



Contracting Authority: European Commission

URB-AL III

Guidelines
for grant applicants

Budget line 1909.01

Reference: EuropeAid/126818/C/ACT/RAL

Deadline for submission of proposals: 16 June 2008

LEGAL NOTICE

The French, English and Portuguese translations are based on the original Spanish version. In the event of any contradictions, the Spanish original will prevail.

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1. URB-AL III

1.1 BACKGROUND

During its two first phases, the general objective of the Program URB-AL consisted of developing direct and lasting links among European and Latin American local groups through circulation, acquisition and implementation of "good practices" in the area of the urban and local policies.

URB-AL has worked essentially on the basis of the two following axes:

- exchange of experiences and work in thematic local government networks;
- institutional support for the local groups to obtain viable results;
- direct implication of the participants in the formulation, implementation and financing of the projects to guarantee a greater appropriation.

With these three elements, the aim was two-fold: on the one hand projects would attain a direct impact in the formulation and implementation of long term local public policies, on the other hand citizens would profit from those projects in the thirteen areas of action of the Programme.

This third phase of the Programme, with a budget of EUR 50 million for 4 years, aims to stimulate and support in Latin American countries processes and policies that contribute to generating social cohesion in the cities and medium level territorial entities (departments, provinces, federal states, etc.) that in many cases would correspond, according to their levels of autonomy and competences, to the EU regions/autonomies/länder.

This way URB-AL follows the new EU policy trends towards Latin America that, since the Guadalajara Summit (2004) contemplates social cohesion as the core of the "strategic alliance" between both regions.

The new phase of the Programme is conceived:

- taking into account the guidelines and rules contained in Regulation (EC) N° 1905/2006 of the European Parliament and the Council of 18 December 2006 by which a financing Instrument for Development cooperation is established;
- appreciating the experience acquired in the two preceding phases of the Programme and keeping the essential elements (in particular the relation between sub-national governments of both regions) that define the identity and the continuity of URB-AL;
- analyzing the lessons learned from the EUROsociAL program and through the projects of bilateral cooperation where social cohesion is the main objective;
- considering how the objective of social cohesion can be deflected at the level of sub-national governments' policies.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

General objective

Contribute to increasing the degree of social and territorial cohesion within local and regional entities in Latin America.

Specific objective

To consolidate or promote, in a limited number of cities and territories of Latin America and on the basis of partnerships and exchange of experiences, social cohesion processes and policies that may become reference models capable of generating debates, and of indicating possible solutions to the sub-national governments of Latin America that wish to stimulate social cohesion dynamics.

Context: The specific objective indicated above can only be ensured through a structured and clearly oriented action of all the Programme components. This objective cannot be reduced to a sum of independent actions that supposedly converge spontaneously towards a highly complex objective. In fact, to be able to reach the objective it is essential that all the actors that will take part in the Programme (EU and Latin American sub-national governments) recognise that its action, although independent, is not an end in itself, but only an essential instrument to ensure an objective that is reachable only by the Programme as a whole. The aforementioned recognition will have to be translated into an active collaboration with the institutions in charge of shaping and steering the programme.

Priorities

The present phase of the URB-AL programme has been constructed on the following hypothesis and observations:

- The partnerships and exchange of experiences among sub-national governments (both North-South and South-South) have an important role in the dissemination and strengthening of social cohesion policies.
- In Latin America, there are interesting experiences and emergent social cohesion generating processes at the local level, which might become reference models.
- One of the main characteristics of the social cohesion generating processes is their integral nature that reflects a general vision of the city/territory where it would be desirable to live in.

Consequently, in the evaluation of the proposals for Actions (projects) addressed to ensure the above indicated specific objective the Commission will apply the following priority criteria:

- ***Synergies among partners:*** partnerships and exchange of experiences will have to be conceived on the basis of related or shared political processes among the partners of Latin America and Europe. Consequently priority will be given to those proposals that put forward attainable objectives through effective cooperation between partners, that is to say, coordinated and collective actions that focus on a shared development of methodologies and have an innovative focus.
- ***Expression of cohesion policies:*** priority will be given to proposals emanating from local plans and policies addressing social and territorial cohesion for which a clear political will and a full consensus exist. Actions will have to represent an added value and/or a fostering effect of existing policies.
- ***Integrity:*** the proposed actions, even if they refer to a specific sector, will have to be the expression of an overall political strategy to increase social cohesion. Therefore, actions

eligible for funding will not represent isolated policies or welfare policies aiming at covering specific needs of certain vulnerable groups.

- **Original and exemplary:** proposals that have the potential of becoming reference models in the field of local public policies for social and territorial cohesion and that are not simply the reproduction of previous experiences will be prioritised.

1.3 FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is EUR 50 million. The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

The funds will be distributed in the following way:

Lot 1. Action proposals (projects) that comply with the eligibility requirements described below will be funded under this Lot. The above-mentioned criteria will be applied in the selection of proposals.

The total budget for Lot 1 is EUR 44 million.

