



Brussels, 11.1.2013
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COMMISSION DECISION

of 11.1.2013

**adopting the 2013 annual work programme: Preparatory Action – European Voluntary
Humanitarian Aid Corps 'EU Aid Volunteers'**

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adopting the 2013 annual work programme: Preparatory Action – European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps 'EU Aid Volunteers'

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 214(5) thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012¹ of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) n°1605/2002 (hereinafter referred to as the 'Financial Regulation'), and in particular Article 54(2)(b) thereof,

Having regard to Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012² of 29 October 2012 on the rules of application of Regulation (EU) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (hereinafter referred to as the 'Rules of Application'), and in particular Article 94 thereof,

Whereas,

- (1) The Commission adopted on 19 September 2012 a proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council establishing the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps – 'EU Aid Volunteers'³. Further to the finalisation of the legislative procedure, the implementation is foreseen from 2014 until 2020.
- (2) The Commission had outlined its approach to set up a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (henceforth referred to as 'EU Aid Volunteers') as foreseen by Article 214(5) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union in the Communication "How to express EU citizen's solidarity through volunteering: First reflections on a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps"⁴, which announced a preparatory action to further explore the features of the EU Aid Volunteers through concrete testing and further consultations.
- (3) The preparatory actions in 2011 and 2012 have delivered interesting lessons through the proposals received and the implementation of the projects focusing on volunteers in projects on crisis prevention, post crises recovery, resilience building and capacity building in civil protection.

¹ OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1.

² OJ L 362, 31.12.2012, p. 1.

³ COM(2012) 514/final, 2012/0245 COD.

⁴ COM(2010)683 final, 23.11.2010

- (4) This preparatory action in 2013 will aim at enlarging the scope of testing options and start preparing the ground for implementation of the programme under the Regulation. It includes, thus, a focus on capacity building in local organisations and expert volunteer deployments as eligible activities and foresees preparatory activities towards the implementation of the EU Aid Volunteers.
- (5) The budgetary authority has earmarked specific funding in the 2013 budget of the EU to pave the way for the preparation and implementation of the 'EU Aid Volunteers'.
- (6) Under Article 54(2)(b) of the Financial Regulation, appropriations for preparatory actions in the fields of application of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union designed to prepare proposals with a view to the adoption of future actions may be implemented without a basic act.
- (7) In accordance with Article 128 of the Financial Regulation, an annual work programme should be adopted for grants.
- (8) The 2013 work programme being a sufficiently detailed framework in the meaning of Article 94(2) and (3) of the Rules of Applications, the present Decision constitutes a Financing Decision within the meaning of Article 84 of the Financial Regulation for the expenditure provided for in the work programme for grants and procurement.
- (9) The maximum contribution set by the present Decision should cover any claims for interest due for late payment on the basis of Articles 92 of the Financial Regulation and 111(4) of the Rules of Application.
- (10) This Decision should include a definition of the terms “substantial change” in the meaning of Article 94(4) of the Rules of Application to ensure that any substantial change in this Decision shall follow the same procedure as the initial Decision.
- (11) It is therefore necessary to adopt a work programme for the actions to be financed under budget article 23 02 04.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The 2013 annual work programme for the implementation of a preparatory action on the EU Aid Volunteers in 2013, as set out in the Annex, is hereby adopted.

Article 2

The maximum contribution authorised by this Decision for the implementation of the Programme is set at EUR 2,000,000 to be financed from budget article 23 02 04 of the general budget of the European Union for 2013.

These appropriations shall also cover any interests due for late payment.

Article 3

Cumulated changes to the allocations to the specific actions not exceeding 20% of the maximum contribution authorised by this Decision shall not be considered substantial, provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objective of the work programme.

The relevant authorising officer may amend the present Decision to introduce non substantial changes in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and of proportionality.

Article 4

The amount of EUR 2,000,000 shall be conditional upon the necessary funds being available under the 2013 general budget of the European Union.

Done at Brussels, 11.1.2013

*For the European Commission
Kristalina GEORGIEVA
Member of the European Commission*

ANNEX

2013 Annual Work Programme: Preparatory Action European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps 'EU Aid Volunteers'

Legal Basis:

Preparatory action in accordance with Article 54(2)(b) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) n°1605/2002 (OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1).

