



Contracting Authority:

Central Financing and Contracting Department (CFCD)

Ministry of Finance

Support to Enhancement, Sustainability and Development of an Active Civil Society

National Programme for Transition Assistance and Institutional Building
2009

Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)

Guidelines for Grant Applicants

Open Call for Proposals

Budget line: 22.020100

Reference: **EuropeAid/133-337/L/ACT/MK**

Deadline for submission of proposals: **29th October 2012**

NOTICE

This is an open Call for Proposals, where all documents are submitted at one stage (Concept Note and full proposal).

However, in the first instance, only the Concept Notes will be evaluated. Thereafter, for the applicants whose Concept Notes have been pre-selected, evaluation of the full proposal will be carried out. Further to the evaluation of the full proposals, an eligibility check will be performed for those which are provisionally selected. This check will be undertaken on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the Contracting Authority and the signed "Declaration by the Applicant" sent together with the application.

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SUPPORT TO ENHANCEMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF AN ACTIVE CIVIL SOCIETY

1.1 BACKGROUND

Civil society has played a notable role in the history of the Beneficiary Country. The legal framework, based on the Constitution, consists primarily of the Law on Citizen Associations and Foundations¹. The first Law on Citizen Associations and Foundations was adopted in 1998 as a necessity emerging from the new democratic political system. The law defined civil society organisations as associations, based on values and interests, non-artisan, not-for-profit and not for business activities. This law did not regulate trade unions, chambers of commerce, political parties, churches and religious communities regulated under different regulations.

Since April 2010² a new Law on Associations and Foundations has been in force. The most important changes introduced with the new Law include further liberalisation and practice of the right for association, extended to legal entities, foreigners and minors. It also introduced a possibility for civil society organisations to perform directly economic activities; to obtain a status of public benefit organisation and to be entitled to perform public authorisations.

The political and socio-economic reforms on-going in the Beneficiary country require an active involvement of various stakeholders, including the **civil society organisations (CSOs)**. Today, the civil society in the Beneficiary country is characterized by huge heterogeneity, representing various sectors and different field of activities, reflecting the current social needs and the process of a gradual wider diversification of interests and trends. According to the data from the re-registration procedure under the new Law, the number of registered citizen associations in the country is currently 3506. A majority of the organisations are members of a federation, platform, coalition, network or other umbrella body, based on type of target groups and field of activities, such as: democracy and rule of law, human rights, gender issues, youth and children, cultural diversification and dialogue, education, employment, environment, etc.

Promoting the aim for closer cooperation with the civil society and encouraging their active involvement in the process of policy development, the Government established, in 2004, the Unit for Cooperation with Non-governmental organisations (NGOs). It operates within the Sector for Policy Analysis and Coordination in the General Secretariat of the Government. In 2007, the Government adopted a **Strategy for Cooperation of the Government with the Civil Sector (2007-2011)**³ with the main objective of providing an overall guidance for a national policy for cooperation and supporting the civil society, based on agreed principles and priorities. It sets out a framework for mechanisms and measures that should aim at: enabling the state administration to develop joint partnership with the civil society; increasing citizens' engagement in the policy and decision-making processes; creating more favourable legal and institutional environment for sustainable development of the CSOs and for implementation of the standards of the European Union in this area; and improving access to public information.

*A Code of Good Practice for Financial Support to Citizen's Association and Foundations*⁴, *Programme for Financing Programme Activities of Citizen's Association and Foundations for 2009*

1 Official Gazette No. 31/98, 29/07

2 Official Journal N52/16.04.2010 available at http://www.nvosorobotka.gov.mk/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=15&dir=DESC&order=date&limit=10&limitstart=0

3 The **Strategy for Cooperation of the Government with the Civil Sector** is available on: http://www.vlada.mk/files/Strategija_za_sorobotka_na_Vladata_so_graganskiot_sektor_2007-2011.pdf

4 Official Gazette of the RM, No. 130/07

*and 2010*⁵ *and Decision for Criteria and Procedures for Allocation of Resources for Financing Programme Activities of Citizen's Association and Foundations from the Budget of the Beneficiary country*⁶ were adopted by the Government to enable transparency and to define criteria and monitoring procedures of the financial assistance granted by the Government to CSOs.

