



**Contracting Authority: European Commission - DG Development
and Cooperation Neighbourhood**

New Euro-Mediterranean initiative for Youth Employment Promotion

Guidelines
for grant applicants

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Deadline for submission of Application form : 09/08/2013

NOTICE

This is an open Call for Proposals, where all documents are submitted together (Concept Note and Full Application Form). In the first instance, only the Concept Notes will be evaluated. Thereafter, for the applicants who have been pre-selected, the full proposal will be evaluated. After the evaluation of the full proposals, an eligibility check will be performed for those which have been provisionally selected. Eligibility will be checked on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the Contracting Authority and the signed 'Declaration by the Applicant' sent together with the application.

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1. NEW EURO-MEDITERRANEAN INITIATIVE FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROMOTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

2011 was a year of change in the EU's southern Neighbourhood. Although the first signs are encouraging, sustained efforts are needed to consolidate this progress.

After years of relative stagnation, democracy is increasingly taking root in the southern Neighbourhood spurred by last year's democratic revolutions in North Africa. The general trend points towards more democracy, a more accountable form of governance and increased respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Arab Spring offers new opportunities for regional co-operation in the southern Neighbourhood. Many of the challenges facing partner countries can only be taken up effectively at regional or sub-regional level.

Unemployment, social exclusion, inequality and poverty are at the heart of people's concerns for the future. They are among the root causes of instability and unrest and need to be addressed to make democratisation sustainable. They require partner countries to reform and adopt an integrated approach with a mix of economic, fiscal, employment, social and education policies. The EU is ready to support such reforms through targeted measures aimed at promoting social cohesion and employment (in particular of young people).

A third of the southern Neighbourhood's population being under 15 years of age, up to 60 million young people will join the workforce by the middle of the next decade. The economies in the region will need to create between 2.5 and 5 million jobs a year if they are to absorb new entrants to the labour market and to reduce unemployment.

The European Parliament has thus proposed a preparatory action with a regional scope "New Euro-Mediterranean strategy for youth employment promotion" through an amendment to the 2012 budget and asked the Commission to implement it. An amount of EUR 1.5 million is therefore earmarked to enhance the mutual exchange of young professionals between both sides of the Mediterranean, covering also vocational traineeships. In the framework of the emerging democratisation in the southern Neighbourhood, the two-way flow of young professionals from both sides of the Mediterranean at professional level as proposed by the preparatory action would be a useful contribution to the consolidation of democracy and the inclusion of young professionals in the job market.

Training and mobility are key factors in the transfer of knowledge and good practice, and thus enhance the effectiveness of the regional market.

The preparatory action "New Euro Mediterranean initiative for youth employment promotion" is consistent with the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) Regulation¹ which foresees that EU assistance shall be used to support measures to notably promote multicultural

¹ Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument.

dialogue, people-to-people contacts and exchanges of young people.

It is also in line with the Joint Communication of the European Commission and of the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy "A partnership for democracy and shared prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean"² which states in section 5 "Promoting inclusive economic development": "There is a need for the countries of the region to re-invigorate their economies to deliver sustainable and inclusive growth, development of poorer regions and job creation. Small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) have a critical role to play in job creation."

Within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean industrial cooperation process coordinated by the European Commission, Mediterranean neighbour countries asked to prioritise entrepreneurship and SME promotion with a view to creating opportunities for young unemployed people.

1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

The **general objective of the Preparatory Action** is to facilitate learning, networking and exchange of experience for new young professionals through periods spent working in small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) run by experienced entrepreneurs in another country.

These exchanges of experience will be done following a two-way flow (EU-Southern Mediterranean and vice-versa) of young professionals. The countries covered by this Preparatory Action will be all EU Member States, together with the 10 southern Neighbourhood countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria³, and Tunisia).

The main beneficiaries will be young professionals who intend to, or are in the process of setting up their company (potential entrepreneurs).

Activities of the young professionals during their stay abroad will include:

- Shadowing a senior Host Entrepreneur (HE);
- Market research and development of new business opportunities;
- Project development, innovation and research and development;
- Taking a fresh look at existing business operations;
- Understanding SME finance;
- Branding, sales and marketing of the host entrepreneur's company;
- Working on concrete projects from one or more of the above mentioned areas.

