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**Contracting Authority**: European Commission

Cross-border Co-operation Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance 2014- 2020 (IPA II)

1st Call for Proposals Cross-border Co-operation Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro (2014-2020)

Guidelines for grant applicants

Budget lines:

BGUE-B2014-22.020401-C1-ELARG DELBIH

BGUE-B2015-22.020401-C1-ELARG DELBIH

BGUE-B2016-22.020401-C1-ELARG DELBIH

Reference:
EuropeAid/153071/DD/ACT/

Deadline for submission[[1]](#footnote-2) of concept notes:

02/12/2016 at 16:00 hrs (Brussels date and time)

NOTICE

This is a restricted call for proposals. In the first instance, only concept notes (Annex A.1) must be submitted for evaluation. Thereafter, lead applicants who have been pre-selected will be invited to submit a full application. After the evaluation of the full applications, 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 lead applicant’ sent together with the full application.

**To apply to this call for proposals organisations must register in PADOR and submit their application in PROSPECT (see section 2.2.2 of the guidelines).** The aim of PROSPECT is to increase the efficiency of the management of the call for proposals and to offer a better service to civil society organisations through a new panel of functionalities such as the on-line submission and the possibility to follow up online the status of their application.

**Preparation:**

All organisations can find the e-learning (Annex L) and the PROSPECT users' manual (Annex M) and the FAQ published together with the documents of this call. You may also contact our technical support team via the online support form in PROSPECT[[2]](#footnote-3).

SUSPENSIVE CLAUSE:

The present Call for Proposals is launched with a "suspension clause" (reference section 2.4.12 of the Procurement and Grants for European). The conclusion of contracts with applicants resulting from this Call for Proposals is subject to the fulfilment of the following condition:

The signature of the Financing Agreement between the European Commission and the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Government of Montenegro concerning the Cross-border Programme for Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro under IPA II for the year 2016.

The results of the present Call for Proposals will invariably be cancelled for applications earmarked to be funded under the 2016 allocation of the programme if the Financing Agreement between European Commission and the beneficiary countries, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, is not signed.

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1. 1ST Call for Proposals Cross-border Co-operation Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro (2014-2020)
	1. Background

These Guidelines are intended to be used by those applying for grants under the 1st Call for Proposals for the Cross-border Cooperation Programme Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro, 2014-2020 (hereinafter ‘the Programme’). The Programme is implemented under the framework of the Instrument of Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) and is the result of joint planning efforts made by the governments and other stakeholders of the two countries. IPA II supports cross-border cooperation with a view to promoting good neighbourly relations, fostering European Union integration and promoting socio-economic development. The legal provisions for its implementation are stipulated in the following :

• Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II)

• Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action

• Commission Implementing Regulation EU no 447/2014 of 2 May 2014 on the specific rules for implementing the IPA II regulation

The Programme analyses the socio-economic situation of the border region, sets out a common strategy for remedying problems identified and formulates joint thematic priorities for development. As specified in its programme document, its implementation is carried out through calls for proposals such as this one. These calls will be launched at regular intervals in order to fund cross-border cooperation projects that will contribute to achieving the strategic objectives agreed upon by the participating countries.

More details about this IPA II Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2014-2020 and the Programme Document can be found on the web page <http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/bosnia_and_herzegovina/ipa/2015/2014_-_2020_ipa_cbc_bosnia_and_herzegovina-montenegro.pdf> and are available for download on the web page of the Directorate for European Integration in Bosnia and Herzegovina and on the web page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration in Montenegro.

As a new development for the financial cycle 2014-2020, the European Commission wants to enhance synergies between the macro-regional strategies and the cross-border cooperation programmes funded by IPA II. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro participate in the macro-regional strategies: the EU Strategy for the Danube Region and the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region.

* 1. Objectives of the programme and priority issues

In line with the objectives specified in the Programme Document, the **overall objective of this Call for Proposals** **is linked with the overall object of the Programme** : the sustainable development in the cross-border area between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro is promoted by the implementation of common actions based on an efficient use of the comparative advantages of the programme area.

To achieve this goal, the Programme includes the following thematic priorities:

 Priority 1: Promoting employment, labour mobility and social and cultural inclusion across the border

Specific objective 1.1: The access to the labour market and the environment for new employment generation are enhanced

Specific objective 1.2: Employment opportunities and social inclusion of vulnerable groups are enhanced

 Priority 2: Protecting the environment, promoting climate change adaptation and mitigation, risk prevention and management

Specific objective 2.1: Cross-border coordination and joint actions improve the management and energy efficiency of local water supply, wastewater and solid waste systems, and the protection of environment

Specific objective 2.2: Climate change adaptation and mitigation measures and risk prevention and management measures are improved

 Priority 3: Encouraging tourism and cultural and natural heritage

Specific objective 3.1: The quality and diversification of the tourism offer building on natural and cultural heritage is improved

**As a result of a decision made by the JMC of the Programme on 22nd July 2016, out of the three thematic priorities of the Programme Document, the following are the specific objectives and the corresponding results that the applications submitted under this Call will contribute to attaining:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Lot[[3]](#footnote-4)** | **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES** | **RESULTS** |
| 1 | Specific Objective 1.2: Employment opportunities and social inclusion of vulnerable groups are enhanced[[4]](#footnote-5) | Result: Opportunities for creation of new jobs for vulnerable groups and their employability are increasedResult indicator: Percentage of unemployed individuals, belonging to vulnerable groups, benefiting from programme activities have found employment or have established a business initiative (disaggregated by specific group, gender and age) |
| 2 | 2. Specific objective 2: The quality and diversification of the tourism offer building on natural and cultural heritage is improved [[5]](#footnote-6) | Result: The number of tourists in rural and natural protected areas are increasedResult indicators: Number of and proceeds from visitors/users of joint rural and natural protected areas Number of thematic clusters and other long-term cross-border business linkages created |
|  | Result: The image and tourist attractiveness of the cross-border region as a multi-ethnic and culturally diverse European destination is improvedResult indicators: Percentage of heritage sites which have improved their visibility |

This Call for Proposals will take into account the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues at project level. When developing a project to address any specific objective, cross-cutting issues need to be mainstreamed in the following manner:

The promotion of local cross-border people to people actions is considered as a horizontal modality that may be applied, where relevant, in pursuing all the selected thematic priorities and the specific objectives.

a) Gender equality and promotion of equal opportunities.

Equality between sexes has to be taken into consideration when setting the project objectives, defining activities (e.g. participation in capacity building activities) and expected results. Equal opportunity prevails when women and men have the same rights, obligations and opportunities.

b) Protection and promotion of ethnic minority rights, including their participation in decision making processes.

Enforcement of equal opportunities has to be secured in the project design in order to promote the integration of ethnic minorities and ensure their participation in decision-making processes in line with project activities and expected results.

c) Integration of persons with physical and mental disabilities.

