

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS – ENLARGEMENT 2004

aimed at civil society and public SECTOR bodies in the European Union

Reference number: APESC 2004/EU-25

### GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

#### I. BACKGROUND

1. Ten new Member States joined the European Union on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2004: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Malta and Cyprus.

Bulgaria and Romania continue their accession negotiations with a view to joining the EU in 2007. The European Commission will present a report in October, recommending whether or not Turkey, a candidate for membership since 1999, can begin accession negotiations.

In April 2004, the European Commission gave a favourable opinion on the application by Croatia to join the European Union. The European Council of 17 and 18 June 2004 granted Croatia the status of a candidate country.

On 12<sup>th</sup> May 2004, the European Commission agreed a strategy paper and country reports on EU's future relations with countries bordering the enlarged European Union, demonstrating EU's commitment to develop its external relations and avoid drawing new dividing lines after this enlargement.

2. In view of:
  - The Commission's Communication of May 10, 2000 on the Communication Strategy for Enlargement<sup>1</sup> and the success over a period of several years of this strategy
  - the Commission's Communication of 20 April 2004 to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions on the implementation of the information and communication strategy of the European Union<sup>2</sup>
  - The information programme for European citizens, PRINCE<sup>3</sup>
  - The need to ensure that the integration of the new Member States into the European Union, the future enlargements and the implementation of a new external relations policy are accompanied by an increasing awareness amongst the general public in terms of

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<sup>1</sup> Doc. SEC (2000) 737

<sup>2</sup> Doc.COM (2004) 196 final

<sup>3</sup> Doc. COM (2000)57 final

- the benefits of the enlargement of the European Union for its citizens
- the contribution that the new Member States can make to helping the EU promote peace, uphold its values and ensure the well-being of its peoples
- the consequences of the enlargement of the European Union in terms of its objectives
- the new challenges that will arise as a result of enlargement for the Union and for its citizens, both in the old and new Member States,

the European Commission has decided to part-finance information and communication initiatives aimed at civil society and public sector bodies by means of a call for proposals.

Total funding for this call for proposals may be up to €14 million. Grants may range from €100,000 to €500,000 per project and can only cover up to 80% of the eligible costs per project submitted by organisations of the civil society, and in general up to 50% of the eligible costs per project submitted by public sector bodies, regional and municipal authorities.

## II. GENERAL OBJECTIVES

The general objectives to be attained by projects that will be supported by this call for proposals are the dissemination of information to the general public and awareness-raising relating to

- (1) **The implications and consequences of the accession to the European Union of ten new members in 2004**
- (2) **The issues that arise as a result of the accession negotiations in progress with Bulgaria and Romania, and the candidacies of Turkey and Croatia**
- (3) **The implications of enlargement for the external relations of the EU with other European and non-European countries**

## III. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA UNDER THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

### 1. Eligibility of actions

The Commission will provide financial support to

- A. Actions implemented in **one** Member State, proposed by organisations of the civil society as well as by public sector bodies acting as information providers
- B. Actions at **regional or municipal level** implemented in **one** Member State, proposed by organisations of the civil society as well as by regional or municipal authorities

- C. Actions implemented at **transnational or transregional level**, covering **at least two** Member States or **two** regions in **different** member States, proposed by organisations of the civil society, public sector bodies or regional and municipal authorities

In order to maximise the qualitative and quantitative impact of the actions,

partnerships between several organisations are recommended.

Actions shall be information and awareness-raising initiatives. They should ensure the widest possible dissemination of information on one or more of the general objectives in the appropriate media (major media, national and regional media, information networks specific to target groups, etc.). To this end, projects should include a communication plan and endeavour wherever possible to involve the different relays and networks established by the EU in the member States. Wherever possible, projects shall integrate the Commission's different information instruments and products (publications, Websites, opinion surveys, films and videos, press kits, etc.).

## 2. Eligibility of projects

Projects must

- develop one of the **themes** listed under point III.3;
- respond to one of the **objectives** set out under point III.4;
- and aim at one of the **target groups** listed under point III.5. It is allowed to cover more than one group, provided this does not over-stretch efforts, which would harm the main target and/or the effectiveness and impact of the action.

The actions proposed must define their qualitative (originality, performance) and quantitative (population covered, volume of products distributed, etc.) objectives, and provide details on resources and means to be deployed. In the case of a set of varied actions aimed at a specific group, the project must be presented in the form of a coherent action plan and calendar.

The project implementation period may not exceed 12 months from the date of signature of the agreement and may not extend beyond **31 May 2006**.