For the purpose of this programme, the definition of SME will be as follows:

According to European Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC of 6 May 2003, enterprises are defined with regard to their number of employees, annual turnover, and their independence. Small and medium-sized enterprises are enterprises employing fewer than 250 people. They should also have an annual turnover of up to EUR 50 million, or a balance sheet total of no more than EUR 43 million.

² COM(2011)200 of 8 March 2011.

³ At the moment of writing, EU co-operation with Syrian authorities (government entities) is suspended. In the light of future decisions, the Commission shall assess the opportunity to involve Syrian authorities in the action's implementation.

As for youth, taking into consideration that there is not a close definition of youth or young people, as this is more of a country-specific term, for the purpose of this programme the age range applied will be between 18 and 35 years.

The **global objective of this Call for Proposals** is to select bodies which will act as Intermediary Organisations (IOs) to implement the programme at local level. They will, in particular, select and assist entrepreneurs to benefit from this Preparatory Action. The present call for proposals will support actions for organisations enhancing and facilitating the mobility of new entrepreneurs.

The Applicant will be required to cooperate with all other organisations and authorities involved in the mobility programme, enabling new entrepreneurs to take part in mobility activities/exchanges as agreed. They will receive support from the Technical Assistance in charge of the coordination, management and monitoring of the programme.

These organisations will help new entrepreneurs from Participating Countries enrich their experience, deepen their knowledge and expand their network by spending periods in enterprises run by experienced entrepreneurs in other Participating Countries. The overall objective of this programme is to enhance entrepreneurship and foster potential start-up entrepreneurs and newly-established micro and small enterprises in the Participating Countries.

The **specific objective (s)** of this Call for Proposals are:

- To provide on-the-job-training for new entrepreneurs in small and medium-sized enterprises elsewhere in the Participating Countries in order to facilitate a successful start-up, and development of their business ideas;
- To foster sharing of experience and information between entrepreneurs on the obstacles and challenges of starting up and developing their businesses;
- To support networking between entrepreneurs from different Participating Countries by building on knowledge and experience from other Participating Countries.
- The Applicant will develop high quality standards so as to deliver the following expected output for this call for proposals:
 - Further developing a network of new entrepreneurs (NEs), host entrepreneurs (HEs) and Intermediary Organisations (IOs)
 - Creating new businesses, joint ventures and spin-off companies and foster cross-border business cooperation.
 - Enhancing the international activities and innovation potential of host entrepreneurs.

1.3. FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

The overall indicative amount made available under this Call for Proposals is € 1.000.000. The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

Size of grants

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

- minimum amount: € 250.000
- maximum amount: € 500.000

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

- Maximum percentage: 90% of the total eligible costs of the action (see also Section 2.1.4).

The balance (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the Contracting Authority) must be financed from sources other than the European Union Budget or the European Development Fund⁴.

2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of the actions financed under this Call, in conformity with the Practical Guide 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:

(1) the actors:

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

(2) the actions:

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

(3) the costs:

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

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

Applicant

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

- be legal persons **and**

⁴ Where a grant is financed by the European Development Fund, any mention of European Union financing must be understood as referring to European Development Fund financing.

- be non-profit-making **and**
- be established in⁵ a Member State of the European Union or in an ENPI country or territory⁶ or a country that is a beneficiary of this Regulation, a country that is a beneficiary of an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance set up by Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 (IPA)⁷ or a Member State of the EEA⁸. This obligation does not apply to international organisations **and**
- Any public or private entity (even if for-profit-making) whose core activity is in the field of business support. This may in particular include:
 - public entities responsible for or active in the fields of economic affairs, enterprise, business support or related issues
 - chambers of commerce and industry, chambers of handicrafts or similar bodies
 - business support organisations, start-up centres and incubators
 - business associations and business support networks
- be specific types of organisations such as: non-governmental organisations, public sector operators, local authorities, international (inter-governmental) organisations as defined by Article 43 of the Implementing Rules to the EC Financial Regulation⁹.
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary **and**

(2) The potential applicant may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if it is in any of the situations 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 8 of the grant application form ('Declaration by the applicant'), the applicant must declare that the applicant himself, the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) are not in any of these situations.

If awarded the Grant contract, the applicant will become the Beneficiary identified as the Coordinator in annex E3h1 (Special conditions). The Coordinator is the main interlocutor of the Contracting Authority. It represents and acts on behalf of any other co-beneficiary (if any) and coordinate the design and implementation of the Action.

