EUROPEAN COMMISSION
ENTERPRISE AND INDUSTRY DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Directorate F: Tourism, CSR, Consumer Goods and International Regulatory Agreements

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Answers to requests for clarifications

Call for proposals

ACTION N°: 41/G/ENT/CIP/12/E/N02S001

TITLE: European Multistakeholder platforms on corporate social responsibility in relevant business sectors

Question 1	*The regional government, which I represent, is interested in participating in the current call of proposals. In that sense we would like to ask you the following questions:* *1.Is this the first call for this type of action, or is therea data base of funded projects under past calls.* *2.Is there a website/data base/forum, where we could search for partners* *3.Is there going to be an info-day*
Answer 1	1. We have already published a similar call 2 years ago and the selected projects can be found at the following site : http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/corporate-social-responsibility/csr_platforms/index_en.htm 2. There is no specific contact point but we intend to publish a list of organisations that are looking for partners. Can we include your name and email address as the contact point for your organisation? 3. There will be no info-day.
Question 2	*I am interested in this Call, but would like to know if Switzerland is eligible to apply.*
Answer 2	Switzerland does not participate to the Competitiveness & Innovation Programme (CIP) and is not eligible for this call.
Question 3	*I need some clarification about the essential elements stated in article 2 point 3 of the objective of the call: "...each individual platform should, through the membership networks of the applicant organisations, cover as many EIP participating countries as possible"* *What do you mean by the "membership network of the applicant organisations"? Is the requirement of European coverage referred to applicant's formal network or, alternately, to platform participants?*
Answer 3	The expectation regarding European coverage should preferably be met through the formal membership networks of applicant organisations. However proposals may also seek to meet this expectation by taking into account the national origin of organisations that are themselves members of the proposed platform.
Question 4	*I would like to know if a public authority, for example a municipality, is eligible to apply for this call as applicant.*

Answer 4	The answer is yes, if they can comply with the substantial requirements of the call.
Question 5	*Could I kindly ask you to clarify the minimum number of partners in case of a consortium? Is the transnational condition an obligation in case of consortium? I can assume that 2 partners from the same country would be enough*
Answer 5	There is no minimum number of partners to compose the consortium. The most important element is that the platform should cover at least 15 EIP countries, independently of the number of partners applying for the project.
Question 6	*1.* *a) Must applicant organizations be located in 15 European different countries?* *or* *b) Must organizations participating in the project (not necessarily as member of the partnership) be located in 15 EU countries?* *2. Have the organizations involved been part of a formally constituted network?*
Answer 6	1. The question is not relevant. The platform should cover at least 15 EIP countries, independently of the number of partners applying for the project. 2. NO, but they must be committed to be part of it.
Question 7	*1. Are partners from Greenland eligible?* *2. a) Has there been (or will there be) an info day on the call as to act as a brokerage event? b) Or is there any other way to get in touch with other partners interested in this call?*
Answer 7	1. Yes, they are. 2. a) There is no “info-day” foreseen. B) see answer 1
Question 8	*We are interested in this call but is it possible to have a precise definition of "platform" in the sense of the call title?*
Answer 8	There is no precise definition of "The platform". The call states what the Commission wants to achieve and what kind of output the Commission expects. It is part of the proposal to define how "the platform" should be designed to meet the requirements of the call.
Question 9	*Is it possible to co-finance by means of staff payrolls? I mean, do we have to co-finance in cash?*
Answer 9	Yes, it is. See also VII.15. FORM B/2 - FINANCING PLAN SUMMARY SHEET of the Guide for Applicants
Question 10	*1) I understand that during the proposal writing I am already supposed to know which organizations will make part of the platform. Is this correct?* *2) I understand that the platform should be made of at least 15 organizations (from at least 15 different countries), no matter if they are applicants or just members of the platform. Is this correct?*
Answer 10	For both questions, the answer is YES
Question 11	*We are a non governmental organisation, working as a national platform of national volunteers organisations. We are a part of XXXXX and also some other EU networks. We are also working a lot on corporate volunteering projects, trying to connect the NGO sector with the buisness. We have been preparing for this call and have already*

