



Answers to requests for clarifications

Call for proposals

**Design, Implementation, Promotion and Marketing of
Accessible Tourism Itineraries**

102/G/ENT/PPA/13/511

<u>Question 1</u>	<p>We have a specific question at this time regarding the geographical scope. The call mentions that “the packages should deliver tourism itineraries involving products and services located in at least 3 different destinations within the same EU Member State.”</p> <p>We would like to know how you define “destinations”. For example, would London be considered a destination; or can we consider that London is big and diverse enough to include several destinations (e.g. the Olympic Park; Westminster & Central London; Thames Barrier Park; etc).</p>
<u>Answer 1</u>	<p>There is no commonly agreed definition of "tourism destination" – however some criteria can be found in ETIS, the European Tourism Indicator system for sustainable management of destinations (http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/sustainable-tourism/indicators/index_en.htm):</p> <p>What is a destination? For the purposes of this System of indicators, a destination can be defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A geographic area that is currently or potentially attractive to visitors/tourists• A place or area which is recognised and can easily be defined as a visitor destination and has a range of facilities and products in place for tourism purposes• A place or area which is promoted as a destination• A place or area where it is possible to measure the supply of and demand for tourism services i.e. the visitor economy.• A place or area where the visitor management process usually includes a range of public and private sector stakeholders together with the host community <p>Bearing in mind these criteria and in defining the geographical scope of your proposal , you should take into account also the other requirements indicated in the call, such as, for example, attractiveness for tourist, sustainability, excellent marketing potential, etc....</p>
<u>Question 2</u>	<p>We intend to develop a project to identify the lodging facilities in XXX County (hotels, hostels, etc) which are properly suited for for tourists with special needs. Based on this study we would like to edit some brochures and maps containing the touristic offer and also we would like to create a web site.</p> <p>XXX County Council implements, in the present, a project "Establishment of national information center and tourism promotion" which improves the promotion of tourism</p>

	<p>potential and presents all touristic offers and local and regional attractions. The study that I have already mentioned will complete this project.</p> <p>We would be grateful if you could tell me if our idea of the project could be included in the financed actions of this call for proposals.</p>
<u>Answer 2</u>	<p>In relation to your question please note that the Commission cannot at this stage express any assessment concerning your project or proposal for project. Assessing the proposal is the exclusive competence of an appointed evaluation committee. Such committee can under no circumstances perform its duties prior to the submission of proposals.</p>
<u>Question 3</u>	<p>On page 7 of the Call for Proposals it states "The proposal should present substantial geographic coverage, at least within the relevant EU Member State. More specifically, the packages should deliver tourism itineraries involving products and services located in at least 3 different destinations within the same EU Member State.", so my question is what is considered, a "destination"? Can a destination be a city, for example, Barcelona, Santa Cruz de Tenerife and Las Palmas de Gran Canaria? Or does a destination mean something bigger like the Canary Islands or Catalonia?</p>
<u>Answer 3</u>	<p>There is no commonly agreed definition of "tourism destination" – however some criteria can be found in ETIS, the European Tourism Indicator system for sustainable management of destinations http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/sustainable-tourism/indicators/index_en.htm:</p> <p>What is a destination? For the purposes of this System of indicators, a destination can be defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A geographic area that is currently or potentially attractive to visitors/tourists • A place or area which is recognised and can easily be defined as a visitor destination and has a range of facilities and products in place for tourism purposes • A place or area which is promoted as a destination • A place or area where it is possible to measure the supply of and demand for tourism services i.e. the visitor economy. • A place or area where the visitor management process usually includes a range of public and private sector stakeholders together with the host community <p>Bearing in mind these criteria and in defining the geographical scope of your proposal , you should take into account also the other requirements indicated in the call, such as, for example, attractiveness for tourist, sustainability, excellent marketing potential, etc....</p>
<u>Question 4</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. p.15-16 As a public-private consortium we can be the applicant coordinator of the project? 2. p.7 "...More specifically, the packages should deliver tourism itineraries involving products and services located in at least 3 different destinations within the same EU Member State. Proposals can be transnational, but this is not a requirement" The 3 different destinations can be all in our area (Turin and its province)? >> In the supposition we will be the coordinator and the applicants will be from the same area 3. p.14 The consortium to which it refers the call must be made before the final date of submission of project proposals? 4. p.12 Co-financing: in the 25% of co-financing can we include the costs of personnel working under an employment contract with the coordinator?

<u>Answer 4</u>	<p>1) Any of the applicants who satisfy the eligibility criteria listed in section “5.1 Eligible Applicants” of the document “Call for proposals” may apply as coordinator. However, at this stage and without any justifications/proofs, the Commission services are not able to prejudge the eligibility of the public-private consortium.</p> <p>Please also refer to page 16 of the Call text: <i>"Several entities that form together one entity, whether or not this entity is established for the purpose of implementing the action, may apply as a sole beneficiary. The entities will be considered as affiliated entities, which each will have to comply with eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria. In the case of affiliated entities forming together a sole applicant, please refer to the grant agreement."</i></p> <p>The applicant entity will have to indicate its participating affiliated entities in the proposal.</p> <p>2) Please refer to Answer 1 and 3</p> <p>3) Yes, the consortium should be made at the final date of the submission of proposals. Please note that applicants (Coordinator and co-applicants/partners) should provide several supporting documents to establish their eligibility, to give evidence of their financial and operational capacity, and forms have to be completed by each individual applicant as well.</p> <p>Please refer to the Guide for applicants and to the Call for proposals document for complete information. It will be the onus of the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in this call for proposals.</p> <p>4) Yes, costs of personnel working under an employment contract could be included. Please refer to section “4.2 Eligible costs” of the published call for proposals document.</p>
<u>Question 5</u>	A disability association can take part in this call in order to provide services to its members?
<u>Answer 5</u>	<p>Please refer to section “5.1 Eligible Applicants” more specifically to section “5.1.2 Other Applicants”: <i>“Other Applicants not referred under points 1.1 and 1.2 above, intending to act as coordinators or as consortium partners shall correspond to the definition of the following target organisations active in the field of tourism or any other field that is strictly related to the object of the proposal such as: ... Not-for profit/Non-governmental organisations, civil society organizations, foundations, think-tanks, <u>disability organisations</u> and charities.”</i></p> <p>Please also refer to the note on page 15 of the call for proposals document:</p> <p><i>“The onus will be on the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in the call. Please provide any useful supporting document and proof of the fulfilment of the abovementioned compulsory requirements and clearly indicate in the submitted proposal, the name of the applicants fulfilling them, in order to allow the evaluation committee to accomplish its assessment.”</i></p>
<u>Question 6</u>	Must the proposal be transnational project or is it possible so submit a national proposal?
<u>Answer 6</u>	Please refer to section 2 C) on page 6-7 of the call text, which explicitly says as follows: "Proposals can be transnational, but this is not a requirement".

