



Contracting Authority

Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia

CIVIL SOCIETY FACILITY AND MEDIA PROGRAMME 2016- 2017

Guidelines for grant applicants

Budget line(s): 22.020401

Reference:

EuropeAid/154831/DD/ACT/RS

Deadline for submission¹ of concept notes:

19/05/2017 at 15:00 CET

at (Brussels date and time)

(in order to convert to local time click here²)

¹ **Online submission via PROSPECT is mandatory for this call for proposals (see Section 2.2.2).** In PROSPECT all dates and times are expressed in Brussels time. Applicants should note that the IT support is open Monday to Friday from 08:30 to 18:30 Brussels time (except for public holidays). Applicants should take note of the weekly maintenance hours mentioned in the PROSPECT user manual.

² An example of a time converter tool available online: <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html>

NOTICE

This is a restricted call for proposals. In the first instance, only concept notes (Annex A.1) must be submitted for evaluation. Thereafter, lead applicants who have been pre-selected will be invited to submit a full application. After the evaluation of the full applications, an eligibility check will be performed for those which have been provisionally selected. Eligibility will be checked on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the Contracting Authority and the signed 'declaration by the lead applicant' sent together with the full application.


To apply to this call for proposals organisations must register in PADOR and submit their application in PROSPECT (see section 2.2.2 of the guidelines). The aim of PROSPECT is to increase the efficiency of the management of the call for proposals and to offer a better service to civil society organisations through a new panel of functionalities such as the on-line submission and the possibility to follow up online the status of their application.

Information session(s) will be organised to help applicants familiarise themselves with the system before the online submission.

The date, time and place of the information session(s) will be announced timely on the EuropeAid website <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome> and on the website of the EU Delegation in Serbia www.europa.rs

No costs incurred by the applicants for attending this information session are reimbursable.

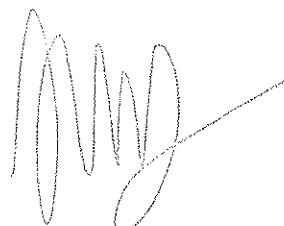
All organisations can find the e-learning (Annex L) and the PROSPECT users' manual (Annex M) and the FAQ published together with the documents of this call. You may also contact our technical support team via the online support form in PROSPECT³.



³ If PROSPECT is unavailable, the IT support can also be reached via email: EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu

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1 CIVIL SOCIETY FACILITY AND MEDIA PROGRAMME 2016-2017

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Indicative Strategy Paper for Serbia⁴ underlines that reforms in the rule of law and fundamental rights sector are a key priority for Serbia, in line with the accession negotiation framework, which incorporates the new approach to the accession negotiations and puts the Rule of Law chapters at the heart of the enlargement process. The horizontal support to civil society and media is seen as one of priorities to improve democracy and rule of law and to contribute to deepening citizens' understanding of the reforms a country needs to complete in order to qualify for EU membership. This can help ensure EU accession is not just a government exercise and stimulate a balanced public debate, which is crucial to achieving a well-informed decision on EU membership at the end of the accession process.

DG Enlargement developed guidelines for the EU support to civil society in enlargement countries for the Period 2014-2020⁵ and Guidelines for EU support to media freedom and media integrity in enlargement countries, 2014-2020⁶. The guidelines include a set of objectives, results and indicators for the EU support to civil society and media which will allow the measurement of progress at country level as well across the enlargement region and provide framework for the assistance through IPA instrument.

The "Civil Society Facility" (CSF) is one of the European Commission's instruments for supporting the development of the civil society and media in the enlargement countries. It was set up in 2008 and since then has been providing the pre-accession assistance to the civil society in the Western Balkans and Turkey, through National and Multi-beneficiary initiatives.

The overall objective of the 2016-2017 Programme is to strengthen participatory democracies and the EU integration process in the Western Balkans and Turkey by empowering civil society to actively take part in decision-making and by stimulating an enabling legal and financial environment for civil society and pluralistic media.

This Call for Proposals is financed through the Civil Society Facility and Media 2016-2017 National Programme initiative. Support in the form of long term grants to civil society and media will be provided to increase CSOs effectiveness and to encourage investigative and creative media production in the area of rule of law, environmental protection, cultural diversity, media and digital literacy and the EU accession process in Serbia.

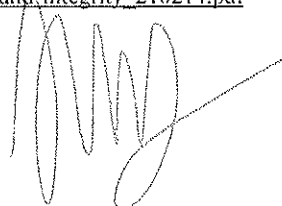
1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

The **global objective** of this call for proposals is to strengthen participatory democracies and the EU integration process by empowering civil society to actively take part in decision making and by stimulating an enabling legal and financial environment for civil society and pluralistic media.

⁴https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2014/20140919-csp-serbia.pdf

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/civil_society/doc_guidelines_cs_support.pdf

⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/press_corner/clarg-guidelines-for-media-freedom-and-integrity_210214.pdf



The **specific objective(s)** of this call for proposals is/are:

Lot 1- Support to Media

- Improve conditions for quality investigative journalism including modern/innovative approaches to increase quality and credibility of media

Lot 2- Support to Civil Society

- Increase capacities of the Serbian CSOs to address reform processes and EU integration process

1.3 FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

The overall indicative amount made available under this Call for Proposals is **EUR 4,600,000**.