⁵ 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 and that its head office is located in an eligible country. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has been concluded.

⁶ Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Palestinian Authority of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Russian Federation, Syria, Tunisia, Ukraine. At the moment of writing, EU co-operation with Syrian authorities (government entities) is suspended. In the light of future decisions, the Commission shall assess the opportunity to involve Syrian authorities in the action's implementation.

⁷ Croatia, Turkey, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia, Montenegro, Serbia (including Kosovo)

⁸ Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

⁹ International organisations are international public-sector organisations set up by intergovernmental agreements as well as specialised agencies set up by them; the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are also recognised as international organisations.

Co-applicant(s)

The applicant must act with co-applicant(s)

- Partnership should be composed of at least the Applicant and at least one co-applicant, one from an EU Member States and one from a Neighbourhood South country.

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

Co-applicant(s) must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the applicant himself.

Co-applicant(s) must sign the Mandate in Part B section 4 of the grant application form.

2.1.2. Affiliated entities

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

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

- (i) legal entities together forming one entity, including where it is specifically established for the purpose of implementing the action. In this case, the resulting entity may apply as a applicant or co-applicant whereas the other entities as its affiliated entity(ies).
- (ii) legal entities having a link with the applicants, notably a legal or capital link, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation on the condition that they satisfy the eligibility and non-exclusion criteria of an applicant.

If the applicants are awarded a contract, their affiliated entity(ies) will not be become Beneficiary(ies) of the Action and signatory(ies) of the Contract. However, they will participate in the design and in the implementation of the Action and the costs they incur (including those incurred for Implementation Contracts and Financial Support to third parties) may be accepted as eligible costs, provided they comply with all the relevant rules already applicable to the Beneficiary(ies) under the Grant Contract.

Affiliated entity(ies) must satisfy respectively the eligibility criteria as applicable to the applicant and to the co-applicant(s).

Affiliated entity(ies) must sign the affiliated entity(ies) statement in Part B section 5 of the grant application form.

2.1.3. Associates and Contractors

The following entities are not applicant(s) nor affiliated entity(ies) and do not have to sign the "mandate" or "affiliated entities' 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. Associates must be mentioned in Part B section 6 — ‘Associates of the Applicant participating in the Action’ — of the Grant Application Form.

- Contractors

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

The grant beneficiaries may award financial support to third entities. These entities are neither affiliated entity(ies) nor associates nor contractors. However, they are subject to the nationality and origin rules set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

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

Definition:

An action is composed of a set of activities.

Duration

The initial planned duration of an action may not exceed 36 months.

Sectors or themes

Any economic sector can participate, but special attention must be given to take into consideration key economic sectors in each country in which mobility actions could be given priority.

Location

Activities under the actions must take place in at least one EU Member State and at least one Neighbourhood South region country (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia).

Types of action

To help achieve the objectives of the action, especially where the action proposed by the applicants requires financial support to be given to third parties, the applicants may propose awarding sub-grants.

In the case of applicants anticipating a redistribution of the grant, they must specify in their applications the objectives and results to be obtained and the types of entity that will be eligible for a sub-grant. A fixed list of the types of activity eligible for sub-grants must be included in the application, together with the criteria for selecting sub-grantees including the criteria for determining the exact amount of each sub-grant.

The following types of action are ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;

Types of activity

The initial planned duration of an exchange may not be lower than 1 month nor exceed 3 months, over a period of 12 months.

As a minimum requirement, we expect the project proposals submitted under this call to describe the following tasks in detail:

- (a) Promotion of the programme

Applicants must describe the proposed communication and promotion measures to effectively raise awareness, disseminate information on the mobility scheme and reach a maximum number of potential candidates. Communication activities should in particular target relevant business organisations and other bodies supporting businesses and start-ups, as well as other target audiences as appropriate. Applicants should demonstrate that they have appropriate access to entrepreneurs. These activities should be focused so

as to ensure that the entrepreneurs who will subsequently apply to the programme will qualify for it and will show good motivation and commitment. For instance, new entrepreneurs must have at least the firm intention to set up a business to enrol for the programme. Also, potential participants should understand that the exchanges organised under the scheme are not internships.

The EU sponsorship of the project should also be clearly visible, as well as the European Commission logo in their communication tools for the programme. Other means of awareness-raising are also encouraged.

