



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

CALL FOR PROPOSALS – MARE/2014/26

**Interoperability improvements in Member States to enhance
information sharing for maritime surveillance**

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1. INTRODUCTION – BACKGROUND

The European Commission, referred to as "the Commission", in particular the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) is launching a call for proposals with a view to concluding grant agreements.

The action that is covered by these grant agreements forms part of a Programme whose implementation has been delegated to the Executive Agency for Small and medium-sized Enterprises (EASME). Therefore this agreement will be signed by EASME.

Europe has a 70 000 km coastline along two oceans and four seas: the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans, the Baltic Sea, the North Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea. The European Union's (EU) maritime regions account for some 40% of its GDP and population. Europe's well-being, safety and security are therefore inextricably linked with the sea.

Member States carry out many different operational tasks at sea, ranging from border control, maritime safety and security, fisheries control, customs, marine environment protection, general law enforcement to defence. To perform their surveillance and intervention missions, national authorities collect a wide amount of information covering among others, the following fields: ships positions and routes, cargo and crew data, intelligence, imaging, events at sea, positions and capacities of surveillance assets, registries, charts and maps, meteo-oceanic data.

The 'Blue Paper' on an EU Maritime Policy adopted by the European Commission in October 2007 and supported by numerous conclusions of the Council of the European Union and resolutions of the European Parliament considers the improvement of the cross-border and cross-sectorial cooperation between all actors involved in maritime surveillance as a key-element to improve the safety, security and environmental protection of the EU maritime domain.

As no authority owns the full picture of what's happening at sea, collaboration is needed at national level as well as EU level to make sure that information collected by one authority and useful for another authority can effectively be shared. Enhanced exchange of information between national authorities will improve the cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness of maritime surveillance.

Initiatives to improve information exchange between EU and national public authorities responsible for different functionalities of maritime surveillance have already been ongoing for some time. Important steps have been taken both at national and Union level, in particular on the civilian side. Progress has already been made through a number of legislative instruments at EU level that put in place systems serving different policy areas and in some cases going beyond one sector.

Experiences made have shown that there is an added value for further cooperation and increased information exchange.

In October 2009, the European Commission set guiding principles on how to achieve better integration of maritime surveillance. Based on these principles and as a first step, a 'Common Information Sharing Environment for the surveillance of the European Union domain' (Maritime CISE) is currently being developed jointly by the European Commission and the EU Member States, including civilian and military authorities as well as the EU Agencies operating in the maritime field.

The overall objective of the Maritime CISE is to facilitate the exchange of agreed sets of information between national authorities carrying out surveillance and intervention missions at sea (border control, maritime safety and security, fisheries control, customs, marine environment protection, general law enforcement, defence), to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of maritime functions. The Commission adopted in July 2014 a Communication on the next steps for the Common Information Sharing Environment for the EU maritime domain¹ which foresees the start by end 2014 of a Member States' driven research project ('EUCISE2020') on Maritime CISE. This project is meant to design, implement and test common IT solutions that will allow existing systems from all relevant sectors to become interoperable in the context of Maritime CISE. This project will however not focus on IT improvements relevant to particular authorities or sectors within or across Member States. Significant differences however remain between the IT setup of the various national authorities across the EU. These differences may hamper the pan European interoperability of public authorities' IT systems in the fields of maritime surveillance.

Therefore, the present Call for Proposals aims at awarding grants for actions implemented by national authorities to improve their interoperability, thereby covering both of the following aspects: i.) enhancing cross-sector and cross-border information sharing in the field of maritime surveillance as well as ii.) supporting the modernisation of IT tools to enhance cross-sector and cross-border information exchange in the field of maritime surveillance. Such actions are seen as a necessary step towards better integration of maritime surveillance in the EU within the framework of Maritime CISE.

Member States are allowed to submit a maximum of two projects as an applicant.

The present document sets out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of actions financed, in conformity with the Financial Regulation (FR) and its Rules of Application (RAP)²:

(1) the Regulation (EU, Euratom) no 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25/10/2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 (OJ L298 of 26/10/2012);

(2) Commission delegated Regulation (EU) no 1268/2012 of 29/10/2012 on the rules of application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (OJ L362 of 31/12/2012).

