

# **GAMMA Community Platform Rules and Regulations**

## **Chapter I Scope**

### *Article 1*

#### *Objective*

This platform regulation refers to the annual application process, selection, funding, and support of community projects via the Gamma Community Platform (“GCP”)

### *Article 2*

#### *Fields of Operation and Thematic Areas*

The Gamma Community Platform will support sustainable projects that uphold the following investment pillars:

- a. Educational Development: initiatives that expand or improve educational opportunity, access, and/or quality
- b. Environment: initiatives that protect or conserve the natural environment or spread environmental awareness
- c. Community: initiatives that bring people and organizations together to strengthen the social fabric of the community in question
- d. Entrepreneurship: initiatives that represent and promote innovative and creative ideas to bring growth, value, and prosperity to the community in question

## **Chapter II Organizational Structure**

### *Article 3*

#### *Governance*

1. The entity that is responsible for implementing the Gamma Community Platform and carrying out its mission is the Advisory and Selection Committee (the “Committee”).
2. The Committee is comprised of at least 3 and no more than 5 members of which:
  - a. At least one member is a representative of Start Campus, duly mandated to represent Start Campus.
  - b. At least one member represents the local community, namely a representative of a local NGO, non-profit association, academic or educational institution, or other person of recognized merit, moral integrity, and competence in the local community’s social, cultural, and environmental realm.
  - c. At least one member is independent of the community in question to bring specific relevant expertise in community engagement, corporate social responsibility, sustainability, and impact outside of the region.
3. Member nomination process
  - a. All Committee members are there in a non-executive capacity.
  - b. Committee members serve for one year and may not serve more than 4 consecutive years.
  - c. Potential committee members may indicate their interest informally to Board or current committee members by word of mouth or CV submission.

- d. Current committee members may nominate future members.
  - e. Members are brought before the Start Campus Board of Directors for approval at a yearly meeting of the board.
  - f. Member selection criteria:
    - i. Member candidates must be at least 18 years of age.
    - ii. Candidates must show expressed interest in the mission of GCP and share its values: sustainability, integrity, transparency, and collaboration.
4. Committee members may not have any direct or indirect relationship with the applicants or with the projects submitted. If they do, they must present an excuse for each specific case.

#### *Article 4*

#### *Roles and Responsibilities of the Advisory and Selection Committee*

The Committee is responsible for the following:

- a. Overall implementation, oversight, and general management of GCP
- b. Annual GCP budget determination
- c. Oversight and monitoring activities to ensure the Community Engagement Policy of Start Campus is being implemented according to its fundamental guiding principles and thematic focus
- d. Regular stakeholder consultation and engagement of local communities
- e. Management of the annual application and selection process of project proposals whereby community initiatives are selected to receive funding and support
- f. Evaluation of projects for funding eligibility and feasibility in a decentralized and participatory manner
- g. Approval of final projects to be voted on by community members
- h. Final determination of exact funding amounts allocated to each funding recipient
- i. Authorization of funding per project up to 90% of eligible project costs
- j. Fund disbursement according to the grant agreement and project schedule
- k. Monitoring and support of the execution of selected projects to provide guidance and recommendations
- l. Reporting annually on the main activities, funding amounts, results achieved, and lessons learned from GCP

### **Chapter III: Eligibility**

#### *Article 5*

#### *Grantee Eligibility Criteria*

1. GCP will only accept applications for projects that directly target and benefit the community in question.
2. Any individual, organization, or company may apply for project funding.
3. GCP will give preference to applicants based in the municipality in question, but others will not be excluded from funding opportunities.

#### *Article 6*

#### *Project Eligibility Criteria*



Applicant project proposals must reflect one or more of GCP Investment Pillars: educational development, environment, community, and entrepreneurship.

## **Chapter IV: Project Submission**

### *Article 7*

#### *Application Process*

1. Applications must be submitted online on the GCP website by completing the application form and uploading all required documents
2. Applications will be open for a period of 3 months, beginning October 15 and ending January 15 at 23:59
3. Each individual or organization may submit more than one project proposal per application cycle but will only be funded for a maximum of (1) project if selected.
4. Questions about the application process can be directed to the contacts provided on the application form. For transparency, questions asked and answered may be published anonymously on the website.
5. Applications will be assessed initially for eligibility and completion. Ineligible applicants will be notified via email.
6. Applications that pass initial screening will move on to the first stage of evaluation.

