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Directorate B. Quality, Research & Innovation, Outreach
B.1. External communication and promotion policy

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Questions & Answers

Call for proposals (2018/C 395/03)

Support for information measures relating to the common agricultural policy (CAP) for 2019

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1. MAIN RULES OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

1.1. Introduction and definition *(Section 1 of the Call)*

What is an information measure?

An information measure is a self-contained and coherent set of information activities organised on the basis of a single budget

1.2. Objectives, themes & target public *(Section 2 of the Call)*

1.2.1. **Objectives**

What is the objective of the call?

The general objective of the call is to build trust within the EU and among all citizens, farmers and non-farmers alike. The common agricultural policy (CAP) is a policy for all the citizens of the EU and the benefits that it provides to them must be clearly demonstrated.

An information measure shall aim to:

- *For the general public*, raise public awareness on the relevance of EU support to agriculture and rural development through the CAP;
- *For stakeholders*, engage with stakeholders (mainly farmers and other parties active in rural areas) in order to further communicate about the CAP to their constituencies, and to the wider public.

1.2.2. **Themes**

What are the specific themes of this call?

The proposals for information measure - via organisations who act as "multipliers" for the communication on the CAP - should illustrate how the CAP contributes towards the delivery of the Commission's political priorities, in particular on the **economic** (ie: investment in rural areas), **environmental** (ie: climate change) and **social** dimension (ie: jobs, growth) of a **sustainable agriculture**.

1.2.3. Target public

Who is the target public of this call?

Target public for the information measures are stakeholders and the general public with a special focus on young people in urban areas.

1.3. Timetable (Section 3 of the Call)

What is the deadline for submitting applications?

The deadline for submitting the applications under this Call for proposals (2018/C 395/03) is 14 December 2018.

What is the implementation period under this call for proposals?

The maximum duration of information measures is 12 months.

Applications for projects scheduled to run for a longer period than 12 months will be rejected.

Is it possible to implement the information measure from July 2019 and June 2020?

Please refer to the Model Grant Agreement, Annex I (Article I.2.) available on our website under "DRAFT Model Grant Agreement" item: https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/grants-for-information-measures_en . The Agreement enters into force on the date on which the last party signs it. The action runs for 12 months starting on the first day following the date when the last party signs the Agreement.

1.4. Budget available (Section 4 of the Call)

What is the total budget earmarked for the co-financing of information measures?

The total budget earmarked for the co-financing of information measures is estimated at EUR 4 000 000.

What is the grant amount under this call?

The grant amount will be minimum EUR 75 000 and maximum EUR 500 000.

2. EVALUATION CRITERIA

2.1. Admissibility requirements (Section 5 of the Call)

May I submit my application on the 15th of December?

No. The deadline for submitting the applications under this Call for proposals (2018/C 395/03) is 14 December 2018. Applications must be sent by post (date as postmark), by courier service (date of receipt by the courier service) or in person (date as receipt).

Is it possible to submit my application electronically?

No. The applications must be submitted in writing using forms and annexes available on our website https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/grants-for-information-measures_en

Only applications on paper will be accepted.

Applications sent by fax or email will not be accepted.

Where may I find the application forms?

All forms and annexes are available on our website under "Mandatory forms" item: https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/grants-for-information-measures_en.

Are the application forms available in all EU languages?

The application forms are available only in English; nevertheless they can be submitted in any of the EU's official languages.

In order to facilitate prompt processing of applications, applicants are encouraged to submit their application in English, French or German.

2.2. Eligibility criteria (Section 6 of the Call)

Please note that the eligibility conditions are assessed at the evaluation phase, not through the Q&A during the submission phase.

Eligible applications will be assessed on the basis on the criterion mentioned in the sections 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 of the call.

2.2.1. Eligible applicants

Which kind of applicants are eligible under this call for proposals?

The applicant (and its affiliated entities if any) shall be a legal entity established in an EU Member State.

