



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG
Directorate Employment
Unit B1 – Employment Strategy

EaSI Programme
**Information sharing and outreach activities to young people
about the Youth Guarantee**

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

VP/2016/008

Any questions should be sent by email to:

empl-vp-2016-008@ec.europa.eu

To ensure a rapid response to requests for information, applicants are invited
to send their queries in English, where possible

This text is available in English, French and German. The English version is the original.

e

Applicants are invited to read the present document in conjunction with the Financial
Guidelines for Applicants for this call as well as the financial rules applicable to the general
budget of the Union and their rules of application:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/biblio/documents/regulations/regulations_en.cfm

Table of Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION – BACKGROUND.....	- 3 -
1.1.	Programme/Legal base.....	- 3 -
1.2.	Policy and economic background	- 3 -
1.3.	Main Purposes	- 4 -
2.	OBJECTIVE(S) – PRIORITIES – EXPECTED RESULTS.....	- 6 -
2.1.	Objectives - Priorities.....	- 6 -
2.2.	Description of the activities to be funded / Type of actions.....	- 7 -
2.3.	Expected outputs/results	- 8 -
2.4.	Monitoring	- 8 -
3.	TIMETABLE.....	- 8 -
3.1.	Starting date and duration of the projects	- 9 -
4.	AVAILABLE BUDGET	- 9 -
4.1.	Co-financing rate.....	- 9 -
5.	ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS	- 9 -
6.	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	- 10 -
6.1.	Eligibility of the applicants (sole or lead and co-applicants) and affiliated entities.....	- 10 -
6.2.	Eligible activities.....	- 11 -
7.	EXCLUSION CRITERIA	- 11 -
8.	SELECTION CRITERIA	- 12 -
8.1.	Financial capacity	- 12 -
8.2.	Operational capacity	- 12 -
9.	AWARD CRITERIA.....	- 13 -
10.	LEGAL COMMITMENTS	- 14 -
10.1.	Sources of Funding.....	- 14 -
11.	FINANCIAL PROVISIONS.....	- 15 -
12.	PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS	- 15 -
13.	COMMUNICATION	- 16 -
14.	REQUIRED DOCUMENTS.....	- 17 -
	ANNEX I: FINANCIAL GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS.....	- 20 -
	ANNEX II:.....	- 21 -
	MODEL FOR TENDER SPECIFICATIONS FOR SUBCONTRACTING EXTERNAL EXPERTISE	- 21 -

1. INTRODUCTION – BACKGROUND

1.1. Programme/Legal base

The **European Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" 2014-2020**¹ is a European-level financing instrument managed directly by the European Commission to contribute to the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy, by providing financial support for the Union's objectives in terms of promoting a high level of quality and sustainable employment, guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection, combating social exclusion and poverty and improving working conditions.

The EaSI Programme shall, in all its axes and actions, aim to:

- (a) pay particular attention to vulnerable groups, such as young people;
- (b) promote equality between women and men,
- (c) combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation;
- (d) promote a high-level of quality and sustainable employment, guarantee adequate and decent social protection, combat long-term unemployment and fight against poverty and social exclusion.

Hence, in designing, implementing and reporting on the activity, beneficiaries/contractors must address the issues noted above and will be required to provide detail, in the final activity report on the steps and achievements made towards addressing those aims.

1.2. Policy and economic background

The effects of the economic crisis on employment have been particularly marked for the European youth. At present around 4.5 million people in Europe under the age of 25 are unemployed and a total of 7.1 million are not in employment, education or training (NEETs). This represents a huge untapped resource that Europe cannot afford to squander and carries serious implications for future growth and social cohesion.

In December 2012, the Commission put forward a Youth Employment Package to assist and guide Member States in combatting youth unemployment and inactivity. Based on the Commission's proposal, the Council adopted a Recommendation on the Youth Guarantee in April 2013². Member States thereby committed to ensuring that all young people under the age of 25 receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

By spring 2014, all Member States had presented national Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans³. Implementation is underway and the Youth Guarantee has already led to bold structural

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1081>

² Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee (2013/C 120/01) <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:EN:PDF>

³ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1090&langId=en>

reforms. As reflected in the Commission's country reports under the European Semester 2015, Member States have strengthened for example the capacity of Public Employment Services, adopted incentives to stimulate job creation and undertaken reforms to improve Vocational Education and Training systems. First results have now become visible with youth unemployment rates decreasing. However, the Youth Guarantee itself is a structural reform effort which takes time to fully materialise. Further efforts are needed. Outreach to inactive young people and those furthest from the labour market has been considered a particular challenge, with 12 Member States receiving a Country-Specific Recommendations on this point in 2014. Moreover, the Youth Guarantee will not work without strong mobilization of all relevant players (including social partners, civil society and the private sector). Other challenges are the delivery of quality services to young people, ensuring the quality of offers, and finding new ways of engaging business.

