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Europe 2020: Employment Policies

**Sectorial Employment Challenges, Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship
Skills, Mobility and Employment Services**

BUDGET HEADING 04.04.01.01
Delivering on skills for growth and jobs

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

2013

VP/2013/010

Version 20/11/2013

Given the likelihood of a large number of requests for information, you are asked not to contact us by telephone.

Questions should be sent by e-mail only to: EMPL-VP-2013-010@ec.europa.eu

To ensure a more rapid response, it would be helpful if applicants send their queries in English, French or German.

The English version of the call is the original.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	3
2	POLICY BACKGROUND	5
3	OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL AND TYPES OF ACTION	7
4	TIMETABLE	17
5	AVAILABLE BUDGETARY ALLOCATION FOR THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS	17
6	SUBMISSION AND EXAMINATION OF GRANT APPLICATIONS	17
6.1	Submission of the applications.....	17
6.2	Start date and duration of the projects.....	17
6.3	Co-financing rates	18
6.4	EVALUATION CRITERIA.....	18
6.4.1	Exclusion criteria.....	18
6.4.2	Eligibility criteria	18
6.4.3	Selection criteria.....	22
6.4.4	Award criteria.....	23
7	PRACTICAL PROCEDURES.....	24
7.1	Where can the application form be found?	24
7.2	Where does the application need to be sent?.....	24
7.3	What next? Accepted and rejected applications	25
8	PROGRESS – ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS FOR CALLS FOR PROPOSALS 2013	26
8.1	Guide on how the activities shall be carried out	26
	ANNEX I FINANCIAL GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS.....	23
	ANNEX II MODEL FOR TENDER SPECIFICATIONS FOR SUBCONTRACTING EXTERNAL EXPERTISE	24

BUDGET HEADING 04.04.01.01

Skills and Employment,
EU Sector Skills Councils,
Restructuring

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. PROGRESS Introduction

PROGRESS¹ is the EU employment and social solidarity programme, set up to provide financial support for the attainment of the European Union's objectives in employment, social affairs and equal opportunities as set out in the Social Agenda² as well as to the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy. This new strategy, which has a strong social dimension, aims at turning the EU into a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy delivering high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. The European Union needs coherent and complementary contributions from different policy strands, methods and instruments, including the PROGRESS programme, to support the Member States in delivering on the Europe 2020's goals.

The PROGRESS mission is to strengthen the EU's contribution in support of Member States' commitments and efforts to create more and better jobs and to build a more cohesive society. To this effect, PROGRESS is instrumental in:

- Providing analysis and policy advice on PROGRESS policy areas;
- Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies in PROGRESS policy areas;
- Promoting policy transfer, learning and support among Member States on EU objectives and priorities; and
- Relaying the views of the stakeholders and society at large.

¹ Decision No 1672/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity — Progress, JO L 315 of 15.11.2006

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:2006D1672:20100408:EN:HTML>

² Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Renewed social agenda: Opportunities, access and solidarity in 21st century Europe, COM/2008/0412 final of 02.07.2008

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0412:FIN:EN:PDF>

More specifically, PROGRESS supports:

- The implementation of the European Employment Strategy (section 1);
- The implementation of the open method of coordination in the field of social protection and inclusion (section 2);
- The improvement of the working environment and conditions including health and safety at work and reconciling work and family life (section 3);
- The effective implementation of the principle of non-discrimination and promotion of its mainstreaming in all EU policies (section 4);
- The effective implementation of the principle of gender equality and promotion of its mainstreaming in all EU policies (section 5).

The call for proposals is issued in the context of the implementation of the 2013 annual work plan which can be consulted at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=987>

1.2. New EU Programme

As PROGRESS is ending in 2013, the Commission has adopted its proposal³ for a new programme on the 6th of October 2011, the Programme for Social Change and innovation (PSCI)⁴. This new programme should come into effect on 1st January 2014. The Commission's proposal for the new Programme integrates and extends the coverage of three existing programmes: Progress (Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity), EURES (European Employment Services) and the European Progress Microfinance Facility.

The general objectives of the programme are defined as below:

- a) Strengthen ownership of the Union objectives in the employment, social and working conditions fields among key Union and national policy-makers, as well as other interested parties in order to bring about concrete and coordinated actions at both Union and Member State level.
- b) Support the development of adequate, accessible and efficient social protection systems and labour markets and facilitate policy reform, by promoting good governance, mutual learning and social innovation.
- c) Modernise Union law in line with the Smart Regulation principles and ensure that Union law on matters relating to working conditions is effectively applied.
- d) Promote workers' geographical mobility and boost employment opportunities by developing Union labour markets that are open and accessible to all.
- e) Promote employment and social inclusion by increasing the availability and accessibility of microfinance for vulnerable groups and micro-enterprises, and by increasing access to finance for social enterprises.

The PROGRESS axe of the new Programme is foreseen to continue the current activities of PROGRESS (i.e. policy coordination, sharing of best practices, capacity-building and testing innovative policies). It would also increase its contribution to social policy experimentation and to the identification of good practices, the aim being to up-scale the

³ COM(2011) 609 final

⁴ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0609:FIN:EN:PDF>

most successful measures with the support of the new European Social Fund.

The European Parliament and the Council reached a political agreement regarding the new Programme on the 28 June 2013, including for a new name the “EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation” (EaSI)⁵.

All activities commencing after the 1st of January 2014 under this contract will have to take into consideration the changes related to the new Programme and will have to satisfy with the implementing conditions including in term of monitoring and evaluation. The Commission might change the objectives, activities, specifications and deliverables of the contract accordingly, during the extension for 2014 and onwards.

2 POLICY BACKGROUND

Section 1 of the PROGRESS programme is intended to support the implementation of the European Employment Strategy (EES) by:

- improving understanding of the employment situation and prospects, in particular through analysis and studies and the development of statistics and common indicators within the framework of the EES,
- monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the European Employment Guidelines and Recommendations and their impact, for example through the Joint Employment Report, and analysing the interaction between the EES and general economic and social policy and other policy areas,
- organising discussions on policies, good practice and innovative approaches, mainstreaming of the needs of vulnerable groups, and promoting mutual learning in the context of the EES,
- raising awareness, disseminating information and promoting the debate about employment challenges, policies and the implementation of national reform programmes, including among regional and local actors, social partners, civil society and other stakeholders.

The Progress programme supports also the activities aimed at achieving the employment objective fixed within the Europe 2020 Strategy, the new European Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

In April 2012, the Commission launched the Communication "Towards a job-rich recovery"⁶ heading the so called Employment Package and came forward with a set of **concrete measures to support the Europe 2020 strategy**.

