



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

ENTERPRISE AND INDUSTRY DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

European Network of Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors

Call for Proposals

ENT/CIP/09/E/N08S03

Grant Programme 2009

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1. CONTEXT

The Work Programme 2009 of the EIP (Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme, one of the components of the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme) includes actions which aim at the creation of a European Network of Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors.

This is the second call for the creation of the European Network of Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors. The first call was launched at the beginning of 2009 and was restricted to the Enterprise Europe Network partners. It is managed by the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation under powers delegated by the European Commission. Under the first call successful applications were received from the following countries: Denmark, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Slovakia and Sweden. The present call for proposals aims to improve the geographical coverage and is therefore designated for countries not yet included in the Network (see chapter 6.1., geographical eligibility).

The action is set up following the Commission Decision C(2009) 32 of 14/01/2009, establishing the Entrepreneurship and Innovation work programme for 2009 pursuant to European Parliament and Council Decision No. 1639/2006/EC establishing a Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme – CIP (2007-2013).

It is recognised that within Europe the lack of exploitation of entrepreneurial potential is even more acute when analysed by gender. Compared with men, fewer women are self-employed in the EU, fewer women start up businesses or have the ambition to do so, and women generally choose to start and manage firms in industries such as retail, services to private persons, and other service industries, that are often (at least until recently) perceived as being less crucial to economic development and growth than science and high-technology¹.

Women's intellectual potential and their contribution to Europe's competitiveness are not being sufficiently exploited, hence the Commission is seeking to promote female entrepreneurship and create a business environment that facilitates the creation and development of women-led companies.

According to Article 2 of the Treaty of the European Union, the Union shall have as its tasks, *inter alia*, the equality between men and women. In addition, Article 3.3 of the Treaty provides that the Union shall aim to eliminate inequalities and to promote equality between men and women.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE CALL

This Call is a follow-up call to the Call **ENT/CIP/09/E/N08S00** previously launched in 2009, in order to complete the coverage of the European Network of Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors with the remaining eligible countries under the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme of the European Commission.

¹ Evaluation on Policy: Promotion of women innovators and entrepreneurship, European Commission (DG Enterprise and Industry), Final Report (GHK, Technopolis), 25 July 2008

The call aims at boosting the rate of female entrepreneurial activity across the EU. The Network of Ambassadors shall inspire women of all ages (including women in active life as well as students) to become entrepreneurs and to set up their own businesses. The Ambassadors will help raise confidence in setting up and creating successful businesses. They will also be role models to inspire other women to become entrepreneurs by "telling their personal success story".

In this sense, the call is addressed to organisations active in business support (see chapter 6.2 of the present document) that will as a consortium set up one network per participating country and bring together successful entrepreneurs across Europe that will work locally and nationally to inspire and encourage women to recognise that entrepreneurship could be a career path for them.

What actions are being funded?

The projects funded will be aimed at boosting the rate of female entrepreneurship activity. Each project will set up one national network. The aggregate of them will constitute a European Network. Applicants should present in their proposals the potential ambassadors and the envisaged target groups. The ambassadors will participate in conferences, workshops, discussion fora and other public events, aimed at promoting female entrepreneurship among women.

Different partners may apply to the call in order to achieve the best possible geographic coverage of the country. However, all partners together shall form only one consortium per country (see chapter 6 of the present document). Projects will be run by those specific consortia made up of partner organisations for the purpose of this Call. The specific consortia must conform to the possible configurations set out in the Guide for applicants.

A female entrepreneurship ambassador is an individual - female or male - who has already made her/his mark in the entrepreneurship sector and can use this experience to inspire female entrepreneurship and encourage women to turn their ideas into reality. The female entrepreneurship ambassadors will help build the vision, confidence and self-belief amongst women, including women in active life as well as students, that they can successfully start and run a business. Ambassadors are expected to promote entrepreneurship amongst women by engaging and speaking to groups in schools, colleges, universities, community groups and the media, as well as addressing conferences, business networks and employment initiatives.

Ambassadors shall be selected nationally from successful and well-known entrepreneurs.

Detailed information on the specific activities to be carried out can be found in chapter II of the Guide for submission whilst the structure of a work plan of a project is described in detail in chapters III and V.

3. MAXIMUM DURATION OF THE ACTION

The maximum duration of the action shall be 24 months. After this time it is expected that participating partners will take over the management of each national network and ensure its continuation.

4. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Scheduled starting date of projects: **August 2010**

Maximum duration of projects: 24 months

The intention is to inform applicants of the outcome of the award procedure no later than by June 2010.

The period of eligibility of costs will start only on the day after signature of the grant agreement by the last of the parties. If a beneficiary can demonstrate the need to start the action before the agreement is signed, related expenditure may be authorised before the agreement is signed. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant application.

The indicative calendar of the action is:

Estimated date for signature of the agreements	July 2010
Estimated date for selection of the Ambassadors at national level	August - September 2010
Estimated date for the induction event of the new countries participating at the European Network of Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors	October 2010
Estimated date for operating the networks	November 2010 onwards

5. BUDGET, FUNDING RATES AND ELIGIBILITY OF COSTS

The indicative amount available for this Call is approx. **EUR 545.000**

The Union funding is limited to a maximum of 50% of the total eligible costs of the projects. The average amount of Union funding is likely to be about EUR 50.000 per project.

Indicative number of projects: an estimated number of 10 national projects with an average of 10 female entrepreneurship ambassadors per Network.

- Contributions in kind are not eligible costs.
- Contributions in kind are not accepted as part of the consortium's co-financing.
- No fees may be paid to the selected female entrepreneurship ambassadors. Only travel and subsistence costs could be paid (see Guide for applicants).
- Eligible costs can be incurred only from the starting date of the action, save in exceptional cases, and under no circumstances before submission of the application for a grant.

- The Union contribution to reimburse eligible costs must not give rise to a profit. Profit is defined as a surplus of receipts over costs. The amount of the grant will be reduced by the amount of any surplus.
- One action may give rise to the award of only one grant from the Union budget. The Commission reserves the right to award a grant of less than the amount requested by the applicant.
- Grants will not be awarded for more than the amount requested.
- The publication does not guarantee the availability of funds for the above action.

5.1. Co-financing and joint and several responsibility

The beneficiary shall supply evidence of the co-financing provided, either by way of own resources, or in the form of financial transfers from third parties.

The applicants shall provide an explicit undertaking from each co-financing organisation to provide the amount of funding stated in the grant application for the operation (duly completed and signed forms A3 and A4 for the applicant and its partners, form C for Third parties).

They shall agree upon appropriate arrangements between themselves for the proper performance of the action. In particular shall they agree on joint and several responsibility for any amount due to the Commission by anyone of them; an optional article of special conditions (article I.10 of the grant agreement for an action with multiple beneficiaries) may limit their level of responsibility but its use is subject to an assessment of the financial risks to be carried out by the Commission.

The grant agreement shall be signed by each participating co-beneficiary unless a power of attorney is conferred to the appointed co-ordinator (Form A/4 of the submission set).

5.2. Subcontracting

Only a limited part of the project may be subcontracted, up to 10 % of the eligible costs.

Subcontracting does not limit the responsibilities of beneficiaries

Please refer to the guide for submission (page 13) for further details on subcontracting.

5.3. Payment arrangements

The draft grant agreements attached to the “Submission set” (**form E**) specify the payment arrangements.

6. ELIGIBILITY

Applications must comply with all of the eligibility criteria set out in this section.

6.1. Geographical eligibility

Applicants eligible to submit proposals must be established in the following countries that were not covered by the results of the first call:

- The following EU Member States: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, and the United Kingdom.
- The following EEA country: Liechtenstein.
- Accession countries, candidate countries and other countries participating in the CIP: Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Albania, Israel, Montenegro, and Serbia, (Organisations based in these countries are eligible on the same conditions as those from EU Member States to apply in a consortium).²

6.2. Legal status eligibility

- 1) Applications must be submitted by a legal entity.
- 2) Corporate bodies must be properly constituted and registered under the law of their home country.
- 3) Any public or private entity whose core activity is in the field of fostering, promoting and/or supporting entrepreneurship can participate in this call for proposals. This includes in particular:
 - public authorities 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 and start-up centres;
 - business associations and business support networks;
 - public and private entities offering business support services.
- 4) Projects shall be run by specific consortia made up of a minimum of two partner organisations for the purpose of this Call. The specific consortia must conform to the following configurations:
 - A national consortium made of partner organisations from the same country; or
 - Under specific circumstances, a transnational consortium. For example: a) a partner organisation of a small country to join a consortium made-up of partner organisations from a bigger neighbouring country, such as Cyprus/Greece, etc. b) partner organisations from neighbouring small countries.