The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

Indicative allocation of funds by lot/geographical distribution:

If the allocation indicated for a specific lot cannot be used due to insufficient quality or number of proposals received, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to reallocate the remaining funds to another lot.

LOT 1 – Support to Media - EUR 2,300,000

Size of grants

Any grant requested under this Call for Proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

- Minimum amount: EUR 150,000
- Maximum amount: EUR 300,000

Any grant requested under this Call for Proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum percentages of total eligible costs of the action:

- Minimum percentage: 65% of the total eligible costs of the action;
- Maximum percentage: 90% of the total eligible costs of the action (see also section 2.1.5).

LOT 2 – Support to Civil Society - EUR 2,300,000

Size of grants


Any grant requested under this Call for Proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

- Minimum amount: EUR 150,000
- Maximum amount: EUR 300,000

Any grant requested under this Call for Proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum percentages of total eligible costs of the action:

- Minimum percentage: 65% of the total eligible costs of the action;
- Maximum percentage: 90% of the total eligible costs of the action (see also section 2.1.5).

The balance (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the Contracting Authority) must be financed from sources other than the European Union Budget or the European Development Fund⁷.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

⁷ Where a grant is financed by the European Development Fund, any mention of European Union financing must be understood as referring to European Development Fund financing.

2 RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of the actions financed under this call, in conformity with the Practical Guide, which is applicable to the present call (available at <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/document.do?locale=en>)⁸.

2.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

(1) the actors:

- The **lead applicant**, i.e. the entity submitting the application form (2.1.1),
- if any, its **co-applicant(s)** (where it is not specified otherwise the lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) are hereinafter jointly referred as "applicant(s)") (2.1.1),
- and, if any, **affiliated entity(ies)** to the lead applicant and/or to a co-applicant(s). (2.1.2);

(2) the actions:

- Actions for which a grant may be awarded (2.1.4);

(3) the costs:

- types of cost that may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant (2.1.5).

2.1.1 Eligibility of applicants (i.e. lead applicant and co-applicant(s))

Lot 1- Support to Media

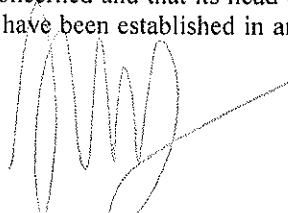
Lead applicant

(1) In order to be eligible for a grant, the lead applicant must:

- be legal persons **and**
- be print/electronic/on-line media, news agencies, media production houses and/or media associations **and**
- be established in⁹ a Member State of the European Union or in a country covered by the Article 10 of the IPA Regulation¹⁰ **and**

⁸ Note that a lead applicant (i.e. a Coordinator) whose pillars have been positively assessed by the European Commission and who is awarded a grant will not sign the standard grant contract published with these guidelines but a PA Grant Agreement based on the PAGO DA template. All references in these guidelines and other documents related to this call to the standard grant contract shall in this case be understood as referring to the relevant provisions of the PAGO DA template.

⁹ To be determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes that should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned and that its head office is located in an eligible country. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot



- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary **and**
- in case the lead applicant is print/audio-visual/on-line media, news agencies, media production houses and/or media associations not established in Serbia, it must act with at least one co-applicant that is established in Serbia.

(2) Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations listed in section 2.3.3 of the Practical Guide;

In Annex A.2, section 5 ('declaration by the lead applicant'), the lead applicant must declare that the lead applicant himself, the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) are not in any of these situations.

The lead applicant may act individually or with co-applicant(s). In case the lead applicant is print/audio-visual/on-line media, news agencies, media production houses and/or media associations not established in Serbia, it must act with at least one co-applicant that is established in Serbia.

If awarded the grant contract, the lead applicant will become the beneficiary identified as the Coordinator in Annex E3h1 (Special Conditions). The Coordinator is the main interlocutor of the Contracting Authority. It represents and acts on behalf of any other co-beneficiary (if any) and coordinate the design and implementation of the action.

Co-applicant(s)

Co-applicants participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the lead applicant.

Co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant.

In addition to the categories referred to in section 2.1.1.(1) above for the lead applicant under this lot, the following are however also eligible:

- Civil society organisations;
- Cultural and educational institutions.

Co-applicants must sign the mandate in Annex A.2., section 4.

If awarded the grant contract, the co-applicant(s) (if any) will become beneficiary(ies) in the action (together with the Coordinator).

Lot 2 - Support to Civil Society

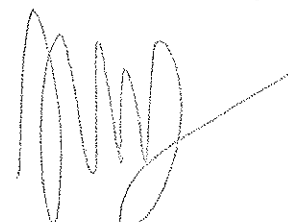
Lead applicant

(1) In order to be eligible for a grant, the lead applicant must:

- be legal persons **and**

be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has been concluded.

