



Call for proposals 2013 for pilot projects

EU AID VOLUNTEERS

Guidelines for Grant Applicants

Contents

| | | |
|-------|---|----|
| 1. | INTRODUCTION – BACKGROUND | 2 |
| 2. | OBJECTIVE – RESULTS..... | 2 |
| 3. | TIMETABLE | 3 |
| 4. | BUDGET AVAILABLE | 3 |
| 5. | ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS..... | 3 |
| 6. | ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA | 3 |
| 6.1. | Eligible applicants | 3 |
| 6.2. | Eligible activities | 5 |
| 6.3. | Implementation period..... | 6 |
| 7. | EXCLUSION CRITERIA | 7 |
| 7.1. | Exclusion from participation: | 7 |
| 7.2. | Exclusion from award:..... | 7 |
| 7.3. | Supporting documents | 7 |
| 8. | SELECTION CRITERIA | 8 |
| 8.1. | Financial capacity | 8 |
| 8.2. | Operational capacity | 8 |
| 9. | AWARD CRITERIA..... | 9 |
| 10. | LEGAL COMMITMENTS | 10 |
| 11. | FINANCIAL PROVISIONS | 11 |
| 11.1. | General Principles..... | 11 |
| 11.2. | Funding forms..... | 12 |
| 11.3. | Payment arrangements | 15 |
| 11.4. | Pre-financing guarantee | 16 |
| 12. | PUBLICITY | 16 |
| 12.1. | By the beneficiaries | 16 |
| 12.2. | By the Commission..... | 16 |
| 13. | DATA PROTECTION | 17 |
| 14. | PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS | 17 |

1. INTRODUCTION – BACKGROUND

The Lisbon Treaty foresees the setting up of a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps, with the objective "to establish a framework for joint contributions from young Europeans to the humanitarian aid operations for the Union" (Art. 214.5 TFEU).

Preparing for this initiative the Commission has adopted a decision on the annual work programme for a preparatory action on the 'EU Aid Volunteers' published on 11 January 2013, foreseeing the implementation of pilot projects. This decision can be accessed on http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding/decisions_2013_en.htm

This call for proposals intends to select pilot projects developing some of the possible features of the future Corps. A first call in 2011 has delivered interesting learning through the proposals received and the implementation of the projects focusing on volunteers in projects on crisis prevention and post crises recovery. The second call in 2012 aimed at enlarging the scope of testing options, including civil protection and crises response as eligible activities. This third and last call in 2013 aims at testing further modules to contribute to the European Commission's work on preparing for implementation.

The Commission has proposed a Regulation on the establishment of the EU Aid Volunteers on 19 September 2012 (COM(2012) 514 final). The final Corps shall be established after adoption by the Parliament and the Council of the regulation, expectedly by 2014.

2. OBJECTIVE – RESULTS

The objective of this call for proposals is to select pilot projects that will test some of the possible modules of the future EU Aid Volunteers initiative, contribute to the European Commission's work on preparing for implementation and allow for a smooth start of the initiative after adoption of the proposed Regulation by the Parliament and the Council.

Expected results:

- To provide opportunities for Europeans to engage as **expert volunteers** in humanitarian aid and/or civil protection activities outside the EU and to contribute to laying the ground for a network of European volunteers active in this field;
- **To add value through volunteering to humanitarian aid and / or civil protection operations** in the fields of resilience building, disaster risk reduction, preparedness and preventing, crisis response, post crisis recovery and linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD);
- To **strengthen local capacities** in third countries in order to support resilience and/or response to crisis.

3. TIMETABLE

| | Stages ¹ | Date and time or indicative period |
|----|---|---|
| a) | Publication of the call | 31/01/2013 |
| b) | Deadline for request of clarifications | 20/02/2013 |
| c) | Deadline for clarifying answers by Commission | 11/03/2013 |
| d) | Deadline for submitting applications | 02/04/2013 (16.00 CET in case of hand delivery) |
| e) | Evaluation period | 03/04/2013 – 15/04/2013 |
| f) | Information to applicants | End of April 2013 |
| g) | Signature of grant agreement | May 2013 |
| h) | Starting date of the action | June 2013 |

4. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The total budget earmarked for the co-financing of projects is estimated at **EUR 1,200,000**.