	checked the previously selected projects. *Do we have to propose the new, European platform which includes – as member or as partners –a minimum of 15 different organisations/companies/public bodies … from 15 different EU/EIP countries?*
Answer 11	See Answer 6.1 - The platform should cover at least 15 EIP countries, independently of the number of partners applying for the project.
Question 12	*How do you meet the criterion of minimum coverage of 15 countries.* *1) can I invite other organizations of 15 countries in the platform if they are not partners of the project?* *2)can the partnership only be made by partners of the same country?*
Answer 12	See Answer 6.1 - The platform should cover at least 15 EIP countries, independently of the number of partners applying for the project.
Question 13	*We have several sectors that we can focus for the proposed project. However some of them have no previous experience on CSR system/actions (i.e. olive oil production) overall but they are interested in participating and developing a CSR profile for their sector. Could a sector with no CSR experience be eligible for the specific call, or the objectives of the call can only be met with a sector that already has an elementary know how on CSR?*
Answer 13	In principle this is possible; however it seems difficult to involve "multistakeholders and companies across a sector in at least 15 EIP participating countries..." without any CSR experience.
Question 14	*a) We, as regional EEN node, have received a consultation from a municipal public administration (city council) about the possibility to focus the project in «CSR in micro-smes" instead of a specific business sector. Would it be eligible?* *b) I have also read in FAQs that a municipality has shown interest in participating in this call, at the same time that it is looking for partners or interested in joining a consortium. Your response to this question seems to be that you intent to publish a list with interested organizations with their contact details. What kind of information do you request from the interested parties*
Answer 14	a) The answer is "no" we explicitly want focus on business sectors. So in my view all further questions are irrelevant. b) see list published under the call text.
Question 15	*1. Can foundations and Private Institutions of Social Solidarity, Non Governmental Organizations, banks and Credit Institutions compete?* *2. Can some of these companies (or organizations) compete together in the some project?* *3. If the organizations may compete together in the some project, may they belong to the same group?* *4. Can structures representing enterprises compete ?*
Answer 15	At this stage, we cannot reply to this question. The evaluation committee will be the only one to assess the eligibility of the Partners of a proposal.
Question 16	*a) Is it necessary that the applicant be an entity or a consortium? b) As it is said that the platform should encompass 15 countries… If not, should those 15 countries be identified within the proposal?*
Answer 16	a) Can be both. b) Yes, because participants need to be identified in the proposal.

Question 17	*Where can I find the list of relevant business sectors?*
Answer 17	There is no such list. "Relevant business sectors" refers to the possible proposals to create such platforms; which sector(s) is/are considered relevant is be defined by the (sector) organisations submitting proposals.
Question 18	*We would like to know how is the term "business sector" defined for the call. Should we follow the NACE list coding?*
Answer 18	We have not predefined "sector", so it up to the applicants how they define "sector" in relation to their proposal.
Question 19	*Do you consider that tourism is relevant enough so as to submit a proposal concerning the creation of a platform on CSR in tourism?*
Answer 19	We did not to prejudge on any sector. The call text explicitly says under point 1 "Context": "The Commission deliberately wants to leave it open to business sectors to apply and has not taken any prior decision to focus on a particular business sector".
Question 20	*"The involvement of European-wide sector-based business federations is considered especially important to the success of the platforms."* 1. *Because of its transnational nature, how is a European federation regarded in terms of nationality?* 2. *If a federation is made up of partners from 3 different Countries (e.g. Italy, Sweden and Spain), does it help me to fulfill 3 out of the 15-country-requirement of the call?* 3. *Maybe is the legal address valid as the criteria for establishing it?*
Answer 20	1. We assume that for example. the european organisation / association / federation of the industrial sector "X" is the umbrella organisation for those representing the sector "X" on national or subnational level in the EIP Participating countries. If another organisation applies, they will have to gather at least 15 "multistakeholder partners" from different countries to participate in the platform. However the proposal could be made by one "lead organisation". 2. Yes, but those partners should actively participate in the "Platform". 3. Yes
Question 21	*I would like to ask whether small businesses (up to 50 employees) could qualify as a "business sector" in and by themselves. Many thanks in advance for your reply.*
Answer 21	Business sectors are for example. textile, construction, tourism,…. Multistakeholder platforms must have several members with a focus on a "relevant business sector", one/some of which can be SMEs.
Question 22	*According to the target organizations listed hereinafter, a public body could be considered as a public authority for the purpose of the call?* *Applicants (lead organisation and any partner organisations) must correspond to the definition of the following target organisations :* *- Sector-based employers'/ business organisation or business network* *- Individual private or public company* *- Trade union* *- Non-governmental organisation* *- Public authority* *- Academic or educational/training institution*
Answer 22	For the purpose of this call, a public body can be considered as a public authority.

