



Contracting Authority: European Commission, Service for Foreign
Policy Instruments

**Partnership Instrument
Annual Action Programme 2014
Public Diplomacy Actions**

EU-US Transatlantic Civil Society Dialogue

Guidelines
for grant applicants

Budget line BGUE-B2014-19.050100-C1-FPI

Partnership Instrument

Reference: EuropeAid/136889/DH/ACT/US

Deadline for submission of full application: 15 May 2015

Notice

This is an open Call for Proposals, where all documents are submitted together (Concept Note and Full Application Form). In the first instance, only the Concept Notes will be evaluated. Thereafter, for the applicants who have been pre-selected, the full proposal will be evaluated. After the evaluation of the full proposals, an eligibility check will be performed for those which have been provisionally selected. Eligibility will be checked on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the Contracting Authority and the signed 'Declaration by the Applicant' sent together with the application.

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1. TRANSATLANTIC CIVIL SOCIETY DIALOGUES EU-USA

1.1. BACKGROUND

The Partnership Instrument (PI) was specifically designed to promote the EU's strategic interests worldwide by supporting cooperation on areas of mutual interest with major international actors. More in detail, it encompasses four of key areas: a) it addresses major global challenges such as energy security, climate change and environmental protection; b) it supports the implementation of the external dimension of EU internal policies and of the Europe 2020 Strategy; c) it covers specific aspects of the EU's economic diplomacy by improving access to third-countries' markets through trade, investment and business opportunities, and d) it supports public diplomacy activities, including academic and think tank cooperation as well as outreach activities to promote the Union's vision and principles.

Priority interventions that may be supported by the Partnership Instrument have been laid out in the following legal basis and policy documents¹:

- Regulation (EU) No 234/2014 of 11 March 2014 establishing a Partnership Instrument for cooperation with third countries;
- Commission Implementing Decision C(2014)4453 of 3 July 2014 on the adoption of the first multiannual indicative programme for the period 2014-2017 under the Partnership Instrument for cooperation with third countries;
- The Commission implementing Decision C(2014)7423 of 16 October 2014 adopting the 2014 Annual Action Programme.

This Call for Proposals builds on the results of previous dialogues funded under the Industrialised Countries Instrument (ICI)² and is implemented under Annex O of the 2014 Annual Action Programme of the Partnership Instrument. In particular, it responds to the fourth key area listed above and it supports EU-US Transatlantic Civil Society Dialogues.

1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

The **global objective** of this Call for Proposals is: to strengthen dialogues between members of EU and US civil society by addressing a wide range of issues and encouraging the involvement of a broad set of stakeholders. These dialogues will complement the formal policy dialogue at government level.

The **specific objective** of this Call for Proposals is to stimulate dialogue and cooperation between non-governmental organisations and interest groups, including social partners, representing wide constituencies in the EU and the US.

In order to complement PI funded activities implemented by US organisations, applications should involve at least one EU and one US organisation, with the EU organisation ideally being the applicant and the US organisation being the co-applicant.

In order to complement PI funded activities implemented by universities and research centres, the objective of actions funded under this call should not be purely of academic nature but involve wider audiences.

1 All available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/fpi/what-we-do/partnership_instrument_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/fpi/key-documents/index_en.htm

2 Regulation (EU) No 1338/2011 of 13 December 2011 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1934/2006 establishing a financing instrument for cooperation with industrialised and other high-income countries and territories, OJ L347/21, 30.12.2011

In line with current EU policy priorities of relevance to the EU-US civil societies, three topics have been identified as priorities under this Call for Proposals (CfP). Actions to be funded under this CfP will have to address **only one** of the following thematic priorities:

1) Continued support to the transatlantic Consumer Dialogue

The Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue (TACD) was launched in September 1998 in the context of the New Transatlantic Agenda (NTA; launched in 1995) and in particular of the New Economic Partnership (launched in 1998). The TACD is a forum of US and EU consumer organizations which develops and agrees on joint consumer policy recommendations to the US government and the European Union to promote the consumer interests in EU and US policy making. By launching the TACD the EU and US showed their support to an increased involvement of civil society - and in particular of consumer organizations - in transatlantic policy-making.

The TADC is regularly providing insightful recommendations on important consumer issues, such as food, information society, intellectual property, financial services and nanotechnology, most notably in the context of ongoing TTIP negotiations. The TADC wants to ensure that consumer welfare is promoted and advocated within EU-US regulatory processes and cooperation such as, for example, the Transatlantic Economic Council (TEC) or the on-going Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations.

2) Transatlantic dialogue focusing on prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism

The prevention of radicalisation/violent extremism and information exchange between the EU and the US will be in a focus during the whole year 2015, especially in connection with the phenomenon of foreign fighters, which is a security concern on the two sides of the Atlantic.

The US is one of the key countries for the EU to cooperate with on the prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism. A civil society dialogue is an undisputable part of this cooperation, not only within the EU but also externally.

The objective of this dialogue is to support civil society-led activities aiming to facilitate common understanding and tackling issues related to the prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism.

