



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, DG

Employment and Social Legislation, Social Dialogue
Labour Law

BUDGET HEADING 04.03.03.03

**INFORMATION, CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION OF
REPRESENTATIVES OF UNDERTAKINGS**

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

2012

VP/2012/003

In view of the large number of enquiries, please do not telephone.

Questions should be sent by e-mail only to: empl-04-03-03-03@ec.europa.eu

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

The English version of the call is the original.

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FINANCIAL GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

BUDGET HEADING 04.03.03.03
INFORMATION, CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION OF
REPRESENTATIVES OF UNDERTAKINGS

1. OBJECTIVES OF THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The budget authority has fixed the amount allocated to the present Call for Proposals for 2012 at € 7 500 000

The purpose of this Call for Proposals is to fund operations aimed at developing employee involvement in undertakings - meaning any mechanism, including information, consultation and participation, through which employees' representatives may exercise and influence on decisions to be taken within the company - in particular by raising awareness and contributing to the application of EU law and policies in this area.

EU law on employee involvement at transnational level includes Directive 2009/38/EC¹ on European works councils, Directives 2001/86/EC² and 2003/72/EC³ on employee involvement in the European Company and the European Cooperative Society, respectively, and Article 16 of Directive 2005 / 56 / EC⁴ on cross-border mergers of limited liability companies.

EU law on employee involvement at national level includes Directive 2002/14/EC⁵ establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees, directive 98/59/EC⁶ on collective redundancies and Directive 2001/23/EC⁷ on transfer of undertakings.

Employee involvement is also fostered through the development of transnational company agreements⁸ between multinational companies and workers' representatives.

In this context, the appropriations of this Call for Proposals finance measures enabling the social partners and the social actors at company level to familiarize themselves with EU law and policies in the area of employee involvement as well as to exercise their rights and their duties to this regard. They cover in particular funding of measures aimed at strengthening transnational co-operation between workers' and employers' representatives in respect of employee involvement. These appropriations also cover the setting up of information and observation points to inform and help the social partners and undertakings to set up employee involvement, structures and to foster relations with EU institutions.

These appropriations may also be used to fund short training actions as well as actions involving representatives of social partners in the candidate countries in the field of employee involvement.

1.1. Type of projects

For the financial year 2012 two categories of projects will be supported under this Call for Proposals:

Type I: **Transnational cooperation projects;**

Type II: **Information and observation points;**

¹ OJ L 122, 16/05/2009

² OJ L 294, 10/11/2001

³ OJ L 207, 18/08/2003

⁴ OJ L 310, 25/11/2005

⁵ OJ L 80, 23/03/2002

⁶ OJ L225, 12/08/1998

⁷ OJ L 82, 23/03/2001

⁸ SEC(2008)2155 and COM(2005)33

1.2. PRIORITY OBJECTIVES AND TYPES OF ACTIONS

1.2.1

Regarding **transnational cooperation projects**, priority objectives are the following:

- a)** to promote actions designed to prepare the setting up of transnational information, consultation and participation bodies and mechanisms arising from the application of EU law on employee involvement;
- b)** to promote the exchange of information and good practice aimed at creating favourable conditions for the setting up of national information, consultation and participation bodies and mechanisms arising from the application of EU law on employee involvement;
- c)** to promote action aiming to familiarize the social partners and actors at company level with the content of EU law on transnational employee involvement and to enable them to exercise their rights and their duties in this regard ;
- d)** to promote transnational actions involving representatives of the new member States and of Candidate Countries in the field of employee involvement;
- e)** to promote action aiming to familiarize the actors represented at company level with transnational company agreements and to strengthen their cooperation within the European Union;
- f)** to promote innovative actions relating to the management of employee involvement, with the view of supporting the anticipation of change and the prevention and resolution of disputes in the context of corporate restructuring, mergers, take-over and relocation in EU-scale groups of undertakings.

Regarding **information and observation points**, priority objectives are the following:

- **h)** to provide support to the preparation, launching and monitoring of transnational co-operation projects in the field of employee involvement;
- **i)** to monitor, analyse and assess the experience regarding the establishment of transnational representative bodies at enterprise level and the extent to which the objectives regarding employee involvement have been effectively fulfilled within such bodies.

1.2.2

Eligible types of action are:

For TYPE I -Transnational cooperation projects

- A.** Conferences, seminars, short training actions, manuals and exchange of information and of good practices involving workers' and/or employers' representatives;
- B.** Analysis papers on quantitative, qualitative aspects and results on subjects related to workers' and employers' representation and social dialogue at undertaking level in a transnational cooperation context;
- C.** Websites, publications, newsletters and others means for the dissemination of information

For TYPE II- Information and observation points

- D.** Helpdesk and assistance to transnational cooperation projects presented by workers' and/or employers' representatives, as well as observation of experience regarding transnational representative bodies at enterprise level. The activities of such structures may include studies, reports and databases, related to information, consultation and participation of employees, as well as websites, publications, newsletters and other means for the dissemination of information.

2. **SUBMISSION OF GRANT APPLICATIONS**

2.1. SUBMISSION AND IMPLEMENTATION DATES

2.1.1. Respect of deadlines – Programming

Only applications for operations starting in 2012 will be considered.

In view of the time needed to examine applications, actions may not start before the deadlines given below. Applicants should note that if their project is approved, they will not necessarily receive the grant agreement prior to the action starting dates indicated and should, therefore, take this into account in programming the timing of their project.

Any expenditure incurred before written confirmation that the application has been accepted is at the applicant's risk.

2.1.1.1.

The maximum **duration** of an operation is 12 months. The Commission may adjust the duration of the operation proposed in the application.

2.1.1.2.

Proposals which do not respect the provisions of point 2.1.1.1. and dates of submission and date of starting as indicated at point 2.1.2. and/or do not comply with the rules indicated at point 4.2 hereinafter, will not be considered by the Evaluation Committee.

2.1.2. Deadlines:

The **deadlines** for the submission of applications (and indicative amounts) are as follows:

- **30 April 2012** for actions commencing no earlier than **30 June 2012** (€ 3 200 000);
- **04 September 2012** for actions commencing no earlier than **04 November 2012** and no later than **22 December 2012** (€ 4 300 000)

2.1.3. Evaluation Process

Applications will be examined by an Evaluation Committee which will meet, in principle, within 40 working days following the deadlines for submission indicated at point 2.1.2. For each meeting of this Committee, complete applications must be submitted to the European Commission by the deadline.

Applications will be examined and selected taking account of the budget comment, the criteria laid down in this document and the principle of balanced support.

The available appropriations may be exhausted before the end of the budget year and it is therefore in the applicant's interest to submit a proposal as early as possible.

2.1.3.1

The partial or total withholding by the applicant of any information that may have an impact on the Commission's final decision concerning the application will entail the automatic disqualification of the application or, if discovered at a later stage, will entitle the Commission to terminate the agreement and demand the full repayment of all sums received by the beneficiary under it.

2.2.CO-FINANCING RATE

This budget heading allows support to be given to projects to which the applicants contribute at least 20 % of the total eligible costs of the action. Contributions in kind will not be taken into account.

