



Contracting Authority: European Commission

Regional Campaign to Prevent and Combat Violence against Women and Girls in the Southern Neighbourhood Countries

Guidelines for grant applicants

Budget line: 22.04.01.01

Reference: EuropeAid/159469/DH/ACT/Multi

Deadline for submission¹ of concept notes:

8 May 2018 at 12:00 (Brussels date and time)

(in order to convert to local time click **here**²)

¹ Online submission via PROSPECT is mandatory for this call for proposals (see Section 2.2.2). In PROSPECT all dates and times are expressed in Brussels time. Applicants should note that the IT support is open Monday to Friday from 08:30 to 18:30 Brussels time (except for public holidays). Applicants should take note of the weekly maintenance hours mentioned in the PROSPECT user manual.

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

NOTICE

This is a restricted call for proposals. In the first instance, only concept notes (Annex A.1) must be submitted for evaluation. Thereafter, lead applicants who have been pre-selected will be invited to submit a full application. After the evaluation of the full applications, an eligibility check will be performed for those which have been provisionally selected. Eligibility will be checked on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the Contracting Authority and the signed 'declaration by the lead applicant' sent together with the full application.

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

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 PROSPECT³.

³ If PROSPECT is unavailable, the IT support can also be reached via email: EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu.

Table of contents

1. REGIONAL CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT AND COMBAT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN THE SOUTHERN NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNTRIES	4
1.1. Background.....	4
1.2. Objectives of the programme and priority issues	5
1.3. Financial allocation provided by the contracting authority	8
2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS	9
2.1. Eligibility criteria.....	9
2.1.1. Eligibility of applicants (i.e. lead applicant and co-applicants).....	9
2.1.2. Affiliated entities.....	11
2.1.3. Associates and Contractors	12
2.1.4. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made.....	13
2.1.5. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included	17
2.2. How to apply and the procedures to follow	20
2.2.1. Concept note content.....	21
2.2.2. Where and how to send concept notes	21
2.2.3. Deadline for submission of concept notes.....	22
2.2.4. Further information about concept notes.....	22
2.2.5. Full applications	22
2.2.6. Where and how to send full applications	23
2.2.7. Deadline for submission of full applications.....	23
2.2.8. Further information about full applications.....	23
2.3. Evaluation and selection of applications	24
2.4. Submission of supporting documents for provisionally selected applications	31
2.5. Notification of the Contracting Authority's decision	32
2.5.1. Content of the decision.....	32
2.5.2. Indicative timetable.....	32
2.6. Conditions for implementation after the Contracting Authority's decision to award a grant.....	33
2.7. Early detection and exclusion system (edes).....	33
3. LIST OF ANNEXES	35

1. REGIONAL CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT AND COMBAT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN THE SOUTHERN NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNTRIES

1.1. BACKGROUND

The European Commission Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality for 2016-2019⁴ defines combating gender-based violence as one of the priority areas for the European Commission's work to promote gender equality. In the Joint Staff Working Document on "Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020⁵", the European Commission and the European External Action Service reaffirm their commitment to continue to contribute in a measurable manner to preventing, and responding to, all forms of violence against girls and women.

Violence against women and girls includes all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women and girls⁶. For the purpose of this call for proposals, it includes violence and abuse in close relationships; sexual violence (including rape, sexual assault and harassment or stalking); harmful practices, such as forced and early marriages, female genital mutilation and so-called 'honour' crimes; gender-based violence in workplace and cyber violence and harassment using new technologies.

Violence against women and girls is both a cause and a consequence of structural gender inequalities. It is a violation of human rights and the most brutal form of discrimination on the basis of sex, and results from unequal power relations between women and men. Conversely, it hinders women from fully participating in the public and political sphere, labour market and society at large.

Women and girls in the Euro-Mediterranean area as well as in all parts of the world are subject to violence in the private and public spheres. In the Southern Neighbourhood region, there is little reliable and comparable data about the prevalence and trends in violence against women and girls. However, women's organisations' reports and national surveys attest that the number of women and girls victims of violence is very high. The combination of discriminative legislation, absence of a comprehensive and effective protection and support for victims; the division between the public and the private spheres and the traditional link between family "honour" and women lead in some contexts to the most extreme form of abuse and violence and normalise violence against women. Even when countries have adopted specific laws criminalising violence against women, these laws are not effectively implemented.

Traditional social norms and practices persist: genital mutilation; difficulty of access to sexual and reproductive health; prohibition of abortion including in cases of danger to the health of the mother, risk of malformation of the foetus and in cases of incest and rape; forced and early marriage, to name some.

Economic factors such as poverty and unemployment can exacerbate violence against women and children. Poverty generates frustration and humiliation that create violence against "the weaker part" of the family: