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*African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States*

“ACP-EU TradeCom II PROGRAMME”

(REG/FED/022-667)

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**Improvement of Port Customs and Operations Efficiency in Africa**

**Contracting authority**: Fondazione Accademia Italiana della Marina Mercantile

Grant scheme for support to implementation of Port Community Systems – Maritime/Logistics Single Windows

Guidelines
for grant applicants

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING PROJECT PROPOSALS :**

**March 12 2021 12.00 CEST**

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| --- | --- |
| ACP | African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States |
| ARSTM | Académie Régionale des Sciences et Techniques de la Mer |
| CET | Common External Tariff |
| EPA | Economic Partnership Agreement |
| EU | European Union |
| FAIMM | Fondazione Accademia Italiana della Marina Mercantile |
| FAL Convention | IMO Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic |
| IMO | International Maritime Organization |
| MSW | Maritime Single Window |
| MT Training | Mid-Term Training |
| PCO professionals | Port Customs and Operations Professionals (trained under activity 2.2 and delivering training to others under activity 2.4) |
| PMAWCA | Port Management Association of West and Central Africa |
| ST Training | Short-term Training |
| WP | Work Package |

# Grant Scheme for Support to Implementation of port Community Systems – Maritime/logistics Single windows in Africa Ports

## Background

Maritime trade in the ECOWAS region is increasingly important, in regard of both trade with the EU and intra-community trade. West Africa is the EU's largest trading partner in Sub-Saharan Africa and represents 2% of EU trade (2.2% of EU imports and 1.8% of EU exports). The EU is West Africa's biggest trading partner, accounting for 37.8% of West Africa's exports and 24.2% of West Africa's imports. In value, EU – West Africa trade amounts to € 68 billion, and West Africa has a trade surplus of € 5.8 billion. It goes without saying that the almost totality of trade in goods between EU and ECOWAS is done by sea.

Intra-community trade by sea in ECOWAS is instead lagging behind. Despite proximity and the chance to maximize efficiency through building regional supply chains, the share of ECOWAS partners in trade statistics of each ECOWAS countries are very low. This is reportedly due to two kinds of problems: poor infrastructures and inefficient, cumbersome and, often, unfair procedures for shipping goods.

In particular, inefficient customs and port operations, in particular administrative clearance procedures, are plaguing activities in West Africa ports. Reportedly, the cost of ports operations, involving multiple stakeholders, institutions, organizations, can easily reach more than 70% of the value of the cargo. These costs for international and sub-regional trade in west and central Africa are widely recognized as crucial disincentives to shippers, hampering the growth of the whole region.

Accordingly, the improvement of efficiency of custom procedures and, in general, of administrative clearance process for trade is a priority for enabling an effective trade in the region and, more specifically, ensure an effective implementation of two crucial instruments:

* The ECOWAS Common External Tariff (CET), a crucial feature of the West Africa Customs Union. The effectiveness of the CET can be ensured only through smooth customs procedures in commercial ports
* The Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between West Africa and the European Union.

The project IPCOEA “Improvement of Port Customs and Operations Efficiency in Africa”, is financed by the European Union and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, with the aim of addressing the challenges above, thgough support to the implementation of Port Community Systems and Single Window systems: A trade facilitation instrument enabling:

* submission of regulatory documents, including customs declarations, applications for import/export permits, certificates of origin, trading invoices and other supporting documents, to a single point
* connection of the activities of all public and private entities that composes a port community

The project is implemented by the international partnership composed by:

* The Italian Shipping Academy (FAIMM), based in Genoa, Italy
* The Regional Academy of Sciences and Techniques of the Sea (ARSTM), based in Abidjan
* The Port Management Association of Western and Central Africa (PMAWCA), based in Lagos

A crucial activity of our project will be the implementation of a Grant Scheme with the aim of making available to actors of Western Africa port communities the resources to implement small-scale actions to start or continue the set-up of Single Windows and/or Port Community Systems.

## Objectives of the programme and priority issues

The **global objective** of this call for proposals is to contribute to closer regional integration and increased participation in the global economy of ACP countries and regions through longer-term and locally anchored institutional capacity building.

The **specific objective** of this call for proposals is: Promoting the implementation of a single window and/or Port Community System approach in ports of the ECOWAS region through the realisation of small-scale actions to start-up or strengthen local process to establish SW/PCS.

