

**Call for proposals VP/2015/009**  
**"EaSI-EURES: Mobility for Professionals"**

## **Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

Date of publication: 19/06/2015

### **Question & Answer 1**

**Q:** Could you please tell me whether my organisation is eligible for participation in this call for proposals?

**A:** Please understand that, in order to ensure equal treatment of all potential applicants, the Commission can, at this stage, not give any information on the eligibility of entities. The detailed information on the eligibility of applicants can be found in section 4 of the call text:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en&callId=434&furtherCalls=yes>

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### **Question & Answer 2**

**Q:** We plan to use a service provider for outsourcing limited parts of the project tasks. For this reason, we are already now preparing the Terms of Reference. Do we already need to go through a procurement procedure at this stage and do we have to present a "pre-contract" together with our proposal? Do we have to contact at least 3 service providers or even more?

**A:** For the purpose of the submission of an application, it is sufficient to attach the draft specifications for the item to be subcontracted under the proposal (see online tool SWIM). The estimated amount for the subcontracting item should appear in the draft budget. There is no need to inform the Commission at the stage of submission about the potential subcontractors or their number. According to the draft grant agreement, the beneficiary shall "*award the contract to the tender offering best value for money or, as appropriate, to the tender offering the lowest price.*" Thus, no minimum number of potential tenderers is set out.

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### **Question & Answer 3**

**Q:** The financial guidelines set out that those organisations submitting proposals for a grant in excess of EUR 750,000 need to present an external audit report produced by an approved auditor. Does this mean an audit report by an independent and official financial auditor (e.g. in Belgium an auditor registered at the "registre public des cabinets de révision" or are the accounts certified by the tax accountant acceptable?

**A:** An "approved external auditor" is an auditor officially recognised by law in the relevant Member State (e.g. in Belgium: registered "cabinet de révision"; in Germany: "Wirtschaftsprüfer/ vereidigter Buchprüfer", etc.).

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#### **Question & Answer 4**

**Q:** Could you please clarify whether, in case of a proposal with multiple applicants and if the grant exceeds EUR 750,000, all (co-applicants) have to submit an external audit report or only those where their share of the grant exceeds this threshold?

**A:** It is necessary for a (co-)applicant to submit this report when they individually exceed the threshold. The threshold is not applied to the total grant but on the share of the grant for each of the (co-)applicants (e.g. a proposal is submitted by three entities and if for one entity the share of the grant exceeds the threshold, only this entity has to submit the audit report).

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#### **Question & Answer 5**

**Q:** The call specifications require that we commit ourselves to estimate, in the proposal, the number of secondments. This number should be somewhere in the range between 100 – 300 secondments. If, for reasons beyond our control, cannot achieve this estimated figure during the implementation of the project, would a respective share of our expenses be rejected?

**A:** This question cannot be answered in full at this stage, since the actual decision on a potential rejection of costs for under-performance will depend on different individual factors. The situation can only be properly assessed once specific problems arise or rather at the end of the project. However, while the Commission may decide after a careful assessment of the situation to reduce the final cost claim, there is no automatic rejection of costs except in case of breach of the grant agreement by the beneficiary(-ies) (see Articles II.1 and II.17 of the draft agreement).

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#### **Question & Answer 6**

**Q:** We are a confederation of associations at European level. Would our member associations established at national level qualify as "affiliate entities" as they are referred to in the financial guidelines for this call for proposals?

**A:** Under some circumstances, member associations may qualify as "affiliate entities". The following conditions (cumulative) must be fulfilled:

- a. Affiliate entities must comply with the eligibility and non-exclusion criteria applying to applicants;
- b. It has a structural link with a beneficiary, in particular a legal or capital link. The legal and capital link defining the affiliation encompasses mainly two notions:
  - Control, as defined in Directive 2013/34/EU on the annual financial statements, consolidated financial statements and related reports of certain types of undertakings, or
  - Membership, i.e. the beneficiary is legally defined as a e.g. network, federation, association in which the proposed affiliated entities also participate or the beneficiary participates in the same entity
- c. The structural link referred to in point (b) is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation. This means that the link would exist independently of the submission of a proposal; it should exist before the call for proposals.

Furthermore, it is important to mention that the applicant bears full responsibility (financial and operational) for the affiliate entity(-ies), notably:

- They are financially responsible for any amount that would have been paid as reimbursement of costs unduly declared by its affiliated entities

- Ensuring that the eligibility criteria applying to its own costs apply mutatis mutandis to the costs incurred by its affiliates
- Ensuring compliance of its affiliates with the rules applying to them on non-liability of the Commission, absence of conflict of interests, confidentiality, visibility of Union funding and evaluation

In case the involvement of one or several affiliate entities in the project is significant, it is advisable to opt rather for the status of a co-beneficiary.

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#### **Question & Answer 7**

**Q:** We understand that "associated partners" as defined in the financial guidelines of the call can only contribute to the project on a non-cost basis. Does this mean that they cannot be reimbursed, even by the lead applicant, for their expenses such as seconded staff, travel etc.?

**A:** As defined, "associated partners" to a project do participate on their own expenses. Expenditure linked to their participation as listed in your question are not eligible for reimbursement.

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#### **Question & Answer 8**

**Q:** If the budget of an applicant including its affiliate entities would exceed the threshold of 750,000 EUR for presenting an audit report but the share of the applicant would be lower than this amount, would be still be required to present an audit report at the proposal stage?

**A:** The financial capacity (see point 4.3.1 of the call specifications) will be carried out on the lead applicant and on co-applicants only. Thus, if the share of budget of the applicant is below the threshold even though if the overall budget including the affiliates to this applicant would be exceeding this amount.

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#### **Question & Answer 9**

**Q:** When preparing the call for proposals, were national legislation constraints considered as regards the legal obligations and sanctions in administrative as well as criminal laws, applying to seconded employees from foreign countries? What happens if the analysis covered in the first part of the tasks under this call gives strong evidence that such exchange scheme cannot or can only be partly implemented?

**A:** The issue of the legal framework is relevant and one of the main purposes of the present call for proposals and examining the feasibility underlying this kind of mobility scheme. The directive for posting of workers does not apply to this specific kind of mobility. Therefore the first part of the call is concentrated on an analytical component that includes mapping all the potential issues that can be met and may need to be overcome, identifying appropriate legal solutions for the design of a secondment scheme, which would be then tested in the second part of the project.

Should the analysis result in strong evidence that such design cannot be properly implemented solely because the outstanding obstacles cannot be solved without specific/targeted legislative action, the subsequent part of the project, consisting in the testing of a secondment scheme, would not be rolled out. A possibility of testing the action at least in a chosen sample of countries where those obstacles have proven surmountable should be however explored.

If the implementation of the second part of the tasks (i.e. the secondment scheme) could not be rolled out due to such evident legal obstacles, this would not imply, in contractual terms, the failure

to reach the project's objectives. However, no expenditure for the secondment scheme could be claimed, thus limiting proportionally the final grant. Nevertheless, if the project is being designed and rolled-out in such a way that no costs are incurred yet for the implementation of the second part, its cancellation would consequently not result in any financial losses.

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