

# Intelligent Cities Challenge

Guide for Applicants, Version 24 April 2020

The present Guide for Applicants presents a brief overview of the context and approach of the Intelligent Cities Challenge and describes the information needed to prepare a successful Expression of Interest. Applicants are strongly encouraged to thoroughly read through the guidelines before preparing an application.

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# 1. What is the Intelligent Cities Challenge or ICC?

## 1.1 How did the Intelligent Cities Challenge come about?

European cities have a crucial role to play in cultivating digital transformation and growth. Urbanisation is increasing every year and 75% of the EU's population is already living in urban areas. People moving to cities leads to higher demand for living space and increasing traffic volume. Furthermore, cities have historically been hotbeds of innovation and progress. The proximity and density created by urban areas have always acted as drivers of inventiveness, creativity and growth. In recent history, the world's most radical innovations have been launched by actors located in cities, who have been able to source resources and knowledge locally.

Finally, the importance of the role of cities in the fight against climate change has also gained increasing recognition over the last three decades, as cities are large contributors of greenhouse gas emissions and other sources of environmental pollution, and actions to fight climate change at the cities and local levels have a high chance of generating immediate results. As a result, cities are in the driver's seat when it comes to the promotion and uptake of more sustainable growth and development models, protecting the environment, and ensuring better living conditions for their populations.

The European Commission fully recognises the need for an integrated and coordinated approach to improve the quality of life in urban areas. 2016 was an important year for moving forward in urban policy design in the EU, as illustrated by the adoption of the Pact of Amsterdam by the EU Ministers Responsible for Urban Matters, establishing the Urban Agenda for the EU. Key Partnerships were launched to tackle challenges of cities and to contribute to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, on topics such as Urban Mobility, Digital Transition, Air Quality and the Circular economy. 2016 was also the year the European Commission launched the first in a series of 3 initiatives designed to accompany cities in their digital transformation for sustainable growth: the Blueprint for cities and regions as launchpads of digital transformation. This was followed by the Digital Cities Challenge which ran from 2017 to 2019. The European Green Deal sets new ambitions for Europe to tackle climate change and environmental-related challenges. It is against this backdrop that the Intelligent Cities Challenge (ICC) is launched. This

is the third and largest in a series of successful initiatives for digital transformation inside cities launched by the European Commission. Twice as many cities will be joining the Intelligent Cities network in comparison to previous initiatives. The Challenge will build on the successful Digital Cities Challenge and proposes an improved methodological process based on city feedback, adding more issue-specific advice, support mechanisms (e.g., new analytical tools) and an entirely new international dimension. The Intelligent Cities Challenge (ICC) should be seen as the natural evolution and continuation of the previous initiatives which supported cities' digital transformation and industrial modernisation to enable them to take full advantage of digital and advanced technologies. However, there are also a number of key changes introduced by the ICC as compared to previous initiatives. The scope of the ICC is broader, including both advanced digital and non-digital technologies and there is an increased focus on sustainability, in addition to enhancing competitiveness and growth.

## 1.2 What is the overall ambition of the ICC?

The vision of the ICC is to create a European network of 100 intelligent cities that exploit the potential of emerging technologies and take ambitious steps to improve the quality of life of their citizens and ensure growth, sustainability and resilience. To this extent, the ICC will act as a driver for cities willing to live up to a simple expectation: that they can play a leading role in driving a technological revolution which will lead not only to increased growth and competitiveness, but more importantly, to healthier, greener and more sustainable living conditions and spaces of the EU's citizens. Effective technologies targeted to the right problems can deliver green, smart and sustainable growth for cities - improving the quality of life for everyone who calls them home. In this sense, the ICC is a unique and first-of-its-kind initiative, not only because of its scale and the uniqueness of its targets (i.e. small-to-medium-scale cities with unleashed potential), but also due to its holistic approach to building a better future for Europe.

## 1.3 What are the participation modalities of the ICC?

The ICC foresees different participation modalities:

- **ICC EU mentee cities** are cities that will directly benefit from the range of support and activities to be carried out in the framework of the ICC. Mentees will be selected through a competitive

process (see below) implemented by a call for Expressions of Interest. The eligibility criteria to become an ICC EU mentee city are further described in section 3. of this document. EU mentee cities can apply on a stand-alone basis or as part of an ICC city consortium (see section 3.4 for additional information on stand-alone vs. consortium applications).

- **ICC EU mentor cities** are cities with higher levels of maturity and development, who wish to support the ICC beneficiary community by sharing their experience and know how. If you wish to become a mentor city, please contact the ICC directly to express your interest at the following email: [helpdesk\\_icc@technopolis-group.com](mailto:helpdesk_icc@technopolis-group.com). DCC mentor cities are invited to join the ICC community as mentor cities.
- **ICC international cities** or cities located outside of the EU can also participate in the ICC either as mentors or mentees. The goal is to create links between the ICC European network and non-EU cities in light of sharing good practices and implementing joint projects. If you wish to become an international ICC city, please contact the ICC directly to express your interest at the following email: [helpdesk\\_icc@technopolis-group.com](mailto:helpdesk_icc@technopolis-group.com).

