



COSME Programme

Call for Proposals

Supporting the Promotion and Development of Transnational Thematic Tourism Products Linked to Cultural and Creative Industries

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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. Introduction

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) play a crucial role in reaching the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy¹. Whereas they are considered as crucial engines for growth and job creation, their competitiveness is affected by a limited exploitation of international opportunities and innovation prospects in the Single Market and beyond.

In this context, the Programme for the competitiveness of enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises (2014-2020)², hereinafter referred to as “COSME”, aims to promote growth and to strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of enterprises in the European Union.

The Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises³ (hereinafter referred to as "EASME" or the "Agency") is entrusted by the European Commission with the implementation, *inter alia*, of parts of the COSME programme.

In this respect, this call for proposals, managed by the EASME, implements partials of the COSME Work Programme 2017, as last amended on 17 February 2017⁴.

1.2. Policy Context

1.2.1. *General policy context*

This call for proposals is based on Article 25 of the COSME Regulation. It aims at supporting the development and, in particular, the promotion of transnational thematic tourism products through cultural and creative industries (CCIs) with involvement of SMEs and in close cooperation with the Member States⁵.

As outlined in the Commission Communication of 30 June 2010⁶, entitled "Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe", which was welcomed by the Council in October 2010, tourism is an important sector of the Union economy. Enterprises in this sector directly contribute 5% of the Union's gross domestic product (GDP). The Treaty on the

¹ COM (2010)2020 final of 3 March 2010 “Europe 2020. A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth”.

² Regulation (EU) No 1287/2013 of 11 December 2013 (Official Journal of the European Union L 347/33 of 20.12.2013).

³ EASME was set up by Commission Implementing Decision 2013/771/EU of 17 December 2013 establishing the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and repealing Decisions 2004/20/EC and 2007/372/EC (Official Journal of the European Union L 341/73 of 18.12.2013).

⁴ Commission Implementing Decision C(2017) 1042 of 17.2.2017 amending Commission Decision C(2016) 7033 of 8.11.2016 concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2017 and the financing decision for the implementation of the Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises.

⁵ Article 25 of the COSME Regulation « (...)In support of action taken in Member States, the COSME programme may support initiatives in both sectoral and cross-sectoral areas with significant potential for growth and entrepreneurial activity, especially those with a high proportion of SMEs, accelerating the emergence of competitive and sustainable industries, based on the most competitive business models, improved products and processes, organisational structures or modified value chains (...)».

⁶ COM (2010) 352 final Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – “Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe” <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52010DC0352>.

Functioning of the European Union ("TFEU") acknowledges the importance of tourism and outlines the Union's competences in this field. It provides that the Union shall complement the action of the Member States in the tourism sector, in particular by promoting the competitiveness of that sector (Title XXII Tourism, Art. 195). Measures to support, coordinate or supplement the actions of the Member States shall be especially aimed at: a) encouraging the creation of a favourable environment for the development of undertakings in this sector; b) promoting cooperation between the Member States, particularly by the exchange of good practices.

In line with the priorities of the Commission, the actions proposed under COSME 2017 work programme contribute to strengthen the competitiveness of the EU tourism sector and increase its contribution to economic growth and jobs in the EU. The actions under COSME will particularly aim, on the one side, at improving the business environment for tourism enterprises, through enhanced socio-economic and market intelligence and exchange of best practices, and on the other side, at diversifying and increasing the visibility of Europe's transnational tourism offer. A particular focus will be given to exploiting synergies between tourism and cultural and creative industries. The actions will be implemented in close cooperation with the industry and the Member States' authorities at all level, in line with the subsidiarity and proportionality principles.

For this particular call for proposals, the following operational objective of the COSME 2017 work programme is relevant: **diversifying and increasing the visibility of Europe's transnational tourism offer**. Under this objective, the Commission aims at co-funding of projects which support the promotion and development of transnational thematic tourism products. The aim is to support partnerships, including destinations and SMEs, developing and promoting transnational tourism products through Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs).

1.2.2. *Specific policy context*

The present call for proposals is implementing the latest Communication on Tourism (COM (2010)352), with particular reference to diversification of the supply of tourist services and products and increasing the visibility of Europe's transnational tourism offer.

Transnational thematic tourism products are an important niche market with a large growth potential. Whilst recognising the important role Member States play in developing and implementing strategies for tourism at national and regional level, the Union should help the development and promotion of transnational tourism products which embody common European shared values and heritage and contribute to promoting Europe as a "unique tourism destination". Therefore the European Commission encourages the development of tourism products on a transnational and European scale.

Various initiatives in favour of the development of diversified and sustainable European transnational products have been put in place over the recent years. There are numerous transnational thematic tourism products (e.g. routes/itineraries/trails/tourism offers) crossing several countries related to different types of tourism which can benefit of support for further development and increased visibility and thereby contribute to promoting tourism. The Commission has already co-financed numerous transnational initiatives and has enhanced the visibility of different thematic tourism products (e.g. cycle or hiking routes crossing several countries; pan-European cultural routes etc.) through conferences and other events⁷.

Currently, the Commission aims at better **exploiting and enhancing synergies between tourism and cultural and creative industries** through concrete actions, as announced by Commissioner Bieńkowska in February 2016 at the European Parliament.

⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/transnational-products_en
https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/cultural_en

Cultural and Creative Industries are knowledge and innovation-intensive industries that trigger spill-overs and synergies with other sectors, such as tourism and the visitor economy. CCIs are one of the most vibrant sectors of the EU economy: they employ over 12 million people and generate a turnover of approximately EUR 1,500 billion⁸. CCIs are at the heart of the creative economy. Being at the crossroads between arts, business and technology, they are in a strategic position to trigger innovation spill-overs to other sectors. It is proven that industries with stronger links to the creative industries have stronger innovation performance. With large cultural impact, CCIs operate in highly dynamic markets with rapidly shifting consumer trends and new technologies. They drive innovation in and add value to many other sectors of the economy. They constantly innovate their products, services and business models. CCIs embrace subsectors (i.e. cultural heritage, architecture, archives and libraries, artistic crafts, design, fashion, film, high-end, music, performing and visual arts, publishing, radio, television and video games) which are very heterogeneous in terms of company structures, turnover, employment, markets, distribution channels and business models.

Moreover, CCIs can contribute to promoting Europe and its tourism offer in a more effective and creative way by enhancing visitor's experience. For example, new audio-visual technologies, such as HD camera mounted on drone, advanced 3D, etc., can increase the attractiveness of sites. It is equally true for Apps which guide tourists to remote rural or mountain areas, hidden treasures, industrial heritage, or gastronomic routes. The development of new products such as travel in time through augmented reality and immersion technologies could be used for tourism as well as for educational purposes.

Furthermore, 2018 as **the European Year of Cultural Heritage** will be an occasion to promote a better knowledge of cultural heritage, and to explore synergies with tourism and cultural and creative sectors.

Europe is a key cultural tourism destination, with a large number of major cultural sites and a strong flow of culturally-motivated international and domestic visitors. It is estimated that cultural tourism accounts for around 50% of all European tourism. The great variety of European cultural heritage – both tangible and intangible – represents an important competitive advantage. Furthermore, EU cultural heritage is a catalyst for creativity and growth. Cultural tourism generates new tourism flows, jobs, undertakings in the cultural and creative sectors not only in capital cities but also in rural and/or post-industrial areas helping to mitigate economic decline. Investing in cultural tourism is a way to ensure that benefits go to a wide range of SMEs and eventually all citizens.

Taking the above into account, this call for proposals aims at co-funding projects developing and promoting transnational tourism products related specifically to the CCI subsector cultural heritage. A particular focus will be put on using CCIs-related technologies in promoting these tourism products and enhancing visitor's experience.

The Commission within this Call will embrace the definition of **cultural heritage** as proposed by UNESCO⁹. In this regard, the term "cultural heritage" encompasses several main categories of heritage:

- a) Tangible cultural heritage:
 - movable cultural heritage (paintings, sculptures, coins, manuscripts, etc.)
 - immovable cultural heritage (monuments, archaeological sites, and so on)
 - underwater cultural heritage (shipwrecks, underwater ruins and cities, etc.)
- b) Intangible cultural heritage: oral traditions, performing arts, rituals, etc.

⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=8900&.

⁹ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/illicit-trafficking-of-cultural-property/unesco-database-of-national-cultural-heritage-laws/frequently-asked-questions/definition-of-the-cultural-heritage/>.

2. OBJECTIVE(S) – THEME(S) – ACTIVITIES – OUTPUTS

2.1. General objectives

General objectives of this call for proposals are to:

- Support growth and job creation in tourism and CCIs;
- Stimulate competitiveness of the tourism industry, innovation, diversification and valorisation of European tourism offer;
- Develop and enhance synergies between tourism and CCIs;
- Create a favourable framework to SME's cooperation;
- Foster transnational cooperation of all actors along the tourism value chain;
- Facilitate long-term European public-private partnerships.

2.2. Specific objectives

The specific objectives of this call for proposals are to:

- Strengthen transnational cooperation with regard to European cultural heritage and tourism;
- Raise awareness of European cultural heritage and increase its value, attractiveness and its potential for the development of the tourism sector;
- Encourage the development and diversification of the supply of tourism products and services by enhanced promotion of transnational thematic tourism products related to cultural heritage;
- Strengthen cross-border cooperation and the management skills of public or private bodies in charge of developing and promoting transnational thematic tourism products related to cultural heritage;
- Better market uptake and visibility of attractive European transnational tourism products focused on European cultural heritage;
- Enhance the competitiveness of the European tourism product through the use of CCI-related technologies;
- Create solid public-private partnerships and ensure cross-fertilisation of knowledge and experience between the participating destinations/organisations.

2.3. Themes and priorities

This call for proposals only supports projects developing and promoting transnational thematic tourism products¹⁰ capitalising on European cultural heritage.

The transnational tourism product must be conceived and structured around a common theme related to European cultural heritage and must use CCIs-related technology in promoting and enhancing visitors' experience.

As possible examples, transnational products focusing on **tangible movable/immovable/underwater cultural heritage** such as traditional historical or archaeological monuments/sites (Roman/Greek archaeological sites/underwater ruins, medieval/gothic cities, castles/cathedrals/monasteries/sanctuaries/temples/caves), industrial sites, museums, theatres, galleries, contemporary architectural sites, as well as **intangible cultural heritage** (local cuisine or

¹⁰ Over and above the examples provided in this section, please also refer to Section 2.4 – Point 2 (amongst others) for a definition of 'transnational tourism product' on page 9.

gastronomy, handicrafts, local arts, village and rural life, etc.) using augmented reality¹¹ and immersion (virtual reality)¹² technologies for joint promotion and enhancing visitors' experience are areas that could be of interest within the context of this Call. **This list is not meant to be exhaustive.**

The Commission wishes to support projects which stimulate competitiveness through innovative activities, besides promoting different tourism products and offers than the ones already co-financed in the past through the tourism calls for proposals¹³. Visibility will eventually also be enhanced through inclusion of co-financed projects within the freshly inaugurated COSME Hub: <https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/cosme-data-hub>.