<u>Question 7</u>	Would you please confirm if applicants can participate in more than one project?
<u>Answer 7</u>	Yes, applicants may participate as a partner in more than one project under this call. However, applicants can only apply for one project as a "lead organisation/coordinator"
<u>Question 8</u>	Please let me know if, in case of a consortium applying for a grant, it is mandatory that amongst the partners should be organisations as are described at point 1.1 and 1.2 or we can form a consortium of organisations mentioned at point 2 of this section, without taking in consideration the organisation from 1.1 and 1.2.
<u>Answer 8</u>	Entities or organisations referred to under Section 5.1 (1.1 – SMEs, and 1.2 Ministry/NTO/regional or local/network or association of local governments) must be present – either as coordinators or as members of the consortium.
<u>Question 9</u>	I would appreciate if you will consider to specify whether Moldova is eligible for this EU project?
<u>Answer 9</u>	I regret to inform you that Moldova does not fulfil the eligibility criteria for this call. Point 5.1 of the call specification explicitly states "EU Member States". This criteria also applies to all applicants participating in a joint proposal.
<u>Question 10</u>	<p>At page 14 of the call, within the Eligible applicants (5.1) you describe:</p> <p><i>“Applicants should act in consortium with partner organisations. The consortium should include: 1.1. At least four (4) SME – Small and Medium Sized enterprise (no mention for micro)- acting in the tourism sector.”</i></p> <p>then, at page 15 is mentioned: <i>“will be seen as an additional asset and added value positively affecting the assessment of the proposed project (see also Annex 3) if the SME involved in the project consortium is a micro or small enterprise.”</i></p> <p>The question is if a micro organization, as defined in your table (micro: < 10; €2 million), can qualify as an applicant partner and/or leader in the project. In this case, further to the turnover or balance sheet, which should be the minimum headcount? The table specifies only < 10.</p>
<u>Answer 10</u>	<p>Please refer to the requirements of the call under "eligibility", and namely to the provisions concerning the composition of the consortium. Participation of SMEs (micro included) – either as leader/coordinators of a consortium or as partners - is a compulsory requirement, and participation of micro and small SMEs is encouraged and will be assessed positively. You should take into account however all the other relevant requirements of the call, as for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The financial and operational capacity (point 7) to perform and complete the project, and propose projects that "combine existing successful products and services into comprehensive tourism packages or itineraries", are "technically and financially sustainable", provide "substantial geographic coverage" etc.... <p>For the definition of small/micro SMEs, please refer to section 5.1.</p>
<u>Question 11</u>	We would like to know whether in the case of MRF, as a not-for profit/non-governmental organization (falling under the category 2. Other Applicants) our organization needs to act as a consortium member with other partner organizations. If yes, do the other members of the consortium have to be from the categories 1.1 and 1.2?

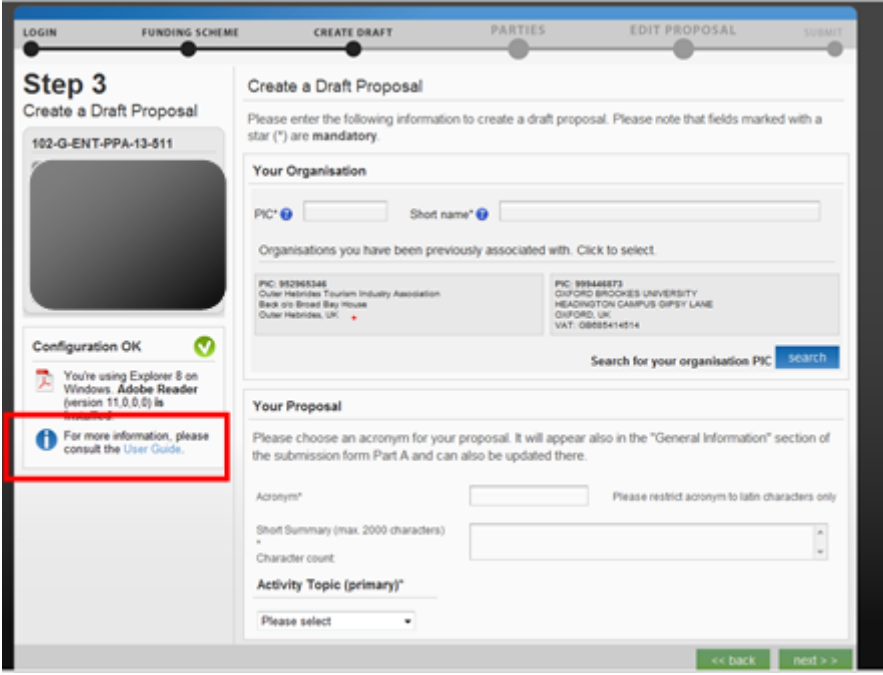
	<p>In other words, if MRF as a non-profit organization decides to apply, can MRF apply independently or jointly with other organizations of our choice (be they NGOs, SMES or public authorities), or does there have to be a consortium led by MRF, that also includes at least 4 SMEs and at least one applicant from category 1.2 (page 15).</p>
<u>Answer 11</u>	<p>With reference to your question, section 5.2 refers to "other applicants" who are neither SMEs nor national/public bodies. The call states that such applicants can act either as coordinators or partners in a consortium provided that they refer to the target organisations active in the field of tourism listed in the call , or other fields strictly related to the object of the proposal.</p> <p>Section 5 clearly indicates the minimum requirements for the composition of the consortium (5.1, subparagraphs 1.1 - 1.2 and 2) and we invite you to refer to them.</p>
<u>Question 12</u>	<p>According to the call for proposals the project proposal must fulfil a number of nine characteristics. Must all characteristics be fulfilled by the project proposal?</p> <p>Must the project proposal include activities for special access needs and functional impairments or can it be addressed as a secondary focus?</p> <p>http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/_getdocument.cfm?doc_id=8111</p> <p>We are aiming at meeting the 7th objective of the call, respectively “To enhance the quality and diversify the offer of accessible tourism experiences in Europe. We would like to enhance the quality and diversify the offer of cycle tourism in 3 different destinations. Would this project idea be eligible for this call?</p>
<u>Answer 12</u>	<p>Concerning your question on the objectives and focus of the call, please refer in particular to section 1 (Context) and namely the part on the definition of "Accessible Tourism", to Section 2 "Objectives" and to section 2 B "Expected results".</p> <p>Concerning your specific question on the diversification of cycle tourism is concerned, please note that the Commission cannot at this stage express any assessment concerning your project or proposal for project. Assessing the proposal is the exclusive competence of an appointed evaluation committee. Such committee can under no circumstances perform its duties prior to the submission of proposals.</p>
<u>Question 13</u>	<p>The Call for Proposals document mentions “accessible tourism <u>itineraries</u>”. In Finnish, the term itinerary translates as a geographical <u>route</u> between places.</p> <p>Is this what the proposal means (a route) or does it refer to a specific <u>location or destination</u>, around which accessible services are offered?</p> <p>To add more confusion, the Call for Proposal also uses terms, such as “package” and “destination”.</p> <p>This is very essential information for us to set up a proper consortium.</p> <p>My second question is: the proposal should present substantial geographic coverage, located in at least 3 different destinations within a Member State. Would it also be beneficial if the destinations are different in nature from each other (e.g. one destination that would center around a national park, a second in a more urban setting, etc.)?</p>

