



**Contracting Authority:** European Commission

Restricted Call for Proposals

## **Women and sustainable energy**

### **Guidelines for grant applicants**

Budget line(s): GPGC - Sustainable Energy  
(BGUE-B2016 & 2017-21.020702)

Reference:  
EuropeAid/155118/DH/ACT/Multi

Deadline for submission<sup>1</sup> of concept notes:

**25/04/2017 at 16:00 (Brussels date and time)**

(in order to convert to local time click [here](#)<sup>2</sup>)

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

## 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.

**These guidelines are published in English and French. In case of any discrepancy between the linguistic versions of this call, the English version will prevail.**

### Online submission via PROSPECT

**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.

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<sup>3</sup>.

**A functional mailbox specifically dedicated to this call has been set up:**

**[EuropeAid-155118@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EuropeAid-155118@ec.europa.eu)**

**It shall be used exclusively for sending clarification requests within the deadlines set in paragraph 2.2 of these guidelines. No other functional mailbox will be used. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to close this mailbox without prior notice once this call for proposals is closed and not to reply to requests which do not fall under one of the afore-mentioned category.**

**Applications submitted by e-mail via this mailbox or any other mailbox will not be considered.**

Even though the verification of eligibility is foreseen to be carried out only for the provisionally selected applicants at the end of the procedure, the Evaluation Committee may decide to verify this point at any previous step of the procedure. Consequently, any proposal found to be non-compliant with all the mandatory conditions set in these guidelines can be automatically rejected on that sole basis, at any stage of the procedure and without any prior notice or clarification request. Applicants are therefore strongly advised to fill in scrupulously the "Check List for Concept Note" (Annex A1) and the "Checklist for the Full Application form" (Annex A.2.). Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the declarations and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the proposal on that sole basis.

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<sup>2</sup> An example of a time converter tool available online: <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html>

<sup>3</sup> If PROSPECT is unavailable, the IT support can also be reached via email: [EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu)

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# 1 SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

This call for proposals is based on the unexpressed potential of increasing access to sustainable energy (SE) by fostering women's involvement, recognizing past and current efforts at redressing gender imbalances women are facing with regard to access to resources, including energy. It will contribute to the EU Gender Action Plan, SDG 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) and SDG 7 (Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all) as well as SE4ALL objectives.

It aims at selecting partnerships (the direct beneficiaries) which will be in charge of implementing a comprehensive action supported with an EU grant targeting at increasing the involvement of women in SE value chains, boosting their active role, their entrepreneurship and improving their access to energy services. To this end, women will be supported to access affordable finance and energy services through appropriate models. They will also be trained and educated through suitable and appropriate schemes. Advocacy and awareness campaigns will also be addressed as supportive measures where necessary. The main focus of the action is on fostering micro, small or medium size entrepreneurial activities of women in or thanks to the sustainable energy sector in developing countries. It fosters development of private sector and jobs creation in particular for women. The action should lead to implement suitable models which could be scaled up in the future and possibly streamlined into the EU Electrifi initiative ([www.electrifi.org](http://www.electrifi.org)). Synergies with the Electrifi initiative will be sought for large size projects potentially eligible.

The final beneficiaries are mainly women in developing countries benefitting from the action, but also targeted entities, communities, etc. that can benefit from the expected results. As part of the action, the Beneficiaries must propose financial and energy support/services to final beneficiaries directly or indirectly in order to help achieving the objectives **OF THE ACTION**.

## 1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

The **global objective** of this call for proposals is to promote women's entrepreneurship and economic empowerment in the sustainable energy sector/value chain.

This should contribute to gender equality, to the eradication of poverty and to job creation, improving women's lives and status.

The **scope** of the action is focussing on the sustainable energy sector, integrating financial services, skills improvement and soft measures for women empowerment.

The **specific objectives** of this call for proposals are:

1. To create jobs and/or entrepreneurship opportunities in developing countries for women;
2. To increase capacities of women to operate in the sustainable energy sector;
3. To raise awareness within communities, society and local/regional/national authorities on the potential and benefits of sustainable energy and women's role in sustainable energy value chains.

Priority under this action will be given to projects having an important component of access to financial services targeting women in particular. In practical terms, the action should dedicate a significant part of its budget (indicatively 70%) to providing access to affordable finance or to affordable finance and sustainable energy services (see Evaluation grid of concept note, point 1.1).

A monitoring activity shall support and demonstrate the effective results of the action, using indicators relevant for SDG 5, 7 and EU Gender Action Plan but also including quantification of final beneficiaries as well as clear results on jobs creation, entrepreneurship opportunities created, etc. It will also help to draw conclusions to ensure set up of sustainability measures and potential replication of the action.

Due to the scope of this action and the multi-component approach, a partnership between entities that together can ensure all different competencies needed to implement the various aspects of the action is mandatory to address the objectives of this call. **This partnership must be constituted by at least 3 entities (one lead applicant and at least two co-applicants)** and possibly affiliated entities (see definitions in section 2.1).

The quality of the partnership will be of particular importance during the selection process (see evaluation grid section 3.4 of full application). Complementarity between the partners is considered essential to successfully implement the action. Different types of partners (such as academia, civil society, NGOs, international or local organisations, financial institutions, government - local, regional, national -, private sector, etc.) may bring added value to a comprehensive approach. The ability to demonstrate local involvement in order to ensure targeted and sustainable activities is also essential, possibly through local partners or local third entities. The composition of the partnership and the added value of each proposed partner will be evaluated in view of ensuring effectiveness and sustainability of the action (see Evaluation grid of full application, point 3.4).

The beneficiaries (lead applicant, co-applicants) and the affiliated entities (if any) should have in the last **five years** a solid demonstrated aggregated/cumulative experience of working in all the following areas:

- Renewable energy (including services or products); **and**
- Women's entrepreneurship, in particular in the sustainable energy value chains; **and**
- Financial services for micro, small or medium businesses or financial services for the development of sustainable energy value chains; **and**
- Knowledge, skills development, vocational training, mentoring or similar activities; **and**
- Advocacy and awareness-raising for gender equality; **and**
- Implementation of projects or activities in the countries eligible for the action location (see section 2.1.4 Eligible action), possibly through local network/branches.

The role and activity(ies) implemented by each implementing entity shall be clearly described in the proposal.

The geographical coverage of the action has to ensure appropriate impact in relation with the objectives of this call for proposals as set in the above. The action must take place in multiple countries which are recipients of Official Development Aid, in Sub-Saharan Africa (mandatorily) and possibly in other regions of the world (such as Northern Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Pacific, Central or South America). The maximum number of countries where activities are proposed to take place is not prescribed, and proposals will be evaluated with the aim of maximising impact and value-for-money.

The selection of countries should be properly justified. The partnerships shall implement all necessary activities related to the objectives of this call. The choice of activities to implement in each country will be duly substantiated and evaluated (see Evaluation grid of concept note, point 1.2).

### **1.3 FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY**

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is EUR 20 000 000. The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to award all available funds. Likewise, this amount could be increased should more funds become available.

### Size of grant

Any requested EU contribution under this call for proposals must fall between the following amounts:

- minimum amount: EUR 4 000 000
- maximum amount: EUR 8 000 000

Any requested EU contribution under this call for proposals must cover maximum 80 % of total eligible costs of the action (see also section 2.1.5).

As per section 6.3.10. of the Practical Guide, the grant **must not give rise to profits for neither the Beneficiaries (Coordinator/lead applicant and co-beneficiaries/co-applicants) nor any affiliated entity** (in the context of this call, profit is defined as a surplus of the receipts over the eligible costs approved by the Contracting Authority when the request for payment of the balance is made). Expected revenue of the action may be accepted as co-financing. However, action revenues in excess of the total costs will be considered as profit. As such, it will need to be deducted when calculating the final amount of the EU grant.

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 any sources other than the European Union Budget or the European Development Fund<sup>4</sup>.

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4 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.

## 2 RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of the actions financed under this call, in conformity with the Practical Guide, which is applicable to the present call (available at <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/document.do?locale=en>)<sup>5</sup>.

The direct beneficiaries are the applicants (the lead applicant (also called Coordinator) and the co-applicants (also called co-beneficiaries)) whose proposal will be selected in the process of this call for proposals and will implement the action. The European Commission is the Contracting Authority who will provide a Grant for the selected action. The beneficiaries of the grant contract can act with additional entities such as affiliated entities and/or associates (see sections 2.1.2 and 2.1.3).