The priority(ies) of this call for proposals is/are:

* Promotion of inter-agency cooperation structures within the port community through joint study and planning of activities between public bodies;
* Co-financing of joint acquisition of IT equipment and/or services; including tools and services to establish mitigation measures countering the COVID-19 Pandemic through digitalization of procedures in a PCS framework.
* Joint studies on implementation of global best practices for single window/PCS in the port.

## Financial allocation provided by the contracting authority

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is EUR 336.000,00. The contracting authority can increase this amount to up to 420.000 Euros depending on the approval of the European Commission and the OACP and the quality of received proposals. The contracting authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

### Size of grants

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

* minimum amount: EUR < 30,000
* maximum amount: EUR <60,000>

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: 50 % of the total eligible costs of the action.]
* Maximum percentage: 80 % 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 general budget of the Union or the European Development Fund[[1]](#footnote-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 on the internet at this address <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/document.do?locale=en>).[[2]](#footnote-2)

## 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 actions:

Actions 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).

### 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 a specific type of organisation involved in the **management of port operations** such as Port Authority, Port Management Organisation, Customs agency, sanitary agency, immigration agency etc. and
* be established in[[3]](#footnote-3) Benin, Cabo Verde, Côte D'ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone or Togo **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

(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 2.6.10.1 of the practical guide;
Lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entities and, in case of legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over the lead applicant, the co-applicants and the affiliated entities are informed that, should they be in one of the situations of early detection or exclusion according to Section 2.6.10.1 of the practical guide, 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 early detection and exclusion system, and communicated to the persons and entities concerned in relation to the award or the execution of a grant contract. In this respect, provisionally selected lead applicants, co-applicants and affiliated entities are obliged to declare that they are not in one of the exclusion situations through a signed declaration on honour (PRAG Annex A14). For grants of EUR 60 000 or less, no declaration on honour is required. See section 2.4.
In Part B Section 8 of the grant application form (‘declaration(s) 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 may act individually or with co-applicant(s).

If awarded the grant contract, the lead applicant will become the beneficiary identified as the coordinator in Annex G (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)**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 satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant himself.
Co-applicants must sign the mandate in Part B Section 4 of the grant application form.
If awarded the grant contract, the co-applicant(s) (if any) will become beneficiary(ies) in the action (together with the coordinator).

(3) Applicants included in the lists of EU restrictive measures (see Section 2.4. of the PRAG) at the
moment of the award decision cannot be awarded the contract[[4]](#footnote-4).

### Affiliated entities

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 an applicant may hence be:

* Entities directly or indirectly controlled by the applicant (daughter companies or first-tier subsidiaries). They may also be entities controlled by an entity controlled by the 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 the 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 Part B Section 5 of the grant application form.]

### 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 Part B Section 6 — ‘Associates participating in the action’ — of the grant application form.

* 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.

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

**Definition:**

An action is composed of a set of activities.

**Duration**

The initial planned duration of an action may not be lower than 2 months nor exceed 6 months.

**Sectors or themes**

The action must address one or more of the following issues:

* Support the start-up of the process for establishing a Port Single Window or Port Community System
* Support and improve an on-going process of establishment of a Port Single Window or Port Community System, by adding features for trade facilitation
* Support the integration of an existing Port Single Window or Port Community System within a national system for trade facilitation
* Support the integration of an existing Port/Maritime Single Window Systems or Port Community System in a regional initiative.

Location

Actions must take place in one or more of the following countries: Benin, Cabo Verde, Côte D'ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo

**Types of action**

The following type of actions can be financed under this call for proposal (non-exhaustive list):

* Purchase of equipment for implementing a Port Single Window/Port Community System
* Acquisition of services in support to the implementation of Port Single Window/Port Community systems, such as IT development services, training, studies etc.
* Realisation of inter-institutional cooperation actions

The following types of action are **ineligible**:

* actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
* actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;

**Types of activity**

* Activities to purchase equipment and acquire services in support to Single Window or Port Community System start-up or implementation
* Workshops and seminars for training or implementation of inter-institutional cooperation
* Installation, start-up, implementation of new equipment or services.
* Any other action involving multiple port stakeholders aimed at supporting the implementation of port community systems or Single Window systems

**Visibility**

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

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

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

The lead applicant or co-applicants may not submit more than one application under this call for proposals.

### 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 shall be based on actual costs incurred by the beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies);

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).