¹⁰ Regulation (EU) N°236/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action



- be non-profit-making **and**
 - be civil society organisations¹¹ **and**
 - be established in a Member State of the European Union or in a country covered by the Article 10 of the IPA Regulation¹² **and**
 - be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary **and**
 - in case the lead applicant is a civil society organisation not established in Serbia, it must act with at least one co-applicant that is established in Serbia.
- (2) Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations listed in section 2.3.3 of the Practical Guide;

In Annex A.2, section 5 ('declaration by the lead applicant'), the lead applicant must declare that the lead applicant himself, the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) are not in any of these situations.

The lead applicant may act individually or with co-applicant(s). In case the lead applicant is a CSO not established in Serbia, it must act with at least one co-applicant that is established in Serbia.

If awarded the grant contract, the lead applicant will become the beneficiary identified as the Coordinator in Annex E3h1 (Special Conditions). The Coordinator is the main interlocutor of the Contracting Authority. It represents and acts on behalf of any other co-beneficiary (if any) and coordinate the design and implementation of the action.

Co-applicant(s)

Co-applicants participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the lead applicant.

Co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant.

In addition to the categories referred to in section 2.1.1.(1) above for the lead applicant under this lot, the following are however also eligible:

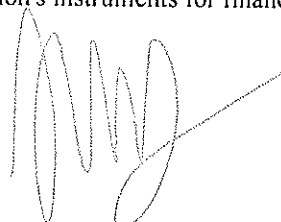
- Media;
- Cultural and educational institutions.

Co-applicants must sign the mandate in Annex A.2., section 4.

If awarded the Grant contract, the co-applicant(s) (if any) will become beneficiaries in the Action (together with the Coordinator).

¹¹ The broadest possible understanding about civil society organisations is applied under this call for proposals, as defined in 1999 by the European Economic and Social Committee (CES/1999/851) and further detailed by both the EESC (CES/1999/851, CES/2000/81) and the EC (COM/2002/0704 final, COM/2005/0290 final)

¹² Regulation (EU) N°236/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action



2.1.2 *Affiliated entities*

Affiliated entity(ies)

The lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) may act with affiliated entity(ies).

Only the following entities may be considered as affiliated entities to the lead applicant and/or to co-applicant(s):

Only entities having a structural link with the applicants (i.e. the lead applicant or a co-applicant), in particular a legal or capital link.

This structural link encompasses mainly two notions:

- (i) Control, as defined in Directive 2013/34/EU on the annual financial statements, consolidated financial statements and related reports of certain types of undertakings:

Entities affiliated to applicant may hence be:

- Entities directly or indirectly controlled by an applicant (daughter companies or first-tier subsidiaries). They may also be entities controlled by an entity controlled by an applicant (granddaughter companies or second-tier subsidiaries) and the same applies to further tiers of control;
 - Entities directly or indirectly controlling the applicant (parent companies). Likewise, they may be entities controlling an entity controlling the applicant;
 - Entities under the same direct or indirect control as the applicant (sister companies).
- (ii) Membership, i.e. the applicant is legally defined as a e.g. network, federation, association in which the proposed affiliated entities also participate or the applicant participates in the same entity (e.g. network, federation, association) as the proposed affiliated entities.

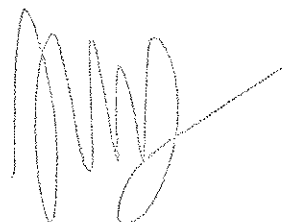
The structural link shall as a general rule be neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation. This means that the link would exist independently of the award of the grant; it should exist before the call for proposals and remain valid after the end of the action.

By way of exception, an entity may be considered as affiliated to an applicant even if it has a structural link specifically established for the sole purpose of the implementation of the action in the case of so-called "sole applicants" or "sole beneficiaries". A sole applicant or a sole beneficiary is a legal entity formed by several entities (a group of entities) which together comply with the criteria for being awarded the grant. For example, an association is formed by its members.

What is not an affiliated entity?

The following are not considered entities affiliated to an applicant:

- Entities that have entered into a (procurement) contract or subcontract with an applicant, act as concessionaires or delegates for public services for an applicant,
- Entities that receive financial support from an applicant,
- Entities that cooperate on a regular basis with an applicant on the basis of a memorandum of understanding or share some assets,



- Entities that have signed a consortium agreement under the grant contract (unless this consortium agreement leads to the creation of a "sole applicant" as described above).

How to verify the existence of the required link with an applicant?

The affiliation resulting from control may in particular be proved on the basis of the consolidated accounts of the group of entities the applicant and its proposed affiliates belong to.

The affiliation resulting from membership may in particular be proved on the basis of the statutes or equivalent act establishing the entity (network, federation, association) which the applicant constitutes or in which the applicant participates.

If the applicants are awarded a grant contract, their affiliated entity(ies) will not become beneficiary(ies) of the action and signatory(ies) of the grant contract. However, they will participate in the design and in the implementation of the action and the costs they incur (including those incurred for implementation contracts and financial support to third parties) may be accepted as eligible costs, provided they comply with all the relevant rules already applicable to the beneficiary(ies) under the grant contract.

Affiliated entity(ies) must satisfy the same eligibility criteria as the lead applicant and the co-applicant(s). They must sign the affiliated entity(ies) statement in Annex A.2., section 5.