Lot 2. A proposal to provide co-ordination, technical support, training and animation of networks and dissemination of results that will contribute to the construction of the programme from the different actions of Lot 1 will be funded under Lot 2.

The maximum amount for Lot 2 is EUR 6 million.

In the case where the minimum percentage foreseen for a specific lot cannot be used due to insufficient quality or number of proposals received, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to reallocate the remaining funds to another lot.

LOT 1 - Actions

Size of grants

Any grant awarded under this programme must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

- minimum amount: EUR 1,5 million
- maximum amount: EUR 3 million

A grant may not be for less than **50 % of the total eligible costs** of the Action.

In principle co-financing will represent at most **80%** of the total eligible costs of the Action (see also point 2.1.4).

The balance must be financed from the applicant's or the partners' own resources, or from sources other than the European Community budget or the European Development Fund.

LOT 2 - Studies, co-ordination and technical support, training and animation of networks, dissemination of results.

Amount of grants

- The maximum amount for Lot 2 grant will be EUR 6 million.

The grant may not be for less than **50 %** or above **80%** of the total eligible costs of the Action (see also point 2.1.4). The balance must be financed from the applicant's or partners' own resources, or from sources other than the European Community budget.

2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of actions financed under this call, in conformity with the provisions of the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions, which is applicable to the present call (available on the Internet at this address: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/index_en.htm).

2.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

- applicant(s) which may request a grant (2.1.1), and their partners (2.1.2),
- actions for which a grant may be awarded (2.1.3),
- types of cost which may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant (2.1.4).

2.1.1 *Eligibility of applicants: who may apply?*

(1) In order to be eligible for a grant, applicants **must**:

- be legal persons **and**
- be non profit making **and**
- be nationals¹ of a Member State of the European Union or of the countries that fall within the area of implementation of the Regulation establishing a Financial Instrument for Development Cooperation² **and**
- belong to the following category: **sub-national governments of the 27 Member States of the European Union or of the countries of Latin America³**. These can be the elected government of a city, an urban district, a province, a region or any other form of local or regional government, recognised as such by the legal regulations prevailing in the country of origin (sub-national governments can apply for grants under Lots 1 and 2) **and**
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with their partners, not acting as an intermediary **and**
- have stable and sufficient financial sources to guarantee the stability of the Action during its whole duration and to contribute to its co-financing **and**
- have sufficient capacity to manage actions of similar magnitude to that for which a grant is requested.

¹ Nationality will be determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes, which should demonstrate that the organisation has been established by a legal instrument under the internal law of the concerned country. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if they are locally registered or endowed with a "Memorandum of Understanding".

² Regulation (EC) N°1905/2006 of the European Parliament and the Council of 18 December of 2006, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/documents/legislation/legal_bases/development_cooperation_es.pdf

³ Latin America (LA) is understood as the 18 countries listed in Annex I of Regulation (EC) N°1905/2006 of the European Parliament and the Council of 18 December 2006: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

(2) Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations which are listed in Section 2.3.3 of the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions (available from the following Internet address:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/index_en.htm);

In part B, section VI of the grant application form (“Declaration by the applicant”), applicants must declare that they do not fall into any of the situations.

2.1.2 *Partnerships and eligibility of partners*

Applicants must act with partner organisations as specified hereafter⁴.

The applicant will act as the lead organisation and, if selected, as the contracting party (the "Beneficiary") and will hold the entire responsibility for the implementation of the Action in view of the Commission.

LOT 1 – Actions (Projects)

Partners

Each project proposal will include a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 9 partners in addition to the applicant.

However in duly justified cases in virtue of the size of the towns or administrative departments where the Action is to be implemented the Commission might accept a larger number of partners⁵.

As a whole, partners of the Project must come from at least one EU country and two different LA countries.

Applicants' partners participate in designing and implementing the Action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the grant Beneficiary. They must therefore satisfy the same eligibility criteria as applicants.

In addition to those categories listed in paragraph 2.1.1 other organisations might also be eligible as partners, such as those:

- who are not local governments (according to the definition in §2.1.1 (1)), such as, for example, associations, foundations, universities, trade unions, NGO or other similar organisations **and**
- who work in or with the local or regional sector in the field of social and/or territorial cohesion **and**
- whose central activity or main aim is directly related with the priority themes of this proposal (see point 2.1.3).

These partners may be included in the proposal in the rate of one every 3 local governments (including the applicant) and they **must have its head office in one of the partner territorial entities participating in the proposal.**

Shall any of the partners withdraw during the implementation of the Action or if extend the number of partners is deemed convenient, the Commission might approve, following a

⁴ Every partner needs to sign the Partnership Declaration annexed in the application form.

⁵ The derogation might be accepted, for instance, in the case of small municipalities (with a population of less than 15.000 citizens) acting in community; in the case of an action implemented in a group of municipalities that belong to a urban district that does not have legal personality or in the case of a joint action of a regional government with part of the local governments comprised in the latter).

sufficiently motivated request from the applicant, the replacement of some partners or the increase in its number.

