

Questions and Answers to Call ENTR/CIP/07/0001

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I.	Introduction.....	2
II.	Specific information for the Call	2
	Objectives	2
	Financial aspects	4
III.	Implementing a single network providing integrated services	6
	Privileged partners	6
IV.	Services in support of Business and Innovation	7
	General questions.....	7
	Compulsory & new services.....	7
	Existing tools and services	8
	Module a.....	9
	Module b.....	12
	Module c.....	13
	Common requirements	14
	Performance indicators.....	15
	Management of projects and the consortium.....	16
	Large events.....	18
V.	Requirements for applicants and Annex 3 – Cooperation of entities in third countries ..	18
	Eligible countries and cooperation of entities in third countries.....	18
	Applicants.....	22
	Geographical coverage	26
	NUTS Classification	28
	Use of specialised external experts.....	30
VI.	Evaluation procedure.....	31
	General questions.....	31
	Eligibility of organisations	32
	Selection: Financial and technical capacity.....	35
	Award	38
VII.	Submission of proposals.....	39
	Submission documents.....	43
VIII.	Support to applicants	48
IX.	Annexes	49
	Framework Partnership Agreement	49
	Award of grants	54
	Financing the action	54
	Payment arrangements	58
	Standard number of productive hours	59
	Subcontracts.....	62
	Eligible costs.....	63
	Non-eligible costs	67
	Financial responsibility	68
	Checks and audits	68
	Audit certificates.....	68
	Specific grant agreement	69
X.	Q & A Other	70
	Questions on the Competitiveness and Innovation Program.....	73

I. Introduction

Reference number	110/I.3/22012007
Question: Can you be more explicit on what "eligible costs" are (SS, page 6)? Which costs will not be due to co-financing?	
Answer: Detailed information on eligible costs is available in article II.15 of the General conditions of the Framework Partnership agreement.	

Reference number	130/I.1/29012007
Question: Please clarify whether this Call is specifically for IRC and EIC centres, or whether other consortiums consisting of private companies, SMEs and other organizations can apply as well. If other consortiums are eligible to apply for a grant as well, then what does the Commission wish to be the connection with the local IRC and EIC centers in each partner country? To participate in the new consortium as partners?	
Answer: The Commission wants to establish a new network providing integrated services to SMEs, building on the strengths and achievements of the current EIC and IRC networks. As you can see in the sections V.2 [Applicants] and VI.1 [Eligibility] any single organization or consortium and not only partners of the current EIC or IRC network can submit a proposal given that it fulfills the constraints of those mentioned sections.	

II. Specific information for the Call

Reference number	1073/II.1/InfoDay
Question: Are services to the local governments (such as surveys, national events, analyses) for implementing EU policies in support of local businesses considered as eligible under the proposal?	
Answer: No, only integrated services in support of business and innovation to enterprises and in particular to SMEs, in compliance with the CIP.	

Reference number	1004/II.6/InfoDay
Question: Is the name of the new network decided? When will the promotion of the new name start?	
Answer: The name of the new network is not yet decided. The network will have available all the promotion tools in due time for the start of the project.	

Objectives

Reference number	26/II.2/22122006
Question: Is there any indication regarding the percentages of each module (module a, b, c, common requirements) which are preferable and acceptable by the EC (budget-wise or total man-power-wise)? i.e. module c should be around 10-12% of the total man-power spent.	
Answer: There is no pre-set percentage for each module, but your proposal should show a fairly even distribution between modules a and b; services and costs related to module c must be sufficiently covered in all proposals as well, but should constitute a smaller portion of the budget than modules a and b. It might be helpful to compare the overall total budget under this call: Out of the 320 mill. € estimated call budget, 150 mill. € are expected to be reserved for modules a and b, thus roughly 47% each, the remaining 20 mill. € i.e. approximately 6% for module c.	

Reference number	52/II.2/05012007
Question: In the introduction, it is said that this proposal comes from the experience achieved with the currently operating networks of EICs and IRCs; does this mean that from 2008 on they won't	

operate anymore?

Answer: From 2008 a new joint single network will operate providing integrated services in support of business and innovation, replacing the currently operating networks of EICs and IRCs. Please check section II and in particular part 2 - Objectives of the submission set.

Reference number 55/II.2/05012007

Question: The new network of business support services to SMEs should be multisectorial? Should it offer, therefore, integrated support services to all sectors of the economy? Or can it be assign to organisations or to a consortium representing specific sectors of the economy? (For example a network for: business support services and innovation, for the manufactory sector, for the tertiary sector, for the craft sector).

Answer: The new network will have to provide services covering all sectors.

Reference number 104/II.2/22012007

Question: One of the objectives of the call is "... To reduce the administrative burden for all parties". What changes are made to reduce the administrative burden for the network partners operation as EIC/ IRC?

Answer: The administrative procedures are described in detail in the submission set and the Model Framework Partnership Agreement.

The most important advantages are:

1. There is a very long timeframe in which accepted network partners have planning security without having to participate in another open call;
2. By forming consortia there are fewer contracts at EU level;
3. Administrative procedures are easier, e.g. through longer reporting periods, flat rates, standard productive hours, clearly defined cost categories.

Reference number 166/II.2/02022007

Question: The budgets of module a & b cannot be equally balanced due to the fact that they depend on a large extend on the number of FTE which will be employed in order to reach the objectives of each module as well as on the individual personnel cost which differs from organisation to organisation. How we will be able to reach this equilibrium?

Answer: The balance is not expressed exclusively in financial terms but should also take into account an overall balance of all services provided.

Reference number 344/II./23022007

Question: Is it necessary to include in the proposal information regarding - Background information on EIC and IRC

Answer: No. Please note that with this call a new network will be established. Please see 52/II.2/05012007 of the FAQ.

Reference number 1001/II.2/InfoDay

Question: What does 'providing integrated services' mean? Do all types of services have to be offered in one place?

Answer: Providing integrated services means that in the basis of the qualifications of the different partners in a consortium, this consortium provides the full range of services. All partners together put in place a 'no wrong door' concept to make available all types of services to clients. SMEs must enjoy simple and direct access to the complete range of competitiveness and innovation services. The Commission, therefore, seeks for integrated service proposals covering all service modules within one application.

For details please check Section III of the submission set.

Reference number 1002/II.2/InfoDay

Question: How are the 'target groups' for the new network defined? Is a sectoral/cluster approach

accepted?

Answer: The most important target group for all services of the network are innovative and technology oriented Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) as a backbone of the European economy. Depending on the nature of the individual service the target group is much larger. It includes, for example for Module a services, any SME seeking information about any EU policy. For Module b services (see section IV.2) it includes, among others, universities, research centres, large and public sector enterprises, clusters and development agencies.

The approach to reach the target groups shall be based on local conditions integrating with and complementing other initiatives and available services. Taking a sectoral or cluster approach is one of the possibilities among others.

Financial aspects

For questions on eligibility of costs and cost categories please refer to section on the 'Framework partnership agreement'

Reference number 45/II.3 /22122006

Question: Where can I find the description of the cost categories?

Answer: Please see Art II.15 of the General Conditions of the model Framework Partnership Agreement with multiple partners.

Reference number 51/II.3/05012007

Question: Is there a maximum/minimum amount for the grant?

Answer: The total budget is 320m euros and there is no minimum or maximum amount for the grant. Please check the section II and in particular part 3 - Financial Aspects of the submission set.

Reference number 132/II.3/29012007 **UPDATED**

Question: In the call for proposal is written that maximum financial contribution is 60% (Commission grant). Is this Commission contribution (grant) considered as public subsidy (support) or not?

Answer: The new state aid framework for research, development and innovation published in the OJ C323/1 on 30.12.2006 gives detailed information under which conditions the Commission contribution is considered as state aid for the applicant and the SME benefiting from the services.

Reference number 147/II.3/29012007

Question: Can the Commission clarify how they intend to apply the socio-economic criteria in the allocation of funds? What are the criteria? Are different levels already established according to the size of the country population (e.g. small, medium, large budgets?).

Answer: There is no pre-defined budget per proposal. In the submission set, we explain that the percentage of total population per Member State could give some guidance about a possible allocation of budget. However, the most important criterion to determine the degree of co-funding will be the quality of each proposal and its conformity to the objectives of the call.

Reference number 160/II.3/02022007

Question: How flexible is the proportion of the financial grant for the individual projects within one proposal? And how will the Commission make it transparent to the applying partners before the signing of the partnership framework agreement? Concerning then the declaration of the co-financing of the partners what should it look like in details?

Answer: The Commission will provide grants for co-financing the implementation of the proposed workplan. The co-financing rate of up to 60% relates to the sum of all accepted eligible costs reported, it does not apply different rates to singular actions proposed in the workprogram. A project consortium may however internally foresee to allocate more of the co-financing provided to certain actions. The co-financing statement form is available for download on the call website.

Reference number	225/II.3/09022007
Question:	Le budget de 320 millions est-il consacré à 6 ou à 7 ans de fonctionnement du réseau ?
Answer:	La budget est prévu pour 7 ans. Pour voir la présentation InfoDay, veuillez consulter l'adresse suivante :
	It is for 7 years of network activity. Please see the presentation given during the InfoDay.
	http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/funding/grants/themes_2006/eic_irc/finance_ylieff.pdf

Reference number	252/II.3/09022007
Question:	Which is the eligible man-days basis per year for drafting the budget - 253 working days per year or 210 working days?
Answer:	The consortium partner have to agree between themselves what man-day basis they take for drafting the budget.

Reference number	1003/II.3/InfoDay
Question:	Are different levels of co-funding for projects and allocation of total funding to countries set?
Answer:	No, within the financing modalities for the call the individual rate of co-funding depends on the total amount requested and the quality of the proposal. There is no pre-defined allocation of funds per country. As indicative the total population of the member states - as a most important socioeconomic criterion - will to a certain extent be reflected in the allocation of the total budget.

Reference number	1082/II.3/InfoDay
Question:	What is the percentage of budget recommended to common activities?
Answer:	There are no 'common activities', only the activities under module C and the 'common requirements' It is up to each partner to decide on the budget. The implementation of the common requirements might be covered by the three service modules.

Reference number	1083/II.3/InfoDay
Question:	Is it possible to create a co-operation for IRC+IEC partners who have no regional/national co-financing?
Answer:	The potential partners have to ensure their own financial contribution since European Commission's co-financing contribution is limited to up to 60%. The grant will be awarded for the delivery of the work program covering all service modules.

Reference number	1085/II.3/InfoDay
Question:	Do all partners of a consortium have to ask for an EU financing or can a partner cover all his costs on his own but contribute to the performance of the project?
Answer:	The financial contribution from the side of the partners is at least 40%. It is up to the different partners to decide about their specific needs for co-financing.

Reference number	1090/II.3/InfoDay
Question:	The total budget of 320m €is for 7 years but the FDA is signed for a period of 6 years?
Answer:	The Competitiveness & Innovation Programme (CIP) will be applied for 7 years (2007-2013) and the budget is due to cover 7 years of activities. Please refer to Article 1.3 of the FPA.

Reference number	1091/II.3/InfoDay
Question:	Can the Commission clarify how they intend to apply the social economic criteria in the allocation of funds? What are the criteria? What is the maximum budget expected from a consortium?
Answer:	Please check the award criteria in the Evaluation Procedure at V.I of the Submission Set

Reference number	1092/II.3/InfoDay
Question:	How fixed should the budget be shared out between the three modules?
Answer:	An indicative budget can be drafted from the allocated budget, for modules A + B there will be 300 million €(150 million €for each module) and 20 million for module C.

Reference number	1107/II.3/InfoDay
Question:	If 150 m €are allocated to module a and 150 m €in module b, how much should go to “common requirements to implement a single network of excellence”? –Article 21.6
Answer:	Common requirements may be included in the budget of the 3 modules.

Reference number	1116/II.3/InfoDay
Question:	a) 320m. €are for the grants to the network members or also the organisation of annual conference, training etc? b) Is it a 6 years programme or a 7 years one? c) Is co-financing from a national authority permitted?
Answer:	a) The budget covers all the network activities. b) The Call will finance a 7 years activity plan. c) Yes.

Reference number	1120/II.3/InfoDay
Question:	Could a consortium apply for funding according to the population of a region?
Answer:	The proposal should be based on eligible costs and the planning of actions, the level and the quality proposed; the population of the Member States is only an indication to a certain extent for allocation of funds.

III. Implementing a single network providing integrated services

Reference number	153/III.2/29012007
Question:	What will be the role and responsibilities of the agency?
Answer:	The Commission is in the process of assessing the appropriate structure to assist in the financial and contractual management and animation of the network. More details will be made available in due course.

Reference number	154/III.2/29012007
Question:	What are the communication lines envisaged between this agency and the network? Would the coordinators in the consortia be the only interlocutors of the agency?
Answer:	The co-ordinators will be the main contact to the support structure (e.g. Agency) in all administrative and legal matters.

Privileged partners

Reference number	1005/III.2/InfoDay
Question:	What does a privileged partnership (as in Section III.2) include? Who is identifying and selecting privileged partners?
Answer:	Privileged partnerships are not subject of this call. A partnership agreement with the network is foreseen for organisations that can contribute to the quality of the network without participating in this call. Such organisations are often federal or international membership associations with sector specific activities. Concrete privileges will be defined by the European Commission in a partnership agreement on a case by case basis in order to

realise largest possible synergies between the partners.

Reference number 1006/III.2/InfoDay

Question: How will it be ensured that privileged partners are representative for the relevant business community?

Answer: Privileged partnership is not subject of this call.

The Commission may give opportunities for privileged partners of the new Network, without any financial implications, in order to promote relations between the network and organisations that are not participating in the call but that can contribute to the Network's quality, based on their merits and potential synergies and added value for co-operation. Privileged partnerships established will respect the integrity and exclusiveness of the provision of services by the selected network partners in any geographic area.

Reference number 241/III.2/09022007

Question: Can we use official associated partners as subcontractors for some actions without tendering and how can we finance them in the case of necessity? Should we introduce their participations into account of the cost of common events, for example?

Answer: Tendering procedures have to be followed for every entity that is not a partner in the consortium. A limit of 20% of the total eligible costs is foreseen for all in-house or external consultants. (Article ii.15.2.3 (a) FPA) . Please refer to FAQ 222/IX/22.02.2207

IV. Services in support of Business and Innovation

General questions

Reference number 1009/IV/InfoDay

Question: Are co-operation activities with countries outside the network's borders considered as eligible? If yes, to what extent?

Answer: The primary focus of activities and related actions in all service modules is the European Union/European Single Market.

However, any cost of actions pursued in co-operation with network partners in third countries is eligible if the general cost eligibility criterion (Part II.15 of the framework partnership agreement) applies.

The European Commission understands that technology markets operate worldwide. So actions, in particular actions for technology transfer, addressing countries outside the network is possible. Applicants are allowed to include such actions in their proposal and justify them in the implementation strategy (provided that they will be carried out for the benefit of European SMEs).

Compulsory & new services

Reference number 1008/IV/InfoDay

Question: Which activities and actions described in the modules are compulsory?

Answer: It is compulsory to propose services and actions in all three service modules and to guarantee that the requirements to implement a single network of excellence (Section IV.4) are met. In each service module it is advised to plan actions for all groups of services under the headings in the service module descriptions. Doing so contributes to the integration of services and opens co-operation possibility with network partners.

Reference number 142/IV/29012007

Question: Is the Commission willing to consider offers of services where the "newer" subjects (such as eco innovation / efficiency) would be treated in a different fashion than the more "classic" business support services?

Answer: As this is a call for proposals, applicants can propose actions they consider relevant for the

target group in their geographical area. The services listed under Modules a to c allow for a wide range of subjects as well as the modalities to deliver them.

Reference number	143/IV/29012007
Question: Is signposting acceptable as a service?	
Answer: Yes. Signposting is an integral part to implement the “No wrong door” concept and as such part of the “Common requirements”.	

Reference number	1007/IV/InfoDay
Question: Is it possible to add innovative new actions to those mentioned as ‘actions eligible’ under an activity or service? Is it possible to get additional information on the eligibility of particular actions like the establishment of regional fund to provide micro grants to companies or the development of an investment promotion agency?	
Answer: The ‘Actions eligible’ are of an indicative nature only. You are free to propose innovative new actions that contribute to the objectives of the call and provide better services to clients. . Paragraph IV.4.5 ‘Exploration and testing of new services’ explicitly provides space for pilot activities. It is not possible to provide specific information on the eligibility of costs for actions beyond those mentioned as eligible. For general rules of eligibility of costs in proposed projects please refer to Part II.15 of the Framework Partnership Agreement and the financial regulations.	

Existing tools and services

Reference number	102/IV/22012007
Question: Can the Commission accept that EIC services and actions for SMEs that are already provided (and funded) by the applicant (or the consortium) not to be submitted in the proposal? Or should they be mentioned, but excluded from financial contribution by the Commission? If so, are they excluded from audits and reports as well? Will a proposal that includes only complementary services (services that are not provided yet), be evaluated equal/better/less, compared to a proposal in which all services are provided?	
Answer: The “implementation strategy”, as the first part of the proposal part B (see Annex II to the submission set), shall present in the sections on “justification” and “methodology” the services to SMEs already established in the region. The services to be co-financed under this call should be complementary to the already available services and contribute directly to the objectives of the call. Under no circumstances can a service offered be co-financed from more than one grant from the EU-budget (for further references please check European Commission’s Financial Regulation, Title VI, GRANTS, Charter 2, AWARD PRINCIPLES, Article 109 FR). Costs for these services cannot be included as eligible cost in the forecast budget. Services that are co-financed from other sources (national, regional or local grants) might be included as eligible costs. In this case the co-financing already received for this service has to be accounted as income to the project. The decision to include these services in the financial proposal is left to the discretion of the applicant. Grants awarded must however not result in a financial profit for the successful applicant. Reports will have to give information on actual costs of project implementation. Only the actual costs for the actions undertaken in line with the proposed work program are audited. It is expected to demonstrate and analyse the already available services in the implementation strategy. The preliminary work program is built on the result of this analysis; therefore the last question is not relevant in the evaluation process.	

Reference number	1010/IV/InfoDay
Question: Will a common network support structure provide a joint database for matchmaking?	
Answer: The existing co-operation databases of EIC and IRC will be taken as a good basis in order to allow maximum synergy between the service modules. The target is to build one commonly accessible database, possibly with module specific data. The European Commission is currently	

exploring different options.

Reference number	1011/IV/InfoDay
Question: Which established intranet tools (databases, trainings) from the network continue to be available?	
Answer: The new network support structure will provide new tools that build on the existing ones. For project design and planning purposes it is advised to take the current instruments as basis. Should an automatic transfer of valid data in existing databases not be possible, the old databases will remain accessible for an intermediary period.	

Reference number	1012/IV/InfoDay
Question: Will the Commission provide a common signposting instrument?	
Answer: No.	

Reference number	1013/IV/InfoDay
Question: To what extent should consortia design specific IT platforms to support network operation?	
Answer: Consortia should only foresee the design of IT tools needed for the implementation of the project in the area to be covered (like customer relation management platform), for the management of the consortium or for specialised co-operation initiatives with individual network partners, for example in the context of pilot activities (see IV.4.5). There is no need for the design of IT tools for overall network operation. These tools will be provided by the network support structure.	

Module a

Reference number	15/IV.1/22122006
What is meant by "internal market"?	
Answer: By Internal Market the EU Internal Market is meant, as distinct from any particular national market.	

Reference number	32/IV.1/22122006
Question: Could you please clarify what sort of activities are expected from the applicants in 1.5 which might be different of those in 1.3 and 1.4?	
Answer: Section 1.5 is asking the applicants to propose appropriate means in order to involve SMEs in the process affecting their operations. For example and in respect with 1.3 and 1.4, the list of actions eligible for funding under this 1.5 section may include among other - actions to encourage participation in online consultation launched by the Commission or the dissemination of the results of the listening to SMEs tools in their geographical area. In any case the objective of the section 1.5 is to invite potential applicants to propose new ideas and methodologies on how to engage SMEs in the European policy-making process depending on local needs.	

Reference number	101/IV.1/22012007
Question: Must a consortium of applicants be able to perform all EIC-activities listed in the submission set (SS) page 9, 1.1-1.7?	
Answer: At consortium level providing services within a geographical area, all activities related to services described under Module a (Information, Feedback, Business Co-operation and Internationalisation services) must be covered. As additionally referred to in section II.2 of the Submission Set the Commission expects that proposals from single organisations or consortia will provide integrated services of all service modules.	

Reference number	105/IV.1/22012007
Question: SS, page 9: "Services will be addressed to all enterprises. Does this refer to all enterprises	

in the geographic area covered by the proposal?

Answer: Yes, this is correct. But obviously in a network of organisations covering all Europe partners must also be prepared to assist foreign companies that show interest in co-operation with a partner in the region.

Reference number 109/IV.1/22012007

Question: With respect to some services (e.g. 1.3, 1.4, 1.6 (SS, page 11) and 4.7 (page 21), the Commission asks for support or co-operation from the applicant.

There is, however, no specific information on the actions and tasks to be fulfilled (terms of reference), which makes it hard for the applicant to provide correct information on man days, costs etc. Can more information be provided? Since these activities are on direct request of the Commission, shouldn't they be 100 % financed by the Commission?

Answer: As this is a call for proposals, applicants can propose actions and activities that correspond the needs of SMEs in the territory to be covered. The links listed under Annex 4 of the submission set allow an insight into the activities currently carried out by the EIC and IRC networks. The Commission will provide a co-financing of up to 60%.

Reference number 239/IV.1/09022007

Question: One of the eligible actions is the following one: "Using the business co-operation database when seeking and disseminating international business co-operation profiles within the network in order to describe the profile of their clients and of the potential partner(s) sought".

What exactly does it mean – just enter profiles or run a search on the database?

Answer: It is required by the partners of the new single network to perform both tasks, entering new profiles and searching for potential business partners

Reference number 243/IV.1/09022007

Question: Nous aimerions avoir des précisions quant au module A,1.6 de l'appel à proposition "Services d'appui en faveur des entreprises et de l'innovation": Faut-il comprendre "cross-border" comme transfrontalier (au sens de la politique régionale de l'UE, c'est-à-dire avec un zonage précis) ou comme transnational?

Answer: Comme mentionné dans le paragraphe IV.1, les partenaires doivent offrir des services qui stimulent la coopération transnationale et qui aident les PME à entrer dans des nouveaux marchés. Ceci n'est pas limité à une zone géographique "transfrontalier régionale", mais aussi transnational, même en dehors de la zone UE. Il est évident que les services offerts aux PME européennes se focalisent en premier lieu sur la zone UE.

Reference number 246/IV.1/09022007

Question: Concernant les actions Panels : quelle est la différence entre les actions citées dans le deuxième paragraphe du 1.3 du submission set et celles citées au deuxième point du 1.5 ?

Answer: Les activités citées dans le point 1.3 paragraphe 2 concernent l'assistance à l'organisation des business panels lancés par la Commission pour mesurer l'impact d'une législation existante. Les activités citées dans le point 1.5 paragraphe 2 utilisent le même processus mais plutôt lors d'une politique en préparation.

Reference number 247/IV.1/09022007 UPDATED

Question: Concernant le paragraphe 1.6 "assisting SME's to develop cross border activities and international networking " : qu'entend-on par "international" ? Quelle est la zone géographique concernée au delà de l'UE ? Nos actions ne doivent-elles pas se focaliser en premier lieu sur la zone EUROPE ? Devons (pouvons) - nous afficher des actions sur d'autres zones géographiques (ex : Asie)?

Answer: Comme mentionné dans le paragraphe IV.1, les partenaires doivent offrir des services qui stimulent la coopération transnationale et qui aident les PME à entrer dans des nouveaux marchés. Ceci n'est pas limité à la zone géographique de l'EU, mais comme mentionné les services offerts aux PME européennes se focalisent en premier lieu sur la zone EU.

Reference number	249/IV/09022007
<p>Question: Une base d'annonces sera mise à disposition du réseau pour favoriser la mise en place des coopérations inter-entreprises; est-ce possible d'avoir plus d'information sur les principes de fonctionnement de la base, les hypothèses prises en compte influant sur la proposition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - la base d'annonce regroupera-t-elle toutes les typologies de coopération (commercial, innovation, technologies, etc.?) - les entreprises auront-elles un accès direct aux annonces? (diffusion et/ou réponse) - l'administration des annonces (notamment leur validation) se fera-t-elle à un niveau centralisé, au niveau du consortium ou au niveau de chaque partenaire? 	
<p>Answer: Comme expliqué dans le point 1.7 du Submission Set, la Commission mettra à disposition des partenaires un outil (business co-operation database) qui sera opéré par les partenaires du réseau et qui comprendra les typologies en support des services offerts dans les modules a et b. L'alimentation de la base de données avec des profils de haute qualité relèvera de la responsabilité des partenaires. Les partenaires seront également responsables pour la dissémination de l'information vers les PME.</p>	

Reference number	253/IV.1/09022007
<p>Question: When you show how each service module description will be structured in point no. 5 there are Publications and other outputs indicated. What do you mean by those? Could you please describe the difference?</p>	
<p>Answer: Point 5 in the preliminary work programme refers to publications (for example leaflets, brochures, handbooks, studies etc.) that are expected as an outcome in the context of every particular module of services.</p>	

Reference number	256/IV.1/19022007
<p>Question: In module a there are the terms "internationalisation Service" (1) and "transnational co-operation". Can you explain the difference between international and transnational? When we organise a information event on third countries market, is it eligible?</p>	
<p>Answer: Information events organised in the consortium's host country or in a country participating in the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (under Article 4 of the CIP) are in principle eligible, provided the topic is of specific interest to local SMEs. The topic could include information on business opportunities in both CIP countries and third countries. In the context of business and innovation support network activities, the term 'transnational' generally refers to specific cross-border initiatives while 'internationalisation' incorporates an element relating to the organisation's international strategic perspective. Please also refer to question 177/IV.4/02022007.</p>	

Reference number	377/IV.1/16032007
<p>Question: Page 10 in Submission Set, Module a: What is meant by "SME environment programme" ? Is it the eco-innovation part of the CIP ?</p>	
<p>Answer: No, it is not linked to the Eco-innovation part of the CIP but to the Environmental Compliance Assistance programme for SMEs, of DG ENVIRONMENT aiming at proposing measures and tools to help SMEs comply with environmental legislation and improve their environmental performance. The programme is due to be published during this spring.</p>	

Reference number	1071/IV.1/InfoDay
<p>Question: In 1.4 and 1.5 (page 11) we should support and help the Commission with business panels, etc... How can we estimate our efforts there, when our role is not specified?</p>	
<p>Answer: In 1.4 the request service is Contributing to the carrying-out of impact assessment studies of the commission. Section 1.5 is asking the applicants to propose appropriate means in order to involve SMEs in the process affecting their operations. The objective of this section is to invite applicants to propose new ideas and methodologies on how to engage SMEs in the European policy making process depending on local needs. Please check answer 32/IV.1/22122006 in FAQ.</p>	

Reference number	1072/IV.1.1/InfoDay
Question:	Is it possible to include in the proposal studies (research of labour market resources, supplier's resources, sub-supplier's resources)?
Answer:	Yes, as long as they aim to provide specialist market information(I.V 1.1) .In general it is necessary for the applicants to consider in addition to the services under Article 21.1, modules a, b, c (CIP) services and activities ensuring the completeness of the project.

Reference number	1074/IV.1/InfoDay
Question:	Will it be compulsory to communicate certain policies or are we free to make a choice on what you communicate based on what the service-provider thinks is of the interest to its community?
Answer:	All policies of interest and relevance for the SMEs should be covered.

Reference number	1075/IV.1/InfoDay
Question:	Do we have to perform business panels (module a)?
Answer:	The European Commission asks for supporting Business Panels. Other forms are also eligible.

Reference number	1079/IV.1/InfoDay
Question:	How may business panels are planned / expected per year? Per consortium (Nuts1)?
Answer:	The number of the business panels is to be determined on a yearly basis as the network will be launched.

Reference number	1076/IV.1/InfoDay
Question:	Can you be more specific on the network contribution related to the impact assessment studies of the Commission?
Answer:	The members of the network will be acting as the focal contact point with the SME community in the process of an impact assessment analysis. As part of the better regulation initiative, impact assessment studies accompany the SME legislative proposals of the Commission. Its aim is to support the decision-making process, with an in-depth analysis of all legislative options available and possible impacts that may derive from them. For a further insight on the <u>Commission's Guidelines for Impact Assessment</u> please check: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/regulation/better_regulation/impact_assessment/docs/sec_2005_791_guidelines_annexes.pdf

Reference number	1089/IV.1/InfoDay
Question:	Betrifft Feedback: Sind die 3 vorgeschlagenen Aktivitäten wie Weitergabe von Unternehmensfällen an die Kommission, Promotion von online Konsultationen und SME Panels obligatorische Aktivitäten im Feedback oder können diese durch andere Vorschläge zur Vermittlung von Unternehmensfeedback ersetzt werden?
Answer:	Es wird von den Netzwerkpartnern erwartet, sich an allen drei Aktivitäten zu beteiligen. Die konkrete Ausgestaltung kann aber verschiedene Formen annehmen und spezifische Anforderungen berücksichtigen.

Module b

Reference number	16/IV.2/22122006
Question:	Will the IRC Secretariat continue to function? Will the IRC BBS service continue in the same format?
Answer:	The result of the call will be a new network providing integrated services as described in sections II and III of the submission set. For the assistance of the new network partners, the Commission will support them by making available the appropriate coordination and operational support built on current systems, tools and methodologies.

Reference number	66/IV.2/05012007
Question: As for the present IRC hosts the module b budget will cover 33 months and not 36 months, is it correct to assume that for the 1 st reporting period, due 30 th June 2009, module b will be reporting for 15 months and not for 18 months?	
Answer: Yes, this assumption is correct.	

Reference number	1014/IV.2/InfoDay
Question: Under which activity are ‘Thematic Groups’ like the existing or other sectoral groups taken into account?	
Answer: Section IV.2.3 ‘providing brokerage services’ includes among the eligible actions the ‘moderation and / or participation in specialist groups’ targeting specific sectors. These specialist groups may however have a wider focus than brokerage services.	

Reference number	1015/IV.2/InfoDay
Question: Will experience with EUREKA and cooperation with EUREKA play a role in the evaluation of project proposals?	
Answer: In general, knowledge and experience of the European Community RTD programme as well as other RTD programmes (e.g. EUREKA) will be considered among other aspects for the selection of proposals, particularly for module b services. See submission set IV.2.5.	

Reference number	1066/IV.2/InfoDay
Question: In Module b (Innovation, knowledge and technology transfer services) only section IV.2.3 makes reference to the trans-nationality actions. Is the European Commission changing the concept of transnational technology transfer?	
Answer: The observation is not valid. Notions of transnationality of actions are also found in the other sections of the module b description. The European Commission is not changing the concept of transnational technology transfer.	

Reference number	1080/IV.2/InfoDay
Question: Wenn die Trägerorganisation bis April 2008 Trägerin eines IRC ist, sind dann ausschliesslich die Aktivitäten des Moduls B von Januar 2008 bis März 2008 bei einem neuen Antrag für die Periode 01/08 bis 03/08 herauszunehmen, oder gilt die Regel für den kompletten Neuantrag?	
Answer: In diesem Fall sind alle Aktivitäten der Module A, C und „Common“ von Beginn an förderfähig, bis auf jene unter Modul B für den erwähnten Zeitraum.	

Module c

Reference number	49/IV.3/05012007
Question: The module c - FP7 has a very limited budget of 6,25% (20 Mio €). It will be complicated to fulfil all demands of SMEs to prepare them for a participation in FP7. Is it possible to transform some tasks to inform and to give general advice to module a and b? If we inform the SMEs according to module a about promotional / funding EU programmes we can not exclude FP7.	
Answer: “Preparing SMEs for a participation in FP7” is not an objective of Module c. Services and eligible actions under module c are to encourage SME participation in FP7 and are described in Section IV.3 in detail. The preparation of SMEs in participating in FP7 is a task of FP7 itself, while CIP proposes accompanying and complementing actions.	

Reference number	67/IV.3/05012007
Question: Is it obligatory that module c services are provided by organisations which host NCPs or is it acceptable module c to be provided by any organisation that can meet the objectives indicated under this module and collaborates with the local NCPs for the exploitation of synergies?	
Answer: It is not mandatory to include the NCPs as partners in the project. Module c services should	

be complementary to NCP services in a sense that they encourage SMEs participation in the 7th Framework Programme and will provide the services in a more regionalised manner. Nevertheless it is highly recommendable to seek active cooperation with the NCPs since it is their core task to give information and assistance regarding the technological and scientific aspects of the Framework Programme for RTD.

Reference number	431g/IX/16032007
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Question: Pour le module c.), est-ce qu'un seul partenaire peut être en charge de ce volet, ou est-ce qu'il faut que pour le module "c" l'ensemble des partenaires du consortium soient impliqués?

Answer: It is up to the consortium to organise how the activities are allocated.

Reference number	1017/IV.3/InfoDay
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Question: Module c services should be complementary to the services of National Contact Points (NCPs) for FP7. DG Research establishes networks among NCPs. Does the European Commission foresee activities for coordination (for example joint platforms) between the network established by this call and the network of NCP?

Answer: There are no such centralised co-ordination activities between the networks foreseen by the European Commission, at least at this stage. Complementarities shall be realised locally between the NCP and the Business and Innovation Support network on the basis of the local needs in particular to achieve proximity of FP7 related services for SMEs.

Reference number	1015/IV.3/InfoDay
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Question: Are further details available on the European Innovation Voucher system?

Answer: Further details on a European Voucher System are not available yet. The voucher system is not an element of this call and therefore applicants do not need to foresee actions related to it. Whether and when established, the network partners may be asked to contribute to the implementation of the scheme.

Reference number	1016/IV.3/InfoDay
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Question: Is it possible to provide partner search services for project ideas for the CIP and 7th Framework Program?

Answer: Yes. Referring to FP7, please see p.3.2 of the submission set. You should take also into account that similar service will be provided by FP7 National Contact Points (NCPs). Overlapping must be avoided but synergies between the two networks should be realised.

Reference number	1018/IV.3/InfoDay
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Question: Can you explain the difference between “assistance in negotiation & conclusion of co-operation agreements for research projects” and “however the direct assistance to companies in the formulation in reply to calls published by...” , the first being an eligible action, the second not.

Answer: Assistance in the formulation of proposals is a commercially available service. Assistance in the formulation of proposals, co-financed by an EC grant, would interfere in this market. Furthermore available resources in the module are not sufficient to achieve tangible impact in this respect.

Common requirements

Reference number	27/IV.4/22122006
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Question: Is there any upper limit for the management (under common requirements) in relation to the budget or total man-power?

Answer: There is no upper limit for the management. The management structure should ensure an effective and efficient work planning, coordination monitoring and reporting, while ensuring comprehensive and high-quality integrated services to SMEs.

Reference number	431a/IX/16032007
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Question: Est-ce que les « common services » doivent être réalisés par tous les partenaires – tant EIC et IRC – ou seulement par une partie des partenaires impliqués (p.ex. seulement EIC) ? Est-ce qu'il s'agit ici plutôt d'actions communes que les partenaires envisagent d'organiser ensemble sur une base périodique de 18 à 36 mois?

Answer: In accordance with section IV.4. these requirements apply to all network partners.

Reference number | 448/IV.4/19032007

Question: Our office assistants are involved in Module "Common Requirements". Is it necessary to include CVs for those kind of staff?

Answer: No, you do not need to provide CVs in the case of office assistants for Common Requirements. Please refer to FAQ 1063/VI.2/InfoDay.

Reference number | 469/IV.4/19032007

Question: We are planning to set-up a common website for the first entry point for SMEs and containing first rough informations about the network and its services. To find the most fitting network partner for its needs the SME shall find contact informations and links to the adequate network partner. Could such a website be calculated under the "Module d" (common requirements)?

Answer: Please note that Common Requirements are not an additional module but are horizontally implemented in all 3 modules a, b and c. In this context such an IT tool could be a part of the Common Requirements.

Reference number | 1069/IV.4/InfoDay

Question: Will a common network support structure replace the existing IRC secretariat and EIC management project? Where will it be established?

Answer: Yes, a common network support structure will be established. It will provide tools for animation of the network partners. Further details will be given in due time.

Reference number | 1070/ IV.4/InfoDay

Question: Which training activities are foreseen? Will they be provided commonly or specifically for the modules a staff member is working on?

Answer: Details on training activities for the network partners foreseen are not yet available.

Reference number | 1130/IV.4/InfoDay

Question: Will the secretariat and the BBS continue to exist in the new network? In what form and how it will be integrated with the business cooperation database?

Answer: In the new network a combined and upgraded form of Business Cooperation Database will be available.

Performance indicators

Reference number | 24/IV.4.4/05012007

Question: La Commission compte-t-elle mettre à disposition du réseau des outils de reporting et de signposting? Si non, les partenaires doivent-ils budgéter le développement de tels outils ?

Answer: Pour les outils de reporting, la Commission développera des outils basés sur ceux déjà existants et ils seront disponibles dès que le réseau sera lancé.

En ce qui concerne le signposting, les partenaires du réseau et d'autres organisations associées offrant des services poursuivront le développement des procédures communes (voir section IV.4.2 du submission set).

Reference number | 25/IV.4.4/05012007

Question: Will it be possible to adapt performance indicators for a running project?

Answer: There are two kinds of performance indicators. Those provided by the European Commission for reporting and benchmarking purposes across the network. Those will be provided by

the Commission at the start of the project, are valid for all projects and might only be modified by the European Commission.

The second set consists of those indicators developed by the consortium for project management, quality assurance and impact assessment. An indicator relating to the expected impact achieved in the region should not change during the project's operation as the expected impact is a basis for the award of the grant. In contrast an indicator related to the quality of a service might be modified if the nature of the service changes.

Reference number	29/IV.4.4/22122006 Updated
Question: Will the EC announce the performance indicators to be applied per module? Will these indicators be mandatory for all members of the network or will each consortium decide the number and type of indicators that will apply for each module?	
Answer: The Commission will specify performance indicators at the level of the network for reporting purposes, quality assurance and benchmarking of accepted projects. All network partners will be required to report their performance in respect to these indicators. In addition, the Commission will require all network partners to provide a regular set of output data in order to build network statistics and demonstrate the impact achieved by the network. These indicators and requested output will be available at the start of the new network. (see Part IV.4.4 of the submission set). For project management the project consortia are asked to develop their own indicators and instruments for internal quality control and self-evaluation as well as the monitoring of outcome and (regional) impact assessment (see award criterion section VI.3. 'Quality' and 'Impact'). These indicators shall be clearly described in the service module descriptions in the preliminary work programme (see Annex 2 – Proposal part B-Full proposal). The project specific indicators should reflect the expected outcome and impact of the project and be quantifiable (see section VI.3. 'Award criterion – 3. Impact').	

Reference number	164/IV.4.4/02022007
Question: Do we need as a consortium to apply Performance Indicators for common services besides the three modules?	
Answer: Please note that it is common requirements. At network level there it is currently not planned to develop common performance indicators for this, but it might be useful for your own project management to develop some indicators.	
Reference number	410/IV/14032007
Question: Indicateurs de performance: est il possible de n'indiquer que des indicateurs qualitatifs ou faut il obligatoirement prévoir des indicateurs quantitatifs? Faut il chiffrer le nombre de manifestations organisées ?	
Answer: Your project should demonstrate both qualitative and quantitative objectives and targets and the methodology how you monitor them by using appropriate indicators. Please see Submission set section IV.4.4 and section VI.3 – Award, in particular the criteria for quality and impact.	

Reference number	1021/IV.4.4/InfoDay
Question: Will the Commission provide the operating tools to measure impact on SMEs?	
Answer: Expected impact on SMEs in the area covered shall be explained by the applicants together with tools and indicators to measure these locally. (See Section IV.4.4 of the submission set and award criteria 'quality' and 'impact'). An evaluation of the program on European Level will be organised by the Commission.	

Management of projects and the consortium

Reference number	146/IV.4.4/29012007
Question: Can the Commission clarify the role and responsibilities of the coordinator? Notably on the	

following points: Can a coordinator also provide services?
Answer: Yes. It is expected that the co-ordinator provides services.
Question: Can the Commission indicate the level of budget that can be allocated to the coordination tasks? (As a % and also, what is a maximum budget?)
Answer: No. The final percentage will depend on the individual composition of the consortium and the respective co-ordination tasks required ensuring a good functioning of the consortium.
Question: What would be the type of costs eligible for coordination activities?
Answer: We cannot provide a complete list of costs, but examples would include the preparation of reports and meetings.
Question: What guidelines can the Commission provide as to the functioning of the consortia?
Answer: The Commission cannot provide any guidelines, as conditions may vary for each consortium.
Question: What is expected in terms of internal cooperation between the members of the consortia?
Answer: The Commission cannot provide any guidelines, as conditions may vary for each consortium. But it is expected that all members co-operate with each other, also to ensure that the “no wrong door” concept will be implemented.

Reference number	151/IV.4.4/29012007
Question: How does the Commission envisage improving the reporting guidelines over the current situation (2006-2007)?	
Answer: Reporting will be based on performance indicators, allowing for shorter and measurable reports. Reporting tools will be made available to the network in due time.	

Reference number	226/IV.4.4/09022007
Question: From the "Framework Partnership agreement with multiple partners" art. I.4 of the Special Conditions, it seems that the role of the coordinator is only for administrative matters. No technical coordination is required from the call? In other part of the call it is required to set up an efficient management structure to assure the performances of the objectives as well as of the results expected. Is the coordinator responsible to implement, monitor and verifying the performances of the partners?	
Answer: No, the coordinator may be involved in a range of tasks. Please see questions 1040/V.2/InfoDay and 146/IV.4.4/29012007 of the published FAQ document. The coordinator is not technically responsible for the performance of the partners. For each consortium covering a specific geographical area, network partners will be asked to establish an effective project coordination, communication, management structure and decision making mechanism, planning, monitoring and reporting, thus meeting its contractual requirements (see section IV.4.4 of the submission set).	

Reference number	1019/IV.4.4/InfoDay
Question: Will the European Commission create an advisory group of representatives from the consortia and / or a steering committee of stakeholders?	
Answer: A representative advisory group of project partners is foreseen.	

Reference number	1020/IV.4.4/InfoDay
Question: Will the Commission establish a common and unified reporting system for the three modules? When will it be available?	
Answer: Yes, such a reporting tool will be made available in time for the first reporting.	

Reference number	1077/IV.4.4/InfoDay
Question: Will there be a requirement of a consortium agreement between the partners?	
Answer: There is not such an official requirement for the submission of the proposal, however the partners of the consortium should sign a Cooperation Agreement, please refer further to Article I.4.1 of the FPA.	

Reference number	1068/IV.4.4/InfoDay
Question: Is there a model for a consortium agreement and project management structures?	
Answer: It is up to the partners in a consortium to define the internal functioning of it. There is no model contract / consortium agreement provided. Art I.4 and Annex III of the Framework Partnership agreement are essential elements for the cooperation in the consortium.	

Reference number	1088/IV.4.4/InfoDay
Question: Welche Messkriterien für den Erfolg eines Konsortiums werden eingesetzt? (Erfolge von Innovationen/Kooperationen in KMU sind bestenfalls nach 3-5 Jahren messbar (Umsatz, Arbeitskräfte); Voraussetzung: KMU <u>wollen</u> diese Ergebnisse mitteilen).	
Answer: Messkriterien beziehen sich auf alle Aktivitäten. Es lassen sich von daher zu verschiedenen Zeitpunkten die entsprechenden Erfolgsstufen überprüfen.	

Reference number	1097/IV.4.4/InfoDay
Question: Est-ce que les dépenses liées à la coordination du consortium peuvent être identifiées dans un "workpackage" séparé ou doivent elles être intégrées dans les budgets des différentes actions du consortium ?	
Answer: Les dépenses liées à la coordination doivent être incluses et intégrées dans les actions communes en utilisant les tables 'Estimated Budget' et selon les instructions données dans le submission set Annexe 2.	

Reference number	1109/IV.4.4/InfoDays
Question: La coordination du consortium, a-t-elle été évaluée à un pourcentage (ou une fourchette de pourcentage) du montant global du projet du consortium?	
Answer: Il n'y a pas de pourcentage, ni des limites pour les ressources nécessaire pour la coordination. La structure de coordination doit être capable de fournir une coordination efficace et assurer le monitoring, reporting, planning et qualité des services intégrés offerts aux PME.	

Large events

Reference number	177/IV.4.7/02022007
Question: In view of the element in the Common Services part of the Work Programme of "Common organisation of large transnational events" - a highly cost-intensive activity - would allocating 30% of the total budget to this module be feasible?	
Answer: Please note that we cannot give any information on specific activities. Also, keep in mind that the common organisation of large trans-national events is supported by all network members in order to mobilise the highest number of client companies. Please see submission set IV.4.7.	

Reference number	1022/IV.4.7/InfoDay
Question: How will the coordination of large events be realised in the network? There is danger that some overlapping events will be proposed in the proposals.	
Answer: The requirement mentioned in section IV.4.7 only applies to a limited number of very large events that have the potential to address large parts of the network. These events are of high importance for the visibility of the network on European level. The selection and coordination of these 'lighthouse' projects will be done by the network support structure. The strict requirement to mention these very large events as milestones in the application does not apply to events which have only a limited potential to attract network partners.	

V. Requirements for applicants and Annex 3 – Cooperation of entities in third countries

Eligible countries and cooperation of entities in third countries

Reference number	17/V.1/22122006
Question: Will the organisations from Third countries be eligible to apply for the new network?	
<p>Answer: Applicants from Third countries can be eligible if their origin country has established a bilateral agreement with the EC to participate in the CIP programme or parts of it. Otherwise, you can still co-operate with the network and any such expression of interest can be submitted at any time during the CIP programme and is not subject to the deadline for this call for proposals. However, in this particular case the host organisation from the third country does not qualify for any financial support through the CIP programme budget.</p> <p>As of 13/02/2006 the following countries have officially expressed their interest to participate in the Competitiveness and Innovation Program:</p> <p>Switzerland Norway Israel Kazakhstan Bosnia-Herzegovina Iceland Chile Egypt Lebanon Serbia</p> <p>For further information please refer to Article 21.5 of the CIP Decision and the Annex III of the Submission set.</p>	

Reference number	99/V.1/22012007
Question: Is a Chinese applicant eligible for this call?	
<p>Answer: Co-operation with third countries like China can either</p> <p>a) be based on the envisaged participation in the CIP and in this case negotiations with the European Commission on participation on the CIP should be reasonably advanced at the time of the deadline of this call or expect to be finalised in 2008;</p> <p>or b) be based on the Article 21.5 (CIP) as explained in Annex 3 of the submission set. Please check chapter V, Section 1 of the submission set [ELIGIBLE COUNTRIES].</p>	

Reference number	224/V.1/02022007
Question: Macedonian based organization as operating in a Candidate country could apply only if the country has signed a MoU with the EC and have paid the “entry ticket” to the CIP. At this moment would the applications from Macedonia be accepted? Could we submit a proposal even though the negotiations are not finalized before 2/04/2007? What is the crucial moment that gives us the right to prepare the proposal is it a Letter of intent of the country or signed MoU and paid entry ticket? Is there any deadline for closing the MoU with the eligible countries?	
<p>Answer: The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is a candidate country, so organizations can present proposals on the same conditions as organizations in EU member states. They are eligible to apply and have to respect the deadline April 2nd. However a grant agreement for a specific project will only be signed after the negotiations about a participation in the CIP are finalized. See section V.1 of the submission set.</p> <p>(The procedure you refer to is applicable to other third countries except candidates and EEA countries, like Switzerland, the Ukraine, Morocco but also Serbia, Kosovo, Albania, Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina. These countries have to express their interest to participate in the CIP before the deadline of the call – otherwise the proposed projects are not eligible.)</p>	

Reference number	242/V.1/09022007
Question: What “Delegation of the Commission to the country” means in "In addition to the work plan and the description of the host organization, the latter shall include a letter of support of the Delegation of the Commission to the country", on page 53 of Submission Set? The question	

1025/V/InfoDay of the published FAQ is "How can a country express its interest to participate in the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Program"? It seems that they are the two different questions.