## 3. Themes

One or several of the following themes must be developed by the projects proposed:

- Explaining the enlargement process and its development: from pre-accession to negotiation and accession treaties
- Problems, doubts and fears: concerns that may be expressed by EU citizens regarding enlargement in terms of possible job losses, increased insecurity (illegal immigration, organised crime), effects on national identity and sovereignty (culture, tradition, religion, size of the country, borders) and the answers the EU can provide to these questions and fears.

- Implications on human rights, children’s rights and protection of minorities (including Roma and other disadvantaged groups) in an enlarged Europe
- Economic and financial implications (e.g. with regard to economic growth, employment, professional mobility, economic convergence, external trade, Internal Market, investment, Economic and Monetary Union, the EU budget (financing and cost of the enlarged Europe))
- Implications for the European social model, for the transport and energy sectors (e.g. as far as energy security is concerned), for research, for consumer protection, and for competition and public services
- Implications of enlargement on the security of its citizens, particularly as regards the fight against terrorism, organised crime, trafficking, and illegal immigration
- Implications for environmental protection
- Cultural identity and sports: European, national, regional and local identity in an enlarged EU
- External relations: role of the enlarged EU in the international arena. Consequences of enlargement on the common foreign, security and defence policy

#### **4. Specific objectives**

At least one of the following objectives must be attained :

1. To familiarise the EU citizens with the Member States which joined the Union on 1 May 2004, with the candidate countries, the perspective of future enlargements and the EU’s relations with its neighbouring countries. This can involve information about their geographical situation, history, specific economic and cultural characteristics, tourism, sport, etc.
2. To deepen citizens' knowledge about the political and economic consequences of enlargement and its importance for the Union;
3. To explain the consequences of the ratification of the EU Treaties, and of the implementation the EU body of law (i.e. the existing European legislation which all member States have to implement) on the citizens’ daily lives
4. To promote tolerance and understanding within the enlarged EU
5. To explain what European citizenship means in terms of new rights and new opportunities
6. To highlight the extent of the reform process undergone by each new member in order to join the Union
7. To help citizens understand the impact of enlargement on their specific areas of activities or business sectors; to familiarise them with existing Community instruments and networks that promote synergy between companies or organisations in a given sector;

8. To raise awareness of the long-term consequences of enlargement on the working of the Internal Market.

## 5. **Target**

The overall target is the **general public**, amongst which following groups can be identified:

1. **Women**
2. **Regions, towns and municipalities in the European Union**
3. **Sportsmen and –women**
4. **Consumers**
5. **Retired and elderly people**
6. **Minorities (Roma and other minorities in Member States)**
7. **Trade unions**
8. **Employers' organisations**
9. **Youth**
10. **Less favoured persons**
11. **Rural populations**
12. **Businesses, in particular SMEs**

## 6. **Applicants**

Projects may be submitted by organisations of the civil society, public sector bodies, regional or municipal authorities as stated in point III.1 under (A), (B) and (C) above.

An indicative list of organisations of the civil society is given below :

1. **Women's organisations;**
2. **Associations of regions and municipalities in the European Union;**
3. **Foundations and cultural associations;**
4. **Sports associations;**
5. **Consumer organisations;**
6. **Associations of retired and elderly people;**
7. **Human rights associations;**
8. **Minorities associations (Roma and other minorities in Member States);**

9. **Social partners (trade unions and employers' organisations);**
  10. **Youth associations, and existing school and information networks, in particular those representing young people who are (i) in school; or, (ii) attending vocational schools, universities or higher education institutes, or receiving training.**
  11. **Associations supporting less-favoured persons, who have little or no access to information due to their socio-economic status;**
  12. **Rural associations, in particular through the regional and local authorities, trade unions and professional organisations, networks and information relays, and their own means of communication (publications, magazines...);**
  13. **Business associations, in particular those representing SMEs, and business circles, through their professional organisations and existing information networks and their own means of communication (publications, magazines...);**
  14. **Think tanks, research institutes and other bodies concerned with examining and diffusing information on the consequences of public policy.**
7. **Eligibility of applicants**

To qualify for Community support, applicant organisations must:

- be legally constituted and registered in one of the 25 Member States of the European Union;
- for transnational or transregional projects (see page 3, point III.1 C ), provide evidence of experience in carrying out information actions at this level;
- be non-profit making;

**Exclusion criteria:**

Applicants will be excluded from participation if:

- they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation
- they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has force of *res judicata*, including for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to EU financial interests;
- they have been found guilty of serious professional misconduct proven by any means;

- they have not fulfilled obligations relating to payment of social security contributions or tax in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established
- they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with contractual obligations under any other contract or grant funded from the EU budget.