The Commission monitors implementation of the Council Recommendation within the European Semester, underpinned by annual data collections under the Employment Committee's (EMCO) Indicator Framework for Monitoring the Youth Guarantee. The Commission will present in the autumn of 2016 a comprehensive report on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, as requested by the June 2013 European Council.

1.3. Main Purposes

High awareness of the Youth Guarantee among young people is essential for a better outreach towards those not registered with their respective national Youth Guarantee systems: it is a pre-condition for them to contact relevant services and benefit from available offers.

As per the Council Recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee, the "*development of effective outreach strategies towards young people, including information and awareness campaigns with a view to catchment and registration with employment services, focusing on young vulnerable people facing multiple barriers (such as social exclusion, poverty or discrimination) and NEETs, and taking into consideration their diverse backgrounds (due in particular to poverty, disability, low educational attainment or ethnic minority/ migrant background)*", are important for the success of a Youth Guarantee scheme⁴. This is to be achieved in partnership with relevant provision and governance stakeholders⁵.

Moreover, the Council Recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee recommends that the European Commission supports information sharing and outreach activities with the setting-up of the Youth Guarantee across Member States.⁶

Current information dissemination efforts and activities include a dedicated Youth Guarantee section on the European Commission DG EMPL website⁷, containing published Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans, reports on the state-of-play of Youth Guarantee Implementation, information on 18 small-scale pilot projects as well as promotional videos, and leaflets. In addition, there are several Member States that have launched information activities, dedicated websites, and videos promoting national policies and measures in line with the Youth Guarantee⁸. Furthermore, the European Commission implemented in the first semester of 2015

⁴ Council Recommendation of 22nd April 2013 on Establishing a Youth Guarantee, Recommendation 8. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:EN:PDF>

⁵ Council Recommendation of 22nd April 2013 on Establishing a Youth Guarantee, Recommendations 2-7. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:EN:PDF>

⁶ Recommendation 7 addressed to the Commission.

⁷ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1079>

⁸ The sites of 21 Member States can be accessed through:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1090&langId=en>

Some examples include:

Italy: <http://www.garanzigiocvani.gov.it/Media/Pagine/default.aspx> ,

Finland: <http://www.nuorisotakuu.fi/nuorisotakuu>

pilot information and awareness-raising activities in partnership with national Youth Guarantee providers in four Member States (Finland, Latvia, Portugal and Romania). A toolkit including a visual concept has been developed in this context, which is available online and can be used in all EU Member States with a view to disseminating information and engaging youth with the Youth Guarantee⁹. The pilot helped underline the role of focus groups to better grasp young people's expectations. It highlighted the need to combine online communication channels (social media channels, a website with information about the scheme and registration), with face-to-face contacts (such as youth events with the participation of advisers). It also highlighted the importance of testimonials and the potential of working with bloggers, role models and sports clubs. Finally, following a Call for Proposals on 'Information sharing and outreach activities to young people about Youth Guarantee offers' in 2015, Bulgaria, Greece, Lithuania and Slovenia are also receiving EU funding for increasing public awareness of the Youth Guarantee¹⁰. The final outcomes and results of these four projects are expected in 2017.

Nevertheless, thus far results and impact in terms of increased awareness of the Youth Guarantee in Member States remain uneven and synergies between communication about individual measures and the Youth Guarantee as a national policy could be further developed. A Flash Eurobarometer survey published in April 2014¹¹ highlighted that the Youth Guarantee suffers from a lack of visibility among its core target audience. Almost eight in ten young people had not heard of the initiative by then, 17% had heard of it but were not familiar with the details. Only 4% had detailed knowledge of it. Awareness was highest in Finland, Sweden and Bulgaria, lowest in France, Estonia and Hungary.

In addition to the national and EU level dissemination information sharing and outreach activities currently running regarding the Youth Guarantee, parallel Union co-funded activities are taking place to tackle youth unemployment using Union instruments and funds. Member States have a legal obligation to carry out communication and information activities in relation to the operational programmes launched with EU financial support, notably from the European Social Fund and the Youth Employment Initiative¹², with a view to informing potential beneficiaries about funding opportunities in the context of these programmes¹³.

As such, activities complementary to and consistent with other EU action are possible and may be implemented jointly with other Union instruments. It should be ensured that activities carried out under the EaSI Programme are consistent with, and complementary to, other Union action such as the European Structural and Investment Funds¹⁴, in particular the ESF/YEI. The EaSI Regulation provides for close synergies being created between the EaSI Programme and other Union Programmes and Funds (in particular the ESF/YEI) with due diligence being taken to avoid the same eligible costs being double funded¹⁵.

