

European Commission

Information Society and Media Directorate-General

Digital Content and Cognitive Systems

Safer Internet 2012 call for proposals

GUIDE FOR PROPOSERS

February 2012

<http://ec.europa.eu/saferinternet>

Foreword

The Guide

The Guide for Proposers is part of the information necessary to make a **project proposal** in response to calls for proposals under the Safer Internet programme. It provides guidance on how to submit a proposal.

It is accompanied by an appendix which contains the proposal submission forms (Parts A, B and C).

Additional Information

The additional documents you will need to prepare a **proposal** are:

1. The **European Parliament and Council Decision** setting the objectives of the programme.
2. The **Work Programme for 2012** which provides the description of the actions, the means to implement the programme and the evaluation criteria.
3. The **Call for Proposals for 2012**, as published on the programme website, detailing which actions are open under a given call and the deadline for proposal submission.
4. The **Guidance Notes for Evaluators** providing guidelines for experts evaluating proposals received in response to the Safer Internet 2012 call for proposals. Potential applicants may wish to read them for an overview of the evaluation process.
5. The **model grant agreement** for Safer Internet projects, with annexes, which specifies the terms and conditions to which your consortium will be expected to agree if your proposal is selected for funding.

All the above documents are available for downloading from the Safer Internet website at

<http://ec.europa.eu/saferinternet>

or can be obtained from this address:

European Commission
Information Society and Media Directorate-General
Safer Internet
Office EUFO 1195
Rue Alcide de Gasperi
L-2920 Luxembourg, Luxembourg
Fax: +352-4301-34079
E-mail: saferinternet@ec.europa.eu

The personal data collected in the context of the call for proposals will be processed in accordance with the Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council 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 (OJ L8,12.01.2001, p.1).

This Guide for Proposers does not supersede the rules and conditions laid out in the European Parliament and Council Decision establishing the programme, in the associated calls for proposals and in the Financial Regulation applicable to the General Budget of the European Communities.

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I. Programme objectives

The **objectives** and **actions** of the Safer Internet programme are laid down in the European Parliament and Council Decision of 18 December 2008¹ with the main objective to promote safer use of Internet and other communication technologies, to educate users, particularly children, parents and carers in this regard and to fight against illegal content and harmful conduct online.

The Safer Internet Work Programme and call for proposals for 2012 specify the actions open in 2012 and set the scope of the actions under which proposals can be submitted. **It is recommended to read the Work Programme carefully before starting to prepare a proposal.**

II. Call for proposals and project types

A single call for proposals, with a **fixed deadline**, is foreseen for 2012.

Four project types are supported: **integrated networks, thematic networks, targeted projects and knowledge enhancement projects.**

Part B of this Guide contains a template for describing the objectives and work plan for each of the four project types. Applicants should use the appropriate template.

The financial instrument will be grants to projects. All such grants need to be co-financed by the beneficiaries, who will need to demonstrate in the proposal their contribution to the project.

Projects overview

| | Characteristics | Typical duration | Co-funding rate | Typical consortium size |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Integrated network | Safer Internet Centres - awareness raising activities, hotlines and helplines | Up to 28 months | 50-75 % co-funding of eligible costs* | 3-4 partners |
| Targeted project | Enhancing law enforcement agencies' identification and analysis of illegal material | Up to 36 months | Up to 50-75% co-funding of eligible costs* | 3-8 partners |
| Thematic network | Promoting positive online experiences for young children | 24-30 months | Up to 100% funding of a limited set of eligible costs | At least 10 partners/ members |
| Knowledge enhancement projects | - Investigating the impact on young people of convergence of technology - Identifying child friendly search tools | Up to 24 months | Up to 100% funding of direct costs | 3-4 partners geographically balanced |

* The general reimbursement rate may reach a maximum of 75% of the total eligible costs for public bodies², non-profit organisations³ and SMEs⁴.

¹ OJ L348 of 24.12.2008, p.118

² Legal entity established as public body by national law.

³ A legal entity is qualified as "non-profit" when considered as such by national or international law.

III. Participation

III.1. Applicants

Action 1.1 of the 2012 call for proposals will only be open for proposals for providing a Safer Internet Centre in the following countries: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Malta, Portugal, Slovakia, Sweden, United Kingdom and Russia⁵.