### 2.1 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),
- its **co-applicants** (**where it is not specified otherwise the lead applicant and its co-applicants are hereinafter jointly referred as the "applicants"**) (2.1.1),
- and, if any, **affiliated entity(ies)** to the lead applicant or to a co-applicant. (2.1.2);

(2) the action:

- action for which a grant may be awarded (2.1.4);

(3) the costs:

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

#### ***2.1.1 Eligibility of applicants (i.e. lead applicant and co-applicants)***

##### **Lead applicant**

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

- be a legal person; **and**
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary; **and**

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<sup>5</sup> Note that a lead applicant whose pillars have been positively assessed by the European Commission and who is awarded a grant will not sign the standard grant contract published with these guidelines but a PA Grant Agreement based on the PAGoDA template. All references in these guidelines and other documents related to this call to the standard grant contract shall in this case be understood as referring to the relevant provisions of the PAGoDA template.

- be established in <sup>6</sup> (this obligation does not apply to international organisations) (See Annex O) :
  - a) a Member State of the European Union; **or**
  - b) a Non-EU country of the European Economic Area; **or**
  - c) an IPA II beneficiary country; **or**
  - d) a developing country or territory, included in the OECD-DAC list of ODA recipients, which is not member of the G20 group;
    - i) *Least Developed Countries* (LDCs);
    - ii) *Other Low Income Countries*;
    - iii) *Lower Middle Income Countries and Territories*;
    - iv) *Upper Middle Income Countries and Territories*;
  - or**
  - e) a G-20 member developing country **only** if they are also the (or one of the) beneficiaries of the action; **or**
  - f) an Overseas Country and Territory (OCTs) covered by Council Decision 2013/755/EU of 25 November 2013 on the association of the overseas countries and territories with the European Union; **or**
  - g) a Non EU Member State of the OECD **only** when contracts are implemented in a Least Developed Country (LDC) or in a Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC).
- (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-applicants and affiliated entity(ies) are not in any of these situations.

The lead applicant must act with at least two co-applicants 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 and coordinates the design and implementation of the action.

### **Co-applicants**

Minimum 2 co-applicants are to be involved in the action.

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<sup>6</sup> To be determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes that should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned and that its head office is located in an eligible country. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has been concluded.



Co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant. However, in addition to the categories referred to in section 2.1.1, the following are also eligible:

- entities without legal personality<sup>7</sup>;

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

If awarded the grant contract, the co-applicants will become beneficiaries in the action (together with the Coordinator).

### **2.1.2 Affiliated entities**

The lead applicant and its co-applicants 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):** 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.

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<sup>7</sup> Grant applications may be eligible if submitted by entities which do not have legal personality under the applicable national law, on the condition that the representatives of that entity can prove that they have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on behalf of the entity.

### 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 delegates 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.

### **2.1.3 Associates and Contractors**

The following entities are neither 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 4 — '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.

### **2.1.4 Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made**

#### Definition

An action is composed of a set of activities. In this respective call, the action may be implemented differently in each country where the action will take place.

### Duration

The initial planned duration of the action's implementation may not be lower than **36** months nor exceed **60** months.

### Sectors or themes

The proposal shall reply to all the objectives set for this call for proposals in section 1.2 and the action must relate to the sustainable energy sector & gender equality. This call for proposals intends mainly to promote women's entrepreneurship and job opportunities in the sustainable energy sector/value chain.

For activities to be included see section below on *Eligible Activities*.

The logic of intervention of the Proposal should be presented, explained and supported by a logical framework which will also include the number of targeted beneficiaries.

### Location

The action must take place in multiple countries which are recipients of Official Development Aid (see list in Annex N).

The action must be implemented in **at least 3 countries of which at least 1 in Sub-Saharan Africa** (See Annex O).

Geographical coverage objectives are stated in section 1.2.

### Ineligible activities

The following types of activities are ineligible (non-exhaustive list):

- action concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- action concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- one-off conferences: conferences can only be funded if they form part of a wider range of activities to be implemented in the life-time of the action. For these purposes, preparatory activities for a conference and the publication of the proceedings of the conference do not, in themselves, constitute such “wider activities”;
- activities intended to raise funds or promote the visibility of the applicants, its affiliates, its associates or contractors;
- activities which consist exclusively or primarily in capital expenditure, such as infrastructure, land, equipment;
- activities which discriminate against individuals or groups of people on grounds of their sexual orientation, religious beliefs or lack of them, or their ethnic origin;
- activities supporting directly political parties;
- activities which include proselytizing activities

### Eligible activities

Activities must reply to the objectives (as set in section 1.2 Objectives of the programme and priority issues) and must be related to the types of activities below:

1. Providing affordable finance to facilitate opportunities for women as entrepreneurs/providers in the sustainable energy value chain, or to facilitate their access to modern and sustainable energy services for productive uses;
2. Developing women's technical and entrepreneurial skills in the energy sector and in energy business through adapted training, education, capacity development, exchange of good practices, etc.;
3. Improving the general environment (institutional and societal) for women's entrepreneurship through political advocacy and/or awareness campaigns;
4. Running an adequate system of monitoring and results dissemination, replication of the action.