<u>Answer 13</u>	<p>Please note that the Commission services cannot, for reasons of equal treatment, neither assess proposals at this stage nor help to draft proposals. Assessing the proposal is the exclusive competence of an appointed evaluation committee. Such committee can under no circumstances perform its duties prior to the submission of proposals. Our reply to your questions has to be considered as a clarification of the published call for proposals document and under no circumstances as an assessment of parts of a proposal.</p> <p>With reference to your first question, the call describes in several parts the actions required. Please take an attentive look especially at sections A and C of the call. The call also explicitly states the following:</p> <p><i>“The proposals should present a high potential for the development of accessible tourism. The aim is to support the market uptake and further dissemination of products and services that already exist and have been implemented and marketed successfully, and promote the uptake and dissemination of new ones. The proposals will be essentially projects that combine existing successful products and services into comprehensive tourism packages or itineraries, to provide fully accessible tourism experiences.”</i></p> <p>A further clarification concerning "destination" has been provided in Answer 1 and 3.</p> <p>For your second question, please refer to Section C) of the call and namely to the following requirement:</p> <p><i>“Comprehensiveness of the package, variety and originality of the tourism products and services included in the package will be evaluated favourably. However, proposals should encompass as a minimum the following core services:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Information (at all stages of the experience, from pre-booking until returning home)</i> <i>ii. Amenities (namely Accommodation and Catering)</i> <i>iii. Customer care</i> <i>iv. at least one activity in each of the following areas:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. “Cultural” (e.g. museums, architecture, archaeology, national heritage, historical landmarks, etc.....),</i> <i>b. “Natural” (e.g. outdoors activities, beach, lake, mountain, park, garden etc.....)</i> <i>c. “Recreational” (e.g. amusement parks, sports, shopping, events, festivals,)”</i>
<u>Question 14</u>	<p>We need to know if "Design, Implementation, Promotion and Marketing of Accessible Tourism Itineraries" is a programme which will have another call the next year. We are interested to submit an application and we are not sure if it will be possible for us to do so through the present call.</p>
<u>Answer 14</u>	<p>The Commission cannot foresee at this stage whether a similar call will be launched. The Commission will also need to evaluate, amongst other factors, the results and experience of the present call.</p>
<u>Question 15</u>	<p>with reference to the 102/G/ENT/PPA/13/511 call for proposal I need a clarification about the deadline: it will be the 22nd of october or the 17th of the october? Moreover, in the guideline it's not clear if the payment in kind is eligible as percentage of co-financing.</p>
<u>Answer 15</u>	<p>We confirm that the deadline for submission of proposals is the 22nd of October 2013 (17:00:00 Brussels local time).</p>

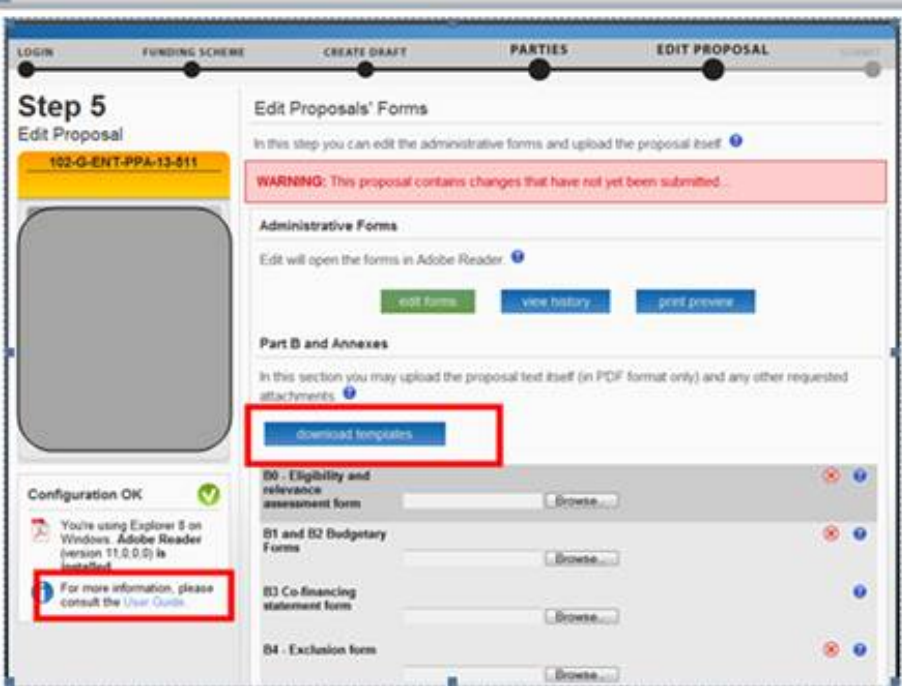
	<p>Please refer to the point 5.2 of the “Call for proposals” document:</p> <p><i>“Applications must comply with the following conditions in order to be eligible for a grant: ...Applications may not include contributions in kind as part of their co-financing”</i></p>
Question 16	<p>Is it possible for the consortium to be an informal consortium among the partners? Such as a consortium where all the partners have signed an agreement to apply together to the call? Or should be a formal consortium registered by the law?</p>
Answer 16	<p>We confirm the consortium does not need to be registered.</p> <p>Please also refer to section “4.3 of the co-financing and joint and several responsibility” of the call for proposal document:</p> <p><i>“The final grant agreement shall be signed by each applicant. Alternatively it shall be signed by the appointed co-ordinator, provided that a <u>power of attorney has been conferred to this entity (Annex IV of the draft grant agreement).</u>”</i></p>
Question 17	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. According to the Call for Proposal art 5.1. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS par. 2 “Other applicants” could you kindly confirm us if a non-profit public/private association, so called "Local Action Group" setting up in line with the Rural Development Program EC Reg 1968/2005, whose core activity falls under the following fields: tourism, regional and rural development, could act as coordinator member? 2. According to the Call for Proposal art 2 “Objective of the call” par C “Requirements”: <i>The proposals should present substantial geographic coverage, at least within the relevant EU Member State. More specifically, the packages should deliver tourism itineraries involving products and services located in <u>at least 3 different destinations within the same EU Member State.</u></i> Could you please kindly confirm us if the three destinations could be identified within the same Province? 3. Could you please kindly confirm us if the cofinancing contribution of the lead applicant (coordinator) could be covered by the voluntary work of its staff?
Answer 17	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any of the applicants who satisfy the eligibility criteria listed in section “5.1 Eligible Applicants” of the document “Call for proposals” may apply as coordinator. However, at this stage and without any justifications/proofs, the Commission services are not able to prejudge the eligibility of the public-private consortium. 2. In addition to the reply provided in Answer 3 , further guidance could be obtained from Annex 3 (Evaluation criteria), and – as far as this aspect is concerned- from the criteria under point 4. The proposals should produce itineraries /packages that respond to all the requirements indicated in Section C) – however the call does not set any explicit requirement as to whether the proposals should be limited to a specific region or province or any other geographical/ administrative division. 3. Voluntary work is considered as contributions in kind and as stipulated in section “5.2 Admissible and eligible proposals” of the “Call for proposals” document: <p><i>“...Applications may not include contributions in kind as part of their co-financing”</i></p>
Question 18	<p>The call for proposals reports (page 15) that a partner of the consortium could be constituted by “regional or local public governmental authority (For the purpose of this call, a regional or local public governmental authority is considered as: region, province, department, municipality, county, city council, commune)”.</p> <p>We ask if a regional agency (an agency of the Regional authority operates like a department,</p>