The present call for proposals is published under Regulation (EU) n° 508/2014 establishing the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, and in particular article 82(b). The relevant Commission Implementing Decision of 4.7.2014 concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2014 and the financing for the implementation of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and relevant documents can be found here:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/maritimeaffairs_fisheries/contracts_and_funding/annual_work_programme/index_en.htm

1

http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/integrated_maritime_surveillance/documents/com_2014_451_en.pdf

2

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/biblio/documents/regulations/regulations_en.cfm

2. OBJECTIVE(S) – THEME(S) – PRIORITIES

The objective of the present Call is to support Member States in improving their authorities' maritime surveillance interoperability, thereby covering both of the following aspects: i.) enhancing cross-sectoral information sharing in the field of maritime surveillance as well as ii.) supporting the modernisation of IT tools to enhance cross-sector and cross-border information exchange in the field of maritime surveillance. In both cases the interoperability improvement are made in the context of Maritime CISE between authorities representing the following 'functions'³: border control, maritime safety and security, fisheries control, customs, marine environment protection, general law enforcement and defence.

Depending for example on the differences in Member States' particular IT set up or on the level of integration of maritime surveillance at national level, the present call's objective can be achieved by implementing two types of projects:

Project-type n°1: Preparatory studies on improvement of cross-sectoral information exchange for maritime surveillance within and between EU member States

Project-type n°2: IT developments to improve cross-sectoral information exchange for maritime surveillance within and between Member States.

These two project types are further described below under section '6.2. Eligible activities'.

While *preparatory studies* (type 1 projects) are meant allowing national authorities to determine their further interoperability needs, *IT developments* (type 2 projects) are meant allowing national authorities to implement actions that fulfil their interoperability needs in the context of Maritime CISE. Projects can be related to either or both projects-type mentioned above.

With a view to be carried out in the Maritime CISE context, such projects will have to take due account of the existing and forthcoming cross-sectoral information systems and related interoperability developments (such as the EU funded project "EUCISE2020" mentioned above, the IMDatE platform operated by EMSA and the National Single Windows for ship's reporting formalities in the frame of directive 2010/65, EUROSUR and results for the Perseus project⁴, developments related to the implementation of the INSPIRE directive, the Copernicus Maritime security service delivering space-based information on maritime security derived and coordinated by EMSA⁵, the Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS) between the MIC and EU countries' contact points⁶, and the Digital Service Infrastructures (DSIs)⁷ of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)⁸ and ⁹ to avoid any overlaps and ensure full

³ According to subsidiarity, each Member State organises these functions in a different manner.

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=4841;

http://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/97515_en.html

⁵ <http://maritimesurveillance.security-copernicus.eu/european-maritime-surveillance>

⁶ http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/environment/tackling_climate_change/128003_en.htm

⁷ Regulation (EU) No 283/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 on guidelines for trans-European networks in the area of telecommunications infrastructure and repealing Decision No 1336/97/EC.

⁸ Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, amending Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulations (EC) No 680/2007 and (EC) No 67/2010.

consistency. Such projects should also be developed in consistency with any relevant on-going regional cooperation projects funded by the EU.

3. TIMETABLE

The indicative planning foresees:

	Stages	Date
a)	Publication of the call	December 2014
b)	Deadline for submitting applications	31/03/2015 (in case of hand-delivery: by 16h)
c)	Information to applicants ¹⁰	September 2015*
d)	Signature of grant agreements ¹¹	September - October 2015*
e)	Starting date of the action	As of signature of grant agreements
f)	Pre-financing payment	Within 30 days of signature of the grant agreement
g)	Progress reports by beneficiary	Quarterly
h)	Final report by beneficiary	Within 60 days of the end of the project
i)	Final payment	After approval of the final report

* Indicative date.

4. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The total budget earmarked for the co-financing of projects amounts €4.590.000.

The indicative grant per project will be approximately between €250.000 and €500.000.

The EASME expects to fund up to 20 proposals and **proposals that are involving at least 3 authorities will be favoured.**

The EASME reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Applications must be sent **no later than 31th March 2015 - by 16:00PM in case of hand-delivery.**
- Applications must be submitted in writing (see section 14), using the application form in Annex A.

⁹ CEF Joinup Community: https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/community/cef/og_page/catalogue-building-blocks, where a catalogue of services is available.

¹⁰ At the latest within 6 months of the deadline for submission of applications.

