



## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

VP/2016/007

### **Actions to boost the demand and supply side of the finance market for social enterprises**

#### **Questions and Answers**

**1. Can one organisation apply for more than one strand?**

Eligible organisations can apply for more than one strand. If an organisation submits more than one proposal, each one must be submitted separately.

**2. In the call it is written that for strand E the Consortium shall include members from at least 5 EU Member States. Does it mean that for the others stands, the consortium doesn't need to include several member States? Can the co-applicants be from the same member State that the applicant?**

For strands A, B, C and D it is not obligatory for the consortium to include several Member States. Therefore, the co-applicants can be from the same Member State as the applicant.

**3. For projects under strand E, partners from 5 countries are required. In case the project is leaded by EU umbrella organisation having affiliated members in 5 countries or more, can this be considered to meet the requirement? Is a commitment letter by affiliated entities required, in any case?**

Applicants under strand E are required to implement the action in a consortium that includes members from at least 5 EU Member States. The Consortium includes the applicant and the co-applicants. Affiliated entities are not part of the Consortium (for your information, 'affiliated entities' are defined in the Financial Guidelines for Applicants published on the same website as the call for proposals <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en&callId=482&furtherCalls=yes> ).

Therefore, if you envisage fulfilling the requested geographic coverage by involving your members, at least four members coming from other countries than REVES itself need to be part of the consortium and apply as co-applicants. In that case, these members need to submit all documentation requested by co-applicants.

Concerning the question on the letter of commitment, those members which would not be part of the consortium, but would still be involved in the project as affiliated entities are required to provide it. For details, please see section 17 ("Required documents") of the call, namely point 5 of the checklist.

**4. Is there a template for the preparation of the description of the detailed work programme and the budget? I couldn't find those documents in the SWIM neither on the website to be downloaded.**

There is no template for the detailed work programme (the format is free). However, in the section "Checklist for required documents" of the call (number 13), some details are offered on what the description of the work programme should include, in what language the document should be provided and the maximum number of characters that should be respected.

In SWIM (the online application form) you have a section called "Budget" that has to be filled in. In addition, you have to provide the "Budget explanation for the action" (no template, free format). However details are provided in the call in the "Checklist for required documents" (number 14) on what this document should include.

**5. How is the market assessment of strand A different from strand B?**

The baseline assessment of the social finance market should give an indication of the stage of development of the market the applicant is operating in and a vision for closing gaps and overcoming deficiencies in the supply of social finance. It should be tailored to each of the strands of the supply side (A, B or C). Section 2.2. ("Strands of the call") explains the objective of each of the strands.

**6. Can you be more specific on the expected objectives and outcomes of strand B? What type of commitment from the legal partners? (ie binding vs non-binding)**

The overall expected outcome of strands B is the establishment of social finance instruments and mechanisms. The results mentioned under section 2.3 of the call are, therefore, inter-linked. The list is, however, not exhaustive. The legal agreement of the partners should be binding.

**7. Does strand B include strand A?**

Under strand A a social finance partnership should be established while under strand B a social finance instrument/mechanism.

**8. What level of commitment do you expect under strand C?**

As mentioned in section 2.3 (“Expected Results”) of the call, for strand C, a cooperation agreement to participate in hybrid schemes of finance for social enterprises is expected that can take the form agreed between investors and grant-makers (private, public and not-for-profit partners).

**9. Though the objective of strand D is clear, it is not clear what you expect (ie to create the services below or to support an organization which provides the services below)?**

The aim of strand D is to improve the existing offer of specialised assistance and services performed for enabling social enterprises to become investment ready. This strand is addressed to organisations that provide this kind of support to social enterprises. The services can take the form of trainings, coaching, mentoring, for example. For further details on eligible activities, please see section 6.2.b) of the call.

**10. Eligible activities: What do you mean by IT services? (ie do you expect the actual product to be set up in practice?) What do you mean by “case by case transaction support”?**

IT services refer to those services in case the financial instrument uses web-tools or is based on a web platform. Case by case transaction support refers to tailored/customized support (on a deal-by-deal basis).

**11. In ‘X’ country, social enterprises are not legally nor formally recognized. How do you recommend that we define the scope of the target market?**

Social enterprises are defined under section 11 ("Definitions") of the call.

**12. Is it possible for an association representing cooperatives to participate as lead partner under strand D? Furthermore, is it possible to present an action on this strand which involves a local consortium, at sub-regional level (in our case)?**

Public or private entities of any type can apply as applicant or co-applicant. The "Checklist for required documents" details the documents that have to be provided by the lead applicant, co-applicant and other organisations involved in the project.

Strand D does not set any limitation to the type of the consortium. Therefore, a local consortium could be eligible under this strand.

**13. Where can I find information of previous funded projects in question notice?**

By accessing the following link you can find details of projects financed under a previous call for proposals published by DG EMPL in 2013 in the area of access to finance for social enterprises (VP/2013/017 "Supporting the demand and supply side of the market for social enterprise finance"):

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=13084&langId=en>

To see the 2013 call (VP/2013/017) please access the link:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en&callId=394&furtherCalls=yes>

**14. Can we be co-applicant in one and outsourced in another?**

The call does not set any limitations on applying as co-applicant in one proposal and being proposed as sub-contractor in another one.

**15. In the case of strand D: the actual support for 20 social enterprises is supposed to be delivered in the stated time frame (15 to 18 months)? Or is the grant destined to define and setup up that service?**

Beneficiaries under strand D are expected to provide the investment readiness support services to at least 20 social enterprises during the project implementation.

**16. Is there the possibility to present a candidature for the mentioned call in order to join existent group or just to say we are available to bring our international experience over social impact measurement and social accounting. Could you give me some information on this? Are there websites or other places to present us as partner?**

We would recommend you to have a look at the list of previous projects financed by DG EMPL in the area of access to finance for social enterprises, under the call for proposals VP/2013/017, where you also have the names of the beneficiary organisations.

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=13084&langId=en>

Particularly for this call for proposals we are not making available any websites where possible co-applicants could present their organisations as partners.

**17. I would like to have a clarification concerning the type of activities eligible for funding. In the call text is written that under strand D is eligible the replication and adaptation of models/instruments. We got in touch with an organization that was awarded in the previous call and we would like to replicate their model on our territory, but we are in the same country, but in two different regions and contexts. Is it possible for us to replicate their model (involving that organization as experts/affiliated partners)?**

As mentioned in the text of the call, under strands A, B, C and D the replication or adaptation of financing or support models has to be implemented in other countries.

Applicants under strand D will have to submit a set of documents attesting their operational capacity as specified in section 8.2 of the call ('Operational capacity').

**18. In the Call, at page 16, within the eligible activities for this strand there is the "provision of investment readiness services [...] that aim at assisting [...] an investment case to typically raise between EUR 100 000 and EUR 500 000 of capital". Furthermore, at page 21, speaking about the documents required for the demand side proposals, it is needed a "description of the planned investment readiness programme [...] including a description of: "the key features of the target group and the targeted deal size (min. 50,000 EUR)". In our experience, we noticed that Social Enterprises sometimes need smaller investment programs, indicatively between EUR 10 000 and EUR 50 000, that may be anyway difficult to obtain for SMEs which haven't the required skills and thus require specific support.**

**We would like to know if the aforementioned limits in the Call are indicative, and therefore if it is possible to draw up a proposal also for lower ranges of investment, or if these limits are mandatory, and therefore the tools developed in the project and, overall, the effective investment readiness plans for 20 social enterprises (mentioned as expected result at page 11 of the Call) must concern investments over**

**EUR 50,000 (or EUR 100,000?).**

Concerning your question on strand D, the limit of minimum EUR 50 000 is mandatory. The information on page 16, referring to an investment case that would typically raise between EUR 100 000 and EUR 500 000, is only descriptive.

**19. With regard to the required “Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between private, public and not-for profit partners, including an investment strategy agreed between partners(specifying objectives, action plan, resources, risks/return profile etc.) for the financial product to be established“ we wonder how convenient might it be to involve private investors? In our Country, asking potential investors to sign a memorandum means exposing them to the risk of being ineligible or excluded, later, from the SIB public expression of interest.**

**With regard to the requirement” Applications under strand B and C should include a letter of commitment from a private and/or public investor (lead applicant, co-applicant) that has committed itself to invest / co-invest in the financial instrument, respectively hybrid financial instrument to be established”, we were wondering if a commitment letter form SIB-public commissioner might be enough, due to the above mentioned concerns on investors’ involvement at this preliminary stage.**

Concerning the MoU, this seems to be indeed a particular situation. As far as we know, a competitive bidding process is usually taking place in other counties in order to select service providers, not private investors. However, it is not compulsory for the MoU to include both public and private investors. A public investor would be sufficient.

Same for the letter of commitment: if no private investors are included in the partnership at this stage, the letter of commitment of the public investor will be sufficient.

**20. Our non-profit organization, would like to join the partnership as we have been the ones who promoted the SIB, built the partnership and have been studying the financial instrument in the last two years, however we are a start-up, with limited budget in the last two years and a network of professionals and no employee. Do you think we would be pass the financial and organizational capacity check as partner?**

Concerning the financial and operation capacity of your non-profit organisation, this will be assessed on the basis of all the documents requested under section 8 of the call for proposals. Please note that, if a co-applicant is considered not to have the required financial or operational capacity, the application as a whole will not be rejected. The co-applicant

will be removed from the consortium and the application will be evaluated without this co-applicant.

**21. The consortium terms in the call for proposal do not call for multiple country partners for strand D. Is it sufficient to have partners from one eligible country? Even if it is not required, is it better to have multiple countries?**

For strands A, B, C and D it is not obligatory for the consortium to include several Member States. Therefore, the co-applicants can be from the same Member State as the applicant.

**22. Does this call represents the "second step" of the process started with a previous call, namely the Call VP/2013/007 "preparatory action - supporting the demand and supply side of the market for social enterprises finance", and, if so, if you expected to receive the follow-ups of those projects co-financed by that Call. We didn't take part in the Call of 2013, but are interested in the present Call. Do you know how can we understand if and which consortium are working on it? Can you kindly suggest me some national contact points or some "exchange platforms" devoted to that Call?**

Indeed the current call for proposals took into account the results of the previous call launched in 2013, so in that sense it is a "follow-up" call. However, applications are not in any way restricted to the projects financed under the previous call. So we encourage you to apply if your organization has a project which could be feasible under one of the five strands.

Particularly for this call for proposals we are not making available any websites where possible co-applicants could present their organisations as partners.

We do not able either to suggest any national contact points but we would recommend that you have a look at the key results of the projects financed under the 2013 call:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=15501&langId=en> In the document you can find the list of projects, as well as links to their websites.

**23. a) Are all the strands open for applications from Norway although Norway still did not sign up for the microfinance and social innovation axis?**

Norway is an EaSI participating country in the activities launched under the EaSI-PROGRESS axis. Therefore, all strands of the call are open for applications from this country.

**b) Is it possible to apply for several relevant strands under the same application?**

Eligible organisations can apply for more than one strand. If an organisation submits more than one proposal, each one must be submitted separately.

**24. Regarding the definition of relevance for countries in strands A, B and C (p.7f.): Does the wording “particularly relevant for actions in countries ...” exclude countries that are not fully covered or partly exceed these definitions?**

**Regarding strand C and the expected results (p.10): Is it required that the agreement to participate in a hybrid scheme of finance for social enterprise is actually realized by establishing or implementing a hybrid finance scheme?**

**Is it possible to hand in a project proposal under strand C, which aims at designing framework contracts for public and private investor, intermediaries and social business to enable the use of social impact bonds for financing social businesses?**

**Is it possible that a co-applicant is responsible for the management of the project?**

The call offers several strands with the aim to cover the variety of social finance market situations in the EU. It is up to the applicant to decide on the strand they wish to apply. We draw your attention to the fact that a baseline assessment of the social finance market situation giving an indication of the stage of development of the market the applicant is operating in is required among the documents under checklist number 20.

We expect projects under strand C to set up, test and pilot the proposed hybrid finance scheme. The preparation of social impact bonds will be considered eligible under the condition that they focus on services to refugees/migrants.

The lead applicant should be in charge of coordinating the project. As specified in the financial guidelines, the coordinator shall not subcontract any part of its tasks to the other beneficiaries (in the case of multi-beneficiary grant agreements) or to any affiliated entity, associate organisation or donor.

**25. Where can we find the template for the letter of mandate (document n.6 in the document list at page 29 of the call text)? It seems not to be available in SWIM even if the call at page 29 mentions that a template is available. Could you please clarify in which link/section of SWIM the letter can be found?**



The template of the letter of mandate can be found in SWIM under section B "Co-applicants involved in the action", sub-section 1.16 "Mandate". Please be aware that you have to click the button "Add new co-applicant" in order to see the required fields that need to be filled out for co-applicants.

**26. Should the declaration on honour be signed by a co-applicant even if it is a public body (Regional government)?**

The documents that do not have to be provided by public entities are only those highlighted in the 'Checklist for required documents' of the call (page 29-32).

**27. Is it compulsory for the MoU under strand B to include both private and public investors?**

It is not compulsory for the MoU to include both private and public investors.

**28. Is there any given template to be used for the letter of Commitment?**

In SWIM you have a template for the letter of commitment that has to be submitted by the lead applicant and partners and by which they explain the nature of their involvement and specify any funding provided.