Entities which do not have legal personality under the applicable national law may be eligible applicants, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on

their behalf, and offer guarantees for the protection of the Union's financial interests equivalent to that offered by legal persons.

Supporting documents should be provided with the application form.

Natural persons, as well as entities established for the sole purpose of the implementation of an information measure within this call for proposals are not eligible applicants.

Examples of eligible organisations:

- non-profit organisations (private or public),
- public authorities (national, regional, local),
- European associations,
- universities,
- educational institutions,
- research centres,
- private companies (for instance communication media companies).

Are British registered entities eligible under this Call for proposals?

The eligibility criteria must be complied with for the entire duration of the grant. 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, the UK applicant will cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the project on the basis of Article II.17 (Termination of the agreement by the Commission) of the Grant Agreement.

2.2.2. Affiliated entities

Is it possible to submit a proposal with several partners?

The information measures under the call for proposals are **mono-beneficiary actions**. This means that there is one legal entity applying for a grant. Affiliated entities may take part in the action in accordance with the conditions set in the call.

For further information on eligibility criteria please see section 6.1. of the call for proposals (2018/C 395/03).

How should be notified the participation of an affiliated entity in the information measure?

If affiliated entities take part in the information measure, the application shall identify such affiliated entities filling in the Form 2 of the application form and also the declaration on honour for the exclusion criteria.

Does the juridical affiliation occur between two legal entities?

Please see section 6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA of the call for all information related to affiliated entities.

Could affiliated entities declare costs?

Affiliated entities may declare eligible costs in accordance with the conditions of the Call. Those costs will be taken into account for the co-financing of the action.

For information on eligibility of costs of entities affiliated to the beneficiary, please also see the Model Grant Agreement, Annex II (Article II.21):

If the Special Conditions contain a provision on entities affiliated to the beneficiary, costs incurred by such an entity are eligible, if:

- (a) they satisfy the same conditions under Articles II.19 and II.20 as apply to the beneficiary; and
- (b) the beneficiary ensures that the conditions applicable to it under Articles II.4, II.5, II.6, II.8, II.10, II.11 and II.27 are also applicable to the entity.

Can a beneficiary cover the total 40% of budget not co-financed by the EU with financial contributions of third parties?

Yes, a third party can cover the total 40 % of the budget. Please note that the information measures under the call for proposals are mono-beneficiary actions. This means that there is one legal entity applying for a grant. Affiliated entities may take part in the action in accordance with the conditions set in the call. For further information on eligibility criteria please see section 6.1. of the call for proposals (2018/C 395/03).

2.2.3. Eligible activities

What is an information measure?

An information measure is a self-contained and coherent set of information activities organised on the basis of a single budget

Which kind of activities are eligible under this call for proposals?

The information measures should include one or several activities such as :

- Production and distribution of multimedia or audiovisual material,
- Web and social media campaigns,
- Media events,
- Conferences, seminars, workshops and studies on CAP related issues.

The following activities are not eligible:

- measures required by law,
- general or statutory meetings,
- financial support to third parties.

Could we repeat some activities in the framework of an information measure?

The eligibility conditions are assessed at the evaluation phase, not through the Q&A during the submission phase. Please see section 6.2. of the call for proposals (2018/C 395/03) for further information.

At what level should be implemented the information measures?

The information measures should be implemented:

- at multiregional or national level of an EU Member State, OR
- at European Union level (in at least two Member States).

May the information measures be implemented only in 1 EU Member State or should be implemented in 2 EU Member States at least?

The information measures should be implemented either at multiregional or at national or at European level (in at least Two Member states). These are alternatives.

2.3. Exclusion criteria *(Section 7 of the Call)*

Could be an applicant excluded from participating in this Call for proposals?

Please see section 7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA of the Call for all information related to a possible exclusion.

Applicants and affiliated entities must provide a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred in section 7 of the Call.

2.4. Selection criteria *(Section 8 of the Call)*

In the form 1 of the application, point 2.4 & 2.5 relating technical and operational capacity of the applicant, there is requested to provide the information required under chapter 8.1 and 8.2. of the Call for proposals (2018/C 395/03). Where may I find those chapters?