Enforcement of equal opportunities has to be secured in the project in order to promote integration of persons affected by disabilities and in securing their participation in project activities (e.g. accessibility to buildings and project sites) and in decision-making processes in line with project activities and expected results.

d) Safeguard and promotion of children’s rights and promotion of children’s participation in decision-making processes.

The project should involve children as relevant stakeholders where and if appropriate (e.g. in case the specific project objective is in the sector mainly relating to children’s needs, such as education, health, sports and culture, but also in sectors in which the project can indirectly influence their lives).

e) Democratic standards, anti-discriminatory practices and good governance.

Activities and operations cannot set up barriers in relation to religion or belief, age, gender, sexual orientation, political affiliation, racial or ethnic origin particularly regarding employment and HR policy pursued towards persons who will be employed within the projects implemented under this grant scheme. Operations must secure a wide public participation and consultation, where appropriate, throughout project activities. This may include setting up consultative processes in developing strategies/policies; executing infrastructural works; ensuring inclusion of target groups and a wide range of different stakeholders.

f) Protection of environment and preservation of natural resources and biodiversity.

The project needs to describe how it will contribute to a better environment or otherwise have a neutral impact on the environment. The concept of environment involves not only issues of pollution, but issues sustainable development (e.g. waste supply chain management and recycling), nature protection and biodiversity, renewable energy, etc.

Please note that mainstreaming cross-cutting issues will be scored through the evaluation methodology of this call as formulated in section 2.3 below.

* 1. Financial allocation provided by the contracting authority

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is EUR 3,240,000.00. The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

**Indicative EU-funded allocations by selected specific objective of the Programme, which correspond to Lots for the purpose of this Call:**

| **Lot No.** | **Lot Title** | **Allocation** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Employment opportunities and social inclusion of vulnerable groups are enhanced | € 720,000.00 |
|  | The quality and diversification of the tourism offer building on natural and cultural heritage is improved | € 2,520,000.00 |
|  | **Total** | **€ 3,240,000.00** |

The applications will compete with each other for the financial resources available within each specific objective separately. When the remaining funds per lot/specific objective will not allow financing another application, the Contracting Authority may pull these funds and award a grant to the application or applications with the highest scores in the ranking of the reserve list.

If the allocation indicated for a one lot cannot be exhausted due to insufficient quality or number of applications received, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to reallocate the remaining funds between the lots. When the remaining funds per lot/specific objective will not allow financing another application, the Contracting Authority may pull these funds and award a grant to the application or applications with the highest scores in the ranking of a single reserve list.

Size of grants

Any grant requested under this call for proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Lot** | **Minimum amount** **of EU-funded grant** | **Maximum amount** **of EU-funded grant** |
| 1. Employment opportunities and social inclusion of vulnerable groups are enhanced | € 200,000.00 | € 400,000.00 |
| 2. The quality and diversification of the tourism offer building on natural and cultural heritage is improved | € 200,000.00 | € 400,000.00 |

Any grant requested under this call for proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum percentages of total eligible costs of the action:

* Minimum percentage: 20 % of the total eligible costs of the action.
* Maximum percentage: 85 % 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[[6]](#footnote-7).

1. 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 at <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/document.do?locale=en>) [[7]](#footnote-8).

* 1. Eligibility criteria

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

1. the actors:
* The **lead 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 lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) are hereinafter jointly referred as "*applicant(s)***") (2.1.1),
* and, if any, **affiliated entity(ies)** to the lead applicant and/or to a co-applicant(s). (2.1.2);
1. the operations:
* Operations for which a grant may be awarded (2.1.4);
1. the costs:
* types of cost that may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant (2.1.5).
	+ 1. Eligibility of applicants (i.e. lead applicant and co-applicant(s))

**Lead applicant**

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

* be a legal person **and**
* be non-profit-making **and**
* be effectively established in either Bosnia and Herzegovina or Montenegro, and
* be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the operations with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary, and
* be a specific type of institution or organisation such as (but not limited to):
* For Lot 1: business associations, business development organisations, employment offices, social and economic development departments in regional and local governments, centres for social welfare, high education institutions, vocational education and training institutions, social partners and civil society organisations.
* For Lot 2: organisations responsible for maintenance and development of natural and cultural heritage, tourism development organisations, local and regional governments.

 (2) Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations listed in section 2.3.3 of the Practical Guide;

In Annex A.2, section 5 (‘declaration by the lead applicant’), the lead applicant must declare that the lead applicant himself, the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) are not in any of these situations.

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

If awarded the grant contract, the lead 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)**

**The applicant must act with at least one co-applicant as specified hereafter.**

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

If the applicant is effectively established in Bosnia and Herzegovina, at least one co-applicant must be effectively established in Montenegro, and vice versa.

CBC partners must carefully bear in mind the most appropriate conditions to ensure an intra-project efficient coordination when deciding on this. The number of partners and the composition of the partnership should be coherent with the envisaged objectives and activities of the operation.

In genuine cross-border operations, the applicant and co-applicant(s) shall cooperate in the development and implementation of operation. In addition, they shall cooperate in either the staffing or the financing of operation or both (see section 2.1.4 below).

Co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant.

Co-applicants must sign the mandate in Annex A.2., section 4.

If awarded the grant contract, the co-applicant(s) will become beneficiary(ies) in the action (together with the Coordinator).

The lead applicant and co-applicant(s) must represent different legal entities.

* + 1. Affiliated entities

Affiliated entity(ies)

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

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

Only entities having a structural link with the applicants (i.e. the lead applicant or a co-applicant), 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 applicant may hence be:

* Entities directly or indirectly controlled by an applicant (daughter companies or first-tier subsidiaries). They may also be entities controlled by an entity controlled by an applicant (granddaughter companies or second-tier subsidiaries) and the same applies to further tiers of control;
* Entities directly or indirectly controlling the applicant (parent companies). Likewise, they may be entities controlling an entity controlling the applicant;
* Entities under the same direct or indirect control as the applicant (sister companies).

(ii) Membership, i.e. the applicant is legally defined as a e.g. network, federation, association in which the proposed affiliated entities also participate or the applicant 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 an applicant 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 a legal 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 an applicant:

* Entities that have entered into a (procurement) contract or subcontract with an applicant, act as concessionaires or delegatees for public services for an applicant,
* Entities that receive financial support from an applicant,
* Entities that cooperate on a regular basis with an applicant on the basis of a memorandum of understanding or share some assets,
* Entities that have signed a consortium agreement under the grant contract (unless this consortium agreement leads to the creation of a "sole applicant" as described above).

How to verify the existence of the required link with an applicant?

The affiliation resulting from control may in particular be proved on the basis of the consolidated accounts of the group of entities the applicant 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 applicant constitutes or in which the applicant participates.

