

Call for Applications – June 2026

**Researcher(s) to author a policy study on:**

**Local value creation for clean supply chains in EU partnerships with emerging economies – partner expectations and institutional fit**

Background

The European Union depends on global supply chains for decarbonizing its economy, buildings and transport, and also for developing new clean industrial sectors. In central components and raw materials, the supply is highly concentrated, often in China. While geo-economic insecurity is rapidly growing, these asymmetric dependencies become a threat to the EU's economic future and prosperity. Therefore, the EU has started to develop approaches for more diversified supply chains and more strategic autonomy.

In this context, the EU is expanding its economic and industrial partnerships with emerging economies that combine relevant industrial capacities, growing domestic markets and strategic resources, and that are increasingly seen as key partners in building clean and resilient supply chains. In these countries, expectations towards international partnerships are closely linked to local value creation, the deepening of existing industrial structures, quality employment, and technological capabilities. These expectations go beyond project-based investments or raw-material supply relationships and increasingly shape the political credibility and attractiveness of EU cooperation offers.

Objectives of the policy study

The **objective** of this study is to provide, as a first step of clarification, an assessment of **whether and to what extent existing EU partnership formats are, in principle, suited to respond to these expectations of emerging economies – including Clean Trade and Investment Partnerships (CTIPs), Raw Materials Partnerships and Global Gateway investment packages**. The study does not aim to deliver a final evaluation of individual instruments, nor to take a position on the expansion of specific formats. Instead, it seeks to analyse the institutional logics, design features, and limitations of current EU approaches.

The analysis should be **guided by the following questions**:

- What is the EU's toolbox for (clean) partnerships? Is there complementarity between different tools (trade, investment, cooperation, etc.) and how coherent are these?
- What forms of local value creation are typically expected by emerging economies in the context of clean supply chains (e.g. supplier development, local processing, operations and services, skills and training, technology and know-how anchoring)?
- How, and based on which implicit assumptions, do existing EU partnership formats already address these expectations – and where do gaps, tensions or shortcomings become apparent?
- Which building blocks and design elements are currently missing or underdeveloped (e.g. investment design, project pipelines, financing structures, governance arrangements, monitoring

frameworks, support for the adaptation to unilateral European clean industry standards) to support local value creation more systematically? It is assumed that high environmental, social and labour standards, including implementation and monitoring tools, form the basic framework for partnerships. However, they may have an additional supporting or facilitating role in the context of local value creation.

- To what extent do new or evolving partnership approaches – including CTIPs currently under discussion – offer entry points for institutional adaptation or supplementation, taking into account different possible configurations of local content approaches?

The study is intended to establish an analytical baseline for subsequent political discussions on how EU partnerships with emerging economies may need to evolve in order to contribute both to the resilience of clean supply chains and to sustainable industrial value creation in partner countries.

**Concluding recommendations** should give a first orientation for this political discussion.

### Methodology

The precise scope and methodology of the research are to be defined by the researcher(s) based on the objectives of the policy study and in close collaboration with FEPS and FES. A joint reflection on the geographic scope would be needed, in order to define which emerging economies to cover – a focus on the most relevant economies for clean supply chains and resilience, for example. This would not exclude a chapter about the EU's partnership toolbox. It should also be jointly discussed in how far to include a number of concrete case studies, or rather focus on one specific supply chain with high relevance for the EU, like batteries, where the EU is highly dependent from China.

The methodology could include a literature review, documentary and press analysis, scrutiny of official plans and policies both in the EU and (potential) partner countries, and expert/stakeholder interviews.

The researcher(s) must adhere to the FEPS guidelines for a responsible and critical use of AI in their research and writing endeavours for the policy study.

### Deliverable

Policy study on “Local value creation in EU partnerships with emerging economies for clean supply chains – partner expectations and institutional fit” (working title). Between approximately 10,000 and 17,000 words maximum.

### Required profile

- Proven expertise in topics related to EU partnerships, trade and investment in global clean supply chains, and related industrial policies
- Proven experience in research with use of literature review and qualitative / mixed methods methodologies
- Proven ability to write papers and communicate in English
- PhD related to international partnerships and/or political sciences, social sciences, sustainability studies, economy, or similar is an asset
- Strong communication and dissemination capacity

- Capacity to both work independently and develop a common vision with FEPS and FES
- Proven ability to deliver in a timely manner and respect deadlines

#### Contractual details

**Start:** Applicants are requested to propose a realistic start date, depending on the expected delivery date. Ideal start date would be August 2026.