(b) Enrolment of entrepreneurs

Applicants should explain how they will engage entrepreneurs to participate in the programme, and the specific channels and efforts they will use for this purpose. The difficulty of this task should not be underestimated, as barriers can be expected from entrepreneurs who could potentially benefit from the programme: it can be a challenge for a young entrepreneur to venture abroad, all the more so if they have just started a new business. Host entrepreneurs may fear not to have the time, or underestimate the benefits they could derive from the exchange.

The persons eligible for financial support under this call are young professionals who intend to, or are in process of setting up their company (potential entrepreneurs) as specified in point 1.2

The proposal should contain enough information about access to and contacts with entrepreneurs, that the applicants have, whether this access is direct or indirect (via their own or other networks), and the kind of relationships they maintain, giving figures where possible.

(c) Assessing applications from New Entrepreneurs (NE) and Host Entrepreneurs (HE)

Applicants will be in charge of screening applications and advise candidates to ensure a high quality of registrations and, in particular, to gauge how committed the NEs are to setting up a business (entrepreneurial motivation, business plan). For the HEs, applicants will assess their willingness to mentor an NE, engage in the exchange (this is not a mere internship for the new entrepreneur), and to derive positive benefit for themselves from the collaboration. Applicants are invited to describe how they would check the quality and ensure the eligibility of applications. The proposals should include the necessary provisions for the maintenance of the portfolio of entrepreneurs, periodic validation of interest and updating of the profiles.

Building relationships

The so-called "matching" process between NE and HE will be considered successful if it leads to a 'successful relationship'. Applicants are invited to describe how they plan proactively to identify the best matches, support contacts and monitor relationships before and during the stay abroad. Applicants also need to describe if and how they intend to help NEs gain access to sources of financial assistance to cover costs related to a stay with an HE (indicating such sources where possible, and providing details of them) other than this Preparatory Action grant, and how they intend to advise NEs on such sources.

All "matches" leading to exchanges must be approved by the Commission prior to its implementation.

At this stage, all parties involved (NE, HE, responsible Applicants) must agree on an "**Agreement**", and establish the objective(s) of the exchange, the activity plan, the responsibilities, the expected outcomes, the duration of the stay and the planned start and end dates, etc. It is very important to make sure that all relevant elements are covered in this document, as this will be the basis for the cooperation between the 2 entrepreneurs over the following months.

(d) Management of sub-grants, commitments and financial assistance

Applicants should describe how they would arrange this in an efficient and effective way, allowing for potential amendments, compliance with the no-profit rule and the handling of payments and reports.

The purpose of the financial assistance provided to NEs is to contribute towards travel costs to and from the country of stay and subsistence costs (in particular for accommodation) during the stay. The applicants to which the NE applied is expected to give the NE financial assistance paid from Commission grants, provided

that the relationship between NE and HE has been previously notified to and approved by the Commission. The applicants will be responsible for correct management of this financial assistance, including advanced payment to NEs and compliance with the no-profit rule. Applicants should describe how they intend to organise the management and control of this financial assistance in an efficient and effective way, including avoidance of any financial abuse.

(e) Preparation of the exchange

Applicants are invited to describe the kind of information and induction they would organise and offer to NEs and how they intend to deliver this information and induction. Applicants are expected to deliver information on the mobility scheme.

(f) follow up of the exchange

Applicants are expected to offer local and remote assistance to visiting NEs during stays with HEs. Applicants are invited to describe the services they plan to offer to address practical questions (housing, transport, insurance, etc.) to NEs visiting their HEs, the modalities they will implement to follow up the exchanges and the mechanisms to be put in place to avoid problems and potential conflicts.

(g) management, quality control and evaluation

Applicants, and in particular the coordinator, should describe:

- How they will undertake the management of the project, especially the role of coordinator
- The measures they will take to ensure that high quality standards are applied by all consortium partners, how they will monitor the achievement of objectives and take appropriate corrective measures such as redistribution of objectives and budget, while ensuring compliance with the Preparatory Action rules and procedures. The main risks that might be encountered and the corresponding mitigating measures should also be described.

The applicant should describe the anti-fraud measures to be implemented. Applicants' attention is drawn to the means of reporting fraud of the European Anti-Fraud Office. Further information about fraud can be found on OLAF's website: http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud/contact_us/index_en.html

(h) Reporting

The projects selected are expected to report regularly to the EC on their activities, matching relationships, problems encountered, solutions implemented and resources spent. The applicants should describe how they intend to organise this reporting in an efficient and effective way.

