



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Call for proposals VP/2018/008

“Support for the deployment of skills assessments in the implementation of “Upskilling Pathways”

Frequently Asked Questions

I could not take part in the webinar on 29 May, where can I find the information given there?

The link to see again the info session and the Power Point presentation are available on the call for proposals [webpage](#).

You can also write an email to our functional mailbox empl-vp-2018-008@ec.europa.eu to request these links and documents, or ask any question related to the call.

ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS

Can an autonomous regional authority apply?

Can a local authority apply?

Can a university/ a public school/ a European NGO apply?

The Commission cannot give a prior opinion on whether an applicant is eligible or not because we do not have the supporting documents from you at this stage to make that judgement.

We advise that you read carefully section 6 of the Call.

To be the lead or sole applicant, the entity must belong to the category “*public entity in charge of national or regional policies and actions for upskilling/re-skilling adults*”.

To be co-applicant, the entity must belong to the category “*public or private entities (profit or non-profit making) involved in the organisation and/or financing and/or provision of services to adults such as skills assessment, validation of competences, education and training, orientation and guidance.*”

An applicant must prove in the application that it has sufficient competence in the field and can ensure sufficient impact on the target group.

We advise you, in preparing your proposal, to coordinate with other relevant potential applicants in your country; this is both to ensure the widest possible impact of your proposed actions and to take account of the fact that only one proposal per “focus country” will be recommended for award (even if several from that country pass the 70% quality threshold).

Your entity also needs to comply with all the other eligibility criteria announced in the call.

What type of consortium is the most appropriate to carry out an action under this call?

The Commission cannot give a prior opinion on the type of consortium most suitable for this project.

However, the specific objective of the call clearly states that the call is "to support **the deployment by national and/or regional authorities**, as an integral element in their implementation of the Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways, of the provision of individual skills assessments (including literacy, numeracy and digital skills) for low skilled / low qualified adults (and in particular for **priority groups identified by countries in the framework of the Recommendation**, where relevant)".

Besides one of the award criteria is the "commitment of **relevant public authority/ies** to exploiting the results of the project in implementing the Upskilling Pathways Recommendation at national level".

Your application should therefore be closely connected to authorities in charge of implementing "Upskilling pathways" and aligned with what they decided.

What, if any, is the maximum number of partners in a consortium?

There is no maximum number of co-applicants in a consortium.

Do we need co-applicants from other countries in our proposal?

No. The transnational dimension is not compulsory.

My country is heavily decentralised in terms of adult learning policies; can country regions be considered as "focus countries"?

The term 'focus country' refers to the whole of a Member State (or the whole of another state participating in the EaSI programme). There are no regional exceptions in decentralised countries.

ELIGIBILITY OF ACTIVITIES

Can the skills assessments deployed focus on job-specific skills?

The Commission cannot give a prior opinion on proposals of activities by potential applicants. Yet the focus of the Upskilling Pathways Recommendation and the call for proposals VP/2018/008 objectives is on basic skills (and *if possible* wider skills) and low-skilled/low-qualified adults.

Are the activities funded under this call limited to the first step of Upskilling Pathways (skills assessment) or can they also cover the two other steps (tailored learning provision and validation of skills)?

The core compulsory activities for this call only cover the first step of « Upskilling Pathways» (skills assessments - section 2.2. (a) et (b) of the call). This call is not meant to support as core actions, actions related to the implementation of the two last steps of Upskilling pathways.

Yet skills assessments deployed under this call should not be completely disconnected from the two other steps, as the ambition of "Upskilling Pathways" is that they articulate in a coherent manner. Therefore skills assessments deployed should "provide the basis for designing a learning offer adapted to the specific needs of each Individual" and "where available, provide individuals with opportunities to validate/certify his or her skills, whether acquired through prior learning or through the proposed learning offer, and whether leading to a qualification or not", as mentioned in the call objectives.

TARGET GROUP

Is there an age definition of adults?

The Upskilling Pathways Recommendation targets “adults with a low level of skills, knowledge and competences who are not eligible for support under the Youth Guarantee”; the age limit for eligibility under the Youth Guarantee differs from Member State to Member State.

Can we focus our proposed action on disabled adults/unemployed adults?