The following sections of this document are mainly targeted at EU cities wishing to participate in the ICC as EU mentee cities (first of the above bullet points).

## 1.4 What types of cities does the ICC call for Expression of Interest target?

The ICC call for EoIs seeks to collect applications from EU cities who wish to become ICC EU mentee cities. These cities should display a high level of commitment and motivation to join the ICC and use it as a platform to advance their local policy agendas for digital transformation for sustainability. ICC wishes to work with cities of intermediate size (i.e. small and medium sized cities), with medium levels of maturity when it comes to the adoption of digital technologies for sustainable development, but which display a high level of potential to achieve transformative change in the short term.

The ICC call for EoIs is open individual municipalities or city governments, which represent the core of the ICC target group. However other forms of local governments such as city districts covering several neighbouring cities or municipalities may also apply to the ICC as long as they meet the eligibility criteria presented in section 3.2 of this document. This may include for instance applications on behalf of French

municipality communities or other similar structures which exist in other Member States. If you have a doubt about whether your local government qualifies to apply to the ICC, write to our helpdesk.

## 1.5 How long will the ICC last?

The Intelligent Cities Challenge has a total duration of 25 months, running from June 2020 to July 2022. Selected cities are expected to remain engaged in the ICC throughout this time.

## 1.6 Where can I find out more about the ICC?

The ICC has a dedicated website which provides information on the challenge, the main upcoming events and also shares all material produced by the cities as the challenge progresses. If you are selected to become an Intelligent Cities Challenge, further information will be communicated to you on the Challenge. For the time being, your go-to sources of information about the initiative are the following:

- The current Guide for Applicants (this document);
- The FAQ section of the ICC website: this forum provides concise and easy to read answers to the most commonly asked questions as part of the ICC challenge. It is continuously updated with common questions from the information webinars and the helpdesk. The FAQ section can be accessed here: [intelligentcitieschallenge.eu/help](https://intelligentcitieschallenge.eu/help)
- The Email contact form: if you have not found the answer you are looking for through the FAQ section, you are able to submit your questions in 23 EU languages to our helpdesk. Rapid replies will be provided in English within 24 hours (except for weekends and holidays). To submit an email please use [helpdesk\\_icc@technopolis-group.com](mailto:helpdesk_icc@technopolis-group.com)
- In addition, a the following informative Webinars are scheduled to help participants familiarise themselves with the ICC as well as the EOI process. We strongly encourage all interested applicants (new entrant ICC cities) to take part in at least one of these webinar sessions.
  - 31 March 2020 at 14h00 CET
  - 14 April 2020 at 14h00 CET
  - 28 April 2020 at 14h00 CET
  - 5 May at 14h00 CET

In order to participate in one of the webinars, you should register here: [intelligentcitieschallenge.eu](https://intelligentcitieschallenge.eu).

Recordings of the webinars will also be made available on the ICC website.

## 2. What do cities stand to gain from participating in the ICC?

### 2.1 What is the ICC value proposition to participating cities?

ICC supports cities in implementing transformation strategies to address common challenges in becoming an intelligent city. The cities chosen to take part in the ICC will receive free-of-charge support needed to develop and implement strategies aimed at making them greener, more liveable and more intelligent. This will enable them to take full advantage of digital and non-digital technologies, to improve the quality of life of their citizens and ensure growth, sustainability and resilience.

Through their participation in the Challenge, cities will:

- Review existing strategies based on real stakeholder needs, and form a prioritized step-by-step roadmap;
- Use these to deliver quick win projects in the first 6 months, followed by larger projects that together result in a measurable improvement on city life.
- Become part of an international self-sustaining network of innovation and collaboration working towards the SDGs.

By the end of the programme, cities should expect to not only be transformed in their use of intelligent and advanced technologies, but long term, self-sustaining benefits:

- Quick win commitments in the first 6 months;
- Centre-stage of a new EU marketplace, designed for cities, SMEs, and a wide range of urban businesses;
- Joint investments to seek funding from EU financial instruments;
- New perspectives on the city's needs, progress, strengths as well as new opportunities for citizens affected by the transition to a greener economy;
- Learning from and developing long term collaborations with international mentors.
- Measurable impacts that matter to the citizens in 2 years;

Beneficiary cities will receive tailored support from a dedicated team of experts to design and roll out initiatives aimed at reaching established city ICC goals. In addition, participation offers a unique

opportunity to build inter-city networks and collaborations with peers across Europe and beyond. As part of the ICC journey, each city will gain access to the following:

- Expert advice tailored to your city: regional specialists will deliver a programme based on the collective expert experience of over 100 smart city strategies, tailored to the biggest thematic issues for your city – be it energy, mobility or clean manufacturing, or other local priorities. This will include a number of local visits to your city and meetings with ecosystem stakeholders;
- Community conventions - for action over talk: regular gathering of EU smart ecosystem to compare performance; hear from world class speakers, receive targeted training; celebrate success and commit to shared action - procurement, standards or shaping marketplaces;
- Online toolbox to activate enablers: get best practice guidance on key enablers (e.g., creating value out of open data, breaking down market barriers for SMEs, finding new outcome-driven business models). Use also innovative tools to engage citizens to understand their views and help them track your progress;
- Mentoring to make partnerships – at home and abroad: get 1-on-1 guidance from the most innovative cities in the EU, who can steer you on your journey and connect you with their own solutions. Interact also with global participants, to learn, to trade and to create new markets.