Answer: Question 1025/V/InfoDay refers to the possibility of a country wishing to join the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP). Annex 3 (p.53) of the Submission Set refers to potential host organisations from non-CIP countries wishing to co-operate with the network under article 21.5 of the CIP (without financial support from the CIP programme budget). In this case, the applicant needs to contact the Delegation of the Commission in the country concerned in order to obtain a letter of support for the proposal.

To get in contact with the European Commission Delegations please visit the relative website http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/delegations/intro/web.htm

Reference number	244/V.1/09022007
Question: Please advise if the proposal coming from my country, which is not a Member State, has to include activities relating to the following items in Annex III of Article 21: - operating tools to measure the impact of existing legislation on SMEs, - contributing to the carrying-out of impact assessment studies of the Commission, - operating other appropriate means to engage SMEs in the European policy-making process.	
Answer: The Commission is interested in having feedback from third countries that may participate to the new network in issues related to the impact for local SMEs from Commission policies which the third country has been associated to (e.g. trade FP7 for Research and Technological Development, etc).	

Reference number	359/V.1/23022007
Question: I am very interest for CIP support programs for business and innovation. I am from Montenegro, and I am coordinator of regional business organisation. Can I compete with my team? We have very interesting projects for development small and medium enterprises.	
Answer: To have interesting projects for the development of SMEs is welcome, nevertheless the proposal should strictly respond to the objectives of the call. Please read carefully the submission set and the section of the published question & answers dealing with co-operation of organisations from third countries. Two mechanisms are described. Both would be open for organisations from Montenegro but require immediate contact with the EC delegation and / or the official public authorities in your country.	

Reference number	414/V.1/16032007
Question: After carefully reading the call, I am still not sure if Canadian organizations (third country) are eligible?	
Answer: The call published will establish a network of service providers in support of business and innovation co-financed by the European Commission through the 'Competitiveness and Innovation Program'. Partners in third countries that do not intend to participate in the CIP can ask to establish a co-operation with the network based on Art.21.5 of the CIP decision. Annex III of the published submission set explains the application procedure for this case. Organisations wishing to co-operate do not have to apply as consortium but they have to cover the basic services from the modules. To apply as consortium or network can be envisaged, in particular as the co-operation with partners in OECD countries has an element of reciprocity regarding the provision of access to existing similar structures in the country. Organisations wishing to co-operate have to include a letter of support from the EC Delegation in the country. Partners intending to co-operate based on Art. 21.5 shall use the structure proposed in the submission set to present their proposal, but not have to use the EPSS tool (as this will not be available after 02/04/2006). They don't have to provide a detailed financial proposal but should demonstrate how the activities are financed locally.	

Reference number	1025/V.1/InfoDay
Question: How can a country express its interest to participate in the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Program?	
Answer: The responsible ministry shall express the country's interest to participate in CIP in a letter to the Vice President of the European Commission, Mr Guenther Verheugen.	

Reference number	1027/V.1/InfoDay
Question: Can the submission deadline be extended if the negotiation process for CIP participation is delayed due to reasons beyond the responsibility of the bidder?	
Answer: No, it is not possible to extend the deadline. If negotiations to participate in CIP are not reasonable advanced in late autumn 2007 to allow the signature of the specific grant agreement, the Commission will propose to start co-operating with the network based on Art. 21.5 without a financial contribution to the applicant from the CIP program. After successful finalisation of the negotiations to participate in CIP a call specifically addressing the countries in questions might be published.	

Reference number	1028/V.1/InfoDay
Question: According to Annex III of the submission set explaining procedures for organisations from third countries to co-operate with the network based on Art. 21.5, entities in third countries don't have to obey the deadline and do not have to apply as consortium. Do other differences exist?	
Answer: Using the procedure described in Annex III is limited to those countries that don't intend to become partner in the CIP or whose cooperation agreement and negotiations are being carried out during the duration of this call. Co-operating partners don't have to apply as consortium but they have to cover the basic services from the modules so applying as consortium should not be excluded. Co-operating partners have to include a letter of support from the EC Delegation in the country. Partners intending to co-operate based on Art. 21.5 shall use the same application documents but not the EPSS tool (as this will not be available after 02/04/2006). They don't have to provide a detailed financial proposal but should demonstrate how the activities are financed locally.	

Reference number	1029/V.1/InfoDay
Question: Is a proposal of a consortium of partners from two or more third countries eligible?	
Answer: For countries that participate in CIP (see ref.: 17/V.1/22122006) the relevant section of the submission set applies (see section V.3). For practical reasons related to bilateral negotiations between national governments and the EC, we do not encourage international consortia from several third countries.	

Reference number	1030/V.1/InfoDay
Question: Shall applicants from third countries use the EPSS tool?	
Answer: Applicants from countries that are considered as eligible (see Ref. 17/V.1/22122006), i.e. the governments apply by 02/04/2007 to participate in CIP, shall use the EPSS tool.	

Reference number	1032/V.1/InfoDay
Question: Will the EICC structure continue?	
Answer: The procedure described in Annex III to the submission set opens the possibility for partners in third countries to co-operate with the network. This will replace the EICC structure from 1/1/2008.	

Reference number	1033/V.1/InfoDay
Question: Will third country proposals be given equal weight in the evaluation process with respect to proposals originating from member states or will the latter be given priority?	
Answer: Proposals from third countries that are considered as eligible to apply and to be co-financed (see Ref. 17/V.1/22122006) will be evaluated on the same terms and criteria as those originating from member states. The objective is to establish a network covering all eligible countries without geographical overlap between the accepted proposals.	

Applicants

Reference number	94/V.2/19012007
<p>Question: To avoid too many direct partners in the consortium and at the same time to ensure a good geographic coverage, it is planned to have - as partner - a member organisation, who will then delegate the work / actions to their members in the different parts of the region. If for example the association of industrial chambers would become partner as the roof organisation, is it then possible that this organisation delegates the work to the different chambers? Or will the rules for subcontracting have to be applying that only 20 % of the actions would be allowed to be delegated (which here would not make sense and would mean, such a construction would not be feasible and all members would need to become partner)?</p>	
<p>Answer:</p> <p>It is necessary to clarify the role of certain actors of the FPA, according to article I.4 relating to the role of partners and more particularly article I.4.1 b : <i>"the partners agree upon appropriate arrangements between themselves for the proper performance of the action through the conclusion of an internal co-operation agreement regarding their internal co-operation and co-ordination. The co-operation agreement shall include all aspects necessary for the management of the partners and the implementation of the action."</i></p> <p>A partner is a beneficiary of the grant and to this respect active in its implementation. He has ownership and responsibility for a part of the action and might contribute financially to it. This means partners must be designated as such in the FPA (and linked SGAs) and be normally signatories or establish a written power to another entity to represent them for this purpose. For example, five entities member of one association may give the latter a written power to sign the FPA (and linked SGAs) in their name and even represent them for all other administrative acts for the implementation of the action as stated in article I.4.1 b) of the FPA. The five entities would in this case be mentioned in the FPA (and linked SGAs) and thus be partners but they are represented administratively by the association.</p> <p>In contrast a subcontractor is only an entity contracted to deliver a service through normal market conditions (and according to the value of the contract, probably awarded after competition and to the best value for money offer) and responsible only towards its contractor for its performance. It is only a cost for the implementation of the action. Such arrangement is not recommended for an entity with an active role, even a minor.</p> <p>It is not the Commission's role to determine the legal status of partners but recommends taking into account the above clarification when drafting the consortium's structure and any arrangement taken in order to simplify it.</p> <p>Arrangement made for this purpose might for example include the delegation of staff members of a partner in the consortium to a third organisation in order to provide services in a geographic area that would otherwise not be covered. This third organisation might or might not contribute financially to the project.</p>	

Reference number	96/V.2/22012007
<p>Question: In the current and previous IRC period, Universities (mainly liaison offices) were involved in the IRC projects as R&D results providers. Is it possible to include liaison offices in the current call perhaps as subcontractors, as obviously they cannot be involved as consortium partners?</p>	
<p>Answer: Any organisation fulfilling the requirements described in section V.2 (eligibility & selection criteria) of the submission set can become a partner in the project. Applying national tendering rules, any organisation can become a subcontractor for the project with a ceiling of the total subcontracting cost for (in-house) consultants of 20% of the other total eligible costs. Please read carefully section V. of the submission set and Art. II.10 and II.15.2.3 of the model framework partnership agreement.</p>	

Reference number	172/V.2/02022007
Question: Could you please clarify what organizations are considered to be public bodies (to which the verification of financial capacity does not apply)? In particular which of the legal status categories of the host organization are considered as public bodies?	
Answer: An indicative definition of public bodies is given in the FP7 Rules for Participation, according to which ‘public body’ means any legal entity established as such by national law, and international organisations. Regarding the verification of the financial capacity, please note the following: According to Art. 118 of the Financial Regulations of the EU the authorising officer of the Commission will decide whether a beneficiary is required to lodge a financial guarantee. The Implementing Rule Art. 182.5 states that the authorising officer may waive the obligation to submit a financial guarantee for public-sector bodies.	

Reference number	223/V.2/02022007 UPDATED
Question: Can a Department/Directorate of a national Ministry in charge for preparation and implementation of the National programme for competitiveness and innovation be part of the consortium that would apply, could such a Directorate have the role of coordinator of the Consortium for example?	
Answer: It is expected that partners in the project provide services directly to SMEs. However, organizations may act as an active coordinator, taking also the responsibility for the reporting. Regarding the involvement of a directorate of a national ministry other forms of co-operation should be checked. Also, please keep in mind the following: According to Art. 52 of the Financial Regulation of the European Communities and the related Implementing Rule Art. 34, there is a conflict of interest where a player in the implementation of the budget is compromised for reasons involving political or national affinity, economic interest or any other shared interest with the beneficiary. By signing the Exclusion form, the host organization declares that the host organization and the staff proposed for the action are not subject to a conflict of interest in the context of the call (see Exclusion form g). The aim of the Article II.15.4, ninth bullet point, is to avoid the <u>double financing</u> of the same costs in accordance with the Article 111 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities. The eligible character of the cost of public officials assigned to the action by a co-partner depends on the following two elements:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) If the public officials put at the disposal of the partner (being a public body) by the central or the local governments <u>do not generate any cost</u> for the partner, then the use of these officials for the action is considered as a <u>contribution in kind</u> and excluded from this call for proposals. If, notwithstanding this exclusion, the partner decides to make use of these officials for the execution of the action, this use should not be mentioned in the proposals. 2) If the public officials put at the disposal of the partner (being a public body) by the central or local governments <u>generate a cost</u> for the partner, then the use of these officials for the action is considered as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. <u>Non eligible</u>, in accordance with the Article II.15.4 of the FPA, if the partner <u>does not control</u> the financial workflows of these officials (i.e.: he may <u>not</u> decide to allocate the funds assigned for these officials by the central or the local governments to one or another action to get an additional funding from the EU for example). In the proposal, the cost of these officials should be reported in the category ‘non eligible costs’; 2.2. <u>Eligible</u> if the partner <u>fully controls</u> the financial workflows of these officials (i.e.: the partner <u>may</u> decide to allocate the funds assigned for these staff by the central or local governments to one or another action). In that case, evidence that there is no risk of double funding should be provided. A declaration to this effect should be included in the proposal 	

Reference number	237/V.2/02022007
Question: What is the importance of the consortium? What will be the added value of the consortium, during the evaluation of the proposal and during the management of the new network?	
Answer: Proposals may be made by single organisations able to provide the demanded services as described in the Call, or by consortia comprising a group of host organisations. Please check Section V.2 [Applicants] of the Submission Set.	

Reference number	313/V.2/23022007
Question: Concerning your answer in the FAQ document of 5 February 2007 to question 223/V.2/02022007 we have a following question: What does the statement (legal decision/opinion...?) really means to such organisations? Is it legally binding? Would it be forbidden for such organisations to be funded under this call?	
Background to our question: There is a recently founded association of universities, which purpose is to assist universities and SMEs to cooperate within FP7. This association is planning to join our consortium. It is funded by our regional government. Does it have the opportunity to claim for funding?	
Answer: <u>The purpose of the answer given in 223/V.2/02022007</u> was to raise awareness for potential conflicts of interest and a possible resulting ineligibility for certain <u>personnel costs</u> . It is recommended that applicants should take this into account in their proposal and explain how they would resolve those potential problems. Please note it is not possible to provide any specific information on the eligibility of specific partners.	

Reference number	335/V.2/23022007
Question: Members of our consortium will be private and public entities (partially owned privately and partially publicly owned by a ministry, it is not GOV or a public body we assume). The public body will become also the coordinator of the consortium. Will the EC request other members, the private entities, to provide financial guarantee or the Commission will request the financial guarantee only from the coordinator? Will the financial capacity of the PNP be verified by the Commission and will it be asked for financial guarantee at all if it acts as a coordinator?	
Answer: According to section VI.2 of the submission set, a financial capacity verification will be done for each partner, except for public bodies. On the basis of this check, the Commission will decide to request from individual partners for financial guarantee. Please also refer to 80/IX/22012007 of the FAQ.	

Reference number	446/V.2/19032007
Question: Can a public body be partner of a consortium by only making economic contribution?	
Answer: It is expected that all partners of a network should be in position to provide services implementing the “ <i>no wrong concept</i> ” of this Call. In this context only a financial contribution would not be sufficient for an organization to be a partner of the new network.	

Reference number	360/IX/FPA/23022007
Question: Could you please tell us if budget shifts between partners of one consortium of one project [within call "ENT/CIP/07/0001"] are possible AFTER the project has started (after the grant agreement has been signed)?	
Answer: Yes, a budget transfer is possible. All adjustments must be notified in writing to the Commission and once the cumulated transfer exceeds 20% of the total eligible costs, the transfer is subject to approval by the Commission (see FPA Art. I.5.3.).	

Reference number	499/V.2/26032007
Question: Associated partners	

The consortium established for our project consists of several host organisations and will cooperate with some associated partners as well. The associate partners will coordinate some of their activities with the coordinator of our project or directly with some of host organisations and the main purpose of the involvement of those associated partners is better geographical coverage ensuring an enhanced dissemination of information and better awareness of project activities on a regional level. Of course, the associated partners do not require any project financing.

How shall the coordinator prove the proper legal relation with these associated partners in the project proposal? Is an agreement treating mutual cooperation between the coordinator and an associated partner sufficient? Is it necessary to include this agreement into the project proposal?

Answer: It is up to the project to decide what kind of cooperation will be sought with other regional stakeholders. In the proposal, a description of this cooperation, showing that the project is appropriately rooted in the regional support infrastructure for enterprises, can be included.

From the side of the Commission, this kind of cooperation will under no circumstances establish any legal or financial obligations towards these “associated partners” and that they are not entitled to use the network branding.

Please see also submission set section IV.4.2 and the section in the FAQ document on privileged partners (pages 6-7).

Reference number	516/V.2/26032007
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Question: We are considering making an application involving a cross-border consortium, covering at least 2 NUTS 1 regions in 2 different countries. Do we need to distinguish the activities and budgets in each of the regions and countries concerned?

Answer: Yes, all proposals will need to differentiate between the budget and services proposed for each NUTS1 territory in each country in order to avoid duplication of efforts and overlapping with other proposals. This means that applications will have to describe separately the budgets and activities associated with each of the regions in each of the countries concerned. Please refer to section V.3 (p.22) of the submission set.

Reference number	1026/V.2/InfoDay
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Question: Can an organisation in third country become a partner in a consortium co-ordinated in an EU member state?

Answer: No, this is not possible. The proposals should fulfil certain geographic requirements (see V.3 “Geographical coverage” in the submission set).

Reference number	1034/V.2/InfoDay
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Question: Co-operation with international organisations with intergovernmental agreements is welcome – what does this mean?

Answer: This refers to those international or intergovernmental organisations that might provide added value to the network. Examples of this kind are organisations with own technology transfer programs (European Space Agency, NATO, FAO). The sentence in the submission set opens the opportunity to co-operate with them in the provision of relevant services.

Reference number	1035/V.2/InfoDay
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Question: Ist die Bildung von Sub-netzen / eines regionalen Relaynetzes möglich?

Answer: Der Aufbau von Subnetzen von Projektpartnern eines Konsortiums ist im Rahmen des ‚no-wrong door‘-Konzepts denkbar.

Der Aufbau eines regionalen Relaynetzes mit externen Partnern ist möglich. Jedoch sind lediglich die Kosten der Projektpartner förderfähig soweit die sie zur Erbringung der Dienste für Firmen notwendig sind (Siehe eligible costs Part II.15 of the Framework Partnership Agreement)

Reference number	1039/V.2/InfoDay
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Question: Can two partners of the same consortium provide the same services within the same geographic area?

Answer: Yes, if it is justified for example by a very large size of the area or by differentiation of target groups.

Reference number	1040/V.2/InfoDay
Question: Can the coordinator of a consortium also provide services? Are the costs of coordination activities eligible?	
Answer: Yes. Co-ordination activities are eligible costs. Detailed arrangements have to be made by the consortium members.	

Reference number	1042/V.2/InfoDay
Question: Can proximity of services be assured by delegating activities to a branch office for an area different from the headquarter of the entity?	
Answer: Yes, this is possible, but applicants should make sure to demonstrate their technical capacity for service provision in the geographic area services are provided for (See also 1000/VI.1/22012007).	

Reference number	1045/V.2/InfoDay
Question: We intend to propose a cross-border consortium as our organisation has got branch offices in several countries. Is it possible to involve the branch offices as partners or shall the staff concerned be included in the payroll of the consortium leader?	
Answer: Both alternatives are possible depending on the legal status of the branch offices (see also Ref. (to be filled in) – network of chambers of commerce). But please be reminded of the following principles: Every proposal has to clearly define the geographic area served (Section V.3 of the submission set). All areas proposed have to be in countries eligible (Section V.1 and Ref 17/V.1/2212206). Only one grant will be awarded for any region (Ref. (to be filled in)) and your proposal would be regarded as competing proposal in every single region covered by your proposed project.	

Reference number	1047/V.2/InfoDay
Question: What role can a regional government play? How useful is the support of a regional government to a consortium / proposal?	
Answer: Regional governments are eligible as partner or co-ordinators. One major objective of the call is the regional integration of services to SMEs, regional governments may have a crucial role in facilitating this integration during the design and implementation of the project. Besides the grant awarded by the European Commission projects might need additional sources of financing – regional governments might provide these.	

Reference number	1084/V.2/InfoDay
Question: Gibt es über die Limitierung der (Inhouse) Consultantkosten (Personalkosten) hinaus eine Begrenzung des sub-contracting?	
Answer: Nein, es gibt keine weitere Limitierung. Bitte konsultieren sie die FAQ: 94/V.2/19012007	

Geographical coverage

Reference number	69/V.3/05012007
Question: Is there an upper limit for the budget per participating country based on the population which the consortium will cover? Will the EC contribution be given proportionally to successful candidates or be based on the countries/regions covered?	
Answer: In this regard, there is no pre-defined allocation of budget by Member State; the distribution will reflect to a certain extent the socio-economic criteria that correspond approximately to the total population in Member States. As mentioned under V.3 of the submission set, the Commission seeks a complete geographical coverage of the services in any geographic area. On the other hand, in order to achieve high-quality services, only proposals which fulfil the eligibility and selection criteria and have passed the thresholds for the award criteria (including budget and cost effectiveness) will be	

retained in the final ranking list, without duplication of services (see VI.3 of the submission set).

Reference number	70/V.3/05012007
Question:	Could the consortia be built up by organisations of one member state, or the idea is that several member States to build a consortium in order to disseminate results?
Answer:	Contrary to many other EU-programs and calls for proposals this call does not need international consortia to propose a project. As described in section V.3 of the submission set international consortia are eligible but are generally not encouraged if they do not intend to serve cross-border areas. The outcome of the call will be a network of organisations providing services in support of business and innovation. As described in section IV.4 of the submission set all selected projects have to fulfil certain “common requirements to implement a single network of excellence” that will ensure effective cooperation among all selected projects and partners in the network. In addition dissemination activities will be assisted by a network support structure.

Reference number	138/V.3/29012007
Question:	In the case of consortia where a national organisation would be working with contractors established locally, how does the Commission see the role of the national partner? How would the question of potential overlapping be addressed?
Answer:	A partner operating at national level should demonstrate that the services provided will differ or be additional to the ones provided by the local partners of the consortium.

Reference number	139/V.3/29012007
Question:	In case some regions / countries are not covered as a result of the call for proposals, when will the next steps be taken by the Commission for a new call? Could exceptional measures be considered to select the additional proposals / organisations fast? e.g. “fast track” application procedure? Different selection procedure? Limited range of activities to be provided?
Answer:	The Commission cannot provide a roadmap at this stage, as it first needs to assess the results of the current call for proposals. In principle, the Commission may consider to publish additional calls for proposals. These would be carried out on the basis of the standard requirements applicable for all calls for proposals. There exists no possibility to accept individual proposals apart in response of calls for proposals. This may mean that for a limited time the requested services in the submission set may not be available.

Reference number	1024/V.3/InfoDay
Question:	How will the Commission deal with proposals which have overlapping geographical coverage?
Answer:	Only one grant per region will be awarded as a result of evaluation procedure with the aim to achieve a full geographic coverage without duplication of activities in any geographic area.

Reference number	1037/V.3/InfoDay
Question:	Wie ist der Nachweis der Flächendeckung im vorgeschlagenen Gebiet zu führen?
Answer:	In den Abschnitten 1 und 4 der ‘Implementation Strategy‘ werden die notwendigen Informationen zu den beteiligten Partnern und ihren bestehen Aktivitäten gegeben.

Reference number	1043/V.3/InfoDay
Question:	Qu’est.-ce que ca veut dire précisément: Couverture complète sans duplication d’activités?
Answer:	The objective of this call for proposals is to establish a new network that makes available to SMEs wherever they are based, services that are easily accessible and of a very high quality. Within any geographic area the roles of partners in the network are clearly defined and duplication of activities, which would confuse clients, should be avoided.

Reference number	1044/V.3/InfoDay
Question:	La définition de la zone géographique couverte se base-t-elle sur le seul critère NUTS1 ou prend-elle en compte d’autres aspects tel que le niveau d’innovation de la zone concernée ?

Answer: It is expected that the typical size of geographical area covered by the member of the new single network will correspond to the NUTS1 nomenclature. In the cases NUTS1 does not correspond to domestic structures in the country other areas of similar size might be proposed (see V.3 of the submission set). "Domestic structures" in this respect are structures that facilitate the integration of the proposed services into existing service provision and their co-financing from third parties.

Reference number	1046/V.3/InfoDay
Question: Wären horizontale Konsortien ohne regionale / geographische Verankerung als Dienstleister des Netzwerks als vollwertige Partner denkbar?	
Answer: Priorität des Aufrufs ist die Integration von Diensten in ausgewiesenen Gebieten. Eine geografische Verankerung ist daher vorgesehen. Dies spiegelt sich unter anderem in den Kriterien zur Evaluierung der Vorschläge wieder. Der horizontale Austausch von Leistungen kann durch Beteiligung an mehreren Vorschlägen (Siehe auch Ref. 1000/VI.1/22012007) oder Dienstleistungsverträge erfolgen.	

Reference number	1086/V.3/InfoDay
Question: Wie können sich Länder mit hohen Personalkosten halten, wenn Budgets nach dem Indikator „Population“ allokiert wird? Wie will die Kommission hier gleich behandeln?	
Answer: Der Hinweis auf die Gesamtbevölkerung soll lediglich eine erste Vorstellung einer möglichen Aufteilung zu geben. Die Qualität eines Antrags ist für den endgültigen Bescheid des Finanzanteils seitens der Kommission. Bitte beachten Sie auch den Wortlaut des Textes: "While there is no pre-defined allocation of budget by Member State, the distribution will reflect to a certain extent the socio-economic criteria that correspond approximately to the total population in Member States."	

