

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

2019CE16BAT117

'Support for information measures relating to the EU Cohesion policy'

1. OBJECTIVES AND THEMES

This is a call for proposals for funding information measures within the meaning of Article 58 (f) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 from appropriations in the 2019 budget as announced by Commission Decision C(2018)8730 of 19/12/2018¹.

With the current call for proposals, the European Commission seeks to select potential beneficiaries for the implementation of a number of information measures² co-financed by the EU. The main aim is to provide support for the production and dissemination of information and content linked to EU Cohesion policy³, while respecting complete editorial independence of the actors involved.

There are two main actions foreseen:

Action 1 – Support for the production and dissemination of information and content linked to EU Cohesion policy by media and other eligible entities (see “Eligible applicants”)

Action 2 – Promotion of EU Cohesion policy by Universities and other educational institutions

Applicants can submit only one application for one action for this call for proposals.

The specific objectives of this call for proposals are:

- To promote and foster a better understanding of the role of Cohesion policy in supporting all EU's regions;
- To increase awareness of projects funded by the EU - through Cohesion policy in particular - and of their impact on people's lives;
- To disseminate information and encourage an open dialogue on Cohesion policy, its results, its role in delivering on the EU's political priorities and on its future;
- To encourage civic participation in matters related to Cohesion policy and to foster citizens' participation to setting priorities for the future of this policy.

The proposals shall illustrate and assess the role of Cohesion policy in delivering the European Commission's political priorities and in addressing current and future challenges for the EU, its Member States, its regions and the local level. More specifically, they should relate to the contribution of Cohesion policy to:

- boosting jobs, growth and investment at the regional and national level, and improving citizens' quality of life;
- helping deliver on the EU's and Member States' major priorities – which include, in addition to job and growth creation, addressing climate change, protecting environment, enhancing research and innovation, among others;

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/tender/pdf/official/2019_financing_decision_ta.pdf

² For the purpose of this call for proposals, an 'information measure' is a self-contained and coherent set of information activities relating to the EU Cohesion policy.

³ With this call for proposals the European Commission is supporting information measures relating to the EU Cohesion policy, which is delivered through three main funds: the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Cohesion Fund (CF) and the European Social Fund (ESF). In this sense, a project which addresses the impact of any of these three Funds in a region is eligible.

- enhancing economic, social and territorial cohesion in the EU while reducing disparities between and within EU countries and regions;
- helping regions harness globalisation by finding their niche in the world economy;
- reinforcing the European project as Cohesion policy directly serves EU citizens.

2. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Action 1:

Eligible applicants (lead and co-applicants as well as affiliated entities if any) must be legal entities established and registered in an EU Member State. Examples of eligible applicants⁴ are:

- media organisations/news agencies (television, radio, written press, online media, new media, combination of different media);
- non-profit organizations;
- universities and educational institutions;
- research centres and think-tanks;
- associations of European interest;
- private entities;
- public authorities⁵ (national, regional and local), with the exception of the authorities in charge of the implementation of Cohesion policy in accordance with Art 123. of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013.

Action 2:

Eligible applicants (lead and co-applicants as well as affiliated entities if any) must be legal entities established and registered in an EU Member State. Only universities and educational institutions are eligible for Action 2.

Natural persons, as well as entities established for the sole purpose of the implementation of the projects within this call for proposals are not eligible applicants (neither for Action 1 nor for Action 2).

For British applicants: 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, you 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 of the grant agreement.

Applicants who participated in the call launched by the European Commission in 2017 (Call for proposals 2017CE16BAT063, "Support for information measures relating to the EU Cohesion policy") and in 2018 (Call for proposals 2018CE16BAT042, "Support for information measures relating to the EU Cohesion policy") are eligible notwithstanding the outcome of their previous application.

⁴ Non-exhaustive list

⁵ Public law bodies or bodies governed by private law with a public service mission.

3. EXCLUSION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

The applicant (lead and co-applicants) and affiliated entities must sign a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in Articles 136(1) and 141 of the Financial Regulation (FR)⁶ (concerning exclusion and rejection from the procedure respectively).

The applicant (lead and co-applicants) must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed information measure as well as stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the project is being carried out or the year for which the grant is awarded and to participate in its funding.

4. AWARD CRITERIA

Applications will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

	Criteria	Elements to be taken into consideration	Weighting (points)
1.	Relevance of the measure and contribution to the objectives of the call for proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of the objectives of the proposal with regard to the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals • Relevance of the types of information actions used with regards to the region(s) • Added value to existing initiatives across the regions in Europe • Innovative character of the project with regard to the evolution of the communication landscape 	30 points; (minimum threshold 50%)
2.	Outreach and effectiveness of the measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific, measurable, attainable and relevant objectives in terms of outreach and dissemination • Ability of the outreach plan (including for example a broadcast schedule, channel(s) of distribution and number of guaranteed contacts based on previous records) to maximise reach per target audience at local, regional, multiregional and national level (multiplier effect), for example via cooperation of applicants with networks and/or regional actors/media • Effectiveness of proposed methodologies to reach the objectives of this call, including methods for content production, mechanism to ensure editorial independence and methods to build technical solutions • Publicity planned for the activities and methods for disseminating results • Measures to monitor progress • Ex-post evaluation methodology • Possibilities for continuation of the project beyond the requested period of EU support 	40 points; (minimum threshold 50%)
3.	Efficiency of the measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost-effectiveness in terms of the proposed resources, taking into account costs as well as expected results 	20 points; minimum threshold 50%)

⁶ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 (OJ L 193 of 30.07.2018, p.1).

4.	Organisation of the project team and quality of the project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of the proposed coordination mechanisms, quality control systems and arrangements to manage risks • Quality of the allocation of tasks in view of implementing the activities of the proposed measure 	10 points; minimum threshold 50%)
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A maximum of 100 points will be awarded for the quality of the proposal. The required minimum overall score is 60 points out of 100, while a minimum score of 50 % is required for each criterion. Only the proposals meeting the above-mentioned quality thresholds will be put onto the ranking list. Reaching the threshold does not automatically imply award of the grant.

5. BUDGET AND PROJECT DURATION

The total budget earmarked for the co-financing of information measures under this call is estimated at EUR 4 800 000 (EUR 4 000 000 for Action 1 and EUR 800 000 for Action 2).

The grant amount will be minimum EUR 70 000 and maximum EUR 300 000. The EU grant will take the form of reimbursement of up to 80% of the actual eligible costs of the action. Applicants must guarantee the co-financing of the remaining amount covered by their own resources.

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

The maximum duration of the projects is 12 months.

6. TIMETABLE AND DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS

Stages	Date and time period
Deadline for submitting applications	10/12/2019
Evaluation period (indicative)	January to March 2020
Information to applicants (indicative)	April 2020
Signature of grant agreements (indicative)	May 2020-July 2020

7. FURTHER INFORMATION

The application forms as well as additional information on the call for proposals can be found in the guidelines for applicants available at http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/funding-opportunities/calls-for-proposal/

Applications must comply with the requirements set out in the above-mentioned guidelines for applicants.