

Call for expressions of interest by individuals wishing to be included on the list of experts regarding Commission Decision of 20.07.2010 setting up a Financial Services User Group

MARKT/2013/20/H

Introduction

By its Decision of 20/07/2010, the Commission set up the Financial Services User Group (FSUG) (hereinafter referred to as 'the group'). Since the term of office of the present group and the validity of the list of experts expire in October 2013, it is necessary to launch a new call for expressions of interest which will allow to draw a new list of experts and subsequently renew the composition of the group. The Commission is therefore calling for an expression of interest by individuals wishing to be included on the list of experts which will serve as a basis for the selection of the 20 members of the FSUG. As stated in its *White Paper on Financial Services Policy 2005–2010*, the Commission attaches great importance to ensuring proportionate user representation. In its 4 March 2009 Communication *Driving European Recovery*, the Commission stated that the interests of European investors, consumers and SMEs must be at the centre of the financial market reform.

During its first three-year mandate, the FSUG has proved to be a very useful and efficient body assisting the Commission in a number of initiatives and coming up with its own ideas and projects. It helped to streamline and further improve the quality of the input received from consumers, retail investors and micro-enterprises to the Commission's policy preparation in the area of financial services. Therefore, it has been decided to draw a new list of experts with a validity period of 6 years as from 1st November 2013. The selection of the 20 members of the group will be based on this list of experts. As indicated in the Decision of 20/07/2010, the term of office of the members of the group is three years (one year contract renewable for up to two further periods of one year); this term of office of three years may be renewed twice.

Members of the group will be individuals appointed to represent the interests of consumers, retail investors or micro-enterprises, and individual experts with expertise in financial services from the perspective of the financial services user.

This call for expressions of interest setting up the Financial Services User Group is open to suitably qualified experts from any part of the EU.

More information on the work performed by the FSUG during its three first years of operation is available on internet: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/fsug/index_en.htm.

1. Contracting authority

European Commission, Internal Market and Services Directorate-General
Rue de Spa 2, 1049 Brussels

E-mail: ec-intmarket-contracts@ec.europa.eu
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/internal_market/calls_en.htm

2. Type: Call for expressions of interest

Persons wishing to apply for inclusion on the list of experts are invited to do so in accordance with the rules set out in this notice.

Expressions of interest must be submitted in one of the official languages of the European Union by electronic means at the following address: ec-intmarket-contracts@ec.europa.eu.

The contracting authority will draw up a list of experts who meet the criteria set out in point 8 below. Once the list is constituted, the Commission will select 20 applicants to become members of the group on the basis of the skills, experience and knowledge necessary and in accordance with the principles of non-discrimination, equal treatment and absence of conflict of interests. The Commission will invite them to conclude a contract for the supply of expert services. (At least 11 members will be individuals appointed to represent the interests of consumers or retail investors.)

Inclusion on the list entails no obligation on the part of the Commission concerning the conclusion of contracts.

3. Type of contract

The list resulting from this notice will be used exclusively for public contracts of the following type: Service contract for the supply of expert services. Please see the standard contract on the website at http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/internal_market/calls_en.htm.

- Expert contracts, to be established for the duration of 12 months, must be signed by the applicants selected to become members of the group. Contracts may be renewed for a further two periods of 12 months each.
- Members of the group will be remunerated with an annual fee of EUR 10 000 for their services. Their travel and, where appropriate, subsistence expenses in connection with the group's activities will be reimbursed on the basis of the provisions in force regarding expert groups at the Commission.
- Throughout the contract period members of the group must demonstrate an appropriate level of commitment to accomplishing the required tasks (workload of approximately 35 days, in addition to the participation in the meetings of the group). Should a member fail to demonstrate an appropriate level of commitment, the Commission will have the right to reduce his/her remuneration and/or terminate the contract early, subject to prior warning.

4. Description of tasks

The tasks of the group of experts are:

- to advise the Commission in the context of the preparation of legislative acts or other policy initiatives affecting users of financial services, including consumers, retail investors and micro-enterprises;
- to provide insight, opinion and advice concerning the practical implementation of such policies;
- to proactively seek to identify key financial services issues which affect users of financial services;
- where appropriate, and in agreement with the Commission, to liaise with and provide information to financial services user representatives and representative bodies at the European Union and national level, as well as to other consultative groups administered by the Commission, such as the European Consumer Consultative Group, the Payment Systems Market Expert Group and the European Securities Markets Expert Group.

The issues on which the group's opinion may be sought will encompass the full range of financial services policy areas including, but not limited to, retail banking, consumer and mortgage credit, payment means and systems, life and non-life insurance, pensions, retail investment products, securities markets and financial supervision.