Reference number	1087/V.3/InfoDay
Question: Können nach Abschluss der Rahmenvereinbarung mit einem Konsortium Veränderungen im Konsortium erfolgen (Ausstiegs eines Partners, Neuaufnahme)?	
Answer: Artikel II.12 der Partnerschaftsrahmenvereinbarung erläutert die Bedingungen im Falle von Veränderungen innerhalb eines Konsortiums. Eine entsprechende Ergänzung der Partnerschaftsrahmenvereinbarung ist demnach notwendig.	

NUTS Classification

Reference number	33/V.3/22122006
Question: Is it possible that one proposal covers several NUTS1 regions or the whole national territory? Is a consortium integrating more than 20 members covering the whole member state territory eligible for the call?	
Answer: One proposal may cover several NUTS1 regions or the whole national territory. For most countries, in particular the larger member states, it is expected that the typical size of geographical area will more or less correspond to the NUTS 1 nomenclature. In theory, there is no limit to the number of consortium members, but the larger a consortium the more difficult becomes the coordination. In the proposals, arrangements for internal co-ordination of consortia should be explicit and will be an important aspect in selecting consortia. Please note that it is not possible to give any further information at this stage since no pre-screening of proposals is performed. Please examine carefully the submission set and in particular the evaluation procedure and the selection criteria.	

Reference number	35/V.3 /22122006
Question: Do the participants have to be at national level, e.g. an innovation service centre that has branches all over the country? Can the regional participants be partners in the consortium? The overall consortium must cover the whole national territory?	
Answer: The call explicitly leaves each region the flexibility to find the most appropriate structure. In practice, however, most regions will build consortia composed of different partners offering different	

services; and the consortium as a whole will cover the whole national territory, a NUTS 1 territory or a territory comparable to NUTS 1.

Reference number | 58/V.3/05012007

Question: Our region has 2 millions inhabitants; therefore it does not strictly qualify as “NUTS1”. The territory covered by the services offered by the potential applicant can cover the territory of this region. Will this call require the potential applicant to cover a larger territory?

Answer: As expressed in the sections on geographical coverage in the call text and the submission set, for most countries it is expected that the typical size of geographical area will more or less correspond to the NUTS1 nomenclature. Where the NUTS1 level does not correspond to domestic structures, alternative geographical area of comparable size may be considered. This is reflected also in the award criteria. A project covering only a smaller area is formally eligible and can be selected if the criteria in part VI.1 and VI.2 of the submission set are fulfilled, but this project has distinct disadvantages in the competitive award procedure. We are not able to provide any individualised advice for a specific territory, but seeking co-operation with any neighbouring region to jointly serve a larger geographic area is the natural approach. In all cases duplication of efforts and overlapping with other proposals must be avoided.

Reference number | 86/V.3/22012007

Question: NUTS classification is usually defined either by geographical dimension and/or by population; regarding to the present call for proposals my organisation would submit a proposal for a region whose population is higher than 3 million people (NUTS 1 level) and the geographical hierarchy places it in NUTS 2 level. Therefore my region is placed in NUTS2 level but its population is sufficient for NUTS1 level. Could we submit a proposal for a network to be structured on this territory only?

Answer: As expressed in the sections on the geographical coverage in the call text (V.3) and the submission set, for most countries it is expected that the size of the geographical area will more or less correspond to the NUTS1 nomenclature. Where the NUTS1 level does not correspond to domestic structures, an alternative geographical area of comparable size may be considered. This is reflected also in the award criteria. A project covering only a smaller area is formally eligible and can be selected if the criteria in VI.1 and VI.2 of the submission set are fulfilled, but this project has distinct disadvantages in the competitive award procedure. We are not able to provide any individualised advice for a specific territory, but seeking co-operation with any neighbouring region to jointly serve a larger geographic area is the natural approach. In all cases, duplication of efforts and overlapping with other projects must be avoided.

Reference number | 114/V.3/29012007

Question: My country is a NUTS I Region and it has 8 NUTS II regions. I want to know if it is eligible an application submitted by a consortium from my country which will cover a NUTS II region and not the entire national territory.

Answer: As expressed in the Section V.3 of the Submission Set for most countries it is expected that the typical size of geographical coverage will more or less correspond to the NUTS 1 nomenclature. Where the NUTS1 level does not correspond to domestic structures, alternative geographical area of comparable size may be considered. This is reflected also in the award criteria. A project covering only a smaller area is formally eligible and can be selected if the criteria in part VI.1 and VI.2 of the Submission Set are fulfilled, but this project has distinct disadvantages in the competitive award procedure. We are not able to provide any individualised advice for a specific territory, but seeking co-operation with any neighbouring region to jointly serve a larger geographical area is the natural approach. In all cases duplication of efforts and overlapping with other proposals must be avoided.

Reference number | 240/V.3/02022007

Question: What areas of Turkey can be considered as a NUT 1 unit?

Answer: In the case of Turkey’s geographical areas, a NUTS classification will have to be considered according to the Eurostat services. Please refer to:

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/eurostat/ramon/nuts/codelist_en.cfm?list=cec

Reference number	276/V.3/09022007
Question: Ist es möglich, ein Konsortium als Gesamtnetzwerk für acht benachbarte EU-Länder zu bilden, das von einer internationalen Wirtschaftsorganisation koordiniert wird und auf NUTS 1 Ebene Service-Subnetzwerke entwickelt?	
Answer: Ziel des Aufrufes ist die Bildung eines Netzwerkes von Projekten auf NUTS1-Ebene um die Integration mit bestehenden Diensten für KMU zu ermöglichen. Internationale Partnerschaften sind für Projektvorschläge nicht nötig, es gibt jedoch keine Maximalgröße eines Konsortiums. Bitte beachten Sie jedoch Frage 1000 zur Teilnahme eines Partners in konkurrierenden Vorschlägen für eine Region.	

Reference number	277-278/V.3/09022007
Question: Können rund 20 Service-Netzwerke mit jeweils 3 – 5 Service-Partner für 20 NUTS 1 Regionen in einem großen Projekt gebündelt werden? Können bei Koordination durch eine Organisation in einem großen Projekt rund 20 Service-Netzwerke (jeweils 1 Netzwerk für 1 NUTS 1 Ebene) einbezogen werden, wenn für jedes dieser rund 20 Netzwerke nur ein Projekt-Partner als zentrale Servicestelle fungiert?	
Answer: Die Koordination der Zusammenarbeit der Projekte und Animation des Netzwerkes durch gemeinsame Datenbanken, Veranstaltungen und Arbeitsgruppen wird durch die Europäische Kommission bzw. ein von ihr beauftragtes Sekretariat oder Agentur durchgeführt.	

Reference number	1031/V.3/InfoDay
Question: Some countries intending to participate don't have a NUTS classification – what shall applicants do?	
Answer: Where the NUTS1 level does not correspond to domestic structures, alternative geographical area of comparable size or proposals covering the whole country may be considered.	

Reference number	1036/V.3/InfoDay
Question: Do partners have to be active on NUTS2 level if the proposal covers a NUTS1 territory? IS NUTS2 the minimum expected size of partner's geographical coverage?	
Answer: Such a geographically based approach is one possibility to achieve proximity of services to SMEs. But other alternatives may exist. In particular more specialised services that require specific know-how might only be offered by one qualified partner in the consortium that serves the target group in the whole NUTS1 territory. There is no minimum geographic size of a partner's coverage defined. But the consortium shall assure accessibility and proximity of services in the whole area proposed to be covered.	

Reference number	1041/V.3/InfoDay
Question: As NUTS 1 is the geographical reference, how does a proposal covering a NUTS1 area and one or several NUTS2 areas have to be structured in terms of action plan and financial proposal?	
Answer: In the 'implementation strategy' the area to be served has to be clearly defined. .	

Use of specialised external experts

For more information please also refer to the section on sub-contracting in the questions on the framework partnership agreement

Reference number	162/V.5/02022007
Question: The cost for inviting experts from abroad (not part-time employees or experts with a particular agreement with the host organisation) to give seminars under module c on how to write successful proposals etc (fee of the expert for the training, ticket, daily allowance) should be indicated as a total under the cost category "events" or should it be split up in the cost categories "travel &	

subsistence”, “in-house consultants” and “other costs”?	
Answer: The reimbursement for experts depends on the kind of invoicing. For example, if the external experts charge their contribution as a whole, including personnel costs, fees, travel etc., it would be regarded as sub-contracting of an expert under Art. II.15.2.3.a of the Framework Partnership Agreement. If, for instance the external speaker is invited to attend an event but does not receive a fee or another reimbursement of his personnel costs, it falls under events (FPA Art. II.15.2.3.c).	
Please note that travel and subsistence costs under Art. II.15.2.2 of the FPA are only for personnel of the host organisation.	

Reference number	1124/V.5/InfoDay
Question: Many public sector organisations have out-sourced some of their services to third party service providers (as described in page 146 of the Financial / Regulations for proposals for Framework Programme.	
1) How will such third party organisations –which are not sub-contractors – be regarded for both eligibility and financial contribution?	
2) If the answer is to regard as “in-house consultants” than is the 20% in relation to time or to cost?	
Answer:	
1) In order not to be considered as third parties they must enter the consortium as partners.	
2) 20% of in house and external consultants in terms of total eligible costs.	

VI. Evaluation procedure

General questions

Reference number	22/VI/05012007
Question: Que signifie exactement : " Veuillez noter qu'un partenaire ne peut bénéficier que d'une seule subvention au titre du budget pour une même action." (page 3 du call) ?	
Answer: Conformément à l'Art. 111 du Règlement Financier des Communautés européennes, un bénéficiaire ne peut recevoir qu'une seule subvention communautaire pour le financement d'une même action.	

Reference number	145/VI/29012007
Question: Will Member States be involved in the evaluation process? If yes when and how?	
Answer: Member states will not be involved in the evaluation process. The evaluation is based on the standard rules applicable to all Calls for proposals. The EIP committee will be informed about the result of this call.	

Reference number	375/VI/16032007
Question:	
What parts of the proposal will be at the evaluators' disposal? The background of this questions is the fear, that the evaluators might get an insight into individual personal costs of staff members. This would collide with the data protection law of our country.	
Answer: The Commission will organise a confidential evaluation for which evaluation experts have to sign a confidentiality agreement in full respect of the relevant procedures, rules and regulations. Furthermore the Commission is fully compliant with the legal framework of Personal Data Protection – see Regulation (EC) 45/2001 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.	

Reference number	1000/VI/22012007
Question: Is it possible to be a partner in more than one proposal with different geographic areas covered?	

Answer: The sentence “Applicants, including all individual partners within a consortium, can only be part of one proposal (V.I)” has to be read together with the sentence in the second paragraph of section VI “Proposals will be grouped according to NUTS1 areas (or comparable geographic areas) and will be evaluated with the other competing bids”. Taken together, no organisation as co-ordinator or partner can participate in more than one proposal competing for any particular NUTS1 (or comparable geographic area) or part thereof.

Examples:

An organisation cannot be partner or co-ordinator in two proposals, the first covering Area A, the second covering Area B and Area A or a part of Area A. The two proposals are competing in Area A. Both proposals are not eligible.

An organisation can be partner in two proposals, the first covering Area A and the second covering Area B. The two proposals are not competing with respect to proposed geographic coverage.

Reference number	1050/VI/InfoDay
Question: How will you select independent experts?	
Answer: The experts will be selected from the FP7–CIP database on the basis of their SME and innovation related experience and qualifications. Individuals working for an organisation that submits a proposal as part of a consortium or are otherwise involved in the preparation of a proposal will not be retained on the expert list, in order to avoid any conflicts of interest.	

Reference number	1110/VI/InfoDay
Question: Les candidats sont admis à participer seulement s'ils n'ont pas un but lucratif et/ou n'ont pas un but immédiat commercial?	
Answer: Les candidats qui ont un but lucratif peuvent participer, mais comme il est expliqué dans le chapitre VI.1 du submission set, uniquement les demandes pour des projets qui sont non-lucratifs ou n'ont pas de but commercial immédiat sont éligibles. Selon Art. 109 du règlement financier des Communautés européennes, les subventions ne peuvent pas avoir comme but de générer du profit pour le bénéficiaire. (voir aussi question 62/VI.1/05012007)	

Eligibility of organisations

Reference number	2/VI.1/15122006
Question: Is a European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG) eligible as sole partner for the call, meaning that the Commission will officially recognize one single legal entity being an EEIG and not the members of this EEIG separately?	
Answer: An EEIG has full and independent legal capacity which differentiates it from purely contractual forms of cooperation. The Council Regulation (EEC) No 2137/85 of 25 July 1985 on the European Economic Interest Grouping establishes the principle that the members of a grouping have unlimited joint and several liability for its debts. Furthermore the Regulation encourages the participation of EEIGs in European programs.	
As for any independent legal body Eligibility and Financial & Technical capacity of EEIG would be checked in the evaluation process for this body.	
As an EEIG must necessarily comprise at least two partners from two different Member States, it is inherently transnational, which offers an advantage in those programs that require international project consortia. In that case, members of an EEIG are not required to submit individual proposals in parallel with that made by the grouping itself (see Communication from the Commission OJ C 285 20/09/1997, p. 17-24).	
However, the call for Services in Support of Business and Innovation, as described in the submission set, focuses on regional integration of support services in clearly specified geographic areas. This does not require international partnership arrangements. For an EEIG it would be carefully evaluated if the foreign partners have the capacity to provide services in the region in question (see in particular submission set section V.3 and III.1).	

Reference number	31/VI.1/22122006
Question: Can a public body be admitted as an applicant for the call for proposals "Services in support of business and innovation"?	
Answer: Yes, a public body can be an applicant to provide the services either as a single organisation or as a member of a consortium comprising a group of organisations.	

Reference number	39/VI.1/22122006
Question: Who can be the submitting body; can it be a city or a commune?	
Answer: Any legal entity can be the submitting body or be a partner in one proposal (see section VI.1). With specific regards to cities and communes it should be emphasised that the objective of the call is to provide integrated services in support for business and innovation in geographic areas covering the whole national territory, a NUTS 1 territory or a territory comparable to NUTS 1 (see V.3 submission set) . To ensure this aspect a city or commune not only would likely need partners for the proposal but should also have to provide services itself.	

Reference number	40-41/VI.1/22122006
Question: Can for example a headhunting enterprise be part of the Consortium?/ Does an advisory enterprise be a part of the Consortium?	
Answer: They are eligible if they fulfil the requirements described in section VI.1 Eligibility. Please note that only applications for projects that are strictly non-profit and/or whose immediate objective is non-commercial shall be eligible. Furthermore, the applicants have to demonstrate their technical capacity and their ability to provide the services for the selection step of the evaluation procedure. Please check carefully section VI.2, General criteria for offering all services.	

Reference number	59/VI.1/05012007
Question: Can a BIC (European Business Innovation Centre) be an applicant, in partnership with local public administration (Regional level)?	
Answer: Any legal entity can be the submitting body or be a partner in one proposal (see submission set sections V.2 and VI.1). Please keep in mind that the objective of the call is to provide integrated services in support for business and innovation in geographic areas covering the whole national territory, a NUTS 1 territory or a territory comparable to NUTS 1 (see V.3 submission set). This means that the selection of projects will be based on the applicants' financial and technical capacity to implement the proposed project (see section VI. of the submission set).	

Reference number	60/VI.1/05012007
Question: Are municipal companies or local public companies eligible for submitting a project proposal for Call for Proposals 2006 - CIP "Services in support for business and innovation"?	
Answer: Any legal entity can be the submitting body or be a partner in one proposal (see submission set sections V.2 and VI.1), thus a public body can be an applicant. Please keep in mind that the objective of the call is to provide integrated services in support for business and innovation in geographic areas covering the whole national territory, a NUTS 1 territory or a territory comparable to NUTS 1 (see V.3 submission set). This means that the selection of projects will be based on the applicants' financial and technical capacity to implement the proposed project (see section VI. of the submission set).	

Reference number	62/VI.1/05012007
Question: Can a consortium include non-profit organisations and normal/profit-making companies?	
Yes, it is possible. However, please note that in accordance with section VI.1 of the submission set, only applications for projects that are strictly non-profit-making and/or whose immediate objective is non-commercial shall be eligible. According to Art. 109 of the Financial Regulation of the European Union grants may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit for the beneficiary.	

Reference number	63/VI.1/05012007
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Question: Is there a minimum number of employees for an organisation required or is it possible to work with or gain expertise from the members of a society or non governmental organisation?	
Answer: Section VI.2 of the submission set describes the financial and technical capacities organisations have to demonstrate during the selection step of the evaluation procedure. There is no minimum number of employees required, however “the team responsible for the project must have adequate professional qualifications and experience” and “applicants must be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the project”. This requires a certain basic infrastructure and skills in the administration of an organisation / society. Nevertheless it is possible to draw on the expertise of the society’s members for the provision of services if proper arrangements for project management and accounting are made. In this context please be aware that the share of costs for subcontracting consultants is limited (see part B of the framework partnership agreement with multiple partners).	
Reference number	77/VI.1/22012007
Question: Is a Science and Technology Park structured as a no-profit private company eligible to be partner of the Consortium?	
Answer: According to the V.I Evaluation Procedure, [section 1. Eligibility] a Science and Technology Park can be eligible to be partner of a consortium.	
Reference number	136/VI.1/02022007
Question: We are planning to propose the creation a national network of relays with the actual IRC and EIC partners as entry points; however this network would involve a very large number of members resulting in a heavy burden for the management of the administrative issues.	
Is it possible to create an “Economic Interest Group” with the purpose of participating in this European network that would act as legal representative of the Chambers of Commerce and Entrepreneurial Associations as well as for the Industrial Liaison Offices to be involved? This would simplify the administrative process considerably and would open the possibility to create a distributed and larger number of entry points.	
This is the legal French definition of an EIG, similar to the corresponding in the Portuguese Law: Economic interest group is a grouping of pre-existing firms which goal is to “facilitate or develop the economic activity of its members and to improve or increase the results of this activity. The aim is not to make profits for the grouping”. (<i>Art. L 251-1 (2) of the Commercial Code</i>) The economic interest group could thus be termed an intermediary between company and association. Registration at the register of commerce and companies (“RCS”) shall grant the legal personality to the economic interest group. http://www.greffe-tc-paris.fr/anglais/takeover/economic_interest_group.htm	
Answer: The creation of an Economic Interest Group to deliver the project is possible. To prove the financial capacity of the new group, the applicants should provide detailed information on the arrangements made between the EIG’s shareholders in order to ensure the operation of the newly founded group. In addition major shareholders shall provide information on their latest approved accounts and they might be asked to provide a financial guarantee for the EIG.	
Reference number	181/VI.1/02022007
Question: our mother company is a kind of holding structure having several independent companies (GMBH) underneath. One company is located in northern Germany, one other in the south; both want to participate in consortia of their regions (independent consortia). The companies are associated to each other through the Holding structure. Is it possible and eligible to apply for both companies? What are the roles to follow in that respect?	
Answer: Yes, each of these GmbH can participate in proposals in different regions, as long as there is no duplication of efforts or overlapping with other proposals.	
Reference number	192/VI.1/02022007
Question: I want to learn if Chamber of Commerce from a candidate country is eligible for the call “Services in support for business and innovation”. Who may I contact for further information?	

Answer: For this call organisations established in candidate countries are invited to apply on the same conditions as EU-member states. Proposals received covering geographic areas in these countries are evaluated on the same conditions. However the specific grant agreement for an accepted project can only be signed after the signature of a bilateral agreement between this country and the European Union on the participation in the CIP. (See section V.1 of the submission set).

Reference number	252/VI/09022007
Question: Is it possible to submit a proposal with a consortium not established completely?	
Answer: From an operational standpoint, all partners of a consortium have to be identified when a proposal is submitted. From a legal standpoint, each partner/ host organisation has to be established under national laws, but not necessarily the consortium.	

Reference number	426/V.4/16032007
Question: - Is there a minimum percentage of full time equivalent to respect for each employee dedicating only a part of his time to the provision of business support services specified in the call ? - If the answer is no, could you give us any recommendable minimum percentage of full time equivalent for each employee dedicating only a part of his time to the provision of business support services specified in the call? - Is there any standard (minimum or maximum) to respect for the number of full time equivalent employees dedicating to the provision of business support services specified in the call ? -If the answer is no, could you give us any recommendable standard (minimum or maximum) to respect for the number of full time equivalent employees dedicating to the provision of business support services specified in the call ?	
Answer: There is no general answer for this. It depends on your organisation and your national legislation what is regarded as fulltime employment. - As a consequence the Commission cannot recommend any minimum percentage of fulltime equivalent. - There is no standard/maximum/minimum of fulltime employees for the provision of services. This depends on the planning and structure of your proposal and consortium – see section V.4 and VI.2 of the Submission set.	

Reference number	1100/VI.1/InfoDay
Question: Has the consortium of applicants, an obligation to formalise under the national law its establishment (before or after signature of FPA or SA)?	
Answer: Each partner/ host organisation has to be established under national laws, but not necessarily the consortium.	

Reference number	1104/VI.1/InfoDay VI.1
Question: What will be the approach to existing EICs in case consortium partners intend to include the existing EIC, but without the current host? Involving the current centre aims to secure the investments made in equipment and training of the staff, as well as the experience	
Answer: Yes. Any legal entity can apply , as it is described in the eligibility, selection and award criteria.	

Selection: Financial and technical capacity

Reference number	30/VI.2/22122006
Question: The limit of 500.000 Euros and the issuing of an audit certificate do not apply to the overall budget of the consortium but on an individual basis (if each partner requests more than 500.000 Euros for EC grant then an audit report is essential). Is this correct?	
Answer: Where the proposed amount requested from the Commission exceeds 500 000€ per host	

organisation, an audit report certifying the most recent available yearly accounts must be provided before the conclusion of the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA). The threshold concerning the audit report is applicable at the level of individual host organisations and not at the consortium level. However, this threshold does not necessarily apply for the lifetime of the FPA and the specific grant agreements themselves, since the conditions under which audit certificates will be required will be determined in the specific grant agreements.

Reference number	238/VI.2/02022007
Question: How many proposals will be financed and what will be the main criteria?	
Answer: There are not a predefined number of proposals that will eventually be awarded. The selection will be based on the applicants' financial and technical capacity to complete the proposed project. Please check Section VI.2 [Selection] of the Submission Set.	

Reference number	245/VI.2/09022007
Question: In the submission set, section VI. 2., under heading "Financial capacity" it is said that an audit report has to be provided where the proposed amount requested from the Commission exceeds € 500.000 per host organisation. Does this mean that in a consortium each host organisation has to provide an audit report and if so, does the co-ordinator has to provide an additional audit report for the consolidated amounts?	
Answer: The audit is required for every individual applicant organisation that requests a Community contribution exceeding 500.000€ A consolidated audit report is not required at consortium level.	

Reference number	343/VI.2/23022007
Question: Concerning the annual budget – our organisation will have an audited budget accepted by the board committee and the owner (Ministry) only at the end of May. Is it possible to provide the 2004-2005 audited budget in that case?	
Answer: Yes. The audited budget should refer to the closed accounts of the last full two financial years (see also Art. 173.II of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation).	

Reference number	1025/VI.2/InfoDay
Question: À propos de la capacité technique: L'avant-dernière présentation (« How will the proposals be evaluated? Eligibility and selection? ») disait que pour être éligible au module a il faut prouver une expérience dans plusieurs secteurs. Mais ça concerne le consortium ou chaque organisation en faisant partie doit être « expert » dans plusieurs secteurs ?	
Answer: Le consortium dans son ensemble, et non chaque partenaire de manière individuelle, doit disposer de l'expérience prévue dans la section VI du submission set. Le consortium en entier doit démontrer la réalisation du « no-wrong-door concept », la proximité avec les PME et la capacité de prendre en compte la problématique régionale spécifique et européenne. Voir aussi 63/V.4/05012007.	

Reference number	1038/VI.2/InfoDay
Question: How applicants prove their ability to provide services in the whole proposed area to be covered?	
Answer: In section 1 and 4 of the 'Implementation Strategy' you are asked to provide information on the partners included in the network and their existing activities.	

