

RECIPROCITY

D3.1

Launch of Funding & Legal Helpdesk (FLHP)

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Publishable summary

This document outlines the operational structure of the Funding & Legal Helpdesk established by RECIPROCITY and the processes and resources needed to ensure its success and achieve its outcomes.

The Funding & Legal Helpdesk set up by all project partners will support cities and municipalities involved in RECIPROCITY in finance and legal issues related to the replication projects. To this end FLHP will facilitate access to different sources of funding, provide guidance on the appropriate funding mix and advise about institutional cooperation and legal matters.

The document develops how the FLHP works, the levels of service to be provided to cities and municipalities, as well as the different activities and resources necessary for this support service. A timetable of activities and the relationship with other project activities is also established.

List of abbreviations

AFP	Access to Finance Portal
EC	European Commission
FLHP	Funding & Legal Helpdesk
FLS	Finance & Legal specialists
LMW	Local Mobility Workshop
MA	Mobility Assembly
MM	Mobility Mission
MMW	Master Mobility Workshop
RCP	Reciprocity
RRDW	Roadmap Replication Definition Workshop
UC	Use Case

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1. Funding & Legal Helpdesk

FLHP, which constitutes task 3.1 of the RCP project, is framed in WP3 Accelerate. As per the Grant Agreement, the objective of WP3 is to support cities and municipal authorities in acquiring the necessary capital for investments in smart and sustainable mobility innovations by providing legal, institutional and business model development, which will allow further acceleration of mobility projects.

The key objective of the FLHP is to establish a central funding and financing support service and develop guidelines and provide tools for institutional cooperation and legal support.

The work for the FLHP will be based on the results of the WP1 and especially the results of the RRDW with selected use cases for replication in follower cities.

1.1. Objective

Funding & Legal Helpdesk will be established to support cities and municipalities with all finance and legal related issues. FLHP will facilitate matching for finance of mobility projects based on innovative solutions that have been proven to be useful in past projects that were mapped out in T1.5 Replication Roadmap Definition Workshops.

The FLHP brings two distinct benefits. On the one hand, investors will be put in touch with end users, and on the other hand, access to existing sources of funding will be facilitated, both at European level (Horizon Europe, Connecting Europe Facility, Urban Innovative Actions...) as well as at national level in the respective EU countries ((FFG F&E-Dienstleistungen (Austria), CDTI Innvierte Program (Spain), Bpifrance funding lines (France) ...).

The municipal authorities will be able to obtain technical advice based on different lines of support. One on public funding options, another on how to finance mobility projects, and one more on institutional cooperation and legal support.

For this purpose, **a node of Access to Finance Specialists** will be established among the project partners. These experts will work in network to explain the different types of funding available, help cities to prepare the required documentation and assist to approach prospective funders and investors that are relevant. FLHP will develop high-level publications: fact sheets, case studies, video clips and more, that will be available in the repository created in the task T4.2 Information & Communication Platform. Besides, it will organise on-site or online training, “News capsule”, small training units, on the main points of interest.

At the same time, FLHP will also offer technical advice on legal and institutional issues related to legal questions, that present the challenges of the intelligent, automated, and connected mobility. Likewise, mobility projects need to bring together different levels and scales of actors. In this case, institutional advice and suggestions are essential to ensure coordination and organization of players to facilitate the success of the mobility solution. FLHP support cities and municipalities in their particular needs through different tools and guidelines such as catalogues, reports or studies to make easy the coordination between the different groups of participants involved in the implementation of mobility projects.

Furthermore, FLHP will establish close cooperation with legal experts and stakeholders to clear such legal & institutional issues. But also to provide assistance on any legal matter that may arise during the adaptation of mobility projects, including the way human safety, privacy, and security are protected, cities are organized, machines and people are connected, and the public and private spheres are defined. This will be carried out through three joint work tables to be held in the Mobility Assemblies.

1.2. Framework for action

In the implementation of their mobility projects, lighthouse cities have used a number of different funding sources. They have also faced legal issues and coordination barriers between different players involved in project development. All this information can serve as a guide for the replication of the projects. However, due to the different local contexts, actors involved, legislative environment or timing of the investment, what has worked in one city does not necessarily work in another.

FLHP works on the one hand by examining the UCs from a financial and legal point of view, and on the other hand by analysing the different financial options and legal context of the replication projects. On this basis, FLHD facilitates access to different sources of funding, provides guidance on the appropriate funding mix and advises about institutional cooperation and legal matters to follower cities, in order to accelerate their mobility projects.

The FLHP framework is at the heart of the replication process of mobility projects on innovative solutions that have been proven to be useful in past and were mapped in WP1. Through a funnel approach, FLHP supports follower cities in finance and legal issues taking into consideration the example of lighthouse cities and their UCs.



Figure 1 FLHP framework

FLHP offers a range of services to support cities & municipalities that want to replicate an innovative and sustainable mobility project. All these services, at no cost to the cities involved in RCP, **facilitate to find the best funding options and to solve legal and cooperation issues between the players involved in the replication projects.**

FLHP offers a three-tier service to the user, including:

- Drafting and publication
- Small training units
- Process enquires

1.3. FLHP services

FLHP main mission is to support the acceleration of replication projects through promotion and dissemination information about Financial & Legal issues and to provide timely and accurate answers to cities' enquiries.

The Helpdesk's tasks include the preparation of a periodical documents & guides, the development of good practice examples, the organisation of short webinars on topics related to funding and legal framework, and to answer enquires from cities and municipalities.

The tasks are grouped into 3 levels of services offered by the FLHP to support the cities as follows:

1.3.1. DRAFTING AND PUBLICATION

The helpdesk will produce publications such as fact sheets, cases studies, good practice examples, catalogues or funding and legal guidelines in PDF format. A minimum of 14 outputs (each month from April 2022 except summer months) will be published within the duration of the work package, and at least 5 of them will deal with legal issues.

Of the 14 outputs, there will be a guide on financial instruments for urban mobility, a guideline on legal issues in mobility projects, 2 good practice examples (one on financial issues and one on legal issues) and a case study on institutional coordination and collaboration. In the case of publishing more than 2 good practices, these are to be drawn from a variety of Member States and cover a range of different topics.

The format will depend on the topic to be addressed and the type of output produced, including mainly text, some pictures and/or infographic. Where possible, each publication has to contain links to further information, and in all cases, they must comply with the visual identity of RCP in order to maintain uniformity and recognition of the project's actions. For this purpose, in collaboration with the WP5 leader, templates will be established where necessary.

Some of the documentation will be disseminated through the RCP newsletters, and all of them will be available in the online platform (AFP) developed for the mobility accelerator in task 4.2.

The proposed topics for each publication will be agreed by the partners at least four weeks prior to the intended publication date, based on what is specified in point 1.4 Topics. At least seven working days before the publication date, each draft will be sent to all partners for approval. Partners will indicate, within three working days, the need for possible changes/further research. The final version of the publication must be provided to task leader 5.2 (Programme dissemination & Promotion) at least one day before the publication date.

1.3.2. SMALL TRAINING UNITS

FLHP will organize at least 6 short training videos call "News Capsules" on issues related to the framework for action. The "news capsules" shall have a maximum duration of 15 minutes, and a minimum of 4.

Propose subjects and speakers shall be based mainly on the material developed in the tier service "drafting and publication". In case it is identified as being of interest to several cities, consideration will be given to enquires related to third level of service. Speakers can be either consortium members or external experts.

The "News Capsules" can be recorded or live, using zoom or MS Teams, and will be in English. In the case of interviews, if this is not possible, it will be subtitled in English. In any case they must be available on the RCP online platform.

The format may be different depending on what is best suited to the topic to be dealt with:

- a training seminar (e.g. present the different European funding schemes for mobility projects);
- an interview with a lighthouse city (e.g. how they solved their coordination problems between the different actors involved in their case of use);
- or a presentation of a good practice (e.g. Green Bond to finance urban mobility projects) For example, it can be prepared an interview with the owner of a good practice, or present the different European funding schemes for mobility projects.

The FLHP expects to make at least 6 videos. Of these, at least two in training format (one on financing and one on legal issues), one in interview format and one case study presentation.

1.3.3. PROCESS ENQUIRES

FLHP processes applications received directly by cities participating in replication projects. FLHP needs to reply to all enquiries by telephone, or electronic mail format in a timely and reliable manner. FLHP may process enquiries in English or in the city's mother tongue.

All written and oral enquiries should be addressed to any of the consortium partners, and will be categorized as standard or non-standard. A standard enquiry takes a short time to answer (not more than 15 minutes) and can be answered without further research, mainly by using information already available on the website or from previously asked questions. Non-standard answers require additional information-gathering and expert input.

Standard enquiries will be answered by the partner receiving them, with support from the task leader if necessary. Non-standard enquiries will be forwarded to FLHP leader to be analysed and coordinate a response from the network of FLS.

