



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

Europe 2020: Employment Policies  
**New Skills for New Jobs, Adaptation to Change, CSR, EGF**

**BUDGET HEADING 04.04.01.01**  
Mutual learning in the field of skills and employment  
EU Sector Skills Councils  
Restructuring

## **CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

**2012**

**VP/2012/009**

Given the likelihood of a large number of requests for information, you are asked not to contact us by telephone.

Questions should be sent by e-mail only to: [EMPL-VP-2012-009@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EMPL-VP-2012-009@ec.europa.eu)

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

The English version of the call is the original.

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

PROGRESS<sup>1</sup> is the EU employment and social solidarity programme, set up to provide financial support for the attainment of the European Union's objectives in employment, social affairs and equal opportunities as set out in the Social Agenda<sup>2</sup> as well as to the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy. This new strategy, which has a strong social dimension, aims at turning the EU into a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy delivering high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. The European Union needs coherent and complementary contributions from different policy strands, methods and instruments, including the PROGRESS programme, to support the Member States in delivering on the Europe 2020's goals.

The PROGRESS mission is to strengthen the EU's contribution in support of Member States' commitments and efforts to create more and better jobs and to build a more cohesive society. To this effect, PROGRESS is instrumental in:

- Providing analysis and policy advice on PROGRESS policy areas;
- Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies in PROGRESS policy areas;
- Promoting policy transfer, learning and support among Member States on EU objectives and priorities; and
- Relaying the views of the stakeholders and society at large.

More specifically, PROGRESS supports:

- The implementation of the European Employment Strategy (section 1);
- The implementation of the open method of coordination in the field of social protection and inclusion (section 2);
- The improvement of the working environment and conditions including health and safety at work and reconciling work and family life (section 3);

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<sup>1</sup> Decision No 1672/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity — Progress, JO L 315 of 15.11.2006.

<sup>2</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Renewed social agenda: Opportunities, access and solidarity in 21st century Europe, COM/2008/0412 final of 02.07.2008.

- The effective implementation of the principle of non-discrimination and promotion of its mainstreaming in all EU policies (section 4);
- The effective implementation of the principle of gender equality and promotion of its mainstreaming in all EU policies (section 5).

The call for proposals is issued in the context of the implementation of the 2012 annual work plan which can be consulted at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=987>

## 2 GENERAL OBJECTIVES AND BUDGETARY ALLOCATION

Section 1 of the PROGRESS programme is intended to support the implementation of the European Employment Strategy (EES) by:

- improving understanding of the employment situation and prospects, in particular through analysis and studies and the development of statistics and common indicators within the framework of the EES,
- monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the European Employment Guidelines and Recommendations and their impact, for example through the Joint Employment Report, and analysing the interaction between the EES and general economic and social policy and other policy areas,
- organising discussions on policies, good practice and innovative approaches, mainstreaming of the needs of vulnerable groups, and promoting mutual learning in the context of the EES,
- raising awareness, disseminating information and promoting the debate about employment challenges, policies and the implementation of national reform programmes, including among regional and local actors, social partners, civil society and other stakeholders.

The Progress programme supports also the activities aiming to the achievement of the employment objective fixed within the Europe 2020 Strategy, the new European Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

In April 2012, the Commission launched the Employment Package Communication "Towards a job-rich recovery"<sup>3</sup> and came forward with a set of **concrete measures to support the EU2020 strategy in the employment field.**

The proposal focuses on the **demand-side of job creation**, setting out ways for Member States to **encourage hiring** by reducing taxes on labour or supporting business start-ups more. It also identifies the areas with the biggest job potential for the future: the **green economy, health services and ICT.**

The policy communication underlines the need for a stronger **employment and social dimension to EU governance** and lays down ways to **involve employers' and workers' representatives** more in setting EU priorities.

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<sup>3</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Towards a job-rich recovery, COM(2012) 173 final of 18.4.2012.

## Content of the Employment Package

1. The Employment Package urges **Member States to strengthen their national employment policies**. In particular it includes proposals for Member States to:

- Create the right conditions for job creation and labour demand such as hiring subsidies that create new jobs, a (budget neutral) tax shift from labour to environmental taxes, or support for self-employment.
- Exploit the big job potential areas for the future such as the green economy where 20 million jobs could be created between now and 2020 and to include green employment into their' National Job Plans, strengthening green skills intelligence.
- Improve health workforce planning and forecasting to match the demand and supply of health professionals better while offering them long-term job prospects and stimulate exchange on innovative and effective recruitment and retention strategies for health workers. The Commission is also launching a consultation on employment opportunities in personal and household services.
- Support an increase in highly qualified ICT labour and promote digital skills across the workforce.

2. The **Communication** also lays down **key areas for reform** so that labour markets become more dynamic and inclusive and therefore more resilient to economic change. These proposals include:

- Drawing on the lessons learned from the crisis such as stimulating internal flexibility to reduce job insecurity and fiscal costs;
- Establishing decent and sustainable wages and avoiding low-wage traps;
- Ensuring appropriate contractual arrangements to prevent the excessive use of non standard ones. The Commission also stresses the need to deliver on opportunities for young people, as well as developing lifelong learning which is key to security in employment and to productivity.
- With 4 million jobs still vacant across the EU, the "Employment Package" calls for higher investment in skills to address the skills mismatches in Europe's labour markets, as well as better anticipation of skills needs.