Reference number	1052/VI.2/InfoDay
Question: In order to prepare a proposal with an organisation that has refused/has been refused to be an EIC previously, could this fact be a negative point in the evaluation process?	
Answer: The past performance for current IRCs and EICs does not affect the evaluation and the selection. Only the quality of the proposals submitted and the conformity to the specifications and objectives of the call will be relevant. See also question 52/II.2/05012007.	

Reference number	1053/VI.2/InfoDay
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Question: How does past performance as an IRC or EIC affect the selection?	
Answer: The past performance for current IRCs and EICs does not affect the evaluation and the selection. Only the quality of the proposals submitted and the conformity to the specifications and objectives of the call will be relevant. See also question 52/II.2/05012007.	

Reference number	1062/VI.2/InfoDay
Question: Are CVs of external consultants required to be enclosed together with the others?	
Answer: In general, the submission of CVs is only mandatory for host organisation staff. However, the inclusion of external staff CVs is possible. However, please be reminded that contracting external consultants is only possible applying the appropriate tendering regulations. Having this in mind it is normally impossible to name and consequently provide CVs of external consultants during the application procedure.	

Reference number	1063/VI.2/InfoDay
Question: Do CVs of non-core staff contributing to the services need to be submitted?	
Answer: In general, the submission of CVs is only mandatory for the host organisations' core staff dedicating most or all of their time to the provision of business support services specified in the call (see submission set section V.4). However, the inclusion of additional staff CVs is possible.	

Reference number	1064/VI.2/InfoDay
Question: What type of information needs to be included on CVs – should it really concentrate on qualifications and experience?	
Answer: Yes, it must show that the members of the team responsible for the project have adequate professional qualifications and experience (see submission set section VI.2 – Technical capacity).	

Reference number	1084/VI.2/InfoDay
Question: Can you tell us an example of financial guarantee for the case of 2 host structures with a 100.000 €budget?	
Answer: There is not a prefixed amount for a financial guarantee since this can have different sources, it can be a bank guarantee, a financial guarantee from another company etc. In case a financial guarantee is required from a particular partner, the coordinator will arrange the delivery of the guarantee to the Commission.	

Reference number	1088/VI.2/InfoDay
Question: As financial year ends on 15 th of April, can balance sheets & profit/loss accounts for 2004 and 2005 be submitted?	
Answer: Balance sheets and profit & loss sheets for 2004 and 2005 can be provided if these documents are not yet available for the year 2006.	

Reference number	1098/VI.2/InfoDay
Question: When co-financing per partner is over 500.000€ there should be an audit. For which period?	
Answer: For the last 2 available year accounts.	

Reference number	1103/VI.2/InfoDay
Question: The balance sheets / profit and loss accounts are official documents. How shall we verify their authenticity? Only by signing and stamping them or by submitting the original documents too?	
Answer: Applicants can submit their accounts and also fill in the relevant submission forms. If they have not sent their accounts in the case they are selected they will be requested to do before the signature of the contact.	

Reference number	1121/VI.2/InfoDay
Question: Quand la subvention excède 500.000 Euro pour un partenaire, un rapport d'audit est	

obligatoire. S'agit-t-il d'une période de un an ou est-ce pour la période 2008-2010?	
Answer: En ce qui concerne l'évaluation de la capacité financière, le montant de 500.000 Euro pour un partenaire concerne la contribution Communautaire demandée qui est applicable sur la période de 3 ans (2008-2010). Par contre le rapport d'audit demandé concerne les comptes annuels des deux dernières années qui doivent être soumis avec la proposition (Article 9, Call for proposals, Financial Capacity).	

Reference number	1111/VI.2/InfoDay
Question: Concernant les bilans financières des soumissionnaires, s'agit-t-il des 2 années 2005 et 2006 ou 2004 et 2005? Quelle seraient les conséquences si un ou plusieurs partenaires d'un consortium présentent un bilan négatif (perte)?	
Answer: Il s'agit des bilans pour les deux dernières années comptables qui sont clôturées. Comme indiqué dans le submission set chapitre VI.2, les soumissionnaires doivent démontrer qu'ils disposent de ressources financières suffisantes pour assurer la mise en œuvre du projet mais également pour assurer une partie de son financement. Le comité d'évaluation jugera cette capacité financière sur base du dossier soumis.	

Reference number	1112/VI.2/InfoDay
Question: Est-ce qu'un rapport d'audit est nécessaire pour un partenaire demandant une subvention supérieure à 500 000 Euro. Est-ce que ce chiffre correspond à la subvention demandée pour 1 année ou l'ensemble de la période (3 ans)?	
Answer: Oui, absolument (point VI.2 Selection / capacité financière). En ce qui concerne la deuxième question, le montant de 500.000 Euro pour un partenaire est applicable sur la période de 3 ans (2008-2010).	

Reference number	1114/VI.2/InfoDay
Question: Est-ce que le financement d'un 'Internal Management Tool' est prévu par la Commission ou par la future agence exécutive?	
Answer: La phase de sélection de la procédure d'évaluation (voir section VI.2 du manuel de soumission) requiert des candidats qu'ils disposent d'une capacité opérationnelle (technique et de gestion) afin de mettre en œuvre le projet. Cette capacité inclut l'achat et l'utilisation d'un éventuel 'Internal Management Tool' (ou de tout autre équipement) dont l'amortissement est généralement considéré éligible au titre de coût indirect au projet. Toutefois, dans des cas très spécifiques où l'achat d'un tel outil se justifierait exclusivement et strictement pour la gestion du projet, le coût correspondant pourra être considéré direct et être enregistré sous la catégorie 'Autre coût spécifique'. De tels achats peuvent déjà figurer dans la proposition mais devront, après la signature de la convention cadre de partenariat (et de la première convention spécifique) et avant d'être réalisés être soumis à l'approbation préalable de la Commission par l'envoi d'une demande écrite accompagnée de tous les documents détaillés nécessaires (voir modèle de convention cadre de partenariat, Article II.15.2.4).	

Reference number	1115/VI.2/InfoDay
Question: La justification de la capacité financière dont les organismes publics sont exclus, est-elle applicable aux chambres de commerce là où elles sont des organisations de droit public?	
Answer: Oui puisque nous parlons bien d'organismes publics (le reste n'est plus utile) Dans la mesure qu'une chambre de commerce appartient dans son intégralité à un organisme public, les règles sont d'application comme si elle est un organisme public. (Référence VI.2 dans le Submission set, appel à propositions).	

Award

Reference number	103/VI.3/22012007
Question: One of the award criteria (aspect of relevance) is "... to what extent do the proposed	

integrated service realise complementarities and synergies with existing business support services in the geographical area" (SS, page 28).

What is meant by this?

Answer: Business and innovation support services are offered everywhere by organisations on national, regional and local level. The future network shall not establish a parallel structure to existing services, but complement them with a European aspect to strengthen European competitiveness and better realise the potentials of the Common Market.

Reference number | 1048/VI.3/InfoDay

Question: Could you please explain more about activities or services that you believe would contribute to quality?

Answer: For the quality of the proposed services, please check the award criteria under submission set section VI.3. The quality criterion include elements such as overall consistency with the objectives of the call and the expected results, methodologies applied to provide the services, self-evaluation and quality control mechanisms and in how far the services are innovative. The objective of this call for proposals is to create a single network providing services of highest quality, based on the excellence and professionalism of network partners.

Reference number | 1049/VI.3/InfoDay

Question: Is the even distribution of services evaluated only based on financial terms? Ex. 150-150 mill. € for modules A/B or is there a connection to performance indicators?

Answer: The equal distribution between modules A and B is primarily based on the need for the proposal as a whole, to provide the proposed integrated services in the entire geographical area in a balanced and efficient manner. See submission set VI.3 – Award criteria. See also question 101/IV.1/22012007.

Reference number | 1051/VI.3/InfoDay

Question: What is exactly meant by the award criterion “to what extent do the proposed integrated services realise complementarities and synergies with existing business support services in the geographical area”?

Answer: This refers to cooperation with existing local/national/European/international services and networks.

VII. Submission of proposals

Reference number | 21/VII/05012007

Question: Dans quelle langue peut – on répondre au call?
In which language can the proposals for the call be written?

Answer: Les propositions peuvent être présentées dans toutes les langues officielles de l’UE, mais il est conseillé d'utiliser une des langues de travail de la Commission européenne (Allemand, Anglais, Français) dans l'optique de faciliter le travail du comité d'évaluation.
The proposals can be submitted in any official language of the EU, but it is recommended to use one of the working languages of the European Commission (English, French, German) in order to facilitate the work of the evaluation committee.

Reference number | 28/VII/22122006

Question: The co-financing form should be signed by the partners or from the organisations that finance each partner? Who should sign the form, the Institute which receives the grant and will be the member of the consortium or the Ministry which finances the Institute?

Answer: The co-financing statement form should be signed for each consortium partner by an authorised representative of the respective co-financing organisation. The co-financing organisation can be a third party; this notion also includes the host organisation itself. In some cases, it can occur that several organisations jointly provide the co-financing for one partner; in this case all co-financing

organisations have to sign and submit the co-financing statement form.	
Reference number	73/VII/22012007
Question: What language should be used to complete the administrative forms?	
Answer: The administrative forms should be filled in English.	
Reference number	74/VII/22012007
Question: Since the proposal will be electronically submitted, the requested forms "Host Organisation Profile", "Exclusion Form" and "Co-financing Statement Form", that should be manually signed, how are they provided? Or, should these forms be provided after the proposal evaluation?	
Answer: You will have to scan the forms and attach them to the proposal. The electronic submission tool will be functioning from the 12 February at the latest. Please check the call website regularly. There you will also find the information how to use the tool.	
Reference number	122/VII/02022007
Question: Does the Commission allow electronic signature of letters and documents between partners?	
Answer: No, the Commission system does currently not allow electronic signatures.	
Reference number	316/VII/19022007
Question: Dans le FAQ, la réponse à la question réf 73/VII/22012007 souligne que les "administrative forms" doivent être en Anglais. Se réfère-t-on aux documents de la partie A "Administrative forms" uniquement ou également aux formulaires administratifs de la partie B "full proposal". Est-ce que les CV sont considérés comme des formulaires administratifs?	
Answer: Non, on se réfère uniquement aux documents A1, A2, A3. Non, des CV ne sont pas considérés comme des formulaires administratifs.	
Reference number	323/VII/19022007
Questions: How long the service module descriptions should be?	
Answer: It is necessary to describe the action itself in sufficient detail so as it can be well and fairly evaluated, responding to the points listed in the Submission set, Annex 2, Part B, 2 (Preliminary Work Programme). There is no pre-defined format for the length of describing the modules.	
Reference number	394/IX/19032007
Question: Each organisation has to submit the following items for "proof of registration and management board members":	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Official registration certificate 2. Extract of Articles of association 3. List of directors/executive board members 	
As far as items 1 & 2, they are usually legal documents with a large number of pages (of about 50 pages in many occasions). A pdf file including the above volume of information will definitely exceed 10 MB and the proposal has not yet been included.	
Could it be sufficient to upload only the front page of items 1 & 2 listed above (official registration certificate and extracts of Articles of association) for the scope of identifying and proofing the status of the partner?	
Answer: According to Art. Implementing Rule 173 (Art. 114 of the Financial Regulation) under the Financial Regulations of the European Communities, the applicants must show that they exist as a legal person. According to IR 173.1, applications shall be made on the form distributed by the authorising officers responsible and in accordance with the criteria laid down in the basic act and the call for proposals. Therefore, it will not be sufficient only to send the cover page since this will not be sufficient for the Commission to establish the legal status, since the document structure varies between legal status' and between Member States.	

Please keep in mind that the EPSS allows technically to upload this kind of documents as annexes to part B. Each annex also can have max. 10 MB).

Reference number | 425/IX/16032007

Question: In the EPSS system, the name of coordinator should be the name of the society and not the name of the contact person. How can we change it?

Answer: Q1: It is not possible to change it in the system, but this does not have any effect on the outcome in the submission forms. The Commission will have all the information needed in the forms.

Reference number | 433/IX/14032007

Question: What do you mean with "2000 characters"? Do you mean individual letters? Are the spaces of the sentences also characters or not?

Answer: This means individual letters and spaces.

Reference number | 431b/IX/16032007

Question: Est-ce que la structure sur la rubrique IV– 1. 1.1.-1.7.) « Services in support of business and innovation » a été indiquée à titre indicatif ou est-ce qu'il faut respecter exactement les mêmes headlines ?

Answer: For the structure of the proposal, please see section IX – Annex 2 – Part B Full proposal of the Submission Set.

Reference number | 431d/IX/16032007

Question: Au niveau du volet concernant les panels, est-ce que les points 1.4 et 1.5 doivent par force être traités de manière séparée ou est-ce que les partenaires concernés peuvent regrouper le thème 1.4 et 1.5 en un seul volet ?

Answer: Si vous les traitez de manière regroupée, ils doivent tout de même pouvoir répondre aux actions proposées sous les points 1.4 et 1.5 mentionnés dans l'appel.

Reference number | 431f/IX/16032007

Question: Dans le cadre de la rubrique 4.2 "Common requirement description", est-ce qu'il faut aussi y décrire les activités communes entreprises par tous les partenaires impliqués et qui figureront dès lors dans le tableau budgétaire "Common services - consolidated"?

Answer: Yes.

Reference number | 440/IX/19032007

Question: As stated in your answer to question 73/VII/22012007, the administrative forms should be filled in English (i.e. A/1, A/2, A/3). I would like know what are the language requirements concerning compulsory administrative forms mentioned in Annex 2, point 4, in the Submission set? In particular, must the proof of registration and management board members (4.2) be translated in English? Furthermore, is it correct that the proof of registration and management board members is not required from a public body?

Answer:

- No, the proof of registration and management board members do not have to be translated. The forms A1, A2, A3 have to be filled in in English.
- Yes, all host organisations/partners must submit these forms (see submission set Annex 2 no 4).

Reference number | 496/other/26032007

Question: on page 48 of the Submission set the following 3 documents are requested to be attached to the proposal;

- o Official registration certificate;
- o Extract of Articles of association/Statutes;
- o List of directors/executive board members (names and forenames, titles or positions in the applicant host organisation).

These documents are normally in the language of the country, specifically in Hebrew in our case. Can

they be submitted in their original language?

Answer: Only documents in one of the official EU languages can be submitted. For all others, a translation or a summary in English must be submitted.

Reference number | 1059/VII/InfoDay

Question: Will a proposal be an integrated one or a compilation of the proposals of all the co-partners, e.g. common methodology, quality measuring tools, etc.

Answer: The integration of services is one of the most important objectives of this call for proposals. The proposal should be a common approach, but at the same time be elaborated as proposed in Annex 2. Annex 2 indicates what kind of information must be given for each partner or for the consortium as a whole.

Reference number | 1060/VII/InfoDay

Question: The staffing table asks for individual hourly rates and individual costs. I understand that this information has to be made available for reporting/auditing purposes. Why for the proposal? In our country we have strict laws on data protection – income belongs to the individual data which are protected. The proposal will be seen by the different consortia members thus these individual data are no longer protected. Will it be permitted to leave out the “individual hourly rate” which is a direct link to income or will it be allowed to work with average hourly rates”.

Answer: No, it is not allowed to use average rates or to omit the “individual hourly rate”. However, the EPSS will secure that the consortium partners cannot have access to the financial and other data of the other partners. An exception is necessarily the coordinator since he is responsible for the submission of the proposal as a whole. In this case, it might be recommendable to set up a confidentiality agreement with the coordinator. In the evaluation process, evaluation experts have to sign a confidentiality agreement. Please see also Art. II.15 of the Framework Partnership Agreement as well as question 79/IX/22012007.

Reference number | 1061/VII/InfoDay

Question: Can proposals be submitted with an electronic/digital signature?

Answer: No, the Commission system does currently not allow electronic signatures.

Reference number | 1108/VII/InfoDay

Question: Can we provide in Annex 2, point 4, compulsory administrative forms of the submission set a copy of the official journal with the act of the establishment of our public organisation or this document must be translated in English?

Answer: If possible please submit this in English in order to facilitate the evaluation process.

Reference number | 531

Question:

We are from a Ministry of Education and Research –
We are the Governmental Organization, and in this context it is necessary to co financing, because we participate as partner in the CIP consortium proposal!
It is necessary to complete Exclusion Form??

Answer:

Yes! By signing the Exclusion form, the host organization declares that the host organization and the staff proposed for the action are not subject to a conflict of interest in the context of the call (see Exclusion form g).

Submission documents

Reference number	82/VII/22012007
Question: Is it possible to download the Submission set Annex 2 - <u>Proposal part B</u> : full proposal (in particular we would like to download the FORM A/1 Proposal Abstract (one per proposal).	
Answer: The electronic submission tool will be functioning from the 12 February at the latest. Please check the call website regularly. There you will also find the information how to use the tool.	

Reference number	87/VII/22012007
Question: The proposal has to be submitted electronically. What about the submission of the numerous duly signed forms? Should it be done by registered mail with confirmation of receipt? To which address? What will be the deadline for the arrival of these documents? For a consortium: have the forms to be submitted by the co-ordinator or separately by each partner?	
Answer: For the proposal submission, no paper versions are required. All forms have to be submitted electronically only through the Electronic Proposal Submission System which will be available on the website from 12 February. You will also find detailed guidelines how to use this tool and submit the proposal.	

Reference number	203/VII/02022007
Question: In the staffing Table (p. 45 or 46 of the Submission set) there is for each period a column name individual cost" and next to it "individual hourly rate". May the "Individual cost" be understood in terms of personnel costs to be attributed to the "number of hours". Or, in other words, is the individual hourly rate calculated by division of "Individual cost" by "number of hours"? And: what are non- eligible individual costs (as implied by the existence of an additional column "individual eligible cost)?	
Answer: Please take into account that the electronic version is the valid one. Based on the web-site version the answer to your question is : The % to be indicated equals the time spent by that person on the project in proportion of a full time schedule. The individual costs are the total of the personnel costs for that person (gross salary, insurance(s),....) on a full-time basis. The individual hourly rate is automatically calculated and serves to calculate the individual eligible cost. The eligible cost results from the application of the % of full time equivalent spent on the job (ex. 100% FTE = 100 % eligible cost; 25% FTE = 25% eligible cost).	

Reference number	336/IX/23022007
Question: How must we submit the compulsory administrative form? The submission set says the following forms must be manually signed: -Host organisation profile -Exclusion form -Co-financing statement form I understand we must sign these forms, scan them and upload them as an Annex to Part B?	
Answer: Yes.	

Reference number	337/IX/23022007
Question: How must we provide the CV of participants? When clicking on the link in the CIP webpage, a new page suggests us to fill up a Europass CV and submit it on-line. Can you please clarify what it is?	
Answer: No, you can download a Word-Version of the CV, fill it in and upload it as an annex to your proposal.	

Reference number	338/IX/23022007
<p>Question: Page 48 of the submission set says we must provide the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Official registration certificate - Extract of articles of association/statutes - List of directors/executive board members. <p>But the submission set says as well that any document other than part B and the mandatory forms will be disregarded.</p> <p>Do we need to submit these documents? Should we scan them and upload them as an Annex to part B?</p>	
<p>Answer: Yes. These are mandatory forms and should be submitted together with the proposal.</p>	

Reference number	342/IX/23022007
<p>Question: There is the list of legal documents to the submission set. Is it necessary to provide an official translation of them?</p>	
<p>Answer: No.</p>	

Reference number	352/IX/23022007
<p>Question: We would like to know if there is a maximum of participating host organisations in a consortia on Nuts 1 level? I have in mind that I have seen somewhere that 15 is a maximum?</p>	
<p>Answer: If necessary, the tool permits to add more participants. However, please also refer to question 33/V.3/22122006 of the FAQ document.</p>	

Reference number	366/IX/other/23022007
<p>Question: 1. Pourriez-vous m'indiquer si les formulaires "Entité légale" et "Signalétique financier" qui figurent sur la page internet de l'appel à proposition sont à joindre au dossier de candidature et à envoyer avant le 2 avril?</p>	
<p>Answer: A ce stade-ci, ce n'est pas obligatoire, mais il est recommandé.</p>	

Reference number	368/IX/23022007
<p>Question: Dans l'appel à proposition il est mentionné (page 9) parmi les documents à joindre au dossier de candidature "l'organigramme et le règlement intérieur", ainsi que "le budget annuel s'il s'agit d'un organisme public"; ces trois documents ne sont pas repris dans les indications de la Partie B relative aux annexes: doivent-elles être ajoutées au dossier?</p>	
<p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - L' organigramme correspond à la "List of directors/executive board members (names and forenames, titles or positions in the applicant host organisation)" dans l'annexe IX - Compulsory administrative forms. - Le règlement intérieur correspond à l'Extract of Articles of association/Statutes" - Le budget annuel est demandé dans le formulaire A/2 – voir explication liée n° 10. 	

Reference number	376/IX/16032007
<p>Question: Vous indiquez dans le fichier Excel du budget estimé que les frais indirects ne doivent pas dépasser 30%. Le mode de calcul de ces frais (automatique dans votre fichier) se fait à partir du pourcentage de la masse salariale. Pouvez-vous nous indiquer s'il s'agit, pour le calcul de la formule « frais indirects » dans les organisations hôtes, d'un pourcentage calculé à partir de la Masse salariale</p>	

directe ou indirecte ?	
Answer: Votre observation est correcte, les frais indirects ne peuvent pas dépasser 30% des frais direct de personnel. Veuillez faire référence au "submission set" Annex 2.2.	
Reference number	389 /IX/02032007
Question: In case when co-financing of the project will be provided by national authorities is it necessary that the Co-financing Statement Form is signed by a relevant Ministry or the project Partner's signature will be sufficient?	
Answer: In the case of a third party contribution the co-financing statement must be signed by the legally authorised representation of the third party contribution.	
Reference number	404/IX/14032007
Question: Could you please specify for the two following questions asked in the Host Organisation Profile and the Form A/2:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have you submitted (or do you intend to submit) in the current year a grant application directly or indirectly from a European institution or agency? and 2. Have you during the last three years obtained a Community grants, procurement contracts or loans directly or indirectly from a European institution or agency? 	
whether the grants they are referring to are ANY grants (e.g. any in FP6/FP7) or THIS ONE.	
Answer: This refers to any Community grants. The principle behind is that according to Art. 111 of the Financial Regulation of the European Communities, one action may give rise to the award of only one grant from the budget to any one beneficiary.	
Reference number	402/IX/14032007
Question: We are planning to present a unique proposal as a single organisation. Which documents do we have to fulfil? Not all the forms are compulsory if you are not building a consortium but we are not sure which ones are necessary to be fulfilled by a single organisation.	
Answer: All documents need to be filled in, but only for one partner which is equivalent to "coordinator".	
Reference number	407/IX – Annex 2/14032007
Question: We have a question concerning the co-financing form in A1. In this form we need to supply the following info:	
How and when the co-financing will take place?	
Role and involvement in preparing the proposed project	
Role and involvement in implementing the proposed project	
Regarding question 1, can you tell me what is meant by this as I am not sure what kind of detail I should put in!!	
And also, since our host organisation is acting as a sole organisation and WILL NOT form part of any consortium can you please confirm that the answers to questions 2 and 3 could be on these lines: “ <i>XXX intends to prepare the proposal and implements the project in its entirety as a sole organisation</i> ”	

Answer: For question 1, please study carefully the co-financing statement form available on the call website.

For question 2 & 3, some co-financing organisations might become active in the steering of the project (for example through their inclusion in a steering committee) or they participate actively in the design of the project without later becoming a partner in the consortium. The questions in the co-financing form provide the space to explain their involvement.

Reference number | 416/other/16032007

Question: Dans le formulaire "Entité légale" il est mentionné qu'il convient de joindre un "document TVA officiel": pourriez-vous préciser le type de document dont vous avez besoin?

Answer: This refers to the national document on which your TVA registration is indicated (only for organisations subject to TVA).

Reference number | 421/IX/16032007

Question: In the Co-Financing Form you ask the following questions:

Role and involvement in preparing the proposed project

Role and involvement in implementing the proposed project

Who do these questions refer to - is it the Admin Officer who is authorised to commit the organisation?

Answer: These questions refer to the co-financing organisation as a whole. Please see question 407/IX – Annex 2/12032007 of the published FAQ.

Reference number | 467/IX/26032007

Question: What do you expect to receive as a reply to the following question which is included in the Host Organisation Form:

"Have you during the last three years obtained a Community grants, procurement contracts or loans directly or indirectly from a European institution or agency."

Do you expect the full list of research projects or other related contracts financed by the European Commission - DG Research during the last three years?

In a similar way, to reply to the following question:

"Have you submitted (or do you intend to submit) in the current year a grant application directly or indirectly from a European institution or agency."

Do you expect the submission of a full list of all the research proposals submitted or to be submitted by all the research groups of the Research Centre?

Answer: Please note that in the 3 relevant fields in A2 Form, a full list of submitted projects and obtained grants should be provided.

Reference number | 470/IX/26032007

Question: On p. 41 of the submission set, the structure of each service module description is explained, such as a detailed plan of actions.

"Each action shall be specified including information on particular target groups if any, information on methodology and tools used, list of deliverables linked to this action"

However, on p. 42, it says:

"The plan of action should not contain detailed descriptions of activities, but only their titles and

ensure that these match the titles listed in relevant subs-sections in the submission set;"
Isn't that in contradiction with each other or how is this to be interpreted?

Answer: The 'plan of actions' is the detailed presentation of the different actions in a service module. The term 'actions' is used in the submission set to give examples of services that could be implemented by the project partners.

The 'plan of action' is a tabular or calendar like presentation of activities of the projects. It includes very big events (see submission set IV.4.7), the moment services are become available etc. The table complements the detailed service module descriptions.

Reference number | 475/other/19032007

Question: Is it compulsory to use the EUROPASS CV template and if not how detailed do the CVs have to be?

Answer: It is not obligatory to use the EUROPASS CV format. Any format providing the necessary information about the suitability and the competences of the persons that will be involved in the project, is acceptable

Reference number | 485/other/19032007

Question: in the FEL form (english version) for public entities a "VAT number" has to be entered. In the german version it is mentioned as "MWST-Nummer" (MehrWertSTeuer-Nummer). In other forms, like the financial identification form, also the VAT number has to be included. But, in the german version of this form the "UST.ID-Nummer" (Umsatzsteuer-Identifikations-Nummer") has to be included. The problem is, that in Germany the "MWST-Nummer" is different from the "UST.ID-Nummer". Which number is meant in the forms?

Answer: If available, please put the Umsatzsteuer-Identifikations-Nummer, otherwise the VAT number. .

Reference number | 1058/VII/InfoDay

Question: Jusqu'à quel degré de précision faut-il aller dans la description des services?

Answer: There is no pre-defined minimum or maximum. The award section VI.3 of the submission set (award) indicates the criteria for the award process. The proposals should be detailed enough to give the evaluators a good understanding of the overall proposal, the methodology, consistency, quality control etc. See also section IX - Annex 2 of the submission set which explains the structure of the proposal and indicates for some parts of the proposal the maximum page number.

Reference number | 492/IX/26032007

Question: Is the financial statement form an obligatory annex that must be submitted by a Non-governmental Organization (NGO)?

Answer: Only public bodies are not obliged to fill in the financial statement form, NGOs not being public bodies should fill in the financial statement.

Reference number | 493/IX/26032007

Question: If the financial statement is not needed for the partner, should it be LEFT BLANK? (i.g. some parts in the financial statement of the consortium will be filled and some parts will be left blank – is it correct and acceptable for the EPSS?)

Answer: No, it should not be left blank. Please read the instructions within that document.

Reference number | 495/IX/26032007

Question: We would like to know if the "Financial Identification Form" and the "FEL Form" must be filled only by the Coordinator and if they must be submitted by the deadline of the call.

Answer: No, it is not mandatory, but strongly recommended.
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Reference number	501/IX/26032007
Question: Since the number of pages is limited for the Implementation Strategy section, we would like to know where in part B we must include the description of the facilities (premises and equipment) the consortium will use to provide services.	
Answer: This should be briefly described in the Implementation Strategy under point 1.	

Reference number	506/IX/26032007
Question: Es wird nach im laufenden Jahr beantragten oder in den letzten 3 Jahren direkt oder indirekt von der KOM oder ihren Agenturen erhaltenen Subventionen gefragt. Wenn eine Einrichtung, die sich an einem Konsortium beteiligen möchte, von einem nationalen Ministerium ein Projekt bewilligt bekommen hat, zu dessen Kofinanzierung dieses Ministerium EU-Strukturfondsmittel einsetzt - muss die Höhe dieser Strukturfondsmittel angegeben werden? Was ist unter "Action Name" einzutragen - der Projekttitel? "Amount in Euro" bezieht sich ausschließlich auf die erhaltenen EU-Mittel?	
Answer: In the Form A/2 the following should be applied: 'Programme name' is the project title, respectively the name of the EC-programme 'Action type' are specific to the programme (for example specific support action in FP6, or service contract) The amount in Euro is the total contract, respectively project volume. It should be indicated that the project was / is co-financed from the EU structural funds. There is no need to identify the amount or share of EU-funds involved in grants awarded by member states or regions.	

Reference number	1105/VII/InfoDay
Question: Is funding for projects under other EU programmes during the past 2 years considered as "other community grants" and should be filled in A2 form?	
Answer: Yes.	

Reference number	1095/VII/InfoDay
Question: The figures in balance sheet will be given in € For non EU countries at which rate and date?	
Answer: Yes the figures should be given in € For the countries that have not adopted euro currency the exchange rate to euro should correspond to this of the closing date of the accounts.	

VIII. Support to applicants

Reference number	1054/VIII/InfoDay
Question: Will there be a continuous dialogue – a "helpdesk" for questions coming up from the submitter during the preparation of a proposal? This regards specifically problems with understanding and submitting documents.	
Answer: Yes, in addition to the general functional mailbox on the call website, there will be an Electronic Proposal Submission System (EPSS) helpdesk specifically for questions regarding the electronic submission. The former mailbox has been functioning since the call publication; the latter will be available from 12 February, together with detailed guidelines on the EPSS. See also 87/IX/22012007.	

IX. Annexes

Framework Partnership Agreement

Reference number	10/IX/22122006
Question: Is there an equivalent to the previous ANNEX II General Conditions?	
Answer: Please note that you may refer to FP6 environment. However, the CIP Programme is independent from FP6 and thus introduces new requirements. Therefore, for this Call for proposals you will find related information in the Submission set and all related documents, as published on the call website.	

Reference number	165/IX/02022007
Question: Which exchange rate we should use for the financial statement form (profit & loss and balance sheet for the last two years)?	
Answer: It should be the exchange rate of the date of closure of the account.	

Reference number	205/IX/26012007
Question: In case of a lower Commission grant than applied for by the consortium or single partner: Is the co-financing organisation (host organisation and/or third parties bound to the undertaking to provide the given amount of co-financing? For example: The total costs applied for the project are 5 MEUR. The Commission's grant applied for is 3 MEUR (60%) and the co-financer undertakes to provide 2 MEUR. Let us assume that, for capacity regions e.g., the final grant provided by the Commission would have an upper limit of 1,5 MEUR. Would the co-financer be allowed to cut the limit his undertaking to 1 MEUR or would he be obliged to provide still 2 MEUR?	
Answer: It is generally expected that in cases where a grant finally awarded to an applicant is lower than the amount requested in the proposal, the applicant will be required to increase its own co-financing without any modification to the content of the proposal in order to cover the portion of costs that would not be covered by a Community contribution. If additionally there are changes affecting either the prospective beneficiary or the action, its costs or work programme covered by the proposal, the Commission must assess whether the nature of these changes calls into question the assessment of the various criteria laid down in the call for proposals and whether the award decision needs to be amended as a result. In particular, if any changes are substantial and call into the question the assessment of one of the eligibility, selection or evaluation criteria laid down in the call for proposals, or if it is found that one or more of the eligibility, selection or evaluation criteria is no longer met, the Commission must cancel the decision to award a grant in the case concerned.	

Reference number	208/IX/09022007
Question: As the proposed subcontracting budget within the proposals is a forecast-estimation, in case of remaining budget in subcontracting cost, is it possible to proceed to budget transfer to other cost categories? Are any limits for budget transfers from one cost category to other?	
Answer: In principle, budget transfers between cost categories are allowed. In all cases the coordinator must notify the Commission about adjustments of the estimated budget by transfers between categories of eligible direct costs. If the cumulated transfers between categories of direct eligible costs exceed 20% of the total eligible costs, a request for approval has to be submitted to the Commission. Please refer to Art. I.4.2.d and in particular to I.5.3 of the Framework Partnership	

Agreement.	
Reference number	248/IX/09022007
Question: Concernant les onglets des partenaires dans le fichier "model estimated budget": la ligne 146 se réfère au profit ou perte que pourrait générer l'opération pour un partenaire. Cette donnée ne semble pas affecter la demande de subvention alors que le Framework Partnership Agreement stipule que tout surplus sera réduit de la subvention. Qu'en est-il exactement?	
Answer: La ligne 146 de l'onglet des partenaires dans la feuille de calcul 'Estimated budget' permet de connaître, pour un partenaire, la perte ou le profit qu'il génère pour le projet. Son objectif est purement informatif. Le respect de la règle de non-profit (Article 109 du Règlement financier applicable au budget des communautés européennes) s'applique au niveau du projet dans son ensemble. Même si cette donnée n'affecte pas la demande de soumission, la contribution communautaire demandée sera réduite du montant de l'éventuel profit généré au niveau du projet dans son ensemble.	
Reference number	254/IX/09022007
Question: Does the co-financing statement form refer to the whole time frame of the FPA (6 years) or to that of the SGA (3 years)?	
Answer: It refers to the period of the first 36 months, as it is stated at the Preliminary Work Programme (Annex 2,chapter 2) where estimated budget is included in.	
Reference number	257/IX/09022007
Question: The temporary staff (registered in the payroll list of the partner), as stated within the Framework Partnership Agreement document, pag.18, have to be included within the personnel costs?	
Answer: Yes	
Reference number	258/IX/09022007
Question: How is it possible to distinguish the temporary staff from the "in house" consultants?	
Answer: The temporary staff must be included in the payroll of the host organisation. See FPA Art. II.15.2.1.	
Reference number	259/IX/09022007
Question: Where I have to indicate the requested budget for the implementation strategy that has a 6 year time horizon (2008-2013)?	
Answer: The budget you fill in the forms is the budget for the first 3 years of operation (Specific Grant Agreement). Please note that there is no budget linked to the 6 years of activity (Framework Partnership Agreement).	
Reference number	283/IX/09022007
Question: According to Cost category, there are 4 main headlines namely, personnel, Travels&Subsistance, Sub-contracting and Other specific cost. Under sub-contracting there are, consulting cost, Cost of communication and promotion and cost of events. But, we don't want to subcontract preparation of events and preparation of promotion materials since we are well organized and have facility to do it. Is it possible to transfer those costs (cost of communication, promotion and cost of events) from "sub-contracting" to "other specific cost" category and cost of audit from "other specific cost" to "sub-contracting"?	
Answer: You may calculate the costs for the preparation of events, promotion and communication under the "other specific costs" category in accordance with Art. II.15.2.4.c) of the Framework Partnership Agreement. However, please note that before the costs actually occur, you have to submit a written request to the Commission, accompanied by justification documents. On the other hand, the costs of the audit certificate cannot be sub-contracted but must remain under the other specific cost heading (see FPA Art. II.15.2.4.b).	
Reference number	298/IX/19022007

Question: If a staff member who is in the payroll of the organization is paid under the project in two parts: under labor contract (part A) and under consultancy contract (part B) (service contract) – how is it described in the budget? The whole amount (part A + part B) is put in the “Personnel” column or it is divided: part A in “Personnel” and part B in the “In house consultants”?	
Answer: It has to be divided to the different cost categories in accordance with the working time spent under each heading.	

Reference number	299/IX/19022007
Question: If we have activities as “surveys of the national supply and demand of innovation” where shall we put the costs as these activities are neither “events” nor “communication and promotion of the action”? May be in other costs?	
Answer: You have to divide the costs of creating these surveys, in accordance with the cost categories according to Art. 15.2 of the FPA. E.g. the working time to produce these surveys has to go under personnel or subcontracting, the other costs may be put under other specific costs in accordance with Art. 15.2.4.c of the FPA.	

Reference number	302/IX
Question: Would you explain what the difference is between “Annual turnover” and “Total yearly revenues/ resources”?	
Answer: Annual turnover is for companies and represents the total of products or services they have sold in year.	
Total revenue / resources is for others (NGO, public bodies, ...) and represents either the total of costs they supported in a year or the total of funds they have at their disposal to finance these costs. Public bodies or some NGOs do not sell anything. Therefore, in order to get assess their economical weight or capability is the resources used or the revenues funding it.	

Reference number	320/IX/Annex 2/02032007
Question: Please can you define exactly the difference between: - Expected results - Deliverables - Milestones	
Answer: In the context of this call the following indications can be given, in order to ensure a basic understanding of the terminology used. - Expected results can be defined as “landmark” results, or “end-points” that are to be achieved during the contract and are crucial to the success of the project and also to reliable periodic progress assessments of the project. - A project deliverable represents a verifiable output of the project which is subject to review by the Commission. It is a concrete action which may contribute towards the achievement of an objective/key result without being a result in itself. This might therefore include such actions as x number of company visits, y number of one-to one assistance sessions, z number of specific workshops, etc, - Milestones are control points where decisions are needed with regard to the next stage of the project. Please note that the future Support Structure might adapt this concept later for reporting purposes.	

Reference number	332/IX/23022007
Question: Please can you explain us better about the financial aspects of the project? We have to prepare the estimated budget for the first period of 3 years but should the contribution for which we apply be for just for 3 years or for 6 years?	
Answer: The estimated budget and the related requested EC contribution should be for 3 years. See Section IX – Annex 2 of the Submission set and the Estimated budget form.	

Only the Implementation Strategy has a 6 years horizon, but is not linked to a budget (see also the InfoDay Presentation on Financial Aspects slide 26).

Reference number | 348/II/23022007

Question: Pourquoi est-il demandé aux candidats à l'appel à propositions de présenter une stratégie de mise en œuvre pour 6 ans (page 4 de l'appel à proposition et document « proposal Part B ») ?

Ne faudrait-il pas proposer une stratégie pour 7 ans dans la rédaction des propositions ?

Answer: The Framework Programme for Competitiveness and Innovation is the first of this kind. It has an agreed duration from 2007-2013. As indicated in Art. I.3.2 of the Framework Partnership Agreement will be valid for a maximum of 6 years (to 31st December 2013). Art.I.3.3. of the FPA provides that any specific grant agreement has to be signed before 31st December 2013 but actions can be carried out after the end of the Framework agreement.

In order to ensure continuity of business and innovation support services the European Commission might make use of these provisions and issue specific grant agreements for the period until 31st December 2014 totalling 7 years of activities.

In order to align the validity of the framework partnership agreement with the implementation strategy to be annexed to this agreement the European Commission is only asking for a 6-year strategy.

Reference number | 367/IX/23022007

Question: Pourriez-vous me confirmer que l'accord cadre de partenariat n'est pas à compléter et à joindre au dossier de candidature ?

Answer: Non, les accords cadre de partenariat ne seront conclus qu'avec les consortia sélectionnés après la procédure d'évaluation.

Reference number | 370 /IX/02032007

Question:

Indirect costs can be calculated as a flat rate up to 30 % of staff costs. They do not need to be supported by invoices. However, does the way how applicants calculate indirect costs have to be explained (in case of an audit)? Do we have to specify the categories of indirect costs (rooms, IT, internal services...) included in the flat rate ?

Answer: No. Calculation and categories of indirect costs doesn't have to be explained and out in categories.

Reference number | 415/IX/16032007

Question: I still do not understand the difference between the levels of "activity" and "action".

If an Activity is, for example, "2.4 Stimulating the capacity of firms", then is it the case that the table for mandays at the end of each module (Page 41 Submission Set) should in fact read "Mandays for Activity 2.1., 2.2., 2.3"...etc. and not "Action 2.1". etc.? Or is the applicant expected to break down the mandays in this table not into 5 areas of work (2.1 - 2.5 for Module B) but into individual actions?

Answer: In the strict sense it should read 'Mandays for activities', however some actions in certain activities / modules may be rather large and time intensive – in particular in the 'brokerage services' (IV.2.3) – whereas others are limited. For good reason you may therefore chose to provide more detailed information on single actions. A minimum requirement for the table is that it provides the information on the number of mandays spent per partner in the different activities of the modules.

Reference number

Question: I have some questions about the documents to provide with the proposal:

Is the Co-financing statement form to be provided by each partner organisation or by each co-financing third party?

If the Co-financing statement form is provided by a co-financing third party, has to be specified to which partner organisation is provided the cofinancing?

If yes, where has it to be specified in the Co-financing statement form?

Answer:

1. The co-financing statement form has to be filled by each co-financing organisations If the co-financing is generated by the 'auto-financing' of a partner, this latter has to fill and sign the co-financing form. If the co-financing is provided by a third party of a partner, this third party has to fill and sign the co-financing form.

2. No, it is not requested for a third party to specify to which partner the co-financing will be provided. The co-financing will be considered at the level of the action and not at the level of each partner. In the case a third party would co-finance an action without specifying to which partner the funds will be allocated, then this co-financing should be reported by the coordinator in the excel table 'Estimated_budget_2008_2010' under the 'Own partners' funding' cell.

Reference number	1082/IX/InfoDay
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Question: Wann muss ein Partner eine Finanzgarantie für die Vorschusszahlungen beibringen?

Answer: Die Kommission wird anhand der eingereichten Finanzunterlagen entscheiden, ob eine Garantie notwendig ist.

Bitte konsultieren sie auch folgende FAQ: 80/IX/22012007

Reference number	1085/IX/InfoDay
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Question: Sind Einnahmen möglich, und wie sind diese anzusetzen?

Answer: Grundsätzlich darf das Projekt nicht gewinnorientiert sein. Einnahmen beispielsweise durch Gebühren durch Kunden sind möglich und werden im Finanzbericht aufgeführt.

Bitte konsultieren sie auch folgende FAQ: Referenz: 82/VII/22012007

Reference number	1090/IX/InfoDay
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Question: Ist eine Kofinanzierung mit Strukturfonds möglich? Beispiel:

EU / CIP = 60%

EU / EFRE = 20% (Ziel 2)

Eigenmittel = 20% (Ziel 2)

Answer: Nein, der Träger muss selbst die Kofinanzierung erbringen. Bitte beachten Sie Artikel 109 der Haushaltsordnung.

Reference number	1091/IX/InfoDay (updated)
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Question: Soll im Proposal für „eligible costs and indirect costs“ mit den Maximalwerten gerechnet werden? Oder gibt es für bestimmte Länder bereits bestimmte Maximalwerte, zum Beispiel für Deutschland: Förderung „indirect costs“ nur bis 20% oder „eligible costs“ nur bis 55%?

Answer: Es gibt keine Differenzierung pro Land. Die Prozentsätze gelten wie in der Ausschreibung angegeben. Indirekte Kosten können bis maximal 30% der Personalkosten erstattet werden.

Reference number	1092/IX/InfoDay
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Question: Subcontracting – Communication and Promotion: Welche Werbemittel fallen darunter? Flyer für das eigene Netzwerkprojekt oder für Aktionen der Kommission?

Answer: Unter „Communication and Promotion“ fallen alle Massnahmen, die im Interesse der KMU entwickelt werden, um die unter Modul a bis c aufgeführten Dienstleistungen bekannt zu machen.

Reference number	1100/IX/InfoDay
Question: Est-ce qu'un accord formel (convention écrite) entre membres du consortium supplémentaire à ce qui est déjà prévu dans le dossier de candidature est indispensable?	
Answer: Comme indiqué dans l'article I.4.1.b du "Framework Partnership Agreement", les partenaires sont responsables pour la conclusion d'un accord de coopération approprié afin d'assurer le bon fonctionnement de l'action sur base d'une bonne coordination entre partenaires.	

Reference number	1117/IX/InfoDay
Question: Au niveau d'un consortium, est-ce qu'il y a une flexibilité de transférer encours du projet des activités d'un partenaire vers un autre et donc de modifier les budgets respectifs des différents partenaires?	
Answer: Comme expliqué dans l'article I.5.3 du Framework Partnership Agreement, une flexibilité dans le transfert des budgets est possible entre partenaires dans les conditions spécifiées dans l'article.	

Reference number	1118/IX/InfoDay
Question: Est-ce que l'achat d'équipements nécessaires à la réalisation du projet sont éligibles?	
Answer: L'achat d'équipements n'est pas à priori éligible car cela est partie intégrante des capacités techniques minimales des soumissionnaires. Uniquement dans les cas très spécifiques ces couts pourraient être déclarés éligibles en tant que "Other specific costs" (Framework Partnership Agreement art. II.15.2.4) après approbation préalable par la Commission (voir aussi question/réponse 89/other/22012007).	

Award of grants

Reference number	51/IX/05012007
Question: Is there a maximum/minimum amount for the grant?	
Answer: The total budget is 320m euros and there is no minimum or maximum amount for the grant. Please check the section II and in particular part 3 - Financial Aspects of the submission set.	

Reference number	229/IX/09022007
Question: In order to be eligible, should all the partners of a consortium be suppliers of integrated services or is it enough that just some of the organisations included in the consortium are working in this sector? For example, may some Universities be partners of the consortium applying for the Community funds under this call for proposal?	
Answer: A consortium as a whole should show that it can offer integrated services to all companies in their region. It does not mean that each partner has to be in a position to cover all sectors and all services. Please see the sections II.2 and IX - Annex 2 of the submission set.	

Reference number	1085/IX/InfoDay
Question: Do all partners of a consortium have to ask for an EU financing or can a partner cover all his costs on his own but contribute to the performance of the project?	
Answer: The financial contribution from the side of the partners is at least 40%. It is up to the different partners to decide about their specific needs for co-financing.	

Reference number	1122/IX/InfoDay
Question: Can the grant of a single partner exceed 60% in case the whole consortium keeps the maximum 60% of co-finance?	
Answer: Yes, as long as the 60% limit of Commission's co-finance is respected.	

Financing the action

Reference number	50/IX/05012007
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Question: We are in contact with our regional government concerning co-financing. Is it possible to use structural funds for co-financing?

Answer: This is not possible. Art. 109 of the Financial Regulations of the European Communities states that a grant must involve co-financing.

Reference number 85/IX/22012007

Question: Is it allowed to generate income, in addition to the co-financing by third parties and the host organisation, respectively, by the project? How to deal with income generated by actions undertaken in carrying out the project? Would it affect the co-financing provided by the Commission? Which kinds of income are allowed to be generated (participant fees for seminars or brokerage events, annual fees for technology watch contracts, e.g.)?

Answer: Projects shall not generate any financial profit (Art. 109 Financial Regulations). The European Commission will provide co-financing for the costs for the provision of services of up to 60%. It is expected that the host organisations and/or other third parties contribute significantly to the project. A minor part for the total proposed budget might be covered from user charges. These user charges shall be non-discriminatory and shall only be charged for individualised services in contrast to free general information and feed-back services. The charging policy for services shall be in line with the other available services in the geographic area.

Any income generated from the provision of services has to be accounted to the project. It is considered as a part of revenue generated by the action (see financial tables in the Annex II). The level of co-financing by the Commission would only be affected if the sum of all revenues is higher than the total costs of the action. Total costs include the costs eligible for the contract and the non-eligible costs.

Reference number 128/IX/02022007

Question: We are a non-profit association of technology centres. We are partners of an IRC and we are participating in the project with our associated technology centres acting as a third-party contribution. Our centres provide us a X% of a technician dedication to perform IRC activities, which is considered as personnel costs. We would like to know if this kind of participation could be used in this call. If not, is there any other possibility of participation apart from subcontracting?