¹¹ At the latest within 9 months of the deadline for submission of applications

- Applications must be drafted in one of the EU official languages, but drafting in English would speed up the evaluation process.

6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA¹²

6.1. Eligible applicants

The following types of entities are eligible to participate in the call, in accordance with the relevant legal basis and the objectives to be achieved:

- Public authorities (national, regional, local administration) of Member States of the European Union involved in the coordination and/or execution of the following maritime surveillance, control and protection functions at national and/or regional level: maritime pollution preparedness and response, marine environment protection, maritime safety including vessel traffic management, accident and disaster response, search and rescue, fisheries control, customs, border control, general law enforcement, defence.
- Affiliated entities: Legal entities having a legal or capital link with applicants, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation, may take part in the action as affiliated entities, and may declare eligible costs as specified in section 11.2. For that purpose, the applicant shall identify such affiliated entities in the application form.

Applicants, including affiliated entities, shall be public entities. In order to assess the applicants' eligibility, the following supporting documents are requested:

- Public entity: copy of the resolution/law/decreed/decision establishing the entity OR if not available, any other official document attesting the establishment of the entity by the national authorities;
- Consortium: in addition to the supporting documents referring to their legal status, consortium members will submit letters confirming their participation to the project.
- Affiliated entities shall demonstrate their legal/capital link with applicant

To be considered as a public entity, the applicants and affiliated entities shall fulfil all of the following criteria:

- The entity has been created by a public authority or is governed by private law with a public service mission,
- The public interest of the entity must be explicitly mentioned in the relevant legal or administrative act(s),
- The entity is financed totally or to a large extent (more than 50%) by public sources,
- In the event that the entity stops its activities, all rights and obligations including financial rights and obligations will be transferred to a public authority.

To verify the public entity nature of applicants and their affiliated entities, the EASME may request them to complete and provide the declaration included in Annex G.

All applicants must fill in the "Legal entity form" (if they are not already registered as service providers of the Commission) available at the following address:

- Legal entity form (Annex C):

¹² Art. 131 FR, 201 RAP

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm

The "Financial identification form" available at the following address shall be completed only by the public authority submitting the application and acting as coordinator of the consortium when applicable:

- Financial information form (Annex D):

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/financial_id_en.cfm

Observers

It is possible for other relevant parties to participate with an observer status, e.g. public authorities or public entities from non EU Member States, relevant EU Agencies¹³, or other regional or international organisations active in the area. Observer status in this context means that participation in any project activity or project meetings will be at the observers' own expenses (e.g. travel costs for observers are not eligible under this project). Furthermore, observers will not receive any European Union co-financing and will not join or sign any statements.

6.2. Eligible activities

The action must meet the conditions of the call and in particular address the specific objectives defined in section 2 above.

The actions should not be linked to IT developments derived from existing legal obligations or IT developments funded by other projects (see section 11.1). The actions should not aim at connecting national systems to EU systems when both serve the purpose of a same user community. The main objective of this call is the enhancement of IT capabilities to develop cross sectorial¹⁴ exchange at national level and across border within the EU.

The projects should not exceed a duration of **two years**.

The following types of activities shall be eligible under this call for proposals:

- **1) Project-type n°1: Preparatory studies on the improvement of cross-sectoral information exchange for maritime surveillance within and between EU member States**
- study/ies on the identification of further cross-sectorial information needs of surveillance authorities at national level and across border within the EU, both in operational centres and in surveillance assets;

¹³ European Defence Agency (EDA), European Environment Agency (EEA), European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA), European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (FRONTEX) and European Law Enforcement Agency (EUROPOL). To illustrate, a project dealing with the southern Baltic Sea, the Gulf of Bothnia and the Gulf of Finland would not satisfy the EU wide geopolitical character of the project.

¹⁴ As mentioned above, the sectors (or functions) are the following: border control, maritime safety and security, fisheries control, customs, marine environment protection, general law enforcement, defence

- study/ies on the creation of IT capabilities or on an IT transformation plan focusing on the strengthening or creation of cross-sectorial information sharing
- study/ies on the compatibility between existing national data models and the CISE data model;
- definition of information services which could be offered to other Member States.