The following are not partners and do not have to sign the “partnership statement”:

- Associates

Other organisations may be involved in the Action. Such associates play a real role in the Action but may not receive funding from the grant with the exception of per diem or travel costs. Associates do not have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in section 2.1.1. The associates have to be mentioned in Part B section IV - “Associates of the Applicant participating in the Action” of the Grant Application Form.

- Subcontractors

The grant beneficiaries have the possibility to award contracts to subcontractors. Subcontractors are neither partners nor associates, and are subject to the procurement rules set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

The applicant will act as the lead organisation and, if selected, as the contracting party (the "Beneficiary").

LOT 2 - Studies, co-ordination and technical support, training and animation of networks, dissemination of results.

Partners

Each project proposal will include a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 9 partners, in addition to the applicant.

As a whole, partners of the Project must come from at least one EU country and one LA country.

Applicants’ partners participate in designing and implementing the Action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the grant Beneficiary. They must therefore satisfy the same eligibility criteria as applicants.

However, in addition to the categories mentioned in paragraph 2.1.1, any EU or Latin American national or international foundations and institutions working in the sphere of decentralised cooperation or supporting local policies may also be eligible as partners.

The following are not partners and do not have to sign the “partnership statement”:

- Associates

Other organisations may be involved in the Action. Such associates play a real role in the Action but may not receive funding from the grant with the exception of per diem or travel costs. Associates do not have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in section 2.1.1. The associates have to be mentioned in Part B section IV - “Associates of the Applicant participating in the Action” of the Grant Application Form.

- Subcontractors

The grant beneficiaries have the possibility to award contracts to subcontractors. Subcontractors are neither partners nor associates, and are subject to the procurement rules set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

The applicant will act as the lead organisation and, if selected, as the contracting party (the "Beneficiary").

2.1.3 *Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made*

LOT 1 – Actions (Projects)

Definition: An action (or project) is composed of a set of activities.

The proposed actions will be considered eligible:

- if its specific objective is coherent with the specific objective of the Programme.

This means that all activity offered in each Action has to be clearly oriented to the promotion/consolidation of social cohesion processes and policies adapted to the needs of the towns/territories by which the grant is requested.

- if applicants explicitly declare that with the offered Action they intend to contribute to the specific objective of the third phase of URB-AL and they are committed to actively co-operate with the Programme **guiding entities**.

Duration

The planned duration of an action may not be less than 36 months nor exceed 48 months.

Sectors or themes

Taking into account:

- the fact that the objective of social cohesion is, by its own nature, multidimensional,
- that in order to achieve this objective an integrated policy-mix of sectorial policies is required,
- the instruments and competences which the sub-national governments have (city councils and other intermediate government organisations).

The proposed actions (Projects) will be registered, according to the relative importance of the foreseen activities, in one of the following sectors, which identify the *different aspects of social cohesion*.

For each one of the five sectors, an indicative, non exhaustive list of priority themes is proposed.

Productive and occupational dimension

In this sector will be presented the proposals whose activities are related among others with:

- policies and support activities for local economic development and the promotion of SMEs,
- innovation and territorial competitiveness policies,

- employment and vocational training active policies,
- policies for the regulation of the migratory flows and in support of the immigrants and returned emigrants' labour insertion,
- policies for the productive valorisation of the emigrants' remittances.

Social dimension: universal access to basic social services and public safety

In this sector will be presented the proposals whose activities are related among others with:

- the strengthening and the integration of basic social services (primary and technical-vocational education, health, water and sanitation, etc.) as tools for the construction, strengthening and warrant of citizenship,
- policies for private-public articulation and complementarity for the supply of basic services,
- public safety policies.

Civic dimension: construction of active citizenship

In this sector will be presented the proposals whose activities are related with identification and participation processes that contribute to create the sense of belonging to the local society, in particular:

- cultural policies for the construction of citizenship and cultural identity,
- youth policies,
- policies of promotion of public participation,
- cross-cutting gender and multicultural integration policies.

Territorial dimension: reduction of territorial inequalities

In this sector will be presented the proposals which present activities that can be put in place by local and regional governments to reduce territorial inequalities and promote territorial cohesion and regional integration, namely:

- policies of urban integration, social urbanization and quality improvement of the outskirts,
- zoning policies,
- models of integrated territorial management,
- cross-border cooperation.

Institutional dimension: institutional strengthening and local taxation

Taking into account the multidimensional nature of social cohesion and the difficulties linked to the policy making in this direction, the Programme will support local institutions in the field of strategic planning and training of policy managers. Furthermore, considering the problem of policy-funding, the Programme may also support the formulation and setting up of a suitable local taxation in accordance with the national laws in the matter.

In this sector will be presented the proposals with activities related, among others, with:

- inter-sectorial strategic planning for social cohesion,

- training for local institutions (political, administrative and technical levels),
- creation or consolidation of institutional public-private mechanisms for local or regional management,
- articulation of the different decision-making levels: local-regional-national,
- taxation and local finances.

Location

The Actions will be implemented, according to the type of activities (see the following title), in one or more of the following countries: the countries of Latin America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela) or the member states of the European Union.

