



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

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Questions and Answers

Version 3

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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.

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).

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.