3. The "Employment Package" also aims to create a **genuine EU labour market**:

- To improve labour mobility, the Commission is fully committed to removing legal and practical obstacles to the free movement of workers such as improving the portability of pensions, the tax treatment of cross border workers or awareness of rights and obligations. It calls on Member States to allow for the export of unemployment benefits for jobseekers in another country (for a period of up to 6 months). It is also sending a strong message to governments to lift restrictions on labour market access to workers from Bulgaria and Romania and to allow nationals from other Member States access to jobs in the public service.
- To improve the matching of jobs with job-seekers, the package proposes to transform the EURES job seeker portal into a true European placement and recruitment tool and foresees (as of 2013) innovative online self-service applications to provide users instantly with a clear geographical mapping of European job offers.

4. Finally, the Employment Package paves the way for **reinforced coordination and monitoring of employment policies** at EU level in line with EU economic governance. From 2013, and as part of the European Semester, the Commission plans to introduce a scoreboard to keep track of Member States' progress in implementing their National Job Plans. To reinforce the involvement of EU and national social partners in employment policy making the Commission has put forward plans for EU-level exchanges of views and monitoring on wage developments. Finally, the package stresses the important link between policy and EU financial instruments (like the European Social Fund) in supporting countries' employment priorities and reforms.

In this context, three areas have been defined for this call:

1. Mutual learning in the field of skills and employment
2. EU Sector Skills Councils
3. Restructuring

The foreseen budgetary allocation to this call is **EUR 3 600 000**.

### **3 PRIORITY OBJECTIVES AND TYPES OF ACTION**

#### **3.1 Mutual learning in the field of skills and employment.**

The objective of this area is to encourage exchanges and mutual learning at all levels and to enhance the transferability of the most effective policies, good practices and innovative approaches to implement the skills dimension of the flagship initiative "An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs – Equipping people with the right skills for employment" and the Employment Package Communication "Towards a job-rich recovery". This mutual learning could in particular target the key growth areas for employment: the low-carbon, resource-efficient economy ("green economy"), the digital economy (ICT sector) and the health and social care sector ("white jobs").

This can concern examples of effective policies, good practices and innovative approaches that result in:

- Developing or collecting and analysing existing good practices of early-warning and forecasting systems to improve the matching of skills supply and demand.
- Collecting and disseminating information on best practices regarding the effective collaboration between sectors (businesses, representative organisations of employers or economic or skills bodies), education and training providers and bodies involved in education and training systems (public bodies at all levels, qualification/accreditation/awarding bodies, guidance and counselling bodies, public employment services) and analyse their role in the identification of skills needs and the transferability potential of the best practices.
- Supporting strategic human resources development, in particular addressing the specificities of small and medium sized enterprises and the contribution of the corporate social responsibility.
- Supporting initiatives targeted at lifelong learning and lifelong guidance to facilitate employment transitions from education to work. Initiatives should in particular

involve several key stakeholders (public employment services, career guidance providers, public authorities at all levels, education and training providers).

- An understanding and/or improvement of the transmission mechanisms and use made of skills forecasting/foresight intelligence, in particular by public authorities such as qualification authorities, education and training providers, employers and workers and their representatives.
- Mapping, analysing and disseminating existing or new co-investment mechanisms between employers and educational and training providers to improve the responsiveness of education and training programmes to labour market needs.

A large variety of actions can be financed under this area of the call: conferences, seminars, round tables, negotiations, studies, surveys, publications, monitoring exercises, and the development of promising practices.

### **3.2 EU Sector Skills Councils**

The Commission supports the creation of EU Sector Councils on Employment and Skills ("EU sector skills council" in short) when there is a demand for their creation from stakeholders in particular from the European social partners. This can enable stakeholders to be in possession of more and better information on the evolution of their sector in terms of skills and employment than if they relied only on their national sources. It can also facilitate peer-learning amongst national observatories by creating a platform of exchange between labour market representatives and their counter side representing education and training providers.

As part of the process to setup a EU Sector Council on Employment and Skills, stakeholders wishing to proceed with the creation of such sector council have first to perform an analysis of the feasibility to create such a body at the European level. This first step will eventually lead to a second step, the setup of a EU sector skills council.

This area is divided into two categories as described below.