Types of action

Looking at their function within the Action's framework activities can be divided in:

- specific activities: necessary activities to implement specific social cohesion policies in a particular urban or territorial reality. ***Specific activities can be carried out only in the countries of Latin America.***
- accompanying activities: activities that prepare, support and interact with the specific activities. Generally this type of activities are typical of the cities or territories (regions, etc.) that transfer experiences and knowledge, give support and guidance to the cities or territories where social cohesion policies are starting-up and where investments concentrate. ***Accompanying activities can be implemented both in LA and in EU countries.***

Considering that partnerships as well as exchanges and transfers of experiences between the EU and Latin America and among Latin American countries represent one of the main characteristics of the Programme, specific activities will normally be supported by accompanying activities (technical assistance, exchange of ideas, experiences and knowledge of social cohesion-related questions).

However, from a financial point of view, specific activities must represent the main part of the Actions (Projects). The expected cost of the accompanying activities can not exceed 20% of the total eligible costs of each Action.

Actions intending to fund specific activities taking place in the EU with Programme funds are not eligible.

This distinction aims to assure that all investments generating material and/or immaterial assets are made exclusively in the countries of Latin America listed in Regulation (EC) N° 1905/2006 of the European Parliament and the Council of 18 December 2006.

Evaluation of the Actions and assessment of results

The proposed Actions have to foresee and describe mid-term and final evaluations.

The outcome of the Actions on social and territorial cohesion has to be measurable. To this end, proposals will have to determine indicators of process and result, from the point of view of the particular contribution of the project to social and territorial cohesion.

Should the proposal be selected, results will represent a firm commitment.

Re-granting

In order to **support the achievement of the objectives of the Action**, and in particular where the **implementation of the Action proposed by the Applicant requires financial support to be given to third parties**, the Applicant **may** propose awarding sub-grants.

The maximum amount is limited to EUR 10.000 per third party of the sub-grant while the total amount which can be awarded as sub-grants to third parties is limited to EUR 100.000.

The list containing the types of activities which may be eligible for sub-grants under this Call for proposal have to be submitted by the Applicant together with the submission of its proposal.

The following types of action are ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;

Personnel

The curriculum vitae of the institutional and technical coordinators in charge of the implementation of the Action must be included in the proposal and will be considered as an integral part of it. In case where permanent experts are foreseen their curriculum vitae will also need to be included in the proposal. For these purposes, the standard model of the European Commission will be used: http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/vernav/Europass+Documents/Europass+CV/navigate.action?locale_id=11).

Number of proposals and grants per applicant

An applicant shall not submit more than 1 proposal per lot under this call for proposals.

One organisation (eligible as "applicant" or as "partner") can take part in up to three proposals (including the proposal where it acts as "applicant") of Lot 1 depending on the type of activities to be developed (specific or support actions).

The general principle is that one organisation (either European or Latin American) can take part in a maximum of three accompanying activities of Lot 1. However, a Latin American organisation (eligible as applicant or as partner) cannot develop or be beneficiary of specific activities in more than one Action of Lot 1.

LOT 2 - Studies, co-ordination and technical support, training and animation of networks, dissemination of results.

In this phase of the URB-AL Program the implementation of the Lot 1 Actions (projects) represents only an initial step. In fact, the Actions are the instruments that will make possible the generation of an exchange of experiences and a debate on the social and territorial cohesion policies that will progressively involve those sub-regional governments in Latin America who want to stimulate change processes. Those governments may become, in a subsequent phase of the programme, executors of other Actions. This might lead to the creation of a virtuous circle, likely to ensure a wide dissemination of the best social and territorial cohesion policies.

In order to facilitate this process an entity must take over the organisation of the programme, more concretely: on the one hand external support and co-ordination of Lot 1 activities, and on the other carrying out activities such as **studies, co-ordination and technical support, training and animation of networks, dissemination of results**. This entity might be formed by sub-national governments (of the EU and Latin America), associations of sub-national governments (of the EU and Latin America) and institutions dedicated to decentralised cooperation or the support to local policies⁶.

Therefore, in order to be eligible under Lot 2 proposals will have to present an articulated group of activities that contribute to creating the favourable conditions for the achievement of the general and specific objectives of the Programme by interacting with Lot 1 Actions.

The aforementioned activities do not have to be mixed up with the management, evaluation and administrative supervision of the grants, tasks due to the European Commission.

Duration

The stipulated length of the Action will be of 48 months.

Sectors or subjects

- Measures addressed to favour synergies, the networking of the projects and the actors of Lot 1, the identification of replicable models, joint reflection on the progress and the circulation of the results of the projects and the programme.
- Technical assistance for those projects that require it.

Types of action

An indicative, non exhaustive list of activities is presented below:

- Definition and dissemination of the most effective methodologies concerning exchanges of experiences, know-how and good practices.
- Dissemination of outcomes.
- Definition of a necessary set of effectiveness and efficiency indicators for the programme.
- Implementation methodological support.
- Organisation of training courses in project implementation.
- Dissemination of the information and reinforcement of the visibility of the programme as a whole.
- Other relevant initiatives, such as studies on specific problems, workshops, information seminars.

