

Questions and answers on call VP/2019/006 CBP

(last update: 22/05/2019)

Question: 1

1a) Could you please be so kind to send us the model privacy statement (in Word). The reference page seems not to contain the information.

1b) Could you please explain the difference between categories 1,2 and 3 under 2.2.3, since it might influence the writing of the application? (It seems that category 1 is only a merge of categories 2 and 3).

1c) you please explain the reasoning behind, [...] beneficiaries must foresee the necessary funding for monitoring and reporting to the Commission (under point 2.3 Monitoring), while stating under 6.2 Eligible activities (core activities), the following activities are considered to be core activities and may not be subcontracted [...] monitoring of the action, and what kind of activities that might be acceptable by the Commission?

1d) Could you please provide us with the Reference Document in Word (Description of the action)?

Answer 1:

1a) The model privacy statement will be published before the end of this call on the call page.

1b) The ultimate goal of all CBP activities should be to increase the job matchings which is why category nr. 1 of point 2.2.3 places the focus stronger on the actual matchings as such.. While for categories nr. 2 and 3 matchings are also the goal, the focus of these categories is rather on the preparatory measures that should ultimately lead to matchings, namely in category 2 the information campaigns and in category 3 the cooperation with other EURES countries, e.g. regarding the organisation of respective events.

1c) Monitoring of the action must remain the overall responsibility of the applicant but applicants may recruit an external evaluator to help them via an implementing contract. This is not the same as subcontracting. Subcontracting would imply that a core activity of a project is contracted out to another party. ~~Monitoring is not a core activity.~~

1d) The EN version of the "Description of the action" can be downloaded from SWIM. The DE and FR versions are available on the call webpage but for technical reasons only in pdf. However, you can convert the pdf version into a word document if necessary.

Question 2:

The template for the Grant agreement provides the possibility to have several reporting periods (I.4.1) as well as pre-payments (I.5.1).

2.1 Will the Commission make use of this tool or will there be just one final request for payment after the end of the project – as in the previous years when the duration of the project was 12 month?

2.2 In case that there will be several reporting periods, should this be reflected in the budget and activity plan of the grant request? Shall we prepare separated budgets and activity plans for the reporting periods?

Answer 2:

*2.1 According to the Financial Guidelines, section 7, **for actions over 12 months up to 24 months**, two pre-financing instalments linked to one reporting period and a final payment will be made as follows:*

- A first pre-financing payment of 40% of the grant within 30 calendar days from the entry into force of the grant agreement...

- A second pre-financing payment of 40% within 60 calendar days from receipt by the Commission of a request for payment, a progress report on implementation of the action and detailed statement on the use of the previous pre-financing instalment.

- The balance will be paid within 90 calendar days from receipt by and subject to the approval of the Commission of the request for payment of the balance, the final technical implementation report and final financial statement (and, if required, a certificate on the financial statements and underlying accounts).

2.2 There is no need for separate budgets and activity plans. The request for 2nd pre-financing has to be introduced in SWIM with the report and the intermediate financial statement accompanied by a detailed statement on the use of the previous pre-financing instalment. The progress report should report on the major milestones achieved so far and any deviations from the plan that have occurred or are to be expected.

Question nr. 3:

We would like to express our interest in becoming your partner in your proposal idea «Cross-border partnerships and support to cooperation on intra-EU mobility for EEA countries and social partners».

We would be very interested to have further conversation at your convenience, in order to extensively discuss a possible cooperation.

Answer 3:

The European Commission would like to thank you for your interest in this call. However a mere expression of interest is not sufficient to qualify for this call.

To be eligible as an applicant of a cross-border partnership, a number of specific requirements have to be fulfilled, as outlined in section 6 of the call text. Among other, participants may be asked, depending on the strand, to form a cross-border consortium together with other partners, (see section 6.1.3 of the call text). It is recommended to read the call text very carefully to ensure that all necessary criteria for a valid application are fulfilled.