*A/ Projects to be submitted in relation to this first exploratory step have to contain the following actions:*

- a) To identify and map for European Union Member States national and or regional level sector bodies (observatories, research institutes, sector councils, training funds, etc.) which produce labour market information and intelligence at sector level on skills needs anticipation and mismatches.
- b) Identify and present, for the bodies identified in a), the scope and nature of their activities, their customers, their legal status, how they are financed, their sectoral coverage and legitimacy (nationally and amongst sector stakeholders).
- c) To identify networks, education and training providers of the sector concerned and their representative organisations if any.
- d) To initiate contacts with those bodies and education/training representatives identified, to present them the concept of EU sector skills councils and assess their interest in the initiative and their willingness to participate in a EU sector skills council.
- e) To define and assess the type of information to be exchanged by national and regional

sector councils as well as the potential contribution of representatives of education and training providers.

f) As a complement to d) and e), collect and present in two different reports, quantitative and qualitative information readily available from the national skills councils visited. The purposes of these reports are to assess the availability of information, the easiness of accessing it and to assess the challenges of bringing together various sources of information.

g) On the basis of the mapping and assessment exercise, to make a pre-selection of those sector councils and education and training representatives who could participate in a EU sector skills council.

h) To identify other types of potential actions to be developed by the EU sector skills council such as information dissemination to different targets (SMEs, Ministries...).

i) to prepare a report, on the basis of the mapping, the meetings with national skills observatories and the two quantitative and qualitative reports, assessing the feasibility of setting-up an EU sector council. The report should include the substantiated decision from the sectors' representatives (in particular the European social partners) to go ahead or not with a European sector council on employment and skills. Should the decision to create a EU sector skills councils be positive, the report should also contain reflections and proposals concerning the composition of the future EU council, roles and responsibilities of each member, its governance structure, eventual legal form, work programme and business plan.

Grants are expected to be EUR 100 000 maximum per application selected for this category.

*B/ Projects to be submitted in relation to the functioning of a EU Sector Council on Employment and Skills have to contain the following actions:*

a) Organise at least two physical meetings of the EU sector skills council, an annual conference, and eventually awareness-raising actions to disseminate the outputs of the sectors' councils work as well as promotional events. The annual conference should have the objective to present and disseminate the reports described here after to a wider audience. The following organisations should be considered for the final conference:

- Representatives from education and employment ministries from all Member States;
- Other organisations linked to the sector but representing specific interests: chambers of commerce, representatives from SMEs;
- National representatives from education and training organisations in IVET, CVET<sup>4</sup>, universities;
- Qualification authorities;
- Representatives from other European networks or committees (Public employment services network, European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network, Euroguidance, etc);
- Representative from specific associations of profession (engineers, lawyers...).

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<sup>4</sup> IVET – Initial Vocational Education and Training. CVET – Continuous Vocational Education and Training



b) Produce the following specific reports:

- A report presenting the employment situation of the sector including forecasts and trends. This information should, to the extent possible, be presented into sub-sectors, occupations and countries (regions). The report should be essentially data-driven, with synthetic description and analyses. This report should be based on the information and data provided by the members of the EU sector skills council, in particular from the national sector skills councils. The richness and value-added of the report will depend on the quality of the information collected and given access to by the national sector skills councils.
- A report presenting a more qualitative assessment of the evolution of the sector, focussing on the evolution of the sector's occupations and the associated skills. It should contain information about emerging jobs, a review of factors affecting the changing nature of jobs, a synthesis of available scenarios. This report should draw on available information from national sector skills councils, such as employers' surveys and foresight techniques.
- A report describing innovative tools, national and/or regional strategies, local initiatives, methods put in place by members of the council to monitor skills needs and address the question of skill mismatch and gaps. The report could also include national experiences from members of the EU sector skills council on mechanisms to meet skill needs from an employer's perspective or successful experiences in using labour market intelligence to close the skills gap. In addition, the purpose of this report is peer-learning and thus the report can also focus on specific themes related to skills gaps and mismatch that reflect the interests of the EU sector skills council.
- A report regrouping the recommendations of the European sector skills council based on the information collected and the analysis done as part of the reports and as a result of discussions between council members. The recommendations should be addressed to different stakeholders, from policy makers at different levels to companies and VET providers. This report should also contain actions to be eventually undertaken by the European sector skills council for the following years (besides those described above) if a need for such action is identified.

**Remark: only sectors which have conducted and finalised a first feasibility and mapping project can submit a project for the running of a EU sector skills council. The activities to be co-financed should be exclusively related to the functioning of the EU sector skills council.**

Grants are expected to be EUR 300 000 maximum per application selected for this category.

### **3.3 Restructuring**

The overall objective of this area is to support the development and dissemination of better expertise and capabilities among the actors concerned in the areas of anticipation, preparation and the accompanying of socially responsible restructuring processes as highlighted in the Commission communication on Restructuring and employment – anticipating and accompanying restructuring in order to develop employment: the role of the European Union (COM (2005) 120 final) and subsequent policy documents, notably the Green Paper on "Restructuring and anticipation of change: what lessons from recent experience?" (COM(2012) 7 final).

Priorities may also target the improvement of the capabilities of the actors on good and/or innovative practices of anticipating change and restructuring at European, sectoral, regional and company level; on the evolution of economic sectors; on the evolution of the roles, responsibilities and practices of the economic and social actors, through exchanges, reports, studies and other analysis and dissemination tools.

Within this context, priority will be given to projects that:

- a) promote exchanges of information and experience and develop the capabilities of the parties taking an active part in restructuring and promote the development of good practices in Europe, such as, for example, guidelines for action to be taken in the event of restructuring;
- b) encourage activities in the context of partnerships either within companies or externally (between social partner organisations at all levels or with external entities such as public authorities or any other stakeholder in the restructuring process) and measures to promote or facilitate the creation of such partnerships;
- c) support the creation of an EU framework on anticipation and management of change and restructuring.