The maximum grant will be EUR 600,000.

The Commission reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Applications must be sent no later than the deadline for submitting applications referred to in section 3.
- Applications must be submitted in writing (see section 14), using the application form and/or electronic submission system available at http://ec.europa.eu/echo/euaidvolunteers/pilot_projects_en.htm².
- Applications must be drafted in English.

Failure to comply with those requirements will lead to the rejection of the application.

6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA³

6.1. Eligible applicants

In order to be eligible for a grant, applicants must:

¹ Stages b), c) d) (or equivalent) and e) to be repeated in case of a two-stage submission procedure.

² Art. 131 FR.

³ Art. 131 FR, 201 RAP

- (1) be legal persons,
- (2) non-profit making
- (3) belong to one of the following categories: non-governmental organisations, public sector organisations and their agencies, international organisations as defined by Article 43 of the rules of application to the EU Financial Regulation;
- (4) be nationals of a Member State of the European Union (this obligation does not apply to international organisations);
- (5) be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with their partners, i.e. not acting as an intermediary;
- (6) and have a proven track record in **at least two** of the following fields:
 - a) successful management and deployment of expert volunteers in third countries;
 - b) established partnerships with a variety of local organisations in recipient countries;
 - c) building capacities in these countries.

In order to assess the applicants' eligibility, the following supporting documents are requested⁴:

- private entity: extract from the official journal, copy of articles of association, extract of trade or association register, certificate of liability to VAT (if, as in certain countries, the trade register number and VAT number are identical, only one of these documents is required);
- public entity: copy of the resolution or decision establishing the public company, or other official document establishing the public-law entity;
- consortium: in addition to the supporting documents referring to their legal status, consortium members will submit letters confirming their participation to the project.

Applicants must act **with at least two partner organisations**. Each consortium must represent **at least three different EU Member States**. More partner organisations and Member States represented in a project partnership will be considered an asset. **In case of international organisations, they must act with at least three partner organisations that are not international organisations from three different Member States.**

Partner organisations (the "co-beneficiaries") participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the co-ordinator. **They must satisfy the eligibility criteria (1) through (5) of those applicable to the applicant (see above) and have a proven track record in at least one of the dimensions mentioned under (6).**

An applicant shall not submit more than one application under this Call for Proposals.

⁴ Applicants that have an ongoing Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) or a Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA) with DG ECHO do not need to provide the private / public entity proof.

An applicant may be at the same time partner in another application.

Partners may take part in more than one application

Associates

Other organisations and entities may be involved in the action as associates. Such associates play a real role in the action (they are for example involved in the activities developed in third countries or provide some of their experts as volunteers). They have no contractual relationship with the Commission and do not have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in this section. They may be for example private companies or organisations from non EU countries. The associates have to be mentioned in section 5 of the Grant Application Form.

6.2. Eligible activities

The pilot projects shall cover the whole project cycle from identifying, selecting, training and deploying European expert volunteers as well as identifying and supporting suitable hosting organisations in third countries for those volunteers.

All projects shall cover the following two main dimensions:

- Deployment of European⁵ volunteers with proven technical expertise and relevant professional track record in a field linked to humanitarian response and/or civil protection such as (non exhaustive list):
 - ✓ medical support; water and sanitation; nutrition and food assistance; logistics; protection; search and rescue; camp management; humanitarian project management; cluster management, etc.
- Local capacity building allowing staff and volunteers in hosting organisations and hosting communities to benefit from activities such as (non exhaustive list):
 - ✓ training, seminars, coaching, exchange of good practices, job shadowing and other relevant capacity building activities.

The following activities (non-exhaustive list) can be financed under this call:

- Identification, selection, training, preparation and deployment of expert volunteers in humanitarian aid and / or civil protection operations outside the EU;
- Identification, selection, training, preparation and deployment of inexperienced volunteers may be considered if they are deployed alongside expert volunteers;
- Development of standards for identification, selection and management of expert volunteers;

⁵ For the purpose of this call, these are nationals or long term residents of EU Member States; of EFTA or EEA countries; and of applicant or accession countries.