Please see section 8, page 9 of the Call for proposals (2018/C 395/03).

Regarding the financial capacity, should the requested balance sheet be positive in order to be eligible for a grant?

According to the section 8.1 of the Call, the balance sheet will allow to the Commission to assess the financial capacity of the applicant ensuring that the applicant has a stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain the proposed activity throughout the duration of the grant. Please note that the Commission will use the balance sheet together with the rest of the information mentioned in the Call to assess the financial capacity of applicants. This will be part of the evaluation process.

To what extent is the operational capacity (section 8.2) referred? Should the applicant have experience in the CAP?

In accordance with section 8.2. of the call for proposals, the applicants must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed information measure.

2.5. Award criteria (Section 9 of the Call)

It is possible to say anything about the chance of success of an application?

The quality of a proposal is assessed at the evaluation phase, not through the Q&A during the submission phase.

Please see section 9. of the call for proposals (2018/C 395/03) for further information.

3. IN PRACTICE

3.1. Legal commitments – Grant Agreement (*Section 10 of the Call*)

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 applicants. A model of such agreement is available on our website under "DRAFT Model Grant Agreement": https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/grants-for-information-measures_en

In the Annex II 8.1 (General conditions of the grant agreement) there is a reference to the "RAO". Could you explain what this stands for?

RAO refers to the Responsible Authorising Officer.

3.2. Financial provisions (*Section 11 of the Call*)

3.2.1. Eligible costs

Which kind of costs are considered as eligible?

Eligible costs shall meet all the following criteria:

- they are incurred by the beneficiary;
- they are incurred during the duration of the information measure, with the exception of costs relating to final reports and audit certificates.
 - The period of eligibility of costs will start as specified in the grant agreement,
 - If a beneficiary can demonstrate the need to start the information measure before the agreement is signed, the costs eligibility period may start before that signature. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant application;
- they are indicated in the estimated budget;
- they are necessary for the implementation of the information measure 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 same criteria apply to costs incurred by the affiliated entities.

Eligible costs may be direct or indirect.

What are eligible direct costs?

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

- the costs of personnel working under an employment contract with the beneficiary
- costs of travel and related subsistence allowances, provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel;
- costs of renting room or equipment;
- costs entailed by subcontracts, provided that specific conditions on subcontracting as laid down in the grant agreement are met;
- costs arising directly from requirements imposed by the Agreement (dissemination of information, specific evaluation of the information measure, audits, translations, reproduction);
- duties, taxes and charges paid by the beneficiary, notably value added tax (VAT), provided that they are included in eligible direct costs, and unless specified otherwise in the grant agreement.

What are eligible indirect costs (overheads)?

Indirect costs are costs that are not directly linked to the information measure implementation and therefore cannot be attributed directly to it.

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

 If applicant is receiving an operating grant financed by the EU or Euratom budget, he must not declare indirect costs for the period covered by the operating grant.

Is there a maximum budget set out for staff costs?

There is no ceiling. However, proposals will be assessed on the basis of the relevant evaluation criteria.

For additional information on reimbursement of staff costs please see the Annex II (a) - Personnel costs- which refers to the general conditions of the draft model grant agreement. Appendix document available on our

Are personnel staff costs considered as eligible when personnel staff is under contract with temporary work agencies or similar?

Staff provided by a temporary work agency implies a contract between the beneficiary and the agency. This would qualify typically as a

purchase of service or subcontracting. Consequently, such costs would not be eligible as personnel costs. However, they could be charged under other budget categories (e.g. subcontracting) if they comply with the eligibility conditions.

For additional information on reimbursement of costs actually incurred please see the Appendix document available on our website under "DRAFT Model Grant Agreement":

https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/grants-for-information-measures_en

May the applicant involve an external expert and its staff for the implementation of the information measure? If yes, can the applicant pay the persons from the consultancy as external experts and the costs that they faced to participate?