2) Project-type n°2: IT developments to improve cross-sectoral information exchange for maritime surveillance within and between Member States

- improving the interoperability of maritime surveillance IT systems, to enhance their readiness to connect amongst IT systems creating preconditions for Maritime CISE (Common Information Sharing Environment). This includes favouring modern technologies, service oriented architectures (SOA) and the use of commonly agreed data models and interfaces, enabling the exchange of information between sectors in an automatic way;
- re-use of useful information from other sectors and integrating it in existing systems (including integration on user screens), both in operational centre and on board surveillance assets. This includes the development of interfaces between existing IT systems;
- packaging of existing information into information services to be offered to other sectors and other Member States;
- creation of a maritime CISE at national level, e.g. development of hubs for information sharing at national level and possibly across border within the EU.

7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

7.1. Exclusion from participation:

Applicants will be excluded from participating in the call for proposals procedure if they 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 or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of a Member State 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 including by decisions of the EIB and international organisations;
- (d) they are not in compliance with their 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 Responsible Authorising Officer (RAO) or those of the country where the grant agreement is to be performed;

- (e) they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering or any other illegal activity, where such an illegal activity is detrimental to the Union's financial interests;
- (f) they are currently subject to an administrative penalty referred to in Article 109(1).

7.2. Exclusion from award:

Applicants will not be granted financial assistance if, in the course of the grant award procedure, they:

- (a) are subject to a conflict of interest;
- (b) are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the Commission as a condition of participation in the grant award procedure or fail to supply this information;
- (c) find themselves in one of the situations of exclusion, referred to in section 7.1.

Administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants, or affiliated entities where applicable, who are guilty of misrepresentation.

7.3. Supporting documents¹⁵

Applicants, and where relevant, its affiliated entities, must sign a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in articles 106(1) and 107 to 109, filling in section 5 of the application form accompanying the call for proposals. The EASME reserves the right to request evidence of the above.

8. SELECTION CRITERIA¹⁶

Operational capacity¹⁷

Applicants must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed action or work programme. In this respect, applicants have to submit a declaration on their honour, and the following supporting documents:

- curriculum vitae or description of the profile of the people primarily responsible for managing and implementing the project;
- where appropriate, a description of the technical equipment, tools or facilities and patents at the disposal of the applicant.

9. AWARD CRITERIA¹⁸

Eligible applications/projects will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria.

¹⁵ Art. 197 RAP

¹⁶ Art. 132 FR, 202 RAP

¹⁷ Art. 131 FR, 202 RAP.

¹⁸ Art. 132 FR, 203 RAP

A maximum of 100 points will be awarded for the quality of the proposal. The minimum overall score required is 60 points and the minimum for each criterion is 50% of the point assigned for that criterion. The criteria for the assessment of the projects are:

- Relevance (minimum required 10 points - maximum 20 points):

The applicant should demonstrate clearly how the proposed action meets the objective described under Section 2. The scope of the project should detail the starting point of the project, including an analysis of the limitations to overcome, and the target state.

- Coherence (minimum required 10 points - maximum 20 points):

To ensure coherence at EU level, the proposed action shall seek to reuse the results of the Cooperation Project Maritime Surveillance (including the Common Data Model and the services), relevant INSPIRE legislation and guidelines, and existing components from the Digital Service Infrastructures (DSIs)¹⁹ of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)²⁰. If the Common Data Model does not support the envisaged information exchange, coordination with JRC (Joint Research Centre) shall be ensured to extend the Common Data Model as appropriate. **Proposals that are involving at least 3 authorities will be favoured.**

- Added value and innovation (minimum required 10 points - maximum 20 points):

Projects aiming at defining new value-added information services built on information from different sectors will be favoured. Actions with a cross-border dimension can be envisaged provided they are developed in consistency with regional cooperation projects funded by the EU under other instruments. The added-value will be appreciated regarding the expected increase of efficiency and effectiveness in maritime surveillance duties. In these cases evidence should be provided that no double financing of the same activities will occur.

- Methodology (minimum required 10 points - maximum 20 points):

The applicant should demonstrate how timely and successful implementation of the project will be achieved, e.g. through detailed project plan – including a detailed Work Breakdown Structure (WBS), risk management plan, etc. In particular applicants should demonstrate that the proposed means of implementation of the project are cost-effective.

- Project Management (minimum required 10 points - maximum 20 points):

Applicants should demonstrate that the organisation and management structure proposed for the project are sufficient to achieve the required quality, meet the deadlines and respect the budget.