### *Article 8*

#### *Required Application Materials*

1. Application materials will be requested in two phases. During phase one, the applicant must fill out the online application form and answer all questions to be considered for initial evaluation.
2. After qualifying applicants attend the Innovation Event described in Article 10, they may be asked to provide the following documents:
  - a. Required:
    - i. Financial plan and itemized budget: Include expenses such as administrative costs, labor, materials, and equipment costs as well as how the applicant plans to finance such costs.
    - ii. Signed statement(s) of responsibility for completion of the project by organization/individual AND contractors if applicable
  - b. Other (required only if applicable):
    - i. Articles of Association: organization/company constitution; defines the appointment process and role of directors as well as the types of activities undertaken by the organization
    - ii. City Council approval statement: as necessary for construction or refurbishment
    - iii. National Authority for Civil Protection approval
    - iv. Social Security, ARS, or Ministry of Education approval
    - v. Proof of compliance with the Public Procurement Code: if securing suppliers for goods and/or services

- vi. Property ID/Matrix Certificate: issued by AT and contains information about a property's tax status
- vii. Land registry title
- viii. Architectural plan and/or models
- ix. Specialty projects: e.g. water/sewer plans, electrical installations, landscape architecture, etc.
- x. Topographic map
- xi. Photographs
- xii. Accounting Reports for the previous 3 months
- xiii. ROC audit

*Article 9  
Acceptance of Applications*

1. All questions must be answered completely and accurately on the application form.
2. The Committee will screen each application for eligibility and completion. Applications deemed ineligible, for failing to meet the requirements, will not be accepted.

## **Chapter V: Project Evaluation**

*Article 10  
Evaluation Process*

1. **Stage 1: Initial Evaluation (January - February)**
  - a. After screening for completion and eligibility, the Committee will thoroughly evaluate each proposal using the criteria and scoring process outlined in Article 11, Section 1.
  - b. Projects scoring 75% and above will pass to stage 2. Others will be notified and provided with their score.
2. **Stage 2: Innovation Event, Interviews, and Site Visits (February - March)**
  - a. Qualifying applicants will be invited to attend a collaborative Innovation Event, during which they will pitch their projects to the Committee and have the chance to collaborate with other candidates. The Committee will conduct interviews with each applicant during the event to learn more about the applicants and their projects.
  - b. Applicants may be asked to provide additional documentation outlined in Article 8, Section 2, to be submitted within two weeks following the Innovation Event.
  - c. Site visits will be conducted by the Committee if necessary to collect additional information.
3. **Stage 3: Final Evaluation (March)**
  - a. Projects will then be scored again by the Committee using the criteria outlined in Article 11, Section 2.
  - b. Projects scoring 75% and above will move to the community voting stage for final selection. Others will be notified and provided with their score and an explanation.

*Article 11*  
*Evaluation Criteria and Scoring*

1. Criteria A: Applications will be assessed by the Committee during the **initial evaluation**, against clear and pre-defined criteria which encompasses the following:
  - a. Impact case and relevance (“**C**”): strength of applicant’s case for the project’s environmental, community, entrepreneurial, and/or educational impact and its relevance to the community in question, 40%
    - i. 0; Poorly articulated, no relevance for the region and GCP Investment Pillars. No clear benefit for the community.
    - ii. 0.5; Somehow relevant impact case for the region and GCP Investment Pillars.
    - iii. 1; Clearly articulated, very relevant for the region and GCP Investment Pillars. Clear benefit for the community.
  - b. Project planning and practicality (“**P**”), 30%
    - i. 0; Idea is not well devised. Timeline is unrealistic and poorly thought out. Application does not include a monitoring and evaluation framework.
    - ii. 0.5, Application either does not include a realistic timeline or a monitoring and evaluation framework. Idea and proposal somewhat well devised.
    - iii. 1; Proposal and timeline are well thought out and realistic. Application includes a monitoring and evaluation framework.
  - c. Degree of innovation (“**I**”), 10%
    - i. 0; No innovative elements in the project. Traditional and conservative.
    - ii. 0.5; Some innovative elements are coupled with traditional elements.
    - iii. 1; Highly innovative project
  - d. Replicability and scalability (“**R**”), 10%
    - i. 0; No conditions for replication and scalability.
    - ii. 0.5; Somehow replicable and scalable.
    - iii. 1; Highly replicable and scalable.
  - e. Applicant’s experience in project implementing and management (“**E**”), 10%
    - i. 0; No experience.
    - ii. 0.5; Some experience
    - iii. 1; Significant experience.
2. Criteria B: Applications will be assessed by the Committee during the **final evaluation**, against clear and pre-defined criteria which encompasses the following:
  - a. Business case (“**B**”): Justification for the project, including an understanding of risks and alternatives, costs, and benefits, 40%
    - i. 0; Poor business case. Poor justification for the project compared with alternatives, poor analysis of risk, low benefit-cost ratio.
    - ii. 0.5; Good business case. Cost-benefit analysis and risks are somewhat questionable.
    - iii. 1; Excellent business case. Solid justification given risks and alternatives. High benefit-cost ratio.
  - b. Technical feasibility (“**T**”): Suitability and efficiency of resources to achieve expected results, 30%

