



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)
Unit A1 – COSME

COSME Programme

Call for Proposals

Supporting the Development and Promotion of Transnational Thematic Tourism Products: Exploiting Synergies between Tourism and Cultural and Creative Industries

GRO/SME/18/C/064

COS-TOURSYN-2018-3-01

EASME-COSME-TOURSYN-2018@ec.europa.eu

Questions and Answers

Version 6

16/07/18

New Questions (and Answers) when compared to previous versions will be highlighted in a yellow background.

Corrected/ updated answers/ additional information in blue background

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

A. General

A.1 Is there a standard referent indicating legally what is a CCI organisation? This would help us include the right partners.

Cultural and creative sectors means all sectors whose activities are based on cultural values and/or artistic and other creative expressions, whether those activities are market- or non-market-oriented, whatever the type of structure that carries them out, and irrespective of how that structure is financed. Those activities include the development, the creation, the production, the dissemination and the preservation of goods and services which embody cultural, artistic or other creative expressions, as well as related functions such as education or management. The cultural and creative sectors include inter alia architecture, archives, libraries and museums, artistic crafts, audiovisual (including film, television, video games and multimedia), tangible and intangible cultural heritage, design, festivals, music, literature, performing arts, publishing, radio and visual arts.

Besides the specifications, additional information may also be found as follows:

a) REGULATION (EU) No 1295/2013 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 11 December 2013 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2014 to 2020) and repealing Decisions No 1718/2006/EC, No 1855/2006/EC and No 1041/2009/EC - <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R1295&from=EN>

b) COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS Promoting cultural and creative sectors for growth and jobs in the EU - <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52012DC0537>

A.2 We have submitted a proposal to another call funded by the COSME programme. We suppose that we can also submit a proposal for this call. Can you please confirm that?

Yes, it is possible for the same organisation to be partner in more than one call under the COSME programme.

A.3 I have no task allocated to access to the submission system (SEP). Could you make us in the conditions to present and submit the project through the system?

As indicated on the EASME Call webpage (<https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/supporting-development-and-promotion-transnational-thematic-tourism-products-exploiting-synergies>), the online link for drafting and submitting proposals (access in the Participants Portal) will be activated as from 12th June 2018.

A.4 Does the lead partner need to be an SME, or could he also be a research NGO or something else? I ask particularly in the light of the following:

8.2 Operational capacity: The coordinator of the project must have at least three years of experience in managing and implementing pan-European projects co-financed by the European Commission. This experience will be assessed exclusively on the basis of the information provided by the consortium in the specific relevant template, at application stage.

The lead partner may be any one of the consortium members, as long as he/she meets the eligibility criteria highlighted in Section 6 of the Call specifications. Thereafter, the coordinator's operational capacity will also be assessed on the basis of the content included in Section 8.2.

A.5 Can the project coordinator be a SME?

Yes, please also see Question/Answer A.4 above.

A.6 Is the Call for Proposals also available in the French language?

No, sorry, it is only available in English.

A.7 I would like to propose a small project, to develop heritage tourism in Portugal. The idea is to create a small tourism unit, in order to facilitate restoration of a heritage house and to develop guided tours and other activities, for example in the creative industry sector. Can this Call assist my project?

Please be guided by the contents of the Call, in particular (but not exclusively limited to) Section 6 relating to the eligibility criteria concerning applicants and consortia.

A.8 Is it possible to involve, as partner, a cooperative operating in the heritage and cultural activities sector and social inclusion? This cooperative is not a SME but has an important background linked to the project idea that we would like to submit.

The onus is on the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in the call. In this context, please be guided particularly by the eligibility criteria for applicants that are set out in section 6.1 of the call for proposals. Applicants must be fully or partly public or private bodies; private bodies must be properly constituted and registered under national law. Natural persons are also considered eligible applicants in line with the type of eligible personnel costs of section 12.2, referring in particular to the direct personal cost category A.3 (SME owners not receiving a salary) or A.4 (beneficiaries that are natural persons not receiving a salary).

In addition, the applicant must correspond to the definition of at least one of the target organisations identified in section 6.1.1 of the call for proposals.

A.9 What is the exact definition of an SME? Moreover, is an SME limited to sprl /SA or an association for example is considered as well as such?

A definition and informative link concerning SMEs is provided in Footnote 11 of the call specifications. Please also be guided particularly by the eligibility criteria for applicants that are set out in section 6.1 of the call for proposals.

A.10 Is it possible for a public body to participate as partner in more than one proposal?

Yes, this is possible.

A.11 Is it possible to write the application in the Italian language?

Section 5 of the Call indicates that applications must be drafted in one of the EU official languages, therefore including Italian. It is at the discretion of the applicant whether to also include a translation of important supporting documents (such as Technical Annex 1 – Section A: Project Summary) in the English language. In this light, please also be aware that English will be used as the working language in the Grant Agreement and project implementation phase, if the application is successful.