The Employment package emphasised, the job creation potential of key sectors. The EU is faced with the need to make profound structural adjustments to its economy as identified in the Europe 2020 Strategy. These result from the transition towards a green, low carbon and resource efficient economy, the demographic ageing of our societies and rapid technological advances. Raising to these challenges and turning them into opportunities, will require a quick and decisive action from all key economic and labour market players for the foreseeable future. These developments will help increase competitiveness and provide important sources of growth and jobs, as well as address

⁵ <http://portal.empl.cec/Units/01/Pages/PROGRESS.aspx>

⁶ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Towards a job-rich recovery, COM(2012) 173 final of 18.4.2012

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0173:FIN:EN:PDF>

economic and social needs. The Annual Growth Survey (AGS) 2012⁷ identifies three main sectors, each of which offers an important job creation potential:

– The demand for green skills in many sectors of the economy has been increasing in recent years and is expected to grow further. This is not only a direct result of **positive employment growth** in the green/eco sectors, but also indirectly as a consequence of the constant pressure on costs of energy and resources across the economy. These indirect effects are widespread and result in the increasing importance of addressing green skills needs to facilitate the transition towards resource and energy efficient economies. This is leading to the redefinition of many skill sets and a new skills-mix for many occupations. Solid labour market intelligence on skill needs and supportive employment policies are thus essential to underpin this transformation. Managing such an important structural economic change calls for joined-up efforts and good practice sharing on the part of the EU and Member States, as well as relevant stakeholders.

- Following the 'Key Actions for ICT Employment' annexed to the Employment Package⁸ President Barroso launched in March 2013 a multi-stakeholder partnership also known as the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs⁹, to tackle the issues of a projected shortfall of up to 900,000 ICT professionals in Europe by 2015. The Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs will deliver concrete actions, which can be implemented in the short-term and have high local impact. It will build on existing programmes and best practices that could be scaled-up. The following are some of the objectives of the actions:

- Reduce labour market mismatches by stimulating professional and geographical mobility
- Improve the image and attractiveness of ICT careers
- Offer training packages co-designed with the ICT industry
- Offer more aligned degrees and curricula at vocational and university level education that will respond to the needs of the labour market

The success of the Grand Coalition depends on the involvement of the large scale stakeholders invited to make pledges to develop tangible actions under the above described areas.

The Grand Coalition will help accelerate and intensify efforts initiated by other European policies, such as the Digital Agenda for Europe, the e-Skills Strategy¹⁰, the Employment Package, the Opening up Education Initiative, the Rethinking Education Strategy and the Youth employment package¹¹.

– **Employment in the EU health and social care sectors is growing fast** due to population ageing and an expansion of services to better meet quality requirements and rising demand for personalised care and professional social services. This rapid expansion (twice the employment growth as compared to the rest of the economy) suggests these sectors will remain a key driver for new jobs in the years to come. To

⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2012_en.pdf

⁸ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Towards a job-rich recovery, COM(2012) 173 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0173:FIN:EN:PDF>

⁹ For more information about the Grand Coalition priorities please consult the . <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/grand-coalition-digital-jobs-0>

¹⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/ict/e-skills/index_en.htm

¹¹ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012DC0727:EN:NOT>

exploit this job creation potential, these sectors have to overcome several challenges including – their image and appeal to new potential recruits, the uptake and integration of new technologies requiring new skill mixes and imbalances in skills levels and working patterns. Activities contributing to the well-being of families and individuals at home such as care services (child and elderly) and housework services, called Personal and Household Services have an important job-creation potential. The demand for the domestic provision of these services is expected to increase due to population ageing in all Member States, combined with the expected decline of the number of potential carers within the family circle. Consequently, new services covering broad ranges of activities are created and are a source of job creation.

European Sector Skills Councils have been promoted by the European Commission with a view to acquiring a deeper understanding of skill needs at sectoral level. The "Employment Package" called for higher investment in skills to better anticipate economic change, skills shortages and swiftly address skills mismatches. The Commission supports the creation of European Sector Skills Councils based on feasibility studies, as announced in the Europe 2020 flagship initiative "An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs". They will provide a focal point at sector level for improving skills intelligence, highlighting mismatches and bottlenecks and for shaping the educational and training offer. They will also facilitate peer-learning at national level by creating a European platform of exchange between labour market actors, skills intelligence observatories and education and training providers active in the sector.

3 OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL AND TYPES OF ACTION

3.1. Objectives of the call

The overall objective of the Call is to encourage new forms of collaboration through partnerships between public and private actors on the labour market (such as public and private employment services, companies including SME's, chambers of commerce, training and education providers, social partners, labour market intelligence entities) to address persistent skills shortages and mismatches to help fill the gap between labour supply and demand in the EU.

The activities should aim to achieve the following technical objectives:

1. Delivery to the end users of specific employment service(s) leading to sustainable placements in jobs and apprenticeships or other measureable outcomes by a mixed set of actors, including measures to support labour mobility at national and European level.
2. Provision of analytical and methodological evidence based findings related to the form and working method of the partnership between the co-operating organisations experienced during the development and implementation of the actions, including an assessment of success and failure factors, challenges and solutions for shortcomings.
3. Development of concrete labour market intelligence tools, allowing for the identification of skills gaps and needs resulting from structural shifts to a low carbon economy, as well as their impact on changing skills sets.

Measures to be financed under this call should be concrete and action oriented and carry a true added value in terms of making a difference where rolled out.

Some of the options to be envisaged could cover:

- implementation and delivery of placement and job insertion initiatives,
- labour market intelligence gathering,
- training measures,
- establishment of networks and the development and exchange of best practice through targeted events.

The Call will consist of four strands in line with the priority areas for job creation previously identified:

i) The first strand will seek to foster joint initiatives aimed at (a) anticipating green skills needs to facilitate matching process between labour supply and demand (b) supporting structural and sectorial adaptation through improving worker adaptability and mobility. The sectorial focus of this part of the call covers **three key sectors**: (1) Construction¹², (2) Recycling (included in Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste management and remediation activities) and (3) Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply. This strand is in line with the objectives set out in the Commission's Employment Package of 2012 (COM (2012) 173 final).

ii) The second strand of the Call will identify effective implementation measures, good practices and innovative approaches with a special emphasis on the employment potential of **ICTs and the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs** (SWD(2012)96 final thus contributing to the implementation of the skills dimension of the flagship initiative "An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs" and in particular to the Employment Package.

iii) The third strand will identify effective implementation measures, good practices and innovative approaches with a special emphasis on **personal and household services** (SWD(2012)95 final.¹³ thus contributing to the implementation of the skills and jobs dimension of the flagship initiative "An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs" and in particular to the Employment Package

iv) The fourth strand will support the consolidation of **European Sector Skills Councils** that are beyond the feasibility phase. These bodies will provide a focal point at sector level for improving skills intelligence, highlighting skills mismatches and bottlenecks and for shaping the educational and training offer. They will also facilitate peer-learning at national level by creating a European platform of exchange between labour market actors, skills intelligence observatories and education and training providers active in the sector.

Structural shifts in the economy leading to a need for anticipating change and restructuring at European, sectoral, regional and company level, as well as the implications for skills policies and actors concerned will serve as backdrop to this Call.

¹² Construction including building renovation is an important sector for energy efficiency.

¹³ ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=7623&langId=en

3.2. Types of actions

An application must only be dedicated to one action presented below.

