in getting involved with the ICC program, please contact the Intelligent Cities Helpdesk to explore the possible options.

Q: What are mentor cities?

Mentor cities will be working with a number of cities in the ICC core city network. Mentor cities can be European or non-European. ICC mentee cities will work with mentor cities during different types of network meetings and these relationships will be developed on an organic and voluntary basis. At this point in time, applicants are not asked to identify which mentor they want to work with as this network is still in the process of being developed.

Q: How long is the Intelligent Cities Challenge?

The Intelligent Cities Challenge has a total duration of 24 months, running from June 2023 to May 2025. Selected cities are expected to remain engaged in the ICC throughout this time.

Q: What support can cities expect if selected for ICC?

A: As stated in Section 3 of the Guide for applicants (specifically subsection 3.1 and 3.2), the ICC offers expert consultant support on the ground, facilitated sessions at several high-profile multi-city events, and a suite of online tools. Financial support is not offered (except for transport and accommodation to ICC events in accordance with ICC travel guidelines). For additional information, applicants are also invited to visit the ICC website.

Q: How are regional specialists/experts chosen?

Once the ICC participant cities are chosen, the ICC puts together a team of experts which provide tailored support to the city through the ICC. This will typically combine in-person and multi-city support. The city team is free to suggest experts which may be taken into consideration. While the general rule of thumb is that the experts are people who speak the native city language, cities can also opt for experts outside their home country. They will be fluent in English too. The ICC mobilizes experts with a good level of expertise in relation to the city's sectors and priorities. At the end of the day, the ICC ensures that the city feels comfortable with its team of experts. An introduction process is organized once the experts are selected.

Q: How does ICC work with other EU projects and funding opportunities?

The Intelligent Cities Challenge is a part of a wider EU support recognising the importance of delivering promises made by the European Green Deal, the digital strategy and other EU policies. It aims to move towards a more digital, service-oriented and low-carbon economy, supported by a knowledge-based society that enable a circular economy through evidence-based reskilling and sustainable investment. There are many crossovers with other programmes financed by the European Commission, including joint sessions, information concerning funding opportunities, etc.

It is important to note that in the previous phase of the programme:

- 23 cities were selected for the Cities Mission
- 35 cities signed the Pact for Skills and other skills initiatives.
- 247€ million were leveraged from public funding from EU, national and regional sources (notably the European Resilience and Recovery Mechanism (RRF).

Q: What if the local officials or staff change during the ICC project period?

Unlike with previous ICC calls, the current programme allows cities to follow at different speeds, in accordance with their available resources and ambitions. The local project leader should be well connected to other departments in the city so that the city's commitment to the ICC can continue despite internal staff changes. Staff changes are to be expected, and the city team should be able to adapt to such situations by ensuring there is more than just one person following the programme internally, communicating closely with the programme as well as with their lead expert. For further support on your individual situation, please reach out to our Helpdesk at helpdesk_icc@technopolis-group.com.

Q: How do I know that my application has been received?

You should have received a confirmation email once you have successfully submitted your EOI. However, this receipt is not proof that the Expression of Interest is eligible for evaluation, but simply confirms that the submission has been received.

Q: What investment of resources do I need to plan for if selected?

The ICC will cover travel and accommodation costs for the city teams to ICC events in accordance with the travel guidelines, as well as the costs of allocated experts during the challenge. The ICC will also cover travel costs for political representatives invited to Mayors events. Cities are expected to allocate resources to managing, implementing and following up on the different activities defined in the framework of the project.
The time and level of effort for participating in the program is indicative (please see subsection **Error! Reference source not found.** of the Guide for Applicants), and can also be linked to the implementation of a broader set of activities or projects that are (in)directly linked to the ICC. The ICC should be seen as a driver of activities and efforts which are already being undertaken by your city.
The ICC will also cover travel and accommodation expenses for mentor city representatives.

Q: What language is required for the ICC?

All interactions in the context of the ICC will take place in English. The individuals who make up your city team must be fluent in English and must be able to produce deliverables and deliver presentations during conferences in English. However, all activities taking place locally can be done in the local language. Your assigned expert team will be fluent in your local language (unless you agreed differently) and have a good understanding of the national context.