## 2.2 What type of policy goals can the ICC help cities pursue?

The ICC can act as a catalyst for cities to implement policy agendas aimed at achieving green, social and intelligent transformative changes. Participation in the ICC can be linked to the following city goals:

- Transforming industry, green manufacturing and clean production
- Growing start-ups, SMEs and social economy
- Transforming and greening construction, housing and urban management
- Smart and sustainable tourism
- Smart and green mobility and transport
- eGovernment and digitising public services
- Enhancing citizen participation and connectivity
- Promoting health and wellbeing of citizens
- Supporting safety and security
- Innovative education and training for up- and re-skilling

- Waste management and circular economy
- Scaling up renewable energy solutions and energy-efficiency
- Efficient management of water and water systems
- Sustainable use and management of natural resources
- Sustainable and resilient food systems
- Climate resilience and disaster management.

In their applications, cities will be asked to identify up to four city goals and sectors they wish to build their involvement in the ICC on. This will constitute the basis for the development of thematic networks within the ICC community. Expressions of interest should also be tailored to these selected city goals.

### **2.3 In what language will the ICC be carried out?**

The ICC official working language is English. Applications should be developed in English, and key deliverables to be developed once selected should be written and submitted in English (but can be translated into the local language). The working language of ICC events will be English (with the exception of some regional chapter meetings which will take place in local languages). City staff – and particularly local managers (see section 2.4) - involved in the ICC should have a good working level of English, meaning they should be able to present and draft deliverables in English, as well as interact with peer cities from the network. However, given the variety of city participants, a lot of the field and preparatory work can be done in the local language. Experts allocated to cities during the Challenge will always have a knowledge of the local language to facilitate interaction and strategy development with local city officials.

### **2.4 What commitments are expected from cities to join the ICC?**

In order to participate in the Intelligent Cities Challenge, cities are required to demonstrate clearly their capacity and commitment to doing so. This will require allocating resources to managing, implementing and following up on the advisory services offered.

In practical terms, this will mean providing the following:

- A dedicated local project manager (PM) involved for the equivalent of at least two days per week throughout the project. The project manager must display a strong level of management and technology skills (without necessarily being an IT specialist). In addition, applicants will need

to demonstrate that the designated PM has the ability to act as a local ambassador, to help build the local ecosystem, to convene people across government departments, and to break down silos to build and implement the ICC action plan. The Expressions of Interest should include the resumé and description of skills of the proposed candidate.

- Two advisors from the local eco-system (business sector, academia, NGO, etc) who are expected to play a hands-on role in the implementation of the ICC at the local level. Advisors are expected to contribute approximately two days per week of their time to the ICC and related activities. The Expressions of Interest should include the resumé and description of skills of the proposed candidates.
- The mobilisation of local stakeholders including, as a minimum:
  - Local administration in charge of economic development, innovation, smart specialisation and/or ICT
  - Representatives of industry/industry associations including ICT service providers and utility companies
  - Representatives of the education sector, such as those working in higher and secondary education institutes, research and technology organisations, vocational education and training programmes.
- A commitment to deliver the agreed/expected work between and leading up to the different working sessions and meetings
- Participation in ICC network meetings (c.a. four per year, financed by the ICC).
- The capacity to host and organise local workshops and working sessions (c.a. 4) as part of the advisory services provided by the ICC
- Support the expert team organise field visits, contact and mobilise stakeholders and draft deliverables
- A commitment to implementing the final strategy that will be co-designed together with the city stakeholders
- Ensure support from local elected leadership as illustrated by a local of support signed by the city mayor or leader of the city network. Mayors are also expected to participate in an ICC mayors meeting.

All of these points also apply to individual cities making up ICC city consortia (see section 3.4 of the applicant guidelines). In addition, consortia must appoint one coordinator in charge of overseeing

consortium-level activities within the ICC. In their EoIs, applicants must be able to justify each of the above points. If any of these commitments are not respected upon selection, cities may be excluded from the ICC.

## 3. How do cities apply to the ICC?

### 3.1 What is the ICC call for Expressions of Interest and where can it be accessed?

ICC is a competitive challenge, open to eligible cities inside the EU. To take part in the ICC, cities must fill in and submit an Expression of Interest (EOI). Applications will be reviewed by an expert team of evaluators who will score EOIs based on pre-defined evaluation criteria. The final list of selected participating cities will be validated by the European Commission in light of ensuring a balanced geographical and thematic distribution within the ICC network.