2.2.1 The contribution to the project of at least 20% will be evidenced from the budget included in the application and, inter alia, through commitment/Partnership letters stating the precise amount of

financial cash contribution to the budget. from each of the Partners to the project as requested at point 3.1.4.1 section 7 below.

2.2.2 Any application which requests a grant of more than 80 % will be excluded automatically from the selection.

2.2.3 For illustrative purposes, the average size of a grant awarded for transnational cooperation projects in 2011 was in the range of EURO 130.000.

2.2.4 The Commission will organise in 2012 an information/networking day in Brussels for beneficiaries under the 2012 call (date to be confirmed). Applicants, having their registered office outside Brussels, must therefore ensure that the travel and daily subsistence allowances according to the rules for reimbursement in force at the Commission, for one person– the Project Manager in principle– to attend this meeting in Brussels are included in their proposed project budget. If the applicant fails to do this, the Commission will not be able to fund the beneficiary's participation in the afore mentioned day.

3. EVALUATION CRITERIA

3.0 EXCLUSION CRITERIA

The applicant must not be in one of the situations listed in Article 93 §1, 94 and 96 §2 point a) of the Financial Regulation.⁹ The situations referred to include bankruptcy, compulsory winding-up, being under court administration, in an arrangement with creditors or any other similar proceedings; convictions of professional misconduct; non-fulfilment of social security or tax payment obligations; convictions of fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity; declared in serious breach of contract in relation to activities funded by the EU budget; subject to conflict of interest; guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the required information.

3.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

3.1.1. General rule of eligibility

The budget heading is intended to finance specific transnational cooperation projects or information and observation points. Therefore grants are not intended to finance the normal operation or meetings of bodies representing management or labour (the social partners); they are intended only to cover additional expenditure linked directly to projects.

3.1.2. Eligible applicants

3.1.2.2

a) The applicant must be properly constituted and registered legal entity, having their registered office based in one of the Member States of the European Union. In derogation from this requirement and pursuant to Article 114 of the Financial Regulation, the organisations of social partners without legal personality under the applicable national law are also eligible provided that their legal representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf and assume financial liability¹⁰.

⁹ See Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities as amended by Council Regulation (EC, EURATOM) No 1995/2006 of 13 December 2006 (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l_390/l_39020061230en00010026.pdf)

¹⁰ Council Regulation (EC, EURATOM) No 1995/2006 of 13 December 2006 amending Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:390:SOM:EN:HTML>

b) A project applicant cannot be an individual.

3.1.2.3. Regarding transnational cooperation projects applicants must be representatives of workers or employers of Member States, based in one of the Member States of the European Union. Thus

- A) for workers: applicants may be works councils or similar bodies ensuring the general representation of workers; regional, national, European, sectoral or multi-sectoral trade unions based in one of the Member States of the European Union;
- B) for employers: applicants may be the management of undertakings, organisations representing employers at regional, national, European, sectoral or multi-sectoral level based in one of the Member States of the European Union. In case of commercial undertakings, the objective of the project must be non-commercial and the undertaking must not make profit of it.

3.1.2.3.1 In order to strengthen co-operation between workers' and employers' representatives in respect of information, consultation and participation within undertakings operating in more than one Member State in the context of a renewed legal framework, projects involving only one information and consultation body should be submitted as joint projects from representatives of workers and employers.

3.1.2.3.2 Where particular circumstances do not allow submitting such a joint project, the reasons must be specified in the application.

3.1.2.3.3 Joint projects should be submitted by one of the parties who will fulfil the contractual commitments *vis-à-vis* the Commission and the other party must indicate in writing its agreement to the joint implementation of the project.

3.1.2.4. Regarding information and observation points, applicants must be European organisations representing workers or employers.

3.1.2.4.1 For the purposes of this Call, "European organization" means a legal entity, having its registered office based in one of the Member States of the European Union and ensuring the general representation at European level, of Member States workers' or employers' national associations and promoting their common interests at European level according to their own by laws.

3.1.2.5. As a departure from the rules stated above, applications from technical bodies such as non-profit training or research bodies can be accepted under the conditions stated hereunder.

Similarly, commercial companies can be accepted under the conditions stated hereunder and only if the aim of the project is non-commercial and the project will not create a profit for the beneficiary of the grant.

The above quoted technical bodies and commercial undertakings will be considered eligible only where they are expressly mandated by one or more of the eligible parties listed in point 3.1.2.3. and 3.1.2.4 (as far as information and observation points are concerned), and when a mandatory letter of mandate in conformity with point 3.1.4/13 hereunder is included.

3.1.4. Eligible applications

To be eligible, applications must:

- a) Be sent by the deadlines indicated in section 2.1.2;
- b) Be submitted according to the requirements listed below and in accordance with the provisions requested at point 4.2 hereinafter;
- c) Be complete, detailed and include all the documents and elements indicated in the table below at point 3.1.4.1;

3.1.4.1 Applications lacking one or more of the documents and/or elements requested hereinafter will be considered **not eligible and therefore will not be examined** by the Evaluation Committee.

1	<p>Official covering letter of application with the original signature of the legal representative (<i>the mandatory draft letter can be found annexed to the online Application form</i>) This covering letter must be submitted in English or French or German and shall mandatorily quote, inter alia:</p> <p>a) the reference of the call for proposals;</p> <p>b) the Type of action (I or II);</p> <p>c) the title of the action;</p> <p>d) the Mandator (if any) as per point 3.1.2.5 hereinabove, specifying his name, address, type of organisation;</p> <p>e) the support (if any) received for the preparation and/or submission of the project; specifying the name, address of the organisation that has provided this support and the kind of support that has been provided.</p>
2	<p>Print-out of the duly completed and submitted on-line application form (see point 4.1) dated and with the original signature of the legal representative.</p> <p>NOTE: Application forms must be compulsorily submitted on-line. Moreover their respective detailed and signed print-outs must be mandatorily submitted as set at point 4.2. hereinafter</p> <p>The on-line form <u>must first be electronically submitted before printing</u>. After the electronic submission no further changes to the application are possible.</p>
3	<p>The grid listing the persons and occupational sectors concerned by the project, duly completed. <i>The grid can be found annexed to the on-line application form.</i></p>
4	<p>"Financial identification" form duly completed with the original signature of the account holder and the original signature and stamp of the bank. <i>The financial identification form can be found annexed to the on-line application form.</i></p> <p>The bank account must be held in the name of the applicant. Applications cannot be accepted with an account held in the name of an individual.</p>
5	<p>"Legal entities" form duly completed with the original signature of the legal representative. <i>The legal entities form can be found annexed to the on-line application form.</i></p> <p>Applicants must also provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a) a copy of the certificate of official registration or other official document attesting to the establishment of the entity (where this exists); • b) a copy of its articles of association/statutes or equivalent, proving the eligibility of the organisation; • c) a copy of a document confirming the applicant's tax or VAT number, if available; • d) in case of social partner organisations without legal personality under the applicable national law, a declaration signed by the legal representative stating his capacity to undertake legal obligations on behalf of the organization .¹¹ The <u>mandatory</u> draft declaration in English or French or German, can be found attached to the on-line application Form.
6	<p>The following three separate documents, signed by the legal representative, must be submitted in English, French or German.</p> <p>The project description and budget posted in the on-line application Form are not sufficient:</p> <p>1) Description of the action It will give a comprehensive description of the scope, objectives, methodology and events of the action;</p> <p>2) Detailed work programme for the project. The work programme must provide a detailed description of the project, a timetable for the activities, the names of all members of staff involved in the project, their positions and employment status must be included;</p> <p>3) Detailed Budget must provide a detailed budget explanation for each row in each heading, which respects the format and numbering of the "project budget estimate" form and which provides any</p>