For reasons of impartiality, the European Commission will not establish any contacts with applicants as not to give any preferential information. Questions can be sent to the call mailbox and will be publicly answered on this website.

Question 4:

With reference to the call for proposals VP/2019/006 “Cross-border partnerships and support to cooperation on intra-EU mobility for EEA countries and social partners”, we would like to ask you the following questions:

4a) can an activity take place outside the project eligible area (intending in another crossborder specific area)?

4b) is it eligible an action planned as a sort of twinning (project's staff visit and learn from best practices in other cross border areas)?

Answer 4:

4a) *The reply to your question depends on the strand that you plan to chose.*

For strand 1, section 2.1 of the call text stipulates:

*“The first strand **supports fair mobility for frontier workers in cross-border regions.**”*

*A frontier worker is defined by article Art. 3,6 of the EURES regulation as “a worker pursuing an activity as an employed person in a Member State and who resides in another Member State **to which that worker returns as a rule daily or at least once a week**”.*

Section 2.2.1 of the call text specifies this further:

*This strand shall support existing cross-border partnerships to implement the objectives as laid down in the EURES Regulation, improving the functioning, cohesion and integration of the cross-border labour markets and promoting voluntary geographical and occupational **mobility in such regions**. The cross-border partnership must be established **based on actual needs** in terms of mobility flows, economic activity, in particular, **it should address skills mismatches in the border region**.*

For strand 2, section 2.2.2 stipulates:

This strand 2 shall support projects that either:

*- target cooperation **in border regions** that are not yet covered by EURES cross-border partnerships with a view to becoming such partnerships in the future or*

- expand the scope of existing EURES cross-border partnerships with pilot actions in areas/sectors new to them
- or
- enrich existing EURES cross-border partnerships with new activities

For applications under strand 3 and 4 the restriction of activities to a cross-border region does not apply, as the nature of these projects is different.

4b) Peer reviews and mutual visits can qualify as eligible actions, although not specifically mentioned in strands 1-3, if facilitation of job matchings and placements is the ultimate goal of such activities.

as long as the envisaged actions are in line with

- a) The [Financial Regulation](#), in particular section 4 which details the eligibility of costs
- b) The call text, in particular with sections 6.2, 2.2 and 6.3.

It will be up to the independent experts evaluating the call to assess the added value if the action is carried out at Union (in this case cross-border) level.

Question 5:

With reference to the above call, we would like to ask you if the organization of a cross-border job fair can be considered as eligible in the view of an action aimed at facilitating job matching, placement and recruitment process in a specific cross-border zone? This event would be the very first time to be organized in our territories and therefore it could represent the start for a stable organization.

Answer 5:

A cross-border job matching fair would facilitate the job matching and is therefore an eligible activity, as long as the envisaged action is in line with

- a) The [Financial Regulation](#), in particular section 4 which details the eligibility of costs
- b) The call text, in particular with sections 6.2, 2.2 and 6.3.

It will be up to the independent experts evaluating the call to assess the added value if the action is carried out at Union (in this case cross-border) level.

Question 6:

Unsere Partner haben im Rahmen der Strategiefindung beschlossen eine einheitliche Darstellung der Region anzustreben. Dabei gab es auch die Idee freie Stellen aus dem Dreiländereck über das EURES-Netzwerk europaweit zu bewerben. Dabei würden wir gezielt mit der Möglichkeit werben als Grenzgänger in dem einen Land zu wohnen und im andern Land zu arbeiten.

Daraus folgt die Frage: Sind Maßnahmen, wie die oben beschriebenen, mit der Zielgruppe Arbeitnehmer außerhalb unserer Region der Grenzpartnerschaft im Rahmen von EaSI gedeckt? Bisher waren die Arbeitnehmer innerhalb unserer Region Zielgruppe.

Die Aktivitäten sind grenzregional in dem Sinne, dass Dienstleistungen mehrere Partner gemeinsam erbracht werden.

