



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Europe 2020: Social Policies  
**Social Protection and Activation Systems**

**BUDGET HEADING 04.03.07**

ANALYSIS AND STUDIES ON THE SOCIAL SITUATION, DEMOGRAPHICS  
AND THE FAMILY

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

**VP/2013/009**

**Call for proposals to support the development of comprehensive active  
ageing strategies**

Questions should be sent by e-mail to:

**[EMPL-GRANT-2013-009@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EMPL-GRANT-2013-009@ec.europa.eu)**

To ensure a more rapid response it is helpful if applicants send their queries in  
English, French or German.

The English version of the call is the original.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION- BACKGROUND

Due to rising life expectancy and declining fertility rates, the proportion of older people in Europe is increasing rapidly. It is projected that by 2050, the ratio of people over 65 compared to the working age population (15-64 years of age) will reach 50% - double of the current levels.

These demographic developments have major social and economic implications. While positive aspects of greater longevity should not be forgotten, the present situation also poses a challenge to the labour supply and to social protection systems.

Older people make a significant contribution to the economy and society, but as their health and education levels improve over time, their contributions can be further enhanced. This could be done by allowing older people to remain longer in the labour market, to participate actively in society and to live independently as long as possible. This is the aim of the "active ageing" policy approach. It is the key to a high quality of life for people of all ages, improved productivity and a move towards strong solidarity between generations in our ageing societies. The active ageing approach promoted in the context of the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations 2012 (EY2012) also contributes to raising employment and reducing poverty and social exclusion and thus helps to meet the targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy<sup>1</sup>. In the context of the European semester for economic policy coordination, the Commission has highlighted in the Annual Growth Survey (AGS) and Country Specific Recommendations (CSR) the need to enhance the participation of older workers in the labour market and extending working lives.

In this context, the EU Social Affairs ministers endorsed Guiding Principles for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations in December 2012<sup>2</sup>. These principles should serve as a checklist for national authorities and other stakeholders on what needs doing to promote active ageing in the areas of employment, participation in society, and independent living.

The Guiding Principles are not prescriptive and don't tell the Member States and stakeholders what they should do. So, it will be for the national governments, regions, cities, companies, trade unions and civil society organisations to apply the guiding principles to their own situations and challenges.

The Active Ageing Index, which was developed by the Commission in a joint project with the United Nations Economic Committee for Europe (UNECE) and the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research (ECV) in Vienna, constitutes a useful tool for this purpose. It captures the untapped potential of older people for more active participation in employment, in social life and for independent living.

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<sup>1</sup> Europe 2020, a strategy for smart sustainable and inclusive growth, COM/2010/2020

<sup>2</sup> Annex to the Council Declaration on the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between generations (2012) (17468/12)

Improving the conditions for active ageing is also one of the objectives of the Social Investment Package (SIP)<sup>3</sup>. It sets out a framework for policy reforms to render social protection more adequate and sustainable, to invest in people's skills and capabilities, and to support people throughout the critical moments experienced across their lives.

The SIP provides guidance to help Member States by establishing a link between social policies, the reforms as recommended in the European semester to reach the Europe 2020 targets and the relevant EU funds. The communication highlights the importance of the contribution older people make as volunteers and carers. It explicitly mentions the contribution of EY2012 to raising awareness of the contribution that older people make to society and for having given political momentum to policy initiatives, for example the Federal Plan for Senior Citizens in Austria.

The Communication specifically refers to healthy and active ageing policies that enable people to make the most of their potential. The Staff Working Document on Long Term Care addresses the question of how to create better conditions for independent living while the Staff Working Document on Health highlights the importance of investing in health.

In the SIP framework, the Commission urges Member States to use the Guiding Principles for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations, the Active Ageing Index and the opportunities offered by the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP AHA)<sup>4</sup> to assess the extent to which older people can realise their potential.

In this context, the Commission organised in June 2012 a conference on "Good Governance for Active and Healthy Ageing". The conference showed that promoting active ageing calls for integrated policy-making, involving many levels of government and departments and agencies responsible for many different policy areas. The importance of an integrated and cooperative approach was further highlighted in the Commission conference on learning for active ageing held in November 2012.<sup>5</sup>

In the framework of the Cohesion Policy, the Commission proposed a new Regulation on the European Social Fund which foresees the ESF support to an investment priority in active and healthy ageing under the thematic objective aimed at promoting employment and supporting labour mobility.<sup>6</sup>

To facilitate this process the Commission offers financial support through this call for proposals for the development and implementation of comprehensive active-ageing strategies as a way to address population ageing in the EU.