The specific objective of this Call for Proposals is to stimulate dialogue and cooperation between local actors, religious communities, non-governmental organisations and interest groups, including social partners, representing wide constituencies in the EU and the US.

Civil society could be engaged in areas such as underlying political, economic, religious and social factors conducive to radicalisation, including stigmatising, discriminatory, racist or xenophobic attitudes, as well as the role of the internet and social media.

In designing the dialogues, existing work as well as experience and best practice of the EU-wide Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) should be explored in order to avoid duplication and develop complementarities.

3) Transatlantic environmental dialogue focusing on energy issues in the context of climate change.

Activities undertaken in response to this Call for Proposals should aim to identify areas for closer cooperation on developing effective strategies that could help fight against climate change at local level, for instance by improving the deployment of energy efficient technologies. The dialogue should also strengthen networking activities between EU and US civil society groups (including industrial and business organisations) on issues dealt with on the occasion of major international climate change negotiations, so to influence and support policymakers in the EU and in the US to take action against global warming and to support sustainable development at international level.

A meaningful inclusion of gender perspectives is strongly recommended in the proposed action(s) and its activities. This implies including a description of the strategy to achieve meaningful gender mainstreaming in the framework of the targeted priorities and the establishment of gender-related objective verifiable indicators in the full application form (i.e. in the description of the action and Logical Framework). For 'Transatlantic dialogue focusing on prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism', adequate attention should be paid to the position (economic independence) of migrant women that play a key role in the education/integration of young persons at risk of radicalisation.

1.3. FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

The overall indicative amount made available under this Call for Proposals is EUR 800,000. The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

Indicative allocation of funds by lot:

Lot 1 - Continued support to the transatlantic Consumer Dialogue: EUR 250,000

Lot 2 - Transatlantic dialogue focusing on prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism: EUR 300,000

Lot 3 - Transatlantic environmental dialogue focusing on energy issues in the context of climate change: EUR 250,000

If the allocation indicated for a specific lot cannot be used due to insufficient quality or number of proposals received, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to reallocate the remaining funds to another lot.

Size of grants

Any grant requested under this Call for Proposals must fall between the following maximum amounts:

Lot 1

- Minimum amount: EUR 200,000
- Maximum amount: EUR 250,000

Lot 2

- Minimum amount: EUR 200,000
- Maximum amount: EUR 300,000

Lot 3

- Minimum amount: EUR 200,000
- Maximum amount: EUR 250,000

Any grant requested under this Call for Proposals must respect the following maximum percentage of total eligible cost of the action:

- Minimum percentage: 50% of the total eligible costs of the action
- Maximum percentage: 75% of the total eligible costs of the action (see also Section 2.1.5).

The balance (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the Contracting Authority) must be financed from sources other than the European Union Budget or the European Development Fund.

2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of the actions financed under this Call, in conformity with the Practical Guide, which is applicable to the present call (available on the Internet at this address: <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/document.do?locale=en>).

2.1. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

(1) the actors:

- The **applicant**, i.e. the entity submitting the application form (2.1.1),
- if any, its **co-applicant(s)** (**where it is not specified otherwise the applicant and its co-applicant(s) are hereinafter jointly referred as the "applicants"**) (2.1.1),
- and, if any, **affiliated entity(ies)** to the applicant and/or to a co-applicant(s). (2.1.2);

(2) the actions:

Actions for which a grant may be awarded (2.1.4);

(3) the costs:

- types of cost that may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant (2.1.5).

2.1.1. Eligibility of applicants (i.e. applicant and co-applicant(s))

Applicant

(1) In order to be eligible for a grant, the applicant must:

- be a legal person **and**
- be a specific type of organisation such as: non-governmental organisation, public sector operator³ **and**
- be established in⁴ a Member State of the European Union or in the USA, **and**
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary **and**

(2) The potential applicant may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if it is in any of the situations listed in Section 2.3.3 of the Practical Guide ;

3 For example: Think tanks, NGOs and PNOs, trade unions, business associations and interests groups representing broad constituencies of civil society

4 To be determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes, which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned and that its head office is located in an eligible country. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has been concluded.

In Part B section 8 of the grant application form ('Declaration by the applicant'), the applicant must declare that the applicant himself, the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) are not in any of these situations.

The applicant must act with co-applicant(s) as specified hereafter.

If awarded the Grant contract, the applicant will become the Beneficiary identified as the Coordinator in annex E3h1 (Special Conditions). The Coordinator is the main interlocutor of the Contracting Authority. It represents and acts on behalf of any other co-beneficiary (if any) and coordinate the design and implementation of the Action.

Co-applicant(s)

It is recommended that minimum one / maximum ten co-applicants to be involved in the action.

Co-applicant(s) participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the applicant.

Co-applicant(s) must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the applicant himself.

In addition to the categories referred to in section 2.1.1, the co-applicant(s) may include also consortia and networks of organisations listed in the above mentioned section.

Co-applicant(s) must sign the Mandate in Part B section 4 of the grant application form.