¹¹ See previous Footnote Nr. 9

	<p>additional relevant information concerning the budget for the project, including subcontracting plans.</p> <p>NOTE: These documents must be submitted in paper as well as <u>electronically</u> in WORD format as <u>annexes to the on-line application form</u>. The electronic version must be identical to the paper version of the document in question.</p>
7	<p>a) Concerning partners from Member States and/or Candidate Countries active in the project, the work and tasks carried out by them (as described in the letters of commitment/partnership) are not subject to the rules on subcontracting listed in Annex I</p> <p>b) Each active Partner involved in the project (e.g. for management, in providing technical support and/or financing), shall provide an original signed letter of commitment/partnership, in English or French or German that shall be attached to the application and submitted <u>electronically</u> (<i>a model is attached to the on-line application form</i>).</p> <p>c) The original signed letter of commitment/partnership shall mandatorily contain all the following elements</p> <p>I) -name, address (phone, fax, e-mail) and person responsible of the partner organisation ,</p> <p>II)- explanation of the nature of their involvement;</p> <p>III)- explanation of the work and tasks to be carried out by the partner :</p> <p>IV)- specification of the cash amount of any funding provided,</p> <p>V)- acceptance by the Partner, if the proposal is selected, to authorise the Commission to publish the name, address of their organisation together with the name and other data of the main beneficiary and of the project.</p> <p>d) All elements quoted above are mandatory.</p> <p>e) Costs incurred by implementing Partners are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the beneficiary and the conditions of the Grant Agreement specified in Annex 1 will also be applicable to partners.</p>
8	<p>The following three separate documents must be submitted in English or French or German.</p> <p>a) Curriculum vitae of the person responsible for managing the action (as quoted in the Application Form) indicating clearly the current employer with whom there exists either a permanent or temporary contract of employment.</p> <p>b) declaration in writing and signed by the person quoted as responsible for managing the action in the Application form, certifying the professional competence of the team performing the tasks associated with the action for which funding is requested. <i>A draft model can be found attached to the on-line Application Form.</i></p> <p>c) Curricula vitae of the persons who will perform the tasks associated with the action (where applicable), for which funding is requested.</p>
9	<p>When Applicants wish to recruit the services of external experts the below quoted documents must be provided in English or French or German.</p> <p>1) Declaration on subcontracting; The legal representative must confirm his intention to comply with the rules for subcontracting, by completing and providing the <i>compulsory declaration on subcontracting attached to the on-line application form.</i></p> <p>2) Annex "CONTRACTS for IMPLEMENTING the ACTION" <i>attached to the on line Application Form:</i> The reasons for subcontracting, information on the nature concerning the activities to be subcontracted, amount, selection and award procedures of subcontracting must be compulsorily provided in this Form and carefully explained.</p> <p>Projects with insufficiently clear explanations on the above quoted elements and/or which do not respect the rules outlined, will be considered to be not eligible:</p> <p>a) Where the value of the contract is less than or equal to € 5 000, it may be awarded on a basis of single</p>

	<p>tender;</p> <p>b) Where the value of the procurement contract awarded exceeds € 5 000 up to €60 000, in addition to mandatorily provide documents listed under 1) and 2) above, Applicants are recommended to provide, when requested, evidence that they have sought bids-by registered letter from at least three different tenderers, including proof of posting and proof that they have posted the call for tender or invitation to tender at least on their website.</p> <p>c) These thresholds apply to each individual contract ;</p> <p>d) The description of the subcontracting plans and procedures for external expertise included in Annex "CONTRACTS for IMPLEMENTING the ACTION" attached to the Application Form will form a part of the grant agreement. The Commission reserves the right to verify that the beneficiary has carried out the subcontracting in accordance with this description and with the rules included in the grant agreement. Failure to comply with these conditions will constitute grounds for non-acceptance of the costs of subcontracting in the final accounts of the beneficiary.</p> <p>Please note that important additional information concerning the award of contracts and external expertise can be found in Annex I to this Call.</p>
10	The most recent balance sheet of the organisation for the most recent financial year, demonstrating the financial capacity of the applicant. The Commission reserves the right to request balance sheets from previous years, if necessary.
11	For grant requests over € 500 000, an external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the last year available (not necessary for public bodies) shall be provided in <u>English or French or German</u> .
12	The signed declaration of honour (<i>the mandatory text, in English or French or German, can be found on-line as Annex to the application form</i>). This must have the original signature of the legal representative, certifying that the applicant is not in one of the situations listed in Article 93 §1, 94 and 96 §2 point a) of the Financial Regulation and his financial and operational capacity.
13	A letter of Mandate (in English or French or German) shall be included if appropriate, according to the requirements of point 3.1.2.5. This letter shall mandatorily contain details on the mandator, the content of the mandate, the reasons for the mandate, the assistance and/or participation of mandator in the project, if any, with the original signature of the legal representative of the mandator. <i>A model is attached to the on line application Form.</i>
14	The most recent activity report of the applicant's organisation (if available in English or French or German).
15	An organisational chart in English or French or German, showing the structure of the applicant's organisation with all members of staff involved in the project, their positions and employment status.

3.1.5. Eligibility of actions:

To be eligible, actions must:

- **A.** Comply with the rules related to dates of starting of the actions as stated in point 2.1.2;
- **B.** Be linked to at least one of the objectives stated at point 1.2 above;
- **C.** Be fully carried out in the Member States of the European Union or in the Candidate Countries at the deadline for the submission of applications;
- **D.** Comply with the rules on subcontracting and external expertise set above and in Annex I;
- **E.** Comply with the European Union co-financing percentage of maximum 80 % as set at point 2.2 above;
- **F.** Have active partners from Member States and /or Candidate Countries in the case of proposals which are not submitted by a European organisation.

- 1) "Partner" means an active institution or organisation involved in carrying out the project (e.g. a sectoral or multi-sectoral trade union or employer representation body at European, national or regional level, a company or a works council, a research or training institute, etc.)
- 2) Profit-making organisations and companies, such as normal commercial suppliers of goods and services, **are not** eligible as project partners. By way of example and without limiting the exclusions to the examples listed, this excludes as project partners, independent consultants, conference organisers, etc.

3.1.6. Eligible participants

Participants in projects should be representatives of workers or employers from the Member States and candidate countries at the deadline for the submission of applications. Thus members or future members of information, consultation and participation bodies; management of undertakings or groups or members of employers associations; officials of workers organisations/ trade union representatives; experts nominated by the eligible social partners mentioned at point 3.1.2.3 above.

3.2. SELECTION CRITERIA

The applicant must be able to demonstrate the financial and operational capacity to complete the activity for which funding is requested. Thus the applicant must have access to solid and adequate financial resources, which are not exclusively made up of European Union grants, to maintain activities for the period of the project and to help finance it as necessary and must have the operational resources (technical, management) needed to successfully complete the activity.