Answer: Please note that a third party contribution in kind is not foreseen under this call. If this technician appears on your payroll and your own personnel costs, the costs are eligible under the project. Otherwise, it should be sub-contracted, taking account that max. 20% of the eligible costs can be sub-contracted to in-house or external consultants (see Framework Partnership Agreement Art. II.15.2.3.a). Another possibility is to participate as a partner of the consortium.

Reference number 311/V.1/23022007

Question: For the work packages "public procurement" we would like to include an organisation which is a registered association. Responsible bodies are ten chambers of commerce and the Consortium of the chambers of crafts (all public bodies). These organisations finance the association via member fees. The Executive Board is presented by a chamber of industry and commerce (public body) and a chamber of crafts (public body).

Must the co-financing form be filled by each of the mentioned responsible bodies, that means by eleven organisations, or would it be sufficient, if the executive board signs this form?

Answer: The co-financing statement must be filled in by all legal entities co-financing the action. Please also note that the co-financing can be either a financial contribution (also of third parties) or own resources of the host organisation for which they support a cost (like personnel or equipment).

Reference number 312/IX/23022007

Question: For the work packages "public procurement" we would like to include an organisation which is a registered association. Responsible bodies are ten chambers of commerce and the Consortium of the chambers of crafts (all public bodies). These organisations finance the association via member fees. The Executive Board is presented by a chamber of industry and commerce (public body) and a chamber of crafts (public body).

Could this potential partner calculate income, generated by fees for services, as own financial contribution?

Answer: In general, the co-financing of an action can be revenue generated by the action. In this case this contribution should be reported as “revenue generated by the action”.

However, your question refers to whether the income can be regarded as own financial resources: Since the revenue generated by the action may belong to other co-financers, it cannot be regarded as own financial contribution. In case the generated revenue will result in a profit, the Commission’s contribution will be reduced. Please also see FAQ 85/IX/22012007.

Reference number 445/IX/19032007

Question: In our case one third party will provide part of the necessary co-financing. This third party provides one co-financing statement for all the co-financing given, or does it have to cut the co-financing into separate forms for the individual partners concerned?

If it has to be given to separate partners, what happens if budgets - in the running contract - are transferred within the consortium. Do the partners concerned then - in reference to the budget transfer - have to submit again the co-financing statements?

Answer: No, it is not requested for a third party to specify to which partner the co-financing will be provided. The co-financing will be considered at the level of the action and not at the level of each partner. In the case a third party would co-finance an action without specifying to which partner the funds will be allocated, then this co-financing should be reported by the coordinator in the excel table 'Estimated_budget_2008_2010' under the 'Own partners' funding' cell.

Reference number 476/IX/19032007

Question: What will be the pre-financing after signing the agreement? Is the pre-financing sum limited to a maximum amount?

Answer: Pre financing will be at 45% of the EC contribution.

Reference number 1081/IX/InfoDay

Question: Kann die Kofinanzierung durch die Partner „in kind“ erfolgen oder muss „cash“ eingebracht werden?

Answer: Eine Ko-finanzierung kann nur direkte finanzielle und personelle Beiträge beinhalten. Der Finanzbericht muss diese entsprechend aufführen.

Reference number 1083/IX/InfoDay

Question: Wie variabel ist der Finanzierungsanteil der EU pro Projekt und wie wird dieser im Vorfeld einer Vertragsunterzeichnung den Antragstellern kommuniziert? Wie sieht dementsprechend die Kofinanzierungserklärung der Antragsteller im Detail aus?

Answer: Der EU Beitrag beläuft sich auf maximal 60%, der Kofinanzierungsanteil beträgt entsprechend mindestens 40%. Der genaue Prozentsatz ergibt sich aus der Qualität des Antrags und dem Gesamtbudget, das für diese Ausschreibung zur Verfügung steht. Die Kofinanzierungserklärung findet sich im Submission Set (Co-financing Statement Form)

Reference number 1099/IX/InfoDay

Question: Can 40% (the percentage not covered by the EU co-finance) be covered by “expected revenues”, i.e. subscription fees paid by local SMEs to the consortium?

Answer: Services shall normally be offered free of charge or at a non-discriminatory price.

Reference number 1119/IX/InfoDay

Question: Are we able to include “contribution in kind” from third parties?

Answer: No, it is not allowed.

Reference number 1123/IX/InfoDay

Question: Is co-financing requested at the level of the separately described activities or also possible at the level of all IRC-IEC activities per service module?

Answer: The 60% co-financing activity applies at the Consortium level, with a balanced distribution of activities as described in the Submission Set.

Reference number 1119/IX/InfoDay

Question: Est-ce qu'un partenaire peut demander un co-financement de la Commission sur des actions phares de son programme de travail et nos pas sur toutes les actions de program de travail?

Answer: Oui pour autant que ces actions phares et le reste du programme de travail qui sera présenté répondent aux objectifs et services tels que décrits dans cet appel à propositions.

Reference number 1113/IX/InfoDay

Question: Qui doit signer le "co-financing statement" form (page 51 of the submission set) lorsque la structure hôte du partenaire n'est pas le principal co-financer? Par exemple, lorsque le partenaire est constitué en association (Structure hôte) et le principal co-financier est une collective comme un conseil régional.

Answer: Lorsque le partenaire dépend d'un co-financier en dehors de la structure hôte, le formulaire mentionné doit être rempli par cette entité légale également (mentionné à la page 51, en haut du formulaire).

Reference number 398/IX – co-financing/14032007

Question: We are an organisation looking to support a consortium for the region which will respond to this call and need to understand how the financing is defined.

60% of the cost is provided by the EU. The other 40% needs to be provided by other sources. Our organisation is one being asked to provide this 40% and I am confused as to what this means under the definition of co financing.

Could this 40% include moneys/ funds committed/ allocated to the same consortium members to be used for similar regional activities related to Business innovation support activities like those listed in the call or does this have to be 'new or extra monies/ funds' dedicated entirely to the activities of this CIP call.

The question is raised due to the fact that we are already committing funding to these same provider in the consortium, for nearly identical activities and need to understand whether that money (already promised) counts as the 40% match required or whether you need for us to set aside new budget to co finance the CIP bid.

Answer: In cases a third party already awards a grant for actions that are covered by this call for proposals, the submitted proposal shall clearly indicate this (for example in the co-financing statement form) and explain to what extend and in what period the actions already financed contribute to the objectives of the call. Doing so allows to consider the committed amounts (or a part thereof) as co-financing.

In the case of an award by the European Commission the existing contract with the beneficiary shall be amended to specifically include the delivery of tasks from the CIP network and to align contract periods.

Please be reminded that co-financing from the EC may be granted up to 60% of eligible costs depending on the quality and cost-efficiency of the proposed project. Other co-financing provided to the beneficiary must not include any other indirect contribution from the European Commission (in order to avoid 'double' financing of the same costs).

Reference number	537/IX/30032007
<p>Question: Notre organisme ne pouvant pas par ses statuts ni facturer ni récupérer la TVA, sera t-il possible de déclarer des couts de sous-traitance tenant compte de la TVA dans le futur contrat ? Notre organisme étant le futur coordinateur, cela représentera notamment des dépenses communes au consortium relatives aux outils de communication (web site, plaquette, carte de visite,...)</p> <p>Merci de votre réponse par rapport à la remarque dans le FPA page 20 en haut "VAT, unless a partner can show he's unable to recover it".</p> <p>http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/funding/grants/themes_2006/eic_irc/cip_docs/framework_partnership_agree.pdf</p>	
<p>Answer: La TVA est un cout éligible dans la mesure où le partenaire peut prouver qu'il ne peut la recouvrer. Si c'est le cas, la TVA doit être intégrée dans les catégories de coût correspondantes, en indiquant séparément le montant net et la TVA correspondante et en renseignant clairement qu'il s'agit de TVA non récupérable. Afin qu'elle puisse être considérée comme coût éligible, la preuve qu'elle est non récupérable devra être fournie au plus tard lors de l'introduction des factures.</p>	
Reference number	538/IX/30032007
<p>Question: 1) Value added tax (VAT) is an eligible cost if the organization can show is unable to recover it.</p> <p>Shall we include VAT in DIRECT costs? If yes which of the following is applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - we present all costs as gross costs (including VAT) - or we specify every cost as net cost (without VAT) and separately for every cost we specify VAT (of course where applicable!) - or we specify total net costs and we give one total amount of VAT <p>Or should VAT be covered under INDIRECT costs (30% of total eligible personnel cost)?</p>	
<p>Answer: Option 1 is the correct way to present the costs. When it is a cost VAT should be indicated in the same category, the principal cost is indicated, but in a dedicated item. More important, evidence should be given that VAT can't be recovered in order to confirm those costs are eligible, <i>at the latest when introducing the cost statements in executing the grant</i>. In the absence of evidence the cost will be considered ineligible.</p>	

Payment arrangements

Reference number	80/IX/22012007
<p>Question: Which legal entities (acting as a partner of a consortium) are eligible to receive prefinancing (as mentioned in Framework Partnership Agreement)? Which partner is obliged to submit a guarantee? Is text (formula) of guarantee fixed by EC or guarantor allowed to formulate guarantee according his own specific rules? Is there any other possibility to receive prefinancing without submitting the guarantee?</p>	
<p>Answer: Each legal entity acting as a partner of a consortium is eligible to receive a prefinancing. A legal entity that is eligible to receive a prefinancing may be asked by the Commission to submit a financial guarantee corresponding to the same amount. The submission of this financial guarantee will depend to a large extent on the financial capacity of the legal entity concerned (see section VI.2 of the submission set on financial capacity). In case the Commission requires the submission of a financial guarantee from a partner, the absence of such a submission will have as a consequence the non-payment of the requested prefinancing .</p> <p>Concerning the form of the financial guarantee, no format is foreseen and the guarantor is allowed to formulate its guarantee in accordance with it own rules in accordance with the Article 182 of the Implementing rules of the Financial Regulation applicable to the budget of the European Communities.</p> <p>It is important to remember that the coordinator will collect the necessary information from the co-partners and will submit a common request for pre-financing to the Commission on their behalf. Also, only one global payment will be made for prefinancing to the coordinator. The latter will be then in charge to allocate the amount to the co-partners.</p>	

Reference number	174/IX/02022007
Question: Article II.16.1 Pre-financing of the Framework Partnership Agreement says that a "financial guarantee from a bank or an approved financial institution" is required for the pre-financing and has to be delivered by the co-ordinator. Is this "financial guarantee" also requested from public bodies? If yes, must the "financial guarantee" be issued by a bank or an approved financial institution or could it be replaced by a self-declarative statement of the public body?	
Answer: It will be decided during the contracting period whether a financial guarantee is necessary. According to Art. 118 of the Financial Regulations of the EU the authorising officer of the Commission will decide whether a beneficiary is required to lodge a financial guarantee. The Implementing Rule Art. 182.5 states that the authorising officer may waive the obligation to submit a financial guarantee for public-sector bodies.	

Reference number	397/FPA/14032007
Question: In the FPA you mention that it is necessary to have a bank account reserved exclusively for EU funds received for carrying out the action for which the grants is awarded.	
We have a bank account where all the departments of the regional Government involved in EU issues received the grants. Would this count be valid for this proposal? Or do we have to create a specific one?	
Answer: In accordance with Art. I.7.2 of the FPA, you have to create a specific one for the action for which this grant is received.	

Standard number of productive hours

Reference number	23/IX/05012007
Question: Il est écrit dans le « submission set » que la feuille « Standard Number of productive hours » est unique. Cependant dans un consortium ces données peuvent varier d'une organisation à une autre. Faut-il calculer une moyenne ? Quelles données faut il utiliser dans les « staffing tables » ?	
In the submission set it is specified that the following table "Standard Number of productive hours" is unique. Nevertheless in a consortium this kind of data can vary from an organisation to another. Should we calculate an average? Which type of data should be used in the staffing tables?	
Answer: Les « Standard Number of productive hours » sont une valeur commune à tous les partenaires. Elles doivent être basées sur un accord entre tous les partenaires et ne représentent pas forcément des valeurs moyennes.	
The "Standard Number of the productive hours" is a common figure for all partners. It is agreed between all partners and is not necessarily an average value.	

Reference number	79/IX/22012007
Question: In the SUBMISSION SET, p.44, there is a table "standard number of productive hours", which contains a line "Average number of training days in a reporting period". What is meant with "training day"? General Training outside the job (for volunteer fire-fighters e.g.) General Training on the job (IT tools; Health and Security?) Internal training regarding the actions of the three modules of the Call? Training organised by the Executive Agency?	
Answer: The calculation of standard productive hours shall establish a relation between the personnel cost of staff and the hours they actually spend on tasks assigned to them. The calculation shall be based on the usual accounting principles followed by the contractor, respecting the national legislation (including collective agreements).	
For the calculation of the standard number of productive hours and the actual staff costs, training and similar activities are to be analysed with regard to the organisation's task assignments to the staff members and the necessity of trainings and similar activities for projects. Those trainings directly related and necessary for the project (for example training related to specific	

instruments of the network) constitute eligible costs of the project and consequently are to be considered as productive hours (and shall not be deducted in the calculation of the standard number of productive hours). Training related specifically to other tasks of the employee shall also not be deducted from the work time as the time might be allocated to another project. In contrast, the time spent for general job related training and other absence that cannot be allocated to a particular project shall be deducted in the calculation of the standard number of productive hours. Every other reasoned absence from the place of work not related to an assigned task that will not be deducted from the employee's salary shall also be deducted in this calculation. This may occasionally apply for absence due to trainings not related to the job (for example defence/civil security related absence including training). Please refer to part II.15 of the Framework Partnership Agreement with Multiple Partners for the rules of eligibility of costs.

Reference number	227/IX/02022007
Question: There are different numbers of productive hours in each of the consortium partners (number of holiday days, etc. is different). Is it correct that eligible personnel costs will be calculated from actual hours spent on the project that in certain partner organization for full time employed staff could be higher than the standard number of productive hours agreed? E.g. the maximum number of hours which can be charged for FTE can be higher than the standard number of productive hours agreed in consortium?	
Answer: It is correct that actual eligible costs are calculated from the actual number of hours spent on the project and the individual hourly rate. However the actual number of hours charged to the project by a staff member can never be higher than the agreed number of standard productive hours. Please refer to the slides of the presentation on Financial Aspects given during the Info Day. Resulting advantages or disadvantages for individual contractors are negligible if compared to the overall volume of costs and the grant.	

Reference number	339/IX/23022007
Question: In order to fill the individual partner's budget template, the individual hourly rate is necessary. Is it possible just to give the individual hourly rate or is it mandatory to also give the staff member's individual cost on full time basis for 18 months? What happens if a partner refuses to give this information because of national or organizational data protection regulations and only gives an individual unit rate or even an average unit rate for all employees working in the project	
Answer: The individual costs should be given on a full-time basis for each individual expected to be involved in the action. Please refer to Article II.15.2. 1 of the FPA “The personnel include permanent and temporary staff (registered in the payroll list of the partner) <u>directly assigned to the action that have authorised in writing the Commission or any other outside body authorised by the Commission to access their personal data necessary to perform checks and audits as defined in Article II.21. In the absence of such approval, the costs of the related staff will be considered as not eligible</u> ”.	
For compliance with national data protection law, also see FAQ 1060/VII/InfoDay.	

Reference number	403/IX/14032007
Question: To estimate the budget is it compulsory to use the exact dedicated personal costs for each staff member or can we use average costs for the individual partner?	
Answer: It is up to the applicants to decide on which basis the costs of the action will be estimated, in particular the cost of each staff member. This basis has to be explained in the proposal.	

Reference number	340/IX/23022007
Question: Could you explain what the staff member's individual costs include? In Article II 15 of the Framework membership agreement this is explained as the actual salary plus social security charges and other statutory costs. Do you have a more detailed explanation or definition which costs are	

accepted? Do you need an explanation and or proof of how partners' have come to this amount? As the amount is for 18 months, the amount does not correspond to amounts available in the host organisations book-keeping systems. Do you have requirements of how to get to the requested amount (e.g. yearly salary / 12 * 18)?

Answer: The calculation of the hourly rate depends on accountancy and salary calculation of each host organisation, in compliance with the national law of the member state. The Commission does not have specific requirements of how to calculate the requested amount: yearly salary /12 * 18 is an acceptable method (resp. 15 in case of an organisation providing module b services under a current IRC contract).

Please note that all other costs in relation to personnel that are not part of the salary may be considered as indirect costs in compliance with Art. II.15.3 of the FPA.

Reference number	341/IX/23022007
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Question: Based on the partner templates, staff member's individual costs have to be listed for 2 reporting periods of 18 months. This means that all additional information and the work programme has to be based on two 18 months' periods as well and not on a yearly basis ?

Answer: Yes, if possible it should be based on two 18 months periods as well, since there are two reporting periods covering 18 months each. However, there is an exception for those partners who currently implement activities under the current network of Innovation Relay Centres. For them the first reporting period for module (b) is 15 months.

Reference number	355/IX/23022007
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Question: Dans les feuilles « overview » apparaissent les « coûts indirects », **mais je n'ai pas trouvé de cellule (jaune) dans les feuilles coordonateur, partenaire 1 etc. pour rentrer les « coût indirects».** Merci de bien vouloir m'indiquer dans quelle partie les « coûts indirects » doivent être renseignés.

Par ailleurs, concernant la feuille « Std number of PH », pourriez vous m'indiquer s'il s'agit d'une moyenne de toutes les structures hôtes ou seulement du consortium. La « reporting period », correspond-elle à 18 mois ou au 36 mois ?

Answer:

- Les cellules jaunes pour les « coûts indirects » se trouvent toute au bas de ce formulaire. Seul un pourcentage peut être introduit par reporting period.
- Pour les « Standard number of PH » il faut indiquer le moyen de tous les membres du Consortium (calcul simple or compromis entre les membres) – voir présentation de l'InfoDay « Financial aspects, feuille 16).
- La « reporting period », correspond à deux fois 18 mois. Il y a cependant une exception pour les partenaires qui sont aujourd'hui actifs au sein du réseau des Centres Relais d'Innovation (IRC). Pour ceux, la première « reporting period » pour les services du module (b) est de 15 mois. Les partenaires concernés doivent remplir une case spécifique (la cellule I26).

Reference number	1087/IX/InfoDay
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Question: Please explain in more detail the “standard normal productive hours”. I do not understand the implications for a proposal with several partners from different host organisations, with different salary scales

Answer: Partners from different host organisations should agree on a total number of productive hours. For more information please check the example available in the presentation of the financial issues available in the website.

Reference number	1101/IX/InfoDay
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Question: A host structure hosts an EIC and IRC. How will this affect the proposal when calculating

Standard productive hours? Can you please clarify this situation even because existing contracts end at different dates?

Answer: For existing IRCs, first period = 15 months (module B). Please refer to slides on the financial issues presentation on the InfoDay, available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/funding/grants/themes_2006/eic_irc/calls_prop_2006_eic_irc_d2.htm#infoday

Subcontracts

Reference number	46/IX/22122006
Question: What is meant with cost (in house) consultants?	
Answer: An in-house consultant is a person working on the premises of the host organisation (i.e. including on its payroll) contributing to the project without being a permanent employee of the organisation. The costs for this person are not accountant as staff costs but as subcontracting. Please be reminded that there is a ceiling established for subcontracting (see Art. II.15.2.3 of the framework partnership agreement with multiple partners) and that subcontracting costs are excluded from the base for calculation of indirect costs.	

Reference number	186/IX/02022007
Question: Whilst there are many elements that we would deliver ourselves (particularly with respect to Module a services) we are keen to pursue the option of subcontracting many of the services in Modules b and c (including some of the "core services like the publication of technology and co-operation profiles in the internal databases, the follow-up of expressions of interest and the state of negotiations"). We are determined to control delivery of the services in our areas and see subcontracting as one of the best options in this respect. If we choose this route the level of subcontracting will very likely exceed the 20% limit. We are committed to the purposes of the new network but feel that the rules are overly constraining on local choices regarding delivery. How will far will evaluators, and if we are successful, negotiators concede our right to decide on matters regarding delivery structures in our area? In short, if our senior management decides that our bid should be such that it contains more than 20% of the budget being subcontracted what will happen?	
Answer: Please note that the ceiling of 20% applies only to sub-contracting of consultants (in-house or external), not sub-contracting in general. Costs exceeding this ceiling will be considered as non-eligible and will not receive co-financing from the Commission (see Framework Partnership Agreement II.15.2.3 and the presentation on Financial Aspects given during the InfoDay).	

Reference number	222/IX/22022007
Question: I need your clarification and advice on the following issues: 1. Consulting the Submission Set, on page 23, point 5. "Use of external experts", it is stated that a maximum of 20% of the total budget is allowed to be used, but basic services, such as, publication of technology profiles and co-operation profiles etc., could not be subcontracted. However in the FPA, on page 19, point 3. "Subcontracting", the costs for in-house consultants is also classified under the subcontracting cost category, which, it describes, cannot exceed 20% of all other eligible costs. Could you please clarify which is the correct method for calculating the maximum allowed costs for subcontracting (in-house and external subcontractors)? 2. Concerning the formulation of the consortium, could you please specify by what mechanism the potential consortiums will include the above mentioned "antennas" under the existing rules, either under subcontracting or any other possible status which you may recommend?	
Answer: 1. In the Submission set, page 23, point 5, the external experts should be considered as consultant (in-house or external) for which a limit of 20% of the total eligible cost is foreseen (Article II.15.2 3 (a)). 2. The Commission can not recommend specific forms of partnerships outside the consortium. The focus remains on the consortium and the individual partners.	

Reference number	249/IX/09022007
Question: Communication & promotion, and Events are not included in the ceiling of 20% subcontracting, and the ceiling of 20% refers to consultants only?	
Answer: Yes, this is correct.	

Reference number	254/IX/09022007
Question: Where can we put the other consultant's costs like external expertise?	
Answer: The sub-contracting part comprises the total of both in-house and external consultants together. Read: (in-house) consultants can be either in-house consultants or external consultants.	

Reference number	268/IX/09022007
Question: In which category should we include "Use of special external experts"? We would like to know if it is possible including in the category "Cost of (in-house) consultants" if the external expert work in other organisation (they are not included in the payroll of the partner).	
Answer: All costs of in-house and/or external experts/consultants should be included in the sub-contracting category.	

Reference number	455/IX/19032007
Question: Is it applicable to all partners separately the 20% maximum of sub-contracting of their tasks and budget.	
Answer: 20% applies for every partner and the consortium in total.	

Reference number	473a/other/FPA
Question: the 20 % maximum for subcontracting is calculated individually to each partner or it is a rule applied for the consortium and so if a partner doesn't use subcontracting at all another could subcontract more than the 20% of its own budget?	
Answer: The 20% maximum is calculated individually by partner. However, please note that this percentage refers to sub-contracting in-house or external consultants only (see FPA II.15.2.3).	

Reference number	1055/IX.2/InfoDay
Question: Can a subcontractor work for more than one project?	
Answer: Yes.	

Reference number	1117/IX/InfoDay
Question: The development of the services mentioned (tender alert services, web sites) should be subcontracted or a partner can do it? Is this eligible? The amount of co-financing?	
Answer: It is not necessary that they are subcontracted if a partner can do them. The costs are eligible, if they relate to external staff contracted for the project they fall under the 20% ceiling of in-house and external consultants (see II.15.3.(a) FPA).	

Reference number	1128/IX/InfoDay
Question: Why there should be a restriction for sub-contractors, specifically of "in house" consultants, regarding the budget establishing? (restriction of 20% of eligible costs)	
Answer: It is expected that the core activities should be undertaken by the partners. Thus a maximum of 20% is eligible for in-house and external consultants.	

Eligible costs

Reference number	89/IX/22012007
Question: Article II.15.2.4. (Other specific costs) allows for the application of strictly necessary costs not mentioned in the preceding articles. May computer hardware and software, respectively, fall	

under this category? Which costs else? Does the need for prior written approval by the Commission mean that such costs have to be applied for (and in addition to the costs outlined in the proposal) only after having signed the Specific Grant Agreement?