If awarded the Grant contract, the co-applicant(s) will become beneficiaries in the Action (together with the Coordinator)

2.1.2. *Affiliated entities*

Affiliated entity(ies)

The applicant and its co-applicant(s) may act with affiliated entity(ies)

Only the following entities may be considered as affiliated entities to the applicant and/or to co-applicant(s):

Only entities having a structural link with the applicants, in particular a legal or capital link.

This structural link encompasses mainly two notions:

- (i) Control, as defined in Directive 2013/34/EU on the annual financial statements, consolidated financial statements and related reports of certain types of undertakings:

Entities affiliated to a beneficiary may hence be:

- Entities directly or indirectly controlled by the beneficiary (daughter companies or first-tier subsidiaries). They may also be entities controlled by an entity controlled by the beneficiary (granddaughter companies or second-tier subsidiaries) and the same applies to further tiers of control;
 - Entities directly or indirectly controlling the beneficiary (parent companies). Likewise, they may be entities controlling an entity controlling the beneficiary;
 - Entities under the same direct or indirect control as the beneficiary (sister companies).
- (ii) Membership, i.e. the beneficiary is legally defined as a e.g. network, federation, association in which the proposed affiliated entities also participate or the beneficiary participates in the same entity (e.g. network, federation, association) as the proposed affiliated entities.

The structural link shall as a general rule be neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation. This means that the link would exist independently of the award of the grant; it should exist before the call for proposals and remain valid after the end of the action.

By way of exception, an entity may be considered as affiliated to a beneficiary even if it has a structural link specifically established for the sole purpose of the implementation of the action in the case of so-called “sole applicants” or “sole beneficiaries”. A sole applicant or a sole beneficiary is an entity formed by several entities (a group of entities) which together comply with the criteria for being awarded the grant. For example, an association is formed by its members.

What is not an affiliated entity?

The following are not considered entities affiliated to a beneficiary:

- Entities that have entered into a (procurement) contract or subcontract with a beneficiary, act as concessionaires or delegates for public services for a beneficiary,
- Entities that receive financial support from the beneficiary,
- Entities that cooperate on a regular basis with the beneficiary on the basis of a memorandum of understanding or share some assets,
- Entities that have signed a consortium agreement under the grant contract.

How to verify the existence of the required link with the beneficiary?

The affiliation resulting from control may in particular be proved on the basis of the consolidated accounts of the group of entities the beneficiary and its proposed affiliates belong to.

The affiliation resulting from membership may in particular be proved on the basis of the statutes or equivalent act establishing the entity (network, federation, association) which the beneficiary constitutes or in which the beneficiary participates.

If the applicants are awarded a contract, their affiliated entity(ies) will not become Beneficiary(ies) of the Action and signatory(ies) of the Contract. However, they will participate in the design and in the implementation of the Action and the costs they incur (including those incurred for Implementation Contracts and Financial Support to third parties) may be accepted as eligible costs, provided they comply with all the relevant rules already applicable to the Beneficiary(ies) under the Grant Contract.

Affiliated entity(ies) must satisfy the same eligibility criteria as the applicant and the co-applicant(s). They must sign the affiliated entity(ies) statement in Part B section 5 of the grant application form.

2.1.3. Associates and Contractors

The following entities are not applicant(s) nor affiliated entity(ies) and do not have to sign the "mandate" or "affiliated entities' statement":

- Associates

Other organisations may be involved in the action. Such associates play a real role in the action but may not receive funding from the grant, with the exception of per diem or travel costs. Associates do not have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in section 2.1.1. Associates must be mentioned in Part B section 6 — ‘Associates of the Applicant participating in the Action’ — of the Grant Application Form.

- Contractors

The grant beneficiaries and their affiliated entities are permitted to award contracts. Associates or affiliated entity(ies) cannot be also contractors in the project. Contractors are subject to the procurement rules set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

2.1.4. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made

Definition:

An action is composed of a set of activities.

Duration

The initial planned duration of an action may not be lower than 24 nor exceed 36 months.

Sectors or themes

- Continued support to the transatlantic Consumer Dialogue
- Transatlantic dialogue focusing on prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism
- Transatlantic environmental dialogue focusing on energy issues in the context of climate change

All actions must conform to the above-described programme objectives and be directed towards the expected results and priorities identified for this CfP in section 1.2.

Location

Actions must take place in both the following countries: European Union Member States and the United States of America.

Types of action

Actions must contribute to the achievement of the objectives listed under section 1.2 of the present Guidelines (Objectives of the Programme).

Actions should be self-contained operations indicating a coherent set of activities with clearly defined operational objectives, target groups and planned, tangible outcomes, within a limited timeframe.

The proposed actions should be designed to produce specific, measurable results in response to identified problems. Proposals must be based on concrete, recent and verifiable information that can clearly identify specific problems and the related constraints. It is thus necessary to set clear objectives based on specifically tailored strategies and intervention methodologies that incorporate complementary, consistent activities for tackling the identified problems directly. The means to be deployed should stem logically from this approach.

The following types of action are ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- construction or renovation of buildings or infrastructures
- actions that discriminate against specific individuals or groups of people on the basis of gender, of religion, of ethnicity, of political considerations or of physical challenge(s).