3.1 Green jobs

Projects financed under this strand shall have a sectorial focus and shall propose actions dedicated to one of **three targeted sectors** as per NACE nomenclature:

- Construction (including building renovation);
- Recycling (included in Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste management and remediation activities);
- Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply.

These sectors have been selected based on their job creation potential and identified green skills shortages.

The green jobs strand with its focus on addressing the skill needs and gaps in three sectors is giving priority to the following activities:

- Developing and testing labour market intelligence tools aimed at identifying and anticipating key green skills bottlenecks through close collaboration with companies, education and training providers and specialised market/skills intelligence organisations.
- Identifying good practice examples of industry friendly green skills assessment and forecasting tools enabling the detection of green skills gaps and delivery of industry-relevant training.
- Developing and pilot testing of the actual green re-/up-skilling projects with a special attention given to schemes dedicated to training of the trainers and other methods for generating leverage/multiplier effects (e.g. addressed to decision makers, using modern communication channels or creating accessible repository of training materials) and to activating the most at risk from this economic structural shift.
- Mobilising key stakeholders at Member State, regional and sector levels in the spirit of social partnership with a view to becoming involved in identifying and addressing skill gaps with very concrete and action oriented projects. This may include also innovative ways to promote attractiveness of green and/or greener jobs in the targeted sectors.
- Evaluation of the actions undertaken, in order to improve subsequent waves of the intervention. This should include success and failure factors well as pointers and recommendations for creating other sustainable partnership models or for scaling up such initiatives.

Outcome-based approach

Proposals submitted under this strand need to clearly indicate the expected outcome, for example, in relation to the identification of skills needs and training/support measures put in place to address the identified gaps. Applicants are free to choose the methods, tools, etc. for implementing the necessary measures that will deliver clear outcomes.

The projects can also include transferring and further up-scaling activities previously evaluated as a successful practice into at least one other Member State, thus involving a minimum of two Member States. This can, for example, be accomplished by using the applicant organisations' network of agencies or branches or working in partnership with

other EU networks in relation to the objectives of this call.

Applicant organisations should work together by relying on their specific strengths and expertise. The project must include applicant organisations from at least two Member States in order to facilitate good practice sharing and mutual learning.

A balanced distribution of funding between the three targeted sectors will be sought.

For illustrative purposes, the expected average size of a grant awarded under this strand would be in the range of EUR 900.000 project for each of the targeted sectors.

3.2. ICT and the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs

The overarching priority of this strand of the Call is to contribute to fill bottleneck job vacancies in the ICT and Digital Jobs area by stimulating labour mobility across the 28 Member States. This effort should complement and strengthen the role played by the Grand Coalition in promoting and supporting ICT skills and jobs, contributing to reaching the employment targets and overall competitiveness aims of the Europe 2020 strategy.

The main objective of this part of the Call is to encourage EU mobility to reduce the gap between labour supply and demand for ICT jobs and to align labour market organisations to the objectives pursued by the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs.

The goal of the Grand Coalition is to encourage collaboration between public, private and third sector actors on the labour market on the implementation of the actions (organisations such as employment services, companies including SME's, chambers of commerce, training and education providers, social partners, NGO's, career centres from tertiary education organisations e.g. universities, polytechnics; welfare institutions, municipalities, or other labour market organisations providing a broad range of client and job placement services at national, regional or local level). Organisations should work together by relying on their specific strengths and expertise. The project must include organisations preferably from both public and private sector and from at least two Member States.

Projects submitted under this part should target ICT jobs, i.e. jobs requiring low, medium or high level of ICT professional skills. ICT jobs can be found in both the ICT industry and ICT using industries. Additionally, projects could focus on how to improve and re-orient the skills sets of jobseekers and job changers to ensure meeting the market demand for ICT skills.

With these elements in mind, each project to be financed shall address the two following actions:

1. Delivery of specific employment services to jobseekers and employers (SME's in particular) leading to sustainable intra-EU mobility with placements in ICT jobs or apprenticeships. Applicants should indicate measurable pre-defined outcomes leading to direct integration/insertion into the labour market. Services should be delivered by a mixed set of organisations.
2. Provision of analytical and methodological findings (lessons learned) related to the form and working method of the partnership developed, based on a sound

evaluation and focusing on the actions of the project. This should include success and failure factors well as pointers and recommendations for creating other sustainable partnership models or for scaling up such initiatives.

Outcome-based employment service delivery

This strand seeks to finance projects with a critical mass of cost efficient placements as a pilot action and eventual showcase. Projects should be "outcome driven", meaning that a service is not only developed but it is also implemented and delivered to the end users through a methodological approach that enables accurate measurement of outcomes and success based on thorough evaluation methods.

The expected result is job placement (filling a job vacancy under a preferably sustainable job contract – 6 months or more -) or placement in apprenticeships of at least 100 jobseekers throughout the duration of the selected project/s.

Proposals submitted under this strand need to clearly indicate the expected outcome for example in relation to placement/integration of services, such as individual support and/or training measures and/or mobility measures. The expected outcomes of the project must be quantified in terms of placement/integration numbers. After project completion the applicant should be able to provide a proof of the successful placement for at least 100 individuals or a detailed justification why the foreseen placements failed. Applicants are free to choose the methods, tools, etc. for implementing the necessary measures that will deliver clear outcomes.

Provision of the measures fostering intra-EU mobility to address mismatches in ICT jobs and skills can include, for instance: delivering services in the areas of searching, profiling and reaching the right candidates, information, advice, job search and matching or post-placements assistance to the end users.

Such actions must not include direct financial support to jobseekers and companies such as paying their travels costs, accommodation, etc.

Preference will be given to projects supporting labour market transitions of vulnerable groups of individuals whose potential is largely untapped (such as the unemployed with or without ICT and/or STEM skills, women, youth etc.).

Projects must demonstrate that mobility and (if applicable) the training provided are responding to labour demand needs and contribute to reducing the ICT skills mismatch. The mobility of workers should be designed on the basis of the geographical mapping of the existing job opportunities (vacancies) and employers' needs and matched, where appropriate, with the jobseekers possessing the required skills but facing the difficulty to find a job in their country of residence.

Projects shall also include an evaluation of the actions undertaken, in order to improve subsequent waves of the intervention. While the delivery of 'outcome based services' through new types of partnerships is the ultimate goal of this part, an equally important expected outcome will be the capacity to spell out success and failure factors. These should be documented in the form of findings and lessons learned deriving from the evaluation of the actions undertaken.

Recruitment and job placement combined with eventual training activities should take place between at least two Member States, with inward and outward mobility being dependent on complementarities in national ICT labour demand and supply. To this end, the recruitment, job-matching, job placement and/or training services provided by the project should also cover at least two Member States.

Whenever possible, customer-oriented information (for jobseekers and/or employers) should be provided in the languages of the countries concerned.

The projects can also include transferring and further up-scaling activities previously evaluated as a successful practice into at least one other Member State, thus involving a minimum of two Member States. This can, for example, be accomplished by using the applicant organisations' network of agencies or branches or working in partnership with other EU networks in relation to the objectives of this call. Projects can also liaise with existing pledges of the Grand Coalition of ICT skills.