- i. 0; Poor technical feasibility: low efficiency of resources and/or poor resource planning, questionable use of technology.
    - ii. 1; Feasible from a technical perspective: high efficiency of resources and good resource planning to achieve results, use of proven technology.
  - c. Financial sustainability and feasibility (“F”), 30%
    - i. 0; Not feasible from a financial perspective
    - ii. 1; Feasible from a financial perspective
3. Scoring Formulas
  - a. Initial evaluation:  $0.4*C + 0.3*P + 0.1*I + 0.1*R + 0.1*E$
  - b. Final evaluation:  $0.4*B + 0.3*T + 0.3*F$
4. Score Rating:
  - a. A, > 90%
  - b. B, 80 to 89%
  - c. C, 70 to 79%
  - d. D, 50 to 69%
  - e. F, < 50%

*Article 12  
Appeals Process*

1. Applicants may appeal initial or final evaluation scores via email within 10 working days of receiving their score. The Committee will respond to the appeal within 10 working days of receiving the appeal.
2. Applicant will need to make a strong case for the appeal to be granted.
3. All appeals will be answered and assessed by an independent jury composed of Start Campus representatives. The applicant may be asked to provide clarification or respond to suggestions for improvement, after which the proposal may be reevaluated if deemed appropriate.

*Article 13  
Dispute Resolution Process*

1. In the event that the applicant does not accept the results of the appeals process, the applicant and the Committee will enter into an alternative dispute resolution method in the form of (in order of formality) negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, or if needed, private judging.
2. The applicant must agree to the alternative dispute resolution process when submitting their application.

## **Chapter VI: Community Voting Process and Final Selection**

*Article 14  
Voting Process*

1. Community voting will take place online on the GCP webpage from April 1 - April 15 following final evaluations, during which the public may visit the voting page and explore project candidates.
2. Only official residents of the community in question are permitted to vote.

3. Voters may vote only once and for only one project.

*Article 15  
Final Selection*

1. At the end of the voting period, projects will be ranked by vote count and the project(s) with the most votes will be selected for funding depending on the budget available for that year.
2. Winning projects will be identified on the voting page on April 15 and announced publicly at a Recipient Event Ceremony in late April.
3. The Committee reserves the right to discard any votes that are deemed the result of manipulation or fraud.

## **Chapter VII: Funding**

*Article 16  
Funding Ranges*

1. Total available project funds available for the year's application cycle will be posted plainly on the GCP webpage prior to the application cycle.
2. GCP will fund up to 90% of total eligible costs for a select number of projects chosen by the final community vote depending on the given year's annual budget. No project will receive 100% funding.
3. If funds allow, the project with the most community votes will receive 90% funding. Additional runners up will receive up to 90% funding until the funding pool for that year's budget is exhausted.
4. Projects receiving less than 90% funding should be revisited by the Committee to ensure feasibility and assess the applicant's ability to provide the remaining funds.
5. Funding recipients must provide proof of ability to finance at least 10% prior to the signing of the grant contract.
6. Funding is non-refundable.

*Article 17  
Eligible Costs*

1. All expenses and costs incurred by the project are eligible for funding except:
  - a. Expenses with fees and taxes (e.g. VAT)
  - b. Hardware and equipment not deemed fundamental and exclusively dedicated to implementing the project
  - c. Expenses paid in cash unless proven it was the only payment method available
  - d. Fines or penalties
  - e. Expenses for any judge or court proceedings
  - f. Banking fees or any other similar expenses
  - g. Expenses already covered by existing grants.

*Article 18*  
*Procurement of Goods and Services*

Purchases of goods for projects financed by GCP are subject to the rules of the Public Procurement Code

- a. For any purchase of goods or services above 5000 euros, at least 3 suppliers must be consulted.

*Article 19*  
*Disbursal of Funds*

1. Funding will be executed in 4 installments unless more or fewer are deemed appropriate.
2. Upon proof of at least 10% minimum contribution and signing of the grant contract, the recipient will receive the initial installment of 40% of the total financing approved.
3. The second installment of 25% will be disbursed upon receipt of a payment request and intermediate progress report demonstrating that at least 70% of the initial installment has been spent.
4. The third installment of 25% will be paid upon receipt of a payment request and second intermediate progress report demonstrating that at least 70% of the second installment has been spent.
5. The final installment of 10% will be paid upon receipt of the final payment request and final project report.