3.2.1 The financial capacity shall be proven, inter alia, by the annual balance sheet and declaration of honour.

3.2.2.

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

Therefore in order to demonstrate his operational capacity the applicant shall provide, inter alia:

- a)-the declaration of honour mentioned above;
- b)-the most recent activity report of the applicant's organisation (if available);
- c)-an organisational chart showing the structure of the applicant's organisation with all members of staff involved in the project, their positions and employment status;
- d)-for each active partner involved in the project management the letter of commitment/partnership requested at point 3.1.4/7 above including the full description of work and tasks to be carried out;
- e)-a written declaration signed by the person quoted as responsible for managing the action in the Application form, certifying the professional competence of the team performing the tasks associated with the action for which funding is requested. This declaration shall be accompanied by their curriculum vitae, as requested at point 3.1.4/8 above.

3.3. AWARD CRITERIA

3.3.1 Proposals which fulfil the eligibility and selection criteria indicated above will be assessed according to the following award criteria:

- i. The extent to which the operation meets the objectives of the budget heading and the priority objectives of this Call for proposals;
- ii. The extent to which the expected results add value to the existing situation or to results already obtained in the past through transnational projects supported under calls for proposals of Budget Heading 04.03.03.03.;
- iii. The extent to which the project concerns innovative measures or new subjects in relation to information, consultation and participation of representatives of undertakings;
- iv. The extent to which the project promotes the joint participation of employers and workers;
- v. The extent to which the operation has a genuine transnational dimension;
- vi. The extent to which workers' and/or employers' representatives from new Member States or candidate countries are actively involved in the project;
- vii. The cost-effectiveness of the operation;
- viii. The overall quality, clarity and completeness of the proposal, including the budgetary aspects and the arrangements to publicise the operation, including aspects related to the European Union funding, and dissemination methods envisaged.

3.3.2. The Evaluation Committee reserves the right when assessing projects to take into account the effectiveness, added value and operational capacity shown in previous projects undertaken by the applicant with Commission funding.

4. PRACTICAL PROCEDURES

4.1. Where can the application form be found?

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

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=630&callId=242&furtherCalls=yes>

This system allows the introduction, edition, validation, printing and submission of the grant application form. Once the application is submitted electronically, a print out of an exemplar has to be signed by the legal representative submitting the proposal and be sent to the Commission as per point 4.2. below. After submission of the application electronically no changes are possible.

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

4.2. Where does the application need to be sent?

4.2.1 The applicant shall mandatorily send the covering letter of application, together with all the applicable documents listed in section "3.1.4. Eligible applications and 3.1.4.1" above as signed originals as well as one copy of all these documents (in total: 2 sets of documents) by the deadlines indicated at point 2.1.2 above, to the following address:

Call for proposals VP/2012/003
European Commission – DG EMPL/B.2
ARCHIVE Rue Joseph II ,54--- B 1049 Brussels(Belgium)

Please send your application by registered mail or express courier service only. The date of post office on the stamp on the envelop or express courier stamp or slip on the envelop indicating the sending date will be considered as proof of the date of sending.

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

- Follow the order of documents as listed in the table under section 3.1.4 " Eligible applications"
- Print the documents double-sided, where possible
- Use only 2-hole folders (please do not bind or glue)

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

4.2.2 When the applicant, requested to prove with the above quoted documents the date of sending of the application, is not able to prove it, the application will be considered as not delivered

4.2.3 -----ALL ENQUIRIES MUST BE MADE BY E-MAIL ONLY AT:

empl-04-03-03-03@ec.europa.eu

PLEASE DO NOT TELEPHONE

4.3. What next? Accepted and rejected applications

Applications will be examined by an Evaluation Committee, which will meet, in principle, within 40 working days following the deadline for submission indicated at point 2.1.2.

Rejected applications

Unsuccessful applicants will receive a letter stating the reasons for refusal. Rejected proposals may be revised and resubmitted in accordance with a subsequent submission deadline and without prejudice to a new complete evaluation. They will only be considered if a new and complete application file including all supporting documents is sent to the Commission by the relevant deadline. Documents submitted to previous meetings of the Evaluation Committee will not be taken into account.

Requests concerning the progress of dossiers sent prior to the elapse of this time periods will not be answered.

Selected applications

Successful applicants will receive two original copies of the grant agreement for acceptance and signature. Both these copies must be sent back to the Commission, which will then return one of them once it has been signed by both parties.

5. PUBLICITY

5.1 In order to achieve a wider dissemination of project results, the Commission may publish on the Internet site of the European Commission elements provided by the beneficiary in the Final Report concerning, inter alia, the project description, results and methodology

5.2 Beneficiaries accept to post the results of the project on their web-site for at least one year. They shall clearly state on the website that the project has received funding from the European Commission.

ANNEX 1

FINANCIAL GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

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The purpose of this document is to enable applicants to prepare their grant applications.

Please be sure to read these guidelines carefully before replying to the current call for proposals.

MAIN FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT RULES

Disclaimer: this document provides the applicants with a quick summary of the main legal and financial rules contained in the Financial Regulation (FR) applicable to the general budget of the European Communities¹² and its Implementing Rules (IR)¹³. The information given is not exhaustive and beneficiaries are therefore asked to carefully read the agreement sent to them, as it will constitute the legal basis for the grant.

1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Grants are subject to the principles laid down in the Financial Regulation, in particular the principles of co-financing, prohibition of double financing and non-profit.

Co-financing principle

European Union grants may not finance the entire cost of the action to be subsidised. The applicant must contribute to the implementation of the action either by way of own resources or by financial contribution from third parties (in the form of public or private assistance obtained elsewhere).¹⁴

No double financing rule

Each action may give rise to the award of only one grant, there can be no duplicate European Union funding of the same expenditure. The applicant must indicate the sources and amounts of any other funding received or applied for in the same financial year for the same action or for any other action and for routine activities (running costs).¹⁵

Non-profit rule

The EU grant may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit for the beneficiary. Profit is defined as a surplus of total actual receipts over the total actual costs of the action. Any income of the action must be indicated in the estimated budget and the final financial statement. The amount of the grant will be reduced by the amount of any surplus.¹⁶

2 RULES RELATED TO THE GRANT REQUESTED

- The rules on co-financing rates can be found in the text of the call for proposals.
- The grant does not cover ineligible costs (see below for definition).
- 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.

¹² Council Regulation (EC, Euratom), n° 1605/2002 of 25.06.2002 (OJ L 248, 16.09.2002), as last amended by Regulation (EU, Euratom) n°1081/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010, http://ec.europa.eu/budget/biblio/documents/regulations/regulations_en.cfm#2

¹³ Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 2342/2002 of 23.12.2002, (OJ L 357, 31.12.2002) and subsequent amendments: Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 1261/2005 of 20.07.2005 (OJ L 201, 02.08.2005), Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 1248 of 07.08.2006 (OJ L 227, 07.08.2006) and Commission Regulation n° 478/2007 (OJ L 111, 28.04.2007) (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/consleg/2002/R/02002R2342-20070501-en.pdf>)

¹⁴ Art. 113 FR and 172 IR

¹⁵ Art. 111 FR and 173(5) IR

¹⁶ Art. 109(2) FR and 165(1) IR

- Signed letters of commitment from the applicant organisation and/or other sources must be provided stating the precise amount of each financial (cash) contribution to the budget. If other institutions or organisations (partners) are involved in carrying out the project, the letter of commitment/partnership, from each of the partners, should also provide the name, address and person responsible and explain the nature of their involvement as well as, eventually, their financial contribution in cash.
- Costs incurred by partners will be eligible in the same way as those incurred by the beneficiary.