### Financial support to third parties<sup>8</sup>

Under this call, financial support to third parties is the main purpose of the action.

A particular focus is expected on the *Eligible activities type 1*. Indeed, the lack of affordable finance is identified as the main barrier to boost women's entrepreneurship and business opportunities, therefore the majority of the total budget of the action should be dedicated to Activity type 1 (administrative and operating costs needed to implement the activities can be included in the activity budget).

In practical terms, the applicants shall award financial support to third parties (women entrepreneurs and/or local operators). This activity type can be implemented with possible set-up or contribution to funds providing adequate financial products, services and/or business support directly to women entrepreneurs and/or through local, regional, national operators for further distribution to final beneficiaries. The activities related to financial support to third parties should represent indicatively 70% of the budget of the action. A budget distribution not respecting this requirement should be duly explained and justified or the action will be deemed ineligible.

To allow the appropriate verification, an indicative budget distribution per activity should be presented with the proposal in the **worksheet 4 of Annex B**. This includes an indicative percentage of the global budget of the action per type of activity and the approximate amount channeled directly to final beneficiaries which should be clearly stated as well for type activity 1.

In compliance with the present guidelines and notably of any conditions or restrictions in this section, the lead applicant should define mandatorily in section Annex A.2, section 2.1.1:

- (i) the objectives and results to be obtained with the financial support
- (ii) the different types of activities eligible for financial support, on the basis of a fixed list
- (iii) the types of persons or categories of persons which may receive financial support
- (iv) the criteria for selecting these entities and giving the financial support
- (v) the criteria for determining the exact amount of financial support for each third entity
- (vi) the maximum amount which may be given
- (vii) the system of control set up to verify the eligibility of costs.

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<sup>8</sup> These third parties are neither affiliated entity(ies) nor associates nor contractors under this action.

In all events, the mandatory conditions set above for giving financial support (points (i) to (vii)) have to be strictly defined in the proposal for grant contract as to avoid any exercise of discretion.

The logic of intervention of the Proposal should be presented, explained and supported by a logical framework.

Proposals will be assessed against both quantitative and qualitative criteria as describe in the evaluation grids (page 19 and 21).

### 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](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/communication-and-visibility-manual-eu-external-actions_en)).

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

**An organisation shall not be participating more than once in the present call for proposals as lead applicant.** Should this be the case, the contracting authority will only consider the first proposal arrived (based on the date and hour of submission) and any other additional proposal will be rejected.

## ***2.1.5 Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included***

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

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

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

Simplified cost options may take the form of:

- **unit costs:** covering all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by reference to an amount per unit.
- **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 beneficiaries 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<sup>9</sup>
- 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.

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<sup>9</sup> 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.

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;

## **2.2 HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW**

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

I. Provide information about the organisations involved in the action. Please note that the registration of this data in **PADOR is obligatory**<sup>10</sup> for this call for proposals:

**Concept note step:** Registration is obligatory for lead applicants applying for EU contributions of more than EUR 60000.

**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.

II. 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,

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<sup>10</sup> Natural persons who apply for a grant (if so allowed in the guidelines for applicants) do not have to register in PADOR. In this case, the information included in PROSPECT and the grant application form is sufficient.



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](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'<sup>11</sup> 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](mailto:EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu) via the online support form in PROSPECT.

### **2.2.1 Concept note content**

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the concept note instructions in the grant application form<sup>12</sup> annexed to these guidelines (Annex A.1). Applicants must apply in English or French.

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.

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<sup>11</sup> Which corresponds to sections 3 and 4 of the full application form – Annex A.2.

<sup>12</sup> The grant application form consists of Annex A.1 – concept note and Annex A.2 – full application form.

### 2.2.2 *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. An electronic version 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 full name and address of the lead applicant, and the words ‘Not to be opened before the opening session’ and «Ne pas ouvrir avant la séance d’ouverture».