Types of activity

The indicative list of activities undertaken in response to Lot 1 should *inter alia* include:

- strengthening of a mechanism for EU and US consumer representatives to provide input into EU and US political discussions and policies in particular in the framework of the TTIP negotiations;
- organise meetings with policy officials and regulators to promote and advocate consumer interests with public authorities;
- identification of common consumers issues and challenges (such as the issue of privacy and data protection), and promote consumer views in the context of transatlantic relations;
- debates and exchanges of knowledge among consumer representatives;
- exchange and dissemination of expertise and knowledge on consumer issues in the EU and the US;
- contribution to the discussions in relevant transatlantic dialogues and on relevant areas discussed in the Transatlantic Economic Council under the auspices of the Transatlantic Economic Framework agreed at the Washington EU-US Summit of 2007;
- formulation of joint policy recommendations which should be disseminated as widely as possible in the EU and in the US.

The indicative list of activities undertaken in response to Lot 2 should *inter alia* include:

- assessment of the efforts on addressing the challenges of radicalisation through preventative actions;
- exchange of experience to enhance cooperation on the "foreign fighters" phenomenon and the atrocities of the so-called Islamic State which have clearly illustrated the need to tackle the issue of online radicalisation and terrorist propaganda;
- best practices exchange in the area of prevention of violent extremism and radicalisation, with the emphasis on the cooperation with the society, minorities, communication strategy.
- enhancement of cooperation and exchange of information by identifying the gaps and areas for improvement.
- formulation of joint policy recommendations which should be disseminated as widely as possible in the EU and in the US.

The indicative list of activities undertaken in response to Lot 3 should *inter alia* include:

- exchange of information about climate change mitigation and adaptation measures at the local level in the EU and US;
- showcase good practices and successful strategies in the field of sustainable development at local level in the EU and in the US⁵. These could include: examples of successful low carbon/energy efficient strategies at local level, examples of innovative business models in the field of green technologies and renewable energies that have contributed to clean energy investments, job creation and emission reductions, and examples of models of civil-society participation that have significantly contributed to boost awareness of the challenges related to climate change and environmental degradation at the local level;
- organise events and conferences at the sides of major international climate change negotiations and act as catalyst of international efforts in the fight against climate change and in support of the strengthening of the green economy worldwide

⁵ On the EU side, co-operation could also be foreseen with the Covenant of Mayors and other organisations representing EU and US cities and regions. http://www.eumayors.eu/about/covenant-of-mayors_en.html

- evaluate the potential opportunities and challenges of interconnecting existing regional emission trading schemes;
- produce/publish joint policy recommendations which should be disseminated as widely as possible in the EU and in the US.

Financial support to third parties⁶

Applicants may not propose financial support to third parties.

Visibility

The Applicants must take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the European Union has financed or co-financed the Action. As far as possible, actions that are wholly or partially funded by the European Union must incorporate information and communication activities designed to raise the awareness of specific or general audiences of the reasons for the action and the EU support for the action in the country or region concerned, as well as the results and the impact of this support.

Applicants must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU financing (see the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU external actions specified and published by the European Commission at http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/communication-and-visibility-manual-eu-external-actions_en).

Number of applications and grants per applicants

The applicant may submit more than one application per lot under this Call for Proposals.

The applicant may not be awarded more than one grant per lot under this Call for Proposals.

The applicant may not be a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in another application at the same time.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity may submit more than one application per lot under this Call for Proposals.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity may not be awarded more than one grant per lot under this Call for Proposals.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity may be an affiliated entity in another application at the same time.

2.1.5. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included

Only 'eligible costs' can be covered by a grant. The categories of costs that are eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and an overall ceiling for 'eligible costs'.

The reimbursement of eligible costs may be based on any or a combination of the following forms:

- actual costs incurred by the Beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies)
- one or more simplified cost options.

Simplified cost options may take the form of:

- **unit costs:** covering all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by reference to an amount per unit.

⁶ These third parties are neither affiliated entity(ies) nor associates nor contractors.

- **lump sums:** covering in global terms all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance.
- **flat-rate financing:** covering specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by applying a percentage fixed ex ante.

The amounts or rates have to be based on estimates using objective data such as statistical data or any other objective means or with reference to certified or auditable historical data of the applicants or the affiliated entity(ies). The methods used to determine the amounts or rates of unit costs, lump sums or flat-rates must comply with the criteria established in Annex K, and especially ensure that the costs correspond fairly to the actual costs incurred by the Grant Beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies), are in line with their accounting practices, no profit is made and the costs are not already covered by other sources of funding (no double funding). Refer to Annex K for directions and a checklist of controls to assess the minimum necessary conditions that provide reasonable assurance for the acceptance of the proposed amounts.