Question 23	*We would like to know if an association formed by different members of different countries presents its scheme to the call, these countries already encompass the 15 that have to hold the platform (just because of the filing of the association) or do they have to ratify one by one.* *On the other hand, I would like to know that if in the case these countries (the ones which form the association) have at the same time cooperation agreements with other countries, these ones would also conform the platform (just as members of it not as partners).*
Answer 23	The expectation regarding European coverage should preferably be met through the formal membership networks of applicant organisations. However proposals may also seek to meet this expectation by taking into account the national origin of organisations that are themselves members of the proposed platform. The most important element is that the platform should cover at least 15 EIP countries, independently of the number of partners applying for the project. All partners must be committed to be part of the platform and partners should actively participate in the "Platform". Please refer to Answers 3, 5, 6 and 20 of our published "Questions and Answers" document.
Question 24	*In part VII.15. FORM B/2 - FINANCING PLAN SUMMARY SHEET of the guidelines, it is written :* *The income side of the forward budget should show:* *The direct monetary contribution from the applicant and, if applicable, its contribution from its own resources (e.g. cost of personnel involved).* *Just for clarification, could you explain what is meant by "if applicable"? Are there some exceptions to this rule, some conditions to meet?*
Answer 24	This means that the contribution of each partner may be monetary and/or from its own resources (e.g. Staff Costs). The nature and the repartition of the consortium's contribution is left to the appreciation of the consortium partners as long as the minimum contribution requested in the Call text is provided;
Question 25	*As point 5.2. is not clear enough, is a legally constituted non profit association eligible to participate in the call for proposals as a lead entity, and to elaborate its own platform including the various organisations listed in the call text ?*
Answer 25	See also answer 15: At this stage, we cannot reply to this question. The evaluation committee will be the only one to assess the eligibility of the Partners of a proposal. Furthermore it is essential that proposals comply with all objectives and requirements of the call.
Question 26	*I address you in order to know if a private and non-profit foundation could act as the leader organization in a "European Multistakeholders platform on corporate social responsibility in relevant business sectors" project ?*

