



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG
Social Affairs
Social Investment Strategy

Call for proposals on social innovation and national reforms

Innovative Work-Life balance Strategies to facilitate reconciliation of professional and caring responsibilities

EaSI

PROGRESS AXIS

Call for proposals

VP/2018/005

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

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Disclaimer: *"The present document aims to complement and clarify the Call for proposals and does not replace it. In the event that there are discrepancies between this document and the Call for proposals, the Call for proposals prevails. Any requests or replies do not constitute any ground to claim any expectation concerning the selection of the proposal or the award of the grant.*

1.) RECEIVED QUESTIONS

1. Is a Public Higher Education Institution established in an EU Member State eligible to apply either as applicant or co-applicant.
ANSWER: see FAQ n°11 & 22.
2. Do you have a precise definition of “social partner”?
ANSWER: A social partner organisation is either an organisation representing workers – often also referred to as "trade union" – or an organisation representing employers. They engage in some form of "social dialogue", discussing and often negotiating such issues as wages, working conditions, training, etc.
3. When you say that at least one co-applicant must be properly established and registered in a EaSI-PROGRESS participating country other than a EU-Member State, does that mean that we can develop a pilot project just in Italy?
ANSWER: Yes, see FAQ n°10 & 11 (geographical location).
4. Could you please give us the exhaustive list of the eligible countries for the call VP/2018/005? We understood that there are the countries from the EU, Norway and Island, Turquie, Albanie, Macédoine, Monténégro and Serbie. What about the countries like Switzerland and Lichtenstein?
ANSWER: see FAQ n°42.
5. We are the local authority (public body) in a municipality in an eligible country [*exact names hidden for confidentiality purpose*]. We would like to apply for the call for proposals on social innovation and national reforms. In the application form in the SWIM system there are three parts except for Lead applicant and Co-applicant as Associate Organisations and Third Parties. Are these Associate Organisations and Third Parties obligatory in this call?
ANSWER: Associate and third parties organisations are not obligatory. See FAQ n°26.
6. As stated in the call text: 6.1 b) Lead applicant must be a public body (such as national, regional and local authorities, employment services). Can a public University be the lead applicant or is the lead applicant position in this call exclusively reserved for "national, regional and local authorities, employment services"?
ANSWER: "such as" means "for example". See FAQ n°22 & 33.
7. Type of entities - Lead applicant must be a public body (such as national, regional and local authorities, employment services). Co-applicants must be public bodies, for profit or non-profit-making private entities. We were wondering whether an Italian public university can apply as lead applicant?
ANSWER: see FAQ n°22 & 33.
8. This is a question concerning the eligibility of the lead partner. In the document Text-VP-2018-005_EN in section 6 the call it states: "Lead applicant must be a public body (such as national, regional and local authorities, employment services)." My question is: Can our university [*name hidden for confidentiality purpose*], which is a public law institute, be the lead applicant?
ANSWER: "such as" means "for example". See FAQ n°22 & 33.
9. Section 2.4. Monitoring: In this section the Call for Proposals says: “In setting up the action, beneficiaries must foresee the necessary funding for monitoring and reporting to the Commission”. Question: Does this refer to the amount of time that the professionals working in the project will need to devote, in order to answer the demands of information by the external contractor? In that case: How can we predict the amount of information that the external contractor will demand from us in order to foresee the associated budget? Is there any guideline? Otherwise: What action/s does this refer to?
ANSWER: This refers to the staff, services or administration costs you will dedicate to monitor your project and to report on it (for example for the second prefinancing and final reports) to the Commission.

10. Section 8.1 Financial capacity: In this section the Call for Proposals says: "The ratio between the total assets in the applicant's (lead 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 would be considered strong if it is equal or greater than 0.70". Question: is this ratio for each entity participating in the project (lead and partners) individually, or is it for the overall project consortium applying?
ANSWER: The ratio applies to the share of budget for each applicant and the individual asset of the applicant. See FAQ n°25.
11. I have a query on the applicant / co-applicant countries. Reference is made to the Call for proposals document - article 6.1b: "At least one co-applicant must be properly established and registered in a EaSI-PROGRESS participating country other than a EU-Member State." If for example the lead applicant is from Malta and the social partner is also from Malta, can the other third co-applicant be from another Member State such as Ireland or does it need to be from non-EU Member States such as EEA/EFTA or applicant country please?
ANSWER: See FAQ n°10.
12. Could you please let me know whether Universities in Europe are eligible to apply? This phrase is unclear to me: "Lead applicant must be a public body (such as national, regional and local authorities, employment services."
ANSWER: Universities are eligible to apply as lead applicant if they are considered as a public body. See FAQ n°22 & 33.
13. Regarding the call VP/2018/005 / EaSI-PROGRESS I have the following questions:
Is there a national contact point in Austria? Are information events planned about the submission details and call procedure?
ANSWER: There is no contact point and no information event foreseen, see FAQ n°21.
14. Section 6.1.c) states that it is committed to include a non EU Member State being an EaSI Progress participant country.
1) Does this imply that we necessarily have to include a partner from Iceland, Norway, Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia or Turkey? Yes or no.
2) If yes, and therefore is mandatory to include at least one of these countries, Is it true that we must confirm again with you that the partner from Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro Serbia or Turkey is eligible? (As states in FAQ document)
ANSWER:
1) Yes, see FAQ n°10.
2) No, see FAQ n°9.
15. 15. Are organizations established in the UK eligible under the present call? I understand that as set out - organisations that are UK based are eligible to apply as the UK is an EU Member State, but the period of funding could possibly extend into a period when it's feasible we may not be.
ANSWER: Yes, UK applicants are eligible as stated under point 6 – Eligibility criteria and 6.1. a) in the text of the Call. However *"Please be aware that eligibility criteria must be complied with for the entire duration of the grant. If the United Kingdom withdraws from the EU during the grant period without concluding an agreement with the EU ensuring in particular that British applicants continue to be eligible, British beneficiaries will cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the project on the basis of Article II.17.3.1(a)of the grant agreement"*.
16. We are a public body (regional labour office), but we have no experience in carrying out projects relating to gender equality in the workplace in the last three years. So we can't submit a list of the projects relating to the subject of the call. We are an institution that evaluates and co-finances from ESF fund projects in the frame of the calls of proposal. In some calls of proposal the projects relating to the organization of crèches for working parents or flexible working time for women's professional activation were funded. Can our institution apply as a lead applicant in this situation?

ANSWER: The list of past projects in the field of the call is used to assess the operational capacity of the applicants. Applicants (lead and co-applicant(s)) must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed action. In particular, applicants must have:

- Carried out projects relating to gender equality in the workplace in the last three years;
 - The necessary operational resources (technical, management) to carry out the action.
- The question relates to the operational capacity of applicants which will be assessed during the evaluation of the proposal. See FAQ n°33.

17. It is clear that the lead applicant of the proposal must be a public body, but regarding the co-applicants, the sentence in the call for proposals is not very clear: Co-applicants must be public bodies, for profit or non-profit-making private entities.

Can a private company participate in the proposal as a co-applicant?

ANSWER: To be eligible as a co-applicant, the private company must have a for profit legal entity or a non-profit-making private legal entity.

18. 1) We are a study and research center on industry, innovation and labour which is a Private Law Body/Non-profit/Local/University-Research Institute, could we be a co-applicant on the Call for Proposals VP/2018/005 ?

2) Regarding the eligibility criteria, you wrote about Consortia:

- The action must involve a consortium of at least 3 applicants (1 Lead applicant + 2 coapplicants).
- At least one co-applicant must be a social partner organisation at European, national or local level.

On this second point, one of our possible social partners is a trade union confederation, but it is not a public body. Can it be, however, co-applicant?

ANSWER: 1+2) To be eligible as a co-applicant, the center or the social partner must be a public body, or a for profit entity or a non-profit-making private entity. See FAQ n°12 & 33.

19. 1.) Is it really a requirement to have a country outside the EU as co-applicant?
2.) Could my organisation (XY) be associate/supporting in projects? For instance as steering group member?

ANSWER: 1) Yes, see FAQ n°10.

2) See FAQ n°26 and 33.

20. In our region, only the most representative entities are able to participate in the social dialogue official process, but there are another organisation representing employers as well. Are we able to engage an organisation that does represent employers, but does not participate in the social dialogue official process in our region?

ANSWER:

Such an organisation can participate to in this Call as one of the co-applicants but not as social partners. Because based on the definition of social partner given in the answer to question n°2 above, organisations which do not engage in social dialogue cannot be considered as social partners.

21. In relation to the EaSI 2014-2020 program, I would like to have in general the complete list of countries eligible to submit proposals as applicants: and in particular for the calls: VP/2017/013; VP/2018/003; VP/ 2018/005.

ANSWER: See FAQ n°9, 10 and 42.

For the Calls VP/2017/013 and VP/2018/003, you must address your question to the corresponding functional mailboxes.

22. Is a public University counted in this call as public body and could it be the lead applicant?

ANSWER: See FAQ n°22 & 33.

23. I am writing on behalf of the XY organisation in order to kindly ask you to clarify two aspects:
a) is there a character limit to be respected while formulating the Description of the action and work plan?

b) is there a downloadable template for the formulation of the Detailed work programme? If yes, could you tell me where to find it?

ANSWER:

- a.) There is no limit to the number of characters but conciseness is recommended.
- b.) No, the detailed work programme is a free format document.

24. a. Can a certain amount of the project budget be used for the procurement of some goods (office equipment etc.) and services (salary of a project coordinator etc.)?
b. Could a renovation or a construction of a building be done by the project budget?
c. Can we furnish/equip an existing facility from the Project budget?
d. Could the social security premiums and salaries of the staff working in the pilot implementation offices be financed from the project budget?

ANSWER:

a) For the purchase of some goods (such as office equipment) or services, see Section 4.2.2.3 Costs of services and Section 4.2.2.4. Administration costs of the Financial guidelines.

However, the salary of a project coordinator cannot be subcontracted because it falls under the coordination of the activities, considered as core activities which may not be subcontracted. Core activities shall be performed by the lead applicant. See Section 6.2 Eligible activities c) Core activities of the text of the Call.

b) No, see Section 6.3 Ineligible activities.

c) Yes only if it falls under eligible indirect costs-overheads. See Section 4.2.3 of the Financial Guidelines.

d) Yes, see the Section 4.2.2.1 Staff costs of the Financial Guidelines.

25. Referring to 6.1. Eligibility of the applicants - c) Affiliated entities: We would like to know if an affiliated entity owned by a Federal Ministry is allowed to undertake a number of tasks against payment?

ANSWER: No because affiliated entities cannot take part in this Call as they are not eligible, see Section 6.1. d) of the text of the Call.

26. We are planning a project with a public youth institution as Lead.

a) Is it correct that the core activities shall be performed only by the lead applicant?

b) Is counselling and pedagogic work a core activity which has to be done by the lead?

ANSWER:

a. Yes. See FAQ n°11

b.) See FAQ n°33

27. I am applying for the EaSi Call for Proposal deadline April 18th and the application specifies uploading G.2 'Detailed work programme' but no template is provided. What information should be provided in this work programme that is not already provided in the other sections?

ANSWER: The detailed work programme is a free format document. It should explain how you are planning your work. Please see the answer 23 above.

28. a) Is the call open to a large private company as a co-applicant (as, if our understanding is correct, projects can only be led by public authorities)? b) Should the geographical scope of the project only concern the country/region/municipality of the leading entity, or could it be tested on a broader pan-EU scope? c) Will priority be given to countries where a higher gender-gap has been identified by the EU Semester recommendations? d) What is intended with the term "innovative" and does such a term imply the use of a digital technology in the project? e) And finally, will there be an information day on the call, which would also allow potential consortium partners to meet?

Answer:

a) Yes, see the answer given to the question n°17.

b) The project could be tested on a pan-EU scope, in accordance with the geographical location of the eligible activities, see the reference to section 6.2 a) in the FAQ n°11.

- c) No, the Call does not give priority to countries where a higher gender-gap has been identified by the EU semester recommendations. However, the award criteria will assess the relevance of the project to addressing the challenges faced by women in the labour market.
- d) In the context of the Call, innovation means new practices, policies or processes to meet newly emerging social needs and needs that are not sufficiently met by current practices. It does not necessarily imply the use of digital technology but should acknowledge a creative thinking.
- e) No, see the answer to the question n°13 above.
29. In relation to the call for proposals we want to know, if a co-applicant from Switzerland can participate in the call.
Answer: See FAQ n°42.
30. Je voulais savoir si l'organisation XYZ [name hidden] (legal person -for profit - private entity) pouvait être codemandeur dans l'appel à propositions VP/2018/005 du programme EaSI-PROGRESS?
Answer: See FAQ n°12 and n°33.
31. Is an international organisation [name hidden] eligible to apply as a co-applicant?
Answer: International organisations are not eligible as lead or co-applicant under this Call. They may participate as associate organisation. See the definition in the Financial Guidelines: Other organisations may only participate in the action as associate organisations where this serves the aim of the action, on a no-cost basis. These organisations will not be a party of the grant agreement concluded with the Commission. Their role shall be described in Annex 1. See also FAQ n°26.
32. Do you think that there will be a second call this year or another call for a proposal in connection with „Innovative Work-Life balance Strategies to facilitate reconciliation of professional and caring responsibilities“ in 2019 and, if possible, can you give an indication of the approximate time of the opening and/or closing of the call?
Answer: No other call is foreseen in 2018 on this topic. The calendar of the Calls is published with the EaSI annual work programme available here: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en>. See also FAQ n°19.
33. Should provide any applicant and co-applicant the cofinancing 20% for its own budget? Or it is possible to distribute the co-financing rate for the whole project differently between the applicants?
Answer: It is up to the project's applicants to decide on the budget allocation between them. Because as mentioned in the section 5 of the Financial Guidelines (page 17), if the proposal is selected for a grant, the Commission will calculate the EU contribution as a percentage of the total eligible costs as shown in the estimated budget for the implementation of the action. The Commission reserves the right to invite the applicant to correct the grant requested if the proposal is acceptable but includes ineligible costs or requires non-substantial adjustments to optimise cost-effectiveness (e.g. reduction of number of working days if these are estimated to be too high, elimination of non-essential activities, etc.).
34. I am writing to inquire about the eligibility of our institution for the grant titled “Innovative Work-Life balance Strategies to facilitate reconciliation of professional and caring responsibilities” (VP/2018/005). It is indicated in the call for proposals that the “lead applicant must be a public body,” and “co-applicants must be public bodies, for profit or non-profit-making private entities.” XX [name hidden], our institution is a non-profit-making entity operating in XXX. We intend to collaborate with the YY Association, along with a potential private sector or non-profit partner. To ensure the meaning of the term “public body,” we would like to kindly ask you whether such a consortium would be eligible for this grant.
Answer: To ensure equal treatments of applicants, the Commission will not give a prior opinion on the eligibility of applicants, an action or specific activities. See FAQ n°33.