- Development of specific training modules for the preparation of expert volunteers with a particular focus on the European dimension and encouraging multi-lingual training;
- Identification of suitable third country host organisations;
- Identification, selection and preparation of staff and volunteers from host country organisations and communities for local capacity building activities;
- Capacity building activities for local staff and volunteers in the host countries, such as training, job shadowing, seminars, exchange of good practices, etc. These activities may include topics related to disaster management and to sound management of European volunteers in host organisations;
- Bonding activities to lay the basis for a Network of European humanitarian volunteers including contacts between the volunteers of previous pilot projects and other current pilot projects;
- Online volunteering opportunities for Europeans to engage with the activities of the EU Aid Volunteers and the local capacity building initiatives. These are activities whereby a volunteer uses the internet to complete tasks, in whole or in part, off-site from the organization or beneficiary being assisted;
- Communication and awareness raising activities on the projects and the EU Aid Volunteers' in general.

A 'volunteer' for the purpose of this call means a person who chooses, out of free will and motivation and without concern for financial gain, to engage in activities that benefit the community, him or herself, and society at large.

Identification, selection, training and preparation of European volunteers can take place in the EU, while the **deployment of volunteers must take place in third countries**, i.e. countries outside the EU that receive EU funding for humanitarian actions or that have received such funding in the past. A list of countries receiving humanitarian aid or having received such aid in the past can be found here:

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding/decisions_2013_en.htm.

The beneficiaries of **capacity building activities**, i.e. staff and volunteers of host organisations and host communities shall come from third countries as defined above. Capacity building activities, however, can be organized **both inside and outside the EU**.

Deployment assignments can be short term and may last up to one year.

Projects have to clearly demonstrate the added value to the usual activities of the project applicant and partners. The European dimension of this volunteering scheme shall be explicitly developed, notably by training volunteers and deploying volunteers with different nationalities together. They also have to demonstrate the expected lessons learnt in the context of the preparation for the EU Aid Volunteers initiative.

6.3. Implementation period

The maximum duration of pilot projects selected under this call is 18 months.

7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

7.1. Exclusion from participation:

Applicants/ Partner organisations will be excluded from participating in the call for proposals procedure if they are in any of the following situations:

- a) is bankrupt or being wound up, is having its affairs administered by the courts, has entered into an arrangement with creditors, has suspended business activities, is the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) has been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of a Member State which has the force of *res judicata*;
- c) has been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authorities can justify including by decisions of the European Investment Bank and international organisations;
- d) is not in compliance with all its obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions and the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which it is established, with those of the country of the contracting authority and those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- e) has been the subject of a judgement which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering or any other illegal activity, where such activity is detrimental to the Union's financial interests;
- f) is a subject of an administrative penalty for being guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in a procurement procedure or failing to supply this information, or having been declared to be in serious breach of its obligations under contracts covered by the Union's budget.

7.2. Exclusion from award:

Applicants will not be granted financial assistance if, in the course of the grant award procedure, they:

- (a) are subject to a conflict of interest;
- (b) are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the Commission as a condition of participation in the grant award procedure or fail to supply this information;
- (c) find themselves in one of the situations of exclusion, referred to in section 7.1.

Administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants where applicable, who are guilty of misrepresentation.

7.3. Supporting documents⁶

Applicants must sign a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in articles 106(1) and 107 to 109, filling in the relevant form attached to the application form accompanying the call for proposals and available at http://ec.europa.eu/echo/euaidvolunteers/pilot_projects_en.htm.

⁶ Art. 197 RAP

8. SELECTION CRITERIA⁷

8.1. Financial capacity⁸

Applicants must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out or the year for which the grant is awarded and to participate in its funding. The applicants' financial capacity will be assessed on the basis of the following supporting documents to be submitted with the application:

a) Low value grants (\leq EUR 60 000):

- a declaration on their honour.

b) Grants \geq EUR 60 000:

- a declaration on their honour and,

EITHER

- the profit and loss account, the balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts were closed;
- for newly created entities, the business plan might replace the above documents.