Spain: <http://www.empleo.gob.es/es/garantiajuvenil/home.html> and

Luxembourg: <http://www.jugendgarantie.lu/>

⁹ <https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/ff082d4f-5e6f-43d0-a8ae-74111dd44c6b>

¹⁰ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=632&langId=en> see VP/2015/005

¹¹ http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/eurobarometre/2014/youth/eb_395_synthesis_youth_en.pdf, see p. 16 for national results

¹² REGULATION (EU) No 1303/2013 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 17 December 2013 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:0320:0469:EN:PDF> Articles 115 -116

¹³ As laid down in Art. 115-117 Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013 and Article 20 Regulation (EU) No. 1304/2013.

¹⁴ As specified in the Common Strategic Framework laid down in regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council

¹⁵ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:0238:0252:EN:PDF> Articles 6-7

2. OBJECTIVE(S) – PRIORITIES – EXPECTED RESULTS

2.1. Objectives - Priorities

A priority of Commission President Juncker's Guidelines¹⁶ is a New Boost for Jobs, Growth and Investment, which necessitates the acceleration of the implementation of the Youth Guarantee Scheme. Coupled with this, one of the objectives of the EaSI PROGRESS axis is to facilitate effective and inclusive information-sharing, mutual learning and dialogue and as such this call for proposals has the overarching objective of removing obstacles to Youth Guarantee implementation, notably by outreach, information sharing and communication activities leading to **both** of the following specific objectives:

1. To better inform/engage Youth Guarantee Stakeholders in implementing partnerships for Youth Guarantee delivery

The relevant stakeholders in the public services, NGOs and civil society may include: employment services, career guidance providers, education and training institutions, youth support services and centres, social partners (employers and trades unions), national, regional, and local government, and youth organisations¹⁷. Involvement of stakeholders that reach out to particularly vulnerable groups facing multiple barriers (such as social exclusion, poverty or discrimination) and that help taking into consideration the diverse backgrounds of NEETs (due in particular to poverty, disability, low educational attainment or ethnic minority/ migrant background) will be particularly relevant.

2. To better inform young people about the Youth Guarantee, engage with and reach out to them, with the aim of bringing them into the Youth Guarantee service

The activities should lead to an increase in the number of young people aware of the Youth Guarantee and of those registered with relevant authorities, i.e. the national Youth Guarantee provider(s). Particular focus should be on the most vulnerable groups, as outlined in the previous paragraph.

Each applicant organisation/ institution is requested to set their own measurable objectives and to develop awareness-raising and communication activities for the Youth Guarantee accordingly in their constituent Member State, which are adapted to the country's circumstances and deemed necessary to remove the remaining specific obstacles to Youth Guarantee implementation. It will be important to justify the added value of the proposed action, be it by setting regional, socio-economic or other relevant priorities. The experience gained from the activities supported under this call for proposals¹⁸ will provide other Member States with various examples for raising awareness and tackling challenges in Youth Guarantee implementation, with a view to creating good practices that could be replicated and adapted to their own Youth Guarantee schemes and feeding into communication on the Youth Guarantee at the European level.

¹⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/publications/president-junckers-political-guidelines_en

¹⁷ Please see Council Recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee, Articles 2 – 7 on building up a Partnership based approach. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:EN:PDF>

¹⁸ For a non-exhaustive list of eligible activities, please see Section 2.2

In the framework of communication activities about the Youth Guarantee, the link should be made to the European Social Fund and the Youth Employment Initiative, which are key funding instruments of Youth Guarantee implementation (see also section I.3). In particular for activities targeting Youth Guarantee stakeholders, the nature of different instruments (e.g. ESF, YEI) – with a clear distinction from the policy (YG) – should be made clear. Applicants are encouraged to include in the awareness-raising activities information on synergies with other relevant instruments, both EU ones (e.g. Erasmus +) and national programmes.

2.2. Description of the activities to be funded / Type of actions

The types of activities which may be funded under this call for proposals include:

Under objective 1:

- actions aiming at the creation and improving of networks, cooperation mechanisms and exchange of good practices among Youth Guarantee provision and governance stakeholders¹⁹. Stakeholders that reach out to particularly vulnerable groups facing multiple barriers (such as social exclusion, poverty or discrimination) and that help taking into consideration the diverse backgrounds of NEETs (due in particular to poverty, disability, low educational attainment or ethnic minority/ migrant background) will be particularly relevant.
- conferences, seminars;
- training activities.