Applications are eligible only if they are:

- Supported by a letter of intent signed by the local leadership (e.g. mayors).
- Duly completed and submitted according to the modalities set out in Section 3.6 and before the deadline set in Section 3.5. Incomplete EOIs will automatically lead to their exclusion.
- Submitted in English via the on-line management system. EOIs submitted in any other language will be excluded.
- Respect the total character limits. Additional elements can be transmitted as Annexes (e.g. letters of support etc).

All information related to the EOI is available online at [intelligentcitieschallenge.eu](https://intelligentcitieschallenge.eu). In order to submit an EOI and receive all the supporting documentation, applicants need to register beforehand. The application should be submitted via the platform. A pdf version of the full EOI can be downloaded first for applicants to fill in the information offline. EOIs can be up to 8 pages at long at most (i.e. 6 sections of up to one page, and one section of up to two pages). Text can then be copied and pasted into the on-line system once it has been drafted.

### 3.2 Who is eligible to apply to the EOI as an EU mentee cities?

The following criteria only apply to EU mentee applicants (see section 1.3 for a definition of EU mentee cities). ICC mentee applicants must be:

- A local public government entity (i.e. municipalities, districts) that are either responsible for or involved in the funding and/or implementation of a policy or programme of a city related to digital transformation, smart / intelligent city, sustainable urban development.
- Located within the European Union.
- Representing cities with more than 50 000 inhabitants.
- The following cities are not eligible to apply:
  - EU cities with less than 50 000 inhabitants and not applying as part of a consortium (see section 3.4 for the formal definition of ICC city consortia).
  - Cities located outside of the EU.
  - Cities with advanced levels of digital technology for sustainability uptake and well-developed ecosystems.

Applications from cities located in EU outermost / island regions are actively encouraged.

### 3.3 Can EoIs be pre-screened by the ICC before being submitted?

Before the application submission deadline, applicants have the possibility of requesting a pre-screening of the applications by the ICC team. The objective of the pre-screening is to provide feedback on the ‘completeness’ of the EoI, not on the actual quality of the application and its content. Pre-screening is meant to allow applicants to ensure they have provided all of the requested information in order to avoid disqualification and improve the robustness of their EoI by covering all of the elements evaluators will be looking to assess. Pre-screening will be done only on-demand for applicants who request it, it will not be done systematically for applicants.

The pre-screening option will be available until the second-to-last week (i.e. the 18<sup>th</sup> of May), prior to the submission deadline (to allow the screening to take place before the deadline, and for applicants to improve their applications). After filling in all of the EoI sections on-line, applicants will be able to select two options:

- Save and submit for screening: this will save the application but will leave it open for future modifications by the applicant, and will alert the ICC team that a pre-screening has been requested. The team will conduct the pre-screening on the basis of a checklist, and provide feedback to the applicant on elements which may be missing. Applicants will be able to return to their EoI and introduce changes before the deadline.

- **Submit and lock:** This option will definitively submit the application and lock it. No further changes will be possible to the EoI. This should be done by applicants who do not wish to have their EoI screened, or by applicants who have already received feedback after initial screening.

### 3.4 What are ICC city consortia and how do they apply?

Cities can apply individually (i.e. stand-alone applications) or as member of a group of cities called ICC city consortia. The main rationale behind the development of city consortia is to drive ICC multiplier effects, and facilitate the delivery of common projects among members of single consortia. City consortia can be one of the following:

- A group of cities located in a single EU region belonging to a formal network or federation of cities (e.g. members of the Andalucía Federation of Municipalities and Provinces).
- A group of cities belonging to a formally constituted common thematic network (e.g. network of coastal cities)
- A group of cities joining an *ad-hoc* city consortium made up for the purposes of this EoI

Cities are equally welcome to apply individually, and are not disadvantaged from not being in a consortia. City consortia are expected to assign one city or organisation as lead organisation that will be in the driving seat throughout the journey, acting on behalf of the city members in the consortium. If cities decide to apply as a consortium, only the lead organisation will need to submit an EoI on behalf of all members, listing the names of the individual cities which make up the consortium. However, all consortia will be assessed for their perceived ability to act as a coherent unit throughout the programme and drive change in their individual city members.

The EoI should be submitted using the same on-line submissions system as for stand-alone applications. Applicants must read carefully the instructions for each of the sections of the EoI to be prepared, in order to identify the information to be provided at the consortium level. In addition, consortia will have to provide a joint letter of support signed by the mayors of all of the participating cities; as well as a letter of commitment signed on behalf of the lead organisation. The lead organization of the consortium can be one of the member cities of the consortium, or a third party such as network or federation. The lead organisation will also have to identify and designate a consortium coordinator in charge of overseeing all consortium-level ICC activities (see also section 2.4).

City consortia will receive the same allocation of resources as a standalone city (i.e. if a given ICC event asks for two members of a local team to join, then the maximum capacity is two members for both a standalone city and city consortium). In practice, this means that the resources allocated for support on behalf of the ICC will not be multiplied times the number of cities joining the consortium. This also applies to the experts as only one team of experts will be allocated to the entire consortium. Both a standalone city and city consortia are envisaged to have two thematic experts and one lead expert assigned. The consortium should reflect on this in the application, including how the member cities will work together to reach the objectives.