A large variety of measures can be financed under this call: conferences, seminars, round tables, negotiations, studies, surveys, publications, monitoring exercises, training measures, training tools, the setting up of networks and the development and exchange of best practices.

Within this context, priority will be granted to actions:

- promoted by the European social partner organisations or having them as their active partners;
- promoted jointly by employers' and workers' representatives (at enterprise, sector and national/regional level), or associating them and other stakeholders in restructuring processes and in the anticipation of needs and skills (public authorities, innovation centres, training centres, development agencies).

## **4 SUBMISSION AND EXAMINATION OF GRANT APPLICATIONS**

### **4.1 Submission deadline and indicative amounts**

Applications must be submitted to the European Commission by the deadline for submission indicated below.

The **deadline** for the submission of applications is **22 October 2012**.

For areas 1 and 3 the indicative amount foreseen, depending on the quality of the proposals submitted, is EUR 1 000 000.

For area 2 the indicative amount foreseen, depending on the quality of the proposals submitted, is EUR 2 600 000.

Applications will be examined by an Evaluation Committee.

Applications will be examined and selected taking account of the provisions of Decision 1672/2006 establishing the PROGRESS programme and the criteria laid down in this document (see below).

## **4.2 Start date and duration of the projects**

The projects should start after signature of grant agreements.

Any expenditure incurred before the signature of the grant agreement (by both parties) is at the applicant's risk.

In principle the maximum duration of an action is 12 months.

## **4.3 Co-financing rates**

Under this call for proposals, the European Commission may finance up to 80% of the total eligible cost of the action. Contributions in kind (i.e. contributions for which no financial flow can be traced in the written accounts like unpaid charity work by a private individual or corporate body, etc.) will not be taken into account.

Applications which request a grant of more than 80% of the total eligible cost will not be eligible.

### *Project size/amount*

For illustrative purposes regarding areas 1 and 3 (for area 2 see indicated maximum grant amounts in section 3.2), the average size of a grant awarded in 2011 was in the range of **EUR 150 000**.

## **4.4 EVALUATION CRITERIA**

### **4.4.1 Exclusion criteria**

Applicants must not be in one of the situations referred to in Articles 93(1), 94 and 96(2)(a) of the Financial Regulation<sup>5</sup>. The situations referred to include bankruptcy, compulsory winding-up, being under court administration, in an arrangement with creditors or any other similar proceedings; convictions of professional misconduct; non-fulfilment of social security or tax payment obligations; convictions of fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity; declared in serious breach of contract in relation to activities funded by the Community budget; subject to conflict of interest; guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the required information.

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<sup>5</sup> Council Regulation (EC, Euratom), n° 1605/2002 of 25.06.2002 (OJ L 248, 16.09.2002), as last amended by Regulation (EU, Euratom) n°1081/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010, [http://ec.europa.eu/budget/biblio/documents/regulations/regulations\\_en.cfm#2](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/biblio/documents/regulations/regulations_en.cfm#2).

## 4.4.2 Eligibility criteria

### Eligibility of applicants

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Be legal persons properly constituted and registered in one of the EU Member States or other PROGRESS participating countries<sup>6</sup>.
- To be eligible **applicants and partners** must fall within one of the following categories:
  - Public authorities or semi-state agencies at national or regional level and international organisations.
  - Non-profit private or public organisations active mainly in the area of employment policy, management of transitions on the labour market and labour market research including the analysis of skills/competences development. These organisations are encouraged to establish partnerships with other stakeholders including with public authorities, semi-state agencies and/or social partners.
  - Social partner organisations. In application of Article 114 of the Financial Regulation, social partner organisations without legal personality are also eligible provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf and assume financial liability:
    - (i) European social partner organisations currently consulted in accordance with Article 154 TFEU (ex Art. 138 TEC)<sup>7</sup>.
    - (ii) National or regional social partners organisations, as long as the project is part of a European approach.
  - Research centres and institutes, universities, education and vocational training institutions or networks and civil society organisations.

### Eligibility of applications

To be eligible, applications must:

- Be submitted by the deadline indicated in section 4.1;
- Be submitted on-line before being printed, and sent in 2 copies as a paper application duly signed (one original dossier and one copy of all submitted documents). Please see section 5.1 and 5.2 for further details on the submission of the application;
- Be complete and include **the documents indicated in the following table**. Where specified below, documents must bear the **original signature of the applicant's legal representative**.

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<sup>6</sup> EU Member States, EFTA/EEA countries (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein), EU candidate countries (Croatia, F.Y.R. of Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey).

<sup>7</sup> An up-to-date list of these organisations can be found at <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=2154&langId=en>.