⁶The Commission considers very important that the present organizations in the instance mentioned have professional competence and the necessary legitimacy to establish, with the sub-national governments, bonds of collaboration based on the confidence and the mutual respect.

- Setting up of a local and regional governments' network, engaged in local and regional social and territorial cohesion policies.
- Organisation of annual meetings or events of project coordinators and other relevant actors of the programme,
- Encouraging strategic reflection.
- Other activities that facilitate the implementation of the projects in compliance with an effective management and directed towards the delivering of results and the identification of good practices.

Location

The Actions will be implemented in one or more than the following countries: the countries of Latin America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Saviour, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela) and the member countries of the European Union.

Evaluation of the Actions and assessment of results

The proposed Actions have to foresee and describe mid-term and final evaluations.

The outcome of the Actions on social and territorial cohesion has to be measurable. To this end, proposals will have to determine indicators of process and result, from the point of view of the particular contribution of the project to social and territorial cohesion.

Shall the proposal be selected results will represent a firm commitment.

Re-granting

In order to **support the achievement of the objectives of the Action**, and in particular where the **implementation of the Action proposed by the Applicant requires financial support to be given to third parties**, the Applicant **may** propose awarding sub-grants.

The maximum amount is limited to EUR 10.000 per third party of the sub-grant while the total amount which can be awarded as sub-grants to third parties is limited to EUR 100.000.

The list containing the types of activities which may be eligible for sub-grants under this Call for proposal have to be submitted by the Applicant together with the submission of its proposal.

The following types of action are ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;

Personnel

The curricula vitae of the institutional coordinators and the permanent experts will have to be included in the proposals and will be considered as an integral part of the proposal. To these purposes, the standard model of the European Commission will be used that is found available in the page:

http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/vernav/Europass+Documents/Europass+CV/navigate.action?locale_id=11

Number of proposals and grants per applicant

Under this call for proposals, each applicant cannot put forward more than 1 proposal in each Lot. Furthermore, in Lot 2 an organisation can not take part in more than one proposal under penalty of cancellation of all the presented proposals.

2.1.4 Eligibility of costs: costs which may be taken into consideration for the grant

Only "eligible costs" can be taken into account for a grant. These are detailed below. The budget is therefore both a cost estimate and a ceiling for "eligible costs". Note that the eligible costs must be based on real costs based on supporting documents (except for subsistence costs and indirect costs where flat-rate funding apply).

Recommendations to award a grant are always subject to the condition that the checking process which precedes the signing of the contract does not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget (for instance arithmetical errors, inaccuracies or unrealistic costs and other ineligible costs). The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the Contracting Authority to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. The amount of the grant and the percentage of co-financing as a result of these corrections may not be increased in any case.

It is therefore in the applicant's interest to provide a **realistic and cost-effective budget**.

Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under the call for proposals, costs must respect the provisions of article 14 of the General Conditions to the Standard Grant Contract (see Annex F).

Contingency reserve

A contingency reserve not exceeding 5% of the direct eligible costs may be included in the Budget of the Action. It can only be used with the **prior written authorisation** of the Contracting Authority.

Eligible indirect costs (overheads)

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the Action may be eligible for flat-rate funding fixed at not more than 7% of the total eligible direct costs.

If the applicant is in receipt of an operating grant financed from the Community budget no indirect costs may be claimed within the proposed budget for the Action.

Contributions in kind

Any contributions in kind, which must be listed separately in Annex B, do not represent actual expenditure and are not eligible costs. The contributions in kind may not be treated as co-financing by the Beneficiary.

The cost of staff assigned to the Action is not a contribution in kind and may be considered as co-financing in the Budget of the Action when paid by the Beneficiary or his partners.

Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- debts and provisions for losses or debts;
- interest owed;
- items already financed in another framework;
- purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary for the direct implementation of the Action, in which case ownership must be transferred to the final beneficiaries and/or local partners, at the latest by the end of the Action;
- currency exchange losses;
- taxes, including VAT, unless the Beneficiary (or the Beneficiary's partners) cannot reclaim them and the applicable regulations do not forbid coverage of taxes;
- loans to third parties.

2.2 HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

Please note that the prior registration in PADOR⁷ for applicants for this Call for proposal is not obligatory. However the applicant can register its organisation data, and upload supporting documents in PADOR.

2.2.1 *Application form*

Applications must be submitted using the application form annexed to these Guidelines (Annex A). This form includes guidance for concept note, which must also be drafted. Applicants should keep strictly to the format of the application and fill in the paragraphs and the pages in order. Please provide budget with round figures.

Applicants must apply in English, French, Spanish or Portuguese.

Please complete the application form carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly.

Any error related to the points listed in the Checklist (section V of part B of the grant application form) or any major inconsistency in the application form (e.g. the amounts mentioned in the budget are inconsistent with those mentioned in the application form) may lead to the rejection of the proposal.

Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is unclear, thus preventing the Contracting Authority from conducting an objective assessment.