Under this strand, the EC expects to co-finance large scale projects, the expected average size of a grant awarded would be in the range of EUR 500 000.

3.3. Personal and household services

The term "personal and household services"(PHS) covers a broad range of activities that contribute to well-being at home of families and individuals: child care (CC), long term care (LTC) for the elderly and for persons with disabilities, cleaning, remedial classes, home repairs, gardening, ICT support, etc.

Traditionally PHS are provided within the household, mostly by women. Parts of these tasks have been progressively externalised outside the home (catering, laundering, day nursery and institutions for elderly) or inside the home to external workers directly or indirectly employed by the household. Several kinds of providers coming from local authorities, social economy or private companies cater for these activities.

Public authorities have been involved in the organisation and financing of LTC and CC as tools for social policies. Formal employment in PHS is quite costly for the majority of the population and therefore the role of public authorities in supporting is key in encouraging the provision of PHS in the formal economy. This intervention can cover both care activities and housework activities.

Workers in the PHS sectors are mostly women, mainly working part time, with relatively low skills and, in certain cases, often from migrant background. In order to warrant the quality of services, several actions and initiatives have been taken especially regarding the working conditions and training of the workforce.

Externalisation of PHS could improve the productivity of such activities due to better use of technologies and investment in training, as externalisation is usually associated with specialisation and new work organisation.

The Commission services invite all stakeholders concerned to develop joint actions to address the issue of promoting new jobs in the PHS sectors. In particular, by developing of projects having the capacity to:

- improve measurement and monitoring of the employment and budget effects of support given by public authorities. A transnational network having the capacity to extrapolate, for the EU28, existing national studies of public intervention concerning tools used or planned to support the PHS would be an added-value;
- promote quality of services and jobs (skill needs, working conditions, development of quality standards and other ways to ensure greater professionalisation of PHS jobs). A transnational network having the capacity to share best practices through the European Union would be another added-value;

- analyse and share practices and projects dealing with the achievement of efficiency. The productivity gains, the introduction of new technologies and the development of new work organisations are essential for the future of these activities. The transnational dimension of the project of the network proposed could facilitate a broad identification and share of interesting initiatives in this field.

A balanced distribution of funding between the three topics will be sought.

For illustrative purposes, the expected average size of a grant awarded under this strand would be in the range of EUR 250.000.

3.4 European Sector Skills Councils

The Commission supports the creation of EU Sector Councils on Employment and Skills ("EU sector skills council" in short). The aims of EU sector skills councils are:

- 1) To provide more and better sectoral skills intelligence, based on the pulling together of existing national sources on employment trends and skills demand and supply in the sector.
- 2) To contribute to the development of skills governance at sectoral level and of national skills policies by facilitating capacity building and peer-learning amongst national skill observatories or equivalent organisations and by creating a European platform of exchange and development of joint sectoral skills projects.

EU sector skills councils should encompass sector specific organisations with a role in long-term matching of demand and supply on the labour markets:

- a. labour demand actors and employment services: employers' organisations and in particular SME representatives, employment services, research institutes or technological platforms
- b. labour supply actors: trade unions and education, training and guidance providers (organisations developing initial and continuing vocational education and training and/or tertiary education, qualification authorities, organisations involved in recognition and accreditation of sectoral skills or occupational profiles, research institutes)

The Commission supports the establishment of EU sector skills councils when there is a demand for their creation from stakeholders representing both the demand and supply of labour and in particular from the European social partners. EU sector skills councils should encompass European umbrella organisations as well as national organisations from at least 10 EU Member States or from EU Member States accounting for more than 50% of workforce in the sector across the EU.

As part of the process of setting up a EU Sector Council on Employment and Skills, applicants have first to perform an analysis of the feasibility to create such a body at the European level. Provided that the feasibility study shows that a clear business case exists for a EU sector skills council in the sector, applicants can proceed to setting up a an EU sector skills council. **The present call will not finance feasibility studies for setting up sector skills councils.**

Projects to be submitted in relation to the functioning of a EU Sector Council on Employment and Skills have to contain the following actions:

Networking for skills development

The EU sector skills councils should stimulate policy development in participating countries, by actively engaging national and regional stakeholders in its activities and by fostering ownership of the initiatives developed within the network in the participating countries.

Facilitating broad networking of stakeholders in the sector, including:

- Representatives from education and employment ministries;
- Employment services – public, private, third sector;
- Sectoral employer organisations, chambers of commerce, representatives from SMEs;
- National representatives from education and training organisations in IVET, CVET¹⁴, universities and research and technology centres;
- Qualification authorities;
- Representatives from other European networks or committees (Public employment services network, European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network, Euroguidance, etc);
- Representative from specific professional associations.

The networking of stakeholders should be organised by facilitating peer learning workshops, structured study visits or thematic working groups on specific topics or occupations in the sector. EU sector skills councils should lead awareness and dissemination actions, including creation and dissemination of concrete tools to share and diffuse knowledge (website, leaflets, video-based products, books, conferences, seminars, etc.).

European sector skills councils should organise during the 18 months of financing at least three physical meetings of the EU sector skills council and an annual European conference. The annual conference should have the objective to present and disseminate the reports, outputs and activities to a wider audience of both European and national organisations.

As EU sector skills councils are projects spanning several years (or periods of 18 months), the following list of activities indicates the appropriate actions for each period in the development of the projects.

First period activities (for sectors which have not already benefited from a previous co-financing to run a EU sector skills Council)

In the first period of functioning, EU sector skills councils should:

- establish the Council's infrastructure, roles and responsibilities,
- identify and trial mechanisms of co-operation and dissemination,
- develop a work plan for the next 2-3 years with concrete deliverables and outputs,
- synthesise the available labour market intelligence in the sector, as detailed below.

Part of the first period activities, the EU sector skills councils should produce reports highlighting:

¹⁴ IVET – Initial Vocational Education and Training. CVET – Continuous Vocational Education and Training

1. The employment situation of the sector including forecasts and trends. Available data should be presented by sub-sectors, occupations and countries (regions), highlighting gaps in information. Both the demand and supply of skills should be presented, as well as mismatches between the educational offer and output and the labour market demands. Bottleneck occupations and instances of excess supply of skills should be particularly highlighted. The report should be data-driven, with synthetic description and analyses. This report should be based on the information and data already available to the members of the EU sector skills council, compiling and analysing existing information,
2. The qualitative evolution of skills in the sector, focussing on the evolution of occupations. It should contain information about emerging jobs, a review of factors driving changes in skills used and a synthesis of available scenarios. This report should draw on existing available information, such as employers' surveys and foresight exercises and highlight gaps in information.
3. Innovative tools, national and/or regional strategies, local initiatives, methods put in place in the countries represented in the Council to monitor skills needs and address the question of skill mismatch and gaps in the sector. The report should analyse the main challenges in the implementation and coordination of national and regional mechanisms to adapt supply, activate skills use and in using labour market intelligence to close the skills gap.
4. Policy recommendations at national and European level based on the information collected and the analysis done as part of the reports. The recommendations should be addressed to different stakeholders, from policy makers at different levels to companies and VET providers.