Participation in all other action of the 2012 call is open to all legal entities established in the Member States. It is also open to participation of legal entities established in EFTA States which are contracting parties to the EEA Agreement (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein).

Under the 2012 Workprogramme the following organisation and country are established as priority for international cooperation and therefore are entitled to receive funding:

- The international organisation INTERPOL is established as priority for co-operation in the field of fighting against illegal content.
- RUSSIA is established as a priority for co-operation in the field of ensuring public awareness and fighting against illegal content and harmful contact and conduct online. In particular legal entities from Russia can submit proposals to provide a Safer Internet Centre in this country. The funding will be limited to 100% of the costs of belonging to the network of Safer Internet Centres, unless Russia decides to join the Programme through signature of a bilateral agreement. In addition legal entities from Russia may also take part in targeted projects, thematic networks and knowledge enhancement projects under the same conditions as entities established in Member States (but not as project co-ordinators).

Legal entities established in other countries may take part in all actions of the 2012 calls under the conditions set out in Article 2 of the Decision setting up the Programme¹, provided that the country signs a bilateral agreement to join the Programme.

Legal entities established in non-EU countries other than those referred to above and international organisations may take part in any project at their own expense, with the exception of INTERPOL, as mentioned above.

Up-to-date information about the countries currently taking part in the Safer Internet programme is available on the Programme web site at <http://ec.europa.eu/saferinternet>.

⁴ SMEs means small and medium size enterprises within the meaning of Commission Recommendation 2003/361/Ec in the version of 6 May 2003.

⁵ These are the countries for which a) the 2011 call for proposals was not open, b) no Safer Internet Centre was selected following the 2011 call for proposals or c) no Safer Internet Centre will be funded by the programme after 1st January 2014.

III.2. Number of applicants

Proposals may be submitted by a single legal entity or by a consortium established in an EU Member State or in another eligible country (see III.I.)

See below for the minimum or maximum requirements for the number of applicants for each project type.

III.2.1. Integrated networks

In order to achieve maximum efficiency and impact, each component of the Safer Internet Centre (awareness-raising, hotline, helpline) should preferably consist of a single organisation. The same organisation can apply for more than one component. Where a consortium applies, the division of labour between the partners should be clear and logical.

The recommended maximum size of a consortium for a Safer Internet Centre is up to four partners if a hotline and a helpline are included. If the consortium is larger, the Commission may require it to be cut down in size or offer a lower rate of funding.

However, the Commission may approve additional strategic partners, not requesting funding, committed to specific project activities.

III.2.2. Targeted projects

The European added value of the proposal will have to be clearly demonstrated, including coverage of several different Member States. A targeted project consortium should be of a manageable size - an indicative size would be 3-8 applicants. Proposals for targeted projects under action 2.1 of the 2012 call must be submitted by a consortium which includes at least two national police bodies (i.e. law enforcement agencies, police academies, police universities or ministries) from 2 different EU Member States. At least 3 Member States should be involved as end users / target group.

III.2.3. Thematic networks

The European added value of the proposal will have to be clearly demonstrated. Thematic networks should cover the majority of EU Member States and be open and proactive in attracting new partners. The network should include at least 10 members.

III.2.4. Knowledge enhancement projects

The European added value of the proposal must be clearly demonstrated, i.e. how the expected results will be of use to and might reflect a wider European situation and/or provide cross-border cooperation within the project.

Knowledge enhancement projects should involve 3-4 countries.

IV. Preparation and submission

IV.1. Proposal structure

A proposal consists of three parts:

Part A provides legal and administrative information about the proposal and the applicants as well as details on the funding requested.

Part B is a structured description of the proposed work. It presents the objectives of the project, summarises its rationale and background. It further describes the applicants and their role, the work plan and management. Part B also includes information on the financing plan of the proposal (how the applicants intend to provide co-financing for the proposed project).

Part C provides information on the financial capacity of the applying organisations to co-finance the proposed project. This information is essential for a proper evaluation and will help in the preparation of a grant agreement if the proposal is successful.

IV.2. Proposal forms

The forms and layout instructions are included in the Appendix – Parts A, B and C.

Please read the instructions in each part of the proposal forms carefully. For instance, the legal name and the legal address of an applicant must correspond exactly to the name and address occurring in e.g. national company registers for companies and in national laws/by laws/statutes for universities.