Under objective 2:

- Outreach, information sharing and communication activities related to the Youth Guarantee (inter alia):
 - o development and maintenance of a devoted national Youth Guarantee online platform (for example a website or a part of existing website), which provides regular updates on the state of play of Youth Guarantee implementation in the country, and especially where young people can find out about the opportunities available to them under the scheme (what, how, when) and where they can register. Each applicant whose Member State has not yet set up such an online platform/website should include this activity in the proposal. Revamps or major extensions of existing platforms are also eligible.
 - o The identification, documentation and dissemination of at least 5 case studies/ testimonials highlighting a success story of a person who has benefited from the YG programme, ideally covering the different types of quality offers (education, traineeship, apprenticeship and job opportunities). Each applicant whose Member State does not yet have such case studies/ testimonials at their disposal should include this activity in the proposal.
 - o development and use of existing national 'own media' portals;
 - o social media communication;
 - o advertising (including digital) and ambient media;
 - o press and media relations;

¹⁹ See Section 2.1, Objective 1 for list of potential provision and governance stakeholders.

- distribution of information and materials via existing networks in touch with young people, such as the Eurodesk²⁰ network of multipliers;
- peer-to-peer outreach (involving young people e.g. as youth ambassadors);
- events, street outreach and visits and activities in youth centres.

Applicants can, when developing outreach, information sharing and communication activities, seek synergy with existing channels to reach young people, including the European Youth Portal (<http://europa.eu/youth/en>) and related social media (e.g. the "European Youth" [Facebook profile](#)).

2.3. Expected outputs/results

The action (see types of activities under 2.2) should lead to enhanced partnerships among Youth Guarantee stakeholders and to an increased number of young people registered for Youth Guarantee services.

2.4. Monitoring

The Commission, with the support of an external contractor, will monitor regularly the EaSI Programme. Therefore, beneficiaries/contractors will have to transmit qualitative and quantitative monitoring data on the results of the activities. These will include the extent to which the principles of equality between women and men has been applied, as well as how anti-discrimination considerations, including accessibility issues, have been addressed through the activities. Related templates are attached or will be provided.

In setting up the action, beneficiaries/contractors must foresee the necessary funding for monitoring and reporting to the Commission.

3. TIMETABLE

	Stages	Date or period
a)	Publication of the call	April 2016
b)	Deadline for submitting proposals	30 June 2016
c)	Evaluation period (indicative)	Until end September 2016
d)	Information to applicants (indicative)	October 2016 ²¹
e)	Signature of the grant agreement (indicative)	November 2016 ²²
f)	Starting date of the action (indicative)	Within two months after signature of the grant agreement

²⁰ <http://www.eurodesk.org/edesk/Contact.do>

²¹ And in any case no later than 6 months after the submission deadline.

²² And in any case no later than 3 months after the date of information to applicants.

3.1. Starting date and duration of the projects

The actual starting date of the action will either be the first day following the date when the last of the two parties signs the grant agreement, the first day of the month following the date when the last of the two parties signs or a date agreed upon between the parties.

Applicants should note that if their project is selected, they may receive the grant agreement after the start date of the action that they have indicatively set in the application form. It is therefore advisable to number the months in the work programme instead of indicating the name of the months, for ease of reference.

Any expenditure incurred before the signature of the Grant Agreement will be at the applicant's risk. No expenditure can be incurred before the deadline for submission.

The project's duration should indicatively be between 6 months and 18 month.

4. AVAILABLE BUDGET

The total budget earmarked for the EU co-financing of projects under this call is estimated at EUR 1 650 000.

The Commission expects to fund approximately five proposals, with a maximum of one per EU Member State.

The Commission reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

4.1. Co-financing rate

Under this call for proposals, the EU grant may not exceed 80 % of the total eligible costs of the action. The applicants must guarantee their co-financing of the remaining amount covered by the applicants' own resources or from other sources other than the European Union budget.

5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Applications must be sent no later than the deadline for submission referred to in section 3(b)
- Applications must be submitted using the electronic submission system available at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim>, and by sending a signed, printed version of the application form and its annexes by post or courier service (see section 12)

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

Applicants are encouraged to submit their project proposal in English in order to facilitate the treatment of the proposals and speed up the evaluation process. It should be noted, however, that proposals in all official languages of the EU will be accepted. In this case, applications should be accompanied by an executive summary in English (checklist point 3).

6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

6.1. Eligibility of the applicants (sole or lead and co-applicants) and affiliated entities²³

a) Place of establishment

Legal entities properly established and registered in the following countries are eligible as lead applicant:

- EU Member States.

Legal entities properly established and registered in the following countries are eligible as co-applicant:

- EU Member States;
- Iceland and Norway in accordance with the EEA Agreement
- Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey²⁴.

b) Type of entities

To be eligible, the sole or lead applicant must be:

- the relevant public authority in charge of establishing and managing the national Youth Guarantee scheme, as already identified by the EU Member State pursuant to the Council Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee (Recital 2; see list of national Youth Guarantee Coordinators under the following link: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=11490&langId=en>),

or

- an entity (public or private, profit or not-for-profit) clearly and demonstratively designated by the aforementioned public authority to implement the activities included in the proposal (upon submission of a letter to that effect. See section 14 checklist point 21).