OR

- the table provided for in the application form, filled in with the relevant statutory accounting figures, in order to calculate the ratios as detailed in the form.

On the basis of the documents submitted, if the Authorising Officer considers that financial capacity is not satisfactory, he may:

- request further information;
- propose a grant agreement without pre-financing;
- propose a grant agreement with a pre-financing paid in instalments;
- propose a grant agreement with a pre-financing covered by a bank guarantee (see section 11.4 below);
- where applicable, require the joint and several financial liability of all the co-beneficiaries;
- reject the application.

8.2. Operational capacity⁹

Applicants and partners must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed action. In this respect, applicants have to submit a declaration on their honour, and the following supporting documents:

- the organisations' activity reports of the last two years preceding the action including detailed information allowing the Evaluation Committee to assess the operational capacity (see part 3.3. and 4.1. of the application form).

⁷ Art. 132 FR, 202 RAP

⁸ Art. 131, 132 FR, 202 RAP.

⁹ Art. 131 FR, 202 RAP.

- where relevant and available curriculum vitae or description of the profile of the people primarily responsible for managing and implementing the operation;
- an exhaustive lists of previous projects and activities performed and connected to the objectives and results of this call (see part 3.3. and 4.1. of the application form).

9. AWARD CRITERIA¹⁰

The award criteria allow the quality of the applications submitted to be evaluated in relation to the set objectives and priorities, and grants to be awarded to actions which maximise the overall effectiveness of the Call for Proposals. They enable the selection of applications which the Contracting Authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities. They cover such aspects as the relevance of the action, its consistency with the objectives of the Call for Proposals, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

Eligible applications will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria (maximum awarded points per criterion):

- (1) Relevance and consistency with the objectives and expected results of the call (25)
- (2) Quality of the project and methodology (25)
 - Clarity, appropriateness and feasibility of the proposed methodology including quality of:
 - identification/selection process of volunteers and hosting organisations;
 - training and support to volunteers;
 - quality and appropriateness of volunteer management and duty of care;
 - quality of capacity building measures for staff and volunteers from third country organisations;
 - risk prevention and crisis management measures.
 - Complementarity with existing humanitarian and civil protection response instruments (where applicable).
- (3) The European dimension and added value of the project (15)
 - How innovative is the project in comparison to existing programmes and activities? What contribution does the project make to create a 'European' programme of EU Aid Volunteers?
- (4) Quality and scope of the partnership (10)
 - The partnership needs to be able to demonstrate a maximum reach-out to European Member States and European volunteers. Additional partners and Member States to the minimum requirements set out under eligibility criteria under 2.1. will be considered an asset;
 - In order to allow for identification of good practices across organisations and types of actors such as NGOs, international organisations, public

¹⁰ Art. 132 FR, 203 RAP

sector operators training institutes, universities and others, the heterogeneity of the partnership will be considered an asset.

- (5) Approach proposed for the management of the project including mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of project's activities, opportunities for knowledge sharing (10)
- (6) Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action (15).
- Appropriate reflection of activities in the budget;
 - Satisfactory ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results, sustainable and efficient use of resources.

Projects that do not receive at least combined 33 points from criteria (1) and (2) shall be rejected.

On the basis of the list of merit drawn up by the Evaluation Committee, the Authorising Officer adopts a final list for allocation of the grants. If the total requested amount of all the pre-selected technically sufficient projects exceeds the total indicative budget available, the proposals will be ranked according to the total points given to them. The Evaluation Committee will propose that the Authorising Officer selects those projects with higher ranking according to the available budget.