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Please note that only the application form and the published annexes which have to be filled in (budget, logical framework) will be transmitted to the evaluators and assessors. It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL relevant information concerning the Action. **No supplementary annexes should be sent.**

2.2.2 *Where and how to send the Applications*

Applications must be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) at the address below:

Postal address:

European Commission
EuropeAid Cooperation Office

To the attention of Mr. Vittorio TONUTTI

Unit B2
J-54 4/38
1 Avenue du Bourget
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium

⁷ <http://ec.europa.eu/euroaid/online-services/pador>

Address for hand delivery or by private courier service

European Commission
EuropeAid Cooperation Office

To the attention of Mr. Vittorio TONUTTI

Unit B2
J-54 4/38
1 Avenue du Bourget
B-1140 Brussels
Belgium

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

Applications must be submitted in one original and 3 copies in A4 size, each bound. The complete application form (part A: concept note and part B: full application form), budget and logical framework must also be supplied in electronic format (CD-Rom) in a separate and unique file (e.g. the application form must not be split into several different files) **in 5 copies (5 CD)**. The electronic format must contain **exactly the same** proposal as the paper version enclosed.

The Checklist (Section V of part B the grant application form) and the Declaration by the applicant (Section VI of part B of the grant application form) must be stapled separately and enclosed in the envelope.

Where an applicant sends a proposal for each Lot each one has to be sent separately.

The outer envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the call for proposals**, together with the title and number of the Lot, the full name and address of the applicant, and the words "Not to be opened before the opening session".

Applicants must verify that their application is complete using the checklist (section V of part B of the grant application form). Incomplete applications will be rejected.

2.2.3 *Deadline for submission of Applications*

The deadline for the receipt of applications at the above-mentioned address is 16 June 2008 at 16:00 Brussels (Belgium) local time. Any application submitted after the deadline will automatically be rejected even if the postmark indicates a date preceding the deadline or if the delay is due to the private courier service.

In case of hand-deliveries, the deadline for receipt is on 16 June 2008 at 16.00 hours Brussels (Belgium) local time as evidenced by the signed and dated receipt (see paragraph 2.2.2). Any application submitted after the deadline will automatically be rejected.

2.2.4 *Further information for the Application*

Questions may in addition be sent by e-mail or by fax no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of proposals to the address listed below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: europaaid-urb-al@ec.europa.eu

Fax: 0032-2-2998010

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for the submission of proposals.

In the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of an applicant, a partner or an action.

Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with the answers, will be published on the internet at the EuropeAid website: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/index_en.htm and the site of the Program URB-AL http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/latin-america/regional-cooperation/urbal/index_en.htm.

2.3 EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the Contracting Authority with the possible assistance of external assessors. All actions submitted by applicants will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria:

(1) STEP 1: OPENING SESSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHECK

The following will be assessed:

- The deadline has been respected. If the deadline has not been respected the proposal will automatically be rejected.
- The Application Form satisfies all the criteria mentioned in the Checklist (section V of part B of the grant application form). If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the proposal may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the proposal will not be evaluated further.

Following the opening session and the administrative check, the Contracting Authority will send a letter to all applicants, indicating whether their application was submitted prior to the deadline, informing them of the reference number they have been allocated, whether they have satisfied all the criteria mentioned in the checklist and whether their Application Form has been recommended for evaluation⁸.

(2) STEP 2: EVALUATION OF THE CONCEPT NOTE

The evaluation of the Concept Notes that have passed the first administrative check will cover the relevance of the Action, its merits and effectiveness, its viability and sustainability. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to skip the evaluation of the Concept Notes whenever considered justified (for example when a less than expected number of proposals are received) and to go straight to the evaluation of the corresponding full proposals.

Please note that the scores awarded to the Concept Note are completely separate from those given to the Full Application.

The Concept Note will be given an overall score out of 50 points in accordance with the breakdown provided in the Evaluation Grid below. The evaluation shall also verify the compliance with instructions provided in the guidance for Concept Note, part A of the grant application form.

If the examination of the Concept Note reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in paragraph 2.1.3, the proposal shall be rejected on this sole basis.

The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheadings. Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following assessment categories: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

⁸ The period for the sending of this letter to the applicant will depend on the number of received proposals.

	Scores	
1. Relevance of the Action	Sub-score	15
1.1 Relevance of the problems to needs and constraints of the country/region to be addressed in general, and to those of the target groups and final beneficiaries in particular	5	
1.2 Relevance to the priorities and objectives mentioned in the Guidelines	5(x2)*	
2. Effectiveness and Feasibility of the Action	Sub-score	25
2.1 Assessment of the problem identification and analysis	5	
2.2 Assessment of the proposed activities (practicality and consistency in relation to the objectives, purpose and expected results).	5(x2)*	
2.3 Assessment of the role and involvement of all stakeholders and proposed partners.	5(x2)*	
3. Sustainability of the Action	Sub-score	10
3.1 Assessment of the identification of the main assumptions and risks, before the start up and throughout the implementation period.	5	
3.2 Assessment of the identification of long-term sustainable impact on the target groups and final beneficiaries.	5	
TOTAL SCORE		50

* The scores are multiplied by two because of their importance

Once all Concept Notes have been assessed, a list will be established with the proposed actions ranked according to their total score.