Answer 26	Applying organisations will have to gather at least 15 "multistakeholder partners" from different countries to participate in the platform. All those partners should actively participate in the "Platform". The evaluation committee will be the only one to assess the eligibility of the Partners of a proposal. Essential is that the proposal can comply with the substantial requirements of the call.
Question 27	*We are not sure if our client titled XXXX, that is a Legal Person, non profit, research organisation is included in the target organisations for the call:* *- Individual private or public company* *- Trade union* *- Non-governmental organisation* *- Public authority* *- Academic or educational/training institution* *XX is interested in participating as a partner in proposal for this call, then, we would like to know if XX is an eligible entity for this call. XX has already the following PIC number:XX. We would be very grateful if you could clarify us this doubt*.
Answer 27	See also Answer 15. At this stage, we cannot reply to this question. The evaluation committee will be the only one to assess the eligibility of the Partners of a proposal." Essential is that the proposal can comply with the substantial requirements of the call.
Question 28	*We are now working to build a consortium formed by a local authority, a university, an association of sector-based private stakeholder based in Barcelona and another one representing the hotel associations of 26 EU member states. The aim of the consortium will be to deeply analyse the situation of the sector regarding RSC, prepare a roadmap to improve RSC in European hotels and spread it European wide. I ask you kindly if you could please give us your point of view regarding if this consortium and its activity would be considered as a multistakeholder platform.*
Answer 28	Applying organisations will have to gather at least 15 "multistakeholder partners" from different countries to participate in the platform. However the proposal could be made by one "lead organisation". However it is essential that all multistakeholder partners actively participate in the "Platform" which comprises more than an analysis as explained under objectives of the call.
Question 29	*I would like to know if this call of proposals 41/G/ENT/CIP/12/E/N02S001 - European Multistakeholder platforms on corporate social responsibility in relevant business sectors could be related to the sector cruise ?*
Answer 29	See Answer 19: "We did not to prejudge on any sector. The call text explicitly says under point 1 "Context": "The Commission deliberately wants to leave it open to business sectors to apply and has not taken any prior decision to focus on a particular business sector". The proposal should comply with all the eligibility criteria and objectives of the call.

Question 30	*The evaluation/selection criteria are not specific and will result in a lot of fitting proposals. I would like to have an understanding how the final selection will be done.* *As for our organisation we have quite some motivated national sector networks wishing to extend the national to a EU CSR approach (Construction-materials, Care, Tourism, Retail, Accountants, etc). We (and also our business partners) have a close relation with 25 countries on CSR, so it is feasible to extend the platform.*
Answer 30	Please see point 11 of tor; evaluation committee will check and compare all proposals received according to same criteria. Applying organisations will have to gather at least 15 "multistakeholder partners" from different countries to participate in the platform. All those partners should actively participate in the "Platform".
Question 31	*In the 5.2 section of the call for proposals, we can read: "Applicants must correspond to the definition of the following target organisations: Sector-based employers'/business organisation or business network; individual private or public company/trade union/ non-governmental organisation/public authority/academic or educational/training institution". Should a consortium be composed of at least one of each target organisation? And how many EU member states should be represented?* *We have also to choose one relevant business sector. In this sector should the CSR strategy be taken as a whole? Or can we deal with only one specific constituent of a CSR strategy (diversity, multiculturality, environmental, supply chains…concerns)?*
Answer 31	Please see Answer 20 1. We assume that for example. the European organisation / association / federation of the industrial sector "X" is the umbrella organisation for those representing the sector "X" on national or subnational level in the EIP Participating countries. If another organisation applies, they will have to gather at least 15 "multistakeholder partners" from different countries to participate in the platform. However the proposal could be made by one "lead organisation". CSR strategic commitments should be more general than just on one specific .
Question 32	*As the enterprises we represent are quite small (most are familiar enterprises or dairies which employ up to 20 persons...), we wanted to check if our sector can be taken into account by your area. Can you tell us if our project can be submit to the call for proposal?*
Answer 32	Please note that the Commission services cannot, for reasons of equal treatment, neither assess proposals at this stage nor help to draft proposals. Assessing the proposal is the exclusive competence of an appointed evaluation committee. Such committee can under no circumstances perform its duties prior to the submission of proposals. Our reply to your questions has to be considered as a clarification of the published call for proposals document and under no circumstances as an assessment of parts of a proposal.