The award decision

Upon completion of the above procedure, the Authorising Officer will take the final decision on the project proposals to be co-financed including the respective maximum financial amount and the rate of co-financing granted. Please note that the Commission reserves the right to award a grant of less than the amount requested by the applicant. However, grants will not be awarded for more than the amount requested in the proposal. The Commission will co-finance the proposals achieving at least the score required to reach technical sufficiency within the limits of the overall budget available for this call for proposals. At this stage the Commission will commit the relevant funds and send a Grant Agreement to the successful applicant (the coordinator) to be signed and returned to the Commission. The Grant Agreement will come into force only once both parties have signed it.

10. LEGAL COMMITMENTS¹¹

In the event of a grant awarded by the Commission a grant agreement drawn up in euro and detailing the conditions and level of funding, will be sent to the beneficiary, as well as the procedure in view to formalise the obligations of the parties. The two copies of the original agreement must be signed first by the Commission. The beneficiary will sign it last and will return it to the Commission immediately.

Please note that the award of a grant does not establish an entitlement for subsequent years.

¹¹ Art. 121 FR, 174 RAP.

11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

11.1. General Principles

a) Non-cumulative award¹²

An action may only receive one grant from the EU budget.

In no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice by the Union budget. To ensure this, applicants shall indicate the sources and amounts of Union funding received or applied for the same action or part of the action or for its functioning during the same financial year as well as any other funding received or applied for the same action.¹³

b) Non-retroactivity¹⁴

No grant may be awarded retrospectively for actions already completed.

A grant may be awarded for an action which has already begun only where the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the action before the grant agreement is signed.

In such cases, costs eligible for financing may not have been incurred prior to the date of submission of the grant application

c) Co-financing¹⁵

Co-financing means that the resources which are necessary to carry out the action may not be entirely provided by the EU grant.

Co-financing of the action may take the form of:

- the beneficiary's own resources,
- income generated by the action,
- financial contributions from third parties.

d) Balanced budget¹⁶

The estimated budget of the action is to be attached to the application form. It must have revenue and expenditure in balance.

The budget must be drawn up in euros.

Applicants which foresee that costs will not be incurred in euros, are invited to use the exchange rate published on the Infor-euro website available at http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/inforeuro/inforeuro_en.cfm.

e) Implementation contracts/subcontracting¹⁷

Where the implementation of the action requires the award of procurement contracts (implementation contracts), the beneficiary must award the contract to the bid offering best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interests and retain the documentation for the event of an audit.

¹² Art. 129 FR

¹³ Art. 196.4 RAP.

¹⁴ Art. 130 FR

¹⁵ Art. 125 FR, 183 RAP.

¹⁶ Art. 196.2 RAP

¹⁷ Art. 137 FR, 209 RAP

In the event of procurement exceeding € 60 000, the beneficiary must abide by special rules as referred in the grant agreement annexed to the call. Moreover the beneficiary is expected to clearly document the tendering procedure and retain the documentation for the event of an audit.

Entities acting in their capacity of contracting authorities in the meaning of Directive 2004/18/EC¹⁸ or contracting entities in the meaning of Directive 2004/17/EC¹⁹ shall abide by the applicable national public procurement rules.

Sub-contracting, i.e. the externalisation of specific tasks or activities which form part of the action as described in the proposal must satisfy the conditions applicable to any implementation contract (as specified above) and in addition to them the following conditions:

- it may only cover the implementation of a limited part of the action;
- it must be justified having regard to the nature of the action and what is necessary for its implementation;
- it must be clearly stated in the proposal.

f) Financial support to third parties²⁰.

The applications may envisage provision of financial support to third parties for activities necessary to achieve the objectives of the call. Financial support to third parties may not exceed €60,000 in total or 10% of the total project budget.

In such case the applications must include:

- an exhaustive list of the types of activities for which a third party may receive financial support.
- the definition of the persons or categories of persons which may receive financial support;
- the criteria for awarding financial support;
- the maximum amount to be granted to each third party and the criteria for determining it.

11.2. Funding forms²¹

Grants are calculated on the basis of a detailed estimated budget indicating clearly the costs that are eligible for EU funding. The grant amount may neither exceed the eligible costs nor the amount requested. Amounts are indicated in euros.

- Maximum amount requested

The EU grant is limited to a maximum co-funding rate of **80% of eligible costs**.

