

Preparing a Proposal

Do's and Don'ts in your application

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Build a strong proposal

A successful proposal should demonstrate that the pilot is

- needed by the cities
- operationally useful
- technically feasible
- measurable
- reusable by other cities
- sustainable after the pilot



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Start from a real city need (1)

Strong proposals begin with a clear problem.

Applicants should explain:

- what challenge the cities face
- why the challenge is important now
- which municipal service/department/community is affected
- what is currently missing
- how the pilot will improve the current situation



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Start from a real city need (2)

Example:

Generic:

‘The pilot will improve city resilience’

Strong:

‘Civil protection teams currently rely on fragmented rainfall, terrain and incident data. The pilot will combine these sources into a flood-risk service that helps them identify high-risk areas 24 hours before expected heavy rainfall.’



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Make the use case operational (1)

A good use case shows who uses the service and which decisions it supports

Applicants should explain:

- who the users are
- when they use the service
- what data they see
- what decision they make
- how this improves current practice



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Make the use case operational (2)

Example:

Generic:

‘The dashboard will support better planning’

Strong:

‘Urban planners will use the dashboard during zoning reviews to compare three land-use scenarios against flood exposure, exposed population and infrastructure vulnerability before selecting a preferred planning option’



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Explain what is shared and federated (1)



A strong cross-city pilot should show a meaningful connection between the city instances, not only the same system deployed locally

Applicants should explain:

- what is shared: data, indicators, models, services, workflows etc
- what remains local: raw data, operational decisions, access rights etc
- how the exchange happens: APIs, catalogues, connectors, standards etc
- why this is better than two separate local pilots



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Explain what is shared and federated (2)



Example:

Generic:

‘The same platform will be deployed in both cities’

Strong:

‘Each city keeps its own LDT instance and local data, but publishes harmonised risk indicators through a federated catalogue and reuses a common alerting service.’





Make the technical solution clear (1)

A strong technical proposal is not the one with the most tools, but the one that clearly explains how the tools work together.

Applicants should include:

- what already exists
- what will be built
- how data flows through the system
- which standards are used and why
- how the two city systems connect
- what the final service will look like



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Make the technical solution clear (2)



Example:

Generic:

‘The architecture will use NGSI-LD, DCAT-AP, ODRL, Kubernetes and AI models’

Strong:

‘Municipal drainage and land-use data will be harmonised into NGSI-LD models, catalogued through DCAT-AP, accessed through role-based permissions, and used by the flood-risk model to generate alerts for civil protection teams’



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Explain how success will be measured (1)



A credible pilot defines what success looks like.

Applicants should include:

- baseline situation
- target value
- measurement method
- validation activity
- responsible partner
- timing



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Explain how success will be measured (2)



Example:

Generic:

‘The service will improve emergency preparedness’

Strong:

‘The service will aim to increase advance warning time from the current warning window to 24 hours before the expected event. This will be tested through two civil-protection exercises and validated against historical flood events’



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Plan for reuse & openness (1)

A successful pilot should produce results that other cities in the wider LDT ecosystem can access, understand, adapt and reuse.

Applicants should include:

- reusable assets
- open assets, licences and access routes
- documentation package
- adoption requirements for other cities
- proprietary elements, if any, & vendor-agnostic replication/migration path



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Plan for reuse & openness (2)

Example:

Generic:

‘Outputs will be open where possible’

Strong:

‘All sensor data used in the LDT will be licensed as CC0 and accessible through public API's. These API's will be structured in line with the OpenAPI specification and publicly documented. Furthermore, all source code for the data visualization layer will be published on GitHub under the Apache 2.0 license.’



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Plan for continuity (1)

A good pilot is designed for life after the project.

Applicants should explain:

- who will operate the service after the pilot
- who will pay for hosting and maintenance
- what staff will be needed
- whether municipal budgets or procurement routes are identified
- who maintains shared or open-source assets
- how other cities can join or replicate



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Plan for continuity (2)



Example:

Generic:

‘The municipality intends to continue using the platform’

Strong:

‘After the pilot, the service will be hosted by the municipal IT department. Estimated annual hosting and support costs will be included in the city’s digital transformation budget, and the technical partner will provide maintenance under a post-pilot support agreement.’



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Make sure your application is eligible

Perform an internal completeness & eligibility check before submission.

Applicants should:

- go through the eligibility check grid
- use the templates and forms from the **current** call
- submit annexes and supporting documents **signed**, if required
- keep the form structure unchanged (budget tables in the application form; formulas, pivot tables & cost category labels in the financial form)
- include only eligible costs (equipment costs as depreciation over the pilot duration, not as the full purchase price)



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Takeaways (1)

Support your claims with evidence

Avoid leaving the reader to infer the logic and back qualitative statements with concrete information:

→ facts, figures, baselines, targets, examples, diagrams, workflows or validation methods.



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Takeaways (2)



Make the pilot logic clear

Show the link between the city need, the pilot objective, the use case, the federated approach, the technical feasibility and the expected impact.



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Takeaways (3)



Plan the pilot legacy from the beginning

Replicability and continuity concern the post-pilot phase, but they should be built into the proposal from the start: what others can reuse, how they can adopt it, and how the service will continue after funding ends.



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