Second and third period activities (for sectors which have already benefited from a first co-financing to run a EU sector skills Council)

Part of the second and third periods of activity, EU sector skills councils should:

- Expand their membership, engaging partners from countries not covered in the first period of functioning. At the end of two years of functioning, EU sector skills councils should cover at least 15 Member States accounting for at least 50% of EU workforce in the sector.
- Attract new membership, including networks of vocational and higher education providers, qualification authorities, research and professional organisations.
- Support capacity building at national level in countries with a significant presence of the sector, having less developed skills intelligence and skills governance arrangements.
- Prove a record of reinforced cooperation among national skills observatories participating in the network, including joint projects and activities.
- Prove a record of involvement in the activities of relevant national or regional authorities.
- Update and disseminate a range of sector skills intelligence tools.

- Develop materials relevant to jobseekers, employment services and the sector workforce informing in an accessible way career choices, up-skilling and re-skilling opportunities and possibilities for EU mobility in the sector.
- Initiate autonomously on the basis of the skills intelligence gathered new actions, e.g. developing skill sets or occupational profiles, quality standards for training, stimulating employer investment in training or campaigns for the attractiveness of the sector.
- Publish a yearly report on the activities of the EU Sector Skills Council which should include an update of the skills intelligence reports elaborated in the first year, an analysis of new skills policies at Member State level and their impact on the sector, a summary of the Council's activities and an assessment of their impact at EU, national and regional level, the main opportunities for further developing the activities of the Council.

Participation in other EU initiatives

As a focal point at sector level for coordinating European skills initiatives, EU sector skills councils could mobilise resources or provide guidance on:

- The establishment of Sector Skills Alliances and Knowledge Alliances under the Erasmus + programme;
- Supporting apprenticeship and traineeship schemes in the sector with the goal of addressing youth unemployment.
- The feasibility of targeted mobility schemes aimed at solving bottlenecks in the sector through increased mobility of workers on the EU labour market.
- Participation in the reference groups contributing to the elaboration of the ESCO classification.
- Effectively disseminating information on skill gaps and opportunities by contributing to the analytical highlights of the EU Skills Panorama
- Developing and maintaining quality standards for training in line with EQUAVET.
- Feeding into and reinforcing the sectoral social dialogue on skills.
- Participate in joint actions with other EU sector skills councils and in EU initiatives relevant to the sector.

All reports produced with EU financial support should become publicly available including for use and publication in the EU Skills Panorama.

Remark: only sectors which have conducted and finalised a feasibility and mapping project can submit a project for the running of a EU sector skills council. The feasibility study should be attached to the application. The activities to be co-financed should be exclusively related to the functioning of the EU sector skills council.

Grants are expected to be in the range of EUR 300 000 per application selected for this strand.

4 TIMETABLE

Stages	Date and time or indicative period
Deadline for submitting applications	15 January 2014
Evaluation period	March 2014
Information to applicants	April 2014
Signature of grant agreement or notification of grant decision	May 2014
Starting date of the action/ work programme	June 2014

5 AVAILABLE BUDGETARY ALLOCATION FOR THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The total indicative amount available for this call for proposals is EUR 5.658.000.

The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

6 SUBMISSION AND EXAMINATION OF GRANT APPLICATIONS

6.1 Submission of the applications

Applications must be submitted electronically online (see section 7.1 below) and sent by post to the European Commission by the deadline for submission indicated below, preferably in English, French, or German language. However, it should be noted that applications in other EU Community language will be accepted.

The **deadline** for the submission of complete applications is **15 January 2014**.

Applications will be examined by an Evaluation Committee.

Applications will be examined and selected taking account of the provisions of Decision 1672/2006 establishing the PROGRESS programme and the criteria laid down in this document (see below).

6.2 Start date and duration of the projects

The projects should start after signature of grant agreements. The indicative date for the start of the projects is June 2014.

Any expenditure incurred before the signature of the grant agreement (by both parties) is at the applicant's risk.

The maximum project duration is 18 months. Applications for projects with duration in excess of 18 months will not be considered.

Extensions after the maximum duration will not be granted, except in very exceptional circumstances if it becomes impossible to complete the project within the scheduled period for reasons beyond the control of the beneficiary, duly notified in advance and before the deadline specified in the grant agreement.

6.3 Co-financing rates

Under this call for proposals, the European Commission may finance up to 80% of the total eligible cost of the action. Contributions in kind (i.e. contributions for which no financial flow can be traced in the written accounts like unpaid charity work by a private individual or corporate body, etc.) will not be taken into account.

Applications which request a grant of more than 80% of the total eligible cost will not be eligible.

6.4 EVALUATION CRITERIA

6.4.1 Exclusion criteria

Applicants must not be in one of the situations referred to in Article 131(4) in combination with Articles 106(1), 107 and 109(2)(a) of the Financial Regulation¹⁵. The situations referred to include bankruptcy, compulsory winding-up, being under court administration, in an arrangement with creditors or any other similar proceedings; convictions of professional misconduct; non-fulfilment of social security or tax payment obligations; convictions of fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity; declared in serious breach of contract in relation to activities funded by the Community budget; subject to conflict of interest; guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the required information.

6.4.2 Eligibility criteria

Eligibility of applicants (lead applicant and co-applicants)¹⁶

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Be legal persons properly constituted and registered in one of the EU Member States or other PROGRESS participating countries¹⁷.
- To be eligible **applicants** must fall within one of the following categories:
 - social partners¹⁸,

¹⁵ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 966/2012 of 25 October 2012 (OJ L298, 26 October 2012); http://ec.europa.eu/budget/biblio/documents/regulations/regulations_en.cfm..

¹⁶ Please see Annex I to the call (Financial Guidelines for Applicants) for a definition of the terms co-applicants, affiliated entities and associate organisations.

¹⁷ EU Member States, EFTA/EEA countries (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein), EU candidate countries (F.Y.R. of Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey).

¹⁸ In application of article 131 of the Financial Regulation, social partner organisations without legal personality are also eligible provided that the conditions of the Financial Regulation related thereto are met. By social partners, we understand:

- public authorities,
- international organisations¹⁹,
- non-profit making organisations,
- profit-making organisations,
- research centres, institutes and universities,
- civil society organisations.

Eligibility of applications

To be eligible, applications must:

- Be submitted by the deadline indicated in section 6.1;
- Be submitted on-line before being printed, and sent in 2 copies as a paper application duly signed (one original dossier and one copy of all submitted documents). Please see section 7.1 and 7.2 for further details on the submission of the application;
- Be complete and include all **the documents indicated in the following checklist**. Where specified below, documents must bear the **original signature of the applicant's legal representative**.