A.12 We would like to know what should be included in the footpage of the “description-of-action-tourism-2018_en” and/or in some locked area of other annexes for: “PROPOSAL NUMBER” (which is not known at the moment). Moreover, do you want us also to put the acronym both on the head and foot page of the “description-of-action-tourism-2018_en”?

Kindly follow the provided template and fill in specifically where indicated the following information:

Project Acronym: XXXXXX (please specify)

Proposal Number: XXXXXX (please specify)

For instance, in the 'Description of Annex' document, such information is requested in the footer, whilst in the excel sheets 'Coordinator Experience' and 'List of Recent projects', this information is requested within the initial/upper text box.

As for the Proposal Number, you may insert the draft number you receive once you commence on-line procedures.

A.13 I am trying to locate the declaration on honour to be signed by all applicants. I found: “Applicants must provide a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in Articles 106(1) and 107 FR, by filling in the relevant form attached to the application form accompanying this call for proposals.” I have trouble locating this template. Could you help me?

Once you commence the online submission, the system will prompt you to tick the relevant boxes accordingly.

A.14 Has a page limit has been set for the technical annex, given that last year the call didn't refer to a page limit but the portal only accepted proposals of max. 50 pages?

Requested uploads – the Technical Annex 1, Technical Annex 2, Coordinator Experience and List of Recent Projects – each have a size limit of 10MB. They should be uploaded in pdf format. Additional supporting documentation may also be scanned and attached to each of these pdf files, if you consider such documents useful in order to allow the evaluation committee to have enough information to assess the fulfilment of the eligibility criteria.

A.15 I participated in the COSME Info Day session held on the 11th of June, through video conference. It was mentioned that if the project was supported by a member of the European Parliament, the process was different. Could you please provide more information on that?

This is a misunderstanding. What was stated during the COSME Info Day is that the European Parliament can launch Preparatory Actions or Pilot Projects and that MEP's are usually willing to discuss new ideas for such actions with different stakeholders. This however is completely unrelated to this specific TOURSYN Call for Proposals.

A.16 We would like to know at para 8.2:

(i) “a summary table indicating the persons that will make up the core team responsible for the project with their qualifications and competences. A template is included in the application forms; “. Do you mean the one included in “description-of-action-tourism-2018_en.doc” B2.2.?

Yes, correct.

(ii) “the organisations’ activity reports or any other similar document;”. There is no module provided in the Call. In which format we have to provide? What do you mean with activity reports? Which activities?

Applicants are requested to submit details, amongst others, concerning previous projects (and activities performed and connected to the policy field or actions to be carried out) and the experience of the project coordinator. Templates are provided accordingly. The onus is on the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in the call, so applicants are also advised to submit supporting documents specifying their activities undertaken within the fields of the Call. Other relevant documents may include status reports (ex. confirming the applicant's status as an SME or public authority, if this requires clarification) and translations such as the one indicated as part of Footnote 9. This can be done by scanning the activity reports/other documents alongside either the List of Previous Projects or the Coordinator Experience, and submitting the documents together as a single pdf.

(iii) “a description of the technical equipment, tools or facilities and patents at the disposal of the applicant in relation to the proposal.” There is no module provided in the Call. In which format we have to provide?

Please follow the same procedure indicated above (point ii).

A.17 We noticed that in the Technical Annex I frontpage, there is a short note stating that each page should be headed with the project acronym and drafting date. The project acronym

can be clearly inserted in the bottom header, but what about drafting date? Where do we have to write it and which date - since drafting is a long process?

Thank you for pointing this out. The drafting date is not needed – please make sure you submit before the submission deadline. Indeed, the project acronym should be inserted in the bottom header, alongside the proposal number (which can also be the draft number – see also Question/Answer A.12 above).

A.18 Could you please clarify what is meant by SME in Tourism within the call named GRO/SME/18/C/064? Hotel? Restaurant? Museum Owner? Festival organiser? Etc.

The importance of SMEs within the context of the Call is regularly elaborated upon, with a definition of SME also being included in Footnote 11. The onus is on the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in the call, also by submitting any supporting document you consider useful in order to allow the evaluation committee to have enough information to assess the fulfilment of the eligibility criteria. In this regard, the entire Section 6 of the Call specifications can be of importance in connection with your question, particularly (but not exclusively) sub-section 6.1.1 which elaborates on which applicants correspond to the definition of target organisations active in the field of tourism, cultural and creative industry.

A.19 I would like to ask you where is available the application form? Also the document Multi-beneficiary model grant agreement - should it be filled and submitted at the current stage?