The applicant proposing this form of reimbursement, must clearly indicate in worksheet no.1 of Annex B, each heading/item of eligible costs concerned by this type of financing, i.e. add the reference in capital letters to "UNIT COST" (per month/flight etc), "LUMPSUM" or "FLAT RATE" in the Unit column. (see example in Annex K)

Additionally in Annex B, in the second column of worksheet no.2, "Justification of the estimated costs" per each of the corresponding budget item or heading the applicant must:

- describe the information and methods used to establish the amounts of unit costs, lump sums and/or flat-rates, to which costs they refer, etc.
- clearly explain the formulas for calculation of the final eligible amount⁷
- identify the beneficiary who will use the simplified cost option (in case of affiliated entity, specify first the beneficiary), in order to verify the maximum amount per each beneficiary (which includes if applicable simplified cost options of its affiliated entity(ies))

At contracting phase, the Contracting Authority decides whether to accept the proposed amounts or rates on the basis of the provisional budget submitted by the applicant, by analysing factual data of grants carried out by the applicant or of similar actions and by performing checks established by Annex K.

The total amount of financing on the basis of simplified cost options that can be authorised by the Contracting Authority for any of the applicants individually (including simplified cost options proposed by their own affiliated entities) cannot exceed EUR 60 000 (the indirect costs are not taken into account).

Recommendations to award a grant are always subject to the condition that the checks preceding the signing of the contract do not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget (such as arithmetical errors, inaccuracies, unrealistic costs and ineligible costs). The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the Contracting Authority to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. It is not possible to increase the grant or the percentage of EU co-financing as a result of these corrections.

It is therefore in the applicant's interest to provide a **realistic and cost-effective budget**.

Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under the Call for Proposals, costs must comply with the provisions of Article 14 of the General Conditions to the Standard Grant Contract (see Annex G of the Guidelines).

⁷ Examples:- for staff costs: number of hours or days of work * hourly or daily rate pre-set according to the category of personnel concerned;- for travel expenses: distance in km * pre-set cost of transport per km; number of days * daily allowance pre-set according to the country;- for specific costs arising from the organization of an event: number of participants at the event * pre-set total cost per participant etc.

Contingency reserve

The budget may include a contingency reserve not exceeding 5% of the estimated direct eligible costs. It can only be used with the **prior written authorisation** of the Contracting Authority.

Eligible indirect costs

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding, but the total must not exceed 7% of the estimated total eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another budget heading in the standard grant contract. The applicant may be asked to justify the percentage requested before the contract is signed. However, once the flat rate has been fixed in the special conditions of the standard grant contract, no supporting documents need to be provided.

If any of the applicants or affiliated entity(ies) is in receipt of an operating grant financed by the EU, it may not claim indirect costs on its incurred costs within the proposed budget for the action.

Contributions in kind

Contributions in kind mean the provision of goods or services to a Beneficiary(ies) or affiliated entity(ies) free of charge by a third party. As contributions in kind do not involve any expenditure for a Beneficiary(ies) or affiliated entity(ies), they are not eligible costs.

Contributions in kind may not be treated as co-financing.

Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- debts and debt service charges (interest);
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- costs declared by the Beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme receiving a Union (including through EDF) grant;
- purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary for the direct implementation of the action, in which case ownership must be transferred to the final beneficiaries and/or local Beneficiary(ies), at the latest at the end of the action;
- currency exchange losses;
- credit to third parties
- salary costs of the personnel of national administrations

2.2. HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

Prior registration in PADOR for this Call for Proposals is obligatory. Registration is obligatory for all applicants, co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies).

PADOR is an on-line database in which organisations register and update their data regularly, through the EuropeAid website: <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/pador>.

Before starting to register your organisation in PADOR, please read the 'Quick guide' on the website. It explains the registration process.

It is strongly recommended to register in PADOR when you start drafting your proposal and not to wait until just before the deadline of submission.

On the paper version of the proposal you must give your EuropeAid ID (EID). To get this ID, your organisation must enter PADOR to register, save and 'sign' certain obligatory data (the fields shown in orange on each screen) and the related documents (see section 2.4).

However, if it is impossible for the organisation to register in PADOR, it must submit a justification proving that this impossibility is general and beyond the control of the applicant and/or its affiliated entity(ies). In such cases, the applicants and/or affiliated entity(ies) concerned must complete the 'PADOR off-line form'⁸ attached to these Guidelines and send it by the submission deadline, together with the application, to the address indicated in sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.6. The registration in PADOR will then be carried out by the European Commission service in charge of the Call for Proposals. If, at a later stage, the organisation wishes to update its data itself, it will have to send an access request to the PADOR helpdesk.

All questions related to registration in PADOR should be addressed to the PADOR helpdesk at: <mailto:EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu>.

Open Call for Proposals

2.2.1. Application forms

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the instructions on the Concept Note and the Full Application form in the Grant Application Form annexes to these Guidelines (Annex A)

Applicants must apply in English.

Any error or major discrepancy related to the points listed in the instructions on the Concept Note or any major inconsistency in the application form (e.g. if the amounts in the budget worksheets are inconsistent) may lead to the rejection of the application.

Clarifications will only be requested when the information provided is unclear and thus prevents the Contracting Authority from conducting an objective assessment.

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Please note that only the application form and the published annexes which have to be filled in (budget, logical framework) will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL the relevant information concerning the action. No additional annexes should be sent.