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:

European Commission  
Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development  
Unit B6 Finance, Contracts & Audit  
Attn. Head of Unit L-41 03/110  
Avenue du Bourget, 1  
1049 Brussels  
Belgium  
Tel : +32 2 2997916

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).

### 2.2.3 *Deadline for submission of concept notes*

The deadline for the submission of concept notes is 25/04/2017 at 16:00 (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**)<sup>13</sup> **The lead applicant is**

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<sup>13</sup> For example: <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html>.

**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 aforementioned 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 16H<sup>14</sup> 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).

#### **2.2.4 Further information about concept notes**

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

E-mail address: **Europeaid-155118@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> as appropriate. 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](mailto: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.

#### **2.2.5 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:

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<sup>14</sup> Please use an online time converter tool, such as the one presented in the footnote above.

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 the co-applicants 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.

## **2.2.6 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> 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. An electronic version 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 Commission  
Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development - EuropeAid  
Unit B6 Finance, Contracts & Audit  
Attn. Head of Unit L-41 03/110  
Avenue du Bourget, 1  
1049 Brussels  
Belgium  
Tel : +32 2 2997916

The 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 pas ouvrir avant la séance d'ouverture'.

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).

### ***2.2.7 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 16H<sup>15</sup> 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).

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<sup>15</sup> Please use an online time converter tool, such as <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html>.

### **2.2.8 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 addresses listed below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: **Europeaid-155118@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), 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> as appropriate. 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](mailto: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.

## **2.3 EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS**

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the Contracting Authority with the possible assistance of external assessors. All 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<sup>16</sup> 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.

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<sup>16</sup> Only where some applications have been submitted offline.

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
<b>1. Relevance of the action</b>	<b>30</b>
1.1. How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the Call for Proposals?*	5x2**
1.2. How relevant to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies) or region(s) is the proposal (including synergy with other EU initiatives and avoidance of duplication)?*  Including coherence of proposed activities with local context and existing framework and initiatives	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
<b>2. Design of the action</b>	<b>20</b>
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**
<b>Maximum total score</b>	<b>50</b>

\*\*these scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance

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

*The Evaluation Committee may re-evaluate the relevance of concept notes in order to ensure a geographical balance when determining the final list of selected concept notes.*

Concept notes that reach the above threshold will be ranked by score. The highest scoring applications will be pre-selected 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<sup>17</sup> 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.

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<sup>17</sup> Only where some applications have been submitted offline.



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<sup>18</sup>

<b>Section</b>	<b>Maximum Score</b>
<b>1. Financial and operational capacity</b>	<b>20</b>
1.1. Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient experience of project management?	5
1.2. Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient technical expertise (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)?  Including, in the last five years, a solid demonstrated and proven successful aggregated/cumulative experience of working in all the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renewable energy sector (including services or products); AND</li> <li>• Women’s entrepreneurship or women empowerment in sustainable energy value chains; or reducing women's poverty; AND</li> <li>• Financial services for micro or small and medium businesses or financial services for the development of sustainable energy value chains; AND</li> <li>• Knowledge, skills development, vocational training, mentoring or similar activities; AND</li> <li>• Advocacy and awareness-raising for gender equality or sensitive issues; AND</li> </ul> Implementation of projects or activities in the countries eligible for the action location (see section 2.1.4 Eligible action) possibly through local network/branches	5
1.3. Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient management capacity (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4. Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5
<b>2. Relevance of the action</b>	<b>30</b>
2.1. How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the Call for Proposals?	5x2**
2.2. How relevant to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies) or region(s) is the proposal (including synergy with other EU initiatives and avoidance of duplication)?  Including coherence of proposed activities with local context and existing framework and	5x2**

<sup>18</sup> 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.

initiatives	
2.3. 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
2.4. 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
<b>3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the action</b>	<b>20</b>
3.1. Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	5
3.2. Is the action plan clear and feasible?	5
3.3. Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the action? Is any evaluation planned?	5
3.4. Is the co-applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s level of involvement and participation in the action satisfactory?  Is the added value of each co-applicant and affiliated entity to the action demonstrated?  Are local partners or local entities involved and is their added value demonstrated?	5
<b>4. Sustainability of the action</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1. Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5
4.2. Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects (including scope for replication, extension and information sharing)?	5
4.3. Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable?:(1) financially (how will the activities be financed after the funding ends?)(2) institutionally (will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the action? Will there be local 'ownership' of the results of the action?)(3) at policy level (where applicable) (what will be the structural impact of the action — e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc?)(4) environmentally (if applicable) (will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?)"	5
<b>5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action</b>	<b>15</b>
5.1. Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	5
5.2. Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	10
<b>Maximum total score</b>	<b>100</b>

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 co-applicants or 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.