35. Is an organization supported by the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) eligible to apply under this call?

Answer: Yes as long as it complies with the no double financing rule. See the Financial Guidelines, point 1 – General principles: Each action may give rise to the award of only one grant, there can be no duplicate European Union funding of the same expenditure. The applicant must indicate the sources and amounts of any other funding received or applied for in the same financial year for the same action or for any other action and for routine activities (running costs). See the article 129 of the Financial Regulation and 193 of the Rules of Application.

See also the points 4.2.3. Eligible indirect costs and 4.2.4 Ineligible costs of the Financial Guidelines.

It must also comply with all the criteria of this Call, see FAQ n°11.

36. Is it possible for EASI-funded networks to participate in these social experimentation projects, as full partners with budgets? Or only as associate partners without budgets?

Answer: Yes, see answer to the question n°35 above.

37. We are now working with our partners at the budget for presenting the project at the call and we have encountered a problem when including the staff of one of our partners, which is a union. The problem is that although the staff who would participate in the project are part of the structure of the union, they are hired by public institutions, and, therefore, those administrations are the ones who pay their salaries. a) How do we include their time allocation in the budget? b) Could it be included as a contribution from third parties?

Answer: a) See the explanation in the point 4.2.2.1 Staff costs of the Financial Guidelines and FAQ n°27. b) If you consider a contribution from third parties, see the point 4.3 Income of the Financial Guidelines.

2.) FAQ

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1. What is the main purpose of this call for proposals?

See section 1.3 of the Call:

"This call for proposals aims to support governmental and non-governmental actors, and social partners in delivering on the rights and principles set out in the Pillar through social innovation and national policy reforms as regards **reconciling work and private life**.

This call aims at funding projects to develop, test, and implement innovative work-life balance strategies in the workplace. The purpose of these strategies is to facilitate the reconciliation of work and private life through supporting a more equal share of care responsibilities between working women and men, thereby encouraging a higher participation of women in the labour market."

2. What are the objectives of this call for proposals?

See section 2.1 of the Call:

"The objectives of this call are:

- to develop, test and/or implement innovative work-life balance strategies in the workplace, conducive towards higher participation of women in the labour market and a better sharing of care responsibilities between women and men;
- to develop sustainable multi-level partnership models that would facilitate the implementation of innovative work-life balance strategies in the workplace;
- to foster knowledge and experience-sharing between different Member States and/or companies already implementing successful work-life balance strategies, with a strong emphasis on challenges faced by women in the labour market and the need to involve more men in care duties;
- to facilitate access to individualised information about social protection rights and entitlements;
- to facilitate professional and geographical mobility of the economically active
- to support the modernisation of social protection systems enabling them
- to respond to such challenges as digitalisation, the changing world of work, ageing of population and the capacity to withstand economic shocks."

3. Is the call for proposals published in any other language than English?

The text of the call for proposal is also available in French and in German.

4. What is the submission deadline for this call for proposals?

See section 3 (Timetable):

The deadline to submit your application is the **18/04/2018**.

5. How to submit my application?

See section 5 (Admissibility requirements):

- Applications must be sent no later than the deadline for submission referred to in section 3.

. Applications must be submitted using the electronic submission system available at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim>, and by sending one signed, printed version of the application form and all 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).

The applications should clearly specify which of the three Lots of the present Call the proposed action refers to.

Please **do not send** your proposals electronically to the Functional Mail Box (FMB) of the Call.

6. In what form does it need to be submitted?

See section 13 (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 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 2 copies (one marked "original" and 1 marked "copy"), including all documents listed in section 15, by the deadline (the postmark or the express courier receipt date serving as proof) to the following address:

*European Commission
Call for proposals VP/2018/xxx – DG EMPL.C1
J-27 – 01/240
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 at the following address:

*European Commission
Service central de réception du courrier
Call for proposals VP/2018/005 – DG EMPL.C1
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 (See section 14).

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.

7. How can I find the compulsory forms in the SWIM online application?

a) ECAS password :

- Before you create a grant application in SWIM, you need to log on with your personal ECAS account.
- Should you not have any ECAS account yet, after you click on the "Apply now", click on "Sign Up" and follow the instructions to create your own ECAS account.
- You also can find information through the following link "How to create an ECAS password" available in all languages http://ec.europa.eu/visits/documents/ecas-step-by-step_bu.pdf

Once you have the ECAS account, you will be able to see “Create new application” button after you click “Apply now” via the link: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/external/display/Welcome.do>

Please note that the form is available in English, French and German.

b) For more detailed step-by-step instructions see SWIM user manual:

- in French : http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/calls/pdf/swim_manual_fr.pdf
- in English : http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/calls/pdf/swim_manual_en.pdf
- in German : http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/calls/pdf/swim_manual_de.pdf

c) The forms can be uploaded from the online SWIM application in

- section A for lead-applicant (declaration of honour),
- section B for co-applicants (declaration of honour, letters of mandate)
- section E for annexes etc.

d) Should you still have a problem, please send a mail to:

empl-swim-support@ec.europa.eu

8. Are applicants allowed to submit more than one application or to be involved in more than one project?

There is no formal limitation in the number of proposals to be submitted as lead or co-applicants.