Since assessment of the proposals will be based on the quality of the proposed projects, proposals should elaborate on all points addressed by these specifications in order to score as many points as possible. The mere repetition of mandatory requirements set out in these specifications, without going into details or without giving any added value, will only result in a very low score. In addition, if certain points of these specifications are not expressly covered by the proposal, the relevant qualitative award criterion may be given

¹⁹ Regulation (EU) No 283/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 on guidelines for trans-European networks in the area of telecommunications infrastructure and repealing Decision No 1336/97/EC.

²⁰ Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, amending Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulations (EC) No 680/2007 and (EC) No 67/2010.

a zero mark. The EASME may call upon external experts in support of the assessment of the proposals.

10. LEGAL COMMITMENTS²¹

In the event of a grant awarded by the EASME, a grant agreement, drawn up in euro and detailing the conditions and level of funding, will be sent to the beneficiary, as well as the procedure in view to formalise the obligations of the parties.

The two copies of the original agreement must be signed first by the beneficiary (where appropriate on behalf of the consortium) and returned to the EASME immediately. The EASME will sign it last.

11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

11.1. General Principles

a) Non-cumulative award²²

An action may only receive one grant from the EU budget.

In no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice by the Union budget. To ensure this, applicants shall indicate the sources and amounts of Union funding received or applied for the same action or part of the action or for its functioning during the same financial year as well as any other funding received or applied for the same action.²³

b) Non-retroactivity²⁴

No grant may be awarded retrospectively for actions already completed.

A grant may be awarded for an action which has already begun only where the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the action before the grant agreement is signed or the grant decision is notified.

In such cases, costs eligible for financing may not have been incurred prior to the date of submission of the grant application.

c) Co-financing²⁵

Co-financing means that the resources which are necessary to carry out the action or the work programme may not be entirely provided by the EU grant.

Co-financing of the action or of the work programme may take the form of:

- the beneficiary's own resources,
- income generated by the action or work programme,
- financial contributions from third parties.

d) Balanced budget²⁶

²¹ Art. 121 FR, 174 RAP.

²² Art. 129 FR

²³ Art. 196.4 RAP.

²⁴ Art. 130 FR

²⁵ Art. 125 FR, 183 RAP.

²⁶ Art. 196.2 RAP

The estimated budget of the action or work programme is to be attached to the application form. It must have revenue and expenditure in balance. A model of a budget overview can be found in Annex 4 of the application form.

The budget must be drawn up in euros.

Applicants who foresee that costs will not be incurred in euros, shall use the exchange rate published on the Infor-euro website available at http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/inforeuro/inforeuro_en.cfm.

e) Implementation contracts/subcontracting²⁷

Where the implementation of the action or the work programme requires the award of procurement contracts (implementation contracts), the beneficiary must award the contract to the bid offering best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interests and retain the documentation for the event of an audit.

In the event of procurement exceeding €130 000, the beneficiary must abide by special rules as referred in the grant agreement annexed to the call. Moreover the beneficiary is expected to clearly document the tendering procedure and retain the documentation for the event of an audit.

Entities acting in their capacity of contracting authorities in the meaning of Directive 2004/18/EC²⁸ or contracting entities in the meaning of Directive 2004/17/EC²⁹ shall abide by the applicable national public procurement rules.

Sub-contracting, i.e. the externalisation of specific tasks or activities which form part of the action/work programme as described in the proposal must satisfy the conditions applicable to any implementation contract (as specified above) and in addition to them the following conditions:

- it may only cover the implementation of a limited part of the action and shall not exceed 40% of the total eligible budget save in duly justified cases.
- it must be justified having regard to the nature of the action and what is necessary for its implementation;
- it must be clearly stated in the proposal.

The grant beneficiary has the possibility to award contracts to provide services or to assist in the implementation of certain limited activities.

The term “subcontracts” is applied to expenses paid by the beneficiary on the basis of:

- Contracts, and
- Invoices/request for reimbursement to external service providers who carry out certain tasks or assist in the implementation of certain limited activities for the project because the beneficiary lacks the resources or expertise to carry them out. These might include, for example:
- External independent financial control (in compliance with country specific control requirements);

²⁷ Art. 137 FR, 209 RAP

²⁸ Directive 2004/18/EC on the coordination of procedures for the award of public work contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts.

²⁹ Directive 2004/17/EC coordinating the procurement procedures of entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors.