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<sup>3</sup> Commission Communication « Towards Social Investment for Growth and Cohesion including implementing the European Social Fund 2014-2020 » COM (2013) 83 final. 20.02.2013

<sup>4</sup> COM (2012) 83 final, 29 February 2012

<sup>5</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/adult/conf12\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/adult/conf12_en.htm)

<sup>6</sup> COM(2011) 607 final /2

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The aim of this call for proposals is to provide financial support for Member State national public authorities willing to engage in the development and implementation of comprehensive strategies for active ageing. Support will be provided to national authorities wishing to involve different policy areas as well as different levels of governance and relevant stakeholders to enhance their capacity to take concrete actions for tackling the challenges posed by ageing populations.

Those active ageing strategies should take due account of the “Guiding Principles for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations”. The use of the Active Ageing Index (AAI) could be envisaged as an analytical tool to identify the areas with the greatest potential for mobilising the resources of the older population and to set goals for integrated strategies as well as a way to monitor the progress made.

The purpose of the support will be to facilitate access to experience and expertise from other countries and/or from international organisations (such as UNECE, OCDE or WHO).

The project proposals should start with an analysis of the specific challenges and the potentials for promoting active ageing. Based on this analysis of the present situation the proposals should demonstrate how a comprehensive strategy can contribute to improving the conditions for active ageing. Projects could either aim for designing and implementing a new comprehensive strategy or for improving an existing one.

It is important that different levels of government cooperate in designing effective and comprehensive strategies. The projects should therefore bring together different levels of governance and stakeholders so that they can move forward jointly, each of them acting in their respective areas of competence.

## 3. TIMETABLE

	Stages	Date and time or indicative period
a)	Publication of the call	07/2013
b)	Deadline for submitting applications	30/09/2013
c)	Evaluation period	10-11/2013
d)	Information to applicants	11/2013
e)	Signature of grant agreement or notification of grant decision	12/2013
f)	Starting date of the action/ work programme	01/2014

#### **4. BUDGET AVAILABLE**

The total budget earmarked for the co-financing of projects is estimated at € 2,000,000.

Grants are expected to amount to between € 100.000 and € 500.000, depending on the scope and duration of projects.

The grant will not exceed 80% of the total eligible costs of the action<sup>7</sup>. The applicant has to guarantee the co-financing of the remaining 20%. This 20% must be covered from sources other than from European Union funds. Contribution in kind is not accepted as co-financing.

The Commission reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available if the quality of the applications received does not warrant it.

#### **5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- Applications must be sent no later than the deadline for submitting applications referred to in section 3.
- Applications must be submitted in writing (see section 14) using the online application SWIM available at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/displayWelcome.do> and sent by registered mail or by hand delivery in one original before the deadline referred to in section 3.
- Applicants are advised to submit their proposals in one of the three working languages of the Commission (English, French or German). In case if the proposal is in any other EU language, applicants are required to submit an executive summary of their proposal in English.

Failure to comply with those requirements will lead to the rejection of the application.

#### **6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

##### **6.1 Eligible applicants**

Entities allowed to participate:

- Lead or sole Applicants must be a national competent public authority in a Member State in charge of the development and implementation of comprehensive strategies for active ageing or a public agency expressly mandated in writing by the competent national authority to assume responsibility for the implementation of the action.
- Where the national level is not responsible for the subject matter of the action, the application must be submitted by a consortium of at least two competent public authorities from different territorial entities in the same country, one acting as lead applicant.

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<sup>7</sup> The term "action" is used interchangeably with "project", designating all the phases in the implementation of the selected pilot counterfactual impact evaluations.

- Co-applicants must be i) a competent public authority in a Member State in charge of the development and implementation of comprehensive strategies for active ageing or a public agency expressly mandated in writing by the competent public authority to assume responsibility for the implementation of the action, or ii) any type of non-profit organisation established in a Member State of the EU, or iii) international organisations.

Affiliated entities are not eligible under the present call for proposals.

## 6.2 Eligible applications

To be eligible, applications must:

- a) Be submitted by a sole applicant or by a lead applicant in consortium with one or several co-applicants;
- b) Be complete and include all the documents indicated in the checklist mentioned in Section 12 of this call.
- c) concern an action fully carried out in the Member States of the European Union;
- d) be clearly linked to the objective of the call for proposal;
- e) must respect the maximum limit for EU co-financing, namely maximum 80% of the total eligible costs of the action;
- f) concern of an action with a maximum duration of 24 months.