Regarding the **funding of the civil society** the national legislation prescribes the state budget as one of the source of funding of the CSOs. Presently, the **Government** finances citizen associations and foundations through several sources, allocated through the budget of the ministries and other governmental institutions.

Additionally, the relevant projects under **IPA National Programmes** contribute to strengthening the capacity of the Unit for cooperation with NGOs and implementation of the Strategy for cooperation of the Government with the Civil Society Sector. IPA 2007; a grant scheme that contributes towards the strengthening of the institutional capacities and development of the civil society through improved involvement of CSOs in the process of drafting legislation and regulations, increased participation of CSOs in providing social services and community-based activities, improved capacities to mobilise resources and voluntary work and improved involvement in the field of democracy and the rule of law. This fosters synergies between state actors and the civil society for joint mobilisation of the potential of the EU integration process (IPA 2008). The grants scheme under IPA 2009 will strengthen the capacities of the civil society and provide support to selected priority areas, such as: CSOs' involvement in fight against corruption and organised crime; strengthening the CSO management and networking, including joint implementation of community based activities and social services, mobilisation of resources and voluntary work, institutional cooperation among CSOs and with the local government.

Institutional Framework

As a candidate country, the Beneficiary country must achieve 'conferral of management' based on accreditation of the Decentralised Implementation System (DIS).

According to the DIS procedures the Central Financing and Contracting Department (CFCD) will be the contracting authority for this Call for Proposals and will be responsible for all procedural and administrative aspects of the tendering process, contracting matters and financial management including payment of project activities. The Head of CFCD will act as the Programme Authorizing Officer (PAO) of the project.

The General Secretariat, Sector for Policy Analysis and Coordination – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs - will be responsible for tasks connected with programming, technical implementation of the project, monitoring and reporting.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

The **overall objective** of the Call for Proposals is to promote an active civil society and to improve the environment conducive to development and sustainability of civil society organisations in the country as proactive social actors in the implementation of the EU Acquis.

The **specific objective (s)** of this Call for Proposals is to strengthen the capacity of Civil Society in the fight against corruption and organised crime, in the protection of human rights, and the CSO management and networking, including joint implementation of community-based activities and social services, resource mobilisation, mobilising voluntary work, institutional cooperation between CSOs and between CSOs and the central and local government.

The specific objectives of this Call for Proposals will be achieved by providing grants to CSOs in the following priority areas:

5 Official Gazette of the RM, No. 3/09 and No. 8/10

6 Official Gazette of the RM, No. 23/09

Priority area 1. Fight against corruption and organised crime (including fight against trafficking of human beings and fight against illegal substances);

Priority area 2. Strengthening the CSOs' management and networking, including joint implementation of community based activities and social services, resource mobilisation, mobilising voluntary work, institutional cooperation between CSOs and between CSOs and the central and local government;

Priority area 3. Protection of human rights, with special focus on vulnerable people, support to victims of family violence, mobilisation of local municipalities in preventing of HIV/AIDS/STI amongst the most at risk adolescents, and supporting the activities within the Decade for Roma inclusion 2005 – 2015 and the National Strategy for Roma.

The eligible thematic priorities and types of action that stem from the above objectives are further specified in Section 2.1.3. Moreover, if a project proposal within any of the priority areas includes some of the following aspects it would be considered as a **value-added element**:

- Actions implemented by applicants **established in the Beneficiary country**. Efforts should be made by the applicants to reach out to **marginalised communities**.
- Actions **in networks to strengthen common approaches and agendas**.
- Actions which incorporate **gender perspectives**.

The value-added elements referred above are introduced in this Call to give weight in the technical evaluation undertaken by the Evaluation committee (Concept note evaluation grid and evaluation criteria 1.4).

For information on the eligible type of actions for each of the priority areas please refer to section 2.1.3.