1	<p><b>Official covering letter of application</b> quoting the reference of the call for proposals and <b>bearing the original signature of the applicant's legal representative.</b></p>
2	<p><b>Print-out of the duly completed application form submitted on-line</b> (<a href="https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/external/displayWelcome.do?lang=en">https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/external/displayWelcome.do?lang=en</a>), <b>dated and bearing the original signature of the legal representative.</b></p> <p>NOTE: The on-line form <u>must be electronically submitted before printing</u>. After the electronic submission no further changes to the application are possible.</p>
3	<p><b>A signed declaration on honour</b> (annex E.1 to the on-line application form).</p> <p>This must be written on the official letterhead paper of the applicant organisation and <b>bear the original signature of the legal representative</b>, certifying that the applicant is not in one of the situations listed in Articles 93(1), 94 and 96(2)(a) of the Financial Regulation and that it has the operational and financial capacity to successfully complete the proposed action.</p>
4	<p><b>"Financial identification" form</b>, (annex E.3 to the on-line application form) of the applicant organisation <b>duly completed with the original signature of the account holder</b>. This form should also bear the original signature and stamp of the Bank or if not a copy of a recent bank statement.</p> <p>This form can be found at:</p> <p><a href="http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/finacial_id/finacial_id_en.cfm">http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/finacial_id/finacial_id_en.cfm</a></p>
5	<p><b>"Legal entity" form</b> (annex E.4 to the on-line application form) of the applicant organisation, duly completed and bearing the original signature of the legal representative.</p> <p>This form can be found at:</p> <p><a href="http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm">http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm</a></p> <p>Applicants must also provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a copy of the <b>certificate of official registration or other official document</b> attesting to the establishment of the entity (where such a document exists);</li> <li>• a copy of their <b>articles of association/statutes or equivalent</b> proving the eligibility of the organisation;</li> <li>• a copy of a document showing the <b>identification number for tax purposes or the VAT number</b>, if applicable.</li> </ul> <p>Exclusively for social partner organisations with no legal personality, a <b>letter from their representative stating his/her capacity to assume legal obligations on their behalf</b> (annex E.9 to the on-line application form) must be submitted.</p>
6	<p><b>A detailed work programme</b> for the project in WORD format (annex E.5 to the on-line application form). This is a separate document (not longer than 10 pages), in addition to the description of the project in the online application form and it must also be submitted electronically. <b>The paper version must be identical to the</b></p>

	<p><b>electronic version.</b></p> <p>The detailed work programme must provide a detailed and comprehensive description of the project, including clear information on the dissemination plans and a timetable for the activities. In the timetable the applicant should use milestones for the different activities without mentioning specific dates (e.g. use "month 1, month 2..." without specifying the day and month). The names, positions and employment status of all staff involved in the project should be included in the detailed work programme. The detailed work programme should be submitted in English, French or German.</p>
7	<p><b>A budget explanation</b> for the project (annex E.8 to the on-line application). This is a separate document in addition to the budget section of the on-line application form and it must also be submitted electronically. <b>The paper version must be identical to the electronic version.</b></p> <p>The budget explanation must provide additional information to explain and justify all items in the proposed budget (and particularly staff costs and subcontracting plans) respecting the format and numbering of the "project budget estimate" form. A simple table listing costs without explanation is not sufficient. The budget explanation should be submitted in English, French or German.</p>
8	<p><b>Letters of commitment:</b></p> <p>If there are partners involved in the project, a signed letter of commitment should be provided from <b>each of the partners named in the application form</b> (section D) following the template provided in annex E.2 to the on-line application form.</p> <p>The signed letter of commitment should contain the following elements:</p> <p>I) name, address (phone, fax, e-mail) and person responsible from each partner organisation;</p> <p>II) explanation of the nature of their involvement;</p> <p>III) explanation of the work and tasks to be carried out by the partner ;</p> <p>IV) specification of the cash amount of the co-funding provided, if any;</p> <p>V) acceptance by the partner, if the proposal is selected, to authorise the Commission to publish the name, address of their organisation together with the name and other data of the main beneficiary and of the project (see point 6.1 d) below).</p>
9	<p><b>In the case of subcontracting for external expertise</b> where the value of external contracts exceeds EUR 5 000, detailed information on the reasons and tasks to be subcontracted and about the selection procedure of the subcontractor must be included in the form "Contracts for implementing the action" (annex E.6 to the on-line application form). The form should be submitted in English, French or German<sup>8</sup>.</p> <p>Applicants wishing to recruit the services of external experts for an amount above</p>

<sup>8</sup> In this context, interpretation and translation tasks are not considered as external expertise. The general rules and principles regarding the conclusion of external contracts included in Annex I do nevertheless fully apply (e.g. the obligation for the beneficiary to "seek competitive tenders from potential contractors and award the contract in writing to the bid offering the best value for money").