**Expected delivery:** Draft for joint review - beginning of November 2026; final draft end of November 2026 at the latest (specific timeline to be discussed with FEPS and FES)

**Type of contract:** Service Provision Agreement with FEPS

**Remuneration:** 20,000 (VAT included)

#### Application process and timeline:

- CV of the applicant, with a list of relevant publications written by the applicant
- One-page essay/cover letter on the object of the activity (please do not use AI). You are invited to include first reflections on the methodology (in particular the question of scope – geography and supply chains).
- Tentative timeline and a table outlining the list of tasks foreseen as part of the research, along with the expected number of working days required for each of them
  - Based on the total amount of working days, please provide your daily rate minding the ceiling of 20,000 EUR (VAT included) for the full contract

**To be sent by email to Luis Sáez Jiménez, ([luis.saez@feps-europe.eu](mailto:luis.saez@feps-europe.eu)) by July 1, 2026.**

Applications not provided in writing via email will not be considered.

Interviews will be conducted **online in early July**.

#### Contacts

For further inquiry and questions, please contact Chloé Deffet, FEPS Climate Policy Analyst ([chloe.deffet@feps-europe.eu](mailto:chloe.deffet@feps-europe.eu)) and Luis Sáez Jiménez, FEPS Project Officer ([luis.saez@feps-europe.eu](mailto:luis.saez@feps-europe.eu)).

## **Annex 1: Legal notice**

### **Participation in the tendering procedure**

#### **Tender Process**

FEPS reserves the right to conduct the tender process and select the successful tender.

FEPS is not bound contractually or in any way to a bidder to this request for tender until FEPS and the successful winner have entered a written contract.

#### **Assessment**

In non-preferential order, the evaluation criteria used to assess the quality of the applications are the following:

Criteria 1: A cost proposal – value for money offered by the applicant.

Criteria 2: Quality of the service offered by the applicant.

Criteria 3: Prior experience with similar projects and deliverables.

Criteria 4: Expertise in the topics and research methodologies at hand.

Criteria 5: Availability.

Applicants must be able to work in English language.

#### **Terms of payment**

Prices must be fixed amounts in Euro.

The amount of VAT must be disclosed on the price offer and invoice.

Costs incurred in preparing and submitting tenders are borne by the tenderers and cannot be reimbursed.

#### **Quality issues**

In delivering the service, the tenderer shall ensure the highest quality standards, of which FEPS shall be the sole judge.

#### **Confidentiality and conflict of interest**

The Tenderer undertakes that they will not at any time, either before or after the termination of this service, use or disclose or communicate to any person confidential information relating to the affairs of FEPS.

This restriction shall continue to apply after the termination of the service without limit in point of time.

To ensure the independence of the terms of their contract, the winning tenderer will sign a declaration certifying that they have no conflict of interests in relation to the tasks to be undertaken and undertake to inform FEPS' Director of Operations should this status change.

#### **Terms and conditions**

FEPS reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, to advertise for new proposals, to abandon the need for services, and to cancel or amend this call for tender at any time prior to the execution of the written contract.

FEPS reserves the right to waive any formalities in the call for tender process. FEPS may respond to questions or provide information from tenderers and is under no obligation to provide such responses or information to all other tenderers.

By submitting a proposal, the tenderer agrees to:

- FEPS may copy the proposal for the purpose of facilitating the evaluation of the proposal and agrees that such copying will not violate the rights of any third party.
- It will not bring any claim or have any cause of action against FEPS based on any misunderstanding concerning the information provided or concerning FEPS' failure, neglect or otherwise, to provide the bidder with pertinent information as Intended by this call for tender.

The accomplishment of a tendering procedure imposes no obligation on the FEPS to award the contract.

Should the invitation to tender cover several items or lots, FEPS reserves the right to award a contract for only some of them.

Subcontracting of contractually agreed responsibilities to third parties will only be possible under written approval and at no additional cost for FEPS.

FEPS shall not be liable for any compensation with respect to tenders whose tenders have not been accepted, nor shall it be so liable if it decides not to award the contract.

#### CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

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