1.3 FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is **EUR 1 500 000**. The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

LOT 1: Priority area 1: Fight against corruption and organised crime

Max Amount for Priority area 1: **EUR: 500 000**

LOT 2: Priority area 2: Strengthening CSOs' management and networking

Max Amount for Priority area 2: **EUR: 500 000**

LOT 3: Priority area 3: Protection of human rights, with special focus on vulnerable people

Max Amount for Priority area 3: **EUR: 500 000**

In the case where the foreseen total amount for a specific priority area cannot be used fully due to insufficient number or quality of proposals received, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to reallocate the remaining funds to another priority area, i.e. lot.

Size of grants

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

- **minimum amount: EUR 30,000**
- **maximum amount: EUR 150,000**

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: 60 % of the total estimated eligible costs of the action.
- Maximum percentage: 100% of the total eligible costs of the action (see also section 2.1.4).

Any grant requested under this Call for Proposal must further be limited to 90% of the estimated total accepted costs^{7, 8}.

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 the applicant's or partners' own resources, or from sources other than the European Union budget or the European Development Fund.

2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of actions financed under this Call, in conformity with the provisions of the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EU external actions, which is applicable to the present call (available on the Internet at this address: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/index_en.htm).

2.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

- applicant(s) which may request a grant (2.1.1), and their partners (2.1.2);
- actions for which a grant may be awarded (2.1.3);
- types of cost which may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant (2.1.4).

2.1.1 Eligibility of applicants: who may apply?

(1) In order to be eligible for a grant, applicants must:

- be non profit making legal entities (individuals are not eligible, nor are informal alliances or initiatives without legal status) operational / active for at least one year before the call is launched and
- be civil society organisations, including non-governmental organisations⁹ and community based organisations and

⁷ Estimated total accepted costs = estimated total eligible costs + taxes, including VAT, where the beneficiary can show it cannot reclaim it

⁸ If there are no taxes, or where they may be reclaimed, this percentage will apply to the total eligible costs to ensure the required co-financing.

- be established in¹⁰ a Member State of the European Union, a country that is a beneficiary of the IPA Regulation, a country that is a beneficiary of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument or a Member State of the European Economic area and
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with their partners, not acting as an intermediary.

(2) Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations which are listed in Section 2.3.3 of the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EU external actions (available from the following Internet address:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/index_en.htm);

In part B, section 7 of the grant application form (“Declaration by the applicant”), applicants must declare that they do not fall into any of these situations.

2.1.2 Partnerships and eligibility of partners

In case applicants are established in a country other than that the beneficiary country where the action will be implemented (as defined in Section 2.1.1.) they must act **with at least one** partner organisation from the beneficiary country. In all other cases, the applicants may act individually or with partner organisations.

Partners

Applicants’ partners participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the grant beneficiary. They must therefore satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable on the grant beneficiary as defined in section 2.1.1.

The following are not partners and do not have to sign the “partnership statement”:

- Associates

Other organisations 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. The associates have to be mentioned in Part B section 5 - “Associates of the Applicant participating in the Action” of the Grant Application Form.

- Contractors

The grant beneficiaries have the possibility to award contracts. Contractors are neither partners nor associates, and are subject to the procurement rules set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

The applicant will act as the lead organisation and, if selected as the contracting party (as the „Beneficiary“).

9 i.e. not a state, national or international governmental institution or organisation or an organisation effectively controlled by such an institution. Whether a potential applicant is likely to be considered as effectively controlled by such an institution will depend on the extent to which such an applicant can demonstrate that it is independent of the state as regards decision-making, budgetary control and the appointment of staff (including members of its controlling body).

10 To be determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a “Memorandum of Understanding” has been concluded.

Definition: An action (or project) is composed of a set of activities.

Duration: The planned duration of an action may not be **lower than 12 months nor exceed 18 months**.

Sectors or themes:

The specific themes to which the actions **must correspond, should be in** one of the following **three priority areas (named lots):**

Lot 1: Fight against corruption and organised crime

Lot 2: Strengthening CSOs' management and networking

Lot 3: Protection of human rights, with special focus on vulnerable people

All proposed actions/projects must clearly belong to **only one of the above lots**, enumerated in the present section of the Call for proposals, and their results must indisputably inscribe themselves within.