The beneficiary alone shall be accountable to the Commission for the implementation of the action. It shall undertake that the conditions applicable to it under Articles II.14 (eligible costs) and II.19 (checks and audits) of the Grant Agreement shall also apply to the partners.

- An external audit report of the previous accounts of the applicant organisation produced by an approved external auditor must be provided for grant applications where the cost to be financed exceeds EUR 500.000. No audit report is required from public bodies or international organisations.¹⁷ The report must certify the accounts for the last financial year available.
- The partial or total withholding by the applicant of any information that may have an impact on the Commission's final decision concerning the application will entail the automatic disqualification of the application or, if discovered at a later stage, will entitle the Commission to impose financial and administrative penalties¹⁸.

3 THE ESTIMATED BUDGET OF THE ACTION

3.1 The budget must be detailed and balanced

Grant applications must include a detailed estimated budget presented in Euro (see application form). Applicants established in countries outside the Euro zone must use the conversion rates published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJ) (<http://ec.europa.eu/budget/inforeuro/index.cfm?Language=en>). Applicants should be aware that they fully carry the exchange rate risk.

The budget estimate must be properly balanced: the two totals (income and expenditure) must be the same, since the available income (including the grant requested from the Commission) will have to finance the planned expenditure¹⁹. Please make sure that all the items related to the implementation of the action are included and not just those for which financing is being sought.

3.2 Expenditure

Expenditure must include the estimated costs exclusively for the implementation of the action.

¹⁷ Art. 173(4) IR

¹⁸ Art. 175 IR

¹⁹ Art. 173(3) IR

3.2.1 General criteria for eligibility of costs

In order to be eligible for EU funding, costs actually incurred must meet the following criteria²⁰:

- (a) be incurred during the duration of the action, with the exception of costs relating to final reports and audit certificates;
- (b) be indicated in the estimated overall budget of the action attached to the grant agreement;
- (c) be necessary for the implementation of the action which is the subject of the grant;
- (d) be identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiary is established and according to the usual cost-accounting practices of the beneficiary;
- (e) comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- (f) be reasonable, justified and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

The successful applicant must take care to avoid any unnecessary or unnecessarily high expenditure.

The beneficiary's internal accounting and auditing procedures must permit a direct reconciliation of the costs and revenue declared in respect of the action with the corresponding accounting statements and supporting documents.

Documentation justifying costs must be kept by the beneficiary for **five years** following final payment by the Commission.

Expenditure eligible for financing may not have been incurred before the grant application was lodged. Please note that the call might precise a specific reference date for the eligibility of costs.

Extra costs associated with the participation of people with disabilities are also eligible. These costs may be required to cover the use, for example, of special means of transport, personal assistants or sign language interpreters.

3.2.2 Eligible direct costs

The eligible direct costs for the action are those costs which, provided that they satisfy the criteria of eligibility set out above, are identifiable as specific costs directly linked to the performance of the action and which can therefore be booked to it directly.

In particular, the following direct costs may be considered eligible:

Staff costs

The costs of staff (permanent or temporary staff employed by the beneficiary or the partners) assigned to the implementation of the action, comprising actual salaries plus social security charges and other statutory costs included in the remuneration, are eligible. The salary costs

²⁰ Art. 172a IR

should not exceed the average rates corresponding to the beneficiary's usual policy on remuneration. In addition, they should not be higher than the generally accepted market rates for the same kind of task.

The costs of personnel of national administrations may be considered as eligible to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which are additional and which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the project concerned were not undertaken.

Please fill in the form reserved for these costs in the budget estimate (see application form) by indicating the persons to be remunerated (full-time/part-time), the number of days of work to be performed and the daily rate calculated on the basis of an average of 225 workable days per year. The determination of the workable days should be made respecting the standard working time either under national laws, collective agreements or under the organisations' normal accounting practice. An example for determining the total workable days per year could be as follows (provided what is established in the appropriate legislation):

Days/year	365 days
Less 52 weekends	104 days
Less annual holidays	25 days
<u>Less statutory holidays</u>	<u>11 days</u>
Total workable days =	225 days

Daily rate =
$$\frac{\text{Gross actual salaries plus social security charges + statutory costs}}{\text{Total workable days}}$$

Should your proposal be financed by the Commission, only the real costs (i.e. actual salaries) will be considered as eligible costs.

The actual time spent on the action must be recorded on a regular basis using timesheets or an equivalent time registration system established and certified by the employer. Timesheets must be dated and signed by the individual concerned and validated by the employer. It is recommended to adopt a single timesheet encompassing the overall time worked by each staff member (not just the time worked by the employee on the particular EU supported action).

Timesheets should not be sent to the Commission, except if specifically requested. For instance, when submitting the request for final payment, the beneficiary might be requested to provide pay slips and timesheets justifying the actual staff costs declared, as well as the basis for the calculation of daily rates and workable days.

Only persons who are directly employed by the promoter and/or the partners and who receive a salary are considered staff. All other persons, i.e. persons who receive a fee and/or submit an invoice for their services are considered external experts and are subject to the rules governing the award of contracts (see subcontracting below). The cost of any work to be performed by external experts must not be included in staff costs but under services.

Travel, accommodation and subsistence allowances

Travel costs must not exceed the most reasonable rates available on the market. Accommodation and subsistence costs for staff taking part in the action are eligible provided that they are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel costs and do not exceed the scales approved periodically by the Commission which are set out in the table below.

Expenses for participants from non-partner organisations (i.e. in conferences) can be declared under "travel".

Journeys must be carried out by the most direct and economic route. Economy class fares will be used as the benchmark for analysing air travel costs. Air travel is acceptable only for distances above 400 km, i.e. return flight above 800 km. For other modes of transport, the benchmark is the first-class rail fare. Car journeys: equivalent of corresponding first-class train ticket.

The *Daily subsistence allowances (DSA)* are paid in addition to costs for accommodation as a flat-rate amount and are considered to cover breakfast and two main meals, local transport, the cost of telecommunications and all other sundries. Daily subsistence allowances are to be calculated as follows according to the length of the mission:

- stays less or equal to 6 hours: reimbursement of actual costs (on production of supporting documents);
- more than 6 hours up to 12 hours inclusive: 0.5 DSA;
- more than 12 hours up to 24 hours inclusive: 1 DSA;
- more than 24 hours up to 36 hours inclusive: 1.5 DSA;
- more than 36 hours up to 48 hours inclusive: 2 DSA;
- more than 48 hours up to 60 hours inclusive: 2.5 DSA, etc.

The maximum amounts (in Euro per calendar day) accepted for each country are set out in the table below, and applicants are advised to adhere to these rates in their budget estimates²¹. Please note that this is a general list; please check the call for proposals to find out the eligible countries for your specific call.