Applicants must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU financing (see the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU external actions specified and published by the European Commission at http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index_en.htm).

Financial support to third parties

Applicants may propose financial support to third parties in order to help achieving the objectives of the action.

The maximum amount of financial support per third party is € 60 000, except where financial support to third parties is the main purpose of the action in which case no thresholds apply.

Under this Call, financial support to third parties may be the main purpose of the action.

The types of activities eligible for financial support are the ones described under Type of activities under 2.14.

In compliance with the present guidelines and notably of any conditions or restrictions set above, applicants should define mandatorily in section 2.1.1. of the grant application form:

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

Visibility

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

Number of applications and grants per applicant

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

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

A co-applicant may submit more than 1 application under this Call for Proposals.

A co-applicant may not be awarded more than 1 grant under this Call for Proposals.

A co-applicant may not be an affiliated entity in another application at the same time.

The affiliated entity(ies) may not take part in more than one application.

2.1.5. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included

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

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

- actual costs incurred by the Beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies)

- one or more simplified cost options.

Simplified cost options may take the form of:

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

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

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

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

- describe the information and methods used to establish the amounts of unit costs, lump sums and/or flat-rates, to which costs they refer, etc.
- clearly explain the formulas for calculation of the final eligible amount¹⁰
- identify the beneficiary who will use the simplified cost option (in case of affiliated entity, specify first the beneficiary), in order to verify the maximum amount per each beneficiary (which includes if applicable simplified cost options of its affiliated entity(ies))

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

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

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

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

inaccuracies. It is not possible to increase the grant or the percentage of EU co-financing as a result of these corrections.

It is therefore in the 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).

Contingency reserve

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

Eligible indirect costs

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding, but the total must not exceed 7% of the estimated total eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another budget heading in the standard grant contract. The applicant may be asked to justify the percentage requested before the contract is signed. 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 any of the applicants or affiliated entity(ies) is in receipt of an operating grant financed by the EU, it may not claim indirect costs on its incurred costs within the proposed budget for the action.

Contributions in kind

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

Contributions in kind may not be treated as co-financing

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

Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- debts and debt service charges (interest);
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- costs declared by the Beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme receiving a Union (including through EDF) grant;
- purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary for the direct implementation of the action, in which case ownership must be transferred to the final beneficiaries and/or local Beneficiary(ies), at the latest at the end of the action;
- currency exchange losses;
- credit to third parties.

2.2. HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

Prior registration in PADOR for this Call for Proposals is obligatory

Registration is obligatory for all applicants and affiliated entity(ies),

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

Before starting to register your organisation in PADOR, please read the ‘Quick guide’ on the website. It explains the registration process.

It is strongly recommended to register in PADOR when you start drafting your proposal and not to wait until just before the deadline of submission.

On the paper version of the proposal you must give your EuropeAid ID (EID). To get this ID, your organisation must enter PADOR to register, save and ‘sign’ certain obligatory data (the fields shown in orange on each screen) and the related documents (see section 2.4).

However, if it is impossible for the organisation to register in PADOR, it must submit a justification proving that this impossibility is general and beyond the control of the applicants and/or its affiliated entity(ies). In such cases, the applicants and/or affiliated entity(ies).concerned must complete the ‘PADOR off-line form’¹¹ attached to these Guidelines and send it by the submission deadline, together with the application, to the address indicated in sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.6. The registration in PADOR will then be carried out by the European Commission service in charge of the CfP. If, at a later stage, the organisation wishes to update its data itself, it will have to send an access request to the PADOR helpdesk.

All questions related to registration in PADOR should be addressed to the PADOR helpdesk at: Europeaid-pador@ec.europa.eu.

2.2.1. Application forms

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the instructions on the Concept Note and the Full Application form 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. if the amounts in the budget worksheets are inconsistent) may lead to the rejection of the application.

Clarifications will only be requested when the information provided is unclear and thus prevents 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 the relevant information concerning the action. No additional annexes should be sent.

2.2.2. Where and how to send Applications

Applications must be submitted in one original and three 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 single file (i.e. the application form must

¹¹ Which corresponds to Sections 3 and 4 of Part B of the application form.

not be split into several different files). The electronic file must contain **exactly the same** application as the paper version enclosed.