2.2.2. Where and how to send Applications

Applications must be submitted in one original and 2 copies in A4 size, each bound. The complete application form (Part A: concept note and Part B: full application form), budget and logical framework must also be supplied in electronic format (CD-ROM or USB stick) in a separate and single file (i.e. the application form must not be split into several different files). The electronic file must contain **exactly the same** application as the paper version enclosed.

The Checklist (Section 7 of Part B the grant application form) and the Declaration by the applicant (Section 8 of Part B of the grant application form) must be stapled separately and enclosed in the envelope.

Where an applicant sends several different applications (if allowed to do so by the Guidelines of the Call), each one has to be sent separately.

⁸ Which corresponds to Sections 3 and 4 of Part B of the application form.

The outer envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the Call for Proposals**, together with the title and number of the lot, the full name and address of the applicant, and the words 'Not to be opened before the opening session'.

Applications must be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) at the address below:

Postal address

European Commission
Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI4)
200, rue de la Loi
1049 Brussels, Belgium

Address for hand delivery or by private courier service

European Commission
Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI4)
for the attention of Genoveva RUIZ CALAVERA
Avenue du Bourget 1
1140 Brussels (Evere), Belgium

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

Applicants must verify that their application is complete using the checklist (Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form). Incomplete applications may be rejected.

2.2.3. Deadline for submission of Applications

The deadline for the submission of applications is 15 May 2015 as evidenced by the date of dispatch, the postmark or the date of the deposit slip. In the case of hand-deliveries, the deadline for receipt is at 16:00 hours local time (CET) as evidenced by the signed and dated receipt. Any application submitted after the deadline will automatically be rejected.

2.2.4. Further information about Applications

Questions may in addition be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of applications to the below address, indicating clearly the reference of the Call for Proposals:

E-mail address: FPI-4-GRANTS-TENDERS@ec.europa.eu

The Contracting Authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for the submission of applications.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of applicants, affiliated entity(ies), an action or specific activities.

Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with the answers, will be published on the EuropeAid website: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome>. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

All questions related to PADOR registration should be addressed to the PADOR helpdesk:

<mailto:EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu>

2.3. EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the Contracting Authority with the possible assistance of external assessors. All actions submitted by applicants will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in paragraph 2.1, the application will be rejected on this sole basis.

(1) STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION

The following will be assessed:

- Compliance with the submission deadline. If the deadline has not been met, the application will automatically be rejected.
- The Application Form satisfies all the criteria specified in points 1-5 of the Checklist Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form). If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The Concept Notes that pass the first administrative check will be evaluated on the relevance and design of the proposed action.

The Concept Note will receive an overall score out of 50 using the breakdown in the evaluation grid below. The evaluation will also check on compliance with the instructions on the Concept Note, which can be found in Part A of the Application Form.

The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheadings. Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Scores

1. Relevance of the action	Sub-score	30
1.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the Call for Proposals?*	5x2*	
1.2 How relevant to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies) or region(s) is the proposal (including synergy with other EU initiatives and avoidance of duplication)?	5x2*	
1.3 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5	
1.4 Does the proposal contain specific added-value elements, such as environmental issues, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of indigenous peoples, or innovation and best practices?	5	
2. Design of the action	Sub-score	20
2.1 How coherent is the overall design of the action? In particular, does it reflect the analysis of the problems involved, take into account external factors and relevant stakeholders?	5x2*	
2.2 Is the action feasible and consistent in relation to the objectives and expected results?	5x2*	

TOTAL SCORE

50

*these scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance

Once all Concept Notes have been assessed, a list will be drawn up with the proposed actions ranked according to their total score.

Firstly, only the Concept Notes with a score of at least 30 will be considered for pre-selection.

Secondly, the number of Concept Notes will be reduced, taking account of the ranking, to the number of Concept Notes whose total aggregate amount of requested contributions is equal to 200% of the available budget for this Call for Proposals. The amount of requested contributions of each concept note will be based on the indicative financial envelopes for each lot.

After the evaluation of Concept Notes, the Contracting Authority will send letters to all applicants, indicating whether their application was submitted by the deadline, informing them of the reference number they have been allocated, whether the Concept Note was evaluated and the results of that evaluation. The Evaluation Committee will then proceed with the applicants whose proposals have been pre-selected.

(2) STEP 2: EVALUATION OF THE FULL APPLICATION

Firstly, the following will be assessed:

- The full application form satisfies all the criteria specified in points 1-9 of the Checklist (Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form). If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The quality of the applications, including the proposed budget and capacity of the applicants and affiliated entity(ies), will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria in the evaluation grid below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and award criteria.

The selection criteria help to evaluate the applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s operational capacity and the applicant's financial capacity and to ensure that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the proposed action and, where appropriate, to participate in its funding;
- have the management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed action. This also applies to any affiliated entity(ies) of the applicants.

The award criteria help to evaluate the quality of the applications in relation to the objectives and priorities, and to award grants to projects which maximise the overall effectiveness of the Call for Proposals. They help to select applications which the Contracting Authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities. They cover the relevance of the action, its consistency with the objectives of the Call for Proposals, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

Scoring:

The evaluation grid is divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Evaluation Grid

Section	Maximum Score
1. Financial and operational capacity	20
1.1 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient experience of project management?	5
1.2 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient technical expertise? (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)	5
1.3 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient management capacity? (Including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4 Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5
2. Relevance of the action	30
<i>Score transferred from the Concept Note evaluation</i>	

3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the action	20
3.1 Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	5
3.2 Is the action plan clear and feasible?	5
3.3 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the action? Is any evaluation planned?	5
3.4 Is the co-applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s level of involvement and participation in the action satisfactory?	5
4. Sustainability of the action	15
4.1 Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5
4.2 Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects? (Including scope for replication, extension and information sharing.)	5
4.3 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable?: - financially (<i>how will the activities be financed after the funding ends?</i>) - institutionally (<i>will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the action? Will there be local 'ownership' of the results of the action?</i>) - at policy level (where applicable) (<i>what will be the structural impact of the action — e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc?</i>) - environmentally (if applicable) (<i>will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?</i>)	5
5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action	15
5.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	/ 5
5.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	/ 10
Maximum total score	100

Note on section 1. Financial and operational capacity

If the total score for section 1 is less than 12 points, the application will be rejected. If the score for at least one of the subsections under section 1 is 1, the application will also be rejected.

Provisional selection

After the evaluation, a table will be drawn up listing the applications ranked according to their score and within the limits of the funds available. In addition, a reserve list will be drawn up following the same criteria to be used if more funds should become available during the validity period of the reserve list.

(3) STEP 3: VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF THE APPLICANTS AND AFFILIATED ENTITY(IES)

The eligibility verification, based on the supporting documents requested by the Contracting Authority (see Section 2.4) will only be performed for the applications that have been provisionally selected according to their score and within the available financial envelope.

- The Declaration by the applicant (Section 8 of Part B the grant application form) will be cross-checked with the supporting documents provided by the applicant. Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the Declaration by the applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the application on that sole basis.
- The eligibility of applicants, the affiliated entity(ies), and the action will be verified according to the criteria set out in Sections 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3.

Any rejected application will be replaced by the next best placed application on the reserve list that falls within the available financial envelope.

2.4. SUBMISSION OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR PROVISIONALLY SELECTED APPLICATIONS

An applicant that has been provisionally selected or placed on the reserve list will be informed in writing by the Contracting Authority. It will be requested to supply the following documents in order to allow the Contracting Authority to verify the eligibility of the applicant, (if any) of the co-applicant(s) and (if any) of their affiliated entity(ies)⁹:

Supporting documents may/must be provided through PADOR, see Section 2.2.

1. The statutes or articles of association of the applicant, (if any) of each co-applicant(s) and (if any) of each affiliated entity(ies)¹⁰. Where the Contracting Authority has recognised the applicant's, or the co-applicant(s)'s, or their affiliated entity(ies)'s eligibility for another call for proposals under the same budget line within 2 years before the deadline for receipt of applications, it should be submitted, instead of the statutes or articles of association, a copy of the document proving their eligibility in a former Call (e.g. a copy of the special conditions of a grant contract received during the reference period), unless a change in legal status has occurred in the meantime¹¹. This obligation does not apply to international organisations which have signed a framework agreement with the European Commission.
2. An external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the applicant's accounts for the last financial year available where the total amount of the grant exceeds EUR 750 000 (EUR 100 000 for an operating grant). The external audit report is not required from the co-applicant(s)).

This obligation does not apply to public bodies and international organisations provided that the international organisation in question offers the guarantees provided for in the applicable Financial Regulation, as described in Chapter 6 of the Practical Guide.

This obligation does not apply to secondary and higher education establishments.

3. A copy of the applicant's latest accounts (the profit and loss account and the balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed)¹². A copy of the latest account is neither required from (if any) the co-applicant(s) nor from (if any) affiliated entity(ies)).
4. Legal entity sheet (see annex D of these Guidelines) duly completed and signed by each of the applicants (i.e. by the applicant and (if any) by each co-applicant(s), accompanied by the justifying documents requested there. If the applicants have already signed a contract with the Contracting Authority, instead of the legal entity sheet and supporting documents, the legal entity number may be provided, unless a change in legal status occurred in the meantime.
5. A financial identification form of the applicant (not from co-applicant(s)) conforming to the model attached at Annex E of these Guidelines, certified by the bank to which the payments will be made. This bank should be located in the country where the applicant is established. If the applicant has already submitted a financial identification form in the past for a contract where the European

9 No supporting document will be requested for applications for a grant not exceeding EUR 60000.

10 Where the applicant and/or a co-applicant(s) and or an affiliated entity(ies) is a public body created by a law, a copy of the said law must be provided.

11 To be inserted only where the eligibility conditions have not changed from one call for proposals to the other.

12 This obligation does not apply to natural persons who have received a scholarship or that are in most need in receipt of direct support, nor to public bodies and to international organisations. It does not apply either when the accounts are in practice the same documents as the external audit report already provided pursuant to Section 2.4.2.