In addition, investors need to sign a letter committing themselves to invest/co-invest in the financial instrument. For this letter, we have no template - the format is free.

**29. Are applicants under strand B expected to submit a signed MoU by the deadline of 13<sup>th</sup> June or such MoU is intended to be a reference document (not signed) to guide the project implementation and be eventually signed during the project? If yes (the MoU has to be signed prior to the project proposal submission), does it have to be signed by all applicants?**

The MoU should be signed. This is actually how we differentiate between Strand A projects which are expected to work towards signing an MoU, and Strand B projects which already have an MoU in place and work towards establishing a financial instrument.

**30. At page 21 and 31 of the call text, in relation to the MoU, it is mentioned to include a “sound (internal or external) feasibility assessment of the investment strategy”: could you please clarify what is meant by “internal or external”?**

What we mean is that the assessment can be done either internally by the organisation(s) who drew up the investment strategy, or by an external contractor.

**31. Is there any reference document giving a formal definition of what is meant in the call by MIGRANTS and REFUGEES (and key priority of intervention)?**

For reference, please consult the glossary of the European Migration network which is available at this link: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/glossary/index\\_a\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/glossary/index_a_en.htm)

**32. Can you clarify where exactly the template for the letter of commitment can be found on the SWIM?**

For co-applicants, the template for the letter of commitment can be found in SWIM in section B "Co-applicants involved in the action", sub-section B.1.18 Letters of commitment. For affiliated entities in section C "Affiliated entities", sub-section 1.4. For associate organisation in section D "Associated entities" sub-section 1.8. For third parties in section E "Third parties", sub-section 1.8.

**33. Is there a template for the Memorandum of Understanding to be signed or it can be in a free format?**

There is no template provided for the MoU.

**34. The most recent balance sheet and profit and loss accounts, including assets and liabilities, specifying the currency used, does this need to be in English?**

For requirements on the language of the application, please see section 5 "Admissibility requirements" of the call.

**35. How is the financial capacity of the applicant assessed? Is there a litmus test (for ex. In other calls it is stated that there is a minimum asset to call value ratio. Is it the same here or the evaluation will be done on an ad hoc basis?)**

No explicit ratios have to be respected for this call. The financial viability of the applicants will be assessed on the base of the financial statements and with the view of assessing their liquidity, solvency, profitability and their dependence from the union funding.

**36. In the template for the letter of commitment, we see the following sentence:**

**“In terms of contribution to the costs of the action, (name of applicant, co-applicant, affiliated entity or third party organisation) will provide a cash contribution to the action of \_\_\_\_\_ Euros.”**

**We have doubts about the meaning of cash contribution. In facts, each applicant will co-fund the 20% of the cost of the action, but this will probably not be done “in cash” but “in kind”, meaning by that “in working hours”. Is that the amount we should specify in the letter of commitment? Can we remove from the letter the word “cash” associated to the word “contribution”?**

You may not change the wording "cash". The contribution to the costs of the action in the framework of the co-financing is a contribution in cash (Contribution in kind are no longer accepted). What the contribution in cash covers is up to you. The Commission is not involved on how you and the other co-beneficiaries set the amount of your respective contribution in cash. But when applying for a grant lead applicant and co-applicants must confirm their own contribution using a letter of commitment.

**37. Could you please explain more precisely what a “contribution in cash” is and how it becomes effective in the case of the VP/2016/007 call? Do we have to pour our resource in cash to some kind of common pot? Or it works just like the mechanism that I have explained above? We also need to understand if the so defined “contribution in cash” (letter of commitment) refers to the 20% of costs of the action that are not covered by the European Commission.**

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.) cannot be accepted.

Contribution in cash is contribution with a financial flow that can be traced in the written accounts.

The contribution in cash covers the 20% not covered by the EC.

**38. In the SWIM application form online, some fields have a red asterisk\* whereas some others don't (example: section F.3 PREVIOUS GRANTS AND CURRENT GRANT APPLICATIONS has no asterisk). Are we supposed to fill in all fields or those with no asterisk\* are not compulsory and can be avoided?**

Fields with the asterisk \* are compulsory to be filled in in SWIM.

**39. It is asked in SWIM under section F.1.2 Administrative structure of each applicant organisation “Describe the administrative structure of each applicant organisation. Max. 10000 characters”. What does ‘each applicant’ mean? Only us who is main applicant, or also each co-applicant?**

The "applicant" refers to lead applicant and co-applicant(s).

**40. The call mentions on page 14 ”To be eligible, the actions must have the involvement of a consortium." But, it’s not clearly said for strand D - How many co-applicants there has to be? Can the co-applicants be from different EU-countries? Or can there be just one? (What exactly is the mentioned consortium in strand D?)**

To be eligible, actions must have the involvement of a consortium. This requirement applies to all strands. For strand D, the consortium should include at least one co-applicant. For strand D, the co-applicant(s) can be from the same country or different EaSI participating countries.

**41. Can the potential investor in the consortium also be an affiliated entity and not a co-applicant?**

Under strand D, applicants are encouraged to involve potential investors in the consortium (it is not compulsory).

**42. At page 7 point 2.2 last paragraph which refers to refugees/migrants. I would like to know is this is an obligatory condition for strands A, B and C?**

The preparation of social impact bonds for strands A, B and C will be considered eligible under the condition that they focus on services to refugees/migrants.

**43. What is the minimum financial and operational capacity that each organization in the consortium must have?**

Details on the financial and operational capacity that the applicant (lead and co-applicant(s)) must have and how it has to be demonstrated are mentioned in section 8.1 'Financial Capacity' and 8.2 'Operational Capacity' of the call. It is up to the applicant to choose the organisations that are the best to fit the consortium.

**44. Could you clarify what an associate organization or a third party organization are considered?**

The terms 'associate organization' and 'third parties' are defined in the 'Financial guidelines for applicants' that can be found on the website where the call has been published:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en&callId=482&furtherCalls=yes>

**45. Concerning Heading 6 - Income applicants and co-applicants contribution: must it be in cash, pure money, or could it be by time, working time financed by the applicant, co-applicant = in kind, that means no cash?**

The contribution to the costs of the action in the framework of the co-financing is a contribution in cash. A contribution in cash is a contribution with a financial flow that can be traced in the written accounts. What the contribution in cash covers is up to you. The Commission is not involved on how you and the other co-beneficiaries set the amount of your respective contribution in cash. But when applying for a grant lead applicant and co-applicants must confirm their own contribution using a letter of commitment.

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.) cannot be accepted.

**46. Can one organisation submit more than one proposal (with different content) for the same strand? Obviously each one will be submitted separately and under differently composed consortia.**

Applications under the same strand from the same organisation are possible with the condition that the proposals submitted have different objectives (e.g. under strand B the establishment of different financial instruments or mechanisms).

