CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR THE SELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE INFORMAL EXPERT GROUP ON SKILLS AND CAREERS DEVELOPMENT IN THE BLUE ECONOMY

1. BACKGROUND

In agreement with Commissioner Karmenu Vella, the Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) has set up an informal group of experts, hereinafter referred to as "the group".

The task of the group is to advice the Commission on matters pertaining to the education, training, skills and career development within the blue economy. Given the complexity and variety of the issue, the group representatives will cover different sectors of the blue economy (shipping, shipbuilding, tourism, ocean energy, aquaculture, fisheries, marine biotechnology, etc.) and represent as well the different sea basins. The expert group will support DG MARE into the development of the skills policy for the marine and maritime sectors. The members of the groups will be asked to share updated information and to provide concrete input to the Commission's policy work. In addition, the experts will also support DG MARE into the implementation of the possible actions planned, through i.e. communication activities.

The Commission is therefore calling for applications with a view to selecting members of the group.

2. FEATURES OF THE GROUP

2.1. Composition

The group shall consist of up to 40 members.

Members shall be organisations, other public entities (i.e. educational provides) or individuals appointed by organisations to represent a common interest. They shall not represent an individual stakeholder, but a policy orientation common to different stakeholder organisations.

Organisations shall be responsible for ensuring that their representatives provide a high level of expertise. DG MARE may refuse a representative nominated by an organisation if it considers that the representative does not meet the profile required, as indicated in chapter 4 of this call. In such cases, the organisation concerned shall be asked to appoint another representative.

2.2. Appointment

Members shall be appointed by the Director General of DG MARE from applicants complying with the requirements referred to in chapter 4 of this call.

Members shall be appointed for 3 years. They shall remain in office until replaced / until the end of their term of office. Their term of office may be renewed.

Members who are no longer capable of contributing effectively to the group's deliberations, who resign or who do not comply with the conditions set out in Article 339 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union shall no longer be invited to participate in any meetings of the group and may be replaced for the remainder of their term of office.

Registration on the Transparency Register is required in order for individuals representing a common interest to be appointed.

As regards members representing a common interest, provision may be made for the same number of alternates as members to be appointed. Alternates shall be appointed in accordance with the same conditions as members and shall automatically replace any members who are absent or indisposed.

In order to ensure continuity and the smooth functioning of the group, a reserve list of suitable candidates shall be established that may be used to appoint replacements. The Commission shall ask applicants for their consent before including their names on the list.

2.3. Rules of engagement and operation of the group

The group shall be chaired by a representative of DG MARE.

The group shall act at the request of DG MARE or at the request of its chairman with the agreement of DG MARE, in compliance with the Horizontal rules on expert groups.

In principle, the group shall meet twice or three times per year on Commission premises in order to discuss matters concerning marine and maritime education, training and career development. DG MARE shall provide secretarial services.

Members and members representatives should be prepared to attend meetings systematically, to contribute actively to discussions in the group, to be involved in preparatory work ahead of meetings, to examine and provide comments on documents under discussion, and to act, as appropriate, as 'rapporteurs' on ad hoc basis. As a general rule, working documents will be drafted in English and meetings will be also conducted in English.

The group shall adopt its opinions, recommendations or reports by consensus. In the event of a vote, the outcome of the vote shall be decided by a simple majority of the members present at vote. Members who have voted against shall have the right to annex a document summarising the reasons of their vote.

The group's deliberations shall be confidential. In agreement with DG MARE, the group may, by a simple majority of its members, decide to open its deliberations to the public.

Participants in the activities of the group shall not be remunerated for the services they render. Travel and subsistence expenses incurred by participants shall be reimbursed by the Commission in accordance with the provisions in force in the Commission and within the limits of the available appropriations allocated to the Commission services under the annual procedure for the allocation of resources.

Members of the group and their representatives, as well as invited experts and observers, shall comply with the obligations of professional secrecy laid down by the Treaties and their

implementing rules, as well as with the Commission's rules on security regarding the protection of EU classified information, laid down in Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/443[1] and 2015/444[2]. Should they fail to respect these obligations, the Commission may take all appropriate measures.

On a proposal by and in agreement with DG MARE the group shall adopt its rules of procedure on the basis of the standard rules of procedure for expert groups, with the agreement of DG MARE.