Commission was in charge of the payments and intends to use the same bank account, a copy of the previous financial identification form may be provided instead.

6. List of activities carried out in the field covered by this programme both in the EU and the US during at least the last four years at the time of the submission of the application.

Where the requested supporting documents are not uploaded in PADOR they must be supplied in the form of originals, photocopies or scanned versions (i.e. showing legible stamps, signatures and dates) of the said originals.

Where such documents are not in one of the official languages of the European Union, a translation into the language(s) of the call for proposals of the relevant parts of these documents proving the applicant(s)'s eligibility, must be attached for the purpose of analysing the application.

Where these documents are in an official language of the European Union other than the language of the call for proposals, it is **strongly** recommended, in order to facilitate the evaluation, to provide a translation of the relevant parts of the documents, proving the applicants' eligibility, into the language(s) of the call for proposals.

If the abovementioned supporting documents are not provided before the deadline indicated in the request for supporting documents sent to the applicant by the Contracting Authority, the application may be rejected.

After verifying the supporting documents, the Evaluation Committee will make a final recommendation to the Contracting Authority, which will decide on the award of grants.

NB : In the eventuality that the Contracting Authority is not satisfied with the strength, solidity, and guarantee offered by the structural link between one of the applicants and its affiliated entity, it can require the submission of the missing documents allowing for its conversion into co-applicant. If all the missing documents for co-applicants are submitted, and provided all necessary eligibility criteria are fulfilled, the above mentioned entity becomes a co-applicant for all purposes. The applicant has to submit the application form revised accordingly.

2.5. NOTIFICATION OF THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION

2.5.1. *Content of the decision*

The applicants will be informed in writing of the Contracting Authority's decision concerning their application and, if rejected, the reasons for the negative decision.

An applicant believing that it has been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may lodge a complaint. See further Section 2.4.15 of the Practical Guide.

2.5.2. *Indicative timetable*

	DATE	TIME*
Information meeting (if any)	Not applicable	Not applicable
Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the Contracting Authority	10 April 2015	16:00 CET
Last date on which clarifications are issued by the Contracting Authority	20 April 2015	-

Deadline for submission of Application Form	15 May 2015	16:00 CET
Information to applicants on opening, administrative checks and concept note evaluation (Step 1)	29 May 2015*	-
Information to applicants on the evaluation of the Full Application Form (Step 2)	11 June 2015*	-
Notification of award (after the eligibility check) (Step 3)	26 June 2015*	-
Contract signature	15 July 2015*	-

***Provisional date.** All times are in the time zone of the country of the Contracting Authority.

This indicative timetable may be updated by the Contracting Authority during the procedure. In such cases, the updated timetable will be published on the EuropeAid web site <http://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome>.

2.6. CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AFTER THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION TO AWARD A GRANT

Following the decision to award a grant, the Beneficiary(ies) will be offered a contract based on the Contracting Authority's grant contract (see Annex G of these Guidelines¹³). By signing the application form (Annex A of these Guidelines), the applicants agree, if awarded a grant, to accept the contractual conditions of the standard grant contract.

Implementation contracts

Where implementation of the action requires the Beneficiary(ies) and its affiliated entity(ies) (if any) to award procurement contracts, those contracts must be awarded in accordance with Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

2.7. EARLY WARNING SYSTEM AND CENTRAL EXCLUSION DATABASE

The applicants and, if they are legal entities, the 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:

- Commission Decision 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) or
- Commission Regulation of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database (CED) (OJ L344, 20.12.2008, p.12),

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 grant agreement or decision.

¹³ Complemented by the provisions in Annex e3h11 where at least one of the beneficiaries is an international organisation.

3. LIST OF ANNEXES

DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED

- Annex A: Grant Application Form (Word format)
- Annex B: Budget (Excel format)
- Annex C: Logical Framework (Excel format)
- Annex D: Legal Entity Sheet
- Annex E: Financial identification form
- Annex F: PADOR offline Form¹⁴

DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION

- Annex G: Standard Grant Contract
 - Annex II: General conditions
 - Annex IV: contract award procedures
 - Annex V: standard request for payment
 - Annex VI: model narrative and financial report
 - Annex VII: model report of factual findings and terms of reference for an expenditure verification of an EU financed grant contract for external action
 - Annex VIII: model financial guarantee
 - Annex IX: standard template for transfer of ownership of assets
- Annex H: Daily allowance rates (Per diem), available at the following address:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/perdiem_en
- Annex K: Guidelines and Checklist for assessing Budget and Simplified cost options.
- ANNEX J: Information on the tax regime applicable to grant contracts signed under the call.

Useful links:

Project Cycle Management Guidelines

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/aid-delivery-methods-project-cycle-management-guidelines-vol-1_en

The implementation of grant contracts

A Users' Guide

<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/companion/document.do?nodeNumber=19&locale=en>

Financial Toolkit

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/procedures-beneficiary-countries-and-partners/financial-management-toolkit_en

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¹⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/pador-line-form-0_en .