



Contracting Authority: The Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States

ACP-EU Cooperation Programme in Science and Technology II (S&T II)

Guidelines
for grant applicants

Intra-ACP envelope of the 10th European Development Fund
& Budget Line 2010 21.06.02

Reference: EuropeAid/133437/D/ACT/ACPTPS

Deadline for submission of proposals: 7 February 2013

Please note that only the English version of this call for proposals is legally binding. All other linguistic versions are provided for information only.

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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DEFINITIONS

ACP	Africa, Caribbean and Pacific.
Action <i>or</i> Project	The set of activities the partnership proposes to carry out.
Applicant	The lead institution within the partnership that submits the proposal and, if the proposal is selected, signs the grant contract.
Associate	Organisation that has a real role in the Action but cannot receive funding from this Programme, with the exception of per diem or travel costs. Associates are not considered partners and they do not have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in Section 2.1.1.
Beneficiary	The Applicant as the contracting party with whom a grant contract will be signed, if the proposal is selected.
Contractors	The grant beneficiaries have the possibility to award contracts to contractors for necessary limited parts of the Action they cannot execute themselves, e.g., the supply of goods, execution of works, or provision of services. They are neither partners nor associates, and are subject to the General Conditions and the Procurement Rules set out in the Annexes II and IV to the standard Grant Contract (see Annex G of these Guidelines).
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument.
EDF	European Development Fund
EEA	European Economic Area.
EFTA	European Free Trade Association.
EU	European Union.
International Organisation	International organisation means international public-sector organisations set up by intergovernmental agreements, and specialised agencies set up by such organisations - these organisations may have worldwide or regional scope. Organisations created under national law are not international organisations (e.g. national NGO with several regional/country offices).
Partner	The institution - including the applicant – that is a member of the partnership.
Partnership	The network of institutions, i.e., the Applicant and its partners, constituted for the purpose of submitting an application and, if successful, for implementing the Action. It does not have to exist previously, and its constitution has to be demonstrated by the signed ‘Partnership Statements’ required under Section III of the Application Form.

Other terms used in the present Guidelines are defined in the glossary to the ‘*Practical Guide to Contract procedures for EU external actions*’ which is available at the following internet address:

<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/annexes.do?group=A&locale=en>

1 ACP-EU SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMME II

1.1 BACKGROUND

The ACP-EU Science and Technology Programme II (ACP S&T II) builds upon the positive results of the on-going ACP-EU Science and Technology Programme I (ACP S&T I). The programmes originate from the need for joint and systematic ACP-EU approaches in support of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI). They respond to the conclusions of the **2002 Cape Town ACP Ministerial Forum on Research for Sustainable Development** and the **2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development**. Such conclusions have recently been reaffirmed in the **2012 ACP-EU Council of Ministers Joint Declaration on Rio+20**.

Developed in the context of the **2006 EU Sustainable Development Strategy** and the 2008 European Commission Communication '**A Strategic European Framework for International Science and Technology Cooperation**', ACP S&T I was aimed at helping achieve Millennium Development Goals 1, 7 and 8 by targeting poverty eradication and focusing on building and enhancing strong S&T capacities to support research, development and innovation in the ACP region, thereby enabling the identification and formulation of activities, processes and policies critical to sustainable development. A first Call for Proposals was published under the 9th EDF in 2008. More than 200 proposals were received and 36 grant contracts were signed by the end of 2009.¹

As with its predecessor, the thrust of the ACP-EU Science and Technology Programme II is based on the conviction that one of the requirements for an effective fight against poverty in the ACP countries is the application of knowledge gained from **Science and Technology (S&T)** in order to promote **innovation** and ultimately develop **appropriate technologies, which could be effectively deployed within the context of** local needs and resources. In this perspective appropriate technologies are affordable, replicable and accessible technologies that can contribute to strengthen ACP countries' and communities' **resilience towards internal and external shocks**, such as the looming energy shortages, the effects of climate change and the rising food insecurity. At the same time appropriate technologies can contribute to the **improvement of living conditions** in villages and cities, while **boosting family and business incomes by raising competitiveness**.