Please refer to Section 16 of the Call specifications for the procedure concerning the submission of proposals. In the EASME web page, for instance, you will find a hyperlink 'Access the Participant Portal'. The document 'Multi-beneficiary model grant agreement' does not need to be filled in – it is included in the set of Call documents so that applicants are aware of the contract they will be requested to sign if their application is successful.

A.20 We have been invited to join two consortiums in the call COS-TOURSYN-2018-3-01. Is it possible for a SME to participate in more than one proposal under this call?

Yes, it is possible for the same organisation to be partner in more than one proposal within this Call, as long as the provisions concerning (for instance) operational capacity (Section 8.2) are met.

A.21 Concerning the question on page limit (A.14), the answer you gave us now is identical to the one you gave last year but we found out while uploading the file, that ECAS had set a limit of 50 pages anyways. Could you please confirm that the ECAS portal allows the upload of longer proposals?

The system has no page limit, but a 10MB size limit. If you are still having problems with more than 50 pages, and if it is really necessary to send more than 50 pages, please split them onto the different requested uploads as indicated in A.14.

A.22 I have a question with respect to the coordinator of the project: would you accept a change of the appointed coordinator during the execution of the project?

Such changes are possible through amendments, yet such changes are not necessarily always accepted as they are examined case by case, according to the specificities of the project.

A.23 Section 6.3 of the Call For Proposal states that " Applicants must demonstrate that they fully respect the eligibility criteria set out in this call for proposals. Adequate supporting documents have to be provided with the application." Could you provide us a list of supporting documents that should be provided?

A list of supporting documents is provided in Section 8.2 of the Call. The onus is however on the applicant to submit additional supporting documents if necessary, such as the translation indicated in Footnote 9 (if applicable) and documentation to demonstrate eligibility (if you consider this useful in order to allow the evaluation committee to have enough information to assess the fulfilment of the eligibility criteria).

A.24 It is clear to our organization that "it is possible for the same organisation to be partner in more than one call under the COSME programme". However, our question is whether there is a maximum of projects in which we can participate?

Please refer to Q/A A.20.

A.25 We have reviewed all the documentation necessary to attach with the application form of the Coordinator and the partners and we need to clarify a question about it. Can you confirm that all the files required for the proposal are the following, please? Or if you need some more documents for the correct presentation of the project? The application form on line must include as attachments:

- - Technical Annex 1 (Description of the action template)
- - Estimated budget template
- - List of previous projects template of partners (excel)
- - Experience by the project coordinator template (excel)
- - CV in Europass format
- - Activity reports or each entity or similar
- - Description of the technical equipment, tools

When you talk about activity reports, do they refer to the account balances of the entity? And when you talk about the description of the technical equipment do they refer to include it in the Excel file of the budget?

The top four in your list have templates which you will find when you access the submission tool. For the other documents, please refer to the list of supporting documents provided in Section 8.2 of the Call. The onus is however on the applicant to submit additional supporting

documents if necessary, such as the translation indicated in Footnote 9 (if applicable) and documentation to demonstrate eligibility (if you consider this useful in order to allow the evaluation committee to have enough information to assess the fulfilment of the eligibility criteria).

As for activity reports and technical equipment, please refer to Q/A A.16 (ii) and (iii).

A.26 We noticed that in the Technical Annex I point B.1.1. there is a request for indicating how your proposal addresses the specific challenge and scope of the topic, as set out in the COSME work programme (see the attached screenshot). However, in the work programme 2018 there is no clear indication of either a challenge or a topic for this specific call. What do you mean for "challenge and scope of the topic" then?

A topic description is amongst others provided upon accessing the 'topic' section in the call page on the Participants Portal. The submission link included in Section 16 (electronic submission procedures) of the Call specifications leads you to such a page accordingly.

A.27 We noticed that in the Technical Annex I point B.1.3. there is a request for providing "a short, robust action plan of the project – in line with the contents of Section 2.8.1." (see the attached screenshot). However, there is no 2.8.1 section in the Technical Annex or in any other document related to the call. Could it possibly be a mistake?

Thank you for pointing this out. The reference should have effectively been to Section 2.6.1 not 2.8.1 of the Call specifications. However, the subsequent sentence in the Technical Annex I point B.1.3, also included in bold, is correct and still applicable: *'This action plan should be further detailed in the section B.3 "Work Plan" in the different work packages'*.

A.28 Regarding the eligibility of the United Kingdom, given that even in the case of Brexit there will be a transition period which would last until December 31st 2020, would the British partners continue to receive EU funding and remain eligible until that day?

As explained in the call for proposal, the eligibility criteria must be complied with for the entire duration of the grant. For the moment the negotiation process is still ongoing and therefore if the United Kingdom withdraws from the EU during the grant period without concluding an agreement with the EU ensuring in particular that British applicants continue to be eligible, entities established in the UK will cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the project on the basis of Article 'Change of the legal situation of the beneficiary' of the grant agreement

A.29 If we have a partner with a legal headquarter in the UK and an operational headquarter in Italy, could we consider the partner as Italian?