2.1.3 Associates and Contractors

The following entities are not applicants nor affiliated entities and do not have to sign the "mandate for co-applicant(s)" or "affiliated entities' statement":

- Associates

Other organisations or individuals may be involved in the action. Such associates play a real role in the action but may not receive funding from the grant, with the exception of per diem or travel costs. Associates do not have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in section 2.1.1. Associates must be mentioned in Annex A.2., section 6 — 'Associates participating in the action'.

- Contractors

The beneficiaries and their affiliated entities are permitted to award contracts. Associates or affiliated entity(ies) cannot be also contractors in the project. Contractors are subject to the procurement rules set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

2.1.4 Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made

For all lots

Definition

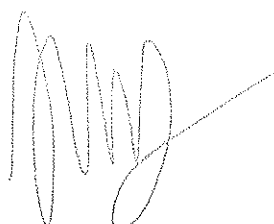
An action is composed of a set of activities.

Duration

The initial planned duration of an action may not be lower than **24 months** nor exceed **48 months**.

Sectors or themes

- Rule of Law
- Environmental protection and Climate change



- Cultural diversity
- Media and digital literacy
- Dialogue on the EU and Serbia's EU Accession Process

Location

Actions must take place in Serbia.

Types of action/activity

Lot 1- Support to Media

The actions/activities must relate to one or more of specific sectors or themes.

- Print, radio, TV and online productions that include series of investigative articles and features;
- Documentaries and drama films (one-off or series) intended primarily for the purposes of television broadcasting;
- Creative educational and cultural programmes for youth;
- Production of the new multimedia productions and development of innovative digital archives;
- Analytical and investigative journalism trainings for local media that include support to third parties covering specific sector/themes relevant to this Call for Proposals.

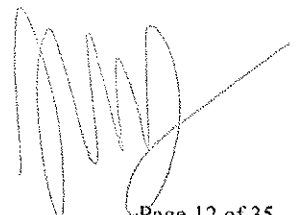
The following types of action/activity are ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- actions concerned with existing media programmes and regular news programmes, talks shows and current affairs debate programmes;
- actions essentially focused on construction activities, purchase of equipment, purchase and/or renovation of building or offices;
- actions aiming predominantly at charitable donations and profit making activities;
- actions which are already funded by other Community programmes and undertaken before the date of contract signature.

Lot 2 - Support to Civil Society

The actions/activities must relate to one or more of specific sectors or themes.

- CSOs initiatives focused on fight against corruption, greater transparency, openness and accountability of public administration;
- Environmental advocacy, education and capacity building;
- Cultural events and educational programmes that promote cultural diversity;



- Joint activities of young people from different cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds that promote respect for cultural diversity;
- Media and digital literacy in the context of civic engagement and positive youth development;
- Strengthening networks for the participation of the civil society in the EU accession process.

The following types of action/activity are ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences or congresses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- actions essentially focused on construction activities, purchase of equipment, purchase and/or renovation of building or offices;
- actions aiming predominantly at charitable donations and profit making activities;
- actions which are already funded by other Community programmes and undertaken before the date of contract signature.

Financial support to third parties¹³

For Lot 1- Support to Media

Applicants may propose financial support to third parties in order to help achieving the objectives of the action that targets analytical and investigative journalism training activities as described in 2.1.4.

The maximum amount of financial support per third party is EUR 10,000.

Under this call, financial support to third parties may not be the main purpose of the action.

In compliance with the present guidelines and notably of any conditions or restrictions in this section, the lead applicant should define mandatorily in section 2.1.1 of the grant application form:

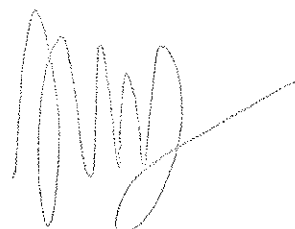
- (i) the objectives and results to be obtained with the financial support
- (ii) the different types of activities eligible for financial support, on the basis of a fixed list
- (iii) the types of persons or categories of persons which may receive financial support
- (iv) the criteria for selecting these entities and giving the financial support
- (v) the criteria for determining the exact amount of financial support for each third entity, and
- (vi) the maximum amount which may be given.

In all events, the mandatory conditions set above for giving financial support (points (i) to (vi)) have to be strictly defined in the grant contract as to avoid any exercise of discretion.

For the purposes of Lot 1 of the Call for Proposals, third parties are local media in Serbia.

For Lot 2 - Support to Civil Society

¹³ These third parties are neither affiliated entity(ies) nor associates nor contractors.



Applicants may propose financial support to third parties in order to help achieving the objectives of the action. All the types of actions which may be financed under Lot 2 are also eligible for financial support to third parties.

The maximum amount of financial support per third party is EUR 10,000.

Under this call, financial support to third parties may not be the main purpose of the action.

In compliance with the present guidelines and notably of any conditions or restrictions in this section, the lead applicant should define mandatorily in section 2.1.1 of the grant application form:

- (i) the objectives and results to be obtained with the financial support
- (ii) the different types of activities eligible for financial support, on the basis of a fixed list
- (iii) the types of persons or categories of persons which may receive financial support
- (iv) the criteria for selecting these entities and giving the financial support
- (v) the criteria for determining the exact amount of financial support for each third entity, and
- (vi) the maximum amount which may be given.