If the applicants are awarded a grant contract, their affiliated entity(ies) will not become beneficiary(ies) of the action and signatory(ies) of the grant 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 lead applicant and the co-applicant(s). They must sign the affiliated entity(ies) statement in Annex A.2., section 5.

* + 1. Associates and Contractors

The following entities are not applicants nor affiliated entities and do not have to sign the "mandate for co-applicant(s)" or "affiliated entities' statement":

* Associates

Other organisations or individuals 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 Annex A.2., section 6 — ‘Associates participating in the action’.

* Contractors

The 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.

* + 1. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made

Definition

An operation[[8]](#footnote-9) is composed of a set of activities.

Operations selected under this cross-border cooperation programme shall deliver clear cross-border impacts and benefits, that is, they must:

* take place in the specific programme area of Bosnia and Herzegovina and/or Montenegro;[[9]](#footnote-10)
* have cross-border impacts and benefits in parts of the programme area of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro;
* foresee cooperation of the cross-border applicant and co-applicant(s) in:
	+ joint development: applicant and co-applicant(s) cooperate in designing the operation, filling in a joint application form and drawing up their respective budget;
	+ joint implementation: grant beneficiaries coordinate, in the frame of the operation, their activities across the border, and carry out most of the project activities together and not as independent, unrelated, mechanically reproduced and country-bound initiatives;
* foresee cooperation of the cross-border applicant and co-applicant(s) in either:
	+ joint staffing: staff on both sides of the border act as one project team (e.g. some staffers carry out their duties for all entities in the partnership: procurement, financial management, overall coordination, training planning, etc.); or
	+ joint financing: activities are financed by the applicant’s and co-applicant(s)’s own budget;
	+ or both joint staffing and financing.

Duration

The initial planned duration of an operation will meet the following requirements depending on the Lot (i.e. Programme’s specific objective) addressed by the application, namely:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **LOT**  | **Minimum number of months** | **Maximum number of months** |
| 1. Employment opportunities and social inclusion of vulnerable groups are enhanced |  12 | 24 |
| 2. The quality and diversification of the tourism offer building on natural and cultural heritage is improved |  12 |  24 |

Sectors or themes

As stipulated in section 1.2 above, **operations will fall** **under only one** of the following Lots (i.e. specific objectives of the Programme) and will have to prove their contribution to attain one or more of their intended results:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **LOT** | **RESULTS** |
| 1. Employment opportunities and social inclusion of vulnerable groups are enhanced
 | Result 1 Opportunities for creation of new jobs for vulnerable groups and their employability are increased |
| 1. The quality and diversification of the tourism offer building on natural and cultural heritage is improved
 | Result 2.1 The number of tourists in rural and natural protected areas are increased |
| Result 2.2 The image and tourist attractiveness of the cross-border region as a multi-ethnic and culturally diverse European destination is improved |

In their application, the lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) will have to refer the programme’s specific objective under which their operation is meant to contribute, as well as the programme’s results affected by the operation, and the programme’s indicators that will be instrumental to measure the operation’s success. Applicants must have the same units to quantify their output indicators in line with the programme output indicators. The following illustrates the list of indicators that the lead applicant and co-applicant(s) will have to include, where appropriate, to estimate the project’s contribution to the programme’s objectives:

| **INDICATORS FOR OBJECTIVE** | **INDICATORS FOR RESULTS (achievement and outputs)** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Employment opportunities and social inclusion of vulnerable groups are enhancedResult 1 Opportunities for creation of new jobs for vulnerable groups and their employability are increased | 1.1 Number of new business development and employment generation initiatives supported 1.2 Number of trainings internships and mentoring support services delivered1.3 Number of participants in trainings, internship and mentoring services |
| 2. The quality and diversification of the tourism offer building on natural and cultural heritage is improvedResult 2.1 The number of tourists in rural and natural protected areas are increasedResult 2.2 The image and tourist attractiveness of the cross-border region as a multi-ethnic and culturally diverse European destination is improved | 2.1.1Number of and proceeds from visitors/users of joint rural and natural protected areas 2.1.2 Number of thematic clusters and other long-term cross-border business linkages created |
| 2.2.1 Number of cultural events organized2.2.2 Percentage of heritage sites which have improved their visibility |

Location

Actions must take place in one or more of the following territorial units:

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Jablanica, Konjic, Trnovo, Trnovo RS, Pale, Pale Prača, Novo Goražde, Goražde, Čajniče, Foča Ustikolina, Kalinovik, Rudo, Višegrad, Rogatica, Foča, Gacko, Nevesinje, Mostar, Hadžici, Ist. Ilidža, Ilidža, Široki Brijeg, Ljubuški, Čapljina, Čitluk, Stolac, Berkovići, Bileća, Ljubinje, Neum, Ravno, Istočni Mostar, Trebinje, Prozor/Rama, Kupres, Kupres (RS), Tomislavgrad, Posušje, Grude, Livno, Sokolac, Istočno Novo Sarajevo, Sarajevo Novi Grad, Vogošća, Sarajevo Stari Grad, Sarajevo Istočni Stari Grad, Ilijaš, Vareš, Breza, Visoko, Kiseljak, Fojnica, Kreševo, Centar Sarajevo, Novo Sarajevo, Olovo.

Montenegro: Pljevlja, Plužine, Žabljak, Šavnik, Nikšić, Herceg Novi, Kotor, Tivat, Bijelo Polje, Mojkovac, Kolašin, Berane, Petnjica, Danilovgrad.

Types of operation

The following types of operation are ineligible:

* operations concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
* operations concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
* operations aimed at the upgrading of infrastructure and equipment in privately owned facilities;
* preparatory studies or preparation of preliminary design for works to be carried out within the project;
* operations without a real cross-border impact;
* operations linked to political parties;
* operations including commercial and profit-making activities ;
* operations which fall within the general activities of competent state institutions or state administration services, including local government
* operations confined to charitable donations;
* operations covered and financed by other EU funded programmes.
* purchasing of vehicles. Such actions may be considered for acceptance only for the Specific Objective 1 and only if crucial for implementation of the action
* humanitarian activities

Types of activity

Indicative types of activities which may be financed under this call for proposals are given below. The following list is not exhaustive and appropriate innovative activities that are not mentioned below may also be considered for financing. By way of illustration projects could contain a range of the following activities in relation to the programme’s results targeted in the call:

**Result 1 Opportunities for creation of new jobs for vulnerable groups and their employability are increased**

- Identifying labour and skills shortages and establishing efficient labour market information systems;

- Development of vocational training and non-formal and life-long learning programmes;

- Vocational training, non-formal and life-long education activities;

- Internships in existing companies, trades and crafts;

- Mentoring of unemployed persons within vulnerable groups at companies, trades and crafts;

- Introduction of practical curriculum into educational and adult-education institutions;

- Identifying and matching the skills training with real private sector needs;

- Provision of careers advice and guidance services;

- Public private consultations and dialogue aimed at detecting employment opportunities and reducing business barriers;

- Identifying and promoting viable public private partnerships and business linkage schemes with strong potential for generating new employment opportunities;

- Promoting and enhancing business innovation skills for creation of new employment opportunities;

- Organization of joint Job fairs / roundtables/ public education/ promotional events or campaigns;

- Promotion of self-employment activities;

- Small-scale demonstration projects on renewable energy use;

- Small infrastructure works and procurement of equipment.