It is the place of the headquarters of the legal entity that is used to identify the place of establishment of an applicant entity.

A.30 My question refers to page 15 of the call text: “Applicants must provide a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in Articles 106(1) and 107 FR, by filling in the relevant form attached to the application form accompanying this call for proposals.” Could you please clarify whether this provision applies for all consortium partners or only to the applicant (Coordinator)? The form mentioned is included in part A, which can only be filled by the Coordinator.

Once you commence the online submission, the system will prompt you to tick relevant boxes accordingly (please also refer to Q/A A.13 above). Such declarations include a confirmation that "no partners are in one of the situations referred to in Articles 106(1) and 107.....", that partners are fully eligible in accordance with the exclusion and eligibility criteria, and that all have the financial and operational capacity to carry out the proposed actions. Therefore at this application stage, the coordinator confirms such statements and signs the declarations on behalf of the consortium.

A.31 In Section 7.4. Supporting documents, it is said that applicants must provide a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in Articles 106(1) and 107 FR, by filling in the relevant form attached to the application form accompanying this call for proposals. Apparently, there is no relevant form attached to the application form as mentioned. Can you pls clarify where we can find the form and whether this is mandatory for the eligibility of the Consortium?

You are kindly requested to follow the procedure indicated above in Q/A A.30 accordingly. Yes, the ticking of such boxes is mandatory.

A.32 Is it possible for one organisation to participate in the current call for proposals twice - once as Lead Partner (Project Coordinator) and once as Project Partner (Beneficiary)?

Yes. Please also refer to Q/A A.20.

A.33 We are a Consortium preparing a proposal with an EPA Applicant. We would like to know where to find the Declaration of Honour to be subscribed at this stage by the Applicant.

You are kindly requested to follow the procedure indicated above in Q/A A.30 accordingly.

A.34 The call talks about a Business Plan for the new thematic tourism product. Does it have to be developed during the Project, involving a Pilot to run too? Or hypothetically drafted at the project proposal stage?

The Call gives importance – also as part of the Award Criteria – to synergies, project continuity, multiplying effects, indicators and transferability measures, amongst others. The onus is on the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in the call, also by showing relevance, quality and impact of the proposed actions, and by submitting evidence that they consider useful at evaluation stage. In this regard, please be guided by the requirements of Section 2.6 of the Call, which indicates that that the proposal needs to briefly elaborate – among others – on its business plan after the EU co-financing period ends.

A.35 We can just upload 4 files:

PartB_Technical_Annex_1_DOA_TOURISM;

Part B_Technical Annex_2_TOURSYN_budget;

Coordinator Experience

List of Recent Projects

How and where we can upload other supporting documents like CVs, any other...etc..? Do we have to integrate them in some of the previous ones? If yes, how? Any constraints?

You are kindly requested to follow the procedure indicated above in Q/A A.14 accordingly.

A.36 Our Consortium is preparing a proposal and I would like to ask: Is a Partners Declaration document inquired for the proposal? If yes is a template available?

You are kindly requested to follow the procedure indicated above in Q/A A.30 accordingly.

A.37 Regarding the B.2. Management structure and procedures (Technical Annex 1); there is a table the last component of which is "allocation to the project % - what sum should be written there? The total amount of the grant for one beneficiary? For example if PP2 will dispose of 60 000 euro, 60 000 euro should be the sum written in the column? Also, regarding the same table: is there a limit for involvement of key staff in the project? How many names should be written in the table per partner?

'Allocation to the project' refers to the percentage of time that each staff member will dedicate to the project. There is no limit for involvement, the onus is on the applicant to show and ensure operational capacity.

A.38 I don't understand what is the difference between table WP 1.3 of the Work Plan - Participants involved in the Work Package and table WP 1.5 Performance Indicators, besides the fact that in the second table there is a column "main tasks". Should the two tables be identical in content? Or the first one should include the entities and their role and the second the names of the people from the entities involved?

No, they are not identical. The 'Performance Indicators' table should describe the indicators used to measure the implementation of the action (inclusive of quantitative targets), whilst the 'Participants involved in the Work Package' table should describe the specific tasks of the partners comprised in each work package, either as Work Package leader or contributor/participant.

A.39 Is a signature of the Lead Partner or other beneficiaries needed in any of the requested documents, part of the application form? Because I don't see a designated place where date, name and signature of the official representative should be placed?

You are kindly requested to follow the procedure indicated above in Q/A A.30 accordingly.

A.40 I have read that the budget file must be turned into pdf format, however only the single pages of the excel are saved as single files: is it possible to print them and attach the scanned pages in an unique pdf?