Answer: The selection step of the evaluation procedure (see section VI.2 of the submission set) requires applicants to have "operational (technical and management) capacity to complete the operation...". This also applies to the technical equipment. Depreciation of technical equipment is to be covered by the indirect costs.

However, in very specific cases purchase of equipment that is strictly necessary for carrying out the action may be attributed to direct eligible costs under the 'other specific costs' category (see Framework Partnership Agreement II.15.2.4). This might apply for example to the purchase of licenses of very specific training software put at the disposal of clients and costs for subscriptions to databases specific for the project. These items can be mentioned already in the application. Please note that after the signature of the FPA and the Specific Grant Agreement, costs under Art. II.15.2.4.c) of the FPA will still be subject to a written approval by the Commission. The consortium partner will have to submit a written request to the Commission, together with detailed supporting justification and documents before the costs have actually incurred.

Reference number	98/IX/22012007
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Question: Reading the General Conditions on costs in the Framework Partnership Agreement I would like to get a clarification on 15.6 It is mentioned in the General Conditions under II.15.6, that indirect costs are not eligible for a partner, if this partner already receives an operating grant from the European Commission. What is meant by "operating grant"? If the host organisation is also involved for example in FP7 projects, in which different actions are financed by the EC, actions different to the work programme for this specific call, will this fall under an already receiving operating grant? Please specify.

Answer: FP6 / FP7 project grants are typically not operating grants but action grants. Operating grants are different from action grants. Operating grants provide financial support to costs necessary for the implementation of the regular and permanent activities of the organisations selected.

Reference number	124/IX/02022007
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Question: Is there any recommendable percentage of the eligible costs of the total budget of the proposal for co-ordination costs?
(Not the percentage of co-financing by the Commission!)

Answer: No, it is up to each proposal to decide the percentage of coordination costs. Please refer to question 27/IV.4/22122006 of the public FAQ document.

Reference number	129/IX/02022007
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Question: Are travel costs within the region eligible in the category "Travel and subsistence" (for example Kilometres made by car, necessary to make company visits)?

Answer: Yes, travel costs within a region are eligible.

Reference number	163/IX/02022007
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Question: Costs for the production of communication tools such as a portal, leaflets, posters, etc should be indicated under the cost category "communication and promotion of the action" under the common services?

Answer: Yes.

Reference number	202/IX/02022007
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Question: How to deal with the costs for a bookkeeper, who is permanently employed in the host organisation, and spends a certain number of person days per year on the financial affairs of the project under consideration? Are these personnel costs (substantiated with person days under service module 4), in-house expert costs (without counting person days in service module 4) or overheads? Is there a difference between the bookkeepers of consortium partners and the one of the co-ordinator (who has at least more responsibilities regarding the pre-financing, financial reporting etc.)?

Answer: The treatment of the cost of a bookkeeper depends on the applicable accounting principles of the partner but is generally considered as an indirect cost. As an exception, if a partner has established a close follow-up of the time spent by a bookkeeper directly working on projects in order to allocate the related proportion of costs on those projects, then the portion of time (and the costs) spent on a project co-financed by the EC of this bookkeeper may be considered as a direct. In the case a bookkeeper is exclusively working on a project co-financed by the EC, the related cost may also be considered as direct costs.

Reference number	301/other /19022007
Question : In the framework of the evaluation process , is it possible to have a look on the official list of external experts ? Or is it possible to namely exclude from this list some EC registered experts that may be competitor or not neutral regarding our project proposal?	
Answer: The European Commission will organise a confidential, fair and equitable evaluation of each proposal according to the criteria applicable for the call, in full respect of the relevant procedures, rules and regulations. When appointing experts, the Commission will take all necessary steps to ensure that they are not involved directly or indirectly in the proposals and that they are not faced with a conflict of interest in relation to the proposals on which they are required to give an opinion.	

Reference number	372/IX/16032007
Question: We are planning to introduce an IT tool for the internal management of our consortium. This tool (software licenses and server hosting) is intended to be purchased from a specialised commercial provider. Under which cost category the appropriate costs will be eligible?	
Answer: Please check carefully 1111/IX/InfoDay of the published FAQ.	

Reference number	431c/IX/16032007
Question: Est-ce que les coûts liés au montage et à l'organisation d'événements de matchmakings (c'est-à-dire les coûts directs) sont-ils également éligibles et, dans ce cas précis, sous quelle rubrique ces derniers pourront-ils figurer (sous le point 1.6 ou 1.7) ?	
Answer: Regarding eligible costs, please see the Framework Partnership Agreement Art. II.15.	

Reference number	447IX/FPA/26032007
Question: Can a civil servant take part in the projects? Is he computable?	
Answer: The aim of the Article II.15.4, ninth bullet point, is to avoid the double financing of the same costs in accordance with the Article 111 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities.	
The eligible character of the cost of public officials assigned to the action by a co-partner depends on the following two elements:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) If the public officials put at the disposal of the partner (being a public body) by the central or the local governments do not generate any cost for the partner, then the use of these officials for the action is considered as a contribution in kind excluded from this call for proposals. If, notwithstanding this exclusion, the partner decides to make use of these officials for the execution of the action, this use should not be mentioned in the proposals. 2) If the public officials put at the disposal of the partner (being a public body) by the central or the local governments generate a cost for the partner, then the use of these officials for the action is considered as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Non eligible, in accordance with the Article II.15.4 of the FPA, if the partner does not control the financial workflows of these officials (i.e.: he may not decide to allocate the funds assigned for these officials by the central or the local governments to one or another action to get an additional funding from the EU for example). In the proposal, the cost of these officials should be reported in the category 'non eligible costs'; 	

- 2.2. Eligible if the partner fully controls the financial workflows of these officials (i.e.: he may decide to allocate the funds assigned for these staff by the central or the local governments to one or another action to get an additional funding from the EU for example). In that case, evidence that the risk of double funding is mitigated should be provided. To this respect, applicants may add a declaration on oath in the proposal.

Reference number	480/IX/26032007
Question: Our personnel department has provided us with information concerning overhead costs of personnel (IT infrastructure, location, general expenses, ...). These indirect costs are fixed amounts per person according to our personnel department. They are not a percentage of labour cost. Can we include these costs as "direct" costs in the "individual cost on full time basis" or do we have to make a calculation what percentage these cost are?	
Answer: The indirect costs flat rate has to be calculated in relation to the total eligible personnel costs under this project. Therefore, you would have to make a calculation what percentage these costs are in relation to the direct eligible personnel costs (see FPA II.15.3). Under no circumstances may this "overhead" cost be included in the individual costs on a full-time basis.	

Reference number	1067/IX/InfoDay
Question: Which costs related to an instrument already available (for example project website) are eligible?	
Answer: Part II.15 of the framework partnership agreement specifies the criteria for eligibility of costs. Among other costs eligible have to be directly related to the project. So cost for updates and maintenance of an existing website are eligible, but the cost for its development and establishment that was done in the past is not eligible.	

Reference number	1086/IX/InfoDay
Question: Please clarify the indirect costs. The presentation indicated that indirect costs would be carried out at 30% of direct costs. Can a flat rate of 30% be applied?	
Answer: Yes only flat rates should be applied, of a maximum of 30% to direct personnel costs.	

Reference number	1089/IX/InfoDay
Question: Are the management activities co-financed up to 60% or to 100%?	
Answer: The percentage of commission's co-finance is a maximum of 60% of all eligible costs	

Reference number	1096/IX/InfoDay
Question: At brokerage and match making event are travel and subsistence costs of client SMEs participating in the event eligible?	
Answer: No, travel and subsistence of client SMEs are not eligible.	

Reference number	1116/IX/InfoDay
Question: Est-ce que les couts de formation du personnel sont éligibles comme "Couts de personnel" (il s'agit de la formation spécifique sur l'activité et le fonctionnement du réseau).	
Answer: Les couts de formation du personnel sont éligibles pour autant qu'il s'agit d'une formation spécifique et nécessaire pour l'activité. (voir également question/réponse 79/IX/22012007).	

Reference number	1110/IX/InfoDay
Question: Can we reserve part of the budget to assist financially some clients?	
Answer: No.	

Reference number	1111/IX/InfoDay
Question: Under which cost category fall computer hardware and software which are exclusively	

devoted to the project?	
Answer: Computer hardware and software is covered by the 30% indirect costs, nevertheless, specific software directly related to the project may be eligible under other specific costs (see II.15.2.4(c) of the FPA)	

Reference number	1118/IX/InfoDay
Question: If a product or a service developed in FP6/FP7 is used or foreseen, is it eligible?	
Answer: No if a service or a product is already financed by FP6/FP7, it cannot be an eligible cost	

Reference number	1131/IX/InfoDay
Question: Is the cost for producing the audit for the 2 last year accounts eligible?	
Answer: No.	

Non-eligible costs

Reference number	1081/IX/InfoDay
Question: It was said that non-eligible costs must be detailed in the proposal. Do these include as in EIC's financial reporting reference to network activities carried out by network members and funded by other EU programme projects?	
Answer: Non eligible costs may be included in the proposals in order to check the non profit character of the award organisation.	

Reference number	1094/IX/InfoDay
Question: What is meant by non-eligible costs and how they have to be specified?	
Answer: Please refer to Article II.15. of the FPA for the definition of the non eligible costs.	

Reference number	167/IX/02022007
Question: Do we have to indicate the non-eligible costs in our costs and revenues tables or not? Which costs are considered as non-eligible ones?	
Answer: You have the possibility to indicate your non-eligible costs. All costs that are not included in the eligible cost category will be regarded as non-eligible; in particular the costs mentioned under II.15.4 of the FPA are not eligible.	

Reference number	481/IX/26032007
Question: Can a governmental agency, being a consortium partner, regard personnel costs as eligible? If not, is an exemption possible? For instance, if no other relevant proposal from our region is submitted?	
<p>Answer:</p> <p>The aim of the Article II.15.4, ninth bullet point, is to avoid the <u>double financing</u> of the same costs in accordance with the Article 111 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities.</p> <p>The eligible character of the cost of public officials assigned to the action by a co-partner depends on the following two elements:</p> <p>1) If the public officials put at the disposal of the partner (being a public body) by the central or the local governments <u>do not generate any cost</u> for the partner, then the use of these officials for the action is considered as a <u>contribution in kind</u> excluded from this call for proposals. If, notwithstanding this exclusion, the partner decides to make use of these officials for the execution of the action, this use should not be mentioned in the proposals.</p>	

2) If the public officials put at the disposal of the partner (being a public body) by the central of the local governments generate a cost for the partner, then the use of these officials for the action is considered as:

2.1. Non eligible, in accordance with the Article II.15.4 of the FPA, if the partner does not control the financial workflows of these officials (i.e.: he may not decide to allocate the funds assigned for these officials by the central or the local governments to one or another action to get an additional funding from the EU for example). In the proposal, the cost of these officials should be reported in the category 'non eligible costs';

2.2. Eligible if the partner fully controls the financial workflows of these officials (i.e.: he may decide to allocate the funds assigned for these staff by the central or the local governments to one or another action to get an additional funding from the EU for example). In that case, evidence that the risk of double funding is mitigated should be provided. To this respect, applicants may add a declaration on oath in the proposal.

Financial responsibility

Reference number	1114/IX/InfoDay
Question: Are partners within the consortium financially inter-dependent? i.e. if one partner is unable to fulfil their requirements does any financial burden?	
Answer: No. Please refer to Article II.19 of the FPA.	

Checks and audits

Reference number	432/IX/14032007
Question: Once we have presented our proposal, if the EC approves it, we must present our activities. Until now, the EIC had got from the European Commission an annual amount to finance its annual activities, but as far as we know now, this is going to change, so that only single activities & projects are going to be financed. However, we do not know how to demonstrate the expenditures without invoices (like salaries of the working staff, copies of documents, etc): how can we demonstrate these expenditures? Could be a sound declaration of the manager of the network enough?	
Answer: At the moment of proposal submission you will just present an estimated budget (see submission set section IX-Annex 2-Preliminary Work Programme).	

Reference number	1120/IX/InfoDay
Question: Will time sheets be necessary for justifying the time spent in the project? Or will SAP – based sheets suffice? At least for staff working 100% for the CIP?	
Answer: Any kind of tool is accepted as long as it provides records for the staff working hours.	

Audit certificates

Reference number	212/VI.2
Question: If the requested amount exceeds € 500.000 there is written (VI.Evaluation Procedure, 2. Selection, Financial Capacity), that an audit report on the annual accounts for the last two financial years is necessary. Does this also apply for public bodies?	
Answer: No, it is not required for the case of a public body.	

Reference number	329/IX/19022007 Audit certificates
Question: Would it be ok to submit the audited years 2002-2003 due to the fact that our organization (a public body) will most probably request more than 500.000 Euros for funding. Years 2004-2005 have not been audited yet by the National Auditor General. The question here is if we are allowed to	

submit older audited accounts and not recent ones.
Answer : According to Art. 173.4 of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation, the following rule applies (see in particular the part in bold) : Where the application concerns grants for an action for which amount exceeds EUR 500,000 or operating grants of which exceed EUR 100,000, an audit report produced by an approved external auditor shall be submitted. That report shall certify the accounts for the last financial year available.
The provisions of the first subparagraph shall apply only to the first application made by a beneficiary to an authorising officer in any one budget year.
In the case of agreements linking the Commission and a number of beneficiaries, those thresholds shall apply to each beneficiary.
In case of partnerships as referred to in Article 163, the audit referred to in the first subparagraph, covering the last two financial years available must be produced before the framework agreement is concluded.
The authorising officer responsible may, depending on his risk assessment, waive the obligation of audit referred to in the first subparagraph for, secondary and higher education establishments and beneficiaries who have accepted joint and several liabilities in the case of agreements with a number of beneficiaries.
The first subparagraph shall not apply to public bodies and the international organisations referred to in Article 43 (2).

Reference number	1093/IX/InfoDay
Question: External audits after evaluation & before FPA: what exactly will be certified?	
Answer: Yearly accounts need to be certified. The statutory audit for the yearly accounts is sufficient evidence.	

Specific grant agreement

Reference number	91/IX/22012007
Question: In Annex II (Specific Grant agreement), Article 4.2, there are mentioned three interim payments. On the other hand, the SA is valid only for three years, i.e. two periods of 18 months. Isn't it?	
Answer: The Model specific grant agreement has to be adapted to the specific needs of a project to be contracted. The Model allows options for up to three interim payments should the need arise.	

Reference number	111/IX/22012007
Question: Are there possibilities to amend a proposal by the time a decision on granting is about to be taken? Or later, during the 3 year period of a Work Program, in which new insights and ideas may occur.	
Answer: Amendment procedures for both the Framework Agreement and the specific grant agreement are described in Article II.14 of the General conditions of the Framework Partnership agreement.	

Reference number	1127/IX/InfoDay
Question: Can activities submitted in the work plan and budgeted, be changed, modified, put in different time or replaced by alternative activities or will we be bound by the activities originally suggested?	
Modifications that do not change the scope of the project and the objectives that are set under which the proposal was awarded may be possible and suggested after the signature of the contract (see FPA). Please refer to Article 2.14	

X. Q & A Other

Reference number	8/other/15122006
Question: Can you tell us whether the attached outline of our project is appropriate to be proposed for financing under this call / under the CIP programme?	
Answer: There will be not any kind of pre-screening of proposals. Proposers are asked to check carefully the submission set and in particular the evaluation procedure and the selection criteria.	

Reference number	42/other/22122006
Question: Are there examples of good projects for CIP?	
Answer: Annex 4 mentions the most valuable sources of information on existing projects directly related to this call.	

Reference number	75,76,81/other/22012007
Question: Not having an active EIC in my country at the moment and in the interest of submitting a more complete and integrated proposal, I would like to be given the possibility of accessing the EIC database.	
Answer: Access to current EIC and IRC network databases and other informatics tools are not possible to non-network members for logistical and confidentiality reasons. There are several public sites and reference documents listed in Annex 4 of the submission set which give detailed information on EIC and IRC activities.	

Reference number	78/other/22012007
Question: What are the requirement and/or procedure we should follow to be member of the current IRC Network?	
Answer: The current IRC network will cease its operation on March 31st 2008. There is currently no possibility to join the network as a partner unless the local IRC consortium would request it and justify the enlargement of the consortium. The European Commission carefully evaluates such a request and has to agree to it. The published call for proposal will establish a new network. All procedures for the application and selection of proposals are described in the submission set.	

Reference number	92 and 93/other/22012007
Question: Could you please inform me about the National Contact Points. Are you planning other info days at international and local level?	
Answer: Please note there will be no other info days. Also in the single network call there are no NCP.	

Reference number	95/other /22012007
Question: We would be grateful if you could provide us the information as regards the average cost of a project and the possible partners which should be involved.	
Answer: For reasons of transparency and equal treatment the European Commission cannot give any specific advice to potential applicants regarding the design of a project proposal. Please read carefully the call text, the submission set and the documented answers to questions under http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/funding/grants/themes_2006/eic_irc/calls_prop_2006_eic_irc_d2.htm	

Reference number	107/other/22012007
Question: To which EU data or information does an EIC have access to, compared to non-EIC/ IRC organisations? Where can a complete overview be found?	
Answer: Annex 4 of the Submission set gives an overview of the activities of the current EIC and IRC networks. The web site links listed under Annex 4 allow obtaining further information about the services and resources of the current networks. The EIC network also operates an intranet in which information about European issues and the network life are available. Staff of EICs also attends	

training sessions in which they receive up-dates about European issues and programmes. Access to internal EIC network tools is not possible for confidentiality and logistical reasons.

Reference number	112/other/22012007
Question: In the Call terms as "activity", "action", "service" and "project" are used. What is the difference between these terms?	
Answer: For the purpose of this call, the following explanations are provided, referring to the terminology of the submission set: "Project" means the entity of all activities, actions, services and management arrangements of an accepted proposal. "Activity" largely corresponds to the entity of services and actions under the sub-headings of modules A, B, and C (i.e. point IV.1.1 to IV.3.3). "Service" is used to describe a group of actions directly addressing the target group. "Action" is used to designate the use of certain instruments or methodologies by staff (or occasionally sub-contractors) to provide a service and contribute to the realisation of an activity.	

Reference number	120/other/02022007
Question: How can I find some partners to make a proposal or to take part to a project?	
Answer: Please note that for this call there is no partner cooperation database.	

Reference number	176/other/02022007
Question: Could you please define the "indirect beneficiaries" ?	
Answer: Direct beneficiaries of the project are those from the target group that are addressed <u>and</u> reached by the project's activities. They get different levels of tangible benefits from the project, for example, better market information or agreements with partners abroad. Indirect beneficiaries are not directly addressed by the project's activities but have benefits from it.	

Reference number	206/other/09022007
Question: Does the Commission take the view that in the UK the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 and 2006 which are known as TUPE in the UK applies or not? These regulations, and amendments, implement the European Community Acquired Rights Directive 1977 and have different names in other states."	
Answer: The Call does not address employment protection legislation. Applicants are required to confirm that host organisations are registered EU legal entities at the time of application. Issues related to Member State employment legislation should be addressed to the national government concerned, or, if there are queries regarding the transposition of EU employment legislation at national level, then the Commission's Employment and Social Affairs DG can be contacted. Further details on the latter can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/labour_law/contact_en.htm ."	

Reference number	235/other/02022007
Question: Will there be a national coordinator, if yes, what will be the role of the national coordinator and local organisation?	
Answer: No, there is no national coordinator role. In the case of a submission on behalf of consortium a proposal coordinator will submit the proposal on behalf of the other participants in the consortium. Please check Annex -5, Guide for electronic submission of proposals.	

Reference number	236/other/02022007
Question: Is there any organisation that is your official interlocutor for this specific call?	
Answer: No.	

Reference number	251/other/19022007
Question: As a partner of a consortium applying for this call, do we have the possibility to have access to DATABASES (e.g. Cooperation Databases), to Specific Training provided by the Commission concerning the field of the specific Call for Proposals or use the logo and/or other	

elements of visibility of the future network, etc.?	
Answer: Only organisations that are partners in a selected consortium will have the possibility to use the different tools and services offered to the network partners.	

Reference number	260/other/09022007
Question: When the same organization is a project coordinator and also provides services within one of the module (module (a)) - how it has to be reflected in the financial form: shall we fill in one table (service module table - coordinator) or we have to show our costs in two tables - one as for co-ordination costs and additionally as a partner 2 (for services provider). And also "Name of the partner" - it is the name of the Host organization?	
Answer: The project coordinator only has to fill in one form, with all his costs. Yes, the name of the partner is the name of the host organisation.	

Reference number	271 /other/02032007
Question: The exchange rate towards a currency of MS that does not belong to the eurozone: can we use for the whole project an exchange rate corresponding to average of qualified prediction for next 6 years? The problem is serious because losses in this field are not eligible costs. For an amount of thousands euros a loss in the case of exchange rate changes is considerable.	
Answer: Please note that the (first) Specific Agreement will cover an initial period of 36 months. In respect with the exchange rate issue, it is indeed difficult to forecast the exchange rate that will be used when actually paying the grant. The budget requested is an estimation of the costs you will incur for developing the action under the specific agreement. The grant awarded by the Commission will be up to a maximum of 60% of this estimation. Consequently, applicants have all the right and freedom to choose the method they think being the most appropriate to forecast their costs. The Commission concerns on the justification and the eligibility of the costs of the Call and considers justified to anticipate this factor in estimating the budget.	

Reference number	274/other/02032007
Question:How to plan some future international activities? Can we expect tendering of some additional international projects, or should we put some additional expenses separately in travels, actions etc.?	
Answer: It is up to each applicants to decide whether they want to out-source, or not, part of the activities proposed (ie. •international activities). If they decide to out-source this activity, then the budget (and the actual costs that will be materialised by an invoice), have to be recorded under the category 'sub-contracting / in-house or external consultants' (taking into account the limit of 20% of all other eligible costs). If they decide not to out-source this activity and use their own internal staff, then the budget (and the actual costs materialised by working hours spent on this activity) have to be recorded under the categories 'Personnel' and 'Travels & subsistence'.	

Reference number	475/other/19032007
Question: Is it compulsory to use the EUROPASS CV template and if not how detailed do the CVs have to be? In the past a career synopsis of about 10 lines was enough.	
Answer: It is not obligatory to use to EUROPASS CV format. Any format providing the necessary information about the suitability and the competences of the persons that will be involved in the project, is acceptable.	

Reference number	1057/other/InfoDay
Question: Will be submission set also be published in German/French/..?	
Answer: No.	

Reference number	1078/other/InfoDay
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Question: Do you think that EIC is supposed to be orientated on promotion and information in the project as a result they have good background just in information and promotion?

Answer: The EIC network will end in December 2007. Most of the current EIC services will be taken up in module A, as part of the intergraded services that will be provided in the new network.

Reference number | 1106/other/InfoDay

Question: Est-ce qu'on peut envisager un changement de stratégie après le première période de 36 mois? Fait-il anticiper cette évolution ou bien sera-t-il possible de produire une annexe à la proposition initiale modifiant la stratégie de départ?

Answer: Conformément à l'annexe 2 du guide de soumission, la stratégie de mise en œuvre de cet appel à proposition est fixée pour toute la durée du FPA ; le premier programme de travail fixera les activités et services —pour une 1^{ère} période de 3 années (2008-2010)- Sur base des résultats de l'évaluation de cette 1^{ère} période, un ou plusieurs programmes de travail seront demandé pour une ou plusieurs périodes subséquentes.

Questions on the Competitiveness and Innovation Program

Reference number | 7/other/15122006

Question: Is there an EIP work programme?

Answer: The work programme is currently under development, please check regularly the website http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/enterprise_policy/cip/index_en.htm

Reference number | 44/other/22122006

Question: Can you give me a reference number of a person in charge of the CIP Programme in my country?

Answer: Please consult the relevant ministry in your country or your country's Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels.

Reference number | 1065/other/InfoDay

Question: Has the European Commission foreseen any call restricted to the members of the new network as outlined in Art. 21.4 of the CIP document?

Answer: Art. 21.4 opens the possibility to publish calls restricted to the members of the network. However currently no such plans exist but may arise during the 7 year duration of the program