Applicants must indicate the proposal short title (acronym⁶) at the top of every page of part B and all annexes. Pages must be clearly numbered.

A standardised set of objectives and work plan has been set for the Safer Internet Centres, in order to ensure similar services across countries, encourage network cooperation and simplify project management and reporting. For this purpose the specific template of part B should be used.

A proposal can only be for one single action⁷. Applicants wishing to make proposals under two (or more) actions should fill out a separate **complete** set of forms for each one.

IV.3. Operational and financial capacity

Applicants must demonstrate that they have the financial and operational capacity to successfully complete the proposed project. The organisation's accounts as requested in part C and the curricula vitae of key personnel as requested in part B are hence key input for the application of the award and selection criteria (see Guidance Notes for Evaluators⁸), whilst further information may be requested by the Commission at a later stage. Public bodies are exempted from the verification of financial capacity.

IV.4. Language

Proposals may be submitted in any official language of the European Union. In order to facilitate assessment by outside experts, however, applicants intending to submit a proposal in a language other than English, are kindly invited to add an **English translation** of at least the narrative part of the proposal (part B, see below).

⁶ The applicants shall bear sole responsibility for assessing that the use of acronyms does not infringe existing trademarks, registered patents and other similar rights.

⁷ If more than one action has been ticked in form A1, or if the action ticked is inconsistent with the rest of the forms, the proposal will be evaluated under the most appropriate action in the light of the documentation provided

⁸ Available from the calls for proposals section on the programme website.

IV.5. Applicants' agreement

When submitting a proposal on behalf of the consortium members, in Form A1 (see Appendix - Part A) the coordinator declares that it is acting on behalf of all applicants, all of whom

- are aware of this proposal
- agree with its content and submission
- have the necessary internal authorisations to commit their organisation to submitting this proposal
- are aware that the proposed project may receive only one grant from the Community budget

The European Commission reserves the right in case of non-compliance with these conditions to eliminate this proposal from the evaluation and/or negotiation process at any time.

IV.6. Submission deadline

Proposals must be received by the Commission before the call deadline specified in the call text. The deadline is published in the call for proposals on the Safer Internet website and in the Official Journal of the European Union.

Please note that the deadline applies to **receipt by the Commission**. No responsibility is taken for the late delivery of proposals. Proposals received **after** the submission deadline will not be considered.

IV.7. Submission method

- Proposals must be prepared and submitted to the Commission on paper in one (1) original and five (5) copies, accompanied by an electronic copy on CD-ROM.
- Proposals must be completed in all parts and must be sent by *registered post, hand delivered* or sent by *courier service*.
- Proposals submitted by fax, telex, or e-mail will **not** be accepted.
- Proposals submitted to the Commission will not be returned.

Filling in the Forms

The templates of the forms can be downloaded from the programme website.

The forms will be machine-read at the Commission. To avoid misreading of your proposal details, we would kindly ask you to read and follow the notes below.

- Print the A and C forms directly from the provided Excel files.
- For numbers, please round to the nearest integer. Do not insert any character or space to separate the digits in a number.
- Remember to indicate the proposal acronym on all pages of the proposal.
- All costs must be given in EUR (and not kilo EUR) and must exclude value-added tax (VAT).

Packaging and Delivery

Proposals should be prepared and submitted as follows:

- one complete unbound original of all parts
- five bound copies of all parts

- a CD-ROM with the electronic version of the proposal containing all administrative forms in excel format and the Description of Work in PDF format.
 - o One Excel file named "sip_forms_A1_A3_coordinator.xls" containing A1 and A3 forms to be prepared **only** for the coordinator. Please make sure that in the form A3 (budget table) the applicant number and the Organisation short name match the A2 forms provided by each applicant.
 - o One Excel file for each applicant (coordinator included) created from "sip_forms_applicant_XX.xls" containing A2, A4, C1 and C2 forms, to be named as: "sip_forms_applicant_01.xls" (the coordinator is always applicant number one) "sip_forms_applicant_02.xls" etc.. (Please make sure to use the same numbering for all applicants in the A2 and A3 forms, which are completed by the coordinator.
 - o 1 PDF containing part B with the description of work named as "[project acronym]_part_B.pdf"

A package should contain **only one** proposal with the original, the respective copies and the CD-ROM only. If you wish to submit more than one proposal, please send each proposal in a separate package.