2.4. **Eligible activities**

Applicants are free to propose any kind of activities, fulfilling, as a minimum, all of the following four areas:

1. Develop a transnational tourism product related to European cultural heritage and the facilitation of its market uptake after the end of the project's co-financing period;
2. Promote and enhance the visibility of a transnational tourism product related to European cultural heritage by using CCIs-related technologies through joint transnational promotion-communication activities and by, among others, providing comprehensive and practical information to potential tourists and other tourism stakeholders;
3. Facilitate public-private partnerships and the integration of tourism enterprises, in particular small and micro enterprises, as well as public authorities, in the supply chain of transnational tourism products as well as into regional development and tourism promotional strategies;
4. Increasing SMEs skills and opportunities in transnational cooperation and developing tourism products related to European cultural heritage.

Applicants are free to propose additional kinds of activities, if duly justified as fulfilling the objectives of this call for proposals.

Examples of the types of eligible activities (*the list is only indicative and is not meant to be exhaustive*):

- Mapping projects (mapping of attractions, sites, destinations and tourism related services that could be linked to the identified theme), product development;
- Development of tourism products and services, which have excellent marketing potential, are attractive and interesting for travellers and operators, and can continue after the end of the co-financing period;
- Development and implementation of a medium-to-long-term joint communication/promotion and market uptake strategy.
- Development of creative promotional activities offering practical information and useful tools for potential tourists. Implementing awareness raising and dissemination actions (e.g.,

¹¹ For this call for proposals 'augmented reality' is meant as a live direct or indirect view of a physical, real-world environment whose elements are augmented (or supplemented) by computer-generated sensory input such as sound, video, graphics or GPS data.

¹² For this call for proposals "immersion (virtual reality - VR)" is meant as a perception of being physically present in a non-physical world. The perception is created by surrounding the user of the VR system in images, sound or other stimuli that provide an engrossing total environment.

¹³ http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/cultural/index_en.htm#cultural_tourism_projects.
http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/transnational-products/index_en.htm.

the production of audio-visuals, communication activities, publications, websites, participation in fairs, partnerships with international media, etc.).

- Using technologies offered by CCIs for enhancing visitors' experience. Development and promotion of a common narrative (audio-visual presentation) on the common theme using the augmented reality and/or immersion (virtual reality) technologies for promotion of all the sites being part of a transitional tourism product.

As also reflected in the award criteria, EASME is looking for projects that:

- **1) Are thematic in nature**

The transnational tourism product must be conceived and structured around a common theme. The theme must be related to European cultural heritage as per definition provided in Section 1.2.2 and it must be clearly identifiable. A requirement of having at least one UNESCO cultural site in the consortia is also being included¹⁴, in order to create solid partnerships and to ensure cross-fertilisation of knowledge and experience between the consortia partners. Other cultural heritage sites could learn from the experience and good practices of the UNESCO site/s, this being normally an established attraction within the touristic sector. **Therefore, the UNESCO cultural site/s must be the focal point around which the transnational product (see also section 2.3) is built.**

- **2) Develop a transnational product**

For the purpose of this call for proposals, a “transnational tourism product” is a set of tourism destinations/sites/attractions/services which take the form of a transnational route/itinerary/trail/tourism offer, either physical (based on physical infrastructure) or conceptual (linking places/destinations/attractions) and which all share a common link/feature/theme.

- **3) Promote synergies between tourism, CCIs and technology use**

Applicants are encouraged to propose exemplary, innovative and creative ideas for the development of tourism via transnational cooperation for the enhancement and promotion of transnational tourism products related to European cultural heritage. The project must demonstrate the use of CCIs-related technologies for the promotion of these tourism products and enhancing visitor's experience.

Non-eligible activities:

- Development/improvement of infrastructure.
- Promoting local offers only, without focusing on a transnational dimension of the offer, or promoting a general type of tourism only, without focusing on a concrete transnational product as a route/itinerary/trail/tourism offer do not fulfil the requirements of this call for proposals.

¹⁴ Refer to Section 6 for the full consortium eligibility criteria

2.5. **General expected results (for outputs or deliverables)**

This action will contribute to enhancing the competitiveness of the tourism sector and more concretely, will improve promotion and visibility of unique European and transnational touristic products. Therefore, this call also aims at boosting the image of Europe as a tourist destination of excellence worldwide.

In general, the project proposal shall target the following general expected results:

- Contribution to competitive and sustainable development, growth (increase in international tourism flows) and employment in the tourism and CCI sectors. Benefits and multiplier effects of synergies between tourism and CCIs-related activities on economy and people's wellbeing;
- Demonstrated contribution to the development of a transnational tourism offer related to European cultural heritage and its diversification. Creation of a "critical mass" of European cultural heritage sites and tourism-related services, providing ground for varied and attractive tourism offers;
- Better market visibility of varied and attractive European transnational tourism offers related to cultural heritage; developing comprehensive and practical information on the product for potential tourists and enhancing visitors' experience;
- Facilitation and consolidation of public-private partnerships and involvement of tourism enterprises, in particular micro and small, in the supply chain of transnational thematic tourism products as well as into regional development and tourism promotional strategies;
- Better valorisation of the European cultural heritage as well as fostering a greater sense of European identity (among tourism actors cooperating in transnational networks and among European and tourists from third countries, discovering other aspects of our European common heritage and assets).
- Solid public-private partnerships and cross-fertilisation of knowledge and experience between the participating destinations/organisations.

The applicant is free to add other, more specific, results relevant to the project proposal. This can amongst others take the form of concrete deliverables in line with the expected results and impacts.

2.6. **General indicators**

Applicants must ensure that the project outcomes and impacts are presented against all the following indicators:

- Number of countries participating in transnational cooperation projects;
- Number of SMEs involved in the development of transnational cooperation projects;
- Increased awareness about and visibility of transnational tourism offers (measurable through a survey of key stakeholders);
- Increased tourism flows in the areas concerned;
- Number of public-private partnerships created.

Moreover, specific outcome indicators have to be defined for each project proposal, depending on the concrete results/outcomes foreseen.

2.7. General requirements

2.7.1. Requirements for the preparation of the proposals

A project proposal must:

- **Be clear.** In order to ensure good structuring and clarity of the project, applicants are requested to divide the actions into work packages, having clear objectives, a clear description of the work, deliverables, milestones, and expected results measured by performance indicators. To do so, partners must fill in the template "Description of Work", provided together with this call for proposals.
- **Be coherent.** The proposal should clearly elaborate – among others - on the following aspects:
 - a) Shortcomings and specific needs to be addressed;
 - b) Identification of the target group and its justification/rationale;
 - c) Logic link between identified needs, specific objectives, proposed actions and expected results;
 - d) Complementarity of the project with other actions being taken (if any) by the applicants.
- **Be supported by a short but robust action plan.** The proposal should briefly elaborate – among others - on the following aspects:
 - a) Status quo (SWOT or similar) analysis of the current situation;
 - b) Identification of needs the project wants to address;
 - c) Analysis of alternative solutions to address the identified needs and their cost-effectiveness;
 - d) Description of and reasons for the chosen solution as proposed in the project proposal;
 - e) Estimation of costs and revenues and financial effectiveness, for the chosen solution in the medium term and a business plan after the EU co-financing period;
 - f) The extent to which the outputs are likely to lead to clear and tangible results;
 - g) Estimated impact of the proposed actions on target groups and on the local economies of targeted areas (indicators, data sources, tools and methodologies to measure short and medium-long term benefits/impact of proposed actions);
 - h) Any evidence of transformative or spill-over effects, including the extent to which additional value is or could be created by its adoption more widely across Europe.
- **Be technically and financially sustainable.** The project proposal should identify the management structure and explain how this will enable the project to meet its goals. It should also identify the staff to be involved and the distribution of tasks between partners and staff members.

The proposals should aim at the creation of successful tourism products and services, which have excellent marketing potential, are attractive and interesting for travellers and operators, and can continue after the end of the project period.

The project should develop a medium-to-long-term communication/promotion and market uptake strategy. Therefore, the project proposal shall clearly refer to how the action will be further developed after the end of the co-financing period, both technically and financially.

- **Generate real measurable results and long-term effects.** The expected results of the project should be clearly outlined (both short-term and medium-long-term results) and they should be quantifiable and measurable. The proposal should indicate how the results can be measured (i.e. which indicators and sources can be used to measure the results, also after the end of the project).

The work packages should also contain a final evaluation of results clearly demonstrating whether and how the relevant results (as well as other results specific to the proposal) have been achieved.

As also elaborated upon in the Award Criteria, it will be seen as an additional asset and added value, positively affecting the assessment of the project proposal, if:

- a) the partners' consortium covers more than 4 countries;
- b) the consortium proposes innovative activities.

3. TIMETABLE

3.1 Planning

Stages	Dates
a) Deadline for submitting applications	29/06/2017 17:00 h Brussels time
b) Evaluation period*	July – September 2017
c) Information to applicants*	November - December 2017
d) Signature of grant agreements*	February – March 2018
e) Starting date of the action*	March – April 2018

* indicative

3.2 Kick-off meeting

The applicant must foresee, in the budget proposal of the project, the participation of maximum two representatives of the project's consortium (one representative of the coordinator organisation and another partner) at the kick-off meeting in Brussels, organised by EASME, at the beginning of the implementation period.

4. BUDGET AVAILABLE AND FUNDING OF PROJECTS

The total budget earmarked for the co-financing of projects is estimated at **EUR 1 500 000**.

The maximum grant per project will be **EUR 300 000**.

EASME expects to fund **5 to 7** proposals.

The grant is limited to a maximum reimbursement rate of **75% of eligible costs**.

EASME reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be complied with:

- Applications must be submitted no later than the deadline for submitting applications referred to in section 3;
- Applications must be submitted in writing, using the electronic system specified in section 16;
- Applications must be drafted in one of the EU official languages.

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

Incomplete applications may be considered inadmissible. This refers to the requested administrative data, the proposal description and requested grant amount, and any supporting documents specified in this call for proposals.

6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

6.1. Eligible applicants

Applicants must be legal entities forming a consortium.

6.1.1 **Applicants must** be fully or partly public or private bodies; private bodies must be properly constituted and registered under national law.

6.1.2 Applicants **must correspond to the definition of at least one of the following target organisations** active in the field of tourism, cultural and creative industry (CCIs):

- Public authorities and their networks or associations at European, international, national, regional and local level or organisations acting on behalf of a public authority¹⁵;

¹⁵ For the purpose of this call for proposals, examples of eligible public authorities at national, regional and local level include but are not limited to: ministries, regions, provinces, counties, voivodeships, oblasts, cantons, districts, departments, prefectures, municipalities, city/local councils and communes.

Moreover, a network or association of regional or local public authorities will be accepted under this category of partners under the conditions that :

(i) it is formally established as a network or association and

(ii) at least one member of the association/network is a regional or local public authority (as mentioned above).

A body/organisation such as a regional or national development agency acting on behalf (or with delegated powers) of a national, regional or local public authority will also be considered eligible to fulfil this criterion provided that the delegation of powers or empowering is established by an official document submitted with the application. **A translation into English should also be provided if the original is in a different language.**

Other public authorities will also be considered, yet the onus is on the applicant to demonstrate the authority's eligibility and relevance in the context of this Call for proposals.