Consequently, part of the total eligible expenses entered in the estimative budget must be financed from sources other than the EU grant (see section 11.1c).

- Contributions in kind²²

¹⁸ Directive 2004/18/EC on the coordination of procedures for the award of public work contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts.

¹⁹ Directive 2004/17/EC coordinating the procurement procedures of entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors.

²⁰ Art. 137 FR, 210 RAP.

²¹ Art. 123 FR, 181 RAP.

²² Art. 127 FR.

In-kind contributions are non-financial resources made available free of charge by third parties to the beneficiary or to the consortium.²³ The corresponding costs are not eligible.

Contributions in kind constitute external contributions in order to cover other costs necessary to carry out the project. Such contributions must not exceed:

- either the costs actually borne and duly supported by accounting documents;
- or, in the absence of such documents, the costs generally accepted on the market in question.

In-kind contributions shall be presented separately in the estimated budget to reflect the total resources allocated to the action. Their unit value is evaluated in the provisional budget and shall not be subject to subsequent changes.

In-kind contributions shall comply with national tax and social security rules.

– **Eligible costs**²⁴

Eligible costs are costs actually incurred by the beneficiary of a grant which meet all the following criteria:

- ✓ they are incurred during the duration of the action, with the exception of costs relating to final reports, kick-off meetings and audit certificates that are also eligible if they incur outside the duration of the action;

The period of eligibility of costs will start as specified in the grant.

If a beneficiary can demonstrate the need to start the action before the agreement is signed, expenditure may be authorised before the grant is awarded. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant application (see section 11.1b).

- ✓ they are indicated in the estimated budget of the action;
- ✓ they are necessary for the implementation of the action which is the subject of the grant;
- ✓ they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiary is established and according to the usual cost accounting practices of the beneficiary;
- ✓ they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- ✓ they are reasonable, justified, and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

The beneficiary's internal accounting and auditing procedures must permit direct reconciliation of the costs and revenue declared in respect of the action/project with the corresponding accounting statements and supporting documents.

The same criteria apply to the affiliated entities.

Eligible direct costs

The eligible direct costs for the action are those costs which, **with due regard for the conditions of eligibility set out above**, are identifiable as specific costs directly linked to the performance of the action and which can therefore be booked to it directly, such as :

- The costs of personnel working under an employment contract with the applicant or equivalent appointing act and assigned to the action, comprising actual salaries

²³ Art. 127 FR

²⁴ Art. 126 FR

plus social security contributions and other statutory costs included in the remuneration, provided that these costs are in line with the applicant's usual policy on remuneration. Those costs may include additional remuneration, including payments on the basis of supplementary contracts regardless of their nature, provided that it is paid in a consistent manner whenever the same kind of work or expertise is required and independently from the source of funding used;

- costs of the personnel of national administrations to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the project concerned were not undertaken;
- subsistence allowances (for meetings, including kick-off meetings where applicable, conferences etc) provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices;
- costs of travel (for meetings, including kick-off meetings where applicable, conferences etc), provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel;
- depreciation cost of equipment (new or second-hand): only the portion of the equipment's depreciation corresponding to the duration of the action and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the action may be taken into account by the Commission unless they are donated to the beneficiary of humanitarian operations and provided that it is used to the benefit of humanitarian aid actions;
- costs of consumables and supplies, provided that they are identifiable and assigned to the action;
- costs entailed by implementation contracts awarded by the beneficiaries for the purposes of carrying out the action/project, provided that the conditions laid down in the grant agreement are met;
- costs of financial support to third parties provided that the conditions laid down in the grant agreement are met;
- costs arising directly from requirements linked to the implementation of the action/project (dissemination of information, specific evaluation of the action, translations, reproduction);
- costs relating to a pre-financing guarantee lodged by the beneficiary of the grant, where required;
- costs relating to external audits where required in support of the requests for payments;

Eligible indirect costs (overheads)²⁵

- a flat-rate amount of 7% of the total eligible direct costs of the action, is eligible under indirect costs, representing the beneficiary's general administrative costs which can be regarded as chargeable to the action.