However, please note that the infrastructure works and/or supply cannot be stand-alone project and must be a part of an integrated effort.

**Result 2.1 The number of tourists in rural and natural protected areas are increased AND**

**Result 2.2 The image and tourist attractiveness of the cross-border region as a multi-ethnic and culturally diverse European destination is improved**

- Joint development of new tourism products and services using ICT and other available technologies (e.g. GPS routes, booking system, etc.) – information exchange, networking, structuring, positioning and branding;

- Organization of promotional events and communication and publicity campaigns;

- Exchange and transfer of experiences;

- Training and capacity building in marketing skills of tourism operators;

- Development and implementation of targeted training schemes for existing and would-be tourism employees in less developed tourist areas;

- Small scale works in hospitality infrastructure and procurement of equipment;

- Organization of joint events, symposiums, workshops etc.;

- Specific professional interventions aimed at protection and promotion of cultural heritage and traditions;

- Arrangement of light infrastructure to support the development of key products (e.g. visitor centres, sign posting, and recreational facilities for tourism purposes);

- Restoration and preservation of historical and cultural sites, including access to them.

Financial support to third parties[[10]](#footnote-11)

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 <https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/communication-and-visibility-manual-eu-external-actions_en>).

**Number of applications and grants per applicants / affiliated entities**

The lead applicant may not submit more than one application(s) per lot under this call for proposals.

The lead applicant may not be awarded more than one grant(s) per lot under this call for proposals.

The lead applicant may be a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in another application under this Call (any lot) at the same time.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity may submit more than one application(s) per lot under this call for proposals.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity may not be awarded more than one grant(s) per lot under this call for proposals.

* + 1. 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.
* **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 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.

Applicants 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 applicants 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 amount[[11]](#footnote-12)
* 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 applicants, by analysing factual data of grants carried out by the applicants 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 grant 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 applicants' interest to provide a **realistic and cost-effective budget**

The simplified cost option may also take the form of an apportionment of Field Office's costs.

Field Office means a local infrastructure set up in one of the countries where the action is implemented or a nearby country. (Where the action is implemented in several third countries there can be more than one Field Office). That may consist of costs for local office as well as human resources.

A Field Office may be exclusively dedicated to the action financed (or co-financed) by the EU or may be used for other projects implemented in the partner country. When the Field Office is used for other projects, only the portion of capitalised and operating costs which corresponds to the duration of the action and the rate of actual use of the field office for the purpose of the action may be declared as eligible direct costs.

The portion of costs attributable to the action can be declared as actual costs or determined by the beneficiary(ies) on the basis of a simplified allocation method (apportionment).

The method of allocation has to be:

1. Compliant with the beneficiary's usual accounting and management practices and applied in a consistent manner regardless of the source of funding and

2. Based on an objective, fair and reliable allocation keys. (Please refer to Annex K to have examples of acceptable allocation keys).

A description prepared by the entity of the allocation method used to determine Field Office's costs in accordance with the entity's usual cost accounting and management practices and explaining how the method satisfy condition 1 and 2 indicated above, has to be presented in a separate sheet and annexed to the Budget.

The method will be assessed and accepted by the evaluation committee and the Contracting Authority at contracting phase. The applicant is invited to submit (where relevant) the list of contracts to which the methodology proposed had been already applied and for which proper application was confirmed by an expenditure verification.

At the time of carrying out the expenditure verifications, the auditors will check if the costs reported are compliant with the method described by the beneficiary(ies) and accepted by the Contracting Authority.

Adequate record and documentation must be kept by the beneficiary(ies) to prove the compliance of the simplified allocation method used with the conditions set out above. Upon request of the beneficiary(ies), this compliance can be assessed and approved ex-ante by an independent external auditor. In such a case, the simplified allocation method will be automatically accepted by the evaluation committee and it will not be challenged ex post.

When costs are declared on the basis of such allocation method the amount charged to the action is to be indicated in the column "TOTAL COSTS" and the mention "APPORTIONMENT" is to be indicated in the column "units" (under budget heading 1 (Human resources) and 4 (Local Office) of the Budget).

It has to be noted that the EUR 60.000 limit, otherwise applicable to costs declared on the basis of simplified cost options, is not relevant for costs declared following apportionment of Field Offices.

Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under this 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).

Salary costs of the personnel of national administrations may be eligible to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the action were not undertaken.

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 lead applicant may be asked to justify the percentage requested before the grant contract is signed. However, once the flat rate has been fixed in the Special Conditions of the 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 beneficiaries or affiliated entities free of charge by a third party. As contributions in kind do not involve any expenditure for beneficiaries or affiliated entities, they are not eligible costs.

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

However, if the description of the action as proposed includes contributions in kind, the contributions have to be made.

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 European 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, in accordance with Article 7.5 of the General Conditions of the standard grant contract, at the latest at the end of the action;
* currency exchange losses;
* credit to third parties;
* in-kind contributions
* fines, financial penalties and expenses of litigation.
* interest on debt;
* value added tax (VAT) except where it is non-recoverable under national VAT legislation;
* the decommissioning and the construction of nuclear power stations;
* investment to achieve the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from activities falling under Annex I to Directive 2003/87/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (1);
* the manufacturing, processing and marketing of tobacco and tobacco products;
* undertakings in difficulties as defined under Union State aid rules;
* investment in airport infrastructure unless related to environmental protection or accompanied by investment necessary to mitigate or reduce its negative environmental impact.

By way of derogation, the purchase of land not built on and land built on in the amount up to 10 % of the total eligible expenditure for the operation concerned shall be eligible for funding under IPA II cross-border cooperation assistance. For derelict sites and for those formerly in industrial use which comprise buildings, this limit shall be increased to 15 %. In exceptional and duly justified cases, this limit may be raised above the respective preceding percentages for operations concerning environmental conservation.

* The purchase of land not built on and land built on in the amount up to 10% of the total eligible expenditure for the operation concerned shall be eligible for funding under IPA II cross-border cooperation assistance if it is justified by the nature of the action and provided in Annex I.
	1. How to apply and the procedures to follow

To apply for this call for proposals the lead applicants need to:

1. Provide information about the organisations involved in the action. Please note that the registration of this data in **PADOR is obligatory** for this call for proposals:

**Concept note step:** Registration is obligatory for lead applicants applying for EU contributions of more than EUR 60 000.