	for specific purposes) could be considered as “region” in order to satisfy the clause of including at least 1 organization among those listed by the call.
<u>Answer 18</u>	<p>In relation to your question please note that the Commission cannot at this stage express any assessment concerning your project or proposal for project. Assessing the proposal is the exclusive competence of an appointed evaluation committee. Such committee can under no circumstances perform its duties prior to the submission of proposals.</p> <p>Please also refer to the call requirements whereby it is indicated that "the onus shall be on the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in the call".</p>
<u>Question 19</u>	<p>1) Could I send you the proofs/documents for our eligibility now, before applying, in order to have an assessment of our eligibility? If yes, I will be able to send you our Statute and some additional documents related to our participation in projects related to the beneficiaries of the call.</p> <p>2) If not, what happens in case we apply together with other partners and we discover that we are not eligible for the call? Could we withdraw from the project? Could the other partners find a replacement without paying any penalty?</p>
<u>Answer 19</u>	<p>No, assessing the proposal/eligibility is the exclusive competence of an appointed evaluation committee. Such committee can under no circumstances perform its duties prior to the submission of proposals.</p> <p>If the appointed evaluation committee consider that one of the partners/applicants does not comply with the eligibility criteria set out in the call for proposals, the proposal will be rejected.</p> <p>Please note that the onus will be on the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in the call.</p> <p>Please also refer to section "5.2 Admissible and eligible proposals".</p>
<u>Question 20</u>	<p>a) Can the applicant of the call for proposal be a single legal person (for example one SME) without Other partners/applicants?</p> <p>b) if our project is approved do we need to sell our touristic package within 18 months (the maximum duration of the project) in order to demonstrate the output?</p>
<u>Answer 20</u>	<p>a) The call clearly says that the "applicants" should act in consortium. The call also set specific requirements as to the composition of the consortium - please refer to section 5.1</p> <p>b) Yes, the call clearly says: <i>"The "packages" will be subsequently promoted and marketed as any other tourism product or package, using primarily mainstream communication and distribution channels"</i> The call also indicates that the results shall be subject to a final evaluation.</p>
<u>Question 21</u>	<p>We would like to know if in order to apply for the call "Design, Implementation, Promotion and Marketing of Accessible Tourism Itineraries 102/G/ENT/PPA/13/511" the consortium has to be composed by partners from different countries and if it possible that all partners are from the same countries.</p>

<u>Answer 21</u>	There is no specific requirement as to country/national composition of the consortium. The call also indicates that proposals can be transnational but this is not a formal requirement. The call however lays down a main requirement, in this respect, i.e. that legal entities applying to this call must be established in any of the 28 EU Member States. Please refer to section “5. Eligibility” of the call for proposals document.
<u>Question 22</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Would the building of infrastructure such as the wooden road (3m wide, 3km in length) be eligible cost (it must be bought in)? b) Do all the partners need to contribute into the budget or is it possible that coordinator contributes and other partners shall have input with their knowledge, programmes and the dissemination (eg. tourist companies) c) Must we have partners from other countries or can Estonian case be the case study of how to build a urban-nature accessibility path for people with disabilities also in other European countries.
<u>Answer 22</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Please note that infrastructures costs will not be considered as eligible costs. b) First, as stipulated in section "5.2 Admissible and eligible proposals" of the “Call for proposals” document: “...Applications may not include contributions in kind as part of their co-financing”. Furthermore, please note that the Form A/3 and Forms B1/B2 on the Forward budget have to be completed for each individual applicant. Therefore, this organisation may be rather considered as third parties than a partner of the consortium. c) There is no specific requirement as to country/national composition of the consortium. The call also indicates that proposals can be transnational but this is not a formal requirement. The call however lays down a main requirement, in this respect, i.e. that legal entities applying to this call must be established in any of the 28 EU Member States. Please refer to section “5. Eligibility” of the call for proposals document.
<u>Question 23</u>	<p>We would like to ask a question related to the destination, in the Call is listed: “<i>the packages should deliver tourism itineraries involving products and services located in <u>at least 3 different destinations within the same EU Member State.</u></i>”</p> <p>If we’re planning an European itinerary considering more States, in each state there should be 3 destinations? So that for example if we cover 3 bordering States, there must be in total 9 destinations?</p>
<u>Answer 23</u>	<p>The specifications for the call do not lay down formal requirements in case the proposals present "transnational" projects. In this respect, the call indicates that "proposals can be transnational but this is no formal requirement". The requirement of the minimum of the three destinations within the same EU Member State applies only to those proposals that do not feature a transnational project.</p> <p>Nevertheless, also transnational proposals must ensure a "substantial geographic coverage" and must be able to fulfil the other requirements of the call, such as variety and richness of the offer, the potential for marketing, the attractiveness, the high potential for fostering accessible tourism, the technical and financial sustainability, etc....</p>
<u>Question 24</u>	One of the applicants (in this case a regional or local public governmental authority) has already a project funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Is there any incompatibility with this call for proposals?