Indirect costs may not include costs entered under another budget heading.

Applicants's attention is drawn to the fact that in the case of organisations receiving an operating grant, indirect costs are not eligible under specific actions.

– **Ineligible costs**

- return on capital;

²⁵ Indirect costs do not apply to operating grants.

- debt and debt service charges;
- provisions for losses or debts;
- interest owed;
- doubtful debts;
- exchange losses;
- costs of transfers from the Commission charged by the bank of a beneficiary;
- costs declared by a beneficiary and covered by another action receiving a European Union grant. In particular, indirect costs shall not be eligible under a grant for an action awarded to a beneficiary who already receives an operating grant financed from the Union budget during the period in question;
- contributions in kind;
- excessive or reckless expenditure.
- value added tax ("VAT").

– Calculation of the final grant amount

The final amount of the grant to be awarded to the beneficiary is established after completion of the action, upon approval of the request for payment containing the following documents²⁶:

- a final report providing details of the implementation and results of the action;
- the final financial statement of costs actually incurred,

EU grants may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the action of the beneficiary. **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 Commission 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.

11.3. Payment arrangements²⁷

A pre-financing payment²⁸ corresponding to 80% of the grant amount will be transferred to the beneficiary within 30²⁹ days either of the date when the last of the two parties signs the agreement provided all requested guarantees have been received.

The Commission will establish the amount of the final payment to be made to the beneficiary on the basis of the calculation of the final grant amount (see section 11.2 above). If the total of earlier payments is higher than the final grant amount, the beneficiary will be required to reimburse the amount paid in excess by the Commission through a recovery order³⁰.

²⁶ Art. 135 FR

²⁷ Art. 90, 135 FR, 207 RAP.

²⁸ Art. 109, 110 RAP

²⁹ Art. 92 FR

³⁰ Art. 109, 110 RAP

11.4. Pre-financing guarantee³¹

In the event that the applicant's financial capacity is not satisfactory, a pre-financing guarantee for up to the same amount as the pre-financing may be requested in order to limit the financial risks linked to the pre-financing payment.

The financial guarantee, in euro, shall be provided by an approved bank or financial institution established in one of the Member State of the European Union. When the beneficiary is established in a third country, the authorising officer responsible may agree that a bank or financial institution established in that third country may provide the guarantee if he considers that the bank or financial institution offers equivalent security and characteristics as those offered by a bank or financial institution established in a Member State. Amounts blocked in bank accounts shall not be accepted as financial guarantees.

The guarantee may be replaced by a joint and several guarantee by a third party or by a joint guarantee of the beneficiaries of an action who are parties to the same grant agreement

The guarantee shall be released as the pre-financing is gradually cleared against interim payments or payments of balances to the beneficiary, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the grant agreement.

12. PUBLICITY

12.1. By the beneficiaries

Beneficiaries must clearly acknowledge the European Union's contribution in all publications or in conjunction with activities for which the grant is used.

In this respect, beneficiaries are required to give prominence to the name and emblem of the European Commission on all their publications, posters, programmes and other products realised under the co-financed project.

To do this they must use the text, the emblem and the disclaimer available at http://ec.europa.eu/echo/media/identity_en.htm.

This also includes timely information on activities of the projects with interest to the general public, such as call for vacancies for volunteers and information on activities of the volunteers. These need to be made available to the Commission to be published on the dedicated website http://ec.europa.eu/echo/euaidvolunteers/index_en.htm.

If this requirement is not fully complied with, the beneficiary's grant may be reduced in accordance with the provisions of the grant agreement.

12.2. By the Commission³²

With the exception of scholarships paid to natural persons and other direct support paid to natural persons in most need, all information relating to grants awarded in the course of a financial year shall be published on an internet site of the European Union institutions no later than the 30 June of the year following the financial year in which the grants were awarded.

The Commission will publish the following information:

- name of the beneficiary;
- address of the beneficiary;

³¹ Art. 134 FR, 206 RAP

³² Art. 35, 128.3 FR, 21, 191 RAP.

- subject of the grant;
- amount awarded.