5. Place of provision of services

The group will meet approximately 8 times a year, normally on Commission premises in Brussels, in the form and according to the timetable determined by the Commission. Upon request of the members, one meeting per year may be held in another Member State.

6. Validity period of the list

This list will remain valid for a period of 6 years as from 1st November 2013. Applicants may apply for inclusion on the list at any time up to 3 months before the expiration of the validity period.

7. Legal form

No specific legal status is required.

8. Criteria for inclusion on the list

8.1. Exclusion criteria

Exclusion criteria to be fulfilled by all the applicants are detailed in the application file that can be downloaded at the following address: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/internal_market/calls_en.htm.

8.2. Selection criteria

Selection criteria to be fulfilled by all the applicants as well as a list of the supporting documentation needed are detailed in the application file that can be downloaded at the following address: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/internal_market/calls_en.htm.

The group of experts shall consist of 20 members appointed in accordance with Article 3 of the above Decision who will be qualified individuals selected by the Commission on the basis of their expertise in the area of financial services. The Commission shall assess the eligibility of individual experts against the following criteria:

- minimum 4 years of professional experience in the financial services sector, at least 2 of which on user-related issues ;
- proficiency in English, a language which is customary in the sphere of finance, at a level which allows the expert to participate in discussions and draft reports in that language; the European framework of reference for languages developed by the Council of Europe must be used as a reference (http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/source/framework_en.pdf);
- availability to participate in meetings approximately 8 times a year and commitment to work extensively between meetings to prepare the output of the group (opinions, position papers, reports etc).

Expressions of interest received should include documentation demonstrating that the proposed expert meets the above criteria.

In making the final selection of group members on the basis of the submitted proposals, the Commission will take into account the need to obtain input from individuals appointed to represent the interests of consumers, retail investors or micro-enterprises on the one hand, and individual experts on the other. In addition, the Commission will endeavour to ensure that the group contains a balance between expertise in all sectors of financial services and that the group offers a balanced representation of geographical origin within the European Union.

9. Selection of applicants

9.1. Applications will be accepted from natural persons. In the event of a successful application, only that natural person who was originally selected by the selection panel will be admitted to the group. No substitution of natural persons will be permitted throughout the full duration of the contract, or during possible renewals.

9.2. The first round of selection of applicants to be included on the list of experts will take place in September 2013. From this list of experts the selection panel, mentioned in Section 9.6(b), will select 20 experts to conclude a contract for 12 months that will enter into force on 1 November 2013. This one year contract shall be renewable for up to two further periods of one year.

9.3. Experts who will not be selected to become members of the group will remain on the list of experts, with the possibility to be invited to become member at a later stage.

9.4. The Commission may decide to invite experts who are on the list to conclude a contract when it considers it appropriate at any time after the first selection round and before the expiration of the validity period of the list. The same procedure of selection will be applied as in the first round of the conclusion of contracts.

9.5. Applications that will be received after the first round of selection will be evaluated by the Commission whenever there is a need for recruiting a new expert and, at least, once a year. The applicants who meet the criteria will be added to the list of experts and may subsequently become members of the group.

9.6. Selection panels

The Commission will set up selection panels consisting of officials from across the Commission services, which will:

- (a) select applicants to be included in the list of experts;
- (b) select members of the group from the list of experts.

9.7. Applications must be submitted in accordance with the procedures set out below

9.7.1. Application file

The application file can be downloaded at the following address: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/internal_market/calls_en.htm.

The model European CV can be downloaded at the following address: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae/templates-instructions>

9.7.2. Applications must be submitted in one of the official languages of the European Union by electronic means at the following address: ec-intmarket-contracts@ec.europa.eu. Applications must clearly mention the reference "Call for expressions of interest 'FSUG' (MARKT/2013/20/H)" and **must be submitted not later than 21/06/2013**.

The application should be signed by the expert him/herself. Unsigned applications will not be retained.

The Commission will publish a list of the members of the expert group on the web pages of Internal Market and Services Directorate-General and Health and Consumers Directorate-General. The members' personnel data will be collected, processed and published in accordance with the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 45/2001¹.

¹ 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 Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data (OJ L 8 of 12.1.2001, p. 1).

Additional information is set out in the Terms of Reference of the group that can be downloaded at the following address:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/internal_market/calls_en.htm

10. Other information

Applicants will be informed of the result of their application. Unclear or incomplete applications may not be considered.

Applicants are obliged to keep the Commission informed of any change in their situation or address so that their application may be kept up to date.