	<p>EUR 60 000 must provide, in addition, a copy of the draft tender specifications. It does not apply to public authorities which are already governed by a system of procurement rules. To assist applicants, a model of tender specifications is included in Annex II of this call. The draft tender specifications should be submitted in English, French or German.</p> <p>Important additional information concerning the award of contracts can be found in Annex I of this call.</p>
10	The most recent balance sheet of the applicant organisation (not necessary for public bodies). The balance sheet must include assets and liabilities. The applicant should specify which currency is being used in the balance sheet. The Commission reserves the right to request balance sheets from previous years, if necessary.
11	<b>For grant requests over EUR 500 000: an external audit report</b> produced by an approved auditor, certifying the accounts of the applicant organisation for the last financial year available (not necessary for public bodies). The external audit report should be submitted in English, French or German.
12	<b>A curriculum vitae of the person responsible for managing the action</b> (named in section A.3 of the on-line application form) and <b>the persons who will perform the main tasks</b> (named under "Management/Coordination" and "Administration/implementation of the project" under "Heading 1 – Staff costs" of the Budget in the on-line application form). The CVs should indicate clearly the current employer.
13	A list of the applicant organisation main projects carried out, if any, in the last three years relating to the subject of the call.

### ***Eligibility of actions***

To be eligible, actions must:

- Be linked to one of the 3 areas of the call for proposals (*Mutual Learning in the field of skills and employment, EU Sector Skills Councils, Restructuring*);
- Be in line with the objectives and type of actions described in section 3;
- Comply with the maximum Union's co-financing percentage of 80%;
- Have a transnational dimension, i.e. be carried out in cooperation with partners from several PROGRESS participating countries in the case of proposals which are not submitted by a European-level or international organisation;
- Be fully carried out in the EU Member States or other PROGRESS participating countries;
- Comply with the rules on subcontracting set out in the financial guidelines for applicants (Annex I).

#### **4.4.3 Selection criteria**

The 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 awarded a grant.

### **Financial capacity**

Financial capacity to carry out the action: the 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<sup>9</sup> (the verification of financial capacity does not apply to public bodies or to international organisations).

### **Operational capacity**

Operational capacity to complete the proposed action: the applicant 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.

Applicants must provide evidence of their operational (technical, management) capacity by producing:

- A list of the main projects carried out, if any, in the last three years relating to the subject of the call (point 13 of the table above under "Eligibility of applications");
- The curriculum vitae of the person **responsible for managing the action and the persons who will perform the main tasks** (point 12 of the table above under "Eligibility of applications");
- The declaration on honour indicated in point 3 of the table above under "Eligibility of applications".

#### **4.4.4 Award criteria**

The grants will be awarded on the basis of a comparative evaluation of all the proposals meeting the above-mentioned eligibility and selection criteria with respect to the following award criteria, the respective importance of each one being expressed as a percentage:

- i) the extent to which the proposal meets the objectives and priorities of this call (30%);
- ii) the extent to which the proposed actions have a genuine transnational dimension. Priority will be given to activities involving partner organisations from a greater number of PROGRESS-participating countries (10%);
- iii) the quality of partnerships, i.e. the degree of involvement and commitment at the application stage of the social partners/stakeholders in the action, the range of eligible countries and variety of actors. (10%);
- iv) the added value and innovativeness of the action (10%);

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<sup>9</sup> The financial capacity of the applicant is assessed based on the analysis of the supporting documents listed in points 3 and 10 in the table above (section 4.4.2 "Eligibility of applications") and by calculating the ratio between the total assets in the applicant's balance sheet and the total budget of the project (the ratio should be greater than 0.70). In addition, the Commission will take into account any other relevant information on financial capacity provided by the applicant.



- v) the lasting impact and/or multiplier effect of the action <sup>10</sup> (10%);
- vi) the arrangements to publicise the operation and envisaged dissemination methods (10%);
- vii) the financial quality of the proposal including its likely cost-effectiveness (10%);
- viii) the overall quality, clarity and completeness of the proposal and of the budget (10%).

The Commission reserves the right to reject proposals from organisations which have failed to comply with their contractual obligations in relation to earlier agreements.

The Evaluation Committee also reserves the right when assessing projects to take into account the effectiveness and added value of previous projects undertaken by the applicant with Commission funding.

## 5 PRACTICAL PROCEDURES

### 5.1 Where can the application form be found?

The compulsory on-line grant application form is an electronic form which must be filled in by using the Internet Web system "SWIM" at the following internet address:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/external/displayWelcome.do?lang=en>

This system allows the introduction, edition, validation, printing and submission of the grant application form. Once the application is submitted electronically, a print out of an exemplar has to be signed by the legal representative submitting the proposal and be sent to the Commission as per point 5.2 below. After submission of the application electronically no changes are possible.

At the above quoted web site other requested forms and other useful documents can be found.

### 5.2 Where does the application need to be sent?

Please send your covering letter of application, together with all the other documents listed in the table under section 4.4.2 "**Eligibility of applications**" above as originals, as well as **one copy of all of these documents by the submission deadline indicated above**, to the following address:

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<sup>10</sup> The multiplier effect refers to how the project and its results will promote change in other fields, e.g. geographical, sector, thematic, etc.

**Call for proposals – VP/2012/009**  
**BUDGET HEADING 04.04.01.01**  
**European Commission – DG EMPL/C.2**  
**Archives – Courier J-27 0/115**  
**B – 1049 Brussels**  
**Belgium**

Please send your application by registered mail or express courier service only and keep proof of the date of sending (the date of the post office stamp or express courier receipt will be considered as proof of the date of sending). Any applications sent by other means (for example fax) or to other addresses will be rejected.