Each proposal should be sent to the address of the European Commission specified in the call notice

*European Commission
Information Society and Media Directorate-General
The Safer Internet programme - Office EUFO 1195
Jean Monnet Building
Rue Alcide de Gasperi
L-2920 Luxembourg*

and marked as follows:

Safer Internet proposal – <name of Call action as indicated in the call notice>

Once a proposal has been received and registered by the Commission, an acknowledgement of receipt will be dispatched.

IV.8. Check list for proposals

Experience shows that a number of general checks are useful before submitting a proposal:

| Action | Completed |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Are all parts of the proposal complete? | |
| – Part A: Forms A2 and A4 one for each applicant (coordinator included); Forms A1 and A3 for coordinator only | |
| – Part B: Narrative description of work | |
| – Part C⁹: Forms C1 and C2 one for each applicant (coordinator included) | |
| Have you prepared one unbound original of all parts? | |
| Have you prepared five bound copies of all parts? | |
| Is the CD-ROM with the electronic versions complete? | |
| – 1 Excel file called “sip_forms_A1_A3_coordinator.xls” for the co-ordinator only | |
| – One Excel file for each applicant (coordinator included), containing forms A2, A4, C1 and C2, named as ”sip_form_applicant_01.xls” (the coordinator is always applicant number one), ”sip_form_applicant_02.xls”, etc. | |
| – 1 PDF containing part B with the narrative description of work named as “[project acronym]_part_B.pdf” | |
| Have you addressed the proposal to the Commission address specified in the call notice and marked it "Safer Internet proposal – <name of Call action as indicated in the call notice>”? | |
| Make sure that your proposal arrives at the Commission by the date and time set in the call notice | |

⁹ Forms C are not needed for public sector organisations.

V. Evaluation of proposals

The evaluation of proposals will be based on the principles of transparency and equality of treatment. It will be carried out by the Commission with the assistance of outside experts. All proposals will be treated in strict confidence.

Each submission will be assessed on the basis of the evaluation criteria, which are divided in three categories: **eligibility criteria**, **award criteria**, **selection criteria**. Only proposals meeting the requirements of the eligibility criteria shall be evaluated further.

The description of the evaluation criteria is presented in the Work Programme. Details of the evaluation process are given in the Guidance Notes for Evaluators¹⁰.

VI. Grant agreement

VI.1. Negotiations

Negotiations are aimed at offering grant agreements to the successfully negotiated projects.

The basic model grant agreement is not negotiable. Applicants are invited to read carefully this document and its annexes, especially the General Conditions, before agreeing to submit a proposal. The model grant agreement can be downloaded from the Programme website.

Negotiations will cover technical, legal or financial aspects of the proposal, based on the results of the evaluation.

The technical aspects of negotiations may cover revisions to the proposed project work plan and adjustments to it, resulting from the evaluation. The legal aspects would cover review of any special contractual clauses or conditions required for the project, and other aspects relating to the development of the final grant agreement (including project start date, timing of deliverables - in particular audit certificates and other legal requirements). The financial aspects would cover the total budget and the EC contribution, the amount of the initial pre-financing, timing of reporting and payments and, if necessary, any financial security which may be requested by the Commission.

Applicants will be excluded from participation if they are in one of the situations listed in the Work programme (chapter 7.2).

If it proves impossible to reach agreement with any applicants within a reasonable deadline that the Commission may impose, negotiations on grant agreement preparation may be terminated and the proposal rejected by the Commission.

VI.1.1. Financial viability of proposal applicants

Further administrative and financial information might be required to assess the viability of the proposed project as the applicants will have to demonstrate that they have all the human, financial and technical resources required for carrying out the project.

As a general rule, public sector bodies are considered to be financially viable. In all other cases (including e.g. companies, associations and non-governmental non-profit bodies), the financial viability of the applicants will be assessed and the Commission may seek to safeguard its interest by asking for a bank guarantee or other suitable measures.

¹⁰ Available from the calls for proposals section on the programme website.

VI.1.2. Conclusion of negotiations

On successful conclusion of these negotiations, the Commission will take decisions on the projects selected for the award of a Community grant.