	The proposal should supply sufficient evidence that the aims of the call will be met.
Question 33	*The Association accounts with 10 different EIP participating countries. Would this be enough? Or is mandatory that the proposal has 15 EIP countries? In the call of proposals we got the impression it would be recommended but not mandatory, but in the FAQs sometimes it seems a requirement.* *Besides the EIP countries number, could you also kindly confirm us that the call of proposal maximum budget allocation is 600.000€?*
Answer 33	As stated in the call under 2.3 it is mandatory that the proposal has 15 EIP countries. As mentioned in Section 4 "EU financing" of the Call text : Maximum budget allocated for this call for proposals is € 600.000. Maximum EU co-financing rate of eligible costs: 75 % Maximum European Union co-financing ceiling per project: € 200.000
Question 34	*I read your FAQs but I need a clarification about the coverage of at least 15 EIP countries by the platform.* *If the applicant is an Italian Chamber of Commerce, how can be possible to reach that number? Could you make a more specific example?*
Answer 34	The subject of the call is to create a platform which should cover at least 15 EIP countries, independently of the number of partners applying for the project. The names of the countries and partners should be given in the proposal as all partners must be committed to be part of the platform and partners should actively participate in the "Platform. Therefore you need to find Partners to fulfil this criterion. We have no specific example.
Question 35	*Is it compulsory to give the names of the 15 different countries which are going to participate in the platform that we would like to create? It is one of the hardest parts in the project, we are going to start working with it now but we would like to know if we should give the names in the proposal or just way until the project is accept*
Answer 35	Yes, the names should be given in the proposals as all partners must be committed to be part of the platform and partners should actively participate in the "Platform".
Question 36	*Can you please explain more accurately in what sense 15 EIP countries have to be included in the Platform for: "European Multi-stakeholder platforms on corporate social responsibility in relevant business sectors"? Reviewing the text of the Call for Proposals and FAQ, it is unclear to us weather we have to include partners in the platform from 15 countries minimum, or the stakeholders from other countries can just demonstrate the readiness to use the results of our project-platform/or join the platform in later stage?*
Answer 36	As stated in the call under 2.3 it is mandatory that the proposal has 15 EIP countries. Applying organisations will have to gather at least 15 "multistakeholder partners" from different countries to participate in the platform. All those partners should actively participate in the "Platform".
Question 37	*a) Maximum EU co-financing rate is 75%.* *Is it necessary for all partners (co-ordinator and partners) to co-finance*

	25% or for example co-ordinator pay 30% from their own recourses, 1.partner 20%, 2.partner 10% …? I would like to know whether the co-funding must be the same percentage for all partners? *b) I would like to know if the draft agreement about cooperation between all partners (partners and coordinator) has to be enclosed with proposal at the stage of electronic submission (in part B)?*
Answer 37	a) The co-financing must be applied on the total eligible costs. Therefore, the co-financing percentage by Partners can be different as long as the final funding by the beneficiary and his Partners reaches at least 25 % of the total eligible costs. b) Partnership agreement (PA) should be annexed to the proposal.
Question 38	*Is it possible for Chambers of Commerce and/or Industry to propose a project under this call?*
Answer 38	Chambers of Commerce and/or Industry can be considered as eligible but the evaluation committee will be the only one to assess the complete eligibility of the Partners of a proposal. Of course, the proposal should also comply with all the eligibility criteria and objectives of the call.
Question 39	*1) Can the providers of services of general interests (water, waste management, gas) participate to this call and create a platform? Can these sectors include in a definition of "relevant business sector"?* *2) There will be a new similar call in the next months?*
Answer 39	1) Yes they can 2) Nothing is foreseen at the moment
Question 40	*XXX is a non-governmental organisation. It is our intention to present a proposal to 41/G/ENT/CIP/12/E/N02S001 for developing a project that aims to create a platform to enhance exchanges, particularly to allow companies to observe good practices in other European countries, and at the final of the project we would like to organize a conference for public debate.*
Answer 40	At first glance your initiative does not fit the objectives of this call. We would like a commitment from companies and stakeholder from at least 15 EIP countries on CSR practices not an observatory or exchange of best practices. However, the evaluation committee will be the only one to assess the eligibility of a proposal. Essential is that the proposal can comply with the substantial requirements of the call