Location: All actions must take place in the Beneficiary country.

Types of action:

1: Fight against corruption and organised crime

1.1. Actions aiming at supporting the fight against trafficking of human beings; illegal substances, including related supporting activities with a focus on schools;

1.2 Actions on anti-corruption and/or organized crime prevention and developing common activities between the CSOs and the media;

1.3 Actions aiming at supporting and improving CSO's capacity to play a monitoring role in sectors critically exposed to corruption problems;

1.4 Promoting and implementing the best practices from EU member states, adapting them to the local environment, especially in the field of public administrations and the fight against corruption.

2: Strengthening CSOs' management and networking

2.1 Actions aimed at stimulating and improving the participation of the CSOs in joint implementation of community based activities and social services, social service provider's sector, offering the possibility of joint implementation activities on local level through partnership between the CSOs and local authorities in areas such as: social welfare, special education, preventive health and other favourable local community initiatives.

2.2 Actions aimed at better resource mobilisation by the CSOs, improvement of their management capacity, mobilising voluntary work and institutional cooperation between CSOs and between CSOs and the central and local government.

2.3 Actions aimed at providing support by the umbrella CSOs to local CSOs in management, fundraising and networking issues (e.g. social welfare, environment, rule of law) and developing coordination tools among CSOs in the country, promoting good practice for workable and operational coordination between CSOs and the local government.

2.4. Actions aimed at supporting long-term partnerships between the Beneficiary country and the EU institutions and regional partners.

3: Protection of human rights, with special focus on vulnerable people

3.1 Actions aiming at raising the general awareness of the public on the protection of human rights with special focus on vulnerable people, people with disabilities and support to victims of family violence as well as developing an environment of tolerance for diversity.

3.2. Actions including initiatives to acquire better resource mobilisation of the local municipalities for the prevention of HIV/AIDS/STI amongst the most at risk adolescents.

3.3. Actions aimed at supporting the priorities of the Decade for Roma Inclusion 2005 – 2015 and the National Strategy for Roma (such as: increasing the availability of quality school education for Roma children, improving their achievements in school and reducing their dropout rate, encouraging the active participation of Roma children's parents in the educational process).

All the above actions listed for each priority are indicative and not exhaustive.

Types of activity

Funds can be provided for the following types of activities within the framework of the eligible actions as per section 2.1.3 (the list of activities below is indicative and not exhaustive):

- carrying out research and analysis,
- convening and debating,
- drafting strategic policy documents,
- educating and capacity building,
- awareness raising and campaigning,
- exchanging know-how and applying best practices,
- introducing innovative models and approaches,
- monitoring public policies implementation,
- networking and partnership building,
- promoting citizens participation in creating and monitoring of public policies,
- other actions in the context of the general purpose of the grant scheme.

Note that the applicant 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 laid down and published by the European Commission at (see

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index_en.htm).

The following types of action are ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with academic research, feasibility studies and other one-off events with no direct impact on the target group;
- projects for the exclusive benefit of individuals or restricted groups of individuals;
- projects supporting political parties or of political/partisan nature;
- core funding of the applicant or its partners;

- retrospective financing for projects already in implementation or completed;
- humanitarian activities;
- actions concerned with infrastructure investments;
- actions concerned only or mainly with the procurement of equipment;
- actions where a considerable part of the budget is planned for the provision of external services and do not involve the active participation of the applicant and partner organisations

Number of applications and grants per applicant

An applicant **may not submit more than 1 application** under this Call for Proposals.

An applicant **may not be awarded more than 1 grant** under this Call for Proposals.

An applicant **may not at the same time be a partner** in another application.

Partners **may not take part in more than one application** under this Call for Proposals.

2.1.4 Eligibility of costs: costs which may be taken into consideration for the grant

Only "eligible costs" can be taken into account for a grant. The categories of costs considered as eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and a ceiling for "eligible costs". Note that the eligible costs must be based on real costs based on supporting documents (except for subsistence costs and indirect costs where flat-rate funding applies).