Considering the important investment required in terms of time and staff to submit a proposal, it is recommended to focus on quality over quantity. Moreover, organisations involved in several proposals shall be able to demonstrate adequate operational and financial capacity for such multiple participation. Double financing is obviously forbidden.

As mentioned *under section 13* of the Call: *"If an- applicant submits more than one proposal, each proposal must be submitted separately."*

9. Which countries are eligible to participate in the Call?

See section 6.1.a of the Call:

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

- EU Member States;
- Iceland and Norway in accordance with the EEA Agreement;
- Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey¹

10. Is trans-nationality required? Is there a minimum number of countries to be involved in the project?

No, *see section 6.1.c (Consortia)*² of the Call:

- "The action must involve a consortium of at least 3 applicants (1 Lead applicant + 2 co-applicants).
- At least one co-applicant must be a social partner organisation at European, national or local level.
- At least one co-applicant must be properly established and registered in a EaSI-PROGRESS participating country other than a EU-Member State."

11. What are the eligibility criteria?

See section 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 and 15.2 of the Call:

¹ 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 with the secretariat of the call (empl-vp-2018-005@ec.europa.eu) their eligibility.

² 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 by each co-applicant, 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 15, checklist points 5 and 6*). Letters of commitment are also required from any associate organisations (participation on a no-cost basis and no financial contribution).

6.1. Eligibility of the applicants (lead and co-applicants)³:

a) *Place of establishment*

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

- EU Member States;
- Iceland and Norway in accordance with the EEA Agreement;
- Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey⁴.

b) *Type of entities*

- Lead applicant must be a public body (such as national, regional and local authorities, employment services).
- Co-applicants must be public bodies, for profit or non-profit-making private entities.

c) *Consortia*

- The action must involve a consortium of at least 3 applicants (1 Lead applicant + 2 co-applicants).
- At least one co-applicant must be a social partner organisation at European, national or local level.
- At least one co-applicant must be properly established and registered in a EaSI-PROGRESS participating country other than a EU-Member State.

d) *Affiliated entities*

Affiliated entities are not eligible under this call.

6.2. Eligible activities

a) *Geographical Location*

To be eligible, actions must be fully carried out in eligible participating EaSI countries (see section 6.1a).

b) *Types of activities*

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

c) *Core activities*

The project management and coordination of the activities are considered to be core activities and may not be subcontracted.

Core activities shall be performed by the lead applicant.

6.3. Ineligible activities

In addition to the ineligible costs specified in section 4.2.4 of the Financial Guidelines, the following types of activities are not eligible for EU funding under this Call:

- lobbying
- acquisition of immovable property and/or vehicles
- building construction.

Failure to comply with the eligibility criteria will lead to **rejection** of the proposal.

12. Which legal entities are eligible to participate in the Call?

See section 6.1.b of the Call:

- Lead applicant **must be** a public body (such as national, regional and local authorities, employment services).
- Co-applicants **must be** public bodies, for profit or non-profit-making private entities.

13. Is a municipality in Turkey eligible as lead applicant under this Call?

Yes.

See FAQ n° 9 and n° 11.

³ See section 2 of the [Financial Guidelines](#) for definitions.

⁴ 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 with the secretariat of the call (empl-vp-2018-005@ec.europa.eu) their eligibility.

14. Is there a list/platform of potential partners?
No, such a list/platform does **not** exist.
15. In what cases is an external audit report required?
See section 8.1 of the Call:
"Financial capacity" and section 15.2: "Required documents"
...For grant exceeding EUR 750 000, an audit report produced by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the last financial year available (see section 15, checklist point 20).
*For further information and requirements for the audit report, please refer to the "Financial Guidelines" - see section 13.2.*⁵
16. What is the budget available? What is the co-financing rate?
See sections 4.1. and 4.2. of the Call:
"The budget earmarked for the EU co-financing of projects under this call is estimated at EUR 10.000.000. The Commission expects to fund 5-7 proposals.
The Commission reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available or to increase the amount of the funds, if available.
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 budget⁶."
17. Must the declaration on honour be completed only by the lead applicant or also by each co-applicant?
See section 7 of the Call:
"Applicants (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>."
18. Are the CVs mandatory for all the project staff?
No, see section 8.2: Operational capacity and 15.2 of the call
(...)
The operational capacity of the applicant (lead and co-applicant) to complete the proposed action must be confirmed by the submission in the proposal of the following:
(...)
 - *the Europass CVs of the proposed project co-ordinator and of the persons who will perform the main tasks, showing all their relevant professional experience (see section 15 checklist point 15);*
 (...)
19. When is the next call on social innovation expected to be published in the framework of the EaSI programme?
Calls for proposals to promote social policy innovation are usually published nearly every year of the programming period 2014-2020 under EaSI programme. General objectives remain the same as defined in the EaSI program; however the topic could be adapted to the current priorities in the social field. The calendar of the calls is published with the EaSI annual work programme available here:
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1081&langId=en>
20. What is the address for the submission of this call for proposal?
See section 13 of the call for proposal:

⁵ Art. 207(3) RAP

⁶ Letters of commitment are required from co-applicants and any third party providing financial contributions to the eligible costs of the action (see section 15, checklist point 5).

- a) If you sent your application **by post** : European Commission - Call for proposals VP/2018/005 - DG EMPL.C1 J-27 – 01/240 – B-1049 Bruxelles - Belgium
- b) If you sent it by courier **services/hand delivery** : European Commission: Service central de réception du courrier - Call for proposals VP/2018/005 - DG EMPL.C1 – Avenue du Bourget, 1 – B-1140 Evere

21. How do I contact you?

See section 14 of the call for proposal:

"All enquiries must be made by e-mail only to: empl-vp-2018-005@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, 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. This is normally done by e-mail. It is entirely the responsibility of applicants to ensure that all contact information provided is accurate and functioning. In case of any change of contact details, please send an e-mail with the application VP reference and the new contact details to empl-vp-2018-005@ec.europa.eu .

All communication regarding the application will be done with the lead applicant only, unless there are specific reasons to do otherwise.

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."

22. Can I consider a public university as a public body? What is a definition of a public body?

A public university is considered as a public body if it meets the below mentioned elements. Public bodies are created under public law to address specific issues of general interest. They have the following features:

- A legal personality distinct of that of the state;
- The capacity to sign contracts in its own name;
- **and**
- The ability to legally sue and be sued in its own name.

Supporting document requested by the European Commission to justify the status (legal entity file) for a public body is a copy of the law, the decree, the resolution or the decision establishing the legal entity concerned.

23. What is the duration of the project?

See section 3 of the Call:

*"The indicative duration of the entire project should be **between 24 and 36 months.**"*

24. What about the operational capacity of co-applicants?

See section 8.2 of the Call:

"Applicant's (lead and co-applicant(s)) must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed action. In particular, applicants must have:

- *Carried out projects relating to gender equality in the workplace in the last three years;*
- *The necessary operational resources (technical, management) to carry out the action;*

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

- *A list of the main projects relating to the subject of the call carried out in the last three years (see section 15, checklist point 17);*
- *The CVs of the proposed project co-ordinator and of the persons who will perform the main tasks, showing all their relevant professional experience (see section 15, checklist point 15);*
- *Declaration on honour signed by the legal representative (including operational capacity to carry out the activity) (see section 15, checklist point 4).*

If the lead applicant is considered not to have the required operational capacity, the application as a whole will be rejected. If a co-applicant is considered not to have the required operational capacity, this co-applicant could be removed from the consortium and the application will be evaluated without this co-applicant⁷. 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."

25. What about the financial capacity of co-applicants?

See section: 8.1:

Applicants (lead and co-applicant(s)) must have access to solid and adequate funding to maintain their 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 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 would be considered strong if it is equal or greater than 0.70.

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

The applicant's (lead 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 15, checklist point 4);*
- *Annual balance sheets and profit and loss accounts for the last financial year available (see section 15, 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 15, checklist point 19).*
- *For grants exceeding EUR 750 000, an audit report produced by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the last financial year available (see section 15, checklist point 20).*

⁷ This includes a re-evaluation of the eligibility of the modified consortium.

- *In addition, the Commission will take into account any other relevant information on financial capacity provided by the applicant and in particular the information provided in section F.2 of the SWIM application form.*

If the lead applicant is considered not to have a strong financial capacity, the application as a whole will be rejected.

If a co-applicant or several co-applicants are considered not to have a strong financial capacity, the Commission may decide on various proportional steps depending on the level of weakness identified, to:

- *reject the whole application;*
- *remove the co-applicant from the consortium and re-evaluate the proposal without this co-applicant;*
- *propose a grant agreement without pre-financing;*
- *propose a grant agreement with a pre-financing paid in several instalments;*
- *propose a grant agreement with pre-financing payment(s) covered by (a) financial guarantee(s);*
- *propose a grant agreement with joint financial liability of 2 or more applicants,*

and inform all applicants accordingly."

26. What about the associate organisations?

Associate organisations may take part in the Call "on a no-cost basis" action (see page 6 of the Financial Guidelines + footnote 8) but they cannot count as part of the consortium. Please take into account Section 6.2 a) of the call regarding the geographical location: *"To be eligible, actions must be fully carried out in eligible participating EaSI countries (see section 6.1)".*

27. How should we consider personnel costs of public organisations? Are they considered eligible costs? Is it possible for public organisations to co-finance the 20% with the salary costs?