Checklist of documents to be submitted	
1	Official covering letter of application quoting the reference of the call for proposals and bearing the original signature of the lead applicant's legal representative and quoting the proposal reference number generated by the SWIM application (VP/2013/010/XXX) .
2	Print-out of the duly completed SWIM application form submitted on-line (https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/external/displayWelcome.do?lang=en), dated and with the original signature of the lead applicant's legal representative . NOTE: The on-line form <u>must be electronically submitted before printing</u> . After the electronic submission no further changes to the application are possible.
3	Print-out of the SWIM Annex : Declaration on honour from the lead applicant and each co-applicant and affiliated entity. This must be written on the official letterhead paper of the organisation and have the original signature of the legal representative, certifying that the organisation is not in one of the situations listed in Articles 106(1) and 107 to 109 of the Financial Regulation and that it has the financial and operational capacity to complete the activity for which funding is requested.
4	Print-out of SWIM Annex : Letter of mandate from each co-applicant. This must follow the template provided, be written on the official letterhead paper of the organisation and have the original signature of the legal representative. It

(i) European social partner organisations currently consulted in accordance with Article 154 TFEU6.

(ii) European-level social partner organisations not covered in (i) above, for example those involved in the preparation and launch of European social dialogue at sectoral level.

(iii) National or regional social partner organisations, as long as the project is part of a European approach.

¹⁹ Including international organisations whose registered office is outside the EU Member States

	must also be submitted electronically in annex to the on-line application form.
5	Free-format : For any affiliated entity, a document providing proof of the legal and /or capital link with the lead applicant or a co-applicant.
6	<p>Print-out of SWIM Annex: "Financial identification" form of the lead applicant organisation duly completed with the original signature of the account holder. This form should also bear the original signature and stamp of the Bank or if not a copy of a recent bank statement.</p> <p>This form can also be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/financial_id_en.cfm</p>
7	<p>Print-out of SWIM Annex "Legal entity" form of the lead applicant and each co-applicant duly completed and bearing the original signature of the legal representative.</p> <p>This form can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm</p> <p>Applicants (lead applicants and co-applicants must also provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a copy of the certificate of official registration or other official document attesting to the establishment of the entity (for public bodies, a copy of the law, decree or decision establishing the entity in question); • a copy of the articles of association/statutes or equivalent proving the eligibility of the organisation (not applicable for public bodies or international organisations); • a copy of a document showing the identification number for tax purposes or the VAT number, if applicable. <p>Exclusively for social partner organisations with no legal personality, a letter from their representative stating his/her capacity to assume legal obligations on their behalf (annex E.9 to the on-line application form) must be submitted.</p>
8	<p>Free format SWIM Annex F.1 & F.2 : Detailed work programme for the project. This is a separate document in addition to the description of the project in the online application form and it must also be submitted electronically. The paper version must be identical to the electronic version.</p> <p>The detailed work programme must provide a detailed and comprehensive description of the project, including clear information on the objectives, methodology, deliverables, dissemination plans and a timetable for the activities. In the timetable the applicant should use milestones for the different activities without mentioning specific dates (e.g. use "month 1, month 2..." without specifying the day and month). The work programme should include a division of roles between the organisations implicated in the project and details on the running of the partnership. The detailed work programme should be submitted in English, French or German. Same for the description of the action.</p>
9	Free format SWIM Annex F.5: Budget explanation for the project. This is a separate document in addition to the budget section of the on-line application form and it must also be submitted electronically. The paper version must be

	<p>identical to the electronic version.</p> <p>The budget explanation must provide additional information to explain and justify all items in the proposed budget (and particularly staff costs and subcontracting plans) respecting the format and numbering of the "project budget estimate" form. A simple table listing costs without explanation is not sufficient. The budget explanation should be submitted in English, French or German.</p>
10	<p>Print-out of SWIM Annex F.3 : Letters of commitment:</p> <p>A signed letter of commitment from each co-applicant, any affiliated entity named in the application form and any associate organisation playing a role in and/or making a financial contribution to the action explaining the nature of the organisation's involvement and specifying the cash amounts of any funding provided. Similarly, a signed letter of commitment from any third party making a financial contribution to the action, specify the cash amounts of any funding provided.</p> <p>The letters of commitment should be submitted in English, French or German.</p>
11	<p>Print-out of SWIM Annex F.4: "Contracts for implementing the action". In the case of subcontracting for external expertise where the value of external contracts exceeds EUR 5 000, detailed information on the reasons and tasks to be subcontracted and about the selection procedure of the subcontractor must be included in the form. The form should be submitted in English, French or German²⁰.</p> <p>Applicants wishing to recruit the services of external experts for an amount above EUR 60 000 must provide, in addition, a copy of the draft tender specifications. This does not apply to public authorities which are already governed by a system of procurement rules. To assist applicants, a model of tender specifications is included in Annex II of this call. The draft tender specifications should be submitted in English, French or German.</p> <p>Outsourcing of project management is not permissible</p> <p>Important additional information concerning the award of contracts can be found in Annex I of this call.</p>
12	<p>The most recent balance sheet and profit and loss account of the lead and co-applicant organisations (not necessary for public bodies or international organisations). The balance sheet must include assets and liabilities. The applicant should specify which currency is being used in the balance sheet.</p>
13	<p>For grant requests over EUR 750 000: an external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the accounts of the applicant organisations for the last financial year available (not necessary for public bodies or international organisations). This threshold applies to each co-applicant in line with their share of the action budget. The external audit report should be submitted in English, French or German.</p>

²⁰ In this context, interpretation and translation tasks are not considered as external expertise. The general rules and principles regarding the conclusion of external contracts included in Annex I do nevertheless fully apply (e.g. the obligation for the beneficiary to "seek competitive tenders from potential contractors and award the contract in writing to the bid offering the best value for money").

14	A curriculum vitae of the person responsible for managing the action (named in section A.3 of the on-line application form) and the persons who will perform the main tasks (named under "Management/Coordination" and "Administration/implementation of the project" under "Heading 1 – Staff costs" of the Budget in the on-line application form). The CVs should indicate clearly the current employer.
15	A list of the lead and co-applicant organisations' main projects carried out, if any, in the last three years relating to the subject of the call.

The application must not benefit from other EU funding.

Eligibility of actions

To be eligible, actions must:

- Proposals must be submitted on a strand per strand basis – no joint applications to all strands will be accepted (*Green Jobs, ICT and the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs, Household Services, and European Sector Skills Councils*);
- Be in line with the objectives and type of actions described in section 3;
- Comply with the maximum European Union's co-financing percentage of 80%;
- Be fully carried out in the EU Member States or other PROGRESS participating countries;
- Comply with the rules on subcontracting set out in the financial guidelines for applicants (Annex I).

6.4.3 Selection criteria

The applicant (lead and co-applicants) must have the financial and operational capacity to complete the activity for which funding is requested. Only organisations with the necessary financial and operational capacity may be awarded a grant.

Financial capacity

Financial capacity to carry out the action: the applicant must have access to solid and adequate funding to maintain its activities for the period of the action and to help finance it as necessary²¹

The financial capacity of the applicant must be confirmed by the provision in the proposal of the following items:

- Declaration on honour (see section 6.4.2, checklist, point 3).

²¹ The financial capacity of the applicant (lead and co-applicants) is assessed based on the analysis of the supporting documents listed in points 3 and 12 in the checklist above (section 6.4.2 "Eligibility of applications") and by calculating the ratio between the total assets in the applicant's balance sheet and the part of the total budget of the project for which that organisation is responsible according to the budget in the application form (the ratio should be greater than 0.70). In addition, the Commission may take into account any other relevant information on financial capacity provided by the applicant.