*The Evaluation Committee may re-evaluate the relevance of concept notes in order to ensure a geographical balance when determining the final list of selected concept notes.*

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.

### **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, of the co-applicants and (if any) of their affiliated entity(ies)<sup>19</sup>:

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

1. The statutes or articles of association of the lead applicant, of each co-applicant and (if any) of each affiliated entity<sup>20</sup>. 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

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<sup>19</sup> No supporting document will be requested for applications for a grant not exceeding EUR 60000.

<sup>20</sup> 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.

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<sup>21</sup>. This obligation does not apply to international organisations which have signed a framework agreement with the European Commission.

2. An external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the 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 the co-applicants 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.

3. 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 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.
4. 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.
6. Entities without legal personality must, to the extent possible, submit the documentation listed above. In addition, a letter must be provided by the legal representative certifying his/her capacity to undertake legal obligations on behalf of the entity.

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, a translation into one of the languages 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 one of the languages 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/one of the language(s) 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.

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

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.

## 2.4 NOTIFICATION OF THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION

### 2.4.1 *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.

Applicants who were unsuccessful **at the Opening and Administrative Check stage** of the procedure wishing to obtain further information should send their request **by letter**, indicating the reference of the Call for Proposals and the reference allocated to the proposal, to:

European Commission  
Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development — EuropeAid  
Unit B.6 "Finance, Contracts, Audit"  
Attn. Head of Unit  
Rue de la Loi, 41 – L-41 3/110  
B-1049 Brussels  
Belgium

Applicants who were unsuccessful **at the Technical evaluation stages** of the procedure **or at the Eligibility check stage** wishing to obtain further information should send their request, **by letter** indicating the reference of the call for proposals and the reference allocated to the proposal, to:

European Commission  
Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development — EuropeAid  
Unit C.6 "Sustainable Energy and Climate Change"  
Attn. Head of Unit  
Rue de la Loi, 41 – L-41 08/017  
B-1049 Brussels  
Belgium

## 2.4.2 Indicative timetable

	DATE	TIME
<b>1. Information meeting, if any</b> (local time)	N/A	N/A
<b>2. Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the Contracting Authority</b>	04/04/2017	12:00
<b>3. Last date on which clarifications are issued by the Contracting Authority</b>	12/04/2017	16:00
<b>4. Deadline for submission of concept notes</b>	25/04/2017	16:00
<b>5. Information to lead applicants on opening, administrative checks and concept note evaluation (Step 1)</b>	June 2017	-
<b>6. Invitations to submit full applications</b>	June 2017	-
<b>7. Deadline for submission of full applications</b>	July 2017	-
<b>8. Information to lead applicants on the evaluation of the full applications (Step 2)<sup>22</sup></b>	September 2017	-
<b>9. Notification of award (after the eligibility check) (Step 3)</b>	September 2017	-
<b>10. Contract signature<sup>23</sup></b>	October 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>.

<sup>22</sup> 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.

<sup>23</sup> 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

## **2.5 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 beneficiaries and its affiliated entity(ies) (if any) to award procurement contracts, those contracts must be awarded in accordance with Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

## **2.6 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.

### 3 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<sup>24</sup>

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](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/about-procurement-contracts/procedures-and-practical-guide-prag/diems_en) (as all necessary information is available via the link the publication of the annex is optional)

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/>

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<sup>24</sup> These documents should also be published by the Contracting Authority.



Annex M : user manual for PROSPECT :

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

Annex N : DAC List of ODA Recipients

Annex O : List of eligible countries and territories referred in section 2.1.1 of the guidelines

## USEFUL LINKS

PROJECT CYCLE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

[https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/aid-delivery-methods-project-cycle-management-guidelines-vol-1\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/aid-delivery-methods-project-cycle-management-guidelines-vol-1_en)

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GRANT CONTRACTS - A USERS' GUIDE

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

FINANCIAL TOOLKIT

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/financial-management-toolkit-for-recipients-15112010\\_en.pdf](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.

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