VI.2. The grant agreement signature and entry in force

The grant agreement will be sent to the coordinator of the project for signature and will enter into force following its signature also by the Commission. The other beneficiaries will have only to complete and sign ANNEX III Form A – “Consent of the beneficiaries to accede to the agreement”. This form will be then transmitted to the Commission by the coordinator by the date specified in the grant agreement.

The project will start on the date agreed upon during project negotiations.

The table below gives an overview of the process from proposal stage to grant agreement signature:

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Proposal submission | |
| Eligibility checks | |
| Evaluation of eligible proposals by the Evaluation committee (with the assistance of outside experts) | |
| Drawing up priority lists of proposals suitable for funding (short-listed and reserve-listed proposals if applicable) and drafting of implementation plan | |
| Negotiations with applicants suitable for funding (short-listed and if necessary reserve-listed proposals) | Commencement of negotiations with successful proposals: <i>6 to 8 weeks after evaluation</i> Grant Agreement signature: <i>5 to 6 months after evaluation</i> |
| Commission award and rejection decisions after any required consultation of Programme Committee and “right of scrutiny” by the European Parliament | |
| Grant agreement signed Project starts on the date specified in the grant agreement | |

VI.3. Consortium structure

Applicants should read carefully the model grant agreement and its annexes. The following points are relevant to the structure of the proposal.

VI.3.1. The coordination of the project

Within a consortium, applicants shall designate one of the applicants to carry out the coordination function.

The coordinator is the liaison between the beneficiaries and the Commission, responsible e.g. for collecting, integrating and submitting project deliverables, and for distributing the funds received from the Commission.

It should be noted that the successful management of the project is a joint commitment of all the applicants.

Sufficient resources must be allocated to the coordination and management of the project.

Within a consortium of a **Safer Internet Centre** applicants shall designate a financial/administrative coordinator and a technical coordinator for each component (awareness raising, hotline and helpline, where appropriate).

VI.3.2. Technical collective responsibility

As laid down in the model grant agreement (art. II.7), the technical implementation of the project will be the collective responsibility of the beneficiaries. To that end, each beneficiary shall take all necessary and reasonable measures to attain the objectives of the project, and to carry out the work incumbent on a defaulting beneficiary.

VI.3.3. Financial joint responsibility

As laid down in the model grant agreement (art. II.8), if a beneficiary does not honour a reimbursement to the Commission, the remaining members of the consortium will have to reimburse the amount due to the Commission.

VI.3.4. Evolution of the consortium

As laid down in model grant agreement (art. 3), the consortium may be enlarged to include other legal entities, which will accede to the grant agreement by means of form B (set out in Annex III to the grant agreement), subject to acceptance by the Commission.

VI.4. Financial contribution of the Community

The Commission provides a financial contribution to the actual eligible costs incurred for execution of the project work for which a grant has been awarded.

VI.4.1. Incurred eligible project costs

Beneficiaries are required to identify and declare their eligible costs by the submission of financial statement based on the **actual costs** incurred in the execution of the action. Supporting documents, which justify these costs, must be retained for at least five years from the end of each payment to permit auditing by Commission services or other institutions, e.g. the European Court of Auditors.

A cost shall be considered as eligible only where it is necessary for and has occurred during the project and is provided for in the grant agreement. It shall be reimbursed if the amount has actually been spent and recorded in the accounts. No profit may be included.

The different categories of **project-related costs** that are eligible for Commission funding are the following:

Direct Costs

Direct costs are all those eligible costs which can be attributed directly to the *project* and are identified by the beneficiary as such, in accordance with its accounting principles and its usual internal rules.

Personnel costs: personnel directly carrying out work under the project; time devoted to the project shall be recorded.

Travel and subsistence: The amount for travel and subsistence costs of personnel working for the project, calculated on the basis of the usual practices of the beneficiary. The prior agreement of the Commission will be required for any destination outside the territory of a Member States, an Associated States or a third country where a beneficiary is established.

Subcontracting: Applicants must be able to carry out the proposed work to be performed. However, where it is necessary to subcontract certain elements of the work, this should be clearly identified in part B of the proposal. Any subcontract, in order to be claimed as an eligible cost, must be awarded to the bid offering best value for money (best price-quality ratio), under conditions of transparency and equal treatment. Beneficiary shall take care to avoid any conflict of interest in awarding a subcontract.