- Website design and hosting;
- Drafting, lay out, printing of promotion material such as newsletters;
- External event organisation;
- Meeting room rental and catering;
- Interpretation/translation;
- Surveys.

f) Financial support to third parties

Financial support to third parties is not an eligible expenditure.

11.2. Funding form³⁰

Form of the grant

The grant takes the form of a combination of

- Reimbursement of a specified proportion of the eligible direct costs actually incurred by the beneficiary, and
- A flat-rate financing ratio for eligible indirect costs.

Maximum amount requested

The EU grant is limited to a maximum co-funding rate of **80 %** of eligible costs actually incurred.

Consequently, part of the total eligible expenses entered in the estimative budget must be financed from sources other than the EU grant (see section 11.1c).

Contributions in kind³¹

In-kind contributions are not an eligible cost under this grant agreement unless prior written approval by the Contracting Authority.³²

Eligible costs³³

Eligible costs are costs actually incurred by the beneficiary of a grant which meet all the following criteria:

- they are incurred during the duration of the action, with the exception of costs relating to final reports and audit certificates;
- the period of eligibility of costs will be defined in the grant agreement.

If a beneficiary can demonstrate the need to start the action before the agreement is signed, expenditure may be authorised before the grant is awarded. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant application (see section 11.1b):

³⁰ Art. 123 FR, 181 RAP.

³¹ Art. 127 FR.

³² Cost items such as those referred to in the section below on Eligible cost (e.g. salary cost) are not considered as contributions in kind.

³³ Art. 126 FR

- c) they are indicated in the estimated budget of the action;
- d) they are necessary for the implementation of the action ;
- e) they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiary is established and according to the usual cost accounting practices of the beneficiary;
- f) they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- g) they are reasonable, justified, and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

The beneficiary's internal accounting and auditing procedures must permit direct reconciliation of the costs and revenue declared in respect of the action/project with the corresponding accounting statements and supporting documents.

The same criteria apply to the affiliated entities.

Eligible direct costs

The eligible direct costs for the action/ work programme are those costs which, **with due regard for the conditions of eligibility set out above**, are identifiable as specific costs directly linked to the performance of the action or the work programme and which can therefore be booked to it directly:

- the costs of personnel working under an employment contract with the applicant or equivalent appointing act and assigned to the action, comprising actual salaries plus social security contributions and other statutory costs included in the remuneration, provided that these costs are in line with the applicant's usual policy on remuneration. Those costs may include additional remuneration, including payments on the basis of supplementary contracts regardless of their nature, provided that it is paid in a consistent manner whenever the same kind of work or expertise is required and independently from the source of funding used. For the calculation of costs of personnel, the calculation sheet provided in Annex F shall be used.
- costs of the personnel of national administrations to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the project concerned were not undertaken;
- subsistence allowances (for meetings, including kick-off meetings where applicable, conferences etc) provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices;
- costs of travel (for meetings, including kick-off meetings where applicable, conferences etc), provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel;
- depreciation cost of equipment (new or second-hand): only the portion of the equipment's depreciation corresponding to the duration of the action/project and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the action may be taken into account;
- costs entailed by subcontracting awarded by the beneficiaries for the purposes of carrying out the action/project, provided that the conditions laid down in the grant agreement are met;

- costs arising directly from requirements linked to the implementation of the action/project (dissemination of information, specific evaluation of the action, translations, reproduction);
- costs relating to a pre-financing guarantee lodged by the beneficiary of the grant, where required;
- costs relating to external audits where required in support of the requests for payments;
- value added tax ("VAT"): VAT is eligible where provided by the relevant articles of the FR³⁴;

Other costs

Other direct costs than the costs mentioned above can be eligible but should be necessary for the action and specified in the budget with the necessary justifications, eg.

- costs of consumables and supplies, provided that they are identifiable and directly assigned to the action/project;
- the cost of external speakers in project meetings and events. In such case:
 - the added-value of their participation and payment of their costs by the beneficiary can be clearly demonstrated and
 - the cost will be definitively paid and borne by the beneficiary.

N.B. ; general administrative costs for the action/project are deemed to be covered by the flat rate for indirect costs and shall, therefore, not be included in the category "other costs".

Eligible indirect costs (overheads)

- a flat-rate amount of 7% of the total eligible direct costs of the action, is eligible under indirect costs, representing the beneficiary's general administrative costs which can be regarded as chargeable to the action/project.