Standard enquiries shall be replied to within a maximum of seven working days. All non-standard responses will be checked with the partner who received the consultation, the FLHP leader and a network expert related to the project partner prior to being sent. A holding reply must be sent if the answer cannot be sent within fourteen working days because of the need to do further research. The expert will be in charge of the response.

FLHP shall keep a history and database (in English) of all requests and replies and send it. The database shall include date of enquiry and response, type (standard /non-standard), topic (financial, legal), brief description of the consultation, summary of response and person in charge of responding.

Replies to standard enquiries have to be sent with a blind copy to FLHP leader. For non-standard enquiries, the expert in charge has to draft the text and forward them to both FLHP leader and partner for approval before sending them to third parties (with a blind copy to them).

All replies should be specific, supportive and of high quality. They should relate directly to the needs of the enquirers and propose adequate solutions to their problems. All replies can be made in English or in the native language of the city.

On the basis of the enquiries that are being solved, FLHP will draw up a list of Frequently Asked Questions which are available on AFP. Also, some of them could be interesting for developing publications and “News Capsules”.

The estimated number of standard questions is: 30

The estimated number of non-standard questions is: 20

1.4. Topics

All consortium members, based on interviews carry out in task 1.2, results from the MMW and the LMW in task 1.3 and results from the RRDW and detected use cases in task 1.5 will identify and propose some topics (e.g. public procurement for public transport vehicles (buses) or taxes, fees and charges to finance sustainable mobility).

Likewise, enquiries received by FLHP and information from mobility missions should be taken into account in the development of the FLHP activities.

All topics to be addressed should be aligned with the mobility projects to be replicated by the cities involved in RCP.

Once a month, as a point of discussion within the regular WP3 meeting, the partners will select two or three topics to develop within the FLHP activities for the next couple of months. In the week prior to the meeting, partners will be invited to send their proposals for topics identified and proposed for discussion at the meeting. The proposals open to discussion are shared with partners the day before the meeting to have time to evaluate them internally.

The topic proposal should contain:

1. Brief description of the issue addressed (e.g. Privacy and data protection in MaaS projects)
2. Type of output which is considered more appropriate for that topic (fact sheet, case study, good practice example, guideline, video...)
3. If needed: good practice owner, contact details of lighthouse city, thematic expert, speaker...
4. Other relevant information

As described in points 1.3.1 and 1.3.2 above, minimum outputs have been established on a certain specific topic to be dealt with:

Table 1 FLHP Topics

Topics	Output	Involve
Financial instruments for urban mobility	guideline	All partners
Legal issues in mobility projects	guideline	All partners
Topic on financial issues	good practice example	Use case owner
Topic on legal issues	good practice example	Use case owner
Institutional coordination and collaboration	case study	Use case owner
Funding	video training format	All partners

Legal and regulatory standards	video training format	All partners
Example from the lighthouse city	video interview	Use case owner
Example from the lighthouse city	video presentation	Use case owner

1.5. Resources

The Services provided by the FLHP will be carried out by the project partners, especially those that relate to “drafting and publication” and “small training units”.

To this end, RCP partners will establish close cooperation with finance & legal experts and stakeholders of the lighthouse cities. In addition, the services of the Enterprise Europe Network, to which BIZUP and ITAINNOVA (IAF third party) belong, will be used for those topics in which they are experts as sources of European funding.

As per the Grant Agreement, in task 3.1 Funding & Legal Support, RCP will establish a network of Finance and Legal Specialist with each project partner contributing experts to the Helpdesk. These experts will work together to explain the different types of funding available, help cities to prepare required documentation and assist them in approaching relevant prospective funders and investors. The FLS will process the enquiries received from cities, and support projects partners in the development of other services.

Apart from work of the consortium, for the work to be carried out in the Helpdesk, each project partner has a budget of three thousand euros for the external experts. The profile of the experts to be hired by each of the partners is detailed in point 2.

Depending on the partner, an organization (e.g. a consultancy firm) or an individual expert may be contracted according to EU procurement rules. The hiring should be completed by the beginning of April 2022.

The partners involve in FLHP will provide the technical facilities for the “small training units” and “process enquires” (Zoom, MS Teams, Telephone or email). FLHP leader will provide a generic e-mail address for channelling enquiries, which will be available on the project website and AFP.

To facilitate access to financial and legal expertise, FLHP uses the AFP, the online platform developed in task 4.2.

AFP is a one-stop-shop for finance-related support of mobility projects and offers a place to refer customers who have financing needs. FLPH uses AFP as a repository for all the recommendations, reports and outputs of its activity as well as to facilitate access to financial and legal expertise as described in section 1.3 FLHP Services.