See section 4.2.2.1 Staff costs (Heading 1 of the budget form) of the "Financial guidelines for applicants" and in particular the last two paragraphs of that section which also apply to public organisations:

"Should your proposal be financed by the Commission, only the real costs (i.e. actual salaries paid) will be considered eligible costs. For personnel costs to count as eligible direct costs there must be a real and verifiable transfer of funds from the organisation and the assignment of the staff in question must be genuine, necessary and reasonable in relation to the activity being subsidised and to the duration of the action.

The costs of personnel of national administrations may be considered as eligible to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which are additional and which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the project concerned was not undertaken."

In SWIM, for such costs to appear as co-financing, they must be presented in the estimated budget in the application form both under Heading 1 and in the section n° 6 – Income.

28. **The text of the Call states that 20% of co-financing is a must. But whether human-resources (salaries) are acceptable as co-financing or not is not very clear. If we assign experts from our institutions to the project, are their salaries acceptable as co-financing?**

See FAQ n° 27. See also section 4.2.2.1 Staff costs (Heading 1 of the budget form) of the "Financial guidelines for applicants." and in particular the following:

"The costs of natural persons working under a contract with the beneficiary other than employment contract may be assimilated to such costs of personnel, provided that the following conditions are fulfilled:

- (i) *the natural person works under the instructions of the beneficiary and, unless otherwise agreed with the beneficiary, in the premises of the beneficiary;*

- (ii) the result of the work belongs to the beneficiary; and
(iii) the costs are not significantly different from the costs of staff performing similar tasks under an employment contract with the beneficiary.

Conversely, the cost of any work to be performed by external experts must not be included in staff costs but under services (see Heading 3)."

29. Are there any limitations in the budget for certain expenditures? For example, purchase of equipment cannot exceed 25%, or human-resources (salaries) cannot exceed 20% etc.?
No.
30. How can we justify salary costs of personnel whose salaries proceed from public grants?
Salary costs should be supported by pay slips and timesheets justifying the actual staff costs declared, as well as the basis for the calculation of daily rates and workable days.
31. Can the salaries of the project staff be displayed as the participation of co-applicant in the project?
See section 4.2.2.1 Staff costs (Heading 1 of the budget form) of the "Financial guidelines for applicants."
32. In the FAQ n°27, it is written that personnel costs of public organisations are acceptable as co-financing.
- Does it include both applicant and co-applicant? Yes.
 - Are personnel costs of co-applicants also acceptable as co-financing? Yes.
 - Does it matter the legal statue of the co-applicant such as public body, international organization, non-governmental organizations etc. for co-financing? Yes.
33. Can we inquire about the eligibility of our organisation and of activities to be implemented by it before submitting our proposal?
No.
See section 14 (Communication):
"To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Commission will not give a prior opinion on the eligibility of applicants, an action or specific activities."
For eligibility criteria see section 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 and 15.2 of the Call.
34. What does it mean: "Members of each applicant organisation" in section D.1.3 of the Online Application Form?
It means that the list of the members of each applicant and co-applicant organisation should be detailed here, when it is relevant. The members depend on the organisation itself.
As examples (non-exhaustive!):
- For an NGO network: list the organisations that are members of the network.
 - For an international organisation: list the organisations that belong to this organisation.
 - For a private company: list the organisations that belong to this company.
 - For local/regional/national authorities: it could be non-applicable but it could also include a list of departments.
- This would help to assess the operational capacity.
35. Section 8.1 states that "The verification of financial capacity will not apply to public bodies". Does it mean that they do NOT need to provide the supporting documents (annual balance sheets/declaration on honour/summary balance sheet and profit and loss accounts/audit report) when time of application?
Yes.
36. I am facing a technical problem when uploading the documents in SWIM. What shall I do?
For any technical problems with the application form, please send a mail to:
empl-swim-support@ec.europa.eu

37. About the EUR 750 000 threshold: Does it mean that only those co-applicants whose share out of total budget exceeds 750.000 have to provide Audit report or it does apply to the total grant for the project and, thus, all co-applicants?

*Yes, see Call document, point 8.1 bullet point 4 +
See "Financial guidelines 2016", section 3 + point 13.1*

"Where the application concerns grants for an action for which the amount exceeds EUR 750 000 an audit report produced by an approved external auditor shall be submitted. This report should certify the accounts of the applicant organisation for the last financial year available. This requirement applies only to the first application made by an applicant to the same authorising officer responsible in any one financial year.

In the case of proposals submitted by a consortium, the threshold mentioned in the first paragraph shall apply to each of the applicants."

38. If the total grant request from a consortium is EUR 2.000.000 but none of the partners exceeds the amount of EUR 750.000, is the report of an external auditor still obligatory?

No, see also FAQ n° 37.