**Full application step:** Registration is obligatory for co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies). Lead applicants must make sure that their PADOR profile is up to date.

1. Provide information about the action in the documents listed under sections 2.2.2 (concept note) and 2.2.5 (full application). Please note that online submission via **PROSPECT is obligatory** for this call.

PADOR is an on-line database in which organisations register and update information concerning their entity. Organisations registered in PADOR get a unique ID (EuropeAid ID) which they **must mention** in their application. PADOR is accessible via the website: <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/pador_en>

**It is strongly recommended to register in PADOR well in advance and not to wait until the last minute before the deadline** **to submit your application in PROSPECT.**

If it is impossible to register online in PADOR for technical reasons, the applicants and/or affiliated entity(ies) must complete the ‘PADOR off-line form[[12]](#footnote-13) attached to these guidelines. This form must be sent **together with the application,** by the submission deadline (see sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.5).

Before starting using PADOR and PROSPECT, please read the user guides available on the website. All technical questions related the use of these systems should be addressed to the IT helpdesk at EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu **via the online support form in PROSPECT.**

* + 1. Concept note content

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the concept note instructions in the grant application form[[13]](#footnote-14) annexed to these guidelines (Annex A.1). Applicants must apply in English.

Please note that:

1. In the concept note lead applicants must provide only an estimate of the **requested EU contribution,** as well as an indicative percentage of this contribution in relation to the total eligible costs of the action. A detailed budget is to be submitted only by lead applicants invited to submit a full application in the second phase

2. The elements outlined in the concept note may not be modified in the full application form. The EU contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 20 %. Lead applicants are free to adapt the requested EU contribution as a percentage of the total eligible costs within the minimum and maximum amounts and percentages provided in section 1.3. The lead applicant may replace a co-applicant or an affiliated entity only in duly justified cases (e.g. bankruptcy of initial co-applicant or affiliated entity). In this case the new co-applicant/affiliated entity must be of a similar nature as the initial one. The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the action if unforeseen circumstances outside the scope of the applicants have taken place following the submission of the concept note and require such adaptation (risk of action not being carried out). In such cases the duration must remain within the limits imposed by the guidelines for applicants. An explanation/justification of the relevant replacement/adjustment shall be included in section 2.1.1 of the grant application form.

Own contributions by the applicants can be replaced by other donors' contributions at any time.

3. Only the concept note form will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that this document contains **all relevant information** concerning the action. **No additional annexes should be sent.**

Any error or major discrepancy related to the concept note instructions may lead to the rejection of the concept note.

Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is not sufficient to conduct an objective assessment.

* + 1. Where and how to send concept notes

The concept note together with the declaration by the lead applicant (Annex A.1 section 2) **must** **be submitted online** **via PROSPECT** <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prospect> following the instructions given in the PROSPECT user manual.

Upon submission of a concept note online, the lead applicant will receive an automatic confirmation of receipt in its PROSPECT profile.

If it is impossible for lead applicants to submit their concept note online via PROSPECT for technical reasons, they must send their proposal in a sealed envelope and attach the concept note together with the declaration by the lead applicant (**Annex A.1** **section 2**). In particular, the lead applicant must send, in a sealed envelope as described below the following items:

 a. One original of the concept note. The signed declaration by the lead applicant (Annex A.1 section 2) must be printed and stapled separately and enclosed in the envelope

b. Two (2) additional copies in A4 size, each bound.

c. An electronic version (CD-ROM of the items under point (a). The electronic file must contain exactly the same application as the paper version enclosed.

c. An electronic version (CD-Rom or USB stick) of the items under point (a). The electronic file must contain **exactly the same** application as the paper version enclosed.

The envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the call for proposals**, together with the lot number and title, the full name and address of the lead applicant, and the words ‘Not to be opened before the opening session’ and ‘Ne otvarati prije zvanicnog otvaranja’.

To reduce expense and waste, we strongly recommend that you do not use plastic folders or dividers. Please also use double-sided printing if possible.

Concept notes 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) to the address below. Where lead applicants send several concept notes (if allowed to do so by the guidelines of the call), each one must be sent separately:

Postal address

European Union Delegatio to Bosnia and Herzegovina

Skenderija 3A, Sarajevo
71000 Sarajevo
Sarajevo

Address for hand delivery or by private courier service:

European Union Delegatio to Bosnia and Herzegovina

Skenderija 3A, Sarajevo
71000 Sarajevo
Sarajevo

Concept notes sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected. Hand-written concept notes will not be accepted.

**Please note that incomplete concept notes may be rejected.** Lead applicants are advised to verify that their concept note is complete by using the checklist for concept note (Annex A.1, Instructions).

* + 1. Deadline for submission of concept notes

The deadline for the submission of concept notes is **02/12/2016 at 16:00 hrs** (Brussels date and time). In order to convert this deadline to local time you can use any online time converter tool that takes into account timezones and winter/summer time changes (example available **here)[[14]](#footnote-15) The lead applicant is strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit** its concept note, since heavy Internet traffic or a fault with the Internet connection (including electricity failure, etc.) could lead to difficulties in submission. The Contacting Authority cannot be held responsible for any delay due to such afore-mentioned difficulties.

In the exceptional case of submission by post or by hand delivery (see section 2.2.2), the date of submission is 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 [[15]](#footnote-16)as evidenced by the signed and dated receipt.

Any concept note submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

However, for reasons of administrative efficiency, the Contracting Authority may also reject any concept note sent in due time but received after the effective date of approval of the concept note evaluation (see indicative calendar under section 2.5.2).

* + 1. Further information about concept notes

An information session on this call for proposals will be held on 25th October 2016 at 12:00 in Mostar, 26th October 2016 at 11:00 in Trebinje, 27th October at 11:00 in Herceg Novi and 28th October 2016 at 11:00 in Niksic.

Should you be interested in this session, please send an email by **22nd October 2016 to the Joint Technical Secretariat email infoJTS@dei.gov.ba,** indicating: name, surname, nationality and email address of the persons who are going to participate as well as their organisation (max. two participants per organisation). No costs incurred by the applicants for attending this information session are reimbursable.

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of concept notes to the address below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: **Delegation-BIH-CfP153071@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 submission of concept notes.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the contracting authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entity(ies), an action or specific activities.

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure will be published on the EuropeAid website <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome> and EU Delegation to BiH website: http://europa.ba/?page\_id=1084 . 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 registration in PADOR or the online submission via PROSPECT should be addressed to the IT helpdesk at EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu **via the online support form in PROSPECT:** Please note that the working languages of the IT support are: English French and Spanish. Therefore users are invited to send their questions in English, French or Spanish should they wish to benefit from an optimum response time.

* + 1. Full applications

Lead applicants invited to submit a full application following pre-selection of their concept note must do so using the full application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex A.2).