The applicants (and where applicable their affiliated entities) agree that the expenditure verification(s) referred to in Article 15.7 of the general conditions to the standard grant contract (see Annex G of the guidelines) will be carried out by

*Studio Mariotti e Benvenuti*

*Via Verdi 82, 50019 Sesto Fiorentino (Florence), Italy*

**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.

**Ethics clauses and Code of Conduct**

a) Absence of conflict of interest

The applicant must not be affected by any conflict of interest and must have no equivalent relation in that respect with other applicants or parties involved in the actions. Any attempt by an applicant to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the evaluation committee or the contracting authority during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing applications will lead to the rejection of its application and may result in administrative penalties according to the Financial Regulation in force.

b) Respect for human rights as well as environmental legislation and core labour standards

The applicant and its staff must comply with human rights. In particular and in accordance with the applicable act, applicants who have been awarded contracts must comply with the environmental legislation including multilateral environmental agreements, and with the core labour standards as applicable and as defined in the relevant International Labour Organisation conventions (such as the conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining; elimination of forced and compulsory labour; abolition of child labour).

**Zero tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment**

The European Commission applies a policy of 'zero tolerance' in relation to all wrongful conduct which has an impact on the professional credibility of the applicant.

Physical abuse or punishment, or threats of physical abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation, harassment and verbal abuse, as well as other forms of intimidation shall be prohibited.

c) Anti-corruption and anti-bribery

The applicant shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations and codes relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption. The European Commission reserves the right to suspend or cancel project financing if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process or during the execution of a contract and if the contracting authority fails to take all appropriate measures to remedy the situation. For the purposes of this provision, ‘corrupt practices’ are the offer of a bribe, gift, gratuity or commission to any person as an inducement or reward for performing or refraining from any act relating to the award of a contract or execution of a contract already concluded with the contracting authority.

 d) Unusual commercial expenses

Applications will be rejected or contracts terminated if it emerges that the award or execution of a contract has given rise to unusual commercial expenses. Such unusual commercial expenses are commissions not mentioned in the main contract or not stemming from a properly concluded contract referring to the main contract, commissions not paid in return for any actual and legitimate service, commissions remitted to a tax haven, commissions paid to a payee who is not clearly identified or commissions paid to a company which has every appearance of being a front company.

Grant beneficiaries found to have paid unusual commercial expenses on projects funded by the European Union are liable, depending on the seriousness of the facts observed, to have their contracts terminated or to be permanently excluded from receiving EU/EDF funds.

e) Breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud

The contracting authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud. If breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the contract, the contracting authority may refrain from concluding the contract.

## How to apply and the procedures to follow

Application forms

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the instructions in the grant application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex A).

Applicants must apply in <English, French, or Portuguese: Applicants must apply in the language most commonly used by the target population in the country in which the action takes place.]

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

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

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Please note that only the grant application form and the published annexes which have to be filled in will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL the relevant information concerning the action.

### Where and how to send applications

Applications must be submitted by uploading the complete application form in the dedicated section of the website [www.ipcoea.net](http://www.ipcoea.net)

Lead applicants must verify that their application is complete using the checklist (Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form)

### Deadline for submission of applications

The deadline for the submission of applications is 12 March 2021 as evidenced by the date of upload of the application form.

### Further information about applications

An information session on this call for proposals will be held on <date> at <X hours><add place if necessary>

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 7 days before the deadline for the submission of applications to the below address(es), indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: <Simoncini.m@imssea.org >

The contracting authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 5 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.

Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with the answers, will be published on the website of the IPCOEA Project: [www.ipcoea.net](http://www.ipcoea.net) .

Please note that the contracting authority may decide to cancel the call for proposals procedure at any stage according to the conditions set out in Section 6.5.9 of the PRAG.

## 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.

1. **STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS**

During the opening and administrative check the following will be assessed:

* + - If the deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will be automatically rejected.
* If the application satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist in Section 7 of Part B] of the grant application form. 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.
1. **STEP 2: EVALUATION OF THE FULL APPLICATION**

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

**The selection criteria** help to evaluate the applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s operational capacity and the 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 any affiliated entity(ies).