**Chapter VIII: Project Execution and Monitoring**

*Article 20*  
*Execution*

1. Funding recipients are obliged to diligently execute the project timeline, under the terms and conditions outlined in the grant contract.
2. Project execution must begin within 30 days of receiving the initial installment, unless relevant justification is provided, otherwise the recipient has 10 working days to return the amounts advanced by the Committee.
3. If needed, the Committee will assign a consultant to assist with project planning and general execution of the project throughout its implementation.

*Article 21*  
*Intermediate Progress Reports*

1. Funding recipients shall provide 2 intermediate progress reports to be submitted to the Committee before the second and third funding installments that detail any changes or updates to the original proposal.
2. The Committee will provide an intermediate progress report template.
3. The report should include:
  - a. Elements of the project that have evolved including any new calculations of risk or expected return
  - b. Documentation detailing how previous funding installment was spent



*Article 22*  
*Final Report*

1. Before the recipient can receive the final funding installment, they shall submit to the Committee a detailed final report of project results including all relevant project stages, changes to the project, accomplishments, and lessons learned.
2. The Committee will provide a final report template to the recipient

*Article 23*  
*Project Account File*

1. Funding recipients shall keep an updated project file containing all communication and documentation related to the project and consisting of the originals of the following documents:
  - a. Application form and all attachments
  - b. Signed grant contract
  - c. Signed financial agreement
  - d. Documentation of partnership contracts
  - e. Proof of minimum 10% contribution
  - f. Expense documents (invoices, receipts, or documents of equivalent value)
  - g. Intermediate progress reports
  - h. Proof of compliance with the public procurement code
  - i. Documents related to audits by GCP or other entities
2. After completion of the project, the project file must be archived for a minimum of five years.

*Article 24*  
*Monitoring of Project Execution*

1. The Committee has the right to follow the progress and to audit the financial, physical, and technical implementation of each project awarded with funding as needed.
2. Recipients will permit representatives of GCP access to locations where the project is being carried out and to necessary documents for monitoring purposes.

*Article 25*  
*Irregularities and Penalties*

In case any irregularity or deviation from the proposal is identified, GCP reserves the right to withhold any further funding to the project and undertake an audit to determine the proper course of action.

## **Chapter IX: Transparency**

### *Article 26 Communication with Applicants*

The following measures will be implemented to ensure transparency with applicants and the public regarding GCP:

- a. The Committee will notify applicants via email regarding the progress of their application as it moves through the application process.
- b. The Committee will inform applicants who are not admitted to subsequent stages and provide an explanation for the decision.
- c. Questions asked and answered by applicants and/or the public may be posted to the GCP webpage.
- d. The Committee will post winning projects, along with the funding amounts awarded to each, to the GCP webpage upon conclusion of the community voting process.

## **Chapter X: Privacy and Data Protection**

### *Article 27 Privacy and Data Protection*

1. The funding recipients and the Committee hereby agrees to comply with their respective obligations under applicable data protection laws in respect of the processing of personal data in connection with the performance of this regulation and shall comply with the General Data Protection Regulation.
2. The Committee assumes the following commitments to all applicants:
  - a) Proceed with the processing of data in a lawful and fair manner, collecting only the information necessary and pertinent to the purpose for which they are intended;
  - b) Allow the data subject to access and correct the information about himself / herself, transmitting it in a clear and strictly corresponding language to the content of the registration;
  - c) Do not use the data collected for purposes incompatible with the collection;
  - d) Keep the data accurate and, if necessary, current;
  - e) Ensure the express consent of the data subject whenever this is required;
  - f) Guarantee free of charge the right to delete the data used when required by the holder;
  - g) Respect professional secrecy in relation to the data processed;
  - h) Do not perform interconnection of personal data, unless legally authorized or authorized by CNPD.

## **Chapter XI: Final and Temporary Provisions**

### *Article 28 Unforeseen matters and contingencies*



Contingencies and unforeseen matters which are not covered by this regulation are subject to a decision by the Committee, based on the principles that underline Start Campus Community Engagement Policy and legal dispositions.

*Article 29  
Applicability*

This regulation is applicable to all projects and initiatives that apply for funding under the Gamma Community Platform. This regulation can be updated and/or amended at any time by the Committee and if necessary, by Start Campus.