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the full application instructions at the end of Annex A.2. Lead applicants must submit their full applications in the same language as their concept notes.

Please note that:

1. The elements outlined in the concept note cannot be modified by the lead applicant in the full application form.The EU contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 20 %, although lead applicants are free to adapt the percentage of co-financing required within the minimum and maximum amount and percentages of co-financing, as laid down in these guidelines under section 1.3. The lead applicant may replace a co-applicant or an affiliated entity only in duly justified cases (e.g. bankruptcy of initial co-applicant or affiliated entity). In this case the new co-applicant/affiliated entity must be of a similar nature as the initial one. The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the action if unforeseen circumstances outside the scope of the applicants have taken place following the submission of the concept note and require such adaptation (risk of action not being carried out). An explanation/justification of the relevant replacement/adjustment shall be included in section 2.1.1 of the grant application form.

2. A copy of the lead applicant’s accounts of the latest financial year (the profit and loss account and the balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed) must be uploaded in PADOR by the full application deadline. A copy of the latest account is neither required from (if any) the co-applicant(s) nor from (if any) affiliated entity(ies)).

3. Only the full application form and the published annexes which have to be filled in (budget, logical framework) will be transmitted to the evaluators (and assessors, if used). It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain **ALL the relevant information** concerning the action. **No additional annexes should be sent.**

Any error or any major inconsistency related to the full application instructions (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 information provided is unclear and thus prevents the Contracting Authority from conducting an objective assessment.

* + 1. Where and how to send full applications

Full application forms together with the budget, the logical framework and the declaration by the lead applicant must be submitted online via PROSPECT [https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/ europeaid/prospect](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prospect) following the instructions given in the users’ manual.

Upon submission of the full application online, the lead applicants will receive an automatic confirmation of receipt in their PROSPECT profile.

(a) If the lead applicant submitted the concept note by post / hand delivery (see section 2.2.3) it must send the full application by the same means (by post or hand delivery).

(b) If the lead applicant submitted the concept note online via PROSPECT but it is technically impossible for the organisation to submit the full application online:

In the above two cases the lead applicant must send by post the application, i.e the full application form, the budget, the logical framework and the declaration by the lead applicant. The lead applicant must send, in a sealed envelope as described below, the following items:

a.One original signed copy of the full application form, the budget and the logical framework. The declaration by the lead applicant (Annex A.2, section 5) must be printed and stapled separately and enclosed in the envelope

b. Two additional copies in A4 size, each bound.

c. An electronic version (CD-Rom or USB) of the items under point (a). The electronic file must contain exactly the same application as the paper version enclosed.

To reduce expense and waste, we strongly recommend that you use only paper for your file (no plastic folders or dividers). Please also use double-sided printing if possible

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) to the address below. Where lead applicants send several applications (if allowed to do so by the guidelines of the call), each one must be sent separately:

Postal address

European Union Delegatio to Bosnia and Herzegovina

Skenderija 3A, Sarajevo

71000 Sarajevo

Sarajevo

Address for hand delivery or by private courier service:

European Union Delegatio to Bosnia and Herzegovina

Skenderija 3A, Sarajevo

71000 Sarajevo

SarajevoThe envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the call for proposals**, together with the number and title of the lot, the full name and address of the lead applicant, and the words ‘Not to be opened before the opening session’ and ‘Ne otvarati prije zvanicnog otvaranja’.

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected. Hand-written applications will not be accepted.]

**Please note that incomplete applications may be rejected.** Lead applicants are advised to verify that their application is complete using the checklist (Annex A.2, Instructions).

* + 1. Deadline for submission of full applications

The deadline for the submission of full applications will be indicated in the letter sent to the lead applicants whose application has been pre-selected. This letter will appear online automatically in the PROSPECT profile of the lead applicant. Lead applicants who, in exceptional cases (see section 2.2.6) had to submit their application by post or hand-delivery, will receive the letter by email or by post if no e-mail address was provided.

**Lead applicants are strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit their full applications**, since heavy Internet traffic or a fault with the Internet connection (including electricity failure, etc.) could lead to difficulties in submission. The Contacting Authority cannot be held responsible for any delay due to such afore-mentioned difficulties.

In the case of submission by post, (see section 2.2.6), the date of submission is 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[[16]](#footnote-17) as evidenced by the signed and dated receipt.

Any application submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

However, for reasons of administrative efficiency, the Contracting Authority may also reject any full application sent in due time but received after the effective date of approval of the full application evaluation (see indicative calendar under section 2.5.2)

* + 1. Further information about full applications

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of full applications to the address listed below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: **Delegation-BIH-CfP153071@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 lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entity(ies), or an action.

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure, will be published on the EuropeAid website <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome> EU Delegation to BiH website: http://europa.ba/?page\_id=1084 .. 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 registration in PADOR or the online submission via PROSPECT should be addressed to the IT helpdesk at EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu **via the online support form in PROSPECT.** Please note that the working languages of the IT support are: English French and Spanish. Therefore users are invited to send their questions in English, French or Spanish should they wish to benefit from an optimum response time.

* 1. Evaluation and selection of applications

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the Contracting Authority with the possible assistance of external assessors. All applications 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 section 2.1, the application will be rejected on this sole basis.

**STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION**

During the opening[[17]](#footnote-18) and administrative check (including the eligibility check of the action) the following will be assessed:

* + - If the deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will be automatically rejected.
		- If the concept note satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist in the instructions included in Annex A.1. This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. 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 this check will be evaluated on the relevance and design of the proposed action.

The concept notes will receive an overall score out of 50 in line with the evaluation grid below. The evaluation will also check the compliance with the instructions on how to complete the concept note (Annex A.1).

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.

**Evaluation Grid**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section** | **Maximum Score** |
| **1. Relevance of the action** | **30** |
| 1.1. How well justified is the relevance of the concept note to the thematic priorities and specific objectives of the Call for Proposals? Will the project contribute to the achievement of programme indicators?\* | 5x2\*\* |
| 1.2. How relevant is the concept note to the particular needs and constraints of the eligible programme area and/or relevant sector (including, as appropriate, synergies with other EU initiatives, in particular with the EU Strategy for the Danube Region and the one for the Adriatic and Ionian Region, as well as 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 and the other additional elements indicated under 1.2. of these guidelines?\* | 5 |
| **2. Design of the action** | **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\*\* |
| **Maximum total score** | **50** |

\* Note: A score of 5 (very good) will only be allocated if the concept note clearly demonstrates how it specifically addresses one of the specific objectives of the call as indicated in Section 1.2 (Objectives of the programme) of these guidelines.

\*\*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 operations ranked according to their total score per specific objective.

Concept notes with a score lower than 30 will be rejected.

Concept notes that reach the above threshold will be ranked by score.