In addition:

- g) Where several public authorities or public agencies are competent in the area of the development and implementation of comprehensive strategies for active ageing, should be submitted by a consortium of at least two competent public authorities or public agencies, one acting as lead applicant so that only one coordinated application is received for the Member State concerned.

## 6.3 Eligible activities

A wide range of activities that can facilitate access to the knowledge and experience of other countries or international organisations, or enhance the use of such experiences in national reform processes, are eligible for co-funding. Such activities may include seminars, study visits, assessments/reviews by international organisations or reports by teams of international experts.

The action should start after the signature of grant agreements, expected within three months of the date of submission.

## 7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Applicants must sign a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in articles 106(1) and 107 to 109 of the Financial Regulation<sup>8</sup>, filling in the relevant form attached to the application form accompanying the call for proposals and available at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/displayWelcome.do>.

### 7.1 Exclusion from participation:

In accordance with article 106(1) of the Financial Regulation, applicants and any co-applicants will be excluded from participating in the call for proposals procedure if they are in any of the following situations:

- they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of a Member State which has the force of res judicata;
- they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify including by decisions of the EIB and international organisations;
- they are not in compliance with their obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the RAO or those of the country where the grant agreement is to be performed;
- they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering or any other illegal activity, where such an illegal activity is detrimental to the Union's financial interests;
- they are currently subject to an administrative penalty referred to in Article 109 of the Financial Regulation<sup>9</sup>.

### 7.2 Exclusion from award:

In accordance with article 107 of the Financial Regulation, applicants and any co-applicants will not be granted financial assistance if, in the course of the grant award procedure, they:

- are subject to a conflict of interest;
- are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the Commission as a condition of participation in the grant award procedure or fail to supply this information;

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<sup>8</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:298:0001:0096:EN:PDF>

<sup>9</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:298:0001:0096:EN:PDF>



- find themselves in one of the situations of exclusion, referred to in section 7.1.

Administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants, or affiliated entities where applicable, who are guilty of misrepresentation.

### 7.3 Supporting documents

When sending the hard copies of the proposal, applicants are requested to submit accompanying documents listed in section 12 below.

## **8. SELECTION CRITERIA**

### 8.1 Financial capacity

Only proposals which comply with the requirements of the eligibility and exclusion criteria will be eligible for further evaluation.

The applicant (i.e. lead applicant and any co-applicants) must have access to solid and adequate funding to maintain its activities for the period of the action and to help finance it as necessary. The verification of financial capacity does not apply to public bodies or international organisations (Article 131 of the Financial Regulation). The financial capacity will be assessed on the basis of the relevant accompanying documents indicated in section 12 hereafter.

### 8.2 Operational capacity

The applicants (lead applicant and any co-applicants) must have the operational resources (technical, management) and the professional skills and qualifications needed to successfully implement the project. The applicant and any co-applicants must have a strong track record of competence and experience in the field and in particular in the type of action proposed.

The operational capacity must be attested by the provision of the following items:

- a) A declaration on honour concerning the operational capacity to carry out the project and, in the case of applicants and co-applicants which are not public bodies or international organisations, that it has the appropriate financial capacity.
- b) The list of the main projects related to the policy field of the call carried out by the applicant and co-applicants in the last three years.
- c) CVs (educational and professional qualifications) and job specifications of the project manager and of the staff who will be involved in the implementation of the project. CVs should be presented in Annex E5 of the SWIM form.

## **9. AWARD CRITERIA**

Proposals which fulfil the eligibility and selection criteria indicated above will be assessed according to the award criteria listed below. The maximum rating for each criterion is indicated in parentheses. The maximum total points that a proposal may obtain is 100. Proposals which do not receive 70 points will not be considered for funding.

- Relevance to the general objectives of the call for proposals: Does the project address the issues raised in this call for proposals? (30%)
- Potential impact on policies in the applicant country: Is the project likely to contribute to the development of better policies and lasting progress in line with EU social policy objectives with regard to active ageing? (20%)
- Overall quality of the proposal: Is the project well designed and clear in its conceptual and practical approach, is the methodology appropriate and does it mobilize the right kind of expertise as well as input from relevant stakeholders, are the respective roles and responsibilities among the project partners and team members clearly defined, is the work plan appropriate and realistic with regard to the project goals? (20%)
- Relevance of the proposal for the EU policy debate: Will the project be relevant to policy makers and stakeholders in other countries and yield potentially transferrable results? (10%)
- Sound cost-efficiency ratio and financial quality of the proposal: Will the project be cost-effective and achieve results at a reasonable cost to the EU budget? (20%)

## **10. LEGAL COMMITMENTS**

In the event of a grant awarded by the Commission, a grant agreement, drawn up in euro and detailing the conditions and level of funding, will be sent to the beneficiary, as well as the procedure in view to formalise the obligations of the parties.