Applicants must certify that they are not in any of the situations listed above (see declaration by the applicant included in the application form).

- Applications which are hand-written, not signed, made other than on the application form, submitted by fax or e-mail or without the necessary supporting documents will be rejected (see point VII.F, Application procedure)

## **8. Eligibility of costs**

Only “eligible costs” can be taken into account for a grant. These are detailed below. The budget is therefore both a cost estimate and a ceiling for "eligible costs". Note that the eligible costs must be based on real costs, not lump sums (except for travel and subsistence costs and indirect costs).

Recommendations to award a grant are always subject to the condition that the checking process which precedes the signing of the contract does not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget. The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the contracting authority to impose reductions or modifications.

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 be

- connected with the subject of the action and they must be provided for in the estimated budget;
- necessary for performance of the action;
- reasonable and justified and they must accord with the principles of sound financial management, in particular in terms of value for money and cost-effectiveness;
- generated during the lifetime of the action as specified in Article I.2.2 of the model grant agreement attached to these Guidelines, unless in exceptional cases duly justified by the applicant in the application form or the accompanying cover letter, eligible costs incurred before the start of the action may be taken into account (see below “Non eligible projects”);
- actually incurred by the beneficiary, be recorded in his accounts in accordance with the applicable accounting principles, and be declared in accordance with the requirements of the applicable tax and social legislation;

- identifiable and verifiable.

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

In particular, the following direct costs are eligible provided that they satisfy the criteria set out in the previous paragraph and indents:

- the cost of staff assigned to the action, comprising actual salaries plus social security charges and other statutory costs included in the remuneration, provided that this does not exceed the average rates corresponding to the beneficiary's usual policy on remuneration; the remuneration of management persons of the applicant organisation and / or any partner(s) are not covered, i.e. the remuneration of the directors (as an example) or persons holding similar positions must not appear in the budget;
- travel and subsistence allowances for staff (of the beneficiary and / or his partners) taking part in the action, provided that they are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel costs or do not exceed the scales approved annually by the Commission;
- the purchase cost of equipment (new or second-hand), 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 duration of the action and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the action may be taken into account by the Commission, except where the nature and/or the context of its use justifies different treatment by the Commission;
- costs of consumables and supplies, provided that they are identifiable and assigned to the action;
- costs entailed by other contracts awarded by the beneficiary for the purposes of carrying out the action, provided that the conditions laid down in Article II.9 of the model grant agreement attached to these Guidelines are met;
- costs arising directly from requirements imposed by the agreement (e.g. dissemination of information as explained under "Eligibility of actions" above, publicity, specific evaluation of the action, audits, translations, reproduction, etc.), including the costs of any financial services (especially the cost of financial guarantees);

Eligible **indirect** costs:

A lump sum not exceeding 7% of the direct eligible costs of the action may be claimed as indirect costs (flat-rate funding).



The eligible indirect costs for the action are those costs which, with due regard for the general conditions of eligibility described above (see first paragraph under “Eligible direct costs” above), are not identifiable as specific costs directly linked to performance of the action which can be booked to it direct, but which can be identified and justified by the beneficiary using his accounting system as having been incurred in connection with the eligible direct costs for the action. They may not include any eligible direct costs. They need not to be supported by accounting documents.

Indirect costs shall not be eligible under a project grant awarded to a beneficiary who already receives an operating grant from the Commission during the period in question.

**Non eligible costs:**

The following costs shall not be considered eligible:

- return on capital;
- debt and debt service charges;
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- interest owed;
- doubtful debts;
- exchange losses;
- VAT, unless the beneficiary (or its partner(s)) can show that he is unable to recover it;
- costs declared by the beneficiary and covered by another action receiving a Community grant;
- purchases of land or buildings;
- excessive or reckless expenditure.

**Contributions in kind:**

Contributions in kind shall not constitute eligible costs. However, the Commission can accept, in duly substantiated exceptional cases, that the co-financing of the action should be made up entirely or in part of contributions in kind. In this case, the value calculated for such contributions must not exceed:

- the costs actually borne and duly supported by accounting documents of the third parties who made these contributions to the beneficiary free of charge but bear the corresponding costs;
- the costs generally accepted on the market in question for the type of contribution concerned when no costs are borne.

Contributions involving buildings shall not be covered by this possibility.

In the case of co-financing in kind, a financial value shall be placed on the contributions and the same amount will be included in the costs of the action as ineligible costs and in receipts from the action as co-financing in kind. The beneficiary shall undertake to obtain these contributions as provided for in the agreement.