<p>Answer 24</p>	<p>Please refer to section “4.1. General Principles of EU funding” of the published Call for proposals document:</p> <p><u>Non-cumulative award</u></p> <p><i>Each action may give rise to the award of only one grant from the budget to any one beneficiary.</i></p> <p><i>In no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice by the Union budget...</i></p>
<p>Question 25</p>	<p>I have registered to submit a proposal to the request Design, Implementation, Promotion and Marketing of Accessible Tourism Itineraries 102/G/ENT/PPA/13/511 and I got to step 3. My question is: How do I retrieve my PIC?</p>
<p>Answer 25</p>	<p>Please refer to the user guide (page 15) you will find on the bottom left side of the screen.</p>  <p>For issues related to the use of the submission system, please contact the dedicated service desk by: Electronic mail address: DIGIT-EFP7-SEP-SUPPORT@ec.europa.eu</p>
<p>Question 26</p>	<p>I would like to know when it is written «each applicant», if it includes also the affiliated partners or it concerns just the lead applicant and the co-applicants? Is a check-list available in order to send the documents for each partner?</p>
<p>Answer 26</p>	<p>The expression “each applicant” concerns just the lead applicant and the co-applicants.</p> <p>1) It is explicitly specified in the “Call for proposals” and “Guide for applicants” documents when a requirement applies to affiliated entities.</p> <p>For instance, section “6. Exclusion criteria” of the call for proposal document: <i>....The same criteria apply to affiliated entities...</i></p> <p>Please also refer to page 16 of the Call Text: <i>“Legal entities having a legal or capital link with applicants, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation, may take part in the action as affiliated entities, and may declare eligible costs. For that purpose, applicants shall identify such affiliated entities in the application form. The affiliated entities will have to</i></p>

	<p><i>comply with the eligibility and exclusion criteria."</i></p> <p>and</p> <p><i>"Several entities that form together one entity, whether or not this entity is established for the purpose of implementing the action, may apply as a sole beneficiary. The entities will be considered as affiliated entities, which each will have to comply with eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria."</i></p> <p>2) The forms A/2 and A/3.2 have to be completed on line through the submission portal for each individual applicant. The templates for part B have to be downloaded also through the submission portal (SEP): https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/submission/manage/login?callId=102-G-ENT-PPA-13-511</p> <p>Please refer to the "Guide for applicants" which contains the information to guide you through the mechanics of preparing and submitting a proposal.</p>
<u>Question 27</u>	In which category should the costs relating to the promotion and marketing of the tourism itineraries be included in the budget?
<u>Answer 27</u>	<p>Please note that the Commission services cannot, for reasons of equal treatment, neither assess proposals at this stage nor help to draft proposals.</p> <p>Please refer to section "VII. Part B – Budget-Forms B1/B2" of the Guide for Applicants which contains information on how to complete the budget forms.</p>
<u>Question 28</u>	<p>In the Guide for Applicants, p. 11, in relation to Annex B5, it states that: "For applicants requesting an EU contribution of €60.000 or lower, form B5 does not have to be provided. However, the applicants in question shall submit a declaration on honour for the purpose of proving their financial capacity."</p> <p>Could you kindly clarify:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does the contribution of €60.000 refer to the single applicant or the whole consortium? 2. Does the "declaration on honour" refer to the Annex B4 or some other document? If it is not B4 but some other document, is there a template available?
<u>Answer 28</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The amount of €60.000 refers to the total amount requested by all applicants taken together. 2. No, the Annex B4 refers to the declaration on exclusion criteria. In this case, it refers to a declaration on honour that your entity has sufficient financial capacity to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out. <p>Please also refer to section "7.1 Financial capacity" of the Call for proposals document.</p>

Question 29	We would like to know where we can find the form B1, B2 and B6.
Answer 29	<p>The templates for the part B should be downloaded from the SEP Platform. Please also refer to the "user guide" you will find on the left in the SEP website.</p>  <p>For issues related to the use of the submission system, contact the dedicated service desk by Electronic mail address: DIGIT-EFP7-SEP-SUPPORT@ec.europa.eu</p>
Question 30	We cannot find the template forms B7,8,9. They are not in the zip file with the other B forms on the submission portal.
Answer 30	<p>Indeed, there is no template to download for forms B7 to B9.</p> <p>Applicants have to submit curriculum vitae (Form B7) and list of previous projects and activities performed in the same fields (Form B8). Any other additional supporting documentation (i.e. evidence for eligibility criteria,..) could be uploaded under Form B9</p> <p>The curriculum vitae should be submitted in the Europass format, for which a template can be downloaded under this link: http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae The curriculum vitae of the staff responsible for managing and implementing the action should be submitted.</p> <p>There is no specific template to download for the Form B8. It is up to the applicants to upload documents they consider relevant to show they have undertook projects in the same fields and demonstrate their capacity to manage scale activity corresponding to the size of the project.</p>

<p><u>Question 31</u></p>	<p>At page 6/7 it is stated that: "Comprehensiveness of the package, variety and originality of the tourism products and services included in the package will be evaluated favourably. However, proposals should encompass as a minimum the following core services: i. Information (at all stages of the experience, from pre-booking until returning home) ii. Amenities (namely Accommodation and Catering) iii. Customer care iv. at least one activity in each of the following areas: a. "Cultural" (e.g. museums, architecture, archaeology, national heritage, historical landmarks, etc.....), 7 Page b. "Natural" (e.g. outdoors activities, beach, lake, mountain, park, garden etc....) c. "Recreational" (e.g. amusement parks, sports, shopping, events, festivals,)"</p> <p>It would seem that the "proposal" coincides with the "package" and that, as such, the latter has to encompass the core services reported above (a, b, and c). Considering that usually a tourism package is defined as a complete trip, including fare, accommodation, meals, ground transport, tour guides, etc., in one all-inclusive price, the questions I would like to ask you are:</p> <p>1) Does the proposal coincides with the package/itinerary or does each proposal can include several packages? 2) What your definition of tourism package is? 3) Finally, does the core services reported above (a, b and c) must be included in each package, in each proposal or in both?</p>
<p><u>Answer 31</u></p>	<p>1) The call does not lay down any limitations as to the number of package(s)/itineraries to be included in a proposal. Therefore a proposal submitted in answer to this call can contain one or more" packages".</p> <p>2) Please refer to the provisions in the call and more specifically to Section C) , whereby: "the proposals will be essentially projects that combine existing successful products and services into comprehensive tourism packages or itineraries, to provide accessible tourism experiences". The packages/itineraries should ensure "accessibility across its different elements: "it should be possible for a potential traveller with special access needs to enjoy any element of the itinerary of his/her choice free of any access concerns". Please also refer to the core elements which are explicitly required in the call specifications - see next answer.</p> <p>3) In case the proposal consists of different /separated packages, the core elements indicated in the call - i.e. Information, Amenities, Customer care , Activities (cultural , natural, recreational) should be present in each package.</p>
<p><u>Question 32</u></p>	<p>We would like to know if:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The partner should be partners must already be in the field of accessible tourism operators or operators who may want to invest in improving their offer? 2. Other types of associations such as union blind, disabled or otherwise can be included as affiliates or other?