² For the latest information on participation of non-member countries in the EIP, please consult the CIP website (http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/international_relations/competitiveness_innovation/index_en.htm). Grants can only be awarded to organisations from those countries where the agreement on the participation of the country in the EIP has come into force.

6.3. Exclusion criteria

By using the “Exclusion Criteria Form” (form D attached to the “Submission Set) Applicants shall declare on their honour that they are not in one of the situations referred to in Articles 93 and 94 of the Financial Regulation. In completing this form the applicant:

- states whether or not he/she/the company is in one or more of the situations described in the form; and
- undertakes to submit to the Commission any additional document relating to the exclusion criteria that the Commission may see fit to request.

Where the proposal is submitted by more than one applicant, each applicant must provide the form.

Please note that, according to articles 96 and 114 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Union and according to article 134b of the Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002³ laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Union⁴, administrative and financial penalties may be imposed by the Commission on applicants who are excluded in relation to points a) to h) of the form in question.

6.4. Eligible proposals

Applications must comply with the following conditions in order to be eligible for a grant:

- Applications must be signed, dated and complete, using the standard submission set;
- Applications must be submitted before the closing date mentioned below;
- Only projects that are strictly non-profit-making and/or whose immediate objective is non-commercial shall be eligible.
- Applications must respect the maximum duration of projects (see section 4).
- Applications must be in line with the scheduled start date (see section 4).
- Applications must respect the maximum EC contribution as laid out in section 5.
- Applications may not include contributions in kind as part of their co-financing.

In this context, will be rejected any project directly or indirectly contrary to EU policy or against public health, human rights, citizen’s security or freedom of expression.

³ As amended by Commission Regulation 1261/2005 of 20 July 2005, Commission Regulation 1248/2006 of 7 August 2006 and Commission Regulation 478/2007 of 23 April 2007

⁴ As amended by Council Regulation 1995/2006 of 13 December 2006

7. SELECTION CRITERIA

7.1. Applicants' financial capacity to complete the proposed action

Applicants must show they have stable and sufficient sources of funding to ensure the continuity of their organisation throughout the project and, if necessary, to play a part in financing it.

To this end applicants must fill in and sign form A/3 for the lead organisation, and form A/4 for partner organisations. The legal entity form and financial identification form are also to be duly filled in, signed and annexed to the aforementioned forms (including supporting documents).

For ease of reference, the applicants are further requested to fill in the financial statement form A/5 of the submission set. This form only applies to private organisations. Public organisations are only requested to indicate their annual revenue/resources in forms A/3 and A/4.

Applicants must include in their grant application form their annual accounts (i.e. profit and loss account; balance sheet) for the last financial year.

Alternatively, a guarantee equivalent to all or part of the grant being sought may be provided in order to show the financial capacity.

The verification of financial capacity shall not apply to natural persons in receipt of scholarships nor to public bodies, nor to the international organisations referred to in Article 43 of the Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 2342/2002.

7.2. External audit reports

Not applicable.

7.3. Applicants' technical capacity to complete the proposed action

Applicants must show they have the operational (technical and management) capacity to complete the operation to be supported and must demonstrate their capacity to manage scale activity corresponding to the size of the project for which the grant is requested. In particular, the team responsible for the project/operation must have adequate professional qualifications and experience.

In order to prove their experience, applicants will need to submit a list of projects carried out in the last 3 years (either funded by the EU or not).

Also, the applicants must include with their grant application form a curriculum vitae of the staff that will actually be performing the work involved and professional references and details of past similar projects. For ease of reference, the curriculum vitae should preferably be submitted in the Europass format which can be found on the following page:

http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/preview.action?locale_id=1

Applicants must be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the project, not acting as an intermediary.

8. AWARD CRITERIA

Provided that proposals meet the eligibility and selection criteria, the action will be evaluated against the following six award criteria.

1. Relevance to the objectives	20
2. Geographical coverage	20
3. Visibility and Impact	15
4. Quality	15
5. Sustainability of the Network	15
6. Budget and Cost-effectiveness	15
Maximum total score	100

If a total score lower than 60 points or a score lower than 50% for any of the above six criteria is obtained, the proposal will not be evaluated further.

The Commission will award grants to the best scoring proposals. Nevertheless, the Commission will make sure that any individual country is not covered by more than one project. A limited number of proposals may be placed in a reserve list.