What you suggested – printing all pages and merging them into a single scan – is indeed possible. However, you should also be able to turn the entire budget file into pdf format through your own settings. When clicking 'save as' and thereafter transforming the file into pdf, please click on the 'options' button and change the preference 'active sheets' to 'entire workbook'. This should ensure that the whole document is saved as a pdf. If not, please feel free to submit as you suggested yourself, as long as all the pages and figures remain visible.

B. Eligibility Criteria

B.1 Section 6.2.1 states that "the consortium must gather a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 8 members/partners - different legal entities - covering at least 5 eligible countries - as listed under section 6.1.3". Please note that there is no section 6.1.3.

Thank you for pointing this out. The reference should have been to Section 6.1.2 (not 6.1.3), where the Call specifies which are the eligible countries.

B.2 Section 6.2.2 states that "the consortium must be composed of at least: a. four SMEs – Small and Medium Sized enterprises: 2 active in the tourism and 2 in the CCIs sector; and b. one national or regional or local public authority". So is the minimum 6 (as indicated in Section 6.2.1) or 4, and what about the 5 eligible countries?

The minimum number of partners is six, which have to originate from at least 5 eligible countries. Out of these six partners, at least two have to be tourism-related SMEs, 2 others CCI-related SMEs and a fifth partner a national or regional or local public authority.

B.3 Can you please confirm whether a private, non-profit, research center such as XXX - a fairly large organisation (+600 people) with expertise in several different science and technical domains, including innovative solutions for both Tourism and CCI - can participate or coordinate a consortium?

Please note that the Executive Agency services cannot, for reasons of equal treatment, neither assess proposals at this stage nor help to draft proposals. Assessing the proposal – including its eligibility - is the exclusive competence of an appointed evaluation committee.

The onus is on the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in the call, also by submitting any supporting document you consider useful in order to allow the evaluation committee to have enough information to assess the fulfilment of the eligibility criteria. In this context, please make sure that your organisation corresponds to the definition of at least one of the target organisations active in the field of tourism, cultural and creative industry (CCIs) as indicated in Section 6.1.1. The list includes research centres.

B.4 Is Serbia eligible to participate in this Call for Proposal?

Footnote 10 of the specifications clearly indicates the groups of countries that are eligible for participation in COSME according to Article 6 COSME Regulation:

European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries which are members of the European Economic Area (EEA), in accordance with the conditions laid down in the EEA Agreement, and other European countries when agreements and procedures so allow;
acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidates in accordance with the general principles and general terms and conditions for the participation of those countries in the Union's programmes established in the respective Framework Agreements and Association Council Decisions, or similar arrangements;
countries falling within the scope of the European neighbourhood policies, when agreements and procedures so allow and in accordance with the general principles and general terms and conditions for the participation of those countries in the Union's programmes established in the respective Framework Agreements, Protocols to Association Agreements and Association Council Decisions.

The updated list of eligible third countries is available on the following webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/cosme/index_en.htm. By following this link, it transpires that participation by Serbian stakeholders is indeed possible.

B.5 The Call states that the consortium must be composed of at least: (i) four SMEs – Small and Medium Sized enterprises: 2 active in the tourism and 2 in the CCI sector; and (ii) one national or regional or local public authority.

We would like to know :

*** concerning number (i). what do you mean with "CCIs sector" in terms of juridical subject? For example a GEOPARK under UNESCO rules, or no profit bodies, or what else?**

*** concerning number (ii). can a public university at regional level be considered as this kind of applicant?**

For examples concerning CCIs, please be guided by Footnote 6 and the definitions provided in the Call specifications and Question/Answer A.1 above. Footnote 9 on the other hand elaborates on the list of eligible public authorities at national, regional and local level. As stated in the same footnote, the onus is on the consortium to demonstrate the proposed partner's eligibility and relevance as a public authority in the context of this Call for Proposals, if the public authority that they wish to propose does not form part of the list included in Footnote 9.

B.6 With reference to Section 8.2 of the Call, specifically that the coordinator of the project must have at least three years of experience in managing and implementing pan-European projects co-financed by the European Commission, do you consider eligible those regional and national projects financed by European funds?

Please note that the Executive Agency services cannot, for reasons of equal treatment, neither assess proposals at this stage nor help to draft proposals. Assessing the proposal – including its eligibility - is the exclusive competence of an appointed evaluation committee.

The onus is on the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in the call, also by submitting any supporting document you consider useful in order to allow the evaluation committee to have enough information to assess the fulfilment of the eligibility criteria. In this context, please make sure that you clearly highlight the pan-European overtones of the projects. These could vary from transnational projects (but not necessarily projects covering the entire European territory) to others having pan European value (for instance in terms of routes and networks).