Lump sums and flat-rate financing (except for subsistence costs and indirect costs) may not be used and will be considered **ineligible**.

Recommendations to award a grant are always subject to the condition that the checking process which precedes the signing of the contract does not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget (for instance arithmetical errors, inaccuracies or unrealistic costs and other 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. The amount of the grant and the percentage of the EU co-financing as a result of these corrections may not be increased.

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

Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under the Call for Proposals, costs must comply with the provisions of Article 14 of the General Conditions to the Standard Grant Contract (see Annex F of the Guidelines).

Contingency reserve

A contingency reserve **not exceeding 5%** of the estimated direct eligible costs may be included in the Budget of the Action. It can only be used with the **prior written authorisation** of the Contracting Authority.

Eligible indirect costs (overheads)

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding fixed at **not more than 7%** of the estimated total eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another heading of the budget of the standard grant contract. The applicant may be asked to justify the requested percentage before contracting. However, once the flat-rate has been fixed in the special conditions of the standard grant contract, no supporting documents need to be provided.

If the applicant is in receipt of an operating grant financed from the EU, no indirect costs may be claimed within the proposed budget for the action.

Contributions in kind

Contributions in kind are not considered actual expenditure and are not eligible costs. The contributions in kind may not be treated as co-financing by the Beneficiary.

Notwithstanding the above, if the description of the action as proposed by the Beneficiary foresees the contributions in kind, such contributions have to be provided.

Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- Taxes, including value added taxes. Nevertheless, these may be considered as part of the estimated total accepted costs of the action for the purpose of co-financing where the Beneficiary (or the Beneficiary's partners) can prove it cannot reclaim them. In such cases, the cost should be included in the Budget under the heading "taxes". Please note however that for the purpose of co-financing, taxes are the only ineligible costs that will be considered within the total accepted costs of the action. Information on taxes can be found in Annex J of the Guidelines;
- Customs and import duties, or any other charges;
- Purchase, rent or leasing of land and existing buildings;
- Fines, financial penalties and expenses of litigation;
- Operating costs, including rental costs, unless these are exclusively related to the period of co-financing of the action;
- Second hand equipment;
- Bank charges, costs of guaranties and similar charges;
- Conversion costs, charges and exchange losses associated with any of the action - specific euro accounts, as well as other purely financial expenses;
- Contributions in kind;
- Any leasing costs;
- Depreciation costs;
- Debt and debt service charges;
- Provisions for losses or potential future liabilities
- Interest owed;
- Items already financed in another framework;
- Credit to third parties.

2.2 HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

Open Call for Proposals

2.2.1 Application form

Prior registration in PADOR for this Call for Proposals is not obligatory. Information in PADOR will not be drawn upon in the present Call.

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the instructions on the Concept Note and the Full application form included in the Grant Application Form annexes to these Guidelines (Annex A)

Applicants must apply in **English**.

Any error or major discrepancy related to the points listed in the instructions on the Concept Note or any major inconsistency in the application form (e.g. the amounts mentioned in the budget worksheets are inconsistent) may lead to the rejection of the application.

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

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Please note that only the application form and the published annexes which have to be filled in (budget, logical framework) will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL relevant information concerning the action. No additional annexes should be sent.

2.2.2 *Where and how to send the Applications*

Applications must be submitted in one original and 2 (two) copies in A4 size, each bound. The complete application form (Part A: concept note and Part B: full application form), budget and logical framework must also be supplied in electronic format (CD-Rom) in a separate and unique file (e.g. the application form must not be split into several different files). The electronic format must contain **exactly the same** application as the paper version enclosed.

The Checklist (Section 6 of Part B the grant application form) and the Declaration by the applicant (Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form) must be stapled separately and enclosed in the envelope.

The outer envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the call for proposals**, together with the lot number and title, the full name and address of the applicant, and the words "Not to be opened before the opening session" and "**Да не се отвора до сесијата за отворање на апликациите**".