Please note that no other type of entity than the ones mentioned above will be accepted as lead applicant.

To be eligible, co-applicant must be a:

- a public or private organisation (profit or non-profit making).

c) Consortia

²³ See section 2 of the Financial Guidelines for definitions.

²⁴ Other candidate and potential candidate countries, would also participate in accordance with the general principles and the general terms and conditions laid down in the framework agreements concluded with them on their participation in Union programmes. However, it is not yet confirmed, therefore applicants and co-applicants from those countries should check their eligibility with the secretariat of the call. (empl-yp-2016-008@ec.europa.eu)

Proposals may be submitted by a sole applicant or by a consortium²⁵, comprising a lead applicant and co-applicant(s).

d) Affiliated entities

Legal entities having a legal or capital link with applicants, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation and which satisfy the eligibility criteria, may take part in the action as affiliated entities, and may declare eligible costs.

For that purpose, applicants shall identify such affiliated entities in the application form.

6.2. Eligible activities

a) Geographical Location

To be eligible, actions must be fully carried out in EU Member States.

b) Types of activities

The grant will finance inter alia the activities indicated in section 2.2.

c) Core activities

The following activities are considered to be core activities and may not be subcontracted:

- Strategy design
- Monitoring of the dissemination, information sharing and outreach activities

d) Financial Support to third parties

Financial support to third parties as defined in point 3 of the Financial Guidelines is not eligible under this call.

7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Applicants (sole/lead and co-applicants) must sign a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in article 106(1) and 107.1(b) and (c) of the Financial Regulation concerning exclusion and rejection from the procedure respectively, using the relevant form attached to the application form available at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/external/displayWelcome.do>.

The same exclusion criteria apply to any affiliated entities.

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

²⁵ Letters of mandate, authorising the lead applicant to submit the proposal and to sign any Grant Agreement on their behalf must be submitted from each co-applicant. Letters of commitment must be submitted from each co-applicant, affiliated entity, certifying that they are willing to participate in the project with a brief description of their role and indicating any financial contribution where applicable (see section 14, checklist points 5 and 6. Letters of commitment are also required from any associate organisations (no financial contribution) and from any third party (financial contribution only).

8. SELECTION CRITERIA

The applicant (lead and co-applicant) must have the financial and operational capacity to complete the activity for which funding is requested. Only organisations with the necessary financial and operational capacity may be considered for a grant.

8.1. Financial capacity

Sole/Lead and co-applicants must demonstrate that they have the financial capacity to carry out the action: each applicant 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 ratio between the total assets in the applicant's (lead/sole and co-applicant(s)) balance sheet and the total budget of the project or the part of the project budget for which that organisation is responsible according to the budget in the application form should be greater than 0.70.

The verification of financial capacity will not apply to public bodies or to international organisations.

The applicants' (lead/sole and co-applicant) financial capacity will be assessed on the basis of the following supporting documents to be submitted with the application:

- Declaration on honour (including financial capacity to carry out the activity) (see section 14, checklist point 4);
- Annual balance sheets and profit and loss accounts for the last financial year available (see section 14, checklist point 18);
- Summary balance sheet and profit and loss accounts using the template provided in SWIM (see section 12) and signed by the legal representative (see section 14, checklist point 19).
- For action grants of EUR 750 000 or more, an audit report produced by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the last financial year available (see section 14, checklist point 20).

8.2. Operational capacity

The sole/lead and co-applicant organisation/institution must have the operational resources (technical, management) and the professional skills and qualifications needed to successfully complete the proposed action, as well as the ability to implement it. In particular, the sole/lead and co-applicants must have:

- a strong track record of competence and experience relating to the objectives of the call of at least three years and in particular in the fields of information dissemination, awareness raising and the creation of effective cooperation mechanisms;

The operational capacity of the applicant (sole/lead and co-applicant) to complete the proposed action must be confirmed by the submission in the proposal of the following items:

- A list of the main projects carried out in the last three years relating to the objective of the call. In the case of work done for the European Commission, applicant

organisations/institutions must also indicate the reference number of the contract and the department for which the contract was performed (see section 14, checklist point 17);

- The CVs of the proposed project co-ordinator and the persons who will perform the main tasks, showing all their relevant professional experience (see section 14, checklist point 15);
- A declaration of the project manager/coordinator certifying the competence of the team to carry out the required tasks (see section 14, checklist point 16);
- Declaration on honour (including operational capacity to carry out the activity) (see section 14, checklist point 4).

If the sole/lead applicant is considered not to have the required financial or operational capacity, the application as a whole will be rejected. If a co-applicant is considered not to have the required financial or operational capacity, this co-applicant will be removed from the consortium and the application will be evaluated without this co-applicant²⁶. In addition, the costs that are allocated to the non-selected co-applicant will be removed from the budget. If the application is accepted, the work programme will have to be adapted as appropriate.