Budget Article:

23 02 04: Preparatory Action on a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps

Budget Amount

EUR 2,000,000

This work programme contains implementing measures for the year. The budget breakdown and main actions are as follows:

- for grants (implemented under direct management): EUR 1,200,000 to finance grants to be selected following a call for proposals and
- for procurement (implemented under direct management): EUR 800.000.

GRANTS

Pilot projects for the EU Aid Volunteers

Grants shall be covered by a written grant agreement.

Objectives of the Action	The objective of this call for proposals is to select pilot projects that will test some of the possible modules of the future EU Aid Volunteers initiative, contribute to the European Commission's work on preparing for implementation and allow for a smooth start of the initiative after adoption of the proposed Regulation by the Parliament and the Council.
Expected results of the Action	To provide opportunities for Europeans to engage as expert volunteers in humanitarian aid and / or civil protection activities outside the EU and to contribute to laying the ground for a community of European volunteers active in this field; To add value to humanitarian aid operations in the fields of

	<p>resilience, linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD), disaster risk reduction, crisis response and post crisis recovery through volunteering and by promoting partnerships between organisations active in humanitarian aid and / or civil protection operations;</p> <p>To strengthen local capacities in countries in order to support resilience and/or response to crisis;</p> <p>To provide opportunities for expertise from the EU public or private sector to be made available in crisis response.</p>
Type of call	Call for proposals
Indicative schedule	Publication of call for proposal: January 2013; 60 calendar days for submission; award decision: April 2013.
Indicative amount	EUR 1,200,000
Maximum co-financing rate	80%
Eligibility criteria	<p>In order to be eligible for a grant, <u>applicants must</u>:</p> <p>(1) be legal persons <u>and</u></p> <p>(2) be non-profit making <u>and</u></p> <p>(3) be specific types of organisations such as: non-governmental organisations, public sector operators, local authorities, international organisations as defined by Article 43 of the rules of application to the EU Financial Regulation⁵ <u>and</u></p> <p>(4) be nationals⁶ of a Member State of the European Union (this obligation does not apply to international organisations) <u>and</u></p> <p>(5) be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with their partners, not acting as an intermediary <u>and</u></p> <p>(6) have a proven track record of successful management</p>

⁵ International organisations are international public-sector organisations set up by intergovernmental agreements as well as specialised agencies set up by them; the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, European Investment Bank (EIB) and European Investment Fund (EIF) are also recognized as international organisations.

⁶ Such nationality being determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a "Memorandum of Understanding" has been concluded.

	<p>and deployment of volunteers in third countries and established partnerships with local organisations in countries that receive EU funding for humanitarian actions or that have received such funding in the past.</p> <p>Applicants must act with at least two partner organisations from two different Member States. More partner organisations and Member States represented in a project partnership will be considered an asset. In case of international organisations, they must act with at least three national partners from three different Member States.</p> <p>Partner organisations (the "co-beneficiaries") participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the co-ordinator. They must satisfy the eligibility criteria 1 through 5 of those applicable to the applicant (see above).</p> <p>The pilot projects shall cover the whole project cycle from identifying, selecting, training and deploying European expert volunteers as well as identifying and supporting suitable hosting organisations in third countries for those volunteers.</p>
<p>Eligible activities</p>	<p>Volunteers will be working with/for local communities or local organisations such as local authorities (municipalities, provincial services), local NGOs etc.</p> <p>Projects shall equally have a strong focus on local capacity building <u>allowing third country nationals</u> who work or volunteer in hosting organisations <u>to benefit from training, seminars and other relevant capacity building activities.</u></p> <p><u>European volunteers with particular technical expertise</u> track record in a field linked to humanitarian response and / or civil protection such as medical support; water and sanitation; food assistance; logistical support; camp management; protection; humanitarian project management etc. can be deployed. <u>Inexperienced volunteers may be considered if deployed with expert volunteers.</u></p> <p><u>Assignments can be short term and may last up to one year.</u></p> <p>Projects have to clearly demonstrate the added value of the activities in the framework of the pilot action to the usual activities of the project applicant and partners. The European dimension of this volunteering scheme shall be explicitly developed, notably by training volunteers and deploying volunteers with different nationalities together.</p> <p>As these projects will be implemented during the 2013</p>