In all events, the mandatory conditions set above for giving financial support (points (i) to (vi)) have to be strictly defined in the grant contract as to avoid any exercise of discretion.

For the purposes of Lot 2 of the Call for Proposals, third parties are civil society organisations in Serbia.

Visibility

The applicants must take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the European Union has financed or co-financed the action. As far as possible, actions that are wholly or partially funded by the European Union must incorporate information and communication activities designed to raise the awareness of specific or general audiences of the reasons for the action and the EU support for the action in the country or region concerned, as well as the results and the impact of this support.

Applicants must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU financing (see the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU external actions specified and published by the European Commission at https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/communication-and-visibility-manual-eu-external-actions_en).

Number of applications and grants per applicants / affiliated entities

The lead applicant **may not** submit more than 1 application per lot under this call for proposals.

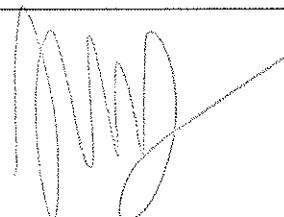
The lead applicant **may not** be awarded more than 1 grant per lot under this call for proposals.

The lead applicant **may not** be a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in another application of the same lot at the same time.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity **may not** submit more than 1 application per lot under this call for proposals.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity **may not** be awarded more than 1 grant per lot under this call for proposals.

2.1.5 Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included



Only 'eligible costs' can be covered by a grant. The categories of costs that are eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and an overall ceiling for 'eligible costs'.

The reimbursement of eligible costs may be based on any or a combination of the following forms:

- actual costs incurred by the beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies)
- one or more simplified cost options.

Simplified cost options may take the form of:

- **unit costs:** covering all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by reference to an amount per unit.
- **lump sums:** covering in global terms all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance.
- **flat-rate financing:** covering specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by applying a percentage fixed ex ante.

The amounts or rates have to be based on estimates using objective data such as statistical data or any other objective means or with reference to certified or auditable historical data of the applicants or the affiliated entity(ies). The methods used to determine the amounts or rates of unit costs, lump sums or flat-rates must comply with the criteria established in Annex K, and especially ensure that the costs correspond fairly to the actual costs incurred by the beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies), are in line with their accounting practices, no profit is made and the costs are not already covered by other sources of funding (no double funding). Refer to Annex K for directions and a checklist of controls to assess the minimum necessary conditions that provide reasonable assurance for the acceptance of the proposed amounts.

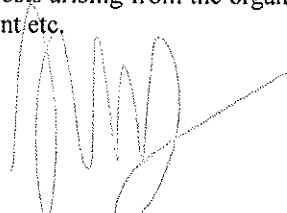
Applicants proposing this form of reimbursement, must clearly indicate in worksheet no.1 of Annex B, each heading/item of eligible costs concerned by this type of financing, i.e. add the reference in capital letters to "UNIT COST" (per month/flight etc), "LUMPSUM" or "FLAT RATE" in the Unit column. (see example in Annex K)

Additionally in Annex B, in the second column of worksheet no.2, "Justification of the estimated costs" per each of the corresponding budget item or heading applicants must:

- describe the information and methods used to establish the amounts of unit costs, lump sums and/or flat-rates, to which costs they refer, etc.
- clearly explain the formulas for calculation of the final eligible amount¹⁴
- identify the beneficiary who will use the simplified cost option (in case of affiliated entity, specify first the beneficiary), in order to verify the maximum amount per each beneficiary (which includes if applicable simplified cost options of its affiliated entity(ies))

At contracting phase, the Contracting Authority decides whether to accept the proposed amounts or rates on the basis of the provisional budget submitted by the applicants, by analysing factual data of grants carried out by the applicants or of similar actions and by performing checks established by Annex K.

¹⁴ Examples:- for staff costs: number of hours or days of work * hourly or daily rate pre-set according to the category of personnel concerned;- for travel expenses: distance in km * pre-set cost of transport per km; number of days * daily allowance pre-set according to the country;- for specific costs arising from the organization of an event: number of participants at the event * pre-set total cost per participant/etc.



The total amount of financing on the basis of simplified cost options that can be authorised by the Contracting Authority for any of the applicants individually (including simplified cost options proposed by their own affiliated entities) cannot exceed EUR 60 000 (the indirect costs are not taken into account).

Recommendations to award a grant are always subject to the condition that the checks preceding the signing of the grant contract do not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget (such as arithmetical errors, inaccuracies, unrealistic costs and ineligible costs). The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the Contracting Authority to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. It is not possible to increase the grant or the percentage of EU co-financing as a result of these corrections.

It is therefore in the applicants' interest to provide a **realistic and cost-effective budget**

The simplified cost option may also take the form of an apportionment of Field Office's costs.

Field Office means a local infrastructure set up in one of the countries where the action is implemented or a nearby country. (Where the action is implemented in several third countries there can be more than one Field Office). That may consist of costs for local office as well as human resources.

A Field Office may be exclusively dedicated to the action financed (or co-financed) by the EU or may be used for other projects implemented in the partner country. When the Field Office is used for other projects, only the portion of capitalised and operating costs which corresponds to the duration of the action and the rate of actual use of the field office for the purpose of the action may be declared as eligible direct costs.

