

NOTICE OF CALL FOR PROPOSALS WITH A VIEW TO OBTAINING GRANTS IN THE FIELD OF TRANSPORT

Call for proposals DG TREN/SUB/02-2006

1. Political context

The European Commission intends to award¹ grants to promote the objectives of the common transport policy. The policy priorities have been set in the work programme for 2006 adopted by the Commission on 25 October 2005 [COM(2005) 531 final]. Information on this call for proposals is available on the DG TREN website at the following address:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/energy_transport/grants/proposal_en.htm

2. Sources of funding

The operations selected will be financed from budget headings “*Transport safety and Internal market and optimisation of transport systems*”.

3. Estimated total amount for this call

The estimated total amount for 2006 is EUR 13 950 000

Transport safety: EUR 10 394 000

Internal market and optimisation of transport systems: EUR 3 556 000

4. Percentage of Community co-financing

The grants are intended as incentives for carrying out an operation which could not be executed without Community financial support, and they reflect the principle of co-financing. The Commission therefore plans to grant only funds which are complementary and subsidiary to contributions made by the beneficiary, the national, regional or local authorities and other bodies. Accordingly, the amount granted will be between 10 and 50% of the total eligible costs of the operation. Contributions in kind are not regarded as eligible costs. Operations will be put in competition in view of a possible financial support.

5. Objectives of this call for proposals:

Considering the legislative initiatives described in the work programme for 2006, the Commission wishes to support operations reinforcing and developing its policies in the field of transport, particularly in the context set in the White Paper "European transport policy for 2010: time to decide" and its mid-term review to be adopted soon.

The scope and the results of these operations should enable the Commission to strengthen its initiatives and to renew them on the basis of the economic, social and technological trends currently existing within the European Union and beyond.

¹ Subject to the adoption by the Commission of the annual DG TREN work programme 2006 for grants.

6. Categories and areas of operations covered by this call for proposals:

6.1. Categories of operations:

Operations to be supported will be classified as follows, although this does not imply the exclusion of operations bearing other characteristics and complying with the objectives quoted in point 5:

- Operations of information and communication: this category deals with the setting up and carrying out of operations in order to present transport policies and convey their message to the categories of users and operators targeted.
- Operations of coaching, teaching, training, and learning: initiatives involving participants in more than one Member State, which concretely aim at improving the behaviour of road users and operators in traffic.
- Operations of research and dissemination of best practices: these operations aim to compare the procedures in force and the equipments used, measure the performance of the transport systems and identify the margins for improvement in order to disseminate the best practices within the European Union.
- Operations of coordination and harmonisation of standards and procedures: this deals with increasing the opportunities of convergence between different existing standards and procedures in order to reinforce the harmonisation process at the European level.

A proposal can cover several categories.

6.2. Areas of operations:

The operations must be devoted to one of the following areas, although this does not imply the exclusion of other proposals of innovative character and European scale, the objectives of which comply with those listed in point 5:

A proposal can cover several areas.

Road safety, in particular:

- Improve knowledge and attitude of road users through practical and verifiable means. Actions targeting compliance issues, young or novice road users and actions involving Member States, whose road safety record is below European average, are especially welcome;
- support and implementation to Commission legislative initiatives in 2006/2007 in road safety, especially with regard to cross-border enforcement including the development of the second generation digital tachygraph technology, road safety infrastructure management, daytime running lights and blind-spot mirrors;
- development of a strategic, highly visible and EU-wide campaigns for the years 2007 – 2009.

Aspects of transport logistics and optimisation of the use of infrastructures at the service of operators and users (air, railway and maritime), such as:

- integration between transport networks,
- optimal use of vehicles and infrastructures,
- the organisation and governance of service operators in the field of transport,
- the cost reduction of maintenance and renewal of infrastructures,
- the elimination of the obstacles to interoperability,
- dialogue between the private and public sector,
- evaluation of logistics chain, including terminals, networks and cross-border routes,
- actions of promotion of the maritime transport at short distance and the inland navigation for the goods,
- awareness of operators' responsibility as regards safety,
- innovation in transport and use of new technologies (such as Galileo),
- training and education of operators and users.

7. Period of eligibility of costs:

The Commission is prepared to support multiannual operations of a maximum duration of **36 months**. Eligible costs can be incurred only after signature of the grant agreement by all the parties, save in exceptional cases, and under no circumstances before submission of the application for a grant.