Indirect costs may not include costs entered under another budget heading.

Ineligible costs

- return on capital;
- debt and debt service charges;
- provisions for losses or debts;
- interest owed;
- doubtful debts;
- exchange losses;
- costs of transfers charged by the bank of a beneficiary;

³⁴ Article 126(3)(c) of the FR

- costs declared by a beneficiary and covered by another action receiving a European Union grant. In particular, indirect costs shall not be eligible under a grant for an action awarded to a beneficiary who already receives an operating grant financed from the Union budget during the period in question;
- contributions in kind from third parties;
- excessive or reckless expenditure;
- deductible VAT;

Calculation of the final grant amount

The final amount of the grant to be awarded to the beneficiary is established after completion of the action, upon approval of the request for payment containing the following documents³⁵, including relevant supporting documents where appropriate:

- a final report providing details of the implementation and results of the action/work programme;
- the final financial statement of costs actually incurred;
- a certificate on the action's financial statements and underlying accounts, produced by an approved auditor or, in case of public entities, by a competent and independent public officer, for each beneficiary. The certificate shall certify, in accordance with the model template provided in Annex VI of the grant agreement, that the costs declared by the beneficiaries in the financial statements on which the request of payment is based are real, accurately recorded and eligible and that all receipts have been declared, in accordance with the agreement.

EU grants may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the action of the beneficiary. **Profit shall be defined as a surplus of the receipts over the eligible costs incurred by the beneficiary**, when the request is made for payment of the balance. In this respect, where a profit is made, the EASME shall be entitled to recover the percentage of the profit corresponding to the Union contribution to the eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiary to carry out the action or work programme.

11.3. Payment arrangements³⁶

11.3.1. *Pre-financing payment*

A pre-financing payment³⁷ of 60% of the maximum grant amount will be transferred to the beneficiary within 30³⁸ days of the date when the last of the two parties signs the agreement.

11.3.2. *Final payment*

The amount of the final payment to be made to the beneficiary will be established on the basis of the calculation of the final grant amount. If the total of earlier payments received

³⁵ Art. 135 FR

³⁶ Art. 90, 135 FR, 207 RAP.

³⁷ Art. 109, 110 RAP

³⁸ Art. 92 FR

is higher than the final grant amount, the beneficiary will be required to reimburse the amount paid in excess through a recovery order³⁹.

11.4. Reporting

11.4.1. *Reporting periods*

Progress reports shall be submitted on a quarterly basis. They shall explain the progress made on the milestones provided for by the grant agreement. Progress reports are requested for project monitoring purposes and do not result in any payment.

At the end of the project, each beneficiary shall submit a final report, including an executive summary, detailing all the actions done, the outputs delivered and the final results achieved. The report shall also include conclusions and recommendations for next steps in improving authorities' maritime surveillance interoperability, lessons learned and details on cost. The payment of the balance will be made on the basis of the final technical and financial reports.

11.4.2. *Reporting format and deadline*

The quarterly progress reports shall be submitted to the EASME in electronic format within 15 days of the end of the quarter to which the progress report relates.

The final report shall be sent to the EASME in electronic and paper format within 60 days of the end date of the project as specified in the grant agreement. The final payment will be based on the approval of the final report. The final report shall not exceed 50 pages and shall be written in English.

12. PUBLICITY

12.1. By the beneficiaries

Beneficiaries must clearly acknowledge the European Union's contribution in all publications or in conjunction with activities for which the grant is used.

In this respect, beneficiaries are required to give prominence to the name and emblem of the European Commission on all their publications, posters, programmes and other products realised under the co-financed project.

To do this they must use the text, the emblem and the disclaimer available at http://europa.eu/about-eu/basic-information/symbols/flag/index_en.htm .

If this requirement is not fully complied with, the beneficiary's grant may be reduced in accordance with the provisions of the grant agreement or grant decision.

12.2. By the EASME⁴⁰

With the exception of scholarships paid to natural persons and other direct support paid to natural persons in most need, all information relating to grants awarded in the course of a financial year shall be published on an internet site of the European Union

³⁹ Art. 109, 110 RAP

⁴⁰ Art. 35, 128.3 FR, 21, 191 RAP

institutions no later than the 30 June of the year following the financial year in which the grants were awarded.