The portion of costs attributable to the action can be declared as actual costs or determined by the beneficiary(ies) on the basis of a simplified allocation method (apportionment).

The method of allocation has to be:

1. Compliant with the beneficiary's usual accounting and management practices and applied in a consistent manner regardless of the source of funding and
2. Based on an objective, fair and reliable allocation keys. (Please refer to Annex K to have examples of acceptable allocation keys).

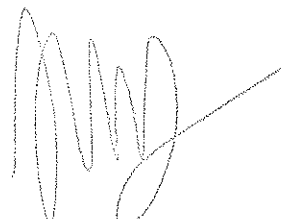
A description prepared by the entity of the allocation method used to determine Field Office's costs in accordance with the entity's usual cost accounting and management practices and explaining how the method satisfy condition 1 and 2 indicated above, has to be presented in a separate sheet and annexed to the Budget.

The method will be assessed and accepted by the evaluation committee and the Contracting Authority at contracting phase. The applicant is invited to submit (where relevant) the list of contracts to which the methodology proposed had been already applied and for which proper application was confirmed by an expenditure verification.

At the time of carrying out the expenditure verifications, the auditors will check if the costs reported are compliant with the method described by the beneficiary(ies) and accepted by the Contracting Authority.

Adequate record and documentation must be kept by the beneficiary(ies) to prove the compliance of the simplified allocation method used with the conditions set out above. Upon request of the beneficiary(ies), this compliance can be assessed and approved ex-ante by an independent external auditor. In such a case, the simplified allocation method will be automatically accepted by the evaluation committee and it will not be challenged ex post.

When costs are declared on the basis of such allocation method the amount charged to the action is to be indicated in the column "TOTAL COSTS" and the mention "APPORTIONMENT" is to be indicated in the column "units" (under budget heading 1 (Human resources) and 4 (Local Office) of the Budget).



It has to be noted that the EUR 60,000 limit, otherwise applicable to costs declared on the basis of simplified cost options, is not relevant for costs declared following apportionment of Field Offices.

Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under this call for proposals, costs must comply with the provisions of Article 14 of the General Conditions to the standard grant contract (see Annex G of the guidelines).

Salary costs of the personnel of national administrations may be eligible to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the action were not undertaken.

Contingency reserve

The budget may include a contingency reserve not exceeding 5% of the estimated direct eligible costs. It can only be used with the **prior written authorisation** of the Contracting Authority.

Eligible indirect costs

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding, but the total must not exceed 7% of the estimated total eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another budget heading in the standard grant contract. The lead applicant may be asked to justify the percentage requested before the grant contract is signed. However, once the flat rate has been fixed in the Special Conditions of the grant contract, no supporting documents need to be provided.

If any of the applicants or affiliated entity(ies) is in receipt of an operating grant financed by the EU, it may not claim indirect costs on its incurred costs within the proposed budget for the action.

Contributions in kind

Contributions in kind mean the provision of goods or services to a beneficiaries or affiliated entities free of charge by a third party. As contributions in kind do not involve any expenditure for beneficiaries or affiliated entities, they are not eligible costs.

Contributions in kind may not be treated as co-financing.

However, if the description of the action as proposed includes contributions in kind, the contributions have to be made.

Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- debts and debt service charges (interest);
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- costs declared by the beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme receiving a European Union (including through EDF) grant;
- purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary for the direct implementation of the action, in which case ownership must be transferred, in accordance with Article 7.5 of the General Conditions of the standard grant contract, at the latest at the end of the action;
- currency exchange losses;
- credit to third parties;

- in kind contributions;
- taxes, including VAT, duties and charges;
- profit or surplus of the receipts over the eligible costs: no grant may give rise to profits, i.e. it must only balance income and expenditure for the action.

Please take special note of the provision of Article 14 of General Conditions with regards to eligible and ineligible costs, as well as rules to be respected set by Annex IV related to all secondary procurement activities.

2.2 HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

To apply for this call for proposals the lead applicants need to:

- I. Provide information about the organisations involved in the action. Please note that the registration of this data in **PADOR is obligatory**¹⁵ for this call for proposals:

Concept note step: Registration is obligatory for lead applicants applying for EU contributions of more than EUR 60 000.

Full application step: Registration is obligatory for co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies). Lead applicants must make sure that their PADOR profile is up to date.

- II. Provide information about the action in the documents listed under sections 2.2.2 (concept note) and 2.2.5 (full application). Please note that online submission via **PROSPECT is obligatory** for this call,

PADOR is an on-line database in which organisations register and update information concerning their entity. Organisations registered in PADOR get a unique ID (EuropeAid ID) which they **must mention** in their application. PADOR is accessible via the website: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/pador_en

It is strongly recommended to register in PADOR well in advance and not to wait until the last minute before the deadline to submit your application in PROSPECT.

If it is impossible to register online in PADOR for technical reasons, the applicants and/or affiliated entity(ies) must complete the 'PADOR off-line form'¹⁶ attached to these guidelines. This form must be sent **together with the application**, by the submission deadline (see sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.5).