**47. In section "Applicant" I noticed that there is the space "registration number". The applicant is a University, where I find this registration number? In the "ECAS" participant portal we have a "pic number" but on SWIM we have not.**

The registration number is not a number provided by the European Union. It is up to the applicant to know whether their organisation has a registration number and where to find it.

We would like to draw your attention to the fact that in the SWIM application form, the registration number is an optional field.

**48. The applicant is a University (lead applicant), how we have to do for the balance sheet? We are public entity.**

As specified in the text of the call for proposals (section "Checklist for required documents", page 29), the highlighted documents in the checklist

do not need to be provided by public entities. The 'balance sheet and profit and loss accounts' is among the highlighted documents in the checklist.

**49. Is the strand B about building the product and its strategy or do we need the product strategy to be already defined and committed?**

We expect the proposals under strand B to have the financial instrument defined and committed. The documents requested for strand B under section 9 “Award Criteria” of the call are:

A Memorandum of Understanding between private, public and not-for profit partners, including:

- an investment strategy agreed between partners (specifying objectives, action plan, resources, risks/return profile etc.) for the financial product to be established
- a sound (internal or external) feasibility assessment of the investment strategy
- an identification of an organisation that could potentially manage the financial instrument.

**50. Regarding the asterisk\* in the online application form (SWIM system), I would like to highlight the fact that the entire section regarding the BUDGET has no asterisk\* at all: does this mean that we are not expected to fill that part of the online application form and that the budget will only be provided through the annex document “Budget explanation”?**

**If this is not the case (and if we have to fill the budget in the online form as well) then how should we interpret the absence of asterisk \* in the other sections of the online application form?**

**We kindly ask you if you could clarify if the following sections/subsections that have no asterisk \* are compulsory:**

- G 9
- F1.3
- F2.1, F2.3
- The entire section F3

The budget form has to be provided. The applicant will not be able to submit his/her application if the budget is blank.

If there are no asterisks, it means that the applicants can submit their application form, even if they did not fill out these fields. It remains

however the responsibility of the applicants to provide an application form with as much relevant information as possible.

We draw your attention to the fact that section F2.1 has an asterisk \*and is therefore compulsory to fill it.

**51. Is it possible to answer to one “strand” in two different consortia, one as lead and one as partner?**

Applications under the same strand from the same organisation are possible with the condition that the proposals submitted have different objectives (e.g. under strand B the establishment of different financial instruments or mechanisms).

**52. Admissibility requirements: All the participants (lead applicant and co-applicants) must have a 3 years’ experience?**

The ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS of applications under the call are those mentioned at page 13 in the text of the call, section "Admissibility Requirements", namely:

- Applications must be sent no later than the deadline for submission referred to in section 3(b)
- Applications must be submitted using the electronic submission system available at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim>, and by sending a signed, printed version of the application form and its annexes by post or courier service (see section 15)
- Applications must indicate the Strand under which they should be evaluated.

Concerning the operational capacity of the applicant, the call specifies that lead and co-applicant(s) must have demonstrable experience of having already carried out projects in the last three years relating to the relevant strand under the present call. The section "Operational Capacity" of the call details for each of the strands how the applicants have to demonstrate this experience.

**53. We would like to clarify if the paper documents must be only sent or also necessarily received by you by the deadline for submitting proposals (13/06/2016).**

The hard copy of the proposal must be duly signed and sent by you in 2 copies (one marked “original” and one marked “copy”), including all documents listed in section 17 by 13 of June (proof of posting or express courier receipt should be kept as it could be requested by the European Commission in cases of doubt regarding the date of submission).

**54. It is not clear to us, if the Erratum of the call published on last May refers to all the strands or only to strand D?**

The erratum published on our website refers only to strand D.

**55. The ring-fenced amount of € 7.000 must be shared among all the participants for the various activities to be implemented? This amount must be a part of the EU co-financing amount or not necessarily?**

It is up to the applicant to decide, based on their proposed transnational activities, if the ring-fenced amount of 7.000 EUR should be shared or not. This amount must be included in the proposed budget of the action.

**56. Is it possible to consider the staff costs of one applicant as co-financing of the project?**

Your contribution is a contribution in cash and represents an amount and should not refer to specific costs. What it covers is up to you.

**57. Is there going to be a webinar on May 24th? How can it be accessed?**

We have indeed planned a webinar for the call VP/2016/007. The webinar will not be organised on May 24<sup>th</sup>. Information on when the webinar will be organised and how it can be accessed will be published on our website: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en&callId=482&furtherCalls=yes>

**58. Can the consortium partner be a “no cost” one (so in fact an associated partner)? Would that organization be considered as a co-applicant/partner to the consortium?**

A co-applicant participates in the action and its costs are covered by the EU funding. It is not a requirement that each co-applicant contribute to the co-financing of the action as long as the consortium's overall contribution equals 20% of the total costs of the action.

On the other hand, the participation of an associate organisation on a no-cost basis means that they can participate to the action but that their costs cannot be covered by the EU funding and therefore their costs do not appear in the budget and they are not party to the Grant agreement. Their role must nevertheless be described in the Annex 1 ('Detailed Work Programme').

**59. Concerning strand E: Does the final platform (at the end of the project) should be composed by social enterprise support organisations settled in at least 15 EU Member States? If this is the case, does the project, or more specifically the 5 partners, should show to have the relevant competencies and network relations to carry to support the widespread dimension of the platform? Or do we have to write in the**



**projects the 15 potential members of the platform with letter of intention or analogous documents?**

We expect the platform to be created by projects financed under strand E to have relevant members organisations in at least 15 EU Member States (this is the outcome "at the end of the project", as you write). In this regard, one of the eligible activities of strand E is:

"Recruitment of platform member organisations providing support services to social enterprises and promotion of the platform towards relevant organisations (such as EU level and national/regional networks)".

The operational capacity required by applicants (lead applicant and co-applicants) and affiliated entities under strand E (and how this has to be demonstrated) is described under section "Operational Capacity" of the call (page 18-19). In relation to this issue, also the award criteria in chapter 9 are relevant. Notably, the applicants in strand E are requested to submit the following information:

- a description of the strategy and action plans for mobilising potential additional platform members that would sign a partnership agreement. The description shall explain:
  - the envisaged representativeness of platform members in relation to geographic coverage and to the types of existing support organisations in Europe
  - how the platform will use the knowledge and experience of already existing European and national networks and organisations working in this field

**60. The EU level platform to be created under strand E needs to have relevant member organizations in at least 15 EU Member States. At the same time page 15 states: Applicants under strand E must implement the action in a consortium, which includes the applicant and at least four co-applicants. The Consortium shall include members from at least 5 EU Member States. We want to re-check if 15 (fifteen) or 5 (five) EU members states is correct number that needs to be included in the CFP.**

The 15 EU Member States refers to the European level platform to be created under strand E (The platform needs to have relevant member organisations in at least 15 EU Member States). The 5 EU Member States refers to the Consortium (Applicants under strand E must implement the action in a consortium, which includes the applicant and at least four co-applicants. The Consortium shall include members from at least 5 EU Member States).