The Commission's prior written approval will be required in the following cases:

- (a) where the cumulative amount of the subcontracts of a *beneficiary* exceeds:
 - 20% of his estimated *eligible costs*,
 - EUR 100 000,whichever amount is the lower;
- (b) where the subcontractor is established in a *third country*.

If you make a proposal which involves sub-contracting for an amount **above the threshold**, in order to allow the evaluators to apply the award criteria, you should explain:

- what tasks will be subcontracted
- how you plan to select the potential subcontractor in accordance with the provisions of art. II.5 of the grant agreement (transparency, equal treatment and best value for money). N.B. You must not indicate the name of the pre-selected subcontractor in the proposal.
- the basis on which the estimated cost of sub-contracting has been calculated

Other specific costs: Costs for the organisation of workshops and conferences, website hosting and design, printing, translation, the acquisition of software licenses, the cost of certification of financial statements or the direct costs incurred in the setting-up of financial guarantees requested by the Commission are eligible costs not requiring specific approval by the Commission. Other costs belonging to this category shall only be eligible subject to written approval by the Commission unless they are already provided for in Annex I (Description of work) to the grant agreement.

Indirect Costs

Indirect costs (overheads) are all those eligible costs which cannot be identified by the beneficiary as being directly attributed to the project but which can be identified and justified by its accounting system as being incurred in direct relationship with the eligible direct costs attributed to the project.

Overheads shall be charged on a flat rate basis amounting to up to 30% of the personnel costs. A beneficiary may request a lower percentage when this is required, for instance, by his internal rules.

Overheads cover the following costs, which may not be charged separately: general management and administration costs, depreciation of buildings and equipment, rent, heating, water, electricity, office furniture, personal computers, office supplies including printer ink and stationery, telecommunications and postal charges.

VI.4.2. *Maximum rate of Community contribution*

Integrated Networks and Targeted projects

The Community financial contribution for Safer Internet Centres will be up to 50% of **direct and indirect** eligible costs as defined in the model grant agreement. For public bodies, SMEs and non-profit organisations the funding will be increased to 75%.

Thematic Networks

Eligible costs for thematic networks will be limited to **direct costs** (as defined in the model grant agreement), of coordinating and implementing the network. i.e. **no indirect costs**. Direct costs will be covered at a rate of 100%.

Eligible costs for network members other than the coordinator are limited to travel and subsistence expenses for events organised by the network or attended by a network member on behalf of the network.

Knowledge enhancement projects

Knowledge enhancement projects will be funded at 100% of direct eligible costs as defined in the grant agreement, but **without indirect costs** (overheads).

VI.4.3. *Pre-financing*

Part of the Community contribution will be paid as pre-financing, while the outstanding balance will be paid at the end of the project. The percentage of pre-financing will vary according to the duration of the project:

For shorter projects (less than 18 months), the pre-financing will be up to 50% of the total Community contribution;

For longer projects the pre-financing will be paid in instalments. For example, in the case of a 24 month project, there will be a first instalment of up to 40% of the total Community contribution at the beginning of the project and a second instalment of up to 40% of the total Community contribution at a date defined in Annex I of the grant agreement (e.g. 12 months later).

The pre-financing may be reduced or partly retained to protect the Community's financial interests.

In certain circumstances the Commission may request financial or other guarantees to ensure the security of any pre-financing made, such as a bank account specifically dedicated to the project or a trust account to be used exclusively for the purpose of the *project*. The guarantee shall be provided by an approved bank or financial institution established in one of the Member States. When the beneficiary is established in a third country, the authorising officer responsible may agree that a bank or financial institution established in that third country may provide the guarantee if he considers that the bank or financial institution offers equivalent security and characteristics as those offered by a bank or financial institution established in a Member State

Payment of the second and subsequent instalments will be conditional on the approval by the Commission of the deliverables due for the preceding project period and of a statement that each beneficiary has incurred eligible costs by that instalment date equivalent to at least 70% of the total amount of any earlier pre-financing per beneficiary. Where the consumption of the previous *pre-financing* of a beneficiary is less than 70%, the amount of the new *pre-financing* payment shall be reduced by the unused amounts of the previous *pre-financing*.

VI.4.4. Final payment

The final payment will be based on the submission of a financial statement by each beneficiary detailing all the eligible costs incurred during the project. If the eligible costs are lower than the amount of the pre-financing the beneficiaries will have to reimburse the difference to the Commission.