Before starting using PADOR and PROSPECT, please read the user guides available on the website. All technical questions related the use of these systems should be addressed to the IT helpdesk at EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu **via the online support form in PROSPECT.**

2.2.1 Concept note content

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the concept note instructions in the grant application form¹⁷ annexed to these guidelines (Annex A.1). Applicants must apply in English.

Please note that:

¹⁵ Natural persons who apply for a grant (if so allowed in the guidelines for applicants) do not have to register in PADOR. In this case, the information included in PROSPECT and the grant application form is sufficient.

¹⁶ Which corresponds to sections 3 and 4 of the full application form – Annex A.2.

¹⁷ The grant application form consists of Annex A.1 – concept note and Annex A.2 – full application form.

1. In the concept note lead applicants must provide only an estimate of the **requested EU contribution**, as well as an indicative percentage of this contribution in relation to the total eligible costs of the action. A detailed budget is to be submitted only by lead applicants invited to submit a full application in the second phase

2. The elements outlined in the concept note may not be modified in the full application form. The EU contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 20%. Lead applicants are free to adapt the requested EU contribution as a percentage of the total eligible costs within the minimum and maximum amounts and percentages provided in section 1.3. The lead applicant may replace a co-applicant or an affiliated entity only in duly justified cases (e.g. bankruptcy of initial co-applicant or affiliated entity). In this case the new co-applicant/affiliated entity must be of a similar nature as the initial one. The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the action if unforeseen circumstances outside the scope of the applicants have taken place following the submission of the concept note and require such adaptation (risk of action not being carried out). In such cases the duration must remain within the limits imposed by the guidelines for applicants. An explanation/justification of the relevant replacement/adjustment shall be included in section 2.1.1 of the grant application form.

Own contributions by the applicants can be replaced by other donors' contributions at any time.

3. Only the concept note form will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that this document contains **all relevant information** concerning the action. **No additional annexes should be sent.**

Any error or major discrepancy related to the concept note instructions may lead to the rejection of the concept note.

Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is not sufficient to conduct an objective assessment.

2.2.2 *Where and how to send concept notes*

The concept note together with the declaration by the lead applicant (Annex A.1 section 2) **must be submitted online via PROSPECT** <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prospect> following the instructions given in the PROSPECT user manual.

Upon submission of a concept note online, the lead applicant will receive an automatic confirmation of receipt in its PROSPECT profile.

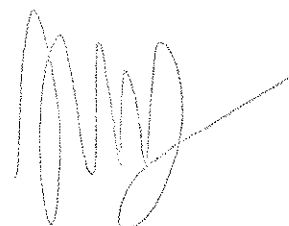
Please note that incomplete concept notes may be rejected. Lead applicants are advised to verify that their concept note is complete by using the checklist for concept note (Annex A.1, Instructions).

2.2.3 *Deadline for submission of concept notes*

The deadline for the submission of concept notes is **19/05/2017 at 15 hrs CET** (Brussels date and time). In order to convert this deadline to local time you can use any online time converter tool that takes into account time zones and winter/summer time changes (example available [here](#))¹⁸ **The lead applicant is strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit** its concept note, since heavy Internet traffic or a fault with the Internet connection (including electricity failure, etc.) could lead to difficulties in submission. The Contacting Authority cannot be held responsible for any delay due to such aforementioned difficulties.

Any concept note submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

¹⁸ For example: <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html>.



2.2.4 Further information about concept notes

Information session on this call for proposals will be held in Belgrade. The schedule of the information session will be published at a later date at the following websites:

- EuropeAid: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome>
- EU Delegation to the Republic of Serbia: www.europa.rs

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of concept notes to the address(es) below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: DELEGATION-SERBIA-FCS@eeas.europa.eu

The Contracting Authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for submission of concept notes.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entity(ies), an action or specific activities.

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure will be published on the EuropeAid website: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome> and the EU Delegation in Serbia website: <http://europa.rs>, as appropriate. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

All questions related to registration in PADOR or the online submission via PROSPECT should be addressed to the IT helpdesk at EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu **via the online support form in PROSPECT**. Please note that the working languages of the IT support are English, French and Spanish. Therefore, users are invited to send their questions in those languages should they wish to benefit from an optimum response time.

2.2.5 Full applications

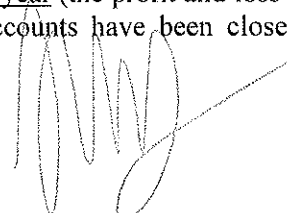
Lead applicants invited to submit a full application following pre-selection of their concept note must do so using the full application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex A.2).

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the full application instructions at the end of Annex A.2. Lead applicants must submit their full applications in the same language as their concept notes.

Please note that:

1. The elements outlined in the concept note cannot be modified by the lead applicant in the full application form. The EU contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 20%, although lead applicants are free to adapt the percentage of co-financing required within the minimum and maximum amount and percentages of co-financing, as laid down in these guidelines under section 1.3. The lead applicant may replace a co-applicant or an affiliated entity only in duly justified cases (e.g. bankruptcy of initial co-applicant or affiliated entity). In this case the new co-applicant/affiliated entity must be of a similar nature as the initial one. The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the action if unforeseen circumstances outside the scope of the applicants have taken place following the submission of the concept note and require such adaptation (risk of action not being carried out). An explanation/justification of the relevant replacement/adjustment shall be included in section 2.1.1 of the grant application form.