## 9. Non eligible projects

1. The following will not be considered:
  - projects not aimed at one of the target groups
  - projects not consistent with the general and specific objectives of this call (points II and III.4)
  - projects submitted by political parties or campaigning organisations
  - pilot actions (projects tested on a limited scale with the idea of developing them on a larger scale);
  - profit-making projects;
  - projects without a balanced budget (total expenditure = total income)
  - projects that have already received Community funding (If another request for funding for the same project has already been submitted under a separate call for proposals, this must be mentioned in the application);
2. In general, the action for which a grant application is being made must not have begun before the entry into force of the grant agreement between the Commission and the beneficiary. However, in exceptional cases, where the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the action before the signature of the grant agreement, expenditure eligible for financing may have been incurred as from the date of submission of the grant application, and may be taken into account.

## IV. AWARD CRITERIA

The Commission's decision to award a grant will be based on the following weighted criteria:

1. Relevance of the project with regard to the general and specific objectives of this call for proposals and the specific needs and constraints of the target group (point III.5):

20 points.

**Any project failing to obtain at least 15 points on this criterion will not be considered further.**

2. Quality and consistency of the proposed means of achieving the objectives (i.e. efficiency and coherence of the tools to be implemented):

15 points

3. The expected multiplier effect on the target group. This effect must be expressed in figures (number of people reached) upon presentation of the project:

15 points

4. The applicant's and partners' sufficient experience of project management and management capacity (staff, equipment, ability to handle the budget for the action):

10 points

5. Innovative aspect of the project (creative idea, original approach and tools, partners of a new type):

5 points

6. The applicant's and partners' sufficient knowledge of the issues to be addressed:

5 points

7. The consistency of budget with staff (are the proposed staff and the corresponding expenditure **necessary** for the implementation of the action?):

5 points

8. The cost-effectiveness (ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results):

5 points

9. The fair sharing of efforts and distribution of benefits between partners in the project (the financial resources and the means should not be allocated to the applicant/main partner in a disproportionate way in comparison with the other parties to the project):

5 points

10. The existence of other funding sources (recourse to other financial partners is encouraged and will be taken into account):

5 points

11. Publicizing the project (before, during and after implementation):

5 points

12. The evaluation method of the actual impact of the project after completion:

5 points

**Projects failing to obtain at least 65 points out of 100 will not be accepted.**

## V. FINANCING

1. A detailed and balanced financial plan, calculated and expressed in euros, and indicating sources of public or private funding.

The tables to be completed will include the detailed calculation method for every category of costs.

2. The Community financing will be governed by a grant agreement that must be signed by the person legally entitled to represent the beneficiary organisation, and designated as such in the application form. Once submitted and accepted, proposals must
  - start at the latest 2 months after the signature of the grant agreement by the last of the contracting parties
  - be implemented within 12 months of the date of signature of the agreement, and
  - be completed by **31 May 2006** at the latest.

Signature of grant agreements is planned to start as from December 2004 and to end by May 2005 at the latest.

Beneficiaries undertake to carry out the projects selected as they are described in the grant application. Any changes in the course of project implementation must obtain the prior approval of the Commission and be set out in a written supplementary agreement.

## VI. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

To allow regular monitoring of the selected projects, those responsible must submit to the Commission:

- 1) Within four months of the start of the project, a progress report detailing its state of advancement. The Commission reserves the right to request an additional progress report;
- 2) Within six weeks of completion of the project, at the latest (see also Art. I.4 and I.5 of the model grant agreement) :
  - a detailed final report providing evidence that the objectives were achieved or explaining why they were not fully achieved,
  - an assessment of the actual qualitative and quantitative impact of the action, indicating the number of persons affected by the action in each of the countries or regions concerned
  - a sample of the means and products used to bring the action to successful conclusion,
  - a detailed financial report drawn up in accordance with the model forward budget in Annex 2 of the application form,

- the list of corresponding accounting documents
- an audit report prepared by an independent and professionally recognized body. Public sector bodies may be exempted from this obligation.

Tables detailing each category of costs must be attached to the final accounts, failing which the grant may be cancelled.

The Commission and the Court of Auditors reserve the right to monitor the use of the Community funds. Audits, either in situ or otherwise, may be performed at any time during project implementation and for up to five years after its completion (see grant agreement sample).

The Community grant is usually paid in two instalments:

- the first (up to 80%) after the grant agreement has been signed and upon receipt of the pre-financing request (i.e. the payment of the first instalment of the grant, on the basis of a corresponding invoice),
- the balance upon approval of the documents mentioned under point 2 above

In duly justified cases, the Commission reserves the right to foresee a third instalment.