Against this backdrop the challenge for most ACP countries is not only to push themselves onto the frontiers of scientific knowledge, but rather to put readily available knowledge to use solving pressing social and economic problems. To this regard countries must **build the capacity to find, absorb, and use existing technologies** as well as to **strengthen their own knowledge generation capacities**. This entails creating appropriate policies and incentives, as well as building technical, vocational, engineering, entrepreneurial, managerial, and scientific capacities. For this reason ACP S&T II will support initiatives that strengthen the recognition of the importance of Science and Technology (S&T) for development, that produce innovation, that promote a scientific culture, that identify S&T goals and priorities, and that bolster national and regional capacities to formulate, manage, monitor, evaluate and disseminate S&T activities within and across ACP countries. However, in order to ensure complementarity with other EU initiatives in the field of STI, such as the Africa Call under the Framework Programme VII, the ACP-EU Research for Sustainable Development Programme, the Erasmus Mundus Programme and the Intra-ACP Mobility Scheme, the ACP-EU Science and Technology Programme II will **neither finance research activities nor academic mobility**.

For STI to blossom, it is essential to involve a broad group of concerned actors through **participatory approaches**. The government has an important role to play in setting the agenda, mobilizing resources, and developing and implementing coherent STI capacity building programs. However, the ability to absorb and utilize new technology and the capacity to innovate reside in a close collaboration between the academia, private enterprises and civil society. Researchers need to be incentivized to carry out applied research and to collaborate with the private sector and civil society. Entrepreneurs should be supported through the establishment of a good business climate, which promotes innovation, and the development of a suitably-trained workforce. Civil society organisations have a significant role to play in bringing to the attention of

¹ More information on the on-going ACP-EU Science and Technology Programme I is available at <http://www.acp-st.eu/>

decision-makers, researchers and entrepreneurs the most pressing social and economic issues, proposing solutions and debating policies.

Accordingly, ACP S&T II favours the creation of partnerships among national and local agencies, academic institutions, professional associations, the private sector and civil society. Such partnerships should mostly involve ACP institutions and actors, thus favouring **endogenous** processes and approaches, which can respond to the actual needs of ACP countries. However, EU partners can play an important role in assisting ACP partners with their experience and technical capacities. Thus ACP S&T II supports the creation and strengthening of international, regional and national networks, which can promote exchanges of wide-ranging perspectives, capacities and experiences.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

The **global objectives** of this call for proposals are:

- To address the scientific and technological divide between ACP member states and the most industrialised countries.
- To strengthen Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) in ACP countries to enable creation, update and use of scientific knowledge.
- To enhance the use of STI as a key enabler for poverty reduction, growth and socio-economic development.

The **specific objective** of this call for proposals **is to contribute to building and strengthening capacities in the areas of Science, Technology and Innovation in ACP countries.**

The **results** that are necessary to achieve the specific objective are threefold:

- Result 1 – STI goals and priorities are identified, formulated and mainstreamed in the national and regional strategies of ACP countries.
- Result 2 – National and regional capacities to devise, manage, monitor, evaluate and disseminate STI programmes and their results are improved.
- Result 3 – The importance of STI for development is acknowledged by decision-makers, mechanisms of innovation understood by policy-makers and a culture of science promoted among the general public.

In line with the ACP Group of States' priorities and the EU Agenda for Change, the Programme prioritises Actions in the fields of **Energy Access and Efficiency** as well as **Agriculture and Food Security**. However, other sectors and/or interdisciplinary approaches are not excluded as long as the foreseen actions and activities are in line with the objectives of the programme.

1.3 FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is EUR 20 800 000.

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

This call for proposals is divided into 2 Lots, one for each of the below-mentioned funding sources. Each lot has **identical objectives, results and activities but different eligibility rules**. Information on the eligibility of applicants, their partners, types of actions and costs is provided in Section 2.1 of these Guidelines for applicants.

LOT 1 – EDF – concerns the EUR 17 800 000 EDF contribution

LOT 2 – DCI – concerns the EUR 3 000 000 EU South Africa DCI contribution

Applicants have to clearly specify in the first page of the grant application form for which lot they are applying. Each proposal may be submitted under only one lot.

In the case where the above amount foreseen 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.