2. A copy of the lead applicant's accounts of the latest financial year (the profit and loss account and the balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed) must be



uploaded in PADOR by the full application deadline. A copy of the latest account is neither required from (if any) the co-applicant(s) nor from (if any) affiliated entity(ies)).

3. Only the full application form and the published annexes which have to be filled in (budget, logical framework) will be transmitted to the evaluators (and assessors, if used). It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain **ALL the relevant information** concerning the action. **No additional annexes should be sent.**

Any error or any major inconsistency related to the full application instructions (e.g. if the amounts in the budget worksheets are inconsistent) may lead to the rejection of the application.

Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is unclear and thus prevents the Contracting Authority from conducting an objective assessment.

2.2.6 Where and how to send full applications

Full application forms together with the budget, the logical framework and the declaration by the lead applicant must be submitted online via PROSPECT <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prospect> following the instructions given in the users' manual.

Upon submission of the full application online, the lead applicants will receive an automatic confirmation of receipt in their PROSPECT profile.

Please note that incomplete applications may be rejected. Lead applicants are advised to verify that their application is complete using the checklist (Annex A.2, Instructions).

2.2.7 Deadline for submission of full applications

The deadline for the submission of full applications will be indicated in the letter sent to the lead applicants whose application has been pre-selected. This letter will appear online automatically in the PROSPECT profile of the lead applicant.

Lead applicants are strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit their full applications, since heavy Internet traffic or a fault with the Internet connection (including electricity failure, etc.) could lead to difficulties in submission. The Contracting Authority cannot be held responsible for any delay due to such afore-mentioned difficulties.

Any application submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

2.2.8 Further information about full applications

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of full applications to the addresses listed below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: DELEGATION-SERBIA-FCS@ec.europa.eu

The Contracting Authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

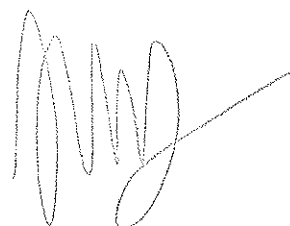
Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for the submission of applications.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entity(ies), or an action.

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure, will be published on the EuropeAid website <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome> and the EU

Delegation in Serbia website: <http://europa.rs> . It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

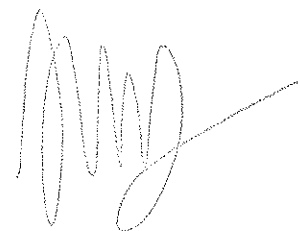
All questions related to registration in PADOR or the online submission via PROSPECT should be addressed to the IT helpdesk at EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu **via the online support form in PROSPECT**. Please note that the working languages of the IT support are: English French and Spanish. Therefore users are invited to send their questions in English, French or Spanish should they wish to benefit from an optimum response time.

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2.3 EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the Contracting Authority with the possible assistance of external assessors. All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in section 2.1, the application will be rejected on this sole basis.

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STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION

During the opening¹⁹ and administrative check (including the eligibility check of the action) the following will be assessed:

- If the deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will be automatically rejected.
- If the concept note satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist in the instructions included in Annex A.1. This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The concept notes that pass this check will be evaluated on the relevance and design of the proposed action.

The concept notes will receive an overall score out of 50 in line with the evaluation grid below. The evaluation will also check the compliance with the instructions on how to complete the concept note (Annex A.1).

The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheadings. Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Evaluation Grid

Section	Maximum Score
1. Relevance of the action	30
1.1. How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the Call for Proposals?	5x2*
1.2. How relevant to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies) or region(s) is the proposal (including synergy with other EU initiatives and avoidance of duplication)?	5x2*
1.3. How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5
1.4. Does the proposal contain specific added-value elements, such as environmental issues, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of indigenous peoples, or innovation and best practices?	5
2. Design of the action	20
2.1. How coherent is the overall design of the action? In particular, does it reflect the analysis of the problems involved, take into account external factors and relevant stakeholders?	5x2*
2.2. Is the action feasible and consistent in relation to the objectives and expected results?	5x2*
Maximum total score	50

¹⁹ Only where some applications have been submitted offline.

*these scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance

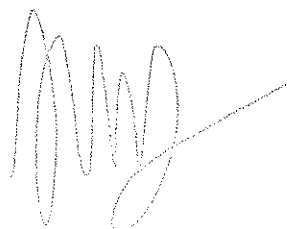
Concept notes with a score lower than 30 will be rejected.

Concept notes that reach the above threshold will be ranked by score. The highest scoring applications will be pre-selected until the limit of 200% of the available budget for this call for proposals is reached.

The amount of requested contributions of each concept note will be based on the indicative financial envelopes for each lot, where relevant.

Lead applicants will receive a letter indicating the reference number of their application and the respective results. This letter will automatically appear online in the PROSPECT profile of the lead applicant. Lead applicants who, in exceptional cases (see section 2.2), had to submit their application by post or hand-delivery will receive the letter by email or by post if no e-mail address was provided.

The pre-selected lead applicants will subsequently be invited to submit full applications.

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