The EASME will publish the following information:

- name of the beneficiary
- address of the beneficiary when the latter is a legal person, region when the beneficiary is a natural person, as defined on NUTS 2 level⁴¹ if he/she is domiciled within EU or equivalent if domiciled outside EU,
- subject of the grant,
- amount awarded.

Upon a reasoned and duly substantiated request by the beneficiary, the publication shall be waived if such disclosure risks threatening the rights and freedoms of individuals concerned as protected by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union or harm the commercial interests of the beneficiaries.

13. DATA PROTECTION

The reply to any call for proposals involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CV). Such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the EU institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. Unless indicated otherwise, the questions and any personal data requested are required to evaluate the application in accordance with the specifications of the call for proposal will be processed solely for that purpose by the EASME. Details concerning the processing of personal data are available on the privacy statement at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/easme/sites/easme-site/files/privacy-statement-calls-EASME.pdf>

Personal data may be registered in the Early Warning System (EWS) only or both in the EWS and Central Exclusion Database (CED) by the Accounting Officer of the Commission, should the beneficiary be in one of the situations mentioned in:

- the Commission Decision 2008/969 of 16.12.2008 on the Early Warning System (for more information see the Privacy Statement on:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm),

or

- the Commission Regulation 2008/1302 of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database (for more information see the Privacy Statement on:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm)

14. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS AND CONTACTS

Proposals must be submitted in accordance with the formal requirements and by the deadline set out under section 5.

⁴¹ European Union Official Journal L 39, of 10 February 2007

No modification to the application is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. However, if there is a need to clarify certain aspects or for the correction of clerical mistakes, the EASME may contact the applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process⁴².

Applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the selection process.⁴³

Application forms are available under annex A. The application form, annexes and relevant documents can be obtained via:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/maritimeaffairs_fisheries/contracts_and_funding/calls_for_proposals/index_en.htm

Applications shall be submitted using the correct forms, duly completed, dated, showing a balanced budget (revenue/expenditure), and signed by the person authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant organisation.

The application must be submitted in one unbound original paper copy with the original signature (not faxed, scanned or otherwise duplicated), as well as in electronic format on CD ROM (or USB). The paper version of the application form has to be identical to the electronic version and must include:

- the estimated budget (Annex 4 of the application form);
- the legal entity form for the beneficiary and, where relevant, affiliated entities (Annex C);
- the financial identification form for the beneficiary (Annex D);

The paper version of the application will legally constitute the application. The envelope of the paper version must clearly state the reference of the Call (MARE/2014/26). It must be submitted in a sealed envelope and must be either:

- sent **by registered mail**, posted or dispatched no later than **31th March 2015** to the address indicated below:

Post:

European Commission
EASME
Ref. MARE/2014/26
B – 1049 Brussels

In this case, the evidence of the date of dispatch shall be constituted by the postmark.

- **delivered by hand** (by the applicant in person or by an agent), or sent **by courier service**, posted or dispatched no later than **31th March 2015 at 16.00 (Brussels time)** to the address indicated below:

Hand delivery/Express mail:

European Commission
EASME
Mail Service
Ref. MARE/2014/26
Avenue du Bourget 1
B-1140 Brussels

⁴² Art. 96 FR

⁴³ Art. 133 FR, 205 RAP

In case of submission by courier service, the evidence of the date of dispatch shall be constituted by the date of dispatch on the deposit slip.

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

Applications sent by fax or e-mail will not be accepted.

Contacts

All questions related to the call may be sent by electronic means (e-mail) to:

MARE-INTEGRATED-MARITIME-SURVEILLANCE@ec.europa.eu,

indicating the subject title 'Interoperability improvements in Member States to enhance information sharing for maritime surveillance'.

Such questions, together with their answers, if of a general interest, will be published under:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/maritimeaffairs_fisheries/contracts_and_funding/calls_for_proposals/index_en.htm

In addition, important information for the applicants may, if need be, be published on this website. Applicants are thus strongly recommended to consult this website regularly.

15. ANNEXES

- Annex A: Application form
- Annex B: Model agreement
- Annex C: Legal entity form
- Annex D: Financial information form
- Annex E: Privacy statement for Legal Entity and Bank Account validation
- Annex F: Calculation sheet for costs of personnel
- Annex G: Public entity declaration