- Managing authorities of UNESCO cultural sites (see also footnote 15);
- Training or educational institutions including universities, research centres;
- Chambers of commerce and industry, chambers of handicrafts or similar bodies and their umbrella Associations;
- Destination management organisations and their networks/associations;
- Travel Agents and Tour Operators and their umbrella associations;
- Not-for profit/Non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations, foundations, think-tanks, umbrella associations, networks or federations of public or private bodies, whose core activity falls under tourism, CCIs;
- International, European and national organisations/associations;
- Federations and associations operating in partnership across the borders of a number of countries with a proven cross-border outreach;
- Micro, Small and Medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) acting in the tourism or CCIs sectors;
- National, regional, local tourism organisations, public and private agencies related to tourism, cultural heritage promotion or regional development;

Affiliated entities, i.e. legal entities having a legal or capital link with applicants, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation, may take part in the action **as applicants** (one of the 5-8 members/partners¹⁶) in order to declare eligible costs.

6.1.3 Only applications from legal entities established in the following countries are eligible:

- EU Member States;
- countries participating in the COSME programme pursuant to Article 6 of the COSME Regulation¹⁷.

¹⁶ Refer also to Section 6.2.1

¹⁷ The following groups of countries are eligible for participation in COSME according to Article 6 COSME Regulation:

- a. European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries which are members of the European Economic Area (EEA), in accordance with the conditions laid down in the EEA Agreement, and other European countries when agreements and procedures so allow;
- b. acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidates in accordance with the general principles and general terms and conditions for the participation of those countries in the Union's programmes established in the respective Framework Agreements and Association Council Decisions, or similar arrangements;
- c. countries falling within the scope of the European neighbourhood policies, when agreements and procedures so allow and in accordance with the general principles and general terms and conditions for the participation of those countries in the Union's programmes established in the respective Framework Agreements, Protocols to Association Agreements and Association Council Decisions.

The updated list of eligible third countries is available on the following webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/cosme/index_en.htm. Proposals from applicants in Article 6 countries may be selected provided that, on the date of award, agreements have been signed setting out the arrangements for the participation of those countries in the programme.

6.2. Eligible consortia

6.2.1 The consortium must gather a **minimum of 5** and a **maximum of 8 members/partners** - different legal entities - covering at least **4 eligible countries** - as listed under section 6.1.3;

6.2.2 The consortium must be composed of at least:

- a. one managing authority of a **UNESCO cultural site included in the World Heritage list**¹⁸. The onus is on the applicant to demonstrate the direct link between the UNESCO cultural site and the managing authority. In case the UNESCO cultural site is a collective¹⁹ World Heritage listing, the managing authority of one (or more) of these sites (but not necessarily all) would also be eligible; and
- b. one **SME**²⁰ – Small and Medium Sized enterprise - **acting in the tourism or the CCIs subsector cultural heritage**; and
- c. one **national or regional or local public authority**.

6.3 Supporting documents:

Applicants must demonstrate that they fully respect the eligibility criteria set out in this call for proposals. Adequate supporting documents have to be provided with the application. Moreover, the proposal has to clearly indicate the name of the applicants fulfilling the above-mentioned eligibility criteria.

6.4 Implementation period

The duration of projects must be between **15-18 months**.

Applications for projects scheduled to run for a shorter or longer period than that specified in this call for proposals will not be accepted.

7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

7.1. Exclusion

The authorising officer shall exclude an applicant from participating in call for proposals procedures where:

- (a) the applicant is bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, where its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by a court, where it is in an arrangement with creditors, where its business activities are suspended, or where it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under national laws or regulations;
- (b) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the applicant is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions in accordance with the law of the country in which it is established, with those of the country in

¹⁸ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/?&type=cultural>

¹⁹ Certain UNESCO cultural sites encompass different sites in different localities

²⁰ SME is defined as a company engaged in economic activities and having less than 250 employees, with a turnover of less than EUR 50 million or a balance sheet total of less than EUR 43 million (http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/facts-figures-analysis/sme-definition/index_en.htm).

which the authorising officer is located or those of the country of the performance of the contract;

- (c) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the applicant is guilty of grave professional misconduct by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the applicant belongs, or by having engaged in any wrongful conduct which has an impact on its professional credibility where such conduct denotes wrongful intent or gross negligence, including, in particular, any of the following:
- (i) fraudulently or negligently misrepresenting information required for the verification of the absence of grounds for exclusion or the fulfilment of selection criteria or in the performance of a contract, a grant agreement or a grant decision;
 - (ii) entering into agreement with other applicants with the aim of distorting competition;
 - (iii) violating intellectual property rights;
 - (iv) attempting to influence the decision-making process of the Agency during the award procedure;
 - (v) attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon it undue advantages in the award procedure;
- (d) it has been established by a final judgment that the applicant is guilty of any of the following:
- (i) fraud, within the meaning of Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995;
 - (ii) corruption, as defined in Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of Member States of the European Union, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 May 1997, and in Article 2(1) of Council Framework Decision 2003/568/JHA, as well as corruption as defined in the law of the country where the contracting authority is located, the country in which the applicant is established or the country of the performance of the contract;
 - (iii) participation in a criminal organisation, as defined in Article 2 of Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA;
 - (iv) money laundering or terrorist financing, as defined in Article 1 of Directive 2005/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council;
 - (v) terrorist-related offences or offences linked to terrorist activities, as defined in Articles 1 and 3 of Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA, respectively, or inciting, aiding, abetting or attempting to commit such offences, as referred to in Article 4 of that Decision;
 - (vi) child labour or other forms of trafficking in human beings as defined in Article 2 of Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council;
- (e) the applicant has shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations in the performance of a contract, a grant agreement or a grant decision financed by the Union's budget, which has led to its early termination or to the application of liquidated damages or other contractual penalties, or which has been discovered following checks, audits or investigations by an authorising officer, OLAF or the Court of Auditors;
- (f) it has been established by a final judgment or final administrative decision that the applicant has committed an irregularity within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95.
- (g) for the situations of grave professional misconduct, fraud, corruption, other criminal offences, significant deficiencies in the performance of the contract or irregularity, the applicant is subject to:

- (i) facts established in the context of audits or investigations carried out by the Court of Auditors, OLAF or internal audit, or any other check, audit or control performed under the responsibility of an authorising officer of an EU institution, of a European office or of an EU agency or body;
- (ii) non-final administrative decisions which may include disciplinary measures taken by the competent supervisory body responsible for the verification of the application of standards of professional ethics;
- (iii) decisions of the ECB, the EIB, the European Investment Fund or international organisations;
- (iv) decisions of the Commission relating to the infringement of the Union's competition rules or of a national competent authority relating to the infringement of Union or national competition law.
- (v) decisions of exclusion by an authorising officer of an EU institution, of a European office or of an EU agency or body.

7.2. Remedial measures

If an applicant declares one of the situations of exclusion listed above (see section 7.4), it should indicate the measures it has taken to remedy the exclusion situation, thus demonstrating its reliability. This may include e.g. technical, organisational and personnel measures to prevent further occurrence, compensation of damage or payment of fines. The relevant documentary evidence which illustrates the remedial measures taken must be provided in annex to the declaration. This does not apply for situations referred in point (d) of section 7.1 .

7.3. Rejection from the call for proposals

The authorising officer shall not award a grant to an applicant who:

- a. is in an exclusion situation established in accordance with section 7.1;
- b. has misrepresented the information required as a condition for participating in the procedure or has failed to supply that information;
- c. was previously involved in the preparation of calls for proposal documents where this entails a distortion of competition that cannot be remedied otherwise.

The same exclusion criteria apply to affiliated entities.

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

7.4. Supporting documents

Applicants must provide a **declaration on their honour** certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in Articles 106(1) and 107 FR, by filling in the relevant form attached to the application form accompanying this call for proposals.

8. SELECTION CRITERIA

8.1. Financial capacity

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:

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.

c) Grants for an action \geq EUR 750 000, in addition:

- an audit report produced by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the last financial year available.

In the event of an application grouping several applicants (consortium), the above thresholds apply by each applicant or affiliated entity.

The above-listed documents will have to be provided at later stage, via the electronic submission tool and only upon request of the EASME.

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 12.4 below);
- where applicable, require the joint and several financial liability of all the co-beneficiaries;
- reject the application.

8.2. Operational capacity

Applicants must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed action.

In this respect, applicants have to submit the following supporting documents:

- curriculum vitae (CV), preferably in European CV format <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu> or description of the profile of the main persons primarily responsible for managing and implementing the different activities of the action. The CV should be accompanied, where appropriate, (like in the field of research and education) by a list of relevant publications/projects managed);
- a list of previous projects and activities performed during the last three years and connected to the policy field of the call for proposals or to the actions to be carried out;
- a description of the technical equipment, tools or facilities and patents at the disposal of the applicant in relation to the proposal (if relevant).

9. AWARD CRITERIA

Eligible applications will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria.

1. RELEVANCE OF THE ACTIONS IN VIEW OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS	30
<p><i>How relevant is the proposal in view of the objectives of the call?</i></p> <p><i>Are the project concept and the activities proposed in line with the Call's expected results?</i></p> <p><i>How strategically chosen, concretely involved and relevant are the different types of project partners?</i></p> <p><i>Has the project proposal a real transnational dimension, whereby the proposed activities demonstrate a European added value?</i></p> <p><i>Has an effort been made to involve more than 4 countries?</i></p> <p><i>How clearly does the project identify the target group/s?</i></p>	
2. QUALITY OF THE PROPOSED ACTIONS	30
<p><i>How clear, coherent and ambitious is the work plan (including preparedness for the evaluation and sequential elaboration of a qualitative proposal)?</i></p> <p><i>How appropriate, practical and innovative are the activities proposed (including the internal plan of action/work packages)?</i></p> <p><i>Is there a logical link between identified needs, specific objectives, proposed actions and expected results? Is this link well described and justified?</i></p> <p><i>How suitable is the contribution of each partner to the activities proposed?</i></p> <p><i>To what extent is the work plan clearly defined in terms of schedule, milestones and deliverables?</i></p> <p><i>To what extent can the methodology and management set up be effective and ensure the high quality of the action proposed?</i></p>	

3. IMPACT ON TARGET AUDIENCE	30
<p><i>To what extent is the project likely to have a tangible impact on the target groups?</i></p> <p><i>To what extent do the expected results of the project contribute to the diversification of the European tourist services / products, enhancing synergies between tourism and CCIs, increasing tourism flows and to the better valorisation of Europe's cultural heritage?</i></p> <p><i>Is the proposal suggesting clear, realistic and practical impact indicators? Does the project contribute to creating a real, measurable impact on tourism development, on CCIs and on the economy in general (e.g. increasing tourists' flows, development of tourism SMEs)?</i></p> <p><i>To what extent does the proposal facilitate project continuity, with regard to the further development and promotion of the transnational tourism product? Is the partnership and the management set-up able to guarantee successful continuation of the project after the EU co-financing? Are concrete measures planned in order to ensure that the project can be continued after the EU co-financing period expires?</i></p> <p><i>Are the proposed dissemination activities of the expected results convincing? How effective and convincing are the promotional and communication activities?</i></p> <p><i>Are the expected multiplying effects reasonable? To what extent does the proposal include elements of follow-up and transferability at EU level?</i></p>	
4. BUDGET AND COST-EFFECTIVENESS	10
<p><i>To what extent is the detailed budget coherent with the work plan of the proposal?</i></p> <p><i>To what extent is the budget clear and detailed, as well as effective, to implement the action? Does the breakdown of the budget, category by category, offer a way of ensuring that the amount of the grant awarded is reasonable in relation to the expected results?</i></p> <p><i>Do the expected results stand in a reasonable relationship to the amount of the grant? Does the budget seem justified when compared to the expected impacts?</i></p> <p><i>To what extent is the proposed expenditure necessary for the implementation of the project?</i></p>	
Maximum total score:	100