B.7 Can a self-employed freelancer be considered as a micro enterprise according to the EU SME definition? Would he be eligible as an SME in the consortium?

The eligibility criteria for applicants are set out in section 6.1 of the call for proposals. Applicants must be fully or partly public or private bodies; private bodies must be properly constituted and registered under national law. Natural persons are also considered eligible applicants in line with the type of eligible personnel costs of section 12.2, referring in particular to the direct personal cost category A.3 (SME owners not receiving a salary) or A.4 (beneficiaries that are natural persons not receiving a salary).

In addition, the applicant must correspond to the definition of at least one of the target organisations identified in section 6.1.1 of the call for proposals.

Furthermore, the eligible composition of the applicant consortia is set out in section 6.2. Specifically, section 6.2.2 defines a Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) as a company engaged in economic activities and having less than 250 employees, with a turnover of less than EUR 50 million or a balance sheet total of less than EUR 43 million (http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/facts-figuresanalysis/sme-definition/index_en.htm).

All the above elements must be demonstrated by the applicant in order to qualify as an SME.

B.8 Are Armenia and Georgia partners eligible to apply for funding in the "COS-TOURSYN-2018-3-01" Call?

Please refer to the Eastern Neighbourhood countries note by following this link that relates to the updated list of eligible third countries: http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/cosme/index_en.htm.

B.9 We would like to ask if a public university from Turkey is eligible to participate as partner or coordinator for the Call of COS-TOURSYN-2018-3-01?

Please refer to Section 6.1 for the full list of eligible applicants (including target organisations). Moreover, please note that Turkish stakeholders may indeed participate – either as coordinator or partner – in the Call (http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/cosme/index_en.htm).

B.9 An important enterprise in the partnership we are building has less than 10 employees: is it eligible as a SME?

Section 6.2.2 – particularly Footnote 11 - defines a Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) as a company engaged in economic activities and having less than 250 employees, with a turnover of less than EUR 50 million or a balance sheet total of less than EUR 43 million (http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/facts-figuresanalysis/sme-definition/index_en.htm).

B.10 Is an ASBL – non for profit organization, considered as a SME ?

The onus is on the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in the call, also by submitting any supporting document you consider useful in order to allow the evaluation committee to have enough information to assess the fulfilment of the eligibility criteria. In this regard, please however be guided particularly by the definition of an SME as also indicated above (Question and Answer B.9).

B.11 I am writing from a regional government in West Georgia, I wonder if we are eligible to participate in the call of the proposal „ Supporting the Development and Promotion of Transnational Thematic Tourism Products: Exploiting Synergies between Tourism and Cultural and Creative Industries".

Please refer to Question/Answer B.8 above

B. 12 We are interested in forming a consortium. Is XXXXX eligible to apply for this Call? For your information, the XXXXX is based in the Black Sea, and is a fully-fledged intergovernmental, regional economic organization that includes 12 Member States from the wider Black Sea region (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine).

The onus is on the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in the call, also by submitting any supporting document you consider useful in order to allow the evaluation committee to have enough information to assess the fulfilment of the eligibility criteria. In this regard, the entire Section 6 of the Call specifications coupled with Footnote 9 and the updated list of eligible third countries: (http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/cosme/index_en.htm) may – amongst other information - be of importance to you in deciding whether to apply or not.

B.13 Could you kindly clarify, in reference to the section 6.2.2 (minimum requirements of the consortium) and footnote 9, if Chambers of Commerce with legal public body status are considered local public authorities?

Footnote 9 lists several examples of eligible public authorities, yet Chambers of Commerce are not specified within the list. The same footnote however indicates that "other public authorities will also be considered, yet the onus is on the applicant to demonstrate the authority's eligibility and relevance in the context of this Call for Proposals". The onus is therefore on the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in the call, also by submitting any supporting document you consider useful in order to allow the evaluation committee to have enough information to assess the fulfilment of the eligibility criteria. Another possibility is that you also consider including Chambers of Commerce as applicants in line with Section 6.1.1.

B.14 It is said that the consortium must have at least four SME-s and one one national or regional or local public authority. We, XXXXX would like to apply for the call as a coordinator, but if we haven't completed the SME self-assessment questionnaire and therefore are not SME (in real life we are), is this eligible? In short – can the coordinator be a non-SME if the other partners make up the 4 SME-s and one regional or local public authority?

When you enter into the submission phase, you will find the template "Description of the Action - Technical Annex 1". The Coordinator may belong to any of the four typologies indicated under 'List of Participants' (A.1.1 – see below), but needs to also meet other criteria such as "the coordinator of the project must have at least three years of experience in managing and implementing pan-European projects co-financed by the European Commission" (Operational Capacity - Section 8.2). Another template is provided accordingly - "Coordinator Experience".