<u>Answer 32</u>	<p>1) The call lays down specific requirements for the composition of the consortium, in particular as far as the presence of SMEs and governmental/administrative bodies and national tourism offices are concerned. Please refer to section 5. The call also foresees that applicants which are other than the categories referred to above "must be active in the field of tourism" or any other field strictly related to the objective of the proposal. The call is therefore also open to operators who want to invest in accessible tourism.</p> <p>2) Yes, the type of associations you refer to can act either as partner or as coordinators of the consortium. Please refer to Section 5.1, point 2 of the call for proposals</p>
<u>Question 33</u>	<p>We are a vocational training company validated by the authorities of the XXX region and our courses deal also with the tourism sector. So is it possible for us to act as a partner in the proposal as other applicant? (The Call for Proposal art 5.1. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS par. 2 "Other applicants" only mentions Academic training or education establishments).</p>
<u>Answer 33</u>	<p>The requirements of the call for proposal focus, amongst other issues, on the importance of training. An association active in tourism vocational training can qualify in principle for the composition of the consortium, under the requirements of "other applicants" (Section 5.1). We wish to remind you however that the onus will be on the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in the call (see box in Section 5.1)</p>
<u>Question 34</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could the Micro Enterprise be considered as the fourth SME? Or you mean it as an additional one apart from the four SMEs? - How would you evaluate a proposal with transnational itineraries?
<u>Answer 34</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - While the call requires a minimum of 4 SMEs in the composition of the consortium, there is no specific requirement in the call as to the number of micro or small SMEs to be involved in the consortium. In this respect, the call only encourages the involvement of micro and smaller operators. In principle all SMEs participating in the consortium could be micro or small. However, in composing the consortium for your proposal you must take into account also all the other requirements such as financial and technical sustainability, market potential, variety, richness, impacts in fostering accessible tourism etc...) - According to the requirements of the call, proposals can be transnational, but this is not a mandatory requirement. On proposals that are transnational, please also check answer to Question 23 (I refer to this one: <p><i>The specifications for the call do not lay down formal requirements in case the proposals present "transnational" projects. In this respect, the call indicates that "proposals can be transnational but this is no formal requirement". The requirement of the minimum of the three destinations within the same EU Member State applies only to those proposals that do not feature a transnational project.</i></p> <p><i>Nevertheless, also transnational proposals must ensure a "substantial geographic coverage" and must be able to fulfil the other requirements of the call, such as variety and richness of the offer, the potential for marketing, the attractiveness, the high potential for fostering accessible tourism, the technical and financial sustainability, etc....</i></p> <p>Please also refer to the evaluation criteria and key elements likely to be assessed by the evaluation Committee listed in Annex 3 of the published "Call for proposal" document where the evaluation criteria are listed</p>

<u>Question 35</u>	<p>Do <u>all</u> businesses (commercial tourism operators of products and services) that will be added to the itineraries/packages need to be co-applicants/consortium partners and therefore each submit the forms A/2 and A/3.2? If not, do we still need to name all businesses in the proposal or only in the future grant agreement or neither?</p> <p>For example, could a consortium consist of an NTO and 5 destination organisations? And if each destination organisation supports 6 businesses, do these businesses need to be named in the proposal?</p>
<u>Answer 35</u>	<p>The call lays down some essential requirements as to the composition of the consortium. These requirements concern the necessary presence (the call states "At least") of a minimum of 4 SMEs, and the presence of a governmental/administrative body at national or local level or NTO or associations of such bodies (see section 5.1). The call also explains how other entities, different than those just mentioned, can also be involved. These "other Applicants" (as referred to in the call) can be part of the consortium, either as coordinators or partners, but cannot replace the organisations/entities whose presence is considered as necessary according to the eligibility criteria.</p> <p>On this, please take note in particular that the following entities, are considered as "Other Applicants" according Section 5.1 – point 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>National, regional, local tourism organisations, public and private agencies related to tourism promotion and marketing</i> - <i>Public and private bodies whose core activity falls under the following fields: tourism, regional development or any other field that is strictly related to the object of the proposal.</i> <p>Concerning your question as to whether all commercial tourism operators of products and services that will be added to the itineraries/packages should feature as co-applicants/partners in the consortium, and whether the required forms should be completed, the answer is YES. The businesses added in the package will be eventually contributing towards the implementation of the proposed package/s. The call states that "<i>the project proposals have to include a thorough description of the existing products and services, indicating actions implemented and their success, as well as a thorough description of the potential of the proposed package for the development of accessible tourism</i>" (Section 2 c)). On this, we also draw your attention to ANNEX 0.</p> <p>Concerning your request for assessment of your example, please note that the Commission cannot at this stage express any assessment concerning your project or proposal for project. Assessing the proposal is the exclusive competence of an appointed evaluation committee. Such committee can under no circumstances perform its duties prior to the submission of proposals.</p>
<u>Question 36</u>	<p>We are preparing a project including 3 countries. We would like to have a clarification about the “existing products / services” you require us to improve in terms of accessibility.</p> <p>Our question is if for these 3 countries we need to involve 3 existing packages (1 from each county) and then combine them to produce a new transnational package,</p> <p>OR we could just involve in the transnational package ONLY some successful existing services included in the existing packages.</p>
<u>Answer 36</u>	<p>With reference to your question on specific examples for a project proposal, please note that the Commission cannot at this stage make any assessment on them, as this is the sole competence of an appointed evaluation committee. We can at this stage however draw your attention to the requirements of the call whereby, "<i>the proposals should present a high</i></p>

	<i>potential for the development of accessible tourism. The aim is to support the market uptake and further dissemination of products and services that already exist and have been implemented and marketed successfully, and promote the uptake and dissemination of new ones". We also draw your attention to other requirements, such as variety, richness, attractiveness, market potential, sustainability, etc.... (see in particular Section C and Annex C- Evaluation Criteria).</i>
<u>Question 37</u>	We would like to involve in the Project some partners like silent partners, not like co-applicant, namely without grant. Do they need the PIC number? If they sign a Letter of intent to collaborate in the project is enough?
<u>Answer 37</u>	The participation of " <u>associated partners</u> ", i.e. other organisations who are <u>not</u> part of the consortium <u>and who are not concurring to the eligible costs</u> (as contribution in kind is not allowed in this call) is not excluded by the Call text. A consortium is free to propose involvement in the project of any other entities without concurring to the eligible costs, if it is justified as bringing added value to the project. Those organisations, outside of the consortium, if involved in the project, have to be clearly indicated as such in the proposal and their role in the project, has to be <u>described in Form B6 (Description of proposal)</u> . Their participation will be subject to the approval of the evaluation committee, evaluating the project proposal.
<u>Question 38</u>	All documents in the SEP must be signed by each partner or simply the signature of the lead partner? Moreover the signature must be digital or simply sign the forms And scan with the signing?
<u>Answer 38</u>	At the electronic submission step, only the "Exclusion Criteria Form" (Form B4) must be signed by all applicants (lead and co-applicants). In case of co-financing of third parties, the "co-financing statement form" (Form B3) must be signed by the third parties. These signed documents (with handwritten signature) should be scanned and uploaded in the part B. The other forms should be completed on line (Forms A) and submitted (Forms B) as specified in the Guide for applicants.
<u>Question 39</u>	As I was reading your selection criteria on Operational capacity, I saw we need to provide CV's and resume's of all staff that will work on this project, an organisational activity report, etc.. Can we provide this information in Dutch or is it necessary to translate everything in English?
<u>Answer 39</u>	Please refer to the last paragraph on page 4 of the Guide for Applicants : <i>"The proposal may be submitted in any of the official languages of the European Union. If your proposal is not in English, a translation of the full proposal would be of assistance to the evaluators. An English translation of the abstract may be included in Part B of the proposal."</i> It also applies to the supporting documents.
<u>Question 40</u>	I would like to know if a Collective name Society (SNC Società in Nome Collettivo) could be an eligible partner.