### 3.5 What is the deadline to apply to the ICC?

Cities can apply for this call between Thursday 27/02/2020 and Friday 29/05/2020 at 11h59 pm. The original deadline has been extended. Selected cities will be informed of results c.a. the second week of June, while all applicants will receive their assessment results at the end of June 2020 at the latest. Given the on-going COVID19 situation in Europe, this timeline may undergo further changes. We suggest applicant regularly visit the ICC website and register as applicants to receive email updates.

### 3.6 What information should be included in the Expression of Interest?

There are a total of seven sections as well as an Annex to be completed for the EOI application. These sections are detailed in the table below. Applicants should refer to the EOI form which is downloadable from the ICC site for more detailed instructions on how to fill out each section and the information to be included. The following table is provided for indicative purposes only.

Applicants are welcome to upload additional documents which support their application, such as letters of support. Supporting figures and graphs (e.g. presentation of the local eco-system) should be included as annexes and will not be included in the total page count tally. An explicit reference should be made to the titles of tables and figures, as well as any supporting document, in the body of the EOI.

Section of the Eoi	Max length / Format	Information to be provided by applicant
<b>1. Key motivations and city goals</b>	Up to 1 page of open text Multiple Choice Question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation of key city or consortium challenges applicants seek to address</li> </ul>

		<p>and overcome, and links to ICC goals.</p> <p>Applicants indicate preferences of city goals they wish to focus on as part of their participation in the ICC. Cities and consortia select and rank up to four city goals and priority sectors.</p>
<b>2. City strengths and assets</b>	Up to 1 page of open text Open text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of key city and consortium strengths and assets to address identified challenges and city goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of general economic and demographic indicators of the city</li> <li>• Data on key economic sectors relevant to the challenges the city wants to address</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>1. Qualitative assessment of strengths and assets</p>
<b>3. The city eco-system</b>	Up to 2 pages of open text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant demonstrates its capacity to mobilise and tap into existing networks and stakeholder communities to support and drive the ICC process and implementation of action plan</li> <li>• Cities and consortia will be asked to provide letters of support as part of their Eols from existing networks, platforms, committees, and key institutions supporting the city in ICC</li> </ul> <p>2. City consortia should present any existing consortium-level ecosystems.</p>
<b>4. Local policy landscape and available resources</b>	Up to 1 page of open text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe existing strategies and roadmaps relevant to the challenges and city goals selected in 1, which could benefit from the ICC assistance and support.</li> </ul> <p>3. Present pipeline of existing projects in relevant fields, and an overview of financial resources available to support the implementation of the ICC agenda and action plan.</p>

<b>5. Proposed ICC team</b>	Up to 1 page of open text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of the proposed ICC local team including qualifications and expertise as well as the planned resources for the ICC.</li> </ul> <p>4. For consortia, this should include the name of the consortium coordinator within the lead organisation.</p>
<b>6. Inter-city collaboration ambitions</b>	Up to 1 page of open text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe intended collaborations with other cities, if any, including the form of collaboration and the added value of the collaboration. This could include collaborations with ICC cities as well as with other cities belonging to other networks and initiatives.</li> <li>• Applicant involvement and role in city networks relevant to the ICC</li> </ul> <p>5. For ICC city consortia, this section should include an explanation of the common vision at the consortium-level, as well as reference to the specific projects the consortium wishes to implement through a collaborative approach.</p>
<b>7. Expected results and impact</b>	Up to 1 page of open text	<p>6. Describe expected results of participation in the ICC.</p>
<b>8. Annexes</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory signed letters from mayors.</li> </ul> <p>7. Any supporting documentation the city may want to provide, including Letters of Support. References to the provided Annexes must be made in the main application</p>

### 3.7 How should applicants prepare and submit their EoIs?

EoIs must be submitted via the online management platform at [intelligentcitieschallenge.eu](http://intelligentcitieschallenge.eu). Applicants must first register on the platform to be able to access the on-line submission form. You can also download a pdf version of the EoI. It is recommended that applicants first fill out the EoI offline, and then proceed to upload text and annexes on the on-line submission system. Applications can be filled

on-line incrementally, and can be saved every step of the way to come back to the application at a later stage. When reaching the final section, applicants will be asked if they wish to save and submit for pre-screening, or submit and lock their application. The former will trigger the pre-screening of the saved application by the ICC team and delivery of feedback on completeness (see section 3.6); while the later will lock the submitted application and indicate that it's ready for final appraisal. Applicants are then able to track the status of their EOI through their user account on the platform.

### 3.8 How will EoIs be assessed and selected?

All applications that meet the eligibility criteria will be scored, based on the selection criteria presented in the following table.