Applications must be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) at the address below:

Postal address

**Central Financing and Contracting Department (CFCD)
Ministry of Finance
Mito Hadzivasilev Jasmin, No.50, 1000 Skopje**

Address for hand delivery or by private courier service

**Central Financing and Contracting Department (CFCD)
Ministry of Finance
Mito Hadzivasilev Jasmin, No.50, 1000 Skopje
Working hours: 8.30 – 16.30 CET**

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

Applicants must verify that their application is complete using the checklist (Section 6 of Part B of the grant application form). Incomplete applications may be rejected.

2.2.3 *Deadline for submission of the Applications*

The deadline for the submission of applications is **29.10.2012** as evidenced by the date of dispatch, the postmark or the date of the deposit slip. In the case of hand-deliveries, the deadline for receipt is at **14.00**

hours local time as evidenced by the signed and dated receipt. Any application submitted after the deadline will automatically be rejected.

However, for reasons of administrative efficiency, the Contracting Authority may reject any application received after the effective date of approval of the first evaluation step (i.e. Concept Note) (see indicative calendar under Section 2.5.2)

2.2.4 *Further information for Application*

Five (5) information sessions on this call for proposals will be organised country wide in September 2012. The exact calendar will be made available on the CFCD website <http://cfcd.finance.gov.mk/>

Questions may be sent by e-mail or by fax no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of applications to the below address, indicating clearly the reference of the Call for Proposals:

E-mail address: cfcd@finance.gov.mk;

Fax: + 389 (02) 3231 219

Contracting Authority has no obligation to provide further clarifications after this date.

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

In the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of an applicant, a partner, an action or specific activities.

Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with the answers, will be published on the internet at the EuropeAid website:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome>

and at the CFCD web site <http://cfcd.finance.gov.mk/>

It is therefore highly recommended to regularly consult the abovementioned websites in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

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 actions submitted by applicants 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 paragraph 2.1.3, the application shall be rejected on this sole basis.

(1) STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION

The following will be assessed:

- The submission deadline has been respected. If the deadline has not been respected the application will automatically be rejected.
- The Application Form satisfies all the criteria specified in points 1-5 of the Checklist (section 6 of part B of the grant application form). 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 evaluation of the Concept Notes that have passed the first administrative check will cover the relevance and design of the action.

The Concept Note will be given an overall score out of 50 points in accordance with the breakdown provided in the Evaluation Grid below. The evaluation shall also verify the compliance with instructions provided in the guidance for Concept Note.

The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheadings. Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following assessment categories: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

	Scores	
1. Relevance of the action	Sub- score	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 and the additional elements indicated under 1.2. of these guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions implemented by applicants established in the Beneficiary country, aiming to reach out to marginalised communities • actions in networks to strengthen common approaches and agendas • actions which incorporate gender perspectives. 	5	
2. Design of the action	Sub- score	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*	
TOTAL SCORE		50

* the scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance

Once all Concept Notes have been assessed, a list will be established with the proposed actions ranked according to their total score.

First, only the Concept Notes which have been given a score of a minimum of 30 points will be considered for pre-selection.

Secondly, the list of Concept Notes will be reduced in accordance to the ranking to those whose sum of requested contributions amounts to twice the available budget for this Call for Proposals, taking into account the indicative financial envelopes foreseen by lot.

Following the Concept Note evaluation, the Contracting Authority will send a letter to all applicants, indicating whether their application was submitted prior to the deadline, informing them of the reference number they have been allocated and whether the Concept Note were evaluated and the results of that evaluation.

The Evaluation Committee will subsequently proceed with the applicants whose proposals have been pre-selected.

(2) STEP 2: EVALUATION OF THE FULL APPLICATION

First, the following will be assessed:

- The full application form satisfies all the criteria specified in points 1-8 of the Checklist (Section 6. of part B of the grant application form). 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.

An evaluation of the quality of the applications, including the proposed budget, and of the capacity of the applicant and its partners, will be subsequently carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in the Evaluation Grid included below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and award criteria.