**Hand-delivered** applications must be received by the European Commission at the latest by 16.00h on the last day for submission. The **only address for hand deliveries** of documents to the European Commission is: **Avenue du Bourget 1, B-1140 Evere, Belgium**<sup>11</sup>. Proof of delivery is a signed receipt from the Commission's Archives Service stamped with the date of the last day for submission or earlier.

Please note that the SWIM electronic application form is available until midnight on the day of the submission deadline. However, as candidates must first submit the form electronically, and then print, sign and send it by post 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.**

Regarding the presentation of the application file, applicants are requested to:

- follow the order of documents as listed in the table under **section 4.4.2 "Eligibility of applications"**;
- print the documents double-sided, where possible;
- only use 2-hole folders. **Please do not bind or glue the dossiers** (stapling is acceptable).

The application must comprise at least one copy along with the original.

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

**ALL ENQUIRIES MUST BE MADE BY E-MAIL ONLY TO:**

[EMPL-VP-2012-009@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EMPL-VP-2012-009@ec.europa.eu)

**- PLEASE DO NOT TELEPHONE -**

### **5.3 What next? Accepted and rejected applications**

Applications will be examined by an Evaluation Committee.

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<sup>11</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/contact/mailling\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/contact/mailling_en.htm)

The European Commission will notify applicants when the evaluation procedure will be finished. Requests concerning the progress of dossiers sent prior to the end of the evaluation procedure will not be answered.

### **Rejected applications**

Applicants of rejected applications will receive a letter stating the reasons of refusal.

### ***Selected applications***

Successful applicants will receive two original copies of the grant agreement<sup>12</sup> for acceptance and signature. Both these copies must be sent back to the Commission, which will then return one to the applicant once it has been signed by both parties.

The grant agreement may include changes 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.

The financial guidelines for applicants (annex I) explains in greater detail other important considerations concerning agreements governing the award of grants.

## **6 PROGRESS – ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS FOR CALLS FOR PROPOSALS 2012**

### **6.1 Guide on how the activities shall be carried out**

#### **a) Requirements concerning equal opportunities**

The PROGRESS Programme aims to promote gender mainstreaming in all its five policy sections and supported activities. Consequently, the Beneficiary shall take the necessary steps to ensure that:

- Gender equality issues are taken into account when relevant for the drafting of the proposal by paying attention to the situation and needs of women and men;
- Implementation of proposed activities includes a perspective informed by a systematic consideration of the gender dimension;
- Performance monitoring includes the collection and gathering of data disaggregated by sex when needed;
- Its proposed team and/or staff respects the gender balance at all levels.

Equally, needs of disabled people shall be duly acknowledged and met while implementing the proposed activities. This will ensure in particular that where the Beneficiary organises training sessions and conferences, issues publications or develops dedicated websites, people with disabilities will have equal access to the facilities or the

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<sup>12</sup> International organisations receive an agreement based on the "European Union Contribution Agreement with an International Organisation".

services provided.

Finally, the Contracting Authority encourages the Beneficiary to promote equal employment opportunities for all its staff and team. This entails that the Beneficiary is encouraged to foster an appropriate mix of people, whatever their ethnic origin, religion, age, and ability.

The Beneficiary will be required to detail in its final activity report the steps and achievements made towards meeting these contractual requirements.

#### **b) Publicity and information requirements**

In accordance with the General conditions, all beneficiaries are under the obligation to acknowledge that the present activity has received funding from the Union in all documents and media produced, in particular final delivered outputs, related reports, brochures, press releases, videos, software, etc, including at conferences or seminars. In the context of the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity – PROGRESS, the following formulation shall be used:

*This (publication, conference, training session etc) is supported by the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity - PROGRESS (2007-2013).*

*This programme is implemented by the European Commission. It was established to financially support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the employment, social affairs and equal opportunities area, and thereby contribute to the achievement of the Europe 2020 Strategy goals in these fields.*

*The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA-EEA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.*

*For more information see: <http://ec.europa.eu/progress>*

For publications it is also necessary to include the following reference: "The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission".

With regard to publication and any communication plan linked to the present activity, the Beneficiary will insert the European Union logo and mention the European Commission as the Contracting Authority in every publication or related material developed under the present grant agreement.

#### **c) Reporting requirements**

PROGRESS is implemented through a results-based management (RBM). The Strategic Framework, developed in collaboration with the Member States, social partners and civil society organisations, sets out the intervention logic for PROGRESS-related expenditure and defines PROGRESS' mandate and its long-term and immediate outcomes. It is supplemented by performance measures which serve to determine the extent to which PROGRESS has delivered the expected results. See in Annex the overview of PROGRESS performance measurement framework. For more information on the strategic framework, please visit PROGRESS website <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=659&langId=en> .

The Commission regularly monitors the effect of PROGRESS-supported initiatives and considers how they contribute to PROGRESS outcomes as defined in the Strategic Framework. In this context, the Beneficiary will be asked to dedicatedly work in close cooperation with the Commission and/or persons authorised by it to define the expected contribution and the set of performance measures which this contribution will be assessed against. As a direct contribution to the PROGRESS Annual Performance Monitoring Report, the Beneficiary will be asked to submit a short quantitative questionnaire on the outputs produced over the course of a given calendar year. At the end of the action, the Beneficiary will also be asked to report on its own performance to the Commission and/or persons authorised by it against a template which will be annexed to the grant agreement.