- The annual balance sheet and profit and loss accounts available from the last financial year (see section 6.4.2, checklist, point 12).

The verification of financial capacity will not apply to public bodies or international organisations provided that the international organisation in question offers the guarantees provided for in the applicable Financial Regulation.

Operational capacity

Operational capacity to complete the proposed action: the applicant must have the operational resources (technical, management) and the professional skills and qualifications needed to successfully complete the proposed action, as well as the ability to implement it. The applicant must have a strong track record of competence and experience in the area and in particular in the type of action proposed.

Applicants must provide evidence of their operational (technical, management) capacity by producing:

- A list of the main projects carried out, if any, in the last three years relating to the subject of the call (see section 6.4.2, checklist, point 13).
- The curriculum vitae of the person **responsible for managing the action and the persons who will perform the main tasks** (see section 6.4.2, checklist, point 14).
- Declaration on honour (see section 6.4.2, checklist, point 3).

6.4.4 Award criteria

The grants will be awarded on the basis of a comparative evaluation of all the proposals meeting the above-mentioned eligibility and selection criteria with respect to the following award criteria, the respective importance of each one being expressed as a percentage:

- i) the extent to which the action meets the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals (20%);
- ii) the quality of the action proposed: including the working methodology, the extent to which the work programme is relevant, adequate and feasible for reaching the objectives and the overall clarity and completeness of the proposal and budget (30%);
- iii) the quality of the partnership, i.e. the involvement of appropriate organisations and the clarity of the division of tasks among parties (20%);
- iv) the added value, transnational dimension and cost-effectiveness of the action (30%).

In order to be considered for co-financing, the projects must obtain the minimum of 70% of the total (100) available points.

Funding will be awarded to proposals with the highest scores of merit, to the extent of available budget for this call.

7 PRACTICAL PROCEDURES

7.1 Where can the application form be found?

The compulsory on-line grant application form is an electronic form which must be filled in by using the Internet Web system "SWIM" at the following internet address:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/external/displayWelcome.do?lang=en>

This system allows the introduction, edition, validation, printing and submission of the grant application form. Once the application is submitted electronically, a print out of an exemplar has to be signed by the legal representative submitting the proposal and be sent to the Commission as per point 5.2 below. After submission of the application electronically no changes are possible.

At the above quoted web site other requested forms and other useful documents can be found.

7.2 Where does the application need to be sent?

Please send your covering letter of application, together with all the other documents listed in the checklist under section 6.4.2 "**Eligibility of applications**" above as originals, as well as **one copy of all of these documents by the submission deadline indicated above**, to the following address:

*Call for proposals – VP/2013/010.
BUDGET HEADING 04.04.01.01
European Commission – DG EMPL/C2-C3
Archives – Courier J-27 0/115
B – 1049 Brussels
Belgium*

Please send your application by registered mail or express courier service only and keep proof of the date of sending (the date of the post office stamp or express courier receipt will be considered as proof of the date of sending). Any applications sent by other means (for example fax) or to other addresses will be rejected.

Hand-delivered applications must be received by the European Commission at the latest by 16.00h on the last day for submission. The **only address for hand deliveries** of documents to the European Commission is: **Avenue du Bourget 1, B-1140 Evere, Belgium**²². Proof of delivery is a signed receipt from the Commission's Archives Service stamped with the date of the last day for submission or earlier.

Please note that the SWIM electronic application form is available until midnight on the day of the submission deadline. However, as candidates must first submit the form electronically, and then print, sign and send it by post or hand delivery by the submission deadline, it is the **applicant's responsibility to ensure that the appropriate postal or courier services are locally available on the day of the deadline.**

²² http://ec.europa.eu/contact/mailling_en.htm

Regarding the presentation of the application file, applicants are requested to:

- follow the order of documents as listed in the checklist under **section 6.4.2 "Eligibility of applications"**;
- print the documents double-sided, where possible;
- only use 2-hole folders. **Please do not bind or glue the dossiers** (stapling is acceptable).

The application must comprise at least one copy along with the original.

If an applicant submits more than one proposal, each one must be submitted separately.

ALL ENQUIRIES MUST BE MADE BY E-MAIL ONLY TO:

EMPL-VP-2013-010@ec.europa.eu

- PLEASE DO NOT TELEPHONE –

Questions may be sent by to the above address no later than 10 days before the deadline for the submission of proposals

The Contracting Authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 5 days before the deadline for submission of proposals.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of applicants, or affiliated entity(ies), an action or specific activities.

No individual replies to questions will be sent but all questions together with the answers and other important notices in the course of the evaluation procedure, will be published on the DG Employment website :

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en&callId=394&furtherCalls=yes>. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

7.3 What next? Accepted and rejected applications

Applications will be examined by an Evaluation Committee.

The European Commission will notify applicants when the evaluation procedure will be finished. Requests concerning the progress of dossiers sent prior to the end of the evaluation procedure will not be answered.

Rejected applications

Applicants of rejected applications will receive a letter stating the reasons of refusal.

Selected applications

Successful applicants will receive two original copies of the grant agreement²³ for acceptance and signature. Both these copies must be sent back to the Commission, which

²³ See section 6 of Annex I – Financial Guidelines for Applicants

will then return one to the applicant once it has been signed by both parties.

The grant agreement may include changes made by the Commission – therefore the applicant should carefully read the whole agreement and the budget and work programme sections in particular, before signing and returning the copies to the Commission.

The financial guidelines for applicants (annex I) explains in greater detail other important considerations concerning agreements governing the award of grants.

8 PROGRESS – ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS FOR CALLS FOR PROPOSALS 2013

8.1 Guide on how the activities shall be carried out

a) Requirements concerning equal opportunities

The PROGRESS Programme aims to promote gender mainstreaming in all its five policy sections and supported activities. Consequently, the Beneficiary shall take the necessary steps to ensure that:

- Gender equality issues are taken into account when relevant for the drafting of the proposal by paying attention to the situation and needs of women and men;
- Implementation of proposed activities includes a perspective informed by a systematic consideration of the gender dimension;
- Performance monitoring includes the collection and gathering of data disaggregated by sex when needed;
- Its proposed team and/or staff respect the gender balance at all levels.

Equally, needs of disabled people shall be duly acknowledged and met while implementing the proposed activities. This will ensure in particular that where the Beneficiary organises training sessions and conferences, issues publications or develops dedicated websites, people with disabilities will have equal access to the facilities or the services provided.

Finally, the Contracting Authority encourages the Beneficiary to promote equal employment opportunities for all its staff and team. This entails that the Beneficiary is encouraged to foster an appropriate mix of people, whatever their ethnic origin, religion, age, and ability.