Size of grants

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

- minimum amount: EUR 300 000
- maximum amount: EUR 1 000 000

In exceptional cases, if it is properly justified, Proposals in the fields of Energy access and efficiency and Agriculture and food security may request a maximum amount of EUR 3 000 000.

Any grant requested under this Call for Proposals must be limited to 85% of the estimated total eligible costs of the action.

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 legal persons and
- Be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the Action with their partners, not acting as an intermediary and
- Be established in²:
 - Lot 1 – EDF: one of the countries listed in Annex K for "Lot 1 – EDF"
 - Lot 2 – DCI: one of the countries listed in Annex K for "Lot 2 – DCI"

The latter eligibility criterion concerning the country of establishment does not apply to international organisations.

(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

2 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.

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

Applicants must act with partner organisations as specified hereafter:

- The partnership must involve at least 3 partners, including the applicant.
- The partnership must involve partners from at least 2 different ACP states as defined in Annex K.
- The number of partners from the ACP states must always be greater than the number of partners from non-ACP states.
- The application must include a partnership statement signed by each partner, confirming that they are familiar with the contents of the application and understand their role and responsibilities in the proposed action. Each member of a partnership must have a precise and clearly defined role in the proposal.
- 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 himself.

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.

- Sub-granting is not allowed.

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

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

Definition

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

Duration

The initial planned duration of an action may not be lower than 12 months nor exceed 36 months.

When determining the duration of the action, applicants should consider a start-up (inception) phase (e.g. recruitment of staff, installation of infrastructures, etc.) and a phase-out period (activity wrap-up, results dissemination, sustainability plan, etc.).

Location

Actions must take place in one or more ACP Member States as listed in Annex K. A limited number of activities may be carried out in non-ACP countries, in particular if one or more of the partners are from outside the ACP region, as long as the location is justified and they clearly benefit ACP countries.

During the selection phase, the evaluation committee reserves itself the right to ensure through the selection of projects for funding that a balanced geographical coverage at the Programme level is achieved.

Sectors or themes

The Programme will prioritise actions that employ interdisciplinary and participatory approaches, contribute to the development of appropriate technologies, favour endogenous learning processes and increase ACP countries' and communities' resilience to internal as well as external shocks.

With regards to sectors, the Programme will prioritise actions that concern **energy access and efficiency** and **agriculture and food security**. Proposals covering other scientific and technological themes would, however, also be considered, provided they are aligned with the objectives of the Programme. Proposals can also target the horizontal, non-thematic strengthening of STI capacities in ACP countries.

During the selection phase, the evaluation committee reserves itself the right to prioritise projects for funding in order to ensure that the above sector priorities are well integrated in the Programme and that there is no duplication of actions.

Cross-cutting issues

While addressing the above-mentioned priority areas and objectives, and taking into consideration the overall development policies' objectives, such as the eradication of poverty and the promotion of economic growth and inclusiveness, the issues below shall be addressed by the programme and hence by the project applicants in an appropriate manner:

- Good governance and human rights
- Gender equality
- Environmental sustainability
- Climate change

Types of action and activities

The following types of actions and activities may be financed under this call. The list is not exhaustive and the actions and activities listed are purely indicative. The list also aims to emphasize that the actions to be supported should relate to STI capacity-building and should not be research projects or mobility:

- Actions aimed at the formulation, revision, and/or evaluation of regional and/or national S&T policies.

The following activities may be considered:

- Organisation of multi-stakeholder workshops to debate needs, capacities and measures to improve STI in ACP countries;
 - Formulation and implementation of technical instruments such as legal frameworks, strengthened intellectual property rights and tax incentives related to STI;
 - Studies on the state of the art of STI, the evolution of R&D investments, the relationships between research institutions and the private sector, etc. in ACP countries;
 - Setting up working groups with relevant private and public sectors participants to promote consensus building in the field of S&T policies and planning.
- Actions aimed at strengthening the capacities of government agencies, research institutions, the private sector and civil society in Science, Technology and Innovation in ACP countries and communities.

The following activities may be considered:

- Implementation of multi-stakeholder activities (publications, database building, information management...) in order to capitalize, disseminate and implement knowledge;

- Inter-linking research institutes, researchers, civil society, business sectors, policy makers, ‘Centres of Excellence’ and science and technology consortia;
 - Identifying, trialling and disseminating ways of encouraging innovatory approaches;
 - Establishment of ACP national and regional mechanisms for advising public bodies on S&T policies.
- Actions aimed at increasing awareness on the importance of Science Technology and Innovation for development.