**61. I would like to know whether organisations without legal entity at the time of application can take part in the action as associated entities (or other, if possible).**

Organisations without legal entity may participate in the action only as associate entity.

Their costs cannot be covered by EU funding. These organisations will not be party of the grant agreement concluded with the Commission and their role shall be described in Annex I ('Detailed Work Programme).

**62. We are a university:**

**a) Is it possible to apply as University? Our University have an identification number as the same of ECAS (as for example in the case of Horizon2020 calls)?**

**b) All the documents must to be signed by the legal representative (the Rector)?**

**c) An observatory can be granted?**

**d) There are national contact points to help us?**

Concerning the types of entities that can apply to the call, these can be public or private entities of any type.

However, please note that, to be eligible, actions must have the involvement of a consortium. Furthermore, under strand D applicants are encouraged to involve (potential) investors in the consortium.

We are not aware of any national contact points. However, we would advise you to have a look at the results of the previous projects financed by DG EMPL in the area of access to finance for social enterprises, under the call for proposals VP/2013/017. They are available at this link: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=15501&langId=en> In the document you can also find the names of the beneficiary organisations.

**63. For strand E, the following references are requested:**

“three references from social enterprises and at least one reference from a funder or investors which the applicant (lead applicant and co-applicants) and affiliated entities have worked with in the last three years, giving details of the support services provided (in areas such as investment readiness of social enterprises, scaling-up of their impact, including transnationally) and the results.”

**Do applicants need to submit 4 references for the consortium, as a whole, or 4 references for each consortium partner?**

The 4 references have to be presented by the lead applicant, as well as by each of the co-applicants. The purpose of this requirement is to make sure that all consortium members have the experience and expertise needed.

**64. I understand minimum 20% co-financing is requested. I presume this can be cash, or time spent by partners during the project for which we do not request subsidies, or relevant work which partners will be doing in parallel and which is not yet funded by the Commission?**

Concerning co-financing, the Commission will cover up to 80% of the eligible cost of the action. The proposed budget should include the total cost of the action (both EU and non-EU rate). During the course of the project and at the end, the real costs incurred will have to be sent to the Commission. On this basis, the beneficiary will receive several tranches of payments which in total cannot exceed 80% of the costs incurred.

Therefore, the 20% should be cash, but it can of course be in the form of staff costs covering the time spent by the team to work on the project. The beneficiary should be able to send supporting documents certifying that 100% of the costs incurred have been paid.

**65. The EU level platform to be created under strand E does it have to include relevant member organisations settled in at least 15 EU Member States at the end of the project or do we have to identify already these organisations in the proposal? Does the project, or more specifically the 5 partners, should have the relevant competencies and network relations to support the widespread dimension of the platform?**

We expect the platform to be created by projects financed under strand E to have relevant members organisations in at least 15 EU Member States (this is the outcome "at the end of the project", as you write). In this regard, one of the eligible activities of strand E is:

"Recruitment of platform member organisations providing support services to social enterprises and promotion of the platform towards relevant organisations (such as EU level and national/regional networks)".

The operational capacity required by applicants (lead applicant and co-applicants) and affiliated entities under strand E (and how this has to be demonstrated) is described under section "Operational Capacity" of the call (page 18-19). In relation to this issue, also the award criteria in chapter 9 are relevant. Notably, the applicants in strand E are requested to submit the following information:

- a description of the strategy and action plans for mobilising potential additional platform members that would sign a partnership agreement.

The description shall explain:

- the envisaged representativeness of platform members in relation to geographic coverage and to the types of existing support organisations in Europe
- how the platform will use the knowledge and experience of already existing European and national networks and organisations working in this field.

**66. The project we propose would cover the aims and activities below<sup>1</sup>. Which strands do these fit with and what is the amount we can apply for?**

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Commission will not give a prior opinion on the eligibility of applicants, an action or specific activities. Concerning the available budget, please see section 4 ‘Available budget’ of the call.

**Can we apply under both strands A and B, as one application?**

Eligible organisations can apply for more than one strand. If an organisation submits more than one proposal, each one must be submitted separately.

**67. Where should the summary balance sheet & P&L be signed (there is no signature field)?**

You can sign at the bottom of the page even if there is no specific field for the signature.

**Would it be sufficient if our co-applicants provided their regular balance sheets and p&ls which they have readily available? Filling out the form is not trivial for them, especially given German accounting standards and given their statuses as foundations/investment fund (they are not commercial companies). We, as a lead-applicant (and main/only beneficiary) can provide a summary balance sheet and p&l. But is it absolutely necessary for the two co-applicants to provide a signed summary (in addition to their regular balance sheets & p&ls) as well? If yes, what amount should be filled in “grant amount”? Is this the same amount that applies to the lead-applicant? Would it be sufficient for them to provide just total assets and total liabilities?**

You should submit the documents required by the call. If this is not possible, you can justify why and we will use the submitted documents to assess the financial capacity. We can come back to you in case the assessment is not feasible with the available documents.

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<sup>1</sup> Not mentioned in the FAQ document due to the specificity and the details offered by the potential applicant

**68. For both strands A and D we are answering in a consortium. One of the consortium members wants to know whether their participation can be in time, materials and others (e.g. rooms and materials for training/mentoring and meeting sessions, communications facilities, training facilitators) – money excluded. Is this possible concerning the budget proposal to be submitted?**

**Strand A – Indicative amount grant - 85.000€ + 17.000€ (materials)**

**Strand D - Indicative amount grant - 100.000€ + 20.000€ (materials)**

Please see the answer to question 64.

**69. Under strand E, the call says that “Three references from social enterprises and at least one reference from a funder or investors which the applicant (lead applicant and co-applicants) and affiliated entities have worked with in the last three years, giving details of the support services provided (in areas such as investment readiness of social enterprises, scaling-up of their impact, including transnationally) and the results (see section 17, checklist point 17).”**

**We have checked the FAQ, but we still do not have clear if this means that each one of the co-applicants has to receive the 3+1 letters (f.i. for 5 co-applicants this means 20 letters), or the consortium as a whole (lead applicant + co-applicants) needs the 3+1 letters, which means 4 letters in total?**

Please see the answer to question 63 (revised to ensure better clarity).

**70. Annex 5 - letter of commitment:**

**"In terms of contribution to the costs of the action, (name of applicant, co-applicant, affiliated entity or third party organisation) will provide a cash contribution to the action of \_\_\_\_\_ Euros. [to be filled in by applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entities or third parties contributing financially to the proposed action]"**

**- We do not understand what is meant for "action": it refers to the project presented under the call or to the financial instruments we are willing to pilot under strand B?**

“Action” refers to the proposal submitted.

