International Cooperative Alliance – Global Office

Concept Note — Session 2

Global Gateway Readiness for Cooperative Organisations

Online Training Series: EU Delegations and EU Compliance for the Cooperative World

Session Details

Date(s): Tuesday, 13 October 2026

Cohorts: Morning cohort 09:30–12:00 CEST | Afternoon cohort 16:00–18:30 CEST

Duration: 2.5 hours per cohort

Format: Live online session, delivered separately to each time-zone cohort

Overall Training Objective

This session is part of a four-session online training series for ICA member Apex bodies and cooperative organisations (national apex federations and individual cooperatives, large and small) on engaging EU Delegations and Member State institutions in support of participation in the Global Gateway initiative. The series aims to equip participants to understand the EU institutional landscape (notably DG INTPA and the EEAS), understand how EU grants work and how they differ from the blended (grant/loan/guarantee) financing of Global Gateway, follow how Global Gateway is being rolled out in practice, and build the practical value-proposition and compliance skills needed to be represented in EU-backed investment mechanisms.

Rationale and Positioning of this Session

This session builds directly on Session 1's institutional map by introducing the Global Gateway strategy itself: what it is, how it is financed, and how it is being rolled out to date. Participants need to understand not only who to talk to, but what mechanism they are actually trying to access — and specifically why Global Gateway is not simply **'another EU grant', but a blended mix of grants, loans and guarantees.**

This is a conceptual session that should remain accessible to a non-financial-specialist audience; the detailed financial and compliance mechanics are deliberately reserved for Session 4.

Learning Objectives

- Explain what Global Gateway is, its strategic pillars and objectives.
- Distinguish Global Gateway's blended-finance architecture (grants, loans and guarantees) from traditional EU grant funding covered in later sessions.
- Understand the role of financial institutions (e.g. the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, national development finance institutions) and of the European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus (EFSD+) guarantee.
- Identify how Global Gateway is being rolled out to date, with concrete country or regional examples.
- Understand how cooperative organisations can realistically position themselves within this architecture.

Detailed Content Outline

1. What is Global Gateway

- Origin (the EU's 2021 strategy) and stated objectives; brief positioning relative to other global infrastructure initiatives.
- The strategic pillars: digital, climate and energy, transport, health, and education and research — and where cooperative and agri-food/rural sectors intersect with these pillars.

2. The financing architecture

- **NDICI-Global Europe** as the underlying EU external financing instrument.
- The European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus (EFSD+) and its guarantee mechanism.
- Blending: how EU grant funding is combined with loans from the EIB, EBRD, national DFIs and private investors.
- How this differs from classic EU grants — in particular risk-sharing, leverage, who ultimately bears financial risk, and repayment obligations attached to loan components.
- Governance: the Global Gateway Board and Business Advisory Group, and what (if any) role civil-society and cooperative actors can play in these structures.

3. Rollout so far

- Team Europe Initiatives (TEIs): what they are, and their thematic and regional spread to date.
- Two to three concrete flagship examples, selected and tailored by the expert to be relevant to participants' regions.
- Early lessons on private-sector and civil-society participation in Global Gateway projects to date.

4. Practical implications for cooperatives

- Where cooperatives realistically fit: as implementers, co-investors, or beneficiaries within Global Gateway-linked projects.
- Entry points: Team Europe Initiatives at country level, EIB/EBRD local offices, and Delegation economic/cooperation sections.
- Setting realistic expectations — the scale of typical Global Gateway projects versus the scale of typical cooperative financing needs, and how smaller actors can access funding via intermediaries, aggregated proposals or consortia.

Practical Example / Case Study Expected

- A worked example in a cooperative-relevant sector (e.g. agri-food value chains, renewable-energy access, or rural connectivity) showing how it could realistically align with a Global Gateway Team Europe Initiative.

Suggested Materials to be Handed Out

- Slide deck.
- One-page infographic: 'Global Gateway financing architecture' showing grants, loans and guarantees and who provides each.
- Comparison table: EU grants vs. Global Gateway financing instruments (eligibility, risk, repayment obligations, typical actors involved).
- A list or map of current Team Europe Initiatives relevant to cooperative sectors, to the extent this is publicly available.

- Continuation of the series glossary (EFSD+, TEI, blending, DFI, EIB, EBRD).

Expectations of the Service Provider

- Expert with substantive, practical knowledge of Global Gateway financing mechanisms, ideally with direct exposure to EFSD+ or blended-finance operations.
- At least one concrete, sector-relevant case study per cohort — case studies may need light adaptation between the morning and afternoon cohorts if their regional composition differs.
- The blended-finance logic (grant/loan/guarantee mix) must be explained clearly and simply for a non-financial-specialist audience; detailed financial mechanics should be left for Session 4.
- Materials submitted to ICA for review at least 5 working days before delivery.

Suggested Methodology and Time Allocation

- Presentation with embedded, concrete examples.
- Structured discussion segment.
- Short applied exercise in which participants identify which Global Gateway pillar or Team Europe Initiative might realistically be relevant to their own organisation's sector.