39. Where can I find the documents in doc. format to fill in the application (annex II, III and F1)?
Once you launch the application form you will be redirected to SWIM where you will be asked to create your profile. There you will be able to fill in all the Annexes in doc. format.

40. Within the project, is it possible to request funds for support for accommodation for the beneficiaries, such as rent support and refurbishment of the training area/facility? This would not be a construction per se, but simply a redecoration of a space to fit the needs.

Purchase of equipment is eligible under the condition set in the Financial Guidelines, section 4.2.2.4 Administration costs (Heading 4 of the budget form) and in particular the following:

"Depreciation for purchase of equipment⁸: the purchase cost of equipment or other assets (new or second-hand) is eligible provided that it is written off in accordance with the international accounting standards and the beneficiary's usual accounting practices and has been purchased in accordance with the procurement rules indicated above. Only the portion of the equipment's depreciation corresponding to the period of eligibility for EU funding covered by the grant agreement and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the action may be taken into account by the Commission.

Administration costs also include the specific sub-headings: Rental of meeting rooms (coffee breaks included); Rental of interpretation booths; Costs for external audits required by the call or grant agreement (see section 13); Financial costs such as those relating to any bank guarantee required under the terms of the specific call or grant agreement (see section 8) and other administrative costs such as costs for consumables and supplies directly assigned to the action and purchased according to the procurement rules."

Redecoration (such as painting walls, installing chairs and tables ...) should be detailed in the proposal to avoid renovating a full building.

For specification on eligibility of the costs, please refer to the "Financial guidelines for applicants" – chapter 4 (Budget, expenditure, eligibility of costs – eligible and ineligible costs.)

41. In case there is a state organisation as a partner in consortium, is it possible to have employees of this organisation to have civil contracts under the project for implementing activities (besides the regular labour contract that is signed between the organisation and the employee)?

See "Financial Guidelines", point 4.2.2.1

The staff costs must be in line with the beneficiary's usual policy on remuneration.

⁸ Art. 126(3)(d) FR

42. Can Switzerland or Lichtenstein participate?
No. See section 6.1 of the Call.
43. In the Terms of Reference, its written: "*The ratio between the total assets in the applicant's (lead and co-applicant(s)) balance sheet and the total budget of the project or the part of the project budget for which that organization is responsible according to the budget in the application form should be greater than 0.70*". What is meant by "total assets"?
Total assets = Accounting assets
44. Can we submit our proposal on 18 April 2018 and send per post a hard copy on 18 April 2018?
Yes.
See FAQ n° 4 and 6.
45. What about the translation of official documents?
Documents should be submitted in any of the official EU languages.
46. While filling in the application form, we were asked to upload the document (Section F.7 - Statutes) proving the eligibility of the organization. In Turkey, laws of establishment could be in tens/hundreds of pages. Is it obligatory to translate those documents before uploading them or could they be accepted also in Turkish?
Documents should be submitted in any of the official EU languages.
Extracts of Laws of Establishment may be provided as long as they allow assessing the Statute of the Entity.
See also FAQ n°45 and 47.
47. Does the format provided in SWIM about legal entity has to be in English or may it be in another language based on the origin country of co-applicant? For example: if we have a Hungarian co-applicant, the document of legal entity may be in Hungarian or explicitly in English?
Documents should be submitted in any of the official EU languages.
48. Concerning the documents: statutes; proof of registration; VAT certificate, we can provide the original copies in Turkish, but do you need also the English version of the documents?
See FAQ n° 45 and 46.
49. We are a private association who receives public grants to cover staff costs for specific projects. Can these staff costs be considered as eligible personnel costs for the project?
No, because the principle of **no double funding** must be respected.
50. Is a technical specification required for each expenditure item exceeding 60,000 euros in accordance with the budget rules? Or is it necessary that all the tendered items exceed the total cost of 60,000 euros?
It is necessary for each tender exceeding 60,000 euros.
51. Can a think tank organisation be a co-applicant?
See FAQ n° 33 and 11.
52. In the guideline, it is written that "At the submission of the application, copies of the signed originals will be accepted for most of the documents to be submitted by the co-applicants."
a) What is included in these documents?
See the "Checklist for required documents".
b) Can "Declaration on honour, Letter of mandate, Letter of commitment, Legal entity form, summary balance sheet & profit and loss accounts" be copies of the signed originals?
No, originals are needed. See "Checklist for required documents".

53. Can the lead and co-applicants add to the co-financing of 20% through in-kind value of goods and resources provided? For example, can work-space and facilities be counted at market-rental rate towards to co-financing requirement? If so, how do we indicate this in our proposal?

No, see *financial guidelines sections 3 and 4.2.4* on contributions in kind.

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Disclaimer: "The present document aims to complement and clarify the Call for proposals and does not replace it. In the event that there are discrepancies between this document and the Call for proposals, the Call for proposals prevails. Any requests or replies do not constitute any ground to claim any expectation concerning the selection of the proposal or the award of the grant.