Answer 6:

Eine einheitliche Darstellung der Grenzregion (als Beschäftigungsregion) ist grundsätzlich begrüßenswert, ebenso wie eine grenzüberschreitende Stellenbörse, um so das Bewusstsein innerhalb der Region für den erweiterten Arbeitsmarkt direkt hinter der Grenze zu schärfen.

*Allerdings können nur Maßnahmen der Partnerschaft unterstützt werden, die sich auf die Förderung des Arbeitsmarktes und dem Austausch von Arbeitskräften ***innerhalb der Grenzpartnerschaft*** beziehen. Alle weiteren Maßnahmen, insbesondere die Anwerbung von intra-EU Arbeitskräften, obliegen der nationalen Entscheidungshoheit.*

Question 7:

A question related to a proposal to submit under strand 1, by a Consortium made up of several organizations of two neighbouring Member States ("A" and "B").

Can a trade union of provincial level (not regional) without legal personality of the "country A" join to the Consortium as co-applicant with its offices of patronage located in the "country B", that haven't a legal personality in the "country B"?

Answer 7:

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

Please refer to the section regarding the eligibility of applicants under 6.1.1:

[...]Organisations of social partners without legal personality under the applicable national law of abovementioned countries are also eligible, provided that the conditions of the Financial Regulation related thereto are met (Art. 197 2. (c) of the Financial Regulation: '[...]entities which do not have

legal personality under the applicable national law, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on behalf of the entities and that the entities offer guarantees for the protection of the financial interests of the Union equivalent to those offered by legal persons. In particular the applicant shall have a financial and operational capacity equivalent to that of a legal person. The representatives of the applicant shall prove that those conditions are satisfied.')

As well as under 6.1.2 a):

[...]To be eligible, co-applicants must fall in one of the categories listed below:

- EURES members or partners

- Social partner organisations at European, national or regional level

- Public or private employment services

- Third sector organisations

- other relevant actors active on the EU/EEA labour market, including European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation

and specific rules for consortia under 6.1.3 a):

[...]To be eligible, applications must as a minimum: Represent entities established in at least two neighbouring Member States, i.e. proposals must have the involvement of the lead applicant and at least one EURES member or partner established in a neighbouring Member State as co-applicant[...].

The consortium also needs to comply with all the other eligibility criteria announced in the call.

Question 8

With reference to VP/2019/006 we would like to draw your attention to that the Call is still referring to the old term “EURES Adviser” (pre-2016) which according to REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS on EURES activity January 2016 - June 2018 [...] *is no longer an officially recognised term with the entry into force of the Regulation (EU) 2016/589, which only refers to ‘EURES staff’ as the human resources involved in EURES.*

Answer 8

You are right. This will be taken into account in future proceedings.

Question 9:

Nous sommes actuellement en train de compléter un dossier d'appel à propositions sur le volet des partenariats transfrontaliers.

Nous avons des partenaires francophones et germanophones.

A ce titre, nous devons fournir des justificatifs, notamment :

- Déclaration sur l'honneur,
- Lettre de procuration.
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Nous n'avons pas trouvé de formulaire de déclaration sur l'honneur traduit. Il n'existe qu'une version anglaise.

Answer 9:

Suite à l'entrée en vigueur du nouveau règlement financier, la déclaration sur l'honneur a été modifiée. Les traductions en Français et en Allemand ne sont pas encore disponibles, veuillez-nous en excuser. La version anglaise doit être utilisée. Ce document est nécessaire pour l'analyse de la proposition et doit être inclus dans la proposition. Sans ce document la proposition risquera fortement d'être rejetée.

Question 10:

- a) Could you please send us the french and german versions of the document „declaration of honour“or can we use the translated versions of last year?
- b) Unfortunately I cannot convert the pdf FR- version of the document « Description of the action » into a word document. Would it be possible to have the FR-Version as Word?

Answer 10:

- a) *Following the entering into force of the new financial guidelines, the declaration of honour has been modified. Please accept our apologies that the translation into French and German are not available therefore the English version should be used since the declaration on honour is necessary to be submitted in the application. If not provided it might lead to the rejection of the application.*
 - b) *The French version of the “description of the action” has been published in word in the meantime on the call page.*
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Question 11:

In the Q&A section on this page,

<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en&callId=553&furtherCalls=yes>, you indicate that **monitoring is not a core activity**.