Destinations		DSA in EUR	Maximum hotel price in EUR	Destinations		DSA in EUR	Maximum hotel price in EUR
AT	Austria	95,00	130,00	LV	Latvia	66,00	145,00
BE	Belgium	92,00	140,00	ME	Montenegro	80,00	140,00
BG	Bulgaria	58,00	169,00	MK	F.Y.R. of Macedonia	50,00	160,00
CY	Cyprus	93,00	145,00	MT	Malta	90,00	115,00
CZ	Czech Republic	75,00	155,00	NL	The Netherlands	93,00	170,00
DE	Germany	93,00	115,00	PL	Poland	72,00	145,00
DK	Denmark	120,00	150,00	PT	Portugal	84,00	120,00
EE	Estonia	71,00	110,00	RO	Romania	52,00	170,00
EL	Greece	82,00	140,00	SE	Sweden	97,00	160,00
ES	Spain	87,00	125,00	SI	Slovenia	70,00	110,00
FI	Finland	104,00	140,00	SK	Slovakia	80,00	125,00
FR	France	95,00	150,00	TR	Turkey	55,00	165,00
HR	Croatia	60,00	120,00	UK	United Kingdom	101,00	175,00
HU	Hungary	72,00	150,00	IS	Iceland	85,00	160,00
IE	Ireland	104,00	150,00	LI	Liechtenstein	80,00	95,00
IT	Italy	95,00	135,00	NO	Norway	80,00	140,00
LT	Lithuania	68,00	115,00	CH	Switzerland	80,00	140,00
LU	Luxembourg	92,00	145,00	RS	Serbia	80,00	140,00

Please note that the Commission and the other European Institutions cover the travel and subsistence costs of their own officials when they participate in an event organised by the beneficiary and these should therefore not be included in the budget estimate.

²¹ The daily allowance rates are subject to periodic review by the Commission.

Catering

The total amount calculated according to the above mentioned rules regarding Daily subsistence allowances shall constitute a maximum. If catering services are provided by the organisers, the DSAs directly paid to participants must be reduced accordingly. In such cases, the daily allowance would be reduced by 30% for each meal provided, and by 15% for breakfast.

Costs of services

Information dissemination and publications costs can be taken into account provided that they are directly related to the action. Please give, for each publication and/or other materials, a description, an estimate of the number of pages and copies planned the frequency and language of publication, an indication of the production costs per copy as well as an estimate of the distribution costs where appropriate.

Translation costs must include the following details: the number of languages, the number of pages to be translated and the rate applied per page. These rates may not exceed the most reasonable market rates.

Interpretation: the different components must be specified. In particular, the number of languages, the number of interpreters, the number of days and the daily rates must be specified. The accepted daily fee of an interpreter may not exceed EUR 700 (including VAT). Interpreters should be hired locally. For their travel and subsistence expenses to be covered by the grant, it must be impossible to hire them locally and it must be explained why this is so.

Evaluation: if the action proposed requires some form of evaluation, monitoring and evaluation methods must be developed, as well as tools to assess, on an on-going basis, the progress of the action in relation to the objectives defined at the beginning and the results. The cost of such work will be regarded as eligible expenditure.

Subcontracting and provision of services

This heading can cover the costs of subcontracting or provision of services by an external party in connection with the implementation of the action (consultancy fees, production of documents, studies, external evaluation etc.).

Work and tasks carried out by the project partners (as described in the letters of commitment) are not subject to these rules of subcontracting. However, it is not permissible to include normal commercial suppliers of goods and services as project partners in order to avoid these rules. By way of example, the Commission does not find it appropriate to include as project partners, independent consultants, conference organisers, and so on.

Applicants should have the operational capacity to complete the action to be supported. However, if the staff does not have the skills required, when justified and necessary, parts of the project may be subcontracted to another person or organisation. In this case, the beneficiary shall ensure that²² the relevant terms applicable to itself under the agreement are also applicable to the subcontractors.

²² The terms related to liability, conflict of interests, confidentiality, publicity, evaluation, assignment and checks and audits

It must be clearly specified which tasks will be subcontracted and why this subcontracting is necessary, in the annex foreseen for this purpose in the electronic application form ("Contracts for implementing the action").

Main rules related to subcontracting activities

When concluding external contracts in order to implement the action, the beneficiary must seek competitive tenders from potential contractors and award the contract in writing to the bid offering **the best value for money, i.e. the best price-quality ratio**. In doing so, the beneficiary shall observe the principles of transparency and equal treatment of potential contractors and shall take care to avoid any conflict of interests²³.

Sub-contracts by a "public" beneficiary/partner must be awarded in accordance with the applicable national rules on public tendering and in conformity with EU Directives on public tendering procedures.

Where the value of the procurement contract awarded exceeds EUR 60 000, the beneficiaries shall, in addition to the above general rules, be able to prove, if requested, that they have sought bids-by registered letter - from at least five different tenderers, including proof of posting and proof that they have posted the call for tender or invitation to tender at least on their website and provide copy of draft tender specifications.

Contracts as referred above may be awarded only in the following cases:

- a) They may only cover the execution of a limited part of the action;
- b) Recourse to the award of contracts must be justified in relation to the nature of the tasks necessary for the implementation of the action;
- c) The tasks to be subcontracted and the corresponding estimated costs must be set out in detail in the budget estimate;
- d) Any recourse to the award of contracts while the action is underway shall be subject to prior written authorisation by the Commission;
- e) The beneficiary shall retain sole responsibility for the implementation of the action and for compliance with the provisions of the agreement. The beneficiary must undertake the necessary arrangements to ensure that the subcontractor waives all rights in respect of the Commission under the agreement;
- f) The beneficiary must undertake to ensure that the terms, mentioned above, applicable to itself under the agreement are also applicable to the subcontractor.

Administration costs

Depreciation for purchase of equipment²⁴: the purchase cost of equipment (new or second-hand) is eligible provided that it is written off in accordance with the tax and accounting rules applicable to the beneficiary and generally accepted for items of the same kind. Only the portion of the equipment's depreciation corresponding to the period of eligibility for EU funding covered by the grant agreement and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the action may be taken into account by the Commission. A justification for the need of purchasing such equipment is to be annexed to the budget estimate.

Other eligible administrative costs are: rental of meeting rooms (coffee breaks included), rental of interpretation booths, communication costs (other than overheads), charges for financial services, costs relating to a bank guarantee and to external audits, etc. Indicative

²³ Art. 120FR, 184 IR

²⁴ Art. 172 IR

amounts for rental of booths, excluding technical equipment: EUR 750 (excluding VAT) per booth per day; rental of booths with equipment and technical assistance: EUR 1200 (excluding VAT) per booth per day.

3.2.3 Eligible indirect costs - Overheads

Indirect costs are general administrative costs – overhead costs incurred in connection with the eligible direct costs of the action. They are limited to a maximum flat-rate of 7% of the total eligible direct costs for the action. These can include maintenance, stationery, photocopying, mailing postage, telephone and fax costs, heating, electricity or other forms of energy, water, office furniture, insurance and any other expenditure necessary for the successful completion of the project. Postage costs are considered as overhead costs and cannot be accepted under the headings "publications" or "administration".

If the accepted budget includes a provision for flat-rate funding in respect of indirect costs, such costs do not need to be supported by accounting documents.

Indirect costs are not eligible for an action where the beneficiary already receives an operating grant from the EU budget during the period in question.