<u>Answer 40</u>	<p>The applicants should comply with the eligibility criteria set out in section "5.Eligibility" of the "Call for proposals" document and more specifically:</p> <p><i>" - Applications must be submitted by a legal person; natural persons (i.e. individuals) are not eligible.</i></p> <p><i>- Corporate bodies must be properly constituted and registered under the law. If a body or organisation is not constituted under the law, a physical person must be designated to provide the legal responsibility."</i></p> <p>Apart from these requirements, there are no restrictions in relation to the legal form of the entities.</p>
<u>Question 41</u>	The part A has to be completed ONLY by the lead applicant and the co applicant and NOT by affiliated if I understood well?
<u>Answer 41</u>	<p>Indeed, the affiliated entities do not have to fill in the Form A.2. However, as mentioned in section "II.3. Affiliated Entities" of the Guide for applicants:</p> <p><i>"The applicant entity will have to indicate its participating affiliated entities in the proposal. The affiliated entities will each have to comply with eligibility and exclusion criteria. In case of holding entities, the affiliated entities will also have to comply with the selection criteria."</i></p>
<u>Question 42</u>	I would like to know if the affiliated partners have to give the form B5 if they are a member of a co-applicant which is a network?
<u>Answer 42</u>	<p>Please refer to section "IV.2. Form B5" of the published "Guide for applicants" document:</p> <p><i>"Affiliated entities participating in the proposal will have to provide evidence on their financial capacity, if they together form a sole applicant (groupings, joint ventures). Affiliated entities that participate in a network organisation applying for the grant do not have to give evidence of their financial capacity.</i></p> <p><i>For this purpose, the form B5 Financial Statement Form, duly filled in and scanned in PDF format and uploaded in Part B of the proposal.</i></p> <p><i>...</i></p> <p><i>The Commission reserves the right to request additional information during the evaluation of proposals."</i></p>
<u>Question 43</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By "income generated by the action or work programme" (see 4.1 General principles of EU funding – co-financing), it is meant money generated by the activities included in the project, during the implementation of the project? 2. The project aims to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – provide services to a pool of clients already identified/existent - create a pool of services available in the future to possible clients? - identify a pool of possible clients as a marketing activity 3. Once implemented, the project will become part of a EU network for such services, already existent, or the beneficiaries will have to promote it and look for partners? 4. Considering that the project is to be implemented by a group of SMEs, which have a

	reduced number of personnel, it is eligible to subcontract a consultant for project management?
<u>Answer 43</u>	<p>1. Yes, it is any income (money) generated by the project (e.g. the yield from sales of publication during the operation, or the fees charged to participating attending a conference) and this, in the context of co-financing.</p> <p>However, please also refer to section “Non-profit rule” (4.1 General principles of EU funding): <i>“EU grant may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the action of the work programme of the beneficiary. Where a profit is made, the Commission is entitled to recover the percentage of the profit corresponding to the EU contribution to the eligible costs actually incurred. For this purpose, profit shall be defined as a surplus of the receipts over the eligible costs incurred, when the request for payment of the balance is made.”</i></p> <p>Please also read section “VII.1. General Rules for the estimated budget” of the Guide for applicants</p> <p>2. and 3.</p> <p>The call clearly identifies 4 different activities: design, implementation, promotion and marketing – the proposals have to clearly describe each one of these activities. Each one of the 4 activities shall have to be performed: the packages have to be designed, implemented, promoted and marketed. On marketing, the call clearly indicates that the packages will be "promoted and marketed as any other tourism product or package, using primarily mainstream communication and distribution channels". The call also indicates that the results of the proposal shall be subject to a final evaluation. As a further element, the call also states that one of the ultimate effects is to create a critical mass of "accessible destinations, attractions, sites and tourism-related services, as mainstream products, providing quality and value-for-money".</p> <p>4. Please note that a limited part of the action and only tasks that are not core business can be sub-contracted to consultants. However, please note that the Commission services cannot at this stage express any assessment concerning your project or proposal for project. Assessing the proposal is the exclusive competence of an appointed evaluation committee. Such committee can under no circumstances perform its duties prior to the submission of proposals. Our reply to your questions has to be considered as a clarification of the published call for proposals document and under no circumstances as an assessment of parts of a proposal.</p> <p>Please also read section “4.4 implementation contracts/subcontracting” of the Call for proposals document as well as section “II.5 Subcontractors” and “VII.12 Form B.1.3. Services subcontracted” of the Guide for applicants.</p>
<u>Question 44</u>	<p>The project request for each beneficiary a grant of less than €100.000,00. The grant request of the whole is more than 100.000,00 Euros. Have each partner has to produce the certification by an external auditor?</p>
<u>Answer 44</u>	<p>The audit report produced by an approved external auditor is only required for grants exceeding 750.000 EUR.</p> <p>Please also refer to section "7.1 Financial capacity" of the Call for proposals document</p>