The following activities may be considered:

- Awareness raising activities for S&T and the promotion of S&T at all levels (government, academia and civil society);
- Promoting professional associations of scientists and technologists across ACP countries;
- In-service training of primary and secondary level teachers and production of material for school students’ education in the field of S&T;
- Organising competitions and summer camps to promote science to the young with special attention to ensuring ethnic, gender and cultural diversity;
- Arranging public debates and consultations on research needs in association with indigenous knowledge and interests;
- Capacity building for civil society groups on research issues.

Ineligible actions

The following types of action are ineligible:

- Actions that conflict, either directly or indirectly, with the policies of the European Union or which may be linked with a prejudicial image;
- Actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;
- Actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships or bursaries for studies, training courses or qualification-linked courses;
- Actions that consists of or contain to any significant extent pure Research and/or Research and Development activities.

Sub-granting

Sub-granting is not allowed under this call for proposals.

Number of applications and grants per applicant

An applicant may submit more than one application per lot under this call for proposals if the majority of the partners are different for each application and if the proposals are for projects that are clearly different in content. Please note that, in this case, each proposal must be submitted individually and separately. The same proposal cannot be submitted for both lots.

An applicant may be awarded more than one grant per lot under this call for proposals.

An applicant may be at the same time partner in another application.

Partners may take part in more than one application.

Visibility

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

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).

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 G of the Guidelines).

Note that taxes, including VAT will only be accepted as eligible costs when the Beneficiary (or, where applicable, its partners) can show it cannot reclaim them. Taxes shall in such case be included in the Budget of the Action under each heading. Information on taxes can be found in Annex J to these Guidelines.

Claimed costs must be duly justified, and in particular, it should be noted that the financing of items such as equipment and travels should be limited to the minimum necessary for the implementation of the action.

- **Staff costs**

Staff cost shall mean any payment made to a person working on a regular or recurrent basis for the project, whether as staff member of a participant partner or as a person contracted specifically for the project.

Staff costs shall be calculated on the basis of the normal salary paid by the partner to the concerned staff member, for the number of months/days to be spent on the project (i.e. no special "international project" rate should be used). This calculation shall include all the normal charges paid by the employer, such as social security contributions and related costs, but shall exclude any bonus. The salary claimed should be justified by including a copy of the partner's salary schedule and/or copies of the latest monthly pay slips of the individual staff members.

Specific funds in the budget should be dedicated to the management of the project. In addition, and with the purpose of avoiding weak reporting (and in particular financial reporting), the project application should include the necessary provisions to allocate a staff member with the appropriate administrative / accounting know-how to the tasks of document keeping and reporting, in particular financial reporting. To this regard a specific budget allocation for "Administrative/support staff (bookkeeping & financial reporting)" must be entered under 1. Human Resources Annex B, Budget for the Action.

- **Participation in stakeholder meetings**

For stakeholder meetings organised by the Contracting Authority, an amount of EUR 10,000 must be foreseen under the budget (headings 'Per diems' and 'Travel').

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.

The cost of staff assigned to the action is not a contribution in kind.

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:

- debts and debt service charges;
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- interest owed;
- costs declared by the beneficiary and covered by another action or work programme;
- purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary for the direct implementation of the action, in which case ownership must be transferred to the final beneficiaries and/or local partners, at the latest by the end of the action;
- currency exchange losses;
- credit to third parties;
- tuition fees or any similar fee for participation to workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses, training events, winter/summer courses, or research periods organised by one of the partners of the partnership.

2.2 HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

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

PADOR is an on-line database in which organisations register themselves and update regularly their data, through the Europeaid website: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/onlineservices/pador/index_en.htm

2.2.1 Application form

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 or French.

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 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.

Where an applicant sends several different applications (if allowed to do so by the Guidelines of the call), each one has to be sent separately.

The outer envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the call for proposals**, together with the title and number of the lot, the full name and address of the applicant, and the words "Not to be opened before the opening session".