**- If for "action" you mean "the project submitted" we are asked as partners to co-finance 20%, but why should we contribute in cash?  
Usually co-financing is in staff working hours.**

Please see the answer to question 36, 45 and 64.

**71. Please clarify whether the references to be provided for strand D should be signed by the social enterprise/funder/investor or whether we should just provide the contact details of the person responsible from each social enterprise/funder/investor for verification purposes?**

The references should be signed by the referees.

**Please clarify which of the below applies:**

**i. four (4) references are required by each separate member of the consortium**

**ii. a total of four (4) references is required by the consortium as a whole**

**iii. a total of four (4) references is required but each member of the consortium must provide at least one (1) reference.**

The 4 references have to be presented by the lead applicant, as well as by each of the co-applicants. The purpose of this requirement is to make sure that all consortium members have the experience and expertise needed.

Please note that we have published a corrigendum by which the 4 references are no longer a requirement for the affiliated entities (under strand D). You can find it on the same webpage as the call: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en&callId=482&furtherCalls=yes>

**72. We would like to submit a proposal for strand D. We would like more information about the 20 social enterprises that we have to collaborate with. Could you please tell us what we should ask from them before submitting our proposal?**

The objective of Strand D is the development of the investment readiness support of social enterprises. Providing investment readiness services to individual social enterprises or groups of social enterprises is one of the eligible activities under this strand. These services include advice and consultancy, mentoring and coaching, dedicated capacity building, training and peer-learning to social enterprises from across different industries and defined geographical locations. We expect testing of your proposed services (assistance) with at least 20 social enterprises.

**73. Unfortunately I was unable to join the webinar (organized on 1 June). Please could you let me know when a recording of the webinar will be made available and when I can access this?**

The link for accessing the recording of the webinar is available on the internet page where the call for proposals is published:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en&callId=482&furtherCalls=yes>

**74. Regarding the hard-copies delivery, can you confirm that it is sufficient if we post them on the 13th of June, meaning that you may only receive it the following day?**

The hard copy of the proposal must be duly signed and sent by you in 2 copies (one marked “original” and one marked “copy”), including all documents listed in section 17 by 13 of June (proof of posting or express courier receipt should be kept as it could be requested by the European Commission in cases of doubt regarding the date of submission).

**Regarding the references from social enterprises and investors that applicants and co-applicants have to submit, is it a problem if one or more of these entities is repeated (despite referring to distinct matters)?**

We would like to see references from three different social enterprises. Nevertheless, as the formulation of our text in the call leaves room for interpretation in this regard, we will not reject applications that are providing for example 2 of the 3 references from the same social enterprise (under the condition they refer to different support services provided).

**Do we have to present the P&L only referent to the last year (2015) or should we present more years back?**

The most recent balance sheet & profit and loss accounts is required (for details, please see checklist number 18 of the call).

**In the template for "summary balance sheet", t0=2015, and what does t-1 refer to?**

T-1 = 2014; current year and previous year.

**Can an associated organisation be simultaneously a sub-contractor?**

Associate organizations may participate in the action on a no-cost basis.

**Are networking events for participants in the investment readiness programme considered as eligible costs? (specifically, work rooms rental and catering costs)?**

See ‘Financial Guidelines for Applicants’, section 4.2.2.

**Are participants per diem an eligible cost? (to support the living expenses of those from other regions of the country)**

See 'Financial Guidelines for Applicants', section 4.2.2.

**Strand D: do the 45,000 max characters refer to both points (1) and (2) together or to each point individually? [(1) Baseline assessment of drivers and barriers; (2) A description of the planned investment readiness programme]**

Yes, the maximum of 45.000 characters refers to both documents (in total).

**75. In the letter of commitment the part referring to:**

**-"... terms of contribution to the costs of the action, (name of applicant, co-applicant, affiliated entity or third party organisation) will provide a financial contribution to the action of \_\_\_\_\_ Euros." is it related to any kind of contribution, foreseen by the budget (cash, kind, staff etc)?**

Please see the answer to question 36, 45 and 64.

**- The Associate Organisations are defined in the application form as "Organisations which participate in the action on a no-cost basis". In the letter of commitment should we delete the part related to the contribution or add 0 euros?**

You should add 0 euros.

Please also see the answer to question 58.

**The memorandum of understanding for the Strand A must be uploaded into the supplementary space for additional documents or elsewhere?**

For strand A, the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding is the expected result of the project (it should be the outcome, at the end of the project).

Please see the checklist number 20 in the call for additional documents requested under strand A.

**We were not able to access to the webinar. Is there the intention to make public a video on your site?**

Please see the answer to question 73.



**76. Is it possible to change a staff member of one applicant/co-applicant involved in the implementation of the project, during the project activities? Should we maintain an equivalent “Indicative daily salary cost”?**

In the section reserved for staff costs in the budget estimate, only the profile or the category of the staff should be indicated. Changes in the staff in each indicated profiles are possible during the project implementation without any formal amendment. The coordinator should however inform the Commission of any change which is likely to affect the implementation of the action.

Only costs actually incurred by the beneficiaries will be charged to the final budget.

**77. Could you explain the differences between operation grants and action grants? The lead applicants is a University and have grants of any type such as Horizon2020 (Marie Curie), ERC, ERASMUS+. The PON, POR and PONREC must be considered in this list?**

The purpose of a grant for an action is to co-finance an action "intended to help achieve a Union policy objective"<sup>2</sup>. An operating grant provides financial support for the functioning of a body which pursues an aim of general Union interest or has an objective forming part of, and supporting, a Union policy.

**78. Among the expected results for strand D there is the “integrated assistance to, and capability building of at least 20 social enterprises in delivering a realistic, but effective investment readiness plans”. We would be grateful if you would precise if we must identify already in the application the 20 social enterprises belonging to the target group, or if we can define only the target group key features, identifying the enterprises in one of the first steps of the project we would realize.**

As mentioned in the section ‘Award criteria’ under strand D, the description of the planned investment readiness programme should include a description the key features of the target group and the targeted deal size.

**We need to know exactly if the letter of intention to invest/co-invest in the envisaged financial product has to represent a definitive commitment for the investor. It is possible that some terms or conditions in order to invest can be verified only once all the technical and economic aspects of the project, and also the structure of the**

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<sup>2</sup> Article 121 of Financial Regulation

**financial instrument, have been tested. For this reason we would like to know if the commitment in this step of the application can be a preliminary interest to invest in the project and if the definitive commitment to invest can be subordinated to some conditions.**

Applications under strand A should provide a letter of intention from a (potential) investor (lead applicant, co-applicant) willing to invest or co-invest in the envisaged financial product (letter of commitments are requested for applications under strand B).