VII. Assistance to applicants

VII.1. Safer Internet website

Links to all the necessary information to prepare a proposal are available at the Safer Internet web site: <http://ec.europa.eu/saferinternet>

Applicants should periodically check this for latest information

VII.2. Frequently Asked Questions

A list of Frequently Asked Questions is published on the programme website providing additional clarification on the work programme and the call.

VII.3. Information days

Specific Information Days may be organised in some Member States. These events are posted on the programme website.

VII.4. Safer Internet Helpdesk

Any questions concerning the call not covered in this document or in the material available at the Safer Internet website may be directed to the Helpdesk:

Email: saferinternet@ec.europa.eu

Fax: +352-4301-34079

Web: <http://ec.europa.eu/saferinternet>

Any last-minute information concerning the call will be posted on the programme website, which potential applicants should check periodically.

VII.5. Pre-proposal service

A pre-proposal service is provided through the Safer Internet helpdesk. Applicants are advised to use the *pre-proposal form* available from the Safer Internet website and to submit a completed pre-proposal form **early in the proposal development process** in order to make the most efficient use of EC feedback.

The Commission will give comments as quickly as possible. Please note, however, that the Commission comments are indicative and not binding. They do not pre-empt the evaluation of any subsequent full proposal.

VII.6. Redress procedure

If, following receipt of the information letter with the results of the evaluation (with the Evaluation Summary report) the coordinator believes there have been shortcomings in the handling of his or her proposal, and that these shortcomings have jeopardised the outcome of the evaluation process, the redress procedure can be used.

Before one month from the date of dispatch of the Commission's letter, the co-ordinator should submit a complaint using the form available on the Programme website (under the section "funding"/call for proposals/how to get help").

An internal evaluation review committee ("redress committee") will then be convened to examine those cases that have been submitted by co-ordinators, before the deadline mentioned above.

Complaints that do not meet these conditions, or do not deal with the evaluation or eligibility checking of a specific proposal, will not be considered.

The committee's role is to ensure a coherent legal interpretation of such requests and equal treatment of applicants. It provides specialist opinions on the implementation of the evaluation process on the basis of all the available information related to the proposal and its evaluation. It works independently. The committee itself does not evaluate the proposal. If the committee considers that there has been a failing in the eligibility checking or evaluation process that is likely to have jeopardised the decision whether or not to fund the proposal, it may suggest a further evaluation of all or part of the proposal by independent experts. The committee will not call into question the judgement of appropriately qualified groups of experts.

The committee is composed of Commission staff having the requisite expertise in legal and procedural matters. It is chaired by an official from a department other than the one responsible for the call. The call-coordinator (or other designated person from the department responsible for the call) is a member of the committee.

In the light of its review, the committee will recommend a course of action to the authorising officer responsible for the call.

An initial reply will be sent to complainants no later than one month of the deadline for redress requests, mentioned above. This initial reply will indicate when a definitive reply will be provided.

The redress procedure does not replace the channels applying to all Commission actions, viz: the Secretariat-General of the Commission for breach of the code of good administration (relations with the public); the European Ombudsman for "maladministration"; the European Court of Justice for a decision affecting a person or legal entity. These channels are also available to applicants who wish to register a complaint after the deadline mentioned above.

VII.7. Some recommendations

- ✓ **Grant agreement:** Read the model grant agreement and check that the conditions in it are acceptable for the organisations in your consortium.
- ✓ **Presentation:** Good proposals are **precise and concise** providing all the information necessary to convey a comprehensive picture of your project in the proposal documents: neither assumptions, nor external searches (e.g. through links, biographical references etc) will be made. Follow the format of the Proposal Submission Forms and the template for the Description of Work for the relevant project type. Evaluators judge on substance, not on number of pages.
- ✓ **Common requirements:** Check that your proposal fulfils the common requirements for the type of project you intend to submit.
- ✓ **Management:** make adequate provisions for high-quality management adapted to the scope of the intended project.
- ✓ **Partnership:** Applicants should discuss and agree beforehand their respective roles and responsibilities. The consortium should aim at a reasonable distribution of resources and tasks.
- ✓ **Competition:** There will be competition, and a weak element in an otherwise good proposal might make it lose out to others. Therefore edit your proposal tightly, strengthen or eliminate weak elements.