Firstly, only the Concept Notes which have been given a score of a minimum of 12 points in the category "Relevance" as well as a minimum total score of 30 points will be considered for pre-selection.

Secondly, the list of Concept Notes will be reduced in accordance to the ranking to those whose sum of requested contributions amounts to at least two times the available budget for this Call for proposals. The Evaluation Committee will subsequently proceed with the evaluation of the full proposals of the pre-selected applicants.

(3) STEP 3: EVALUATION OF THE FULL APPLICATION

An evaluation of the quality of the proposals, including the proposed budget, and of the capacity of the applicant and his partners, will be carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in the Evaluation Grid included below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and award criteria.

The selection criteria are intended to help evaluate the applicants' financial and operational capacity to ensure that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the Action is being carried out and, where appropriate, to participate in its funding;
- have the management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed action. This also applies to any partners of the applicant.

The award criteria allow the quality of the proposals submitted to be evaluated in relation to the set objectives and priorities, and grants to be awarded to actions which maximise the overall effectiveness of the call for proposals. They enable the selection of proposals which the Contracting Authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the Community financing. They cover such aspects as the relevance of the Action, its consistency with the objectives of the call for proposals, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

If the examination of the proposal reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in paragraph 2.1.3, the proposal shall be rejected on this sole basis.

Scoring:

The evaluation criteria are divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following guidelines: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good. Grants will be awarded to the best scoring proposals.

Evaluation Grid

Section	Maximum Score
1. Financial and operational capacity	20
1.1 Do the applicant and partners have sufficient experience of project management ?	5
1.2 Do the applicant and partners have sufficient technical expertise ? (notably knowledge of the issues to be addressed.)	5
1.3 Do the applicant and partners have sufficient management capacity ? (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the Action)?	5
1.4 Does the applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance ?	5
2. Relevance	25
2.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and one or more of the priorities of the call for proposals? Note: A score of 5 (very good) will only be allocated if the proposal specifically addresses at least one priority . Note: A score of 5 (very good) will only be allocated if the proposal contains specific added-value elements, such as promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities...	5 x 2
2.2 How relevant to the particular needs and constraints of the target country/countries or region(s) is the proposal? (including avoidance of duplication and synergy with other EC initiatives.)	5
2.3 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5 x 2
3. Methodology	25
3.1 Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with	5

the objectives and expected results?	
3.2 How coherent is the overall design of the Action? (in particular, does it reflect the analysis of the problems involved, take into account external factors and anticipate an evaluation ?)	5
3.3 Is the partners' level of involvement and participation in the Action satisfactory? Note: If there are no partners the score will be 1.	5
3.4 Is the Action plan clear and feasible?	5
3.5 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the Action?	5
4. Sustainability	15
4.1 Is the Action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5
4.2 Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects ? (including scope for replication and extension of the outcome of the Action and dissemination of information.)	5
4.3 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable : - financially (<i>how will the activities be financed after the funding ends?</i>) - institutionally (<i>will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the Action? Will there be local "ownership" of the results of the Action?</i>) - at policy level (where applicable) (<i>what will be the structural impact of the Action — e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc?</i>)?	5
5. Budget and cost-effectiveness	15
5.1 is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	5
5.2 Is the proposed expenditure necessary for the implementation of the Action?	5 x 2
Maximum total score	100

Note on Section 1. Financial and operational capacity

If the total average score is less than 12 points for section 1, the Evaluation Committee will reject the proposal.

Note on Section 2. Relevance

If the total average score is less than 20 points for section 2, the Evaluation Committee will reject the proposal.

In order to encourage the participation in the programme of the eight less developed countries of the Latin-American region (Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Paraguay, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua) the Commission will award 5 additional points to those proposals demonstrating that at least 40% of the budget of the Action will be invested in one or several of those countries.

Provisional selection

Following the evaluation, a table listing the proposals ranked according to their score and within the available financial envelope will be established as well as a reserve list following the same criteria.

Note: The scores awarded in this phase are completely separate from those given to the concept note of the same application.

(4) STEP 4: VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF THE APPLICANT AND PARTNERS

The eligibility verification, based on the supporting documents requested by the Contracting Authority (see section 2.4) will only be performed for the proposals that have been provisionally selected according to their score and within the available financial envelope.

- The Declaration by the applicant (Section VI of part B the grant application form) will be cross-checked with the supporting documents provided by the applicant. Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the Declaration by the applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the proposal on that sole basis.
- The eligibility of the applicant, the partners, and the Action will be verified according to the criteria set out in sections 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3.

Following the above analysis and if necessary, any rejected proposal will be replaced by the next best placed proposal in the reserve list that falls within the available financial envelope, which will then be examined for the eligibility of its applicant and the partners.