Eoi quality, potential and relevance evaluation criteria	Weight in the final evaluation	Indicative assessment elements
<b>1. Key motivations and city goals</b>	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of the ICC objectives and alignment between city expectations and ICC goals</li> <li>• Relevance of selected city goals vis à vis city challenges</li> <li>• Level of motivation and commitment to reach results</li> <li>• Level of support from local authorities</li> <li>• Evidence of political commitment and backing of the ICC application</li> </ul> <p>Fitness for purpose of organization interested in leading the ICC</p>
<b>2. City strengths and assets</b>	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequacy of city background vis à vis ICC target group (e.g. medium maturity)</li> <li>• Potential of the city to address city goals based on the existing strengths and assets</li> </ul>

		1. Demonstrated added value of ICC in unleashing city potential
<b>3. The city eco-system</b>	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant and coherent local eco-system mapping, relevance of the ecosystem with regard to identified city goals</li> <li>• Potential to mobilise relevant stakeholders for the purpose of building local ICC eco-system and launch strategy and action plan</li> </ul> <p>2. Level of support for the city to engage in the ICC within the local network of stakeholders</p>
<b>4. The local policy landscape and available resources</b>	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existence of a relevant local policy framework and accompanying resources</li> <li>• Existence of additional complementary initiatives, especially at EU level</li> <li>• Existence of a pipeline of projects in relevant fields</li> </ul> <p>3. Evidence of added value of the ICC with regard to the existing policy framework</p>
<b>5. Presentation of the proposed ICC team</b>	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of team with relevant expertise</li> <li>• Full composition of team</li> </ul> <p>4. Allocation of sufficient resources to ICC</p>
<b>6. Inter-city collaboration ambitions</b>	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motivation to collaborate with other cities and engage in cross-city collaborations</li> <li>• Participation in existing city networks</li> <li>• Relevance and added value of the consortium approach (if applicable)</li> </ul>

		5. Capacity to identify actions to be implemented through a collaborative approach at the EoI stage
<b>7. Expected results and Impact</b>	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Realistic yet ambitious expectations of impact of participation in the ICC</li> <li>• Willingness of the city or consortium to commit to achieving certain results</li> <li>• Coherence of expected impact vs selected city goals</li> </ul> <p>6. Innovative nature of expected impact described</p>

Based on the above criteria and weighting system EoIs will be scored. EoIs which do not meet the minimum threshold will be excluded. The remaining cities will be placed on the EoI longlist. The final selection will include the top-ranked cities. However, the final selection will ensure a balanced geographical distribution meaning that non top-ranked cities may be included in the final selection.

### 3.9 When and how will applicants receive the results of the EoI?

EoIs which are deemed not eligible will be automatically notified upon the closing of the EoI submission period. Remaining applications will be notified of the final results during the month of June. Feedback sheets will be provided to all applicants at the end of June at the latest. All decisions are final and cannot be appealed.

# Appendix A Frequently Asked Questions

## Application

What Is the ICC call for Expressions of Interest or EOI?

*ICC is a competitive challenge, open to eligible cities inside the EU. To take part In the ICC, cities must fill in an submit an Expression of Interest (EOI). Applications will be reviewed by an expert team of evaluators who will score EOIs based on pre-defined evaluation criteria.*

2. How can I apply for the ICC?

*Applications to ICC can only be made by completing and submitting the ICC Expression of Interest form online. To access the online platform you will need to register on the homepage at the Apply section. You can also find a copy of the EOI form to download and prepare your application. However all answers and annexes will need to be submitted through the online form.*

3. Will the deadline for applications be postponed because of Covid-19?

*Given the difficult situation currently faced by European countries with the spread of COVID-19, the deadline for the submission for the ICC Expressions of Interest has been extended to the 29th of May 2020. Accordingly, the deadline for the pre-screening of applications is extended to the 18th of May 2020, and we have added new webinar dates which will be communicated on the website shortly. The situation will continue to be monitored and any further updates will be communicated on our website. For DCC cities, the deadline has been extended until the 22nd of May 2020.*

4. Can I save my EOI and come back to it?

*You will be able to save your application at every step of the way and come back to it at a later stage. You will need to log back into your user profile to return to your application. To do so, just click **Log in** and enter your user details. On your user dashboard click **Go to EOI form**.*

5. Is there a limit to the number of topics to choose from?

*You can select up to four different city goals you would like to focus your EoI and involvement of the ICC in. You can of course focus on 1 or 2 mainly, but we do ask at this stage that you select up to four in section 1 of the EoI, for the purpose of building preliminary thematic networks.*

6. How will I know that my application has been received?

*You will receive a confirmation email once you have successfully submitted your EOI. However, this receipt will not be proof that the Expression of Interest is eligible for evaluation.*

7. When and how will applicants receive the results of the EOI?

*EOIs which are deemed not eligible will be automatically notified upon the closing of the EOI submission period. Remaining applications will be notified of the final results during the third week of May. Feedback sheets will be provided to all applicants at the end of May at the latest. All decisions are final and cannot be appealed.*