In view of the time required to evaluate applications, actions should not start before the deadline given in section 3 above.

Applicants should note that if their project is selected, they will not necessarily receive the grant agreement prior to the action starting date indicated and should, therefore, take this into account in programming the timing of their project. Any expenditure incurred before the signature of the grant agreement is at the applicant's risk.

## **11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS**

For more detailed information on the financial and administrative aspects of the call please see Annex I which is available on the call website: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=630&langId=en>

Only eligible costs can be taken into account for determining the amount of grant. The categories of costs considered as eligible and non-eligible are indicated in the section 4.2 of the above Guidelines.

Before awarding a grant, the Commission will check whether the budget does not contain problems such as arithmetical errors, inaccuracies, unrealistic costs or other ineligible costs. The check may give rise to a request for clarification and may lead the Commission to ask for modifications or reductions of some budget items before delivering the grant.

The amount of the grant and the percentage of EU co-financing can never be increased as a result of these corrections.

For implementation contracts, the beneficiary must award the contract to the bid offering best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interests and retain the documentation for the event of an audit. Please refer to the financial guidelines (Annex I) for more information on subcontracting and implementing contracts.

The overall coordination and management, as well as the financial management of the project cannot be sub-contracted. Procedures to award contracts may have been initiated, but contracts may not be concluded by the beneficiaries before the start of the implementation of the projects.

## **12. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**

The call, the application form, the Financial Guidelines for Applicants and further information related to the call for proposals are provided on the following website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=630&langId=en>

**Applications accompanied by the required annexes indicated in the checklist below must be submitted:**

### **1) in electronic format via the SWIM online application**

The web-based application called SWIM allows applicants/beneficiaries to introduce, edit, validate, print and submit grant applications, request for payments and request for modifications on the budget estimate. SWIM can be accessed at the following web address <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/displayWelcome.do>.

The electronic application in the online application SWIM must be "valid". Invalid electronic applications are automatically excluded from further evaluation. In order to validate the application, click on the "send" button. This step is irreversible and must be carried out before the deadline.

**and**

### **2) in hard copy (in one original) to the following addresses:**

a) **by registered mail** or express courier service (the submission date will be taken as the date of dispatch, as evidenced by the postmark or the express courier receipt date):

European Commission  
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion  
Unit D3 (J-27 01/242): Call for proposals VP/2013/009  
B-1049 Brussels, Belgium

b) or **by hand delivery** against a signed receipt from the Commission's central mail service (this hand delivery can be direct or through any authorised representative of the applicant, including private messenger service etc.) by 16.00 h, 30/09/2013:

European Commission  
 Unit D3 - Call for proposals VP/2013/009  
 Central courier service  
 Avenue du Bourget, 1  
 B-1140 Evere, Belgium

When sending the hard copy, applicants are requested to number the accompanying documents to be submitted with the application. Documents will be printed double-sided, if possible. Only two-hole folders will be used. The dossier should not be bound or glued.

The reference of the call for proposals must be indicated on the envelope.

**Application not submitted online as well as by registered mail or hand delivery by the deadlines indicated above will not be considered by the Evaluation Committee.**

Please make sure that the full set of the application form and all accompanying documents are sent by post by the deadline. **The absence of any of these documents may invalidate the application.**

<i>Order</i>	<i>Documents composing the paper application</i>	<i>Available in SWIM</i>
1.	Cover letter of application quoting the reference number of the call (VP/2013/009) signed and dated by the legal representative of the applicant organisation.	No
2.	Submitted on-line application form. The print-out should be dated and signed by the legal representative. The on-line form must be electronically submitted before printing. Once the electronic application is submitted, no further changes will be possible.	Yes
3.	A declaration on honour from the lead applicant and each co-applicant. This must be written on the official letterhead paper of the applicant organisations and have the original signature of the legal representative, certifying that the applicant organisation is not in one of the situations listed in Articles 106(1) and 107 to 109 of the Financial Regulation and that it has the operational capacity to complete the activity for which funding is requested and, in the case of co-applicants which are not public bodies or international organisations, that it has the appropriate financial capacity.	Yes
4.	Financial identification form duly completed and signed by the account holder of the applicant organisation and bearing the stamp and signature of the bank. It is also possible to attach a copy of a recent bank statement to the financial identification	Yes