The selection criteria are intended to help evaluate the applicants' financial and operational capacity to ensure that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out and, where appropriate, to participate in its funding;
- have the management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed action. This also applies to any partners of the applicant.

The award criteria allow the quality of the applications submitted to be evaluated in relation to the set objectives and priorities, and grants to be awarded to actions which maximise the overall effectiveness of the Call for Proposals. They enable the selection of applications which the Contracting Authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities. They cover such aspects as the relevance of the action, its consistency with the objectives of the Call for Proposals, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

Scoring:

The evaluation criteria are divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following guidelines: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Evaluation Grid

Section	Maximum Score
1. Financial and operational capacity	20
1.1 Do the applicant and, if applicable, partners have sufficient experience of project management?	5
1.2 Do the applicant and, if applicable partners have sufficient technical expertise? (notably knowledge of the issues to be addressed.)	5
1.3 Do the applicant and, if applicable, partners have sufficient management capacity? (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4 Does the applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5
2. Relevance of the action	30
<i>Score transferred from the Concept Note evaluation</i>	

3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the action	20
3.1 Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	5
3.2 Is the action plan clear and feasible?	5
3.3 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the action? Is evaluation foreseen?	5
3.4 Is the partners' level of involvement and participation in the action satisfactory?	5
4. Sustainability of the action	15
4.1 Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5
4.2 Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects? (Including scope for replication and extension of the outcome of the action and dissemination of information.)	5
4.3 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable: - financially (<i>how will the activities be financed after the funding ends?</i>) - institutionally (<i>will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the action? Will there be local "ownership" of the results of the action?</i>) - at policy level (where applicable) (<i>what will be the structural impact of the action — e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc?</i>) - environmentally (if applicable) (<i>will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?</i>)	5
5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action	15
5.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	5x2*
5.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	5
Maximum total score	100

*the scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance

Note on Section 1. Financial and operational capacity:

If the score is less than 12 points for section 1, the application will be rejected.

Provisional selection

Following the evaluation, a table listing the applications ranked according to their score and within the available financial envelope will be established as well as a reserve list following the same criteria.

(3) STEP 3: VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF THE APPLICANT AND PARTNERS

The eligibility verification, based on the supporting documents requested by the Contracting Authority (see section 2.4) will only be performed for the applications that have been provisionally selected according to their score and within the available financial envelope.

- The Declaration by the applicant (Section 7 of part B the grant application form) will be cross-checked with the supporting documents provided by the applicant. Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the Declaration by the applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the application on that sole basis.
- The eligibility of the applicant, the partners, and the action will be verified according to the criteria set out in sections 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3.

Following the above analysis and if necessary, any rejected application will be replaced by the next best placed application in the reserve list that falls within the available financial envelope, which will then be examined for the eligibility of its applicant and the partners.

2.4 SUBMISSION OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR PROVISIONALLY SELECTED APPLICATIONS

Applicants who have been provisionally selected or listed under the reserve list will be informed in writing by the Contracting Authority. They will be requested to supply the following documents in order to allow the Contracting Authority to verify the eligibility of the applicants and their partners:

- 1. The statutes or articles of association of the applicant organisation⁹ and of each partner organisation**
- 2. Copy of the applicant's latest accounts** (the profit and loss account and the balance sheet for the previous financial year for which the accounts have been closed).
- 3. Legal entity sheet** (see annex D of these Guidelines) duly completed and signed by the applicant, accompanied by the justifying documents which are requested therein. If the applicant has already signed a contract with the Contracting Authority, instead of the legal entity sheet and its supporting documents the legal entity number may be provided, unless a change in its legal status occurred in the meantime.
- 4. A financial identification form** conforming to the model attached at Annex E of these Guidelines, certified by the bank to which the payments will be made. This bank must be located in the country where the applicant is registered.
- 5. Statement from the applicant on the audit firm** which will carry out verifications referred to in Article 15.6 of General Conditions. Applicant's statement, must be supported by confirmation from the Audit firm and documentary proof on Auditor's License.

The requested supporting documents must be supplied in the form of originals, photocopies or scanned versions (i.e. showing legible stamps, signatures and dates) of the said originals. However, the Legal entity sheet and the financial identification form must always be submitted in original.