Upon a reasoned and duly substantiated request by the beneficiary, the publication shall be waived if such disclosure risks threatening the rights and freedoms of individuals concerned as protected by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union or harm the commercial interests of the beneficiaries.

13. DATA PROTECTION

The reply to any call for proposals involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CV). Such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. Unless indicated otherwise, the questions and any personal data requested are required to evaluate the application in accordance with the specifications of the call for proposal will be processed solely for that purpose by the European Commission DG ECHO. Details concerning the processing of personal data are available on the privacy statement at:

http://ec.europa.eu/dataprotectionofficer/privacystatement_publicprocurement_en.pdf.

Personal data may be registered in the Early Warning System (EWS) only or both in the EWS and Central Exclusion Database (CED) by the Accounting Officer of the Commission, should the beneficiary be in one of the situations mentioned in:

- the Commission Decision 2008/969 of 16.12.2008 on the Early Warning System (for more information see the Privacy Statement on:
- http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm),

or

- the Commission Regulation 2008/1302 of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database (for more information see the Privacy Statement on http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm)

14. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals must be submitted in accordance with the formal requirements and by the deadline set out under section 5.

No modification to the application is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. However, if there is a need to clarify certain aspects or for the correction of clerical mistakes, the Commission may contact the applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process³³.

Applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the selection process.³⁴

➤ Submission on paper

Application forms are available at

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/euaidvolunteers/pilot_projects_en.htm.

³³ Art. 96 FR

³⁴ Art. 133 FR, 205 RAP

Applications shall be submitted on the correct form, duly completed, dated, showing a balanced budget (revenue/expenditure), **submitted in three copies** (one original clearly identified as such, plus **two** copies) in A4 size, each bound, and signed by the person authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant organisation.

Applicants shall submit proposals

a) either by post or by courier **no later than 02/04/2013** in which case the evidence of the date of dispatch shall be constituted by the postmark or the date of the deposit slip, to

European Commission
DG ECHO A.3 "Policy and Implementation Frameworks
AN88
B 1049 Brussels

b) or delivered by hand **no later than 16.00 CET** (receipt by the courier service) **on 02/04/2013**, to

European Commission
Central Mail Service
OIB 4
Avenue du Bourget,1
1140 Brussels

The outer envelope must bear the title of the Call for Proposals: "**EU Aid Volunteers Call for proposals 2013 for pilot projects**", and the words "**Not to be opened before the opening session**".

Applications sent by fax or e-mail will not be accepted. Applications may not be hand-written.

➤ Electronic submission

Applicants are requested to submit a copy of the application and all Annexes in an electronic format such as DVD or other commonly used storage devices (USB etc).

➤ Contacts

Questions of clarification may in addition be sent by e-mail no later than 20/02/2013 to EU-AID-VOLUNTEERS@ec.europa.eu.

➤ Annexes:

Documents to be completed:

A1): Application form

A2): Budget for the Action

Documents for information:

B1): Checklist of documents to be provided

B2): Model grant agreement

B3): Daily allowance rates (per diem): available at the following address:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/per_diems/index_en.htm

Applicants must verify that their application is complete using the checklist (Annex B1). Incomplete applications may be rejected.

Proposals submitted to the Commission remain the property of the Commission and will not be returned.

The Contracting Authority has no obligation to provide further clarifications after this date. Replies will be given no later than 11/03/2013. In the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of an applicant, a partner, an action or specific activities. Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with the answers, will be published on the internet at http://ec.europa.eu/echo/euaidvolunteers/pilot_projects_en.htm. It is therefore highly recommended to regularly consult the abovementioned website in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

Once a proposal has been received and registered by the Commission, an acknowledgement of receipt will be dispatched to the applicant in three weeks after the closing date of the present call for proposals. The acknowledgment of receipt will contain a reference number, which must be mentioned in all correspondence concerning the proposal.

Applicants who have not received an acknowledgement of receipt by e-mail within three weeks after the closing date, should contact ECHO by e-mail:
EU-AID-VOLUNTEERS@ec.europa.eu.