A signed Memorandum of Understanding (including the commitment of the partners to contribute to, and to collaborate in, establishing a financial product providing access to finance for social enterprises) is the expected result (the outcome) of projects financed under strand A.

**79. In the guidelines, it is written (page 26): “The hard copy of the proposal must be duly signed and sent in 2 copies (one marked “original” and one marked “copy”), including all documents listed in section 17 by the deadline (the postmark or the express courier receipt date serving as proof) to the following address ...”. Does it mean that we could send it through DHL until the 13rd of May or that the proposal must be received by the European commission on the 13rd of May at the latest?**

You can send it through express courier service by 13 of June (please keep the express courier receipt as it could be requested by the European Commission in cases of doubt regarding the date of submission).

**Concerning the references required for the stand D, does each partner of the consortium must provide three references from social enterprises and one reference from a funder / investor? Or is it requested to provide those four documents for the whole consortium?**

Please see the answer to question 71.

**80. We cannot find the following templates: Declaration on honour, Letter of commitment/intention, Summary balance sheet & profit and loss accounts.**

The template of the declaration on honour can be find under section A “Applicants”, respectively section B “Co-applicants” of the SWIM application. The template of the letter of commitment can be found under section B, C, D and E. Please be aware that you have to click the button "Add new co-applicant/affiliated entity/associate organisation/third party" in order to see the required fields that need to be filled out under each of the respective sections in SWIM.

For the other letters (letters of intention to invest/co-invest in the envisaged financial product, respectively the letter of commitment to invest/co-invest in the financial instrument/hybrid scheme of finance to be established), there is not template provided (the format is free).

**81. We see that we should send proof of registration, statues and vat certificate. We have this in Swedish. And we can't get them in English. What to do? Is it ok to send the original without translation?**

Please see the answer to question 34.

**82. Should an amount already be defined at this stage in the letter of commitment requested under strand B or is the commitment to invest sufficient? If yes, is there a minimum investment necessary?**

The commitment to invest is necessary for applications under strand B. It is not compulsory to define the exact amount at the stage of the application.

**83. As part of our application, we have one co-applicant. For administrative purposes, this co-applicant has asked if we (the lead applicant) can apply to administer all of the funds made available in the case of a successful application, with our co-applicant invoicing us for the aspects of the work they complete.**

The coordinator is designated as the sole recipient of payments on behalf of all of the beneficiaries and must ensure that all the appropriate payments are made to the other beneficiaries. How this is done should be defined in your internal cooperation agreement.

Each beneficiary shall however declare their actually incurred costs in each correspondent heading of the final report. Subcontracting of tasks between beneficiaries is not possible.

**84. Regarding the ring-fenced amount of 7.000 Euros for transnational activities: how and where do we have to include it in the budget form since it is specified in section 10? Other transnational activities can be prepared only after the first workshop organized by the Commission?**

Other transnational activities, in addition to those defined under section 'Other Requirements' can be proposed. They should be indicated under section G.11 'Transnational dimension' of the grant application form. The related eligible costs should be part of the proposed budget of the action (but outside the ring-fenced amount of 7.000 Euros).

**We have also another question regarding the cash contribution requested. In the Q&A file, can you please clarify your answer at question 56? Can we consider staff cost as our contribution in cash since they are of course financially traceable (pay slip)?**

Please see the answer to question 64.

**85. Some organisations which will be associate organisations, producing letters of commitment do not have official letterhead paper of the organisation. What to do in this case?**

In this case the official letterhead paper of the organisation can be replaced by the stamp of the organisation.

**Due to lack of time/short application time, our partners cannot be co-applicant, but they want to be associate organisations. Is it ok that our consortium consists of one applicant and 5-8 associate organisations, but no co-applicant?**

To be eligible actions must have the involvement of a consortium. For details please see section 6.1 'Eligibility of applicants (lead and co-applicants)', point c) 'Consortia'.

**We have articles of association/statutes proving the eligibility of our organisation, but it is in Swedish. But do we need to translate the statutes or is it ok just to send the Swedish version?**

Please see the answer to question 34.

**86. One of our consultancy activities could be making social economy organizations investor ready (strand D in the proposal) but we also provide financing for social economy organizations. These are two separate legal structures but with the same company name and branding. So, given this situation is it possible to apply for strand D since financing partner and support partner will be the same?**

Applications under strand D should include a consortium composed of lead applicant and at least one co-applicant. Concerning the type of entities eligible under the call, please see section 6.1 'Eligibility of the applicants (lead applicant and co-applicants), point b) 'Type of entities'.

**87. In the letter of mandate it is mentioned:**

**"(...) authorised to represent the applicant, hereby requests from the Commission a grant of EUR [insert amount] with a view to implementing the [action [insert name of the action]] [work programme [insert reference to the work programme]] on the terms laid down in this application ".**

**Do we need to insert the reference to the work programme?**

You need to insert only the amount and the name of the action in the above text.

**88. I would like to have further details about the annex H.10 (Summary balance sheet & profit and loss accounts) of the call for proposals “VP/2016/007 Actions to boost the demand and supply side of the finance market for social enterprises”. Is it possible to add some lines to the template of the Summary balance sheet & profit and loss accounts as it doesn’t really correspond to an association budget? Some lines are missing (dedicated funds etc).**

The summary balance sheet is in principle a standard document to be used for all types of organisations which includes formulas. The template is not editable in the SWIM application. If more detailed information needs to be provided which cannot fit in the lines of the summary balance sheet, this information should anyway be provided in the detailed balance sheet and profit and loss accounts of the organisation.

**89. Can you please clarify if the ring-fenced amount of 7.000 EUR for transnational activities includes direct costs only, or direct costs and personnel/staff costs in order to complete the transnational activities?**

It should include all the costs (including staff costs) necessary to implement the transnational activities as indicated under section 10 ‘Other requirements’ of the call. For criteria of eligibility of costs please see ‘Financial Guidelines for applicants’ (section 4.2.1).

**90. What is the German name for the “VAT certificate” and where/how can it be obtained?**

The name is "Nachweis der Umsatzsteuer-Identifikationsnummer". It can probably be obtained from the tax office in your country.

**Which person is the “coordinator” – can it be the same as the “project manager”?**

The lead applicant is the coordinator; it is up to you to decide who you want to appoint.

**Does the legal work contracted to a law firm, e.g. to create document drafts, already constitute “outsourcing”?**

This involves the conclusion of an external contract. The main rules for the award of implementing contracts and subcontracting can be found at page 13 of the ‘Financial Guidelines for Applicants’.

**Do eligible costs include:**

- regulatory registration fees (e.g. EUSEF, 10,000 EUR?)
- annual membership fee for associations/networks
- database subscriptions
- fees to participate in events

- expert advisory / consulting services
- training costs?