For information on eligible direct costs see section 11.1.1. a) of the call for proposals.

Could we use daily timesheets staff costs in our estimated budget table?

Please fill in the form correctly, the Annex III Budget (Table 1) - Estimated budget of the action, A Personnel costs (per day/month).

According to the Annex V.2, the supported documents relating costs of personnel have to be timesheets or any equivalent time recording tool employed by the beneficiary and its affiliated entities aiming to reconcile the actual time (hours, days, months) dedicated to the project with the one claimed.

Are boarding pass costs allowed? Are meal costs eligible? If yes, could you inform us within which budgetary category such costs have to be inserted?

Subsistence allowance includes meals and local transport, on the condition that the eligibility conditions are met (section 11.1.1. (b) of the Call for proposals).

For further information on eligible direct costs please see Annex III (financial statement, table 1.B.3) and V.2 (supporting documents).

Is the renting of a car (needed due to some activities' logistics) an eligible cost?

In accordance with section 11.1.1. b) of the call for proposals, costs of travel and related subsistence allowances are regarded as eligible direct costs provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel. Please also see Annex III Budget, Table 1 (B.3).

Is fuel for car rental considered as eligible cost?

For information on eligible direct costs, see section 11.1.1. b) of the call for proposals and Annex III Budget, Table 1 (B.3).

If city bus, tram and taxi will not be eligible for urban events, is there any other city based transport considered as eligible?

Transport within a city is not a "travel" cost; therefore it is not eligible cost (section 11.1.1. b) of the call). However, such costs could be covered under the "subsistence" costs, provided that the eligibility conditions are fulfilled.

3.2.2. Ineligible costs

Which kind of cost is considered as ineligible?

- return on capital and dividends paid by a beneficiary;
- 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 the beneficiary under another information measure receiving a grant financed from the Union budget;
- contributions in kind from third parties;
- excessive or reckless expenditure;
- deductible VAT;
- purchase of equipment.

Could you provide an example or definition of Benefit in Kind in relation to the Budget table relating to the call for proposals?

For contributions in kind from third parties please see section 11.2.(i) and 11.4. of the call for proposals.

Contributions in kind are regarded as non-financial resources made available free of charge by third parties (e.g. volunteer work, providing a meeting room for free). In-kind contributions shall be presented separately in the estimated budget to reflect the total resources allocated to the information measure (see Annex III, Tables 2 and 3).

Is the value of contributions in kind taken into account in the amount of the action calculated on our grant application letter?

This value is part of the estimated total expenditure and total revenue of the action and should be mentioned in the relevant budget tables, if applicable.

If we are not getting any financial contribution from any stakeholders, private entities etc., is it suffice to write "n/a" in the "Benefit in Kind" table?

Yes.

3.2.3. Forms of the grant

How will be defined the amount of the grant?

The grant amount will be minimum EUR 75 000 and maximum EUR 500 000.

The grant will be defined by applying a maximum co-financing rate of 60 % to the eligible costs actually incurred.

For additional information on reimbursement of costs actually incurred please see section 11.3. of the call for proposals: "Forms of the grant".

Is the maximum grant amount of EUR 500 000 based on 60% or 67% of eligible costs?

The EUR 500 000 are the maximum Union contribution, irrespective from the co-financing rate.

Please also see 11.3.2. Flat-rate of the call for proposals.

What is the ceiling of the grant?

According to the section 11.3 of the Call, the grant will be defined by applying a maximum co-financing rate of 60 % to the eligible costs incurred together with a flat rate of 7 % of the eligible direct costs covering the indirect costs such as general administration costs. The maximum grant will be 500.000,- € (section 4 of the Call).

There is no ceiling for co-financing from third parties.

As stated in the form 'Declaration on honour' on the first page, point (3) the applicant has to declare that it has not received any other Union funding to carry out the action subject of this grant application and commits to declare immediately to the omission any other such Union funding it would receive until the end of the action.