However, under **6.2 Eligible activities (all strands)**, section **C) Core activities** the second bullet point mentioned as a core activity is: **monitoring of the action**.

We would very much appreciate some clarification regarding this.

Answer 11:

While you can have a service contract with an expert to support you with the monitoring, the responsibility itself for monitoring cannot be outsourced. as stated in the general conditions of the grant agreement, paragraph II.2.3. "The coordinator may not subcontract any part of its tasks to the other beneficiaries or to any other party". Please refer to our answer 1c. However, the last sentence will be deleted for clarity.

Question 12:

We kindly ask you for the following clarifications:

- a) Are there specific eligible areas in cross-border territories (NUTS)?
- b) If the 2018 balance is not yet closed for a specific co-applicant agency (according to the Italian regulation, associations can approve the balance by December 2019), what kind of data should be filled in the summary balance sheet form? Can they use the one of the previous year?
- c) Letter of mandate: which amount has to be specified on the letter of mandate of each co-applicant? The total amount of the action or the amount of the partner budget?

Answer 12:

- a) *There are no areas specifically eligible. Any cross-border area can apply as long as it fulfills the requirements of the call text.*
 - b) *As indicated in the check list of the call, the financial data must relate to the most recent data available.*
 - c) *In the letter of mandate no amounts need to be specified.*
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Question 13 (relating to Question 1c):

With regard to your reply, **Answer 1 c)** we would like to have a better understanding on the issue with recruitment of an external evaluator.

Have we understood it correct that we can recruit an external staff member (such as an external developer) for a limited time period to perform a specific task and that the cost could be recorded under staff cost?

Answer 13

According to the Financial guidelines (paragraph 4.2.2.1, staff costs) the costs of natural persons working under a contract with the beneficiary other than an employment contract or who are seconded to the beneficiary by a third party against payment may be assimilated to such costs of personnel, provided that the following conditions are fulfilled:

- (i) the person works under conditions similar to those of an employee (in particular regarding the way the work is organised, the tasks that are performed and the premises where they are performed);*
- (ii) the result of the work belongs to the beneficiary; (unless exceptionally agreed otherwise); and (iii) the costs are not significantly different from the costs of staff performing similar tasks under an employment contract with the beneficiary. Conversely, the cost of any work to be performed by external experts must not be included in staff costs but under services (see Heading 3).*

Question 14:

- a) Does the duration of the action have to be 2 years or can it also be one year.
- b) And will there be another call next year?

Answer 14

- a) *The project shall start on 1 January 2020. The duration should *indicatively* be 24 months. The duration can be shorter in case of justified reasons. Please note that the application needs also to comply with the other criteria.*
 - b) *There will be no “call for proposals on cross-border partnerships and support to cooperate intra-EU mobility for EEA countries and social partners” in 2020.*
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Question 15:

In the framework of the new call for proposals , one of our organisations, a university would like to take charge of the cross-border mobility reports of the partnership in 2019 and 2020. However, owing to administrative hurdles, they cannot apply as beneficiaries.

Therefore, one of our other organisations which will apply as beneficiary will have to take charge of this activity, although the implementation of the activity will be carried out by the university through its own staff (associate professors).

Our problem has to do with the type of supporting documents that the university can provide to this other organisation in order to justify the costs associated with the elaboration of the mobility report. The document which the university usually provides to support these extra staff costs is called "Receipts for honorary fees which is the way these "extra works" are remunerated by including them into the normal payroll.

Our question is whether the "Receipts for honorary fees is considered as an acceptable supporting document.

Answer 15:

"Receipts for honorary fees" issued by a subcontractor (in this case the university) can be accepted as supporting documents. However, please note that the other organisation must be able to provide evidence that they respected fully their tender procedures and rules for awarding the contract to the university.