3.2.4 Non-eligible costs

The following expenses are ineligible and therefore not accepted:

- contributions in kind: these are contributions that are not invoiced, such as voluntary work, equipment or premises made available free of charge;
- return on capital;
- debt and debt service charges;
- doubtful debts;
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- interest owed;
- exchange losses;
- VAT, unless the beneficiary can show that he/she is unable to recover it according to the applicable national legislation. VAT paid by public bodies is not an eligible cost. It should be noted that VAT paid by a public body²⁵ to operators who are subject to VAT (when purchasing goods or supplying services within the framework of the implementation of the co-financed action) is not eligible. The VAT thus collected by operators liable for tax will in fact be returned to accounts of the Member State of the public body. Considering this VAT as an eligible cost would lead to double financing (by the EU and by the fiscal revenue).
- excessive or reckless expenditure;
- costs declared by the beneficiary and covered by another action or work programme receiving an EU grant.

3.3 Income

Total income must be identical to total expenditure. The income side of the budget must show:

²⁵ In accordance to Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28/11/06, states, regional and local government authorities and other bodies governed by public law shall not in theory be regarded as taxable persons in respect of the activities or transactions in which they engage as public authorities.

- The beneficiary's contribution in cash: the direct monetary contribution from the applicant's own resources and/or the contribution from any other fund providers. This means an effective expenditure, i.e. a financial flow that can be traced in the written accounts. Placing a civil servant remunerated by a public administration, or an employee of a company or organisation, at the disposal of the project is treated as a cash contribution since this gives rise to an expense that can be identified in the accounts of these administrations or organisations.
By way of another example, if a meeting room is made available paying the cost of rental, then this is treated as a cash contribution, which can be included in the direct eligible costs of the project and on the income side.
- The revenue generated by the action: any income expected to be generated by the implementation of the action should be detailed (such as the yield from sales of publications or conference registration fees).
- The EU grant: the grant requested from the Commission.

4 HOW THE GRANT WILL BE CALCULATED

If the proposal is selected for a grant, the Commission will calculate the EU contribution as a percentage of the total eligible costs as shown in the estimated budget for the implementation of the action.

The Commission reserves the right to reduce the grant requested if the proposal is acceptable but considered too expensive, and to reduce individual unit costs if these are estimated to be too high.

Determination of the final amount of the grant

The EU final grant is calculated on the basis of the **actual** eligible expenditure by applying the "double ceiling" rule and verifying compliance with the non-profit rule.

- Application of the "double ceiling" rule limiting the grant both to the percentage of the eligible costs and to the maximum amount mentioned in the grant agreement

The EU final grant is calculated by applying the percentage for the co-financing of the eligible costs laid down in the grant agreement to the total of the actual eligible costs. This amount must not exceed the maximum amount for the EU grant laid down in the grant agreement.

As a result, if the actual expenditure turns out to be lower than the expenditure you budgeted, the actual grant will also be reduced in application of the percentage contribution which will remain the same. If the actual expenditure turns out to be higher than the expenditure budgeted, the EU grant will not be increased. It is therefore in the applicant's interest to submit a realistic estimate of expenses.

- Verification of compliance with the non-profit rule

The grant may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit for the beneficiary²⁶.

²⁶ Art. 109(2) FR

On the basis of the above rule if the total income of the action is higher than the total costs, the final grant amount will be reduced accordingly so that it will not produce a profit.

A mere forecast of expenditure does not give entitlement to a grant. This is why the exact amount of the final grant cannot be calculated until the Commission has received the final activity report and the final statement of expenditure. The expenditure that is committed to the implementation of the action must be justified by invoices or equivalent supporting documents, in order to be accepted as actual expenditure. It must also relate to actual rather than inputted costs.

5 AGREEMENT GOVERNING THE GRANT

Should the Commission award a grant, a grant agreement setting out the conditions and maximum level of funding will be concluded with the beneficiary.

Successful applicants will receive two original copies of the grant agreement for acceptance and signature. Both of these copies must be sent back to the Commission, which will then return one of them once it has been signed by both parties.

6 PAYMENT PROCEDURES

The payment procedures will be laid down in the grant agreement.

The balance will be paid upon acceptance by the Commission of the final technical implementation report and final financial statement.

7 GUARANTEE²⁷

The Commission may require the beneficiary to provide a guarantee in advance, in order to limit the financial risk linked to the payment of the pre-financing.

This guarantee shall be denominated in euro and shall be valid for a period sufficiently long to allow it to be activated. The guarantee shall be provided by an approved bank or financial institution established in one of the Member States.

The guarantee shall be released as the pre-financing is gradually cleared against interim payment(s) or payment of the balance to the beneficiary in accordance with the conditions laid down in the grant agreement or, in the absence of such clearing, three months after a recovery is notified to the beneficiary by which the Commission asks him to repay the pre-financing. The Commission undertakes to release the guarantee within the following month.

In exceptional cases, the guarantee may be replaced by a joint and several guarantee by a third party or by the irrevocable and unconditional joint guarantee of the beneficiaries of an action who are parties to the same grant agreement.

²⁷ Compulsory in the case of pre-financing representing over 80% of the total amount of the grant and exceeding EUR 60 000. However, this requirement may be waived for public-sector bodies and international organisations or for beneficiaries who have signed a framework partnership agreement with the Commission. (Art.118 FR and 182(1) IR)

8 BANK ACCOUNT AND INTEREST GENERATED BY PRE-FINANCING PAYMENTS²⁸

Payment shall be made to the beneficiary's bank account or sub-account denominated in Euro. The account or sub-account indicated by the beneficiary must make it possible to identify the funds transferred by the Commission and the interest yielded by the pre-financing payments.

If the funds paid into the account yield interest or equivalent benefits under the law of the State on whose territory the account is opened, such interest or benefits, if they have been generated by pre-financing payments which remain the property of the European Union, shall not be treated as a receipt for the action.

The beneficiary shall, as specified in the grant agreement, inform the Commission of any interest or equivalent benefits yielded by pre-financing payments higher than EUR 50 000, it has received from the Commission. Notification must be made when the request is introduced for interim payment or for payment of the balance that clears the pre-financing. Interests yielded by pre-financing payments between EUR 50 000 and EUR 750 000 will be directly deducted from payments. Interests generated by pre-financing payments higher than EUR 750 000 will be recovered through a recovery order.

Interests shall not be due to the EU on pre-financing paid to Member States, that is to say, not only the central structure of the State, but also, on the one hand, the regional or local authorities and, on the other hand, the public bodies acting on behalf, under the control or the responsibility of the Member State, or paid in the framework of joint management with international organisations.

All costs related to these requirements (such as the cost for opening and closing accounts) are eligible and may be submitted in the budget estimate.

9 SUBMISSION OF REPORTS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

Within three months after the closing date of the action, the beneficiary must submit to the Commission the final report on the implementation of the action, along with a final financial statement of all actual expenditure and actual revenue. Both reports must be submitted on-line via SWIM as well as in paper version (see section 13). The final implementation report must be completed using the template announced in the call that will also be annexed to the grant agreement.

Should the final report be deemed to be inadequate or of low quality, the Commission reserves the right to request additional information within 60 days of reception of the final report, and, if necessary, to suspend the final payment until the requested information is provided.