The highest scoring applications will be pre-selected, taking into account the ranking per lot, until the limit of at least 200% of the available budget for this call for proposals is reached.

The amount of requested contributions of each concept note will be based on the indicative financial envelopes for each lot, where relevant.

Lead applicants will receive a letter indicating the reference number of their application and the respective results. This letter will automatically appear online in the PROSPECT profile of the lead applicant. Lead applicants who, in exceptional cases (see section 2.2), had to submit their application by post or hand-delivery will receive the letter by email or by post if no e-mail address was provided.

The pre-selected lead applicants will subsequently be invited to submit full applications.

**STEP 2: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECK AND EVALUATION OF THE FULL APPLICATION**

During the opening[[18]](#footnote-19) and administrative check (including the eligibility check of the action) for full applications the following will be assessed:

* + - If the submission deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will automatically be rejected.
		- If the full application satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist in Annex A.2. This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. 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 full applications that pass this check will be further evaluated on their quality, including the proposed budget and the capacity of the applicants and affiliated entity(ies). The evaluation criteria used are presented 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 lead applicant's financial capacity and are used to verify 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 (this only applies to lead applicants);
* have the management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed action. This applies to applicants and to any affiliated entity(ies).

For the purpose of the evaluation of the financial capacity, lead applicants must ensure that the relevant information and documents (i.e. accounts of the latest financial year and external audit report, where applicable) in their PADOR profile are up to date. If the information and documents in PADOR are outdated and do not allow for a proper evaluation of the financial capacity, the application may be rejected.

**The award criteria** help to evaluate the quality of the applications in relation to the objectives and priorities set forth in the guidelines, 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.

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[[19]](#footnote-20)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **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 projectmanagement?  | 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 Does the lead applicant have sufficient management capacity (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the operation)? | 5 |
| 1.4 Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance? | 5 |
| **2. Relevance of the operation** | **30** |
| *Score transferred from the Concept Note evaluation* |  |
| **3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the operation** | **20** |
| 3.1 Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results? Are they well methodologically developed with a clear indication of the partners’ responsibilities?[[20]](#footnote-21) | 5 |
| 3.2 Is the operation plan clear, logically structured and feasible? [[21]](#footnote-22) | 5 |
| 3.3 Does the full application contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcomes of the operation (at the level of overall objective, specific objective(s) and project results)? Are the project indicators likely to contribute to the achievement of programme indicators? 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 operation satisfactory? Does the proposal involve genuine cross-border cooperation (joint development, joint staffing, joint implementation, joint financing)? Are the activities proposed likely to have a clear cross-border benefit and impact? Is the partnership convincing? | 5 |
| **4. Sustainability of the operation**  | **15** |
| 4.1 Is the operation likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups? Have assumptions and risks been well assessed? | 5 |
| 4.2 Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects? (Including scope for replication, extension, dissemination and information sharing.) | 5 |
| 4.3 Are the expected results of the proposed operation sustainable?:- financially *(how will the activities be financed after the funding ends?)*- institutionally *(will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the operation? Will there be local ‘ownership’ of the results of the operation?)*- at policy level (where applicable) *(what will be the structural impact of the operation — e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc?)*- environmentally (if applicable) *(will the operation have a negative/positive environmental impact?)* | 5 |
| **5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the operation** | **15** |
| 5.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget? Are the expenses well justified? | 5 |
| 5.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory? Are the costs estimated based on real market prices? | 10 |
| **Maximum total score** | **100**  |

If the total score for section 1 (financial and operational capacity) 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.

If the lead applicant applies without affiliated entities the score for point 3.4 shall be 5 unless the involvement of co-applicants or affiliated entities is mandatory according to these guidelines for applicants.

Note that (members of) the evaluation committee or internal assessors evaluating the full applications may re-evaluate the scores given for the relevance at concept note stage and transferred to the full application.

After the evaluation, applications will be ranked according to their score. The highest scoring applications will be provisionally selected until the available budget for this call for proposals is reached.

In addition, a reserve list will be drawn up following the same criteria. This list will be used if more funds become available during the validity period of the reserve list.

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

The eligibility verification will be performed on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the Contracting Authority (see section 2.4). It will only be performed for the applications that have been provisionally selected according to their score and within the available budget for this call for proposals.

* The declaration by the lead applicant (section 5 of Annex A.2) will be cross-checked with the supporting documents provided by the lead applicant. Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the declaration by the lead applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the application on that sole basis.
* The eligibility of applicants and the affiliated entity(ies) 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 budget for this call for proposals.

* 1. Submission of supporting documents for provisionally selected applications

A lead applicant whose application 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 lead applicant, (if any) of the co-applicant(s) and (if any) of their affiliated entity(ies):

 Supporting documents must be provided through PADOR (see section 2.2)

The statutes or articles of association of the lead applicant, (if any) of each co-applicant and (if any) of each affiliated entity[[22]](#footnote-23). Where the Contracting Authority has recognised the lead 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 meantime[[23]](#footnote-24). This obligation does not apply to international organisations which have signed a framework agreement with the European Commission.

An external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the lead applicant's accounts for the last financial year available where the total amount of the requested EU contribution exceeds EUR 750 000 (EUR 100 000 for an operating grant). The external audit report is not required from (if any) the co-applicant(s) or affiliated entity(ies).

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.

Legal entity sheet (see Annex D of these guidelines) duly completed and signed by each of the applicants (i.e. by the lead applicant and (if any) by each co-applicant), 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.

1. A financial identification form of the lead applicant (not from co-applicant(s), nor from affiliated entity(ies)) 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 lead applicant is established. If the lead applicant has already submitted a financial identification form in the past for a contract where the European 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.

**When an operation contains the execution of works, the following supporting documents, submitted along with the full application form, will be necessary**:

1. Proof of ownership or long term lease (at least for 10 years after the signature of the contract) of the land/assets where the works are to be executed;
2. Approved/certified detailed work design or otherwise a statement by the relevant national institution(s) confirming that the national legislation(s) do/does not require the design’s approval for this type of works;
3. A positive decision on environmental impact assessment or otherwise a statement from the relevant public authority(ies) that the latter assessment(s) are/is not needed for the specific project activities;
4. All necessary legal authorisations (e.g.: location and construction permits);
5. An indicative priced bill of quantities issued not earlier than 2 years prior to the deadline for submission of full applications – calculated in euro.

The requested supporting documents (uploaded in PADOR or sent together with the PADOR offline form) 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 orin the language of the country where the action is implemented, a translation into the language of the call for proposals of the relevant parts of these documents proving the lead applicant's and, where applicable, co-applicants' and affiliated entity(ies)' 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 lead applicants' and, where applicable, co-applicants' and affiliated entity(ies)' eligibility, into the language of the call for proposals.

Applicants have to take into consideration the time necessary to obtain official documents from national competent authorities and to translate such documents in the authorised languages while registering their data in PADOR.