The final amount of the grant will depend upon the expenses actually incurred. (See General Conditions attached to the model grant agreement)

## VII. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

**A.** There will be just one selection of projects for this Call for Proposals.

**B.** The **participation form** is available on Internet at the following address:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/communication/index.htm#call\\_civil\\_society\\_eu25\\_2004](http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/communication/index.htm#call_civil_society_eu25_2004)

**C.** The text of the present call for proposals is published in English, French and German on the Website. Upon request, the text can be provided in one of the other official languages<sup>4</sup>. Applications may however be submitted in one of the EU official languages. They must be submitted in one original and four (4) copies certified by the person legally entitled to represent the promoting organisation. They shall also state the names of those responsible for the technical and financial aspects of the action.

**D.** Questions related to the call may be sent by e-mail **until 10 September 2004** at the latest (included) to the following dedicated mailbox

[ELARG-CPEU25@cec.eu.int](mailto:ELARG-CPEU25@cec.eu.int)

All requests for clarifications will be answered until **17 September 2004** at the latest. Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with the answers, will be published on the Internet at:

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<sup>4</sup> Spanish, Czech, Danish, Estonian, Greek, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Hungarian, Maltese, Dutch, Polish, Portuguese, Slovak, Slovenian, Finnish, Swedish

E. Applications must be **received** in a sealed envelope by registered mail, courier or hand-delivery at the following address:

European Commission  
Directorate General Enlargement  
CHAR 6/17 - Att. Mr. Georges Ingber  
Rue de Genève, 1  
B-1140 Brussels  
Belgium

at the latest on **30 September 2004, 16.00 hrs local Brussels time.**

**Applications arriving later will not be considered, even if the postmark indicates a date preceding the deadline or if the delay is due to the private courier service.**

Delivery of the proposal will be certified through a receipt dated, indicating the arrival time and signed by the responsible official of the Central Courier Service of the Commission. This service is available from 8.00 hrs to 17.00 hrs from Monday to Thursday and from 8.00 hrs to 16.00 hrs on Fridays.

Applications delivered to other addresses or sent by another means (e.g. by e-mail or by fax) will not be considered either.

The outer envelope must bear the reference of this call for proposals, the full name and address of the applicant and the words "*not to be opened before the opening session*".

Applicants should verify that their application is complete by comparing it with the **checklist** included in the application form.

F. The application file must include:

1. An official letter of application from the organisation, dated and signed;
2. The application form, duly completed, dated and signed by the person legally entitled to represent the applicant;
3. The balanced forward budget (expenditure/income) of the proposed activity, in euros. The Forward budget (Annex 2A to the application form) must be dated and signed and presented in accordance with the tables provided in the application form. It must include detailed income and expenditure figures, with an indication of unit costs, as shown in the Annex 2B to the Application Form)
4. A description of the project;

5. A detailed calendar;
6. The applicant organisation's annual accounts for the last financial year available;
7. For actions, where the cost to be financed exceeds €300,000, the application shall be accompanied by an external audit report produced by an approved auditor. The report shall certify the accounts for the last financial year available and give an assessment of the financial viability i.e. that the applicant has stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain his activity throughout the period of implementation of the action and to participate in its funding.
8. The organisation's articles of association, statutes or similar
9. The legal entity form
10. The applicant's most recent annual report, if available
11. The organisation's financial identification sheet with bank details, including the IBAN (international bank account number) code
12. The names of those responsible for:
  - (a) signing the agreement on behalf of the organisation,
  - (b) technical management of the project,
  - (c) administrative and financial management of the project, if appropriate.
13. A declaration from the potential beneficiary on his honour that he is not in any of the situations listed in the exclusion criteria (see point III.7); declaration included in the declaration form which is part of the application form
14. A declaration from the potential beneficiary on his honour that he has the operational capacity to complete the proposed action (included in the declaration form which is part of the application form)
15. Letters of commitment from all the partners to the project indicating the amount of funding they will contribute to the action, including the certificate of own funds from the applicant.

**Applications that do not contain all the documents referred to in points 1 to 15, and those that do not meet all the conditions stipulated in the present call will not be considered.**

#### **G. Notification**

Information of the applicants:

Applicants shall be informed of their selection in November 2004. At that stage, such notification shall not constitute a legal commitment by the Commission. Grants shall be paid subject to the successful completion of administrative and financial procedures.

**H.** Participation in the present call for proposals implies the acceptance of the rules applicable to this procedure.