The target group of the “Upskilling Pathways” Recommendation, and of this call, is low-skilled/low-qualified adults. Within this broad group, some Member States may decide as a first priority to target certain sub-groups and your proposal may focus on one (or more) of the sub-groups identified by your Member State. We advise you to seek further information from the authority/ies in charge of the implementation of the Upskilling Pathways Recommendation in your country as your proposal must be consistent with the overall approach they have adopted. While there is no list available of the authorities in charge of implementing UP in each of the countries, you may find it helpful to consult your [National Coordinator for the implementation of the European Agenda for Adult Learning](#) as a first point of contact.

ACTIVITIES

May our application focus exclusively on the assessment of literacy skills?

The “Upskilling Pathways” Recommendation covers all three basic skills (literacy, numeracy and digital skills). If your application focuses on only one basic skill, you will need to justify this. As the call objectives mention: “*the provision of individual skills assessments (including literacy, numeracy and digital skills)*”.

Is there a minimum number of participants that have to undertake a skills assessment during the course of the action?

The call does not require the actions you propose to include making adults undergo a skills assessment. You should note, however, that the award criteria include the planned impact on the whole target group and the potential for transferability.

We already have a project; may we apply for funding under this call to upscale it?

Your proposal must be relevant to the objectives of this call for proposals. You may not fund the same activities with different EU grants. The call states clearly (2.2 (b)) that proposals may include enlarging the scope of existing tools and arrangements, or adapting them to the needs of low-skilled adults.

OTHER

Is there a list of public authorities in charge of the implementation of Upskilling Pathways in each Member State?

No. Member States have not informed the European Commission about which body/ies will be responsible for the implementation of the Upskilling Pathways Recommendation. You may wish to contact your Ministry of Education or of Labour or your [National Coordinator for the European Agenda on Adult Learning](#).

If the National Coordinator for the European Agenda on Adult Learning in my country refuses to join the consortium submitting my application, should I still develop a proposal?

The European Commission cannot give a prior opinion concerning the composition of a consortium. It is for the lead applicant to judge if the consortium submitting the application is relevant and contributes to meet the call for proposals' award criteria. The National Coordinator for the European Agenda on Adult learning in your country can give applicants more information on subjects related to Upskilling Pathways and EU adult learning policies, submit an application or join a consortium if it so wishes, but having the Coordinator in the application's consortium is not a mandatory condition to apply for this call.

Is it possible for one entity to be a co-applicant in two different consortia and submit several proposals?

Yes, one entity may apply twice as co-applicant. Particular attention should be given to avoiding double funding in case the two proposals are awarded.

This call covers the skills assessment component of Upskilling Pathways; will there be subsequent calls that address the other two components (tailored learning and validation)?

It is not known whether there will be any further calls for proposals on Upskilling Pathways.

FINANCE

How do you assess financial capacity and cost-efficiency? Do you use sub-criteria when giving points?

The mono-applicant's or lead applicant's and each co-applicant's financial capacity will be assessed on the basis of the following supporting documents to be submitted with the application:

- Declaration on honour (including financial capacity to carry out the activity)
- Annual balance sheets and profit and loss accounts for the last financial year available
- Summary balance sheet and profit and loss accounts using the template provided in SWIM
- For grants of EUR 750 000 or more per beneficiary or affiliated entity, an audit report produced by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the last financial year available
- information on the financial capacity provided by the applicant and in particular the information provided in section "Financial Resources" of the SWIM application form

The ratio between the total assets in the applicant's (lead and co-applicant(s)) balance sheet and the total budget of the project or the part of the project budget for which that organisation is responsible, according to the budget in the application form, would be considered strong if it is equal to or greater than 0.65.

The verification of financial capacity will not apply to public bodies.

The cost-efficiency of the proposed action will be evaluated against the corresponding award criterion: "a reasonable and realistic budget, proportional to the scale and scope of the action". There are no sub-criteria for this award criterion.

How can the co-financing be provided?

The co-financed share may take the form of (see financial guidelines on the call webpage)

- **the applicants' own resources:** can be indeed for example the use of applicants' staff or equipment for the purposes of implementing the action
- **or revenue generated by the action or work programme:** this income is by definition an estimate at this stage. It must be confirmed when the request for payment of the balance is

submitted. Expected interest on any pre-financing from the Commission does not constitute income from the supported operation and consequently should not appear in the 'Financing' part of the estimated budget.

- **or financial contributions by third parties**

The sources of financing other than the EU grant must not include a grant awarded under another EU financial instrument or programme ("double-funding" rule).