Only proposals which comply with the requirements of the above selection criteria will be considered for further evaluation.

9. AWARD CRITERIA

The proposals which fulfil the eligibility and selection criteria will be assessed according to the following award criteria:

- **Relevance criteria** (Max. 30 point)
Particular attention will be paid to
 - How is the proposed action relevant to the objectives of the call?
 - Is there a clear diagnosis of the issues addressed in the proposal?
 - Is there a well-supported approach suggested to address these issues?
 - Are all relevant stakeholders that are necessary to implement the action involved in the application and the proposed work plan?
 - Is there an effective information dissemination strategy towards all relevant stakeholders and target groups?
- **Quality criteria, including clarity of the activities and work plan, of the expected outcomes, of the budget proposal and appropriateness of the impact/outcome evaluation method** (Max. 25 point)
Particular attention will be paid to
 - Is the work plan clear, consistent and feasible? Does it include well identified and well planned activities, a clear and attainable timetable and methodology?
 - Does the work plan have the capacity to achieve the planned objectives and outcomes? Does it include key performance indicators (KPI)?
 - Is there a convincing plan for monitoring and evaluation of the planned activities, impacts and outcomes? Is there a quality assurance plan?
 - Is the budget explanation complete and clear?
- **Cost-effectiveness criteria** (Max. 20 point)
Particular attention will be paid to

²⁶ This includes a re-evaluation of the eligibility of the modified consortium.

- To what extent are the project output and impact proportional to the amount of the requested grant?
- To what extent does the proposal draw on and adapt experiences of similar previous and existing activities within the country or the EU (in particular, but not exclusively, the four pilot projects on Youth Guarantee outreach and awareness raising²⁷)?
- **Added value criteria** (Max. 25 point)
Particular attention will be paid to
 - What is the added value of the proposed action in light of similar previous or existing outreach, information sharing and communication activities? To what extent is the action filling identified gaps?
 - Is collaboration planned with networks established by the European Commission (such as Europe Direct and the Informal Network of ESF Information Officers INIO²⁸)?

Applications will be ranked according to the total score awarded. Taking into account the available budget and the Commission's intention to fund a maximum of one proposal per EU Member State, the proposals with the highest total scores will be recommended for award, **on condition that:**

- **the total score reaches at least 60% of the maximum possible mark;**
- **the score for each criteria is at least 50% of the maximum possible mark for that criterion.**

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, or to the coordinator in the case of multi-beneficiary grant agreements.

The 2 copies of the original agreement must be signed by the beneficiary, or the coordinator in the case of multi-beneficiary grant agreements, and returned to the Commission immediately. The Commission will sign it last.

The grant agreement may include corrections and deletion of ineligible costs or activities made by the Commission – therefore the applicant should carefully read the whole agreement and the budget and work programme sections in particular, before signing and returning the copies to the Commission.

A model Grant Agreement is published on the Europa website under the relevant call: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en>.

Please note that the award of a grant does not establish an entitlement for subsequent years.

10.1. Sources of Funding

In addition to the obligations with regard to visibility of Union funding foreseen in the General conditions to the grant agreement, beneficiaries must acknowledge in writing that the project has been supported by the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation ("EaSI") 2014-2020. In practice, all products (publications, brochures, press

²⁷ See in section 1.3 as well as footnote 9.

²⁸ <http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=1829>

releases, videos, CDs, posters and banners, and especially those associated with conferences, seminars and information campaigns) must state the following:

This (publication, conference, video, xxx) has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020). For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>

The European emblem must appear on every publication or other material produced. Please see:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/services/visual_identity/pdf/use-emblem_en.pdf

Every publication must include the following:

The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Commission.

11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

Details on financial provisions are laid out in the Financial Guidelines for Applicants and the model Grant Agreement, both published on the Europa website under the relevant call: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en>.

Specific procurement procedures

Where the value of a foreseen procurement contract for subcontracting external expertise exceeds EUR 60 000, in addition to the rules indicated in the Financial Guidelines for applicants, the following shall apply:

- the applicant must provide with the grant application a copy of the draft tender specifications. To assist applicants, a model for tender specifications is included in Annex to this call. The draft tender specifications should be submitted in English, French or German.
- if selected, beneficiaries must be able to prove, if requested, that they have sought bids from at least five different tenderers, including proof that they have published the call for tender or invitation to tender at least on their website and provided a detailed description of the selection procedure.

This requirement does not apply to public authorities which are already governed by a system of public procurement rules.

12. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

The procedure to submit proposals electronically is explained in point 14 of the "Financial Guidelines for Applicants". Before starting, please read carefully the SWIM user manual:

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/calls/pdf/swim_manual_en.pdf

Once the application form is filled in, applicants must submit it both electronically and in hard copy, before the deadline set in section 3.b above.