The complete selection and evaluation procedure is described in chapter III of the Guide for submission.

Please note that, in case of award, the beneficiary authorises the Commission, to publish the following information in any form and medium, including via the Internet:

- the beneficiary's name and the address,
- the subject and purpose of the grant,
- the amount granted and the proportion of the action's total cost covered by the funding.

9. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

9.1. Preparing the proposal

The proposal must be drafted in one of the official languages of the European Union, using the specific submission set available for this call. Please refer also to the **Guide for submission** for explanatory details.

The submission set can be:

- Downloaded from Europa web site: <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/funding/index.htm>
- Or obtained at the following address:

European Commission
Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General
Grant Programme 2009
Call for proposals No. ENT/CIP/09/E/N08S003
Contact: Mr Marko Curavić
Office address: BREY 6/284
B-1049 Brussels – BELGIUM
Fax: (+32-2)-296.62.78 – e-mail: entr-entrepreneurship@ec.europa.eu

The proposal must be submitted, **in triplicate, including an electronic version on CD-rom or DVD, and placed** inside **two** sealed envelopes, one inside the other. Both envelopes should be addressed to the department indicated above. It should bear the following description: ‘**Call for proposals No ENT/CIP/09/E/N08S003**’ and the following note: ‘**Not to be opened by the internal mail department**’. If self-adhesive envelopes are used, they must be sealed with adhesive tape and the sender must sign across this tape.

9.2. Sending the proposal

Proposals must be submitted, on paper

- a) Either **by registered mail**, postmarked no later than **12/03/2010, to the address indicated above**.
- b) or **by courier services**, no later than **12/03/2010, to the address indicated above**,
- c) or **delivered by hand**, i.e. by delivery in person or by an authorised representative no later than **12/03/2010, to the following address**:

European Commission
Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General
Grant Programme 2009
Call for proposals No. ENT/CIP/09/E/N08S003
Directorate E - Promotion of SMEs’ competitiveness
Unit E.1 – Entrepreneurship, BREY 6/284
Service central de réception du courrier
Avenue de Bourget, 1
B-1140 Bruxelles, Belgique

How to reach rue de Bourget 3:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/calls/hand_delivery.html

Please note, that for security reasons, hand deliveries (including private courier services) are not accepted in other Commission’s buildings. An acknowledgement of receipt shall be delivered by the “Service central de réception du courrier”. This department is open from 08.00 to 17.00 from Monday to Thursday and from 08.00 to 16.00 on Friday; it is closed on Saturdays, Sundays and Commission holidays.

Evidence of timely submission by post or courier service will be constituted by the date of dispatch, the postmark or the date of the deposit slip. In the case of hand-delivery, the signed and dated receipt will serve as evidence.

Applicants shall observe precisely the above indications in order that proposals can reach their precise destination in due time.

A notification of shipment shall be sent to the e-mail address ‘*entr-entrepreneurship@ec.europa.eu*’ by 12/03/2010 at the latest.

10. TREATMENT OF QUESTIONS FROM THE APPLICANTS

All the information that is needed for preparing and for submitting a proposal is already included in the text of the call for proposals and in the annexed documents. However possible questions can be submitted in writing by sending an e-mail to the following address:

entr-entrepreneurship@ec.europa.eu

Questions will be answered by the Commission in writing; no answers, explanations or clarifications will be given on the telephone. Answers to questions asked by applicants will be also published on the web (“Frequently Asked Questions”) at the address:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item_id=3917&lang=en

11. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The European Union has the task to promote equality between women and men and shall aim in all its activities to eliminate gender inequalities (articles 2 and 3 of the Treaty on the European Union). In this context, women are particularly encouraged to be involved in proposal submission.

12. PERSONAL DATA

Your grant application will be processed by computer. All personal data (such as names, addresses, CVs, etc.) will be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data.⁵

Your replies to the questions in the submission set are necessary in order to assess your grant application and they will be processed solely for that purpose by the department responsible for the Union grant programme concerned. On request, you may be sent personal data and correct or complete them.

⁵ Official Journal L 8, 12.1.2001.

For any question relating to these data, please contact the Commission department to which the application must be returned. Beneficiaries may lodge a complaint against the processing of their personal data with the European Data Protection Supervisor at any time.

13. ANNEX 1 SUBMISSION SET

14. ANNEX 2 GUIDE FOR SUBMISSION