3.2.4. Balanced budget

Could you explain the difference between the revenue and "Financial contributions from third parties earmarked to the eligible costs"? Should we mention any contributions to co-financing within the section entitled "Financial contributions from third parties"? For example EUR 20,000 supports from a patron?

The difference refers to a financial contribution given by a third party specifically to be used for the action (i.e. money given as a donation to a beneficiary specifically for an activity covered by the GA).

Does the financial contribution of the beneficiary (own resources) correspond to the 40% which is not financed by the EU commission?

Yes, all or part of it.

May the beneficiary be in a position to increase staff costs into the budget taking in account the possible indexation that could occur in more than one year?

Budget transfers to the budget category 'personnel costs' are limited to 10% of the amount of the budget category 'personnel costs'.

For further information please see Article II.22 Budget transfers of the Annex II – General conditions. Please also see Article I.12 of the Draft Model Grant Agreement - Special provisions on budget transfers.

Is co-finance needed?

Co-financing of the information measure may take the form of:

- The beneficiary's own resources
- Income generated by the information measure
- Financial contributions from third parties.

For further information on co-financing please see section 11.4. of the call for proposals.

3.2.5. Calculation of the final grant amount

When will be paid the amount of the grant?

The grant support is paid after the reporting periods.

In accordance with Article I.4.4 of the Draft Model Grant Agreement a request for payment of the balance and supporting documents must be submitted within 60 calendar days following the end of the last reporting period.

For further information on the payment, please see Article I.5.4 of the Draft Model Grant Agreement.

3.2.6. Reporting and payment arrangements

Would it be possible to receive an advance or at least submit a request for an interim payment after the first reporting period as it was plan in the previous DG Agri call for 2018?

According to the section 11.6 of the Call for proposals for 2019 (2018/C 395/03), only a final payment may be requested

Where to find the final technical report and final financial statement templates?

Please see Annex IV (Technical report) and Annex V (Financial statement).

Could you clarify the section "Expected results " mentioned in Form 3 and in particular the reference to the model technical implementation report ? Could you provide a definition of the terms "deliverables" and "benchmarks" as used in the same section?

The "model technical implementation report" mentioned in Form 3 refers to the Model Technical Implementation Report available in the Annex IV of the model grant agreement.

The expected results must be concrete, realistic and quantified as far as possible.

Do I need to know if Annex V has to be compiled and sent with others or can we do it later?

Before sending your application, please check that you have included all documents which have been mentioned in the checklist which you can find in the end of Annex I.

Annex V refers to the model financial statement that has to be send with the request of final technical and financial report.

3.2.7. Other financial conditions

What does it mean that a subcontracting does not cover "core tasks" of the information measure (Annex II Article 11.1 - General conditions of the grant agreement)? For example we want to subcontract our public relations requirements to a professional who is an expert in agri-communication, would an action like this be eligible or is public relations seen as a "core task"?

The eligibility conditions are assessed at the evaluation phase, not through the Q&A during the submission phase. Please see section 6. of the call for proposals for further information.

According to Annex II, Article II.11.1 (b) recourse to subcontracting is justified because of the nature of the action and what is necessary for its implementation ensuring that such subcontracting does not cover core tasks of the action. We do not have a definition of "core" tasks.

Applicants should bear in mind that they will be selected -inter alia- on their capacity to implement the action; therefore having large recourse to subcontracting could hamper their proposal.

3.3. Publicity (Section 12 of the Call)

How can publicity be mentioned?

Beneficiaries must clearly acknowledge the European Union's contribution in all their material 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/agriculture/grants-for-information-measures/>

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

3.4. Personal data *(Section 13 of the Call)*

For further information, please see section 13 of the call for proposals (2018/C 395/03).

4. USEFUL INFORMATION

Where can I find useful information?

Please consult the Europa webpage under:
https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/grants-for-information-measures_en

For any further questions on Grants for information measures relating to the common agricultural policy, please contact:

AGRI-GRANTS@ec.europa.eu