The SWIM electronic application form is available until midnight on the day of the submission deadline. Since the applicants must first submit the form electronically, and then print, sign and

send it by post service or hand delivery by the submission deadline, it is the **applicant's responsibility to ensure that the appropriate postal or courier services are locally available on the day of the deadline.**

The hard copy of the proposal must be duly signed and sent in two copies (one marked “original” and one marked “copy”), including all documents listed in section 14, by the deadline (the postmark or the express courier receipt date serving as proof) to the following address:

European Commission
Call for proposals VP/2016/008 – DG EMPL.B1
Rue Joseph II 27 – 03/38
B-1049 Bruxelles - BELGIUM

Please send your proposal by registered post, express courier service or by hand delivery only. Proof of posting or express courier receipt should be kept as it could be requested by the European Commission in cases of doubt regarding the date of submission.

Hand-delivered proposals must be received by the European Commission before 4 p.m. on the date of the deadline for submission as indicated in section 3(b) at the following address:

European Commission
Service central de réception du courrier
Call for proposals VP/2016/008 – DG EMPL.B1
Avenue du Bourget, 1
B-1140 Evere

At that time the European Commission's Mail Service will provide a signed receipt which should be conserved as proof of delivery.

If an applicant submits more than one proposal, each proposal must be submitted separately.

Additional 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.

13. COMMUNICATION

The information contained in the present call document 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.

All enquiries must be made by e-mail only to:
empl-vp-2016-008@ec.europa.eu
For any technical problems please contact: empl-swim-support@ec.europa.eu

Questions may be sent by to the above address no later than 10 days before the deadline for the submission of proposals.

The Commission has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 5 days before the deadline for submission of proposals. To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Commission will not give a prior opinion on the eligibility of applicants, or affiliated entity(ies), an action or specific activities.

No individual replies to questions will be sent but all questions together with the answers and other important notices will be published (FAQ in EN) at regular intervals on the Europa website under the relevant call: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en>.

The Commission may, on its own initiative, inform interested parties of any error, inaccuracy, omission or clerical error in the text of the call for proposals on the mentioned Europa website. It is therefore advisable to consult the above mentioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

No modification to the proposal is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. If there is a need to clarify certain aspects or to correct clerical mistakes, the Commission may contact the applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process.

Applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the selection process. Unsuccessful applicants will be informed of the reasons for rejection. No information regarding the award procedure will be disclosed until the notification letters have been sent to the beneficiaries.

14. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The table below includes the documents that must be provided on submission of the proposal. It also indicates where originals are required. We recommend that applicants use the table as a **checklist** in order to verify compliance with all requirements.

While some information must be supplied using the templates available in the SWIM, other documents may need to be completed and/or attached electronically, usually either administrative documents or free format text descriptions. The SWIM application indicates in each section where SWIM templates should be used as well as which and where free format documents can be uploaded electronically.

Regarding the compilation of the application file, it is recommended to:

- 1) follow the order of documents as listed in the checklist (and attach a ticked checklist as below to the proposal);
- 2) print the documents double-sided;
- 3) use 2-hole folders (do not bind or glue; stapling is acceptable).

CHECKLIST for required documents

This table includes the documents that must be provided for the proposal and where originals are required. We strongly recommend using the table as a checklist in order to verify compliance with all requirements. **Notes:** highlighted documents do not need to be provided by public entities. Documents marked with * are obligatorily to be attached online in SWIM as well.