	<p>European Year of Citizens, special attention to horizontal themes such as intergenerational dialogue and promoting European citizenship through solidarity in action is encouraged.</p> <p>The following activities (non-exhaustive list) can be financed under this call:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification, selection, training and preparation of expert volunteers for deployment in humanitarian aid and / or civil protection operations; • Identification of suitable third country host organisations; • Capacity building activities for local staff and volunteers in the recipient countries, such as training, job shadowing, seminars, etc. These activities may include topics such as sound management of European volunteers in host organisations to maximize the sustainable impact on local communities, and topics related to disaster management. • Deployment of volunteers in humanitarian aid and / or civil protection operations outside the EU; • Bonding activities to lay the basis for a Network of European humanitarian volunteers including contacts between the volunteers of previous pilot projects and other current pilot projects; • Develop online volunteering opportunities for Europeans to engage with the activities of the EU Aid Volunteers; <p>Selection of volunteers, training and preparation of European volunteers can take place <u>in the EU</u>, while the deployment of volunteers must take place <u>in third countries</u> (outside the EU).</p> <p>Projects shall focus on <u>countries that receive EU funding for humanitarian actions or that have received such funding in the past.</u></p> <p>Capacity building activities for staff and volunteers of third countries can be organized <u>both inside and outside the EU.</u></p>
<p>Essential Selection criteria</p>	<p>The candidates will be selected on the basis of their financial and operational capacity. This includes the economic and financial soundness and capacity to carry out the tasks set out in the call for proposal, and the skills and human resources needed to provide the services required (including recent relevant experience in managing</p>

	volunteers in third countries).
Essential Award criteria	<p>The proposals will be awarded on the basis of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance and consistency with the objectives of the call; • Quality of the project and methodology; • The European dimension and European added value; • Quality and scope of the partnership. • Approach proposed for the management of the project including mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of project's activities, opportunities for knowledge sharing; • Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action.

Form of the grant

EU grants in the form referred to in point (a) of Article 123(1)(a) of the Financial Regulation shall be calculated on the basis of eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiary and subject to a preliminary budget estimate as submitted with the proposal and included in the grant decision or agreement.

PROCUREMENT

Stocktaking and analysis of existing training programme in humanitarian volunteering including criteria and procedure for assessment of the volunteers' preparedness for deployment, stocktaking and analysis of standards for volunteer management, certification mechanism, workshops, conferences and studies, notably evaluation of the pilot projects.

Objectives of the Action	The objectives are to further build knowledge on different dimensions of the EU Aid Volunteers and prepare the ground for implementation of different features of the EU Aid Volunteers to allow for a swift and uninterrupted start of the programme after adoption of proposed Regulation by the European Parliament and the Council.
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Expected results of the Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering of lessons learnt and organising cross-fertilisation of the 2011 and 2012 pilot projects through evaluation, capitalisation workshops and conferences in Brussels and, where relevant, in other European countries. • Preparation of input to a European modular training programme for the EU Aid Volunteers through stocktaking and analysis of existing training and feedback from humanitarian training experts and development of criteria and procedure for assessment of the volunteers' preparedness for deployment. • Stocktaking and analysis of existing standards for humanitarian volunteering and consultation with the experts in the field leading to recommendations and input for European standards in this area. • Stocktaking and analysis of certification mechanism for sending and hosting organisations for compliance with standards leading to recommendations and input for European standards in this area. • Raising awareness with humanitarian actors and the general public on the EU Aid Volunteers. • Building a network of those volunteers who have already completed the programme during the pilot projects.
Type of call	Calls for tender or use of existing framework contracts
Indicative schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of 1 call for tender and signature of 3 contracts during the first quarter of 2013. Finalisation of outputs by 4th quarter of 2013. Signature of contract during second quarter. • Capitalisation meetings are scheduled for the second and fourth quarter 2013. • Communication activities are expected to take place in all 4 quarters of 2013.
Indicative amount	EUR 800.000