2.4 SUBMISSION OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR PROVISIONALLY SELECTED PROPOSALS

Applicants who have been provisionally selected or listed under the reserve list will be informed in writing by the Contracting Authority. They will be requested to supply the following documents in order to allow the Contracting Authority to verify the eligibility of the applicants and their partners:

1. The statutes or articles of association of the applicant organisation⁹ and of each partner organisation. Where the Contracting Authority has recognized the applicant's eligibility for another call for proposals under the same budget line within 2 years before the deadline for receipt of applications, the applicant may submit, instead of its statutes, copy of the document proving the eligibility of the applicant in a former Call (e.g.: copy of the special conditions of a grant contract received during the reference period), unless a change in its legal status has occurred in the meantime¹⁰.

2. Legal entity sheet (see annex D) duly completed and signed by the applicant, accompanied by the justifying documents which are requested therein. If the applicant has already signed a contract with the Contracting Authority, instead of the legal entity sheet and its supporting documents the legal entity number may be provided, unless a change in its legal status occurred in the meantime.

3. A financial identification form conforming to the model attached at Annex E, certified by the bank to which the payments will be made. This bank must be located in the country where the applicant is registered. If the applicant has already signed a contract with the European Commission or where the European Commission has been in charge of the payments of a contract, a copy of the previous financial identification form may be provided instead, unless a change in its bank account occurred in the meantime.

The supporting documents requested must be supplied in the form of originals or photocopies of the said originals. However, the Legal entity sheet and the financial identification form must always be submitted in original.

When such documents are not in one of the official languages of the European Union, a translation into one of the languages of the call for proposals of the relevant parts of these documents, proving the applicant's eligibility, must be attached and will prevail for the purpose of analysing the proposal.

When these documents are in an official language of the European Union other than one of the languages of the call for proposals, it is **strongly** recommended, in order to facilitate the evaluation, to provide a translation of the relevant sections of the documents, proving the applicant's eligibility, into one of the languages of the call for proposals.

If the supporting documents are not provided before the set deadline (15 calendar days from the receipt of the letter sent by the Contracting Authority), the application may be rejected.

Based on the verification of the supporting documents by the Evaluation Committee it will make a final recommendation to the Contracting Authority which will decide on the award of grants.

⁹ Where the applicant and/or (a) partner(s) is a public body created by a law, a copy of the said law must be provided

¹⁰ To be inserted only where the eligibility conditions have not changed from one call for proposals to the other.

2.5 NOTIFICATION OF THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION

2.5.1 *Content of the decision*

Applicants will be informed in writing of the Contracting Authority's decision concerning their application and the reasons for the decision.

Applicants believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may formally request to the Contracting Authority directly. The Contracting Authority must reply within 90 days of receipt of the complaint.

2.5.2 *Indicative time table*

	DATE	TIME*
Information meeting (if any)	n.a.	n.a.
Deadline for request for any clarifications from the Contracting Authority	26 May 2008	16.00h
Last date on which clarifications are issued by the Contracting Authority	05 June 2008	-
Deadline for submission of Application Forms	16 June 2008	16.00h
Information to applicants on the opening & administrative check	11 July 2008 *	-
Information to applicants on the evaluation of the Concept Notes	30 July 2008 *	-
Information to applicants on the evaluation of the Full Application Form	30 August 2008 *	-
Notification of award (after the eligibility check)	15 September 2008 *	-
Contract signature	15 December 2008 *	-

***Provisional date.** All times are in the time zone of the country of the Contracting Authority

2.6 CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION FOLLOWING THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION TO AWARD A GRANT

Following the decision to award a grant, the Beneficiary will be offered a contract based on the Contracting Authority's standard contract (see Annex F). By signing the Application form (Annex A), the applicant declares accepting, in case where it is awarded a grant, the Contractual conditions as laid down in the Standard Contract.

Implementation contracts

Where implementation of the Action requires the Beneficiary to award procurement contracts, it must award the contract to the tenderer offering the best value for money, that is to say, the best price-quality ratio, in compliance with the principles of transparency and equal treatment for potential contractors, care being taken to avoid any conflict of interests. To this end, the Beneficiary must follow the procedures set out in Annex IV to the contract.

3. LIST OF ANNEXES

DOCUMENTS TO FILL IN

ANNEX A: GRANT APPLICATION FORM (WORD FORMAT)

ANNEX B: BUDGET (EXCEL FORMAT)

ANNEX C: LOGICAL FRAMEWORK (EXCEL FORMAT)¹¹

ANNEX D: LEGAL ENTITY SHEET (EXCEL FORMAT)¹²

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/annexes_standard_documents/index_en.htm

ANNEX E: FINANCIAL IDENTIFICATION FORM

DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION

ANNEX F: STANDARD CONTRACT

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/annexes_standard_documents/index_en.htm

ANNEX G: DAILY ALLOWANCE RATES (PER DIEM), available at the following address:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/per_diems/index_en.htm

¹¹ Optional when the total amount of the grant to be awarded under the call for proposals is EUR 100 000 or less.

¹² Only applicable where the European Commission is the Contracting Authority or will make the payments under the contracts to be signed.