8. Eligibility criteria

8.1. Legal status of applicants:

Applications submitted in writing by legal persons who are citizens of a Member State of the European Union. The organisation coordinating the project and the partners, hereafter named "Applicants", must show that they exist as a legal person, by providing a certified true copy of their articles of association or equivalent.

8.2. Grounds for exclusion

Applications will not be considered for a grant if the applicants are in any of the following situations:

- a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of *res judicata*;
- c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;

- d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- e) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- f) following another procurement procedure or grant procedure financed by the Community budget, they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations;
- g) are subject to a conflict of interest;
- h) they have been guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required or have failed to supply this information.

Applicants must certify that they are not in one of the situations listed in point 8.2.

8.3 *Administrative and financial penalties*

- 1) Without prejudice to the application of penalties laid down in the contract, candidates or tenderers and contractors who have been guilty of making false declarations or have been found to have seriously failed to meet their contractual obligations in an earlier procedure will be excluded from all contracts and grants financed by the Community budget for a maximum of two years from the time when the infringement is established, as confirmed after an adversarial procedure with the contractor.

That period may be extended to three years in the event of a repeat offence within five years of the first infringement.

Tenderers or candidates who have been guilty of making false declarations will also incur financial penalties representing 10% of the total value of the grant being awarded.

Contractors who have been found to have seriously failed to meet their contractual obligations will incur financial penalties representing 10% of the value of the grant in question.

That rate may be increased to 20% in the event of a repeat offence within five years of the first infringement.

- 2) In the cases referred to in points 8.2 a), c), d) and f), the candidates or tenderers will be excluded from all contracts and grants for a maximum of two years from the time when the infringement is established, as confirmed after an adversarial procedure with the contractor.

In the cases referred to in points 8.2 b) and e), the candidates or tenderers will be excluded from all contracts and grants for a minimum of one year and a maximum of four years from the date of notification of the judgment.

Those periods may be extended to five years in the event of a repeat offence within five years of the first infringement or the first judgment.

- 3) The cases referred to in point 8.2. e) cover:

- a) cases of fraud as referred to in Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests established by the Council Act of 26 July 1995²;
- b) cases of corruption as referred to in Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of Member States of the European Union, established by the Council Act of 26 May 1997³;
- c) cases of participation in a criminal organisation, as defined in Article 2(1) of Joint Action 98/733/JHA of the Council⁴;
- d) cases of money laundering as defined in Article 1 of Council Directive 91/308/EEC⁵.

9. Selection criteria

The applicants must have access to solid and adequate funding sources, so as to be able to maintain activities for the period of the project funded and to help finance the project. The applicants must have the professional skills and qualifications required to complete the proposed action.

9.1 *Financial capacity of applicants*

Applicants must show that they have the financial capacity and operational capability to complete the operation to be supported and must provide their balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed. The last of these provisions does not apply to public bodies and international organisations.

Applicants must fill in the form relative to legal entities, available from the website mentioned in point 1.

9.2 *Technical capacity of applicants*

Applicants must have the technical capacity and operational capability to complete the operation to be supported and must provide the following documents (résumés of the people in charge of carrying out the operation, description of projects and activities undertaken in the last three years and more particularly of projects related to the relevant issue).

10. Award criteria

² OJ C 316, 27.11.1995, p. 48.

³ OJ C 195, 25.6.1997, p. 1.

⁴ OJ L 351, 29.12.1998, p. 1. Joint action of 21 December 1998 on making it a criminal offence to participate in a criminal organisation in the Member States of the European Union.

⁵ OJ L 166, 28.6.1991, p. 77. Directive of 10.6.1991, as amended by Directive 2001/97/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 December 2001 (OJ L 344, 28.12.2001, p. 76).

The operation supported must be designed to further one of the objectives referred to in point 5 above. The Commission will base the choice of operations and the rate of Community cofinancing on the following criteria:

10.1. Quality of the operation (80%)

A. The Commission will assess the **European dimension** of the project and its added value to EU safety policies, in particular those set out in the White Paper "European transport policy for 2010: time to decide" and the ensuing sectoral policies. In this context, local, regional or purely national initiatives are excluded (20%);

B. The Commission will assess the **innovative character** of the project, in terms of new approaches presented and new practices developed (20%);

C. The **multiplier effect**: The Commission will assess the value of the project in terms of transfer and generalisation of knowledge and good practice, dissemination or large-scale application of the results as well as the scale of the operation in response to Commission's priority of supporting large-scale projects (15%).