**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.

*Scoring:*

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

**Evaluation grid**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section** | **Maximum Score** |
| **1. Financial and operational capacity** | **10** |
| 1.1 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient in-house expertise in port operations?  | 5 |
| 1.4 Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance? | 5 |
| **2. Relevance** | **20** |
| *Is the objective of the Action in line with the objectives of the IPCOEA project as set out in the guidelines?* | **5** |
| *Is the benefit of the action to the process of PCS/SW implementation clearly described?* | **10** |
| *Is the inter-institutional cooperation assured in the application by having multiple stakeholders as co-applicants or affiliated entities?* | **5** |
| **3. Design of the action and Implementation approach** | **20** |
| 3.1 How coherent is the design of the action? Are the services and equipment to be procured clearly identified? | 10 |
| 3.2 Does the proposal include credible baseline, targets and sources of verification? If not, is a baseline study foreseen (and is the study budgeted appropriately in the proposal)? | 5 |
| 3.3 Is the action plan for implementing the action clear and feasible? Is the timeline realistic? | 5 |
| **5. Sustainability of the action**  | **10** |
| 5.1 Is the action likely to have multiplier effects, including scope for replication, extension, capitalisation on experience and knowledge sharing? | 5 |
| 5.2 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable?:- Financially *(e.g. financing of follow-up activities, sources of revenue for covering all future operating and maintenance costs)*- Institutionally *(will structures allow the results of the action to be sustained at the end of the action? Will there be local ‘ownership’ of the results of the action?)*- At policy level (where applicable) *(what will be the structural impact of the action — e.g. improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods)*- Environmentally (if applicable) *(will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?)* | 5 |
| **6. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action** | **40** |
| 6.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget? | / 10 |
| 6.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the results satisfactory? | / 10 |
| 6.3 What is the financial commitment of the applicants given by the co-financing proposed (50%: 20 points, 80%: 0 points) | / 20 |
| **Maximum total score** | **100** |

If the total score for Section 1 (financial and operational capacity) is less than 6 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 4.3 shall be 5 unless the involvement of co-applicants or affiliated entities is mandatory according to these guidelines for applicants.

*Provisional selection*

After the evaluation, a table will be drawn up listing the applications 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.

1. **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 by default 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 8 of Part B of the grant application form) 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)[[5]](#footnote-5):

The statutes or articles of association of the lead applicant, (if any) of each co-applicant and (if any) of each affiliated entity[[6]](#footnote-6). 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[[7]](#footnote-7). This obligation does not apply to international organisations which have signed a framework agreement with the European Commission.

A copy of the lead applicant’s latest accounts (the profit and loss account and the balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed)[[8]](#footnote-8). A copy of the latest account is neither required from (if any) the co-applicant(s) nor from (if any) affiliated entity(ies)).

[Legal entity sheet (see Annex C 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.]

[A financial identification form of the lead applicant (not from co-applicant(s)) conforming to the model attached as Annex D 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.]

[Documents 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/one of the language(s) 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 applicant's and, where applicable, co-applicants' and affiliated entity(ies)' eligibility, into <the/one of the language(s) of the call for proposals >.

If the abovementioned supporting documents are not provided before the deadline indicated in the request for supporting documents sent to the 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.

## Notification of the Contracting Authority’s decision

### 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.

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 and, if they are legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over them, are informed that, should they be in one of the situations of early detection or exclusion, 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 early detection and exclusion system, and communicated to the persons and entities concerned in relation to the award or the execution of a grant contract.

For more information, you may consult the privacy statement available on <http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm>

1. LIST OF annexes

**Documents to be completed**

Annex A: Grant application form (Word format)

Annex B: Budget (Excel format)

[Annex C: Legal entity sheet]

[Annex D: Financial identification form]

**DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION[[9]](#footnote-9)**

Annex E: Standard grant contract

- Annex II to the Grant Contract: general conditions

Annex III to the Grant Contract: Budget for the action

Annex IV to the Grant Contract: Procurement rules for beneficiary(ies)

Annex V to the Grant Contract: Standard request for payment

Annex VI to the Grant Contract: Model narrative and financial report

Annex F: Declaration on Honour

Annex G: 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 for assessing simplified cost options.

**Useful links:**

**Project Cycle Management Guidelines**

[http://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&locale=en>

**Financial Toolkit**

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

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. 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-1)
2. Note that a lead applicant (i.e. a coordinator) 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 contribution agreement based on the contribution agreement 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 contribution agreement template. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. To be determined on the basis of the organisation’s statutes, which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned and that its head office is located in an eligible country. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ has been concluded. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The updated lists of sanctions are available at [www.sanctionsmap.eu](http://www.sanctionsmap.eu).

Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. No supporting document will be requested for applications for a grant not exceeding EUR 60 000. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. 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-6)
7. To be inserted only where the eligibility conditions have not changed from one call for proposals to the other. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. This obligation does not apply to natural persons who have received a scholarship or that are in most need in receipt of direct support, nor to public bodies and to international organisations. It does not apply either when the accounts are in practice the same documents as the external audit report already provided pursuant to Section 2.4.2. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. These documents should also be published by the contracting authority. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)