- **TOUSME** (SME active in the field of tourism, as requested in section 6.2.2, letter a),
- **CCISME** (SME active in the CCI sector, as requested in section 6.2.2, letter a),
- **EPA** (Eligible Public Authority as requested in section 6.2.2, letter b),
- **OTHER** (any other eligible partner as listed in section 6.1.2).

B.15 If applying for the smaller grants, i.e. under 60,000 euros , does one have to have the same amount of partners to form the Consortium ? (ie. must it also be a consortium made up of a minimum of 6 members ?)

The eligibility requirements of the Call apply for all grants, irrespective of the requested grant.

B.16 We are keen to involve XXX, a Dutch microenterprise active in the leisure/tourism industry but are not sure they qualify as tourism SME according to COSME standards. Their website with google translate: XXX. They organise shows, events, workshops and activities that attract tourists from everywhere in the Netherlands. They cooperate with event organisations and other regional partners. If we hold this against the definition of 'tourism' according to WTO, Mathieson and Wall or Macintosh and Goeldner they would quality.

"Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited." World Tourism Organization/WTO); "The temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs." (Mathieson and Wall,1982); "The sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the interaction of tourists, business suppliers, host governments and host communities in the process of attracting and hosting these tourists and other visitors." (Macintosh and Goeldner,1986)

Is this the right interpretation? Would you please recommend if XXX qualifies as a tourism SME according to COSME standards?

Please note that the Executive Agency services cannot, for reasons of equal treatment, neither assess proposals at this stage nor help to draft proposals. Assessing the proposal – including its eligibility - is the exclusive competence of an appointed evaluation committee.

The onus is on the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in the call, also by submitting any supporting document you consider useful in order to allow the evaluation committee to have enough information to assess the fulfilment of the eligibility criteria. In this context, please make sure that the Dutch microenterprise corresponds to the definition of at least one of the target organisations active in the field of tourism, cultural and creative industry (CCIs) as indicated in Section 6.1.1. The list includes microenterprises active in tourism, destination management organisations and their networks/associations, and private cultural heritage promotion/regional development agencies.

B.17 Can a foundation registered and acting in CCI in Serbia be eligible to be lead partner or applicant?

Question/Answer B.4 above elaborated on the eligibility of Serbian partners. Please also make sure that the so called foundation corresponds to the eligibility requirements indicated in Section 6.2 and to the definition of at least one of the target organisations active in the field of tourism, cultural and creative industry (CCIs) as indicated in Section 6.1.1.

B. 18 I found that financial and operational capacities of applicants are a bit conflicting - in the financial capacity requirements, it is stated that the applicant can be newly formed company, but in the operational capacity requirement, the applicant should have minimum 3 years experience in managing and implementing projects financed/co-financed by European Commission. Please clarify also in terms of the management and implementation experiences of EU co/funded projects: is this only related to the lead partner/main beneficiary?

As stated in Section 8.2 Operational Capacity, it is the coordinator of the project who must have at least three years of experience in managing and implementing pan-European projects co-financed by the European Commission. This requirement is not applicable to other applicants forming part of the consortium.

B.19 As the main applicant is an EPA, is it compulsory to present at the application stage the 2 years in advance Profit and Loss Accounts and Balances?

If you are specifically referring to the requirements of Section 8.1, please note the relevant Call text as follows: "the above-listed documents (see Section 8.1) will have to be provided at later stage, via the electronic submission tool and only upon request of EASME. " In terms of eligibility, as indicated in Footnote 9, the onus is on the applicant to demonstrate the authority's eligibility and relevance in the context of the Call.

B.20 Regarding the documents, specified in point 8.2 of the Call - Operational capacity. Are all of them required for all participants in the consortium or only for the Lead Partner?

Operational capacity concerns the whole consortium, but please be also guided by the contents of Q/A B.18 accordingly. The onus is on the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in the call, also by submitting any supporting document you consider useful.

B.21 Is it possible to cooperate with partners from Russia and Israel, or our partners should be only member of the EU?

As indicated in Footnote 10 of the Call specifications, the updated list of eligible third countries is available on the following webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/cosme/index_en.htm..

B.22 Is it possible to cooperate with partners who works in smart technologies sector? This Smart Technology Science and Research Center is not a SME but has an important role in our project because, they can prepare innovative equipment.

Please be guided by Q/A B.3 above

C. Financial and Budgetary Provisions

C.1 Are Municipalities subject to Audits and Financial Viability Checks?

All beneficiaries – whether public or private sector stakeholders - are subject to audits. Municipalities are on the other hand not subjected to Financial Viability Checks.

C.2 Could the co-funding to be borne by the beneficiaries (equal to 25% of the eligible expenses), be hedged in terms of human resources or must it be represented exclusively by financial resources?