No.	Document	Specification and content	The document must be provided by each				Originally signed?	Checkbox
			Lead applicant	Co-applicant	Affiliated entity	Associate organisation/ third party		
1	Official cover letter of the application	This letter must quote the reference of the call for proposals, be originally signed and dated by the authorised representative and include the proposal reference number generated by SWIM (e.g. VP/2016/008/xxxx) – free format	✓	--	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Signed SWIM application form submitted online + hard copies	The SWIM application form submitted online must be printed and dated and signed by the authorised legal representative and send by hard copies as foreseen in Section 12. <i>Note: the online form must be electronically submitted before printing. After electronic submission, no further changes to the proposal are permitted.</i>	✓	--	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Executive summary (if necessary)	Executive summary in EN (maximum 2 pages) – free format	✓	--	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Declaration on honour*	The template is available in SWIM and must be written on the official letterhead of the organisation, bearing the original signature of the authorised legal representative.	✓	✓	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Letter of commitment*	The template is available in SWIM and must explain the nature of the organisation's involvement and specify the amount of any funding provided. The letter must be written on the official letterhead of the organisation and bear the original signature of the legal representative.	--	✓	✓	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Letter of mandate*	The template is available in SWIM and must be written on the official letterhead of the organisation, dated and signed by the authorised legal representative.	--	✓	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Legal/capital link with lead or co-applicant*	Affiliated entities are required to provide proof of the legal and/or capital link with the lead or co-applicant.	--	--	✓	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Legal entity form*	The template is available in SWIM and online (http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm) and must be duly signed and dated by the legal representative. Exclusively in the case of social partner organisations without legal personality : a signed letter of the legal representative certifying his/her capacity to undertake legal obligations on behalf of the organisation.	✓	✓	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Proof of registration	A certificate of official registration or other official document attesting the establishment of the entity (for public bodies: the law, decree, decision etc. establishing the entity).	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Statutes	The articles of association/statutes or equivalent proving the eligibility of the organisation.	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	VAT certificate	A document showing the identification number for tax purposes or the VAT number, if applicable.	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Financial identification form*	The template is available in SWIM and online (http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/financial_id_en.cfm) and must be duly signed and dated by the account holder and bearing the bank stamp and signature of the bank representative (or a copy of recent bank statement attached).	✓	--	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Description of the action and work plan*	The template is available in SWIM which must be duly completed and submitted electronically together with the online submission form and on paper as well. The document should be submitted in English	✓	--	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Budget Explanation for	This is a separate free-format document in addition to the budget section of the on-line application form and it	✓	--	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>

	the project	must also be submitted electronically in annex to the on-line application form. The paper version must be identical to the electronic version of the budget explanation. The budget explanation must provide additional information to explain and justify items of the proposed budget. It should in particular explain: how the number of working days of staff involved in the implementation of the action has been fixed; how average travel costs were calculated; unless this is self-explanatory, how costs of services and administration costs were defined. The Commission may request applicants to submit additional justifications of proposed eligible costs during the evaluation procedure.						
15	Curricula vitae of key staff	Detailed CVs of the person responsible for managing the action (named in section A.3 of the online application form) and the persons who will perform the main tasks (named under "Management/Coordination" under "Heading 1 – Staff costs" of the budget in the on-line application form). The CVs should indicate clearly the current employer.	✓	✓	✓	--	--	☐
16	Declaration certifying the competence of the project team	Declaration of the project manager/coordinator certifying the competence of the complete project team to carry out the required task and demonstrating operational capacity. It should include a job specification of the project manager and the persons (from sole /lead applicant, co-applicants and affiliated entities) performing the main task, with a brief description of their outputs related to the subject of the proposal. – free format	✓	--	--	--	--	☐
17	List of main projects	A list of the main projects carried out, if any, in the last three years relating to the subject of the call other than those already indicated in the SWIM online application form (section D.3) – free format	✓	✓	✓	--	--	☐
18	Balance sheet & profit and loss accounts	The most recent balance sheet and profit & loss accounts, including assets and liabilities, specifying the currency used.	✓	✓	--	--	--	☐
19	Summary balance sheet & profit and loss accounts	The template is available in SWIM and must be signed by the authorised legal representative	✓	✓	--	---	✓	☐
20	Audit report	For grant requests of EUR 750,000: an external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the accounts for the last financial year available. The threshold applies to each co-applicant in line with their share of the action budget. The report should be submitted in English, French or German.	✓	✓	--	--	--	☐
21	Letter of designation by Public Authority	In cases where the Public Authority in charge of establishing and managing the national Youth Guarantee scheme (as already identified by the Member State pursuant to the Council Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee) is not the lead or sole applicant, a letter from the aforementioned Public Authority should be submitted, clearly designating another entity as the lead or sole applicant, who will implement the activities included in this proposal.	✓	--	--	--	✓	☐
22	Draft tender specifications	In case of subcontracting for external expertise where the value of the contracts exceeds EUR 60 000, a copy of the draft tender specifications must be submitted. A model is included in Annex II of this call. The draft tender specifications should be submitted in English, French or German.	✓	--	--	--	--	--

ANNEX I:

FINANCIAL GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

Annex I is available on the Europa website under the relevant call:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en&callId=422&furtherCalls=yes>

**ANNEX II: MODEL FOR TENDER SPECIFICATIONS FOR SUBCONTRACTING
EXTERNAL EXPERTISE**

Tender Specifications –

1. Background
2. Purpose of the Contract
3. Tasks to be performed by the Contractor
 - 3.1. Description of tasks
 - 3.2. Guidance and indications on tasks execution and methodology
4. Expertise required
5. Time schedule and reporting
6. Payments and standard contract
7. Price
8. Selection criteria
9. Award criteria

The contract will be awarded to the tenderer whose offer represents the best value for money - taking into account the following criteria:

.....
.....
.....

It should be noted that the contract will not be awarded to a tenderer who receives less than 70% on the Award Criteria.

10. Content and presentation of the bids
 - 10.1. Content of the bids
 - 10.2. Presentation of the bids