The portal services will focus on: 1) approaching funders for professional support; 2) finding useful information; 3) receiving expert advice on the right type of finance from the investor best suited to the requirements of mobility projects; 4) support for funders.

1.6. Timeline for the FLHP activities

A minimum of 14 outputs and 6 videos will be published within the duration of the work package. The following table shows the proposed timetable of FLHP activities.

Table 2 FLHP timeline

Output	Month
Publications	2022: Apr; May; Jun; Sep; Oct; 2 Nov; Dec
	2023: Jan; Feb, Mar; Apr; May; Jun;
News Capsules	2022: May; Sep; Nov
	2023: Jan; Mar; May;
Process enquires	From May 2022 to June 2023
3 joint roundtables about legal & institutional issues	In Mobility Assemblies (Nov. 2022, Feb. 2023, Apr. 2023)

2. Finance and Legal Specialist Profile

As per the Grant Agreement, in Task 3.1 Funding & Legal Support, RECIPROCITY will establish a network of Finance and Legal Specialist with each project partner contributing experts to the Helpdesk.

This document defines the expert profile to be provided by each partner to the Funding & Legal Helpdesk. A call for applicants will be sent through RCP partners' networks and will be published on RCP website and newsletter. CV and specialist financial conditions will be reviewed by FLHP leader, in close collaboration with the project coordinator and consortium partners involved.

FLHP will establish a model contract based on [EU Experts Contract](#) to be used by the partners. This model contract must be adapted to the applicable regulations in each of the respective countries.

The model contract shall include the following terms and conditions:

1. Subject of the contract
2. Work to be provided
3. Fees
4. Rights and obligations of the parties
5. Breach of contract
6. Provisions (communication between parties, amendments...)

2.1. Main duties and responsibilities

Funding and/or legal expert (public) will support European cities and municipalities in different types and sources of funding available for the innovative urban mobility solutions as well as support them to clear legal and institutional issues.

It will focus on defining (public) funding mechanisms for replication projects, on accessing them by supporting the drafting of the relevant applications and identify and keep track of potential sources for additional (also private) funding to replicate urban mobility projects.

2.1.1. TASKS

Some examples of tasks in which the expert will support the consortium in the framework of the Funding & Legal Helpdesk are:

- Reviewing the market regarding available public (primary) and private (e.g. bank loans, bonds...) funds for replication of urban mobility projects.
- Providing assistance and advice to cities and municipalities on specific aspects of project financing (sources of funding and optimal funding mix) and legal and institutional issues.
- Provide assistance on legal matters that may arise during the adaptation of mobility projects, including the way human safety, privacy, and security are protected, cities are organized, machines and people are connected, and the public and private spheres are defined.
- Supporting in the drafting of funding applications for replication projects.
- Providing assistance and advice to cities and municipalities about legal and institutional issues.
- Supporting matchmaking activities with funders & investors (physical or virtual) for mobility replication projects.
- Assist RECIPROCITY partners in the development of material for the FLHPO (fact sheets, guidelines or reports, catalogues, cases studies and shorts training videos).

2.1.2. SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

1. Qualifications

- Experience in handling (public) funds for project delivery, preferably with local governments (e.g. cities).
- Deep understanding of funding mechanisms for delivery projects in the area of urban mobility (e.g. structural funds, EIB loans).
- Knowledge of the legal and regulatory framework affecting the development of mobility projects.
- Experience in providing guidance for Innovative financing alternatives and procurement procedures.
- Experience in international work environments.
- Experience in urban mobility consultancy

2. Skills

- Capability, ability and fluency in working with funding institutions and partners from academia, industry and cities.
- Capacity to work on physical and virtual events, activities, communication with an international.

3. Education

- A level of education which corresponds to completed Business, Engineering or similar Masters' degree or three years of equivalent professional experience.
- Written and spoken English (one or more additional European languages are welcomed).

2.1.3. CONTRIBUTION OF RECIPROCITY

To compensate the experts for the costs and time spent on their engagement as financial and legal experts, the RECIPROCITY project provides some compensation. The responsibility for this lies with the respective local contact persons of the RECIPROCITY project.

RECIPROCITY (Replication of innovative concepts for peri-urban, rural or inner-city mobility), coordinated by R-Tech Regensburg (Germany), involves 10 partners including clusters, regional development agencies, innovation accelerators and universities. The project started in February 2021 and will run for 32 months.



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