The co-financing principle implies that part of the action is to be funded by the beneficiary or covered by contributions other than those made from the Union budget. The co-financed share may take the form of the beneficiary's own resources, of revenue generated by the action or work programme or of financial contributions or contributions in kind provided by third parties.

C.3 Could you confirm that the 400.000 euros threshold refers to the EU contribution and, therefore, a total budget could exceed such amount?

As indicated in Section 4 of the Call, 400,000 euros is the maximum EU grant per project. Total eligible costs need to be higher, given that the grant is limited to a maximum reimbursement rate of 75%.

C.4 If the project product is sold and generates income during the project period, is the overall funding amount for the project diminished in proportion to the profit made from the products?

Please refer to the end paragraph of Section 12.2 of the Call specifications, specifically: "EU grants may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the action. Profit shall be defined as a surplus of the receipts over the eligible costs incurred by the beneficiary, when the request is made for payment of the balance. In this respect, where a profit is made, the EASME shall be entitled to recover the percentage of the profit

corresponding to the Union contribution to the eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiary to carry out the action."

C.5 Could you clarify what is written in section 12.c (page 20 of the call for proposals) about co-financing in the form of in-kind contributions from third parties? Specifically whether, if a third party is willing to cover the co-financing costs of one partner with a contribution in-kind, does the third party need to be a "linked third party" or could it be any other party? And why does the call for proposals state that such contribution is not an eligible cost?

The overriding Call grant principle centres around co-financing, meaning that the difference between the EU funded grant (maximum of 75% of eligible costs) and the remaining part of the budget needs to be covered through other funds (such as a 'contribution from third parties'). The meaning of a 'linked third party' is however different, because the latter is an entity which has a link with the beneficiary and which could receive EU co-financing if it forms part of the Consortium and is requesting funding.

Please refer also to Question/Answer C.2

C.6 Kindly clarify a doubt of one of our partners, regarding the hourly and yearly rate they need to indicate. One member of the staff of the partner is the owner of an SME. When indicating her annual salary, can she indicate the SME's total earnings of the year? As owner, she doesn't have a monthly salary. Her annual salary corresponds to the SME's profit. Can she indicate one year SME profit as her salary/hourly/yearly rate?

The EASME web page announcing the Call lists a number of documents amongst which is the Multi Beneficiary Model Grant Agreement (MGA):
<https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/supporting-development-and-promotion-transnational-thematic-tourism-products-exploiting-synergies>

For additional details concerning your query, please refer to the above mentioned document, and notably - but not limited - to Sections 5.2 and 6.2. For instance, in Section 6.2A – Subsection "Calculation" under "Direct Personnel Costs", you will find the requested information relating to personnel costs of SME owners or beneficiaries that are natural persons without a salary (budget categories A.3 and A.4) declared on the basis of unit costs.

C.7 - In the call document it is specified: "EU grants may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the action." But it is also specified about co-financing - it may take the form of: "income generated by the action". Could you specify which kind of income could be considered if profit is not encouraged? Moreover, can in-kind contributions be allowed from external entities (entities which are not part of the consortium, and not third parties) during the project period ?

Please read carefully the provisions of Section 12: Financial Provisions. The co-financing principle implies that part of the action is to be funded by the beneficiary or covered by contributions other than those made from the Union budget. The co-financed share may take the form of the beneficiary's own resources, of revenue generated by the action or work programme or of financial contributions or contributions in kind provided by third parties. Income generated by the action is therefore allowed, but must be fully declared. Where a profit is made, the EASME shall be entitled to recover the percentage of the profit corresponding to

the Union contribution to the eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiary to carry out the action.

C.8 Can you clarify if for “contributions in kind provided by third parties” we can use funds from Public organizations, as for example funds from National Government?

As specified in Section 4 of the Call, the grant is limited to a maximum reimbursement rate of 75% of eligible costs. The onus is therefore on the applicant to find contributions other than those made from the Union budget to make up the remaining 25% maximum, as long as these are in line with co-financing guidance elaborated upon in Q/A C.2

C.9 Do Partners have to provide Financial Data for the Application?

It is unclear what you mean exactly by financial data. A template (Part B_ Technical Annex_2_TOURSYN_budget) for instance is provided for you to insert the requested project budget. Please however also read carefully (amongst others) Q/A B.19 and the provisions of Section 12: Financial Provisions, as these might help provide you with specific feedback.

C.10 I am writing to you because I am trying to calculate the hourly rate of a SMEs Owner. According to the call, multi grant agreement. My difficulty is to understand if the number you mentioned in the formula are fixed (EUR 4,650 and 143 hours) because when I am going to calculate the hourly rate multiplying per country-specific correction coefficient the hourly rate is too high.

The numbers (EUR 4,650 and 143 hours) are included as an example. They change according to the country-specific coefficients.