The Checklist (Section 7 of Part B the grant application form) and the Declaration by the applicant (Section 8 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**, 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:

Postal address

European Commission
EuropeAid Development and Co-operation Directorate-General,
Unit EuropeAid F/5
Finance, Contracts and Audit
Reference: **EuropeAid/134491/C/ACT/Multi**
Office: J-54 – 03/231
Central Mail Department
Avenue de Bourget 3
B-1140 Brussels (Evere), Belgium

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 7 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 **09/08/2013** 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 CET 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 sent in due time but 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 about Applications

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

E-mail address: EuropeAid-EUROMED-YOUTH-EMPL@ec.europa.eu

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

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

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

Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with the answers, will be published on the EuropeAid website: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome>

It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

All questions related to PADOR registration should be addressed to the PADOR helpdesk:

Europeaid-pador@ec.europa.eu

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 will be rejected on this sole basis.

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

The following will be assessed:

- Compliance with the submission deadline. If the deadline has not been met, the application will automatically be rejected.
- The Application Form satisfies all the criteria specified in points 1-5 of the Checklist Section 7 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 Concept Notes that pass the first administrative check will be evaluated on the relevance and design of the proposed action.

The Concept Note will receive an overall score out of 50 using the breakdown in the evaluation grid below. The evaluation will also check on compliance with the instructions on the Concept Note, which can be found in Part A of the Application Form.

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

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 ?	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

**these scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance

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

First, only the Concept Notes with a score of at least 30 will be considered for pre-selection.

Secondly, the number of Concept Notes will be reduced, taking account of the ranking, to the number of Concept Notes whose total aggregate amount of requested contributions is equal to at least 200% of the available budget for this Call for Proposals.

After the evaluation of Concept Notes, the Contracting Authority will send letters to all applicants, indicating whether their application was submitted by the deadline, informing them of the reference number they have been allocated, whether the Concept Note was evaluated and the results of that evaluation. The Evaluation Committee will then 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 7 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 quality of the applications, including the proposed budget and capacity of the applicants and affiliated entity(ies), will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria in the evaluation grid below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and award criteria.

The selection criteria help to evaluate the applicant(s)'s and the co-applicant(s)'s operational capacity and the applicant's financial capacity and to ensure that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the proposed action 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 affiliated entity(ies) of the applicants.

The award criteria help to evaluate the quality of the applications in relation to the objectives and priorities, and to award grants to projects which maximise the overall effectiveness of the Call for Proposals. They help to select applications which the Contracting Authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities. They cover 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 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Evaluation Grid

Section	
1. Financial and operational capacity	Yes/No
1.1 Do the applicants and, if applicable, affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient experience of project management?	
1.2 Do the applicants and, if applicable, affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient technical expertise? (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed.)	
1.3 Do the applicants and, if applicable, affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient management capacity? (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	
1.4 Does the applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	
	Maximum Score
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 any evaluation planned?	5
3.4 Is the co-applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s 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, extension and information sharing.)	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	80

*these scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance

Note on Section 1. Financial and operational capacity

If the answer is negative to one or more of the criteria, the application will be rejected.

Provisional selection

After the evaluation, a table will be drawn up listing the applications ranked according to their score and within the limits of the funds available. In addition, a reserve list will be drawn up following the same criteria to be used if more funds should become available during the validity period of the reserve list.

(3) STEP 3: VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF THE APPLICANTS AND AFFILIATED ENTITY(IES)

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 applicants, the affiliated entities(ies), and the action will be verified according to the criteria set out in Sections 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3.

Any rejected application will be replaced by the next best placed application in the reserve list that falls within the available financial envelope.

2.4. SUBMISSION OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR PROVISIONALLY SELECTED APPLICATIONS

An applicant that has been provisionally selected or placed on the reserve list will be informed in writing by the Contracting Authority. It will be requested to supply the following documents in order to allow the Contracting Authority to verify the eligibility of the applicant, of the co-applicant(s) and (if any) of their affiliated entity(ies)¹²:

Supporting documents may/must be provided through PADOR, see Section 2.2

1. The statutes or articles of association of the applicant, (if any) of each co-applicant(s) and (if any) of each affiliated entity(ies)¹³ Where the Contracting Authority has recognised the applicant's, or the co-applicant(s)'s, or their affiliated entity(ies)'s eligibility for another call for proposals under the same budget line within 2 years before the deadline for receipt of applications, it should be submitted, instead of the statutes or articles of association, a copy of the document proving their eligibility in a former Call (e.g. a copy of the special conditions of a grant contract received during the reference period), unless a change in legal status has occurred in the meantime¹⁴. 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. An external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the applicant's accounts for the last financial year available where the total amount of the grant exceeds € 750 000 (€ 100 000 for an operating grant),

This obligation does not apply to public bodies and international organisations 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.