## **Budget and expected contributions**

8. What investment of resources is expected from cities participating in the ICC?

*The ICC will cover all travel and accommodation costs for the city teams, as well as the costs of allocated experts during the challenge. Cities are expected to allocate resources to managing, implementing and following up on the different activities and goals defined in the framework of the project. This means providing a dedicated local project manager and two advisors from the local ecosystem (approx. 2 days per week per city official). This time and Level of Effort is indicative, and it 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 were already being undertaken by your city. The ICC will also cover travel and accommodation expenses for mentor city representatives.*

9. How long will the ICC last?

*The Intelligent Cities Challenge has a total duration of 25 months, running from June 2020 to July 2022. Selected cities are expected to remain engaged in the ICC throughout this time.*

10. Is the dedication of two days per week permanent throughout the project or will some weeks be busier than others?

*Please note that the 2 days a week is an indicative level of effort suggested by the ICC team. It is in no way mandatory. City officials can organize their time as they see fit. Based on the previous experience of the Digital Cities Challenge, we can say that the workload is flexible, and fairly evenly spread out with some weeks busier than others (before submitting a deliverable or taking part in an event for example). However you wish to organize your time, we do request a regular and active commitment on the part of city officials.*

## Cities, city consortia & partner search

11. What types of cities does the ICC call for Expression of Interest target?

*The ICC call for EOIs seeks to collect applications from EU cities who wish to become ICC EU mentee cities. ICC wishes to work with cities of Intermediate size (i.e. small and medium sized cities), with medium levels of maturity when it comes to the adoption of digital technologies for sustainable development, but which display a high level of potential to achieve transformative change in the short term. The ICC call for EOIs is open to individual municipalities or city governments, or other forms of local governments such as city districts covering several neighbouring cities or municipalities may also apply to the ICC as long as they meet the eligibility criteria. If you have a doubt about whether your local government qualifies to apply to the ICC, write to our helpdesk at [helpdesk\\_icc@technopolis-group.com](mailto:helpdesk_icc@technopolis-group.com).*

12. Are other organisations, apart from cities, also eligible?

*Only local government organisations (e.g. cities) are eligible to apply. Other organisations, such as SMEs or universities for instance, may support your ICC application. They can submit letters of support for your application. They are not formal “applicants”. Neither the lead city applicant, nor other ICC partners will be receiving funding, so the partner-subcontractor distinction does not apply to the ICC. For more information on the eligibility criteria, please refer to the ICC Handbook. If you have a doubt regarding whether a certain type of local government is eligible to apply, please submit the question to the helpdesk at [helpdesk\\_icc@technopolis-group.com](mailto:helpdesk_icc@technopolis-group.com).*

13. What are the requirements in terms of the number of inhabitants for a consortium?

*As indicated in our guidelines, you must be a city with over 50.000 inhabitants to submit an EOI application as a stand-alone applicant. If you are a city with under 50.000 inhabitants, you may only apply as part of a city consortium. It is recommended that the consortium has over 50.000 inhabitants in total.*

14. What is expected when forming a city consortium?

*Cities must identify their partners to create city consortia on their own. The ICC has not established a partner search tool. Cities applying in consortia can choose to apply with partner cities they have an existing cooperation with, or cities that are part of a same structural network (federation of cities). The ICC is looking for consortia of cities that are rather compact, with pre-existing relations, or that have something in common. We expect a clear rationale for why you are applying as a consortia (themes, rejects which you intend to collaboratively work on together).*

15. What is required from city consortia in terms of project management?

*For city consortia, your EoI should identify:*

- *One representative from the lead organisation who will act as the consortium coordinator.*
- *One local coordinator for each of the participating cities.*
- *Two representatives from eco-system organisations for each one of the participating cities (so not 2 per consortium but 2 per city)*

16. How many cities need to be part of the consortium?

*There is no fixed number on how many cities can constitute a city consortium. We recommend that it should be of a manageable size. We are looking for consortiums that demonstrate capacity and willingness to work together.*

17. What is the difference between a stand-alone application and a city consortium application?

*Cities can apply individually (i.e. stand-alone applications) or as member of a group of cities called ICC city consortia (this does not apply to districts which should apply as stand-alone cities). City consortia can be one of the following:*

- *A group of cities joining an ad hoc city consortium made up for the purposes of the EOI*

- *A group of cities located in a single EU region belonging to a formal network of federation of cities (e.g. members of the Andalucía Federation of Municipalities and Provinces).*
- *A group of cities belonging to a formally constituted common thematic network (e.g. network of coastal cities).*

*If cities decide to apply as a consortium, only the lead organisation will need to submit an EOI on behalf of all members, listing the names of the individual cities which make up the consortium. The EOI should be submitted using the same online submission system as for stand-alone applications. Applicants must read carefully the instructions for each of the sections of the EOI to be prepared, in order to identify the information to be provided at the consortium level. In addition, consortia will have to provide a joint letter of support signed by the mayors of all the participating cities; as well as a letter of commitment signed on behalf of the lead organisation. The lead organisation of the consortium can be one of the member cities of the consortium, or a third party such as a network or federation. The lead organisation will also have to identify and designate a consortium coordinator in charge of overseeing all consortium-level ICC activities.*