In addition to these requirements, other documents that might be indicated in the text of the call for proposals must also be provided.

²⁸ Art. 5(a) FR, Art. 3, 4, 4(a) IR

10 PUBLICITY

All grant beneficiaries are required to mention clearly the fact that they have received funding from the EU in any publication, in other materials, and during activities (conferences or seminars, etc.), for which the grant is used, using the following wording: "**With financial support from the European Union**". The logo of the EU, given at the following web address: http://europa.eu/abc/symbols/emblem/index_en.htm should also be visible.

Any communication or publication by the beneficiary, in any form and medium, including the Internet, shall indicate that sole responsibility lies with the author and that the Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

In addition to these minimum requirements, references specified in the text of the call for proposals must also be indicated.

All grants awarded in the course of a financial year shall be published on the Internet site of the EU institutions during the first half of the year following the closure of the budget year in respect of which they were awarded.

By signing the grant agreement for an action, the beneficiary authorises the Commission to publish the following information in any form and medium, including via the Internet site of the EU²⁹:

- the beneficiary's name and the address
- the subject of the grant,
- the amount awarded and the rate of funding of the costs of the action.

In order to increase the visibility of transnational partnerships and to facilitate networking between organisations, the Commission intends to publish the name and address of partners together with the name and address of the beneficiary. To that purpose, the Beneficiary will be asked to seek the partners' agreement to authorise the Commission to publish this data. This written agreement should be included in the letters of commitment sent to the Commission with the application form.

With a view to disseminate all results obtained and outputs delivered under the grant agreement, the Executive Summary sent with the Implementation Report will be posted on the website of the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.

Moreover, the applicants, by signing the grant agreement accept to post the results of the project on their web-site for at least one year. They shall clearly state on the website that the project has received funding from the European Commission

Upon a duly substantiated request by the beneficiary, publication of this data can be waived if it threatens the safety of the beneficiary or harms his business interests.

11 EVALUATION

If the proposal should include a specific evaluation component for ongoing monitoring and final evaluation of the action, these costs can be taken into account as eligible in the budget estimate.

²⁹ Art. 110(2) FR, 169(2) IR

Successful proposals could be the subject of an ongoing and ex-post evaluation led by the Commission and/or by independent experts selected by the European Commission. Therefore, the beneficiaries of the grant undertake to make available to the Commission and/or persons authorised by it, all necessary documents or information as will allow the evaluation to be successfully completed and give these persons the rights of access required.

12 CHECKS AND AUDITS

An external audit report is required in the following cases:

12.1 Audit report in support of grant applications³⁰

Organisations' proposals for an action for which the grant exceeds EUR 500 000, shall be accompanied by an external audit report produced by a certified auditor. That report shall certify the accounts for the last financial year available.

12.2 Audit report in support of requests for payment³¹

An external audit report produced by an approved auditor or in case of public bodies, by a competent and independent public officer may be required by the authorising officer in respect of any interim or final payment request, depending on his assessment of the management risk.

It is compulsory in the case of a grant for an action over EUR 750 000, when the cumulative amounts per financial year of requests for interim payments and for payment of the balance is at least EUR 325 000. The purpose of the audit report is to certify that the submitted accounts comply with the financial provisions of the agreement, that the costs declared by the beneficiary in the financial statements on which the request for payment is based are real, accurately recorded and eligible according to the grant agreement and that all receipts have been declared.

The obligation to provide such a certification of the financial statements and underlying accounts may be waived in the cases of grant beneficiaries that are public bodies or international organisations. If an external audit of the action's accounts is not required, the beneficiary himself shall certify on his honour that information contained in requests for payments is full, reliable and true. He shall also certify that the costs incurred can be considered eligible in accordance with the grant agreement and that requests for payment are substantiated by adequate supporting documents that can be checked.

The beneficiary undertakes to provide any detailed information requested by the Commission or by another qualified outside body chosen by the Commission for the purposes of checking that the action and the provisions of the agreement are being properly implemented. The beneficiary must enable the Commission and/or the Court of Auditors to verify the organisation's accounting documents, if they deem this appropriate. To this end, documentation justifying items of expenditure must be retained by the applicant's organisation for five years following final payment by the Commission.

³⁰ Art. 173(4) IR

³¹ Art. 180(2) IR

13 PROCEDURE: ELECTRONIC MEANS OF SUBMISSION - SWIM

The Internet Web application called "SWIM" (SAGA Web Input Module) allows applicants/beneficiaries to introduce, edit, validate, submit and print grant applications, as well as requests for payments and modifications on the budget estimate. SWIM can be accessed in the following web address³²: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim>
The final financial statement and the final implementation report will also be submitted via SWIM.

13.1 Introduction of grant applications

The grant application form has to be filled in electronically as follows: first, access the system at the address mentioned above and select the number of the call for proposals you wish to apply for in the box "New grant application", enter your e-mail address and then fill in your application. Once your application is completed, click on the "submission" button in order to finalise the submission procedure. Please note that after submitting your application form electronically no changes to the application are possible.

After electronic submission, the application form must also be printed out, signed by the legal representative of the organization submitting the proposal and sent by post to the responsible Unit, as specified in the text of the call for proposals.

Failure to respect this procedure will render the application ineligible.

13.2 Requests for payments and budgetary modifications

In addition to the documents specified in the grant agreement, financial documents required in support of requests for further pre-financing payments (if applicable) and for payment of the balance, as well as requests for modifications of the budget estimate to be made by addendum must also be submitted electronically using SWIM, as well as by post duly signed by the legal representative.

To be allowed to log on to SWIM and to access its grant file, the beneficiary will be asked to enter the same application reference number and password assigned by the system to the grant application when it was created.

13.3 Final reports

As mentioned in section 9, the final report on the implementation of the action and the final financial statement of the actual expenditure and actual revenue must be submitted on-line via SWIM as well as by post duly signed by the legal representative.

14 DATA PROTECTION

The grant application will be processed by computer. All personal data (such as names, addresses, CVs, etc.) will be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data.³³ Replies to the questions in the application

³² For more technical details on using SWIM, a user's manual is available on-line

³³ Official Journal L 8, 12.1.2001.

form are necessary in order to assess the grant application and they will be processed solely for that purpose by the department responsible for the EU grant programme concerned. On request, applicants may be sent personal data to correct or complete. For any question relating to these data, please contact the Commission department to which the form must be returned.

Beneficiaries may lodge a complaint against the processing of their personal data with the European Data Protection Supervisor at any time.

15 EARLY WARNING SYSTEM AND CENTRAL EXCLUSION DATABASE

Grant applicants and, if they are legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over them, are informed that, should they be in one of the situations mentioned in:

- the Commission Decision 2008/969 of 16.12.2008 on the Early Warning System (EWS) for the use of authorising officers of the Commission and the executive agencies (OJ, L 344, 20.12.2008, p. 125) (for more information see the Privacy Statement on http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm), or

- the Commission Regulation 2008/1302 of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database – CED (OJ L 344, 20.12.2008, p. 12) (for more information see the Privacy Statement on http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm#BDCE),

their personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the EWS only or both in the EWS and CED, and communicated to the persons and entities listed in the above-mentioned Decision and Regulation, in relation to the award or the execution of a procurement contract or a grant agreement or decision.