In order to be considered for funding, proposals will need to have passed an overall threshold of 70% in terms of total score. In addition, thresholds of 50% will be applied to each individual award criterion described above in order to ensure a consistent minimum quality for all award criteria. Proposals will be ranked according to their total score.

10. LEGAL COMMITMENTS

In the event of a grant awarded by the EASME, 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 procedures in view to formalise the obligations of the parties.

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

The authorising officer may draw a reserve list of proposals that have passed the above thresholds. In the event that the original budget of the action is increased or that selected proposal(s) fail to conclude the grant agreement, a grant may be awarded to proposals from the reserve list.

11. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW PROCEDURES

Unsuccessful applicants may request the review of the admissibility and eligibility procedure and the evaluation procedure with regard to their proposal as specified in section V of the Guide for applicants.

12. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

12.1 General principles

a) Non-cumulative award

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.²¹

b) Non-retroactivity

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-financing

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

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

²¹ Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC (Official Journal of the European Union L 94, 28.3.2014, p. 65)).

d) Balanced budget

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 Info-euro website available at: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/inforeuro/inforeuro_en.cfm.

e) Implementation contracts/subcontracting

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.

In the event of procurement exceeding EUR 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 2014/24/EU²² or contracting entities in the meaning of Directive 2014/25/EU²³ shall abide by the applicable national public procurement rules. The beneficiary is expected to clearly document the tendering procedure and retain the documentation for the event of an audit.

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 parties.

Applications may not envisage provision of financial support to third parties.

²² Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC (Official Journal of the European Union L 94, 28.3.2014, p. 65).

²³ Directive 2014/25/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on procurement by entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors and repealing Directive 2004/17/EC (Official Journal of the European Union L 94, 28.3.2014, p. 243).

12.2 Funding forms

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 EU contribution requested**

The EU contribution is limited to a maximum reimbursement rate of eligible costs indicated in section 4. Consequently, part of the total eligible expenses entered in the estimative budget must be financed from sources other than the EU grant (see section 12.1c).

➤ **Eligible costs**

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 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 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 12.1 b).

- ✓ 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.

Further details are included in the model grant agreement.

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 costs incurred by 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 :

A. Direct personnel costs²⁴

Types of eligible personnel costs

A.1 Personnel costs are eligible if they are related to personnel working for the beneficiary under an employment contract (or equivalent appointing act) and assigned to the action ('**costs for employees (or equivalent)**'). They must be limited to salaries (including during parental leave), social security contributions, taxes and other costs included in the **remuneration**, if they arise from national law or the employment contract (or equivalent appointing act).

They may also include **additional remuneration** for personnel assigned to the action (including payments on the basis of supplementary contracts regardless of their nature), if:

- (a) it is part of the beneficiary's usual remuneration practices and is paid in a consistent manner whenever the same kind of work or expertise is required;
- (b) the criteria used to calculate the supplementary payments are objective and generally applied by the beneficiary, regardless of the source of funding used.

A.2 The **costs for natural persons working under a direct contract** with the beneficiary other than an employment contract or **seconded by a third party against payment** are eligible personnel costs, if:

- (a) the person works under the beneficiary's instructions and, unless otherwise agreed with the beneficiary, on the beneficiary's premises;
- (b) the result of the work carried out belongs to the beneficiary, and
- (c) the costs are not significantly different from those for personnel performing similar tasks under an employment contract with the beneficiary.

The costs of the personnel of **national administrations** are eligible 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.

Further details of the calculation of personnel costs are included in the model grant agreement.

B. Direct costs of subcontracting (including related duties, taxes and charges, such as non-deductible value added tax (VAT) paid by beneficiaries that are not public bodies acting as public authority) are eligible if the conditions set out in the grant agreement are met.

C. Direct costs of providing financial support to third parties are not eligible.

D. Other direct costs

D.1 Travel costs and related subsistence allowances (including related duties, taxes and charges, such as non-deductible value added tax (VAT) paid by beneficiaries that are not public bodies

²⁴ Based on Commission Decision C(2017) 1118 of 23.2.2017 the personal costs of beneficiaries being SME owners or natural persons both without a salary can be eligible on the basis of unit costs. For their calculation see Article 6.2 Point 1.4 of the H2020 AGA – Annotated Grant Agreement http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/amga/h2020-amga_en.pdf (in AGA v2.2 on page 77).

acting as public authority) are eligible if they are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel.

D.2 The **depreciation costs of equipment, infrastructure or other assets** (new or second-hand) as recorded in the beneficiary's accounts are eligible, if they were purchased in accordance with the conditions set out in the grant agreement and written off in accordance with international accounting standards and the beneficiary's usual accounting practices.

The **costs of renting or leasing** equipment, infrastructure or other assets (including related duties, taxes and charges, such as non-deductible value added tax (VAT) paid by beneficiaries that are not public bodies acting as public authority) are also eligible, if they do not exceed the depreciation costs of similar equipment, infrastructure or assets and do not include any financing fees.