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:

Adresse postale
Programme ACP pour la Science et la Technologie
Programme Management Unit
c/o GOPA-Cartermill
Rue de Trèves, 45
B1040 Brussels

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 applications

The deadline for the submission of applications is **7 February 2013** 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 16:00 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 the application

Information sessions on this Call for Proposals will be held in Brussels and ACP countries. For more information on date and place please refer to the Programme website www.acp-st.eu and <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome>.

Questions may be sent by e-mail 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: Call2012@acp-st.eu

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 in the S&T Programme website: www.acp-st.eu. 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

	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 countries or regions 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 sustainability, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, good governance and human rights or climate change?	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 at least 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, it will be assessed if 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 —</i> 	5

<i>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. 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 organisation³ and of each partner organisation. This obligation does not apply to international organisations which have signed a framework agreement with the European Commission. A list of the relevant framework agreements is available at the following address:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/financing/international_organisations/other_international_organisations/index_en.htm
2. Where the grant requested exceeds EUR 500 000, an external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the applicant's accounts for the last financial year available.

This obligation does not apply to international organisations nor to public bodies.

³ Where the applicant and/or (a) partner(s) is a public body created by a law, a copy of the said law must be provided.

3. 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)⁴.
4. 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.
5. 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. If the applicant has already signed a contract with the European Commission or where the European Commission has been in charge of the payments of a contract, a copy of the previous financial identification form may be provided instead, unless a change in its bank account occurred in the meantime.

This bank account must yield interest or equivalent benefits. If the costs for opening and/or maintaining such an account equals or exceeds the expected interest, applicants may be exempted from this obligation by submitting a declaration of honour to this fact.

6. The name, complete address and contact details of the audit firm that will carry out the expenditure verification referred to in Art. 15.6 of the General Conditions (see Annex G of these Guidelines). Please note that the selected audit firm must be a member of an internationally recognised supervisory body for statutory auditing.

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, a translation into English or French 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 or French 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 or French.

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*

⁴ This obligation does not apply to natural persons who have received a scholarship, nor to public bodies nor to international organisations. It does not apply either when the accounts are in practice the same documents as the external audit report already provided pursuant to Section 2.4.2.

	DATE	TIME*
Information sessions on this Call for Proposals will be held in Brussels and ACP countries	For more information on date and place please refer to www.acp-st.eu and https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome.	
Deadline for request for any clarifications from the Contracting Authority	18/01/2013	
Last date on which clarifications are issued by the Contracting Authority	28/01/2013	
Deadline for submission of Application Form	07/02/2013	16:00
Information to applicants on the opening & administrative checks and concept note evaluation (step 1)	29/04/2013*	
Information to applicants on the evaluation of the Full Application Form (step 2)	26/06/2013*	
Notification of award (after the eligibility check) (step 3)	12/08/2013*	
Contract signature	17/09/2013*	

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

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 S&T Programme website www.acp-st.eu.

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 G 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.

If the successful applicant is an international organisation, the model Contribution Agreement with an international organisation or any other contract template agreed between the international organisation concerned and the Contracting Authority will be used instead of the standard grant contract provided that the international organisation in question offers the guarantees provided for in the applicable Financial Regulation, as described in Chapter 6 of the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EU external actions.

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.

3 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

ANNEX E: FINANCIAL IDENTIFICATION FORM

DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION

ANNEX G: STANDARD GRANT CONTRACT

- ANNEX II: GENERAL CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO EUROPEAN UNION-FINANCED GRANT CONTRACTS FOR EXTERNAL ACTIONS
- ANNEX IV: CONTRACT AWARD PROCEDURES
- ANNEX V: STANDARD REQUEST FOR PAYMENT
- ANNEX VI: MODEL NARRATIVE AND FINANCIAL REPORT
- 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: MODEL FINANCIAL GUARANTEE
- ANNEX IX: STANDARD TEMPLATE FOR TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP OF ASSETS

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

ANNEX I: STANDARD CONTRIBUTION AGREEMENT, APPLICABLE IN CASE WHERE THE BENEFICIARY IS AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION

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

ANNEX K: LIST OF ELIGIBLE COUNTRIES

PROJECT CYCLE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

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