	form, in which event the stamp of the bank and the signature of the bank's representative are not required. The signature of the account holder is obligatory in all cases (available at <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/financial_id_en.cfm">http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/financial_id_en.cfm</a> ).	
5.	<p>Legal entity forms for the lead applicant and each co-applicant, duly completed with the original signature of the legal representative of the entity(available at <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm">http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm</a>)</p> <p>The lead applicant and each co-applicant must also provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a copy of the certificate of official registration or other official document attesting to the establishment of the entity (for public bodies, a copy of the law, decree or decision establishing the entity in question) - not necessary for international organizations who have signed a framework agreement with the European Commission;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a copy of the articles of association/statutes or equivalent, proving the eligibility of the organization – not necessary for public authorities or international organizations who have signed a framework agreement with the European Commission ;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a copy of a document confirming the applicant's tax or VAT number, if applicable.</li> </ul>	Yes
6.	A <b>letter of mandate</b> from each co-applicant. This must follow the template provided, be written on the official letterhead paper of the organisation and have the original signature of the legal representative.	No
7.	<b>Letters of commitment.</b> A signed letter of commitment from <b>each co-applicant</b> should be provided, explaining the nature of the their involvement and/or specifying the cash amounts of any funding provided, following the template provided to the on-line application. The letters of commitment should be submitted in English, French or German.	No
8.	Document "Contracts for implementing the action" for subcontracting	Yes
9.	The list of the main projects related to the policy field of the call carried out by the applicant in the last three years	No
10.	CVs (educational and professional qualifications) and job specifications of the project manager and of the internal staff who will be involved in the implementation of the project by the applicant authority.	Yes

11.	<b>The most recent balance sheets of the lead applicant and all co-applicants organisations</b> (not necessary for public bodies and international organisations). The balance sheets, by definition, must include assets and liabilities. The applicant should specify which currency is being used in the balance sheet. The Commission reserves the right to request balance sheets from previous years, if necessary.	
12.	Print-out of the <b>Description of the action</b> , specifying the information <b>laid out in point 2 : Objectives of the Call</b>	No

Complementary documents sent by post, by fax or by electronic mail after the deadlines mentioned above will not be considered for evaluation unless requested by the European Commission.

The applicant's attention is also drawn to the fact that incomplete or unsigned forms, hand-written forms and those sent by fax or e-mail will not be taken into consideration.

**The Financial Guidelines for Applicants** annexed to the present call for proposals provide more detailed information for the applicants, especially as regards guidelines for presenting the proposal's provisional budget along with the rules governing which categories of expenditure are eligible and which are not.

The information contained herein together with the Financial Guidelines for Applicants provides all the information you require to submit an application. Please read it carefully before doing so, paying particular attention to the priorities of the present call.

### 13. EVALUATION PROCESS

Applications will be assessed by an independent Evaluation Committee. The work of the Evaluation Committee consists in assessing each of the applications against the exclusion, eligibility, selection and award criteria.

Applications which are not submitted by the deadline will automatically be rejected. After the deadline for submission of proposals, the Commission may contact the applicant to request clarification. Failure to reply to the clarification request will invalidate the application.

Only proposals which satisfy the exclusion and eligibility criteria will be evaluated further against selection and award criteria.

The Commission will inform each applicant of the final decision taken.

Successful applicants will receive two original copies of the grant agreement detailing the conditions and level of funding for acceptance and signature. Both copies must be sent back to the Commission which will return one to the applicant once it has been signed by both parties.

### 14. CONTACT

The Commission will publish and update all questions and answers of general interest on <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/displayWelcome.do>

Contacts between the contracting authority and potential applicants can only take place in certain circumstances and under the following conditions:

Before the final date for submission of proposals, at the request of the applicant, the Commission may provide additional information solely for the purpose of clarifying the nature of the call.

**Any requests for additional information must be made by e-mail only to [EMPL-GRANT-2013-009@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EMPL-GRANT-2013-009@ec.europa.eu), indicating the reference VP/2013/009.**

To ensure a more rapid reply, it would be helpful if the requests for additional information could be sent in English.

In the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the Commission cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of an applicant or an action or on the outcome of the call before the official publication of results.

The Commission may, on its own initiative, inform interested parties of any error, inaccuracy, omission or other clerical error in the text of the call for proposals.

Any additional information including that referred to above will be published together with the call documents on the Europa website.