D. **Cost-benefit ratio**: the Commission will assess the cost-effectiveness ratio of the action and will, to that purpose, evaluate the expected results in light of the grant requested. (10%)

E. **Visibility**: the Commission will assess the means, by which the visibility of the action on a European Union level will be assured, eg through publications, organisation of events, Internet sites, CD-ROMs (15%).

10.2. Presentation of the application (20%)

The Commission will assess the organisation and proposed execution of the action, and will assess the detail of the proposal with regard to the following aspects:

A. **work plan** including a clear and full description of the means to achieve the goals of the actions, with a detailed financing plan, person-months attributed to specific tasks, and a meaningful and realistic time-table

B. **Methodology**: The proposers have to present an evaluation method for their project with result indicators for the proposed objectives.

Only applications with a total score of 70% or higher and of at least 60% for each individual criterion will be taken into consideration for Community funding.

11. General conditions for awarding grants

The general conditions for awarding grants, particularly the definition of the eligible costs and the methods of payment, are set out in the draft grant agreement available at the Internet address mentioned in point 1. Applicants must compulsorily take notice of this document and must take into account the conditions for awarding grants when drawing up their proposal.

For all applications for pre-financing of over €100 000, a financial guarantee equivalent to the amount pre-financed will be required. In addition, the Commission reserves the right to require a financial guarantee for pre-financing amounts of under €100 000.

The budget for the action attached to the application must have revenue and expenditure in balance and show clearly the costs which are eligible for financing from the Community budget. Therefore, applicants must provide a detailed breakdown of all expenditure related to their proposal.

The Commission will only recognise the cost of entities having signed the contract, whether as beneficiary or as co-beneficiary. She will no longer accept the cofinanced participation of third parties to the contract, when they are neither beneficiaries, nor cobeneficiaries, unless they are subcontractors, the costs of which are taken into account when considering the beneficiaries or cobeneficiaries.

For actions where the cost to be financed by the Commission exceeds €300 000, the application must be accompanied by an external audit report produced by an approved auditor. This report must certify the accounts for the last year available and give an assessment of the financial viability of the applicant. If this report is not submitted, the proposal will be rejected.

12. Submission of applications for a grant

Applications must be made only using the **model application form available at the Internet address mentioned in point 1**. For each application, **one signed original and five copies** must be supplied by the organisation coordinating the project. Partners must fill in the parts B and C of the application form.

The form relative to legal entities, available from the website mentioned in point 1, must also be filled in.

Any unsigned applications will be rejected when the proposals are opened.

13. Closing date for submission of applications for a grant

13.1. Grant applications can be sent in two ways:

(a) **either sent by registered mail or by private courier**

The proposal must be sent by registered mail or by private courier, dispatched not later than **16 August 2006** (the postmark or the receipt issued by the courier service serving as proof of the dispatch) to the following address:

By registered mail

European Commission
Directorate-General Energy and Transport
DM 28 - 0/110 - Archives
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium

By private courier

European Commission
Directorate-General Energy and Transport - DM 28 - 0/110
Rue de Genève, 1
B-1049 Brussels (Evere)
Belgium

(b) or delivered by hand

Proposals must be delivered by hand at the **Central Mail of the European Commission by 16 August 2006 not later than 4 p.m.** (Brussels time), at the following address:

European Commission
Directorate-General Energy and Transport – DM 28 0/110
Rue de Genève 1
B-1140 Brussels (Evere)
Belgium

In this case, a receipt must be obtained as proof of submission, signed and dated by the official in the Commission's central mail department who took delivery. The department is open from 08.00 to 17.00 Monday to Thursday, and from 8.00 to 16.00 on Fridays. It is closed on Saturdays, Sundays and Commission holidays.

13.2. Practical arrangements:

Proposals must be placed inside two sealed envelopes, one inside the other. The inner envelope should be marked:

Call for proposals No. TREN/SUB/02-2006
not to be opened by the internal mail department
DM 28 0/110 – Courrier/Archives

If self-adhesive envelopes are used, they must be sealed with adhesive tape and the sender must sign across this tape.

14. Indicative schedule

Reception of proposals: refer to point 13.1 above

Evaluation: September 2006

Award decision: November 2006