<p><u>Question 45</u></p>	<p>1) Our training center, a social cooperative society, would like to involve as partner in our project a private society, a consortium company with limited liability which operates in the sector of tourism.</p> <p>You have to note that we are also partner/member of this private society/company, together with other public local governmental authorities (especially a mountain community-association of communes).</p> <p>Could we, together with the mountain community, participate as eligible applicants or are we considered "affiliated" entities?</p> <p>2) In the case that we are considered affiliated entities, could we act as co-ordinator/Lead Partner?</p> <p>3) In the case of a public affiliated entity, is it possible for this entity to participate as an applicant as foreseen in section 5, point 1.2, p.15 of the call?</p>
<p><u>Answer 45</u></p>	<p>1) Please note that the Commission services cannot at this stage express any assessment concerning your project or proposal for project. Assessing the proposal is the exclusive competence of an appointed evaluation committee. Such committee can under no circumstances perform its duties prior to the submission of proposals.</p> <p>2) No, affiliated entities could not act as co-ordinator/Lead partner</p> <p>3) The public entity should decide whether they participate as an applicant or as affiliated entity. In case they decide to participate as affiliated entity, they will <u>not</u> be considered for the eligibility criteria as foreseen in section 5, point 1.2 of the call text. In case they decide to participate as applicant, they will also have to complete the full set of forms (Form A2 and part B as indicated in the guide for applicant).</p>
<p><u>Question 46</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For our financial planning it is essential to know if the total budget available includes the 25% equity capital? 2. How and at which point do we have to proof evidence about the 25% equity capital (except in form B2)? 3. Is the maximum EU financing amount of 125.000 EUR pre-tax or after deduction of tax? 4. We are planning to cooperate with a consulting company as a subcontractor, but we are not able to actually name the company yet. Is it still possible to include the costs for the subcontractor in the total budget?
<p><u>Answer 46</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please refer to section "4.1 General principles of EU funding" of the "Call for proposals": <p><u>Balanced budget</u></p> <p><i>The estimated budget of the action or work programme is to be attached to the application form. <u>It must have revenue and expenditure in balance.</u></i></p> <p>And</p> <p><u>Co-financing</u></p> <p><i>Grants shall involve co-financing, which implies that the resources necessary to carry out the action or the work programme shall not be provided entirely by EU contribution. EU financing may not cover 100% of the total costs of the action.</i></p> <p><i>Co-financing of the action or of the work programme may take the form of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the beneficiary's own resources, (direct money contribution or e.g. costs of personnel involved...) - income generated by the action or work programme, - financial contributions from third parties.

	<p>Please also read the section “VII.13 Form B/2-Financing Plan Summary sheet” in the “Guide for applicants”.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> At the submission stage, only the Form B2 is required. The maximum EU financing amount per project of 125.000 EUR is a net amount. Please refer to section “4.4 Implementation contracts/subcontracting” of the published “Call for proposals” document: <p><i>“It is not necessary to have already selected subcontractors at the time the proposal is submitted. However, cost of contractors not selected in accordance with the applicable rules for procurement will not be eligible.”</i></p>
<u>Question 47</u>	<p>We have been working on putting together a very exciting and innovative package to improve accessible tourism ... but the proposal will not be ready in time. I have just created a login and begun to complete the application and I will continue to add some project descriptions until the deadline. Having begun to draw together a project with increasing levels of support, enthusiasm and participation it is very likely that XXX will choose to submit a proposal should there be any further rounds. Is there any possibility of feedback for the project even though the proposal will not be completed?</p>
<u>Answer 47</u>	<p>The Commission will only evaluate proposals which are submitted within the deadline, and complete with all supporting documents and information required.</p> <p>At this stage, the Commission cannot foresee whether and when a similar call will be launched.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the Commission cannot give any feedback on "interim" or "draft proposals".</p>
<u>Question 48</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The call (p. 16) request to attach supporting documents to establish the eligibility of the parties involved. In the “guide for applicants” (p. 12) instead asked to attach such documents only if, following the evaluation, the application is proposed for award. When we have to attach the supporting document? Consortium members which kind of letters confirming their participation to the project, will have to submit?
<u>Answer 48</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Since in the purpose of this Call for proposals, the legal status of the applicants is part of the eligibility criteria, the applicants should provide the supporting documents (listed in the Call for proposals documents 16-17) to establish their eligibility at the stage of the electronic submission. <p>Please also refer to the note on page 15 of the call for proposals document:</p> <p><i>“The onus will be on the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in the call. Please provide any useful supporting document and proof of the fulfilment of the abovementioned compulsory requirements and clearly indicate in the submitted proposal, the name of the applicants fulfilling them, in order to allow the evaluation committee to accomplish its assessment.”</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> There is no specific template/model of letter. The applicants should provide a letter (the format is free) confirming their participation to the project.

<u>Question 49</u>	We are preparing a project proposal under the above programme. We have registered the project in SEP and the question is: The uploading of the documents will be performed by the coordinator or by each individual partner? The guide for applicants mentions that the coordinator will upload all documents for all partners, but the area where the uploading takes place does not allow separate uploading.
<u>Answer 49</u>	As it is only possible to upload one PDF file per slot available on part B, the coordinator have indeed to group/combine the supporting documents from all members in one and upload it per slot. Concerning the filenames, please refer to section III – Part B "Proposal details" of the Guide for applicants. We would recommend choosing the name of the Lead Applicant (coordinator).
<u>Question 50</u>	We would like to have some info on the document "power of attorney" requested in A Form of the submission portal for Call 102/G/ENT/PPA/13/511. What document is this? Have you got a draft?
<u>Answer 50</u>	It should be a letter from the company/organisation confirming that the person is authorised to sign contract/agreement on behalf of the company/organisation (power of signature) and represent the company vis-à-vis third parties.
<u>Question 51</u>	With regard to the staff costs, the persons who would be in charge for the activities of project management would be: - working for the Coordinator; - inserted in its organizational structure as an in-house consultant (namely, that dedicated to EU programmes) and - paid for such job. Nonetheless, please note that, in any case, (i) they are not to be considered as external consultant, and (ii) the remuneration for their work would be defined under a contract which would not provide, in any case any invoice or VAT obligations relating to the amount earned. Is it correct to set such persons as in charge for project management activities taking into account that they are not technically employees nor external consultants? In affirmative case, which is the reference rate for calculating such "staff costs", considering that both in the "Guide for Applicants" and in the Form B.1.1. reference is expressly made to "salary rates"?
<u>Answer 51</u>	Please note that the Commission services cannot, for reasons of equal treatment, neither assess proposals at this stage nor help to draft proposals. Assessing the proposal is the exclusive competence of an appointed evaluation committee. Such committee can under no circumstances perform its duties prior to the submission of proposals. Our reply to your questions has to be considered as a clarification of the published call for proposals document and under no circumstances as an assessment of parts of a proposal. Some categories of in-house consultants may be considered as personnel costs if the specified conditions are fulfilled. Please refer to page 18 of the Guide for Applicants: <i>"The costs of natural persons working under a contract with the beneficiary other than an employment contract (in-house consultants) may be assimilated to such costs of personnel, provided that the following conditions are fulfilled:</i> <i>(i) the natural person works under the instructions of the beneficiary and, unless otherwise agreed with the beneficiary, in the premises of the beneficiary;</i>

- (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;"*

Please also refer to section 4.2.1 of the Call for proposals document:

"SME owners and other natural persons who do not receive a salary may declare eligible personnel costs for the work carried out under an action or work programme, on the basis of unit costs specific to the programme under which the call is launched. In other cases, owner managers that do not receive a salary cannot claim any reimbursement for their activities.

The standard number of productive hours shall be equal to 1 575.

The reference rate for early-stage researchers shall apply to SME owners of start-ups with a professional experience of up to two years.

The reference rates for experienced researchers shall apply to

(a) SME owners with a professional experience of two to ten years;

(b) SME owners with more than ten years of experience.

Hourly rate calculation tool: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/find-doc_en.html"