The only portion of the costs that will be taken into account is that which corresponds to the duration of the action and rate of actual use for the purposes of the action.

D.3 **Costs of other goods and services** (including related duties, taxes and charges, such as non-deductible value added tax (VAT) paid by beneficiaries that are not public bodies acting as public authority) are eligible, if they are purchased specifically for the action and in accordance with the conditions set out in the grant agreement.

Such goods and services include, for instance, consumables and supplies, dissemination, protection of results, certificates on the financial statements (if they are required by the Agreement), translations and publications.

E. Eligible indirect costs (overheads)

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

Indirect costs are eligible if they are declared on the basis of the flat-rate of 7% of the eligible direct costs.

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

Applicants's attention is drawn to the fact that in the case of beneficiaries receiving an operating grant²⁵ financed by the EU or Euratom budget, they cannot declare indirect costs for the period covered by the operating grant.

➤ **Ineligible costs**

- (a) costs related to return on capital;
- (b) debt and debt service charges;
- (c) provisions for future losses or debts ;
- (d) interest owed;
- (e) doubtful debts;
- (f) currency exchange losses;

²⁵ For the definition, see Article 121(1)(b) of Regulation 2015/1929 of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 (OJ L 218, 26.10.2012, p.1): '**operating grant**' means direct financial contribution, by way of donation, from the budget in order to finance the functioning of a body which pursues an aim of general EU interest or has an objective forming part of and supporting an EU policy.

- (g) bank costs charged by the beneficiary's bank for transfers from the Agency;
- (h) excessive or reckless expenditure;
- (i) deductible VAT;
- (j) costs incurred during suspension of the implementation of the action;
- (k) in-kind contributions provided by third parties;
- (l) costs declared under another EU or Euratom grant (including grants awarded by a Member State and financed by the EU or Euratom budget and grants awarded by bodies other than the Agency for the purpose of implementing the EU or Euratom budget); in particular, indirect costs if the beneficiary is already receiving an operating grant financed by the EU or Euratom budget in the same period.

Further details are included in the model grant agreement.

➤ **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 documents:

- a final report providing details of the implementation and results of the action;
- the final financial statement of costs actually incurred;
- a certificate on the financial statements of the action for each beneficiary, if
 - the (cumulative) amount of payments it requests as reimbursement of actual costs (and for which no certificate has yet been submitted) is EUR 325 000 or more and
 - the maximum grant amount indicated, for that beneficiary in the estimated budget (see Annex 2) as reimbursement of actual costs is EUR 750 000 or more.

In the event of non-execution or clearly inadequate execution of an activity planned in the work programme annexed to the grant agreement, the final grant will be reduced accordingly.

EU grants may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the action. **Profit shall be defined as a surplus of the receipts over the eligible costs incurred by the beneficiary or its affiliated entities**, when the request is made for payment of the balance. In this respect, where a profit is made, the EASME 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.

12.3 Payment arrangements:

Pre-financing payment

A pre-financing payment corresponding to 70% of the grant amount will be transferred to the beneficiary within 30 days of the date when the last of the two parties signs the agreement, provided all requested guarantees have been received.

Final payment

EASME 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 12.2 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 EASME through a recovery order.

12.4 Pre-financing guarantee

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 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.

13. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

Beneficiaries will be requested to submit the following reports:

- A technical progress report, not linked to a request for payment, covering the first half of the project;
- A final technical and financial report, linked to the request for the payment of the balance.

Further details are included in the model grant agreement.

14. PUBLICITY

14.1 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 in accordance with the details provided in the grant agreement.

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

In addition to the text and logo relevant to the EU programme, the authorising officer will provide beneficiaries with a disclaimer stating that the EU is not responsible for the views displayed in the publications and/or in conjunction with the activities for which the grant is used.

14.2 By EASME

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.

EASME will publish the following information:

- name of the beneficiary,
- address of the beneficiary when the latter is a legal person, region when the beneficiary is a natural person, as defined on NUTS 2 level²⁶ if he/she is domiciled within EU or equivalent if domiciled outside EU,
- 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.

15. 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 45/2001²⁷ 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 proposals will be processed solely for that purpose by the Head of Unit A.1 of the EASME. Details concerning the processing of personal data are available on the privacy statement at: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/support/legal_notice/h2020-ssps-grants_en.pdf

Personal data may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) should the beneficiary be in one of the situations mentioned in Article 106(1) and 107 of the Financial Regulation 966/2012²⁸ (for more information see the Privacy Statement on: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/explained/management/protecting/privacy_statement_edes_en.pdf).

16. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals must be submitted in accordance with the requirements of section 5 and by the deadline specified under section 3.

➤ Electronic submission

²⁶ Commission Regulation (EC) No 105/2007 of 1 February 2007 amending the annexes to Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS) (Official Journal of the European Union L 39 of 10.02.2007).

²⁷ Official Journal of the European Union L 8/1 of 12.01.2001.

²⁸ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=celex%3A32012R0966>.

Applicants are requested to go to <http://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/cosme-eu-programme-competitiveness-enterprises-and-small-and-medium-sized-enterprises-smes> and follow the procedure for submitting an application.

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, EASME may contact the applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process.

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

➤ **Contacts**

EASME is available to answer questions relating to the content of the present call for proposals. All questions must be sent by e-mail to:

EASME-COSME-CULTURAL-TOURISM-2017@ec.europa.eu

Answers will be published at <https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/cosme> (refer to this specific call under "Open calls for proposals").

17. ANNEXES:

- Guide for applicants
- Description of the action template
- Estimated Budget template
- Model Grant agreement
- List of previous projects template