## DCC cities

18. I am a returning DCC city, previously involved in the Digital Cities Challenge. Is the process the same for me?

*No, the process is different. DCC cities are not asked to complete an EOI application, as entrant ICC cities are required to do. They are invited to take part in the ICC via an exclusive email invitation from the European Commission. DCC cities are asked to fill in a short questionnaire regarding their progress in implementing the DCC, priorities, interests and preferred strategic orientations for taking part in the ICC. DCC cities are also asked to attach a letter of Commitments from the City Mayor as well as the Resumes of involved team members.*

## Experts and ICC language

19. How will regional specialists be chosen?

*Once the ICC participant cities are chosen, the ICC puts together a team of three experts which provide tailored support to the city through the ICC. The city team is free to suggest experts which may be taken*

*into consideration. The general rule of thumb is that the experts are people who speak the native city language. They will be fluent in English too. To the extent possible, the ICC tries to put together teams that are well acquainted with the country and the region they are working with. The ICC mobilises experts with a good level of expertise in relation to the city's policy goals. 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 expert are selected.*

20. 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 should be fluent in English and able to produce deliverables and present 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 and have a good understanding of the national context.*

## ICC Team Composition

21. What people would be suitable as advisors from the local ecosystem to make up the local ICC team?

*Information on the selection criteria for the selection of the team leader and advisors is available in the Applicant guidelines. The ICC is looking for people who do not belong to the applicant organisation. Instead they should be members of the city ecosystem (people partnering with the city and making the ICC a reality) such as universities, research organizations, chambers of commerce, private sector enterprises (SMEs, start-ups), local clusters. Local ecosystem members are key stakeholders that help drive the process forward.*

## International Cities

22. What is the application process for cities outside of the EU?

*Non-EU cities interested in joining the ICC as mentor or mentee should reach out to us directly to express interest (please contact the Helpdesk at [helpdesk\\_icc@technopolis-group.com](mailto:helpdesk_icc@technopolis-group.com)). More information regarding the engagement process for non-EU cities will be provided in the next two weeks. We encourage you to visit our website regularly for updates.*

23. Can UK cities participate in the ICC?

*UK cities that were already part of the DCC, are welcome to join the ICC through the DCC city sign up process - <https://www.intelligentcitieschallenge.eu/dccapplication>. Unfortunately, UK cities are not eligible to apply as ICC EU mentee cities. UK cities may instead apply to join as one of the ten international cities of the ICC.*

## Letter of support and CVs

24. Is it required that a city mayor signs the letter of support?

*To the extent possible, letters of support should be signed by the City Mayor. Letters of support signed by a high-level responsible official within the municipality may also be accepted in case your city is unable to secure a letter signed by the mayor (e.g. upcoming elections, transition period etc). Overall, the more evidence city's present of having institutional support and support from elected representatives for their application, the stronger the application will be.*

25. Is there a template for the letter of support?

*There is no specific format to follow for the letter of intent from the mayor, you can structure this as you wish, as long as it shows the support from the mayor.*

26. Should the Europass format be used for the CVs?

*Applicants may use whichever CV format is preferred including Europass format.*

## Mentor city

27. How will you create the mentee and mentor duos?

*Mentor cities will be working with a number of cities in the ICC mentee network. Mentor cities can be European or non-European. ICC mentee cities can choose which mentors they work with. Those 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.*

28. What kind of support will be provided by the mentor cities?

*Cities receive different forms of support during the duration of the challenge:*

- *Support from the allocated city experts (experts with experience in your city, in your thematic areas, etc). These experts work only with your city, and accompany you throughout the whole process, preparing for the meetings and drafting the deliverables;*
- *Support from the ICC mentor cities: these cities at advanced stages in intelligent transformation provide their more general advice and experience in relation to some of the key thematic areas of the ICC during events.*
- *You will also be engaging with EU mentee city peers throughout the duration of the challenge who will also provide their experience and advice on a less formal basis.*

29. How should mentor cities apply?

*If you're thinking of joining as a mentor city, there is no formal process: you can reach out to us directly through the Helpdesk indicating your interest. The Helpdesk can be contacted via [helpdesk\\_icc@technopolis-group.com](mailto:helpdesk_icc@technopolis-group.com).*

## Webinar

30. How can I change the webinar I signed up for?

*To change the webinar you have registered for log into your account. On your user dashboard click **My profile**. This will take you to your profile page. Click **Edit** to change any of your user details, including password or selecting another webinar you would like to sign up for. Click **Save** to confirm the change.*

## Other

31. Where can I find out more about the ICC?

- *Download the Guide for Applicants from the homepage;*
- *Contact the helpdesk by using the form below. You are able to submit your questions in 23 EU languages to our helpdesk. Rapid replies will be provided in English within 24 hours (except for weekends and holidays);*



- *Or sign up for one of our four informative Webinars scheduled to help participants familiarise themselves with the ICC as well as the EOI process. We strongly encourage all interested applicants to take part in at least one of these webinar sessions. You can find the dates and register for a webinar on the homepage.*