Where such documents are not in one of the official languages of the European Union or in the language of the country where the action is implemented, a translation into English of the relevant parts of these documents, proving the applicant's eligibility, must be attached and will prevail for the purpose of analysing the application.

Where these documents are in an official language of the European Union other than English, it is **strongly** recommended, in order to facilitate the evaluation, to provide a translation of the relevant parts of the documents, proving the applicant's eligibility, into English.

If the abovementioned supporting documents are not provided before the deadline indicated in the request for supporting documents sent to the applicant by the Contracting Authority, the application may be rejected.

Based on the verification of the supporting documents by the Evaluation Committee it will make a final recommendation to the Contracting Authority which will decide on the award of grants.

2.5 NOTIFICATION OF THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION

2.5.1 Content of the decision

Applicants will be informed in writing of the Contracting Authority's decision concerning their application and, in case of rejections, the reasons for the negative decision.

Applicants believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may file a complaint. See further section 2.4.15 of the Practical Guide.

2.5.2 Indicative time table

	DATE	TIME*
Information meeting (if any)	September	-
Deadline for request for any clarifications from the Contracting Authority	09.10.2012	14.00 hrs
Last date on which clarifications are issued by the Contracting Authority	19.10.2012	-
Deadline for submission of Application Form	29.10.2012	14.00 hrs
Information to applicants on the opening & administrative checks and concept note evaluation (step 1)	February 2013	-
Information to applicants on the evaluation of the Full Application Form (step 2)	April 2013	-
Notification of award (after the eligibility check) (step 3)	June 2013	-
Contract signature	July 2013	-

* **Provisional date.** All times are in the time zone of the country of the Contracting Authority.

This indicative timetable may be updated by the Contracting Authority during the procedure. In such case, the updated timetable shall be published on internet at the EuropeAid web site:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome>

and at the CFCD web page: <http://cfcd.finance.gov.mk/>

2.6 CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION FOLLOWING THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION TO AWARD A GRANT

Following the decision to award a grant, the Beneficiary will be offered a contract based on the Contracting Authority's standard grant contract (see Annex F of these Guidelines). By signing the Application form (Annex A of these Guidelines), the applicant declares accepting, in case where it is awarded a grant, the Contractual conditions as laid down in the standard grant contract.

Implementation contracts

Where implementation of the action requires the Beneficiary to award procurement contracts, it must award the contract to the tenderer offering the best value for money, that is to say, the best price-quality ratio, in compliance with the principles of transparency and equal treatment for potential contractors, care being taken to avoid any conflict of interests. To this end, the Beneficiary must follow the procedures set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

LIST OF ANNEXES

DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED

- ANNEX A: GRANT APPLICATION FORM (WORD FORMAT)
- ANNEX B: BUDGET (EXCEL FORMAT)
- ANNEX C: LOGICAL FRAMEWORK (EXCEL FORMAT)
- ANNEX D: LEGAL ENTITY SHEET (PDF FORMAT)
- ANNEX E: FINANCIAL IDENTIFICATION FORM (PDF FORMAT)

DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION

ANNEX F: STANDARD GRANT CONTRACT

- Annex II: General Conditions applicable to European Union-financed grant contracts for external Actions
- Annex III: Budget for the Action
- Annex IV: Contract-award procedures
- Annex V: Standard request for payment
- Annex VI: Model narrative and financial report and List of detailed expenditure incurred – list of references to supporting documents
- Annex VII: Model report of factual findings and terms of reference for an expenditure verification of an EU financed grant contract for external actions
- Annex VIII: Standard template for Transfer of Ownership of Assets.

ANNEX G: DAILY ALLOWANCE RATES (PER DIEM), available at the following address:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/index_en.htm

ANNEX J: INFORMATION ON THE TAX REGIME APPLICABLE TO GRANT CONTRACTS SIGNED UNDER THE CALL

PROJECT CYCLE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/publications/manuals-tools/t101_en.htm