Please see 'Financial Guidelines for Applicants' (Section 4.2.1) for the criteria of eligibility of costs.

### **91. Concerning strand A of the call:**

**- the Memorandum of Understanding has to be signed by all the applicants, co-applicants or even only by some of them?**

The Memorandum of Understanding (expected result under strand A) should include the commitment of the partners (including their roles and contributions) to contribute to, and to collaborate in, establishing a financial product providing access to finance for social enterprises. It depends on the project itself and the results how many of the applicants will sign it.

**- concerning a finance market not yet developed, the financial product could be defined during the project activities, as an objective of the action, or has to be strictly indicated already now in the presentation of the action?**

Please see the expected results of strand A, section 2.3 of the call.

**92. The "Balance sheet & profit and loss accounts" document, should be submitted separately for each applicant and co-applicant? The point "External Co-Funding" is it related to the EC grant or cash contribution from third parties?**

The lead applicant and each co-applicant need to submit separately the summary balance sheet and profit & loss accounts (see checklist for required documents of the call, number 18).

External co-funding means contributions from third parties.

**93. Language: I read you accept documents in English, French or German. Do you mean our Spanish partner needs to translate their references, bylaws, etc in one of these 3 languages?**

Applicants are encouraged to submit their application in EN, FR or DE in order to facilitate the treatment of the proposals and speed up the evaluation process. However, proposals in all official languages of the EU will be accepted (please see section 5 'Admissibility Requirements' of the call for further details).

**Original copies: what is meant by original hardcopies? Do all our consortium partners need to send us original hardcopies prior to 13/06 or can we 'simply' print the documents from SWIM?**

Please see the ‘Checklist for required documents’ (Section 17 of the call) indicating the documents that must be provided by each lead applicant/co-applicant/affiliated entity/associate organization/third party as well as which of these have to be originally signed.

**94. The annex H.10 (Summary balance sheet & profit and loss accounts): does it refer to the balance sheet of the "proposal" or to balance sheet of the co-applicants?**

**The co-applicants have the balance sheet in Italian. Can we upload it?**

The ‘Summary balance sheet & profit and loss accounts’ should be provided by the applicant and each of the co-applicants. For further details please see section 17 of the call ‘Required documents’, checklist number 19).

For requirements on the language of the application, please see the answer to question 93.

**95. The Checklist for required documents requests 'balance sheets and profit & loss accounts'. However, as we are a start-up with less than one year operation, we do not yet have an annual balance sheet and P&L accounts that we could submit. How do you suggest we best proceed with this required document?**

All applicants and co-applicants have to submit the most recent balance sheet & profit and loss accounts (cf. no. 18 of checklist). For newly created entities, the business plan might replace the above documents.

Please note that the applicants must have demonstrable experience of having already carried out projects in the last three years (depending on the strand they are applying for). For details please see section 8.2 ‘Operational Capacity’.

If the lead applicant is considered not to have the required financial or operational capacity, the application as a whole will be rejected. If a co-applicant is considered not to have the required financial or operational capacity, this co-applicant will be removed from the consortium and the application will be evaluated without this co-applicant<sup>3</sup>. In addition, the costs that are allocated to the non-selected co-applicant will be removed from the budget. For further details please see section 8.2 of the call.

**96. Do I understand correctly that each applicant needs to provide 20% co-financing or does the Commission not pay attention to how the consortium handles co-financing among co-applicants?**

Please see the answer to question 58.

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<sup>3</sup> This includes a re-evaluation of the eligibility of the modified consortium.

**97. Joint activities and the six workshops are they the same thing? Are all covered by the ring-fenced amount of 7.000 EUR?**

They are not the same thing. The ring-fenced amount of 7.000 EUR should be allocated for implementing the joint activities (with projects from other Member States financed under this call for proposals or the previous call for proposals VP/2013/017, with the objective of stimulating transnational collaboration and action e.g. study visits, expert workshops, sharing of tools etc.) to be fine-tuned in the detailed work programme, after the first workshop. The participation in up to six workshops should be included in the budget of the proposal, but not as part of the 7.000 EUR. For further details please see section 10 ‘Other requirements’ of the call.

**98. Can the 20% of co-financing come from other public funders within the EU or the US?**

Please see section 1 ‘General principles’ of the ‘Financial Guidelines for applicants’.

**Can applicants that are already running funds for social enterprises apply to grow their activities? If yes, under which strand?**

Under strands A, B, C and D the replication or adaptation of financing or support models to be implemented in other countries (including through joint ventures or franchising) is eligible.

**99. Are networking events for participants in the investment readiness programme considered as eligible costs?**

Please see ‘Financial Guidelines for Applicants’ (Section 4.2.1) for the criteria of eligibility of costs.

**100. Does ‘within the respect of these principles, the beneficiary may organize the award of contracts according to their usual practices’ means that sub-contracting does not have to be publicly published as procurement?**

For details on the necessary arrangements that must be undertaken by the beneficiary to ensure that the contractors and sub-contractors waive all rights in respect of the Commission under the agreement, please see section 4.2.2.3 Costs of services of the Financial Guidelines for applicants (page 14).

**101. Strand D: what does it mean the focus on testing the methodology? Is it that all the 20 social enterprises should be successfully ready to get the 100k-500k investment?**

It depends on each of the projects if all the 20 social enterprises will be successfully ready in getting the 100-500k investment.



**102. It is not clear in the call the status of grants vs loans or equity as a form of investment to scale businesses. Are grants considered a valid form of investment if conditioned by a business plan and business performance?**

The main tasks of the actions under the supply side will be to develop and establish feasible, suitable and reliable financial instruments (strands A and B) or hybrid finance packages (strand C). Financial instruments are defined under section 11 'Definitions' of the call.

**103. In the budget, should the ring-fenced amount of 7.000 EUR appear as a lump sum or can it be divided in different headings?**

It should be divided across the different headings of the budget according to the related costs of the planned joint activities.

**104. How many projects will be financed per strand?**

The proposals with the highest evaluation scores will be selected for award with due consideration to the Commission's intention to ensure a certain geographical balance between EaSI participating countries.

Please note that for strand E only one proposal will be selected for award. As it is a European level action it will not be taken into consideration in the geographic distribution of the projects.

**105. Most of our investors in social enterprises are individuals rather than public bodies or investment institutions. How do the letters of intention (strand A), respectively commitment (strands B and C) mentioned on page 14 of the call apply to us in this case?**

To be eligible, applicants and co-applicants may be public or private entities of any type. Natural persons cannot be applicants or co-applicants.

**106. Would the travel costs of staff of an associate organisation attending a project event (e.g. conference) be eligible?**

Travel costs of participants in a project event from organisations which may also happen to be associate organisations in the action would be eligible in the same way as any other participant in the event as long as they are included in the declared costs by one of the beneficiaries of the grant agreement.