**d) Information on partners in PROGRESS funded projects (when applicable):**

In order to increase the visibility of transnational partnerships established under PROGRESS and to facilitate networking between organisations involved in actions covered by PROGRESS grants, the Commission intends to publish the name and address of partners in PROGRESS-funded projects together with the name and address of the beneficiary, the reference of the call for proposals and the title and description of the project. To that purpose, the Beneficiary will be asked to seek the partners' agreement to authorise the Commission to publish this data. This written agreement should be included in the letters of commitment sent to the Commission with the application form.

**e) Communication and dissemination plan**

Adequate communication and dissemination of results is essential in ensuring the EU added value of the action and its sustainability after the funding has ended. Information-giving and awareness raising are key activities to ensure that other interested parties benefit from the project and can create new opportunities to extend it or develop new partnerships. The proposals must therefore include a detailed plan for communication and dissemination of the projects' results. In particular, such a plan must include information on dissemination activities and targeted audiences.

At final report stage, the Beneficiary will be required to provide details about how and to whom the results, best practices and findings have been disseminated and how interested parties have been involved in the project.

# OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

## PROGRESS Ultimate Outcome

*Member States implement laws, policies and practices in a manner that contributes to the desired outcomes of the Social Agenda*

PROGRESS works toward its ultimate outcome by helping strengthen the EU's support for Member States' efforts to create more and better jobs and to build a more cohesive society. PROGRESS seeks to contribute to (i) an **effective legal regime** in the EU in relation to the Social Agenda; (ii) **shared understanding** across the EU with regard to Social Agenda objectives; and (iii) **strong partnerships** working toward Social Agenda objectives.

In operational terms, support provided by PROGRESS facilitates (i) provision of analysis and policy advice; (ii) monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies; (iii) policy transfer, learning and support among Member States; and (iv) relaying to decision-makers the views of the stakeholders and society at large.

### Legal Regime

#### Outcome:

*Compliance in Member States with EU law related to PROGRESS areas.*

#### Performance Indicators

1. Transposition rate of EU law on matters related to PROGRESS policy areas
2. Effectiveness of application in Member States of EU law on matters related to PROGRESS policy areas.
3. EU policies and legislation are grounded in thorough analysis of situation and responsive to conditions, needs and expectations in Member States in PROGRESS areas
4. Extent to which PROGRESS-supported policy advice feeds into the development and implementation of EU legislation and policies
5. Cross-cutting issues are addressed in PROGRESS policy sections
6. EU policies and legislation display a common underlying logic of intervention in relation to PROGRESS issues
7. Gender mainstreaming is systematically promoted in PROGRESS

### Shared Understanding

#### Outcome:

*Shared understanding and ownership among policy/decision-makers and stakeholders in Member States, and the Commission, of objectives related to PROGRESS policy areas.*

#### Performance Indicators

1. Attitudes of decision-makers, key stakeholders and general public regarding EU objectives in PROGRESS policy areas
2. Extent to which national policy discourses or priorities reflect EU objectives
3. Extent to which principles of good governance (including minimum standards on consultation) are respected in policy debate
4. Extent to which the outcomes of policy debates feed into the development of EU law and policy.
5. Greater awareness of policy-and decision-makers, social partners, NGOs, networks regarding their rights/obligations in relation to PROGRESS policy areas
6. Greater awareness of policy-and decision-makers, social partners, NGOs, networks regarding EU objectives and policies in relation to PROGRESS policy areas

### Strong Partnerships

#### Outcome:

*Effective partnerships with national and pan-European stakeholders in support of outcomes related to PROGRESS policy areas.*

#### Performance Indicators

1. Existence of common ground/consensus among policy and decision-makers and stakeholders on EU objectives and policies
2. Identification and involvement by the EU of key actors in a position to exert influence or change at EU and national levels
3. Effectiveness of partnerships in relation to outcomes related to PROGRESS policy areas.
4. Number of individuals served or reached by networks supported by PROGRESS.
5. Extent to which advocacy skills of PROGRESS-supported networks have improved
6. Satisfaction of EU and national authorities with the contribution of networks
7. Extent to which PROGRESS-supported networks take a cross-cutting approach

# **CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

**2012**

**VP/2012/009**

## **ANNEX I**

### **FINANCIAL GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS**

Annex I is available on the call website:

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

**ANNEX II**

**MODEL FOR TENDER SPECIFICATIONS FOR SUBCONTRACTING  
EXTERNAL EXPERTISE**

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Tender Specifications – .....

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- 1. Background**
- 2. Purpose of the Contract**
- 3. Tasks to be performed by the Contractor**
  - Description of tasks**
  - 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**

*(option 1)*

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.

*(option 2)*

The contract will be awarded to the tenderer whose offer represents the lowest price.

**10. Content and presentation of the bids**

**Content of the bids**

**Presentation of the bids**