If the abovementioned supporting documents are not provided before the deadline indicated in the request for supporting documents sent to the lead 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 lead applicant has to submit the application form revised accordingly.

* 1. Notification of the Contracting Authority’s decision
		1. Content of the decision

The lead applicants will be informed in writing of the Contracting Authority’s decision concerning their application and, if rejected, the reasons for the negative decision. This letter will be sent by e-mail and will appear online automatically in the PROSPECT profile of the user who submitted the application. Lead applicants who, in exceptional cases (see section 2.2), had to submit their application by post or hand-delivery, will be informed by email or by post if they did not provide any e-mail address. Therefore, please check regularly your PROSPECT profile, taking into account the indicative timetable below.

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.

* + 1. Indicative timetable

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **DATE** | **TIME** |
| **1. Information meeting, if any** (local time) | 25th October 2016 in Mostar, 26th October 2016 in Trebinje, 27th October in Herceg Novi 28th October 2016 in Niksic  | 12:0011:0011:0011:00 |
| **2. Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the Contracting Authority** | 11th November 2016 | - |
| **3. Last date on which clarifications are issued by the Contracting Authority** | 21st November 2016 | - |
| **4. Deadline for submission of concept notes**  | 02/12/2016  | 16:00 |
| **5. Information to lead applicants on opening, administrative checks and concept note evaluation (Step 1)** | February 2017 | - |
| **6. Invitations to submit full applications**  | February 2017 | - |
| **7. Deadline for submission of full applications** | April 2017 | - |
| **8. Information to lead applicants on the evaluation of the full applications (Step 2)[[24]](#footnote-25)** | May 2017 | - |
| **9. Notification of award (after the eligibility check) (Step 3)** | May 2017 | - |
| **10. Contract signature[[25]](#footnote-26)** | June 2017 | - |

**All dates and times are expressed in Brussels time**, where it is not specified otherwise.

This indicative timetable refers to provisional dates (except for dates 2, 3 and 4) and may be updated by the Contracting Authority during the procedure. In such cases, the updated timetable will be published on the EuropeAid web site <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome> and EU Delegation to BiH website: http://europa.ba/?page\_id=1084.

* 1. 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 standard grant contract (see Annex G of these guidelines). 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. Where the Coordinator is an organisation whose pillars have been positively assessed, it will sign a PA Grant Agreement based on the PAGoDA template. In this case references to provisions of the standard grant contract and its annexes shall not apply. References in these guidelines to the grant contract shall be understood as references to the relevant provisions of the PA Grant Agreement.

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.

* 1. Early detection and exclusion system (edes)

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 section 2.3.3.1 or 2.3.3.2 of the Practical Guide 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 EDES. For further information see section 2.3.3 and 2.3.4 of the Practical Guide.

1. LIST OF annexes

**Documents to be completed**

Annex A: Grant Application Form (Word format)

 A.1. Concept Note

 A.2. Full Application Form

Annex B: Budget (Excel format)

Annex C: Logical Framework (Word format)

Annex D: Legal Entity Sheet

Annex E: Financial identification form

Annex F: PADOR off Line Form ***(ONLY IF IMPOSSIBLE TO REGISTER IN PADOR)***

**DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION[[26]](#footnote-27)**

Annex G: Standard Grant Contract

- Annex II: general conditions

- Annex IV: contract award rules

- 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/funding/about-procurement-contracts/procedures-and-practical-guide-prag/diems_en>

Annex J: Information on the tax regime applicable to grant contracts signed under the call

Annex K: Guidelines and Checklist for assessing Budget and Simplified cost options.

Annex L : e-learning :

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prospect/external/>

Annex M : user manual for PROSPECT :

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prospect/external/>

**Useful links**

Project Cycle Management Guidelines

[https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/aid-delivery-methods-project-cycle-management-guidelines-vol-1\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/publications/manuals-tools/t101_en.htm)

The implementation of grant contracts - A Users' Guide

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

Financial Toolkit

<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/financial-management-toolkit-for-recipients-15112010_en.pdf>

Please note: The toolkit is not part of the grant contract and has no legal value. It merely provides general guidance and may in some details differ from the signed grant contract. In order to ensure compliance with their contractual obligations beneficiaries should not exclusively rely on the toolkit but always consult their individual contract documents.

\* \* \*

1. Online submission via PROSPECT is mandatory for this call for proposals (see Section 2.2.2). In PROSPECT all dates and times are expressed in Brussels time. Applicants should note that the IT support is open Monday to Friday from 08:30 to 18:30 Brussels time (except for public holidays). Applicants should take note of the weekly maintenance hours mentioned in the PROSPECT user manual. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. If PROSPECT is unavailable, the IT support can also be reached via email: EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. For the purpose of this Call for Proposals, specific objectives of the Programme selected for this Call are organised as lots of the Call. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. In the Cross-border Programme document, this is Specific objective 1.2 under the Thematic priority 1: Promoting employment, labour mobility, social and cultural inclusion across the border [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. In the Cross-border Programme document, this is Specific objective 3.1 under the Thematic priority 3: Encouraging tourism and cultural and natural heritage [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Where a grant is financed by the European Development Fund, any mention of European Union financing must be understood as referring to European Development Fund financing. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. In accordance with Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 447/2014, the term "operation" is used instead of term "action". [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. An operation may be implemented in a single participating country, provided that cross-border impacts and benefits are identified. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. These third parties are neither affiliated entity(ies) nor associates nor contractors. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Which corresponds to sections 3 and 4 of the full application form – Annex A.2. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. The grant application form consists of Annex A.1 – concept note and Annex A.2 – full application form. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. For example: http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. Please use an online time converter tool, such as the one presented in the footnote above. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Please use an online time converter tool, such as http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. Only where some applications have been submitted offline. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. Only where some applications have been submitted offline. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. Note that the relevance may be re-evaluated in the cases described in sections 6.5.7 and 6.5.8. of the Practical Guide. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. The score of this question will be seriously affected if the application includes the execution of works and the information included in section 2.1.1 of the application form will call into question whether all preconditions to undertake works have been met by the applicants. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. Idem. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. Where the lead 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. To be inserted only where the eligibility conditions have not changed from one call for proposals to the other. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. Note that according to the financial regulation, in direct management, applicants must be notified the outcome of the evaluation of their applications within 6 months following the submission deadline of the full application. This time-limit may be exceeded in exceptional cases, in particular for complex actions (including multi-beneficiary calls), large number of proposals or in case of delays attributable to the applicants. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. Note that according to the financial regulation, in direct management the grant contract must be signed within 3 months following the notification of the award decision. This time-limit may be exceeded in exceptional cases, in particular for complex actions (including multi-beneficiary calls), large number of proposals or in case of delays attributable to the applicants [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. These documents should also be published by the Contracting Authority. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)