12 No supporting document will be requested for applications for a grant not exceeding EUR 60 000.

13 Where the applicant and/or a co-applicant(s) and or an affiliated entity(ies) is a public body created by a law, a copy of the said law must be provided.

14 To be inserted only where the eligibility conditions have not changed from one call for proposals to the other.

3. A copy of the applicant's latest accounts (the profit and loss account and the balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed)¹⁵.
4. Legal entity sheet (see annex D of these Guidelines) duly completed and signed by each of the applicants, accompanied by the justifying documents requested there. If the applicants have already signed a contract with the Contracting Authority, instead of the legal entity sheet and supporting documents, the legal entity number may be provided, unless a change in legal status occurred in the meantime.
5. A financial identification form of the applicant conforming to the model attached at Annex E of these Guidelines, certified by the bank to which the payments will be made. This bank should be located in the country where the applicant is established. If the applicant has already submitted a financial identification form in the past for a contract where the European Commission was in charge of the payments and intends to use the same bank account, a copy of the previous financial identification form may be provided instead.

Where the requested supporting documents are not uploaded in PADOR they 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 of the relevant parts of these documents proving the applicant(s)'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.

After verifying the supporting documents, the Evaluation Committee 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*

The applicant will be informed in writing of the Contracting Authority's decision concerning their application and, if rejected, the reasons for the negative decision.

An applicant believing that it has been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may lodge a complaint. See further Section 2.4.15 of the Practical Guide.

¹⁵ This obligation does not apply to natural persons who have received a scholarship or that are in most need in receipt of direct support, nor to public bodies and 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.

2.5.2. Indicative timetable

	DATE	TIME*
Information meeting (if any)	Not applicable	
Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the Contracting Authority	19/07/2013	16:00 CET
Last date on which clarifications are issued by the Contracting Authority	29/07/2013	-
Deadline for submission of Application Form	9/08/2013	
Information to applicants on opening, administrative checks and concept note evaluation (Step 1)	30/08/2013*	-
Information to applicants on the evaluation of the Full Application Form (Step 2)	16/08/2013*	-
Notification of award (after the eligibility check) (Step 3)	30/09/2013*	-
Contract signature	15/10/2013*	-

*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 cases, the updated timetable will be published on the EuropeAid web site

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

2.6. CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AFTER 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 agrees, if awarded a grant, to accept the contractual conditions of the standard grant contract.

Implementation contracts

Where implementation of the action requires the Beneficiary(ies) and its affiliated entity(ies) (if any) 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.

2.7. EARLY WARNING SYSTEM AND CENTRAL EXCLUSION DATABASE

The applicants and, if they are legal entities, the persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over them, are informed that, should they be in one of the situations mentioned in:

- Commission Decision of 16.12.2008 on the Early Warning System (EWS) for the use of authorising officers of the Commission and the executive agencies (OJ, L 344, 20.12.2008, p.125) or
- Commission Regulation of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database (CED) (OJ L344, 20.12.2008, p.12),

their personal details (name, given name (if natural person), address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control (if legal person)) may be registered in the EWS only or both in the EWS and CED, and communicated to the persons and entities listed in the above-mentioned Decision and Regulation, in relation to the award or the execution of a grant agreement or decision.

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)¹⁶
- Annex D: Legal Entity Sheet¹⁷
- Annex E: Financial identification form
- Annex F: PADOR off Line Form¹⁸

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 action
 - Annex VIII: model financial guarantee
 - Annex IX: standard template for transfer of ownership of assets

¹⁶ Optional where the total amount of the grants to be awarded under the Call for Proposals is € 100 000 or less.

¹⁷ Only applicable where the European Commission is the Contracting Authority or will make the payments under the contracts to be signed.

¹⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/onlineservices/pador/dispensation_en.htm. Only applicable in centralised calls where PADOR used.

Annex H: Daily allowance rates (Per diem), available at the following address:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/index_en.htm

Annex K: Guidelines and Checklist for assessing Budget and Simplified cost options.

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