The Beneficiary will be required to detail in its final activity report the steps and achievements made towards meeting these contractual requirements.

b) Publicity and information requirements

In accordance with the General conditions, all beneficiaries are under the obligation to acknowledge that the present activity has received funding from the Union in all documents and media produced, in particular final delivered outputs, related reports, brochures, press releases, videos, software, etc, including at conferences or seminars. In

the context of the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity – PROGRESS, the following formulation shall be used:

This (publication, conference, training session etc) is supported by the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity - PROGRESS (2007-2013).

This programme is implemented by the European Commission. It was established to financially support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the employment, social affairs and equal opportunities area, and thereby contribute to the achievement of the Europe 2020 Strategy goals in these fields.

The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-28, EFTA-EEA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

For more information see: <http://ec.europa.eu/progress>

For publications it is also necessary to include the following reference: "The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission".

With regard to publication and any communication plan linked to the present activity, the Beneficiary will insert the European Union logo and mention the European Commission as the Contracting Authority in every publication or related material developed under the present grant agreement.

c) Reporting requirements

PROGRESS is implemented through a results-based management (RBM). The Strategic Framework, developed in collaboration with the Member States, social partners and civil society organisations, sets out the intervention logic for PROGRESS-related expenditure and defines PROGRESS' mandate and its long-term and immediate outcomes. It is supplemented by performance measures which serve to determine the extent to which PROGRESS has delivered the expected results. See in Annex the overview of PROGRESS performance measurement framework. For more information on the strategic framework, please visit PROGRESS website <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=659&langId=en> .

The Commission regularly monitors the effect of PROGRESS-supported initiatives and considers how they contribute to PROGRESS outcomes as defined in the Strategic Framework. In this context, the Beneficiary will be asked to dedicatedly work in close cooperation with the Commission and/or persons authorised by it to define the expected contribution and the set of performance measures which this contribution will be assessed against. As a direct contribution to the PROGRESS Annual Performance Monitoring Report, the Beneficiary will be asked to submit a short quantitative questionnaire on the outputs produced over the course of a given calendar year. At the end of the action, the Beneficiary will also be asked to report on its own performance to the Commission and/or persons authorised by it against a template which will be annexed to the grant agreement.

d) Information on partners in PROGRESS funded projects (when applicable):

In order to increase the visibility of transnational partnerships established under PROGRESS and to facilitate networking between organisations involved in actions covered by PROGRESS grants, the Commission intends to publish the name and address

of partners in PROGRESS-funded projects together with the name and address of the beneficiary, the reference of the call for proposals and the title and description of the project. To that purpose, the Beneficiary will be asked to seek the partners' agreement to authorise the Commission to publish this data. This written agreement should be included in the letters of commitment sent to the Commission with the application form.

e) Communication and dissemination plan

Adequate communication and dissemination of results is essential in ensuring the EU added value of the action and its sustainability after the funding has ended. Information-giving and awareness raising are key activities to ensure that other interested parties benefit from the project and can create new opportunities to extend it or develop new partnerships. The proposals must therefore include a detailed plan for communication and dissemination of the projects' results. In particular, such a plan must include information on dissemination activities and targeted audiences.

At final report stage, the Beneficiary will be required to provide details about how and to whom the results, best practices and findings have been disseminated and how interested parties have been involved in the project.

OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

PROGRESS Ultimate Outcome

Member States implement laws, policies and practices in a manner that contributes to the desired outcomes of the Social Agenda

PROGRESS works toward its ultimate outcome by helping strengthen the EU's support for Member States' efforts to create more and better jobs and to build a more cohesive society. PROGRESS seeks to contribute to (i) an **effective legal regime** in the EU in relation to the Social Agenda; (ii) **shared understanding** across the EU with regard to Social Agenda objectives; and (iii) **strong partnerships** working toward Social Agenda objectives.

In operational terms, support provided by PROGRESS facilitates (i) provision of analysis and policy advice; (ii) monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies; (iii) policy transfer, learning and support among Member States; and (iv) relaying to decision-makers the views of the stakeholders and society at large.

Legal Regime

Outcome:

Compliance in Member States with EU law related to PROGRESS areas.

Performance Indicators

1. Transposition rate of EU law on matters related to PROGRESS policy areas
2. Effectiveness of application in Member States of EU law on matters related to PROGRESS policy areas.
3. EU policies and legislation are grounded in thorough analysis of situation and responsive to conditions, needs and expectations in Member States in PROGRESS areas
4. Extent to which PROGRESS-supported policy advice feeds into the development and implementation of EU legislation and policies
5. Cross-cutting issues are addressed in PROGRESS policy sections
6. EU policies and legislation display a common underlying logic of intervention in relation to PROGRESS issues
7. Gender mainstreaming is systematically promoted in PROGRESS

Shared Understanding

Outcome:

Shared understanding and ownership among policy/decision-makers and stakeholders in Member States, and the Commission, of objectives related to PROGRESS policy areas.

Performance Indicators

1. Attitudes of decision-makers, key stakeholders and general public regarding EU objectives in PROGRESS policy areas
2. Extent to which national policy discourses or priorities reflect EU objectives
3. Extent to which principles of good governance (including minimum standards on consultation) are respected in policy debate
4. Extent to which the outcomes of policy debates feed into the development of EU law and policy.
5. Greater awareness of policy-and decision-makers, social partners, NGOs, networks regarding their rights/obligations in relation to PROGRESS policy areas
6. Greater awareness of policy-and decision-makers, social partners, NGOs, networks regarding EU objectives and policies in relation to PROGRESS policy areas

Strong Partnerships

Outcome:

Effective partnerships with national and pan-European stakeholders in support of outcomes related to PROGRESS policy areas.

Performance Indicators

1. Existence of common ground/consensus among policy and decision-makers and stakeholders on EU objectives and policies
2. Identification and involvement by the EU of key actors in a position to exert influence or change at EU and national levels
3. Effectiveness of partnerships in relation to outcomes related to PROGRESS policy areas.
4. Number of individuals served or reached by networks supported by PROGRESS.
5. Extent to which advocacy skills of PROGRESS-supported networks have improved
6. Satisfaction of EU and national authorities with the contribution of networks
7. Extent to which PROGRESS-supported networks take a cross-cutting approach

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

2013

VP/2013/010

ANNEX I

FINANCIAL GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

Annex I is available on the call website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langid=en&catid=630&callid=373&furthercalls=yes>

ANNEX II

**MODEL FOR TENDER SPECIFICATIONS FOR SUBCONTRACTING
EXTERNAL EXPERTISE**

Tender Specifications –

1. **Background**
2. **Purpose of the Contract**
3. **Tasks to be performed by the Contractor**
Description of tasks
Guidance and indications on tasks execution and methodology
4. **Expertise required**
5. **Time schedule and reporting**
6. **Payments and standard contract**
7. **Price**
8. **Selection criteria**
9. **Award criteria**

(option 1)

The contract will be awarded to the tenderer whose offer represents the best value for money - taking into account the following criteria:

-
-
-

It should be noted that the contract will *not* be awarded to a tenderer who receives less than 70% on the Award Criteria.

(option 2)

The contract will be awarded to the tenderer whose offer represents the lowest price.

10. Content and presentation of the bids

Content of the bids

Presentation of the bids