DG MARE may invite experts from outside the group with specific competence in a subject on the agenda to participate in the work of the group or sub-group on an ad hoc basis.

DG MARE may give observer status to individuals, either by direct invitation or as a result of this call for applications. When entities referred to in article 7 (C) and 7(E) are appointed as observers, they shall nominate their representatives. Although observers and their representatives may be permitted by the Chair to take part in the discussions of the group and provide expertise, they shall not have voting rights and shall not participate in the formulation of recommendations or advice of the group.

In agreement with DG MARE, the group may set up sub-groups to examine specific questions on the basis of terms of reference defined by the group, with the agreement of DG MARE. Sub-groups shall report to the group. They shall operate in accordance with the rules laid down by the group and in compliance with the Horizontal rules on expert groups. If members of sub-groups are not members of the group, they shall be selected via a public call for applications under the conditions foreseen by the Horizontal rules for expert groups. Sub-groups shall be dissolved as soon as the mandate is fulfilled.

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1 Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/443 of 13 March 2015 on Security in the Commission (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 41).

2 Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444 of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53).

2.4. Transparency

The group shall be published on the Register of Commission expert groups and other similar entities, hereinafter referred to as “the Register of expert groups".

The names of individuals representing a common interest shall be published on the Register of expert groups; the interest represented shall be disclosed. The names of organisations shall be published on the Register of expert groups.

All relevant documents (such as agendas, minutes and participants’ submissions) shall be made available either on the Register of expert groups or *via* a link from the Register to a dedicated website, where information can be found. Access to dedicated websites shall not be submitted to user registration or any other restriction. Exceptions to publication shall be foreseen where disclosure of a document would undermine the protection of a public or private interest as defined in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) N° 1049/2001[3].

Personal data shall be collected, processed and published in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001[4].

3. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Interested individuals and organisations are invited to submit their application to the European Commission, DG MARE.

Applications must be completed in one of the official languages of the European Union. However, applications in English would facilitate the evaluation procedure. If another language is used, it would be desirable to include a summary of the CV in English.

Organisations shall indicate the name of their representative(s) in the group.

An application will be deemed admissible only if it is sent by the deadline and includes the documents referred to below. All documents submitted by applicants should be duly filled in, legible, signed and numbered sequentially.

Supporting documents

The applicant should apply through the EU Survey on-line tool at the following e-mail address: https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/BlueSkillsExpertGroup2016

This should include the following information:

- the applicant's motivation

[3] These exceptions are intended to protect public security, military affairs, international relations, financial, monetary or economic policy, privacy and integrity of the individual, commercial interests, court proceedings and legal advice, inspections/investigations/audits and the institution's decision-making process.

[4] Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 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 (OJ L 8 of 12.1.2001, p. 1).

- the category to which the application is made (annex I)
- compliance with the selection criteria (annex II)
- For individual experts applying to be appointed as members of the group in a personal capacity or to represent a common interest, as well as for representatives nominated by organisations, curriculum vitae (CV) shall also be provided, preferably not exceeding three pages.

The deadline for submission for this call for interest is 31 May 2016 at 22.00 (Brussels time)

4. SELECTION CRITERIA

DG MARE will take the following criteria into account when assessing applications:

– proven and relevant competence and experience in areas relevant to marine/maritime education, training, career guidance, career development, lifelong learning;

– good knowledge of the English language allowing participating actively in the discussions

5. SELECTION PROCEDURE

The selection procedure shall consist of an assessment of the applications performed by DG MARE against the selection criteria listed in chapter 4 of this call, followed by the establishment of a list of most suitable applicants, and concluded by the appointment of the members of the group. DG MARE shall establish a reserve list of suitable candidates that may be used to appoint replacements.

When defining the composition of the group, DG MARE shall aim at ensuring, as far as possible, a high level of expertise, as well as a balanced representation of relevant know how and areas of interest, while taking into account the specific tasks of the group, the type of expertise required and the relevance of the applications received.

Where individual experts are appointed, either in their personal capacity or to represent a common interest, DG MARE shall seek a geographical balance and a gender balance.

The list of members shall be published on the Register of expert groups

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Electronically signed on 20/04/2016 17:39 (UTC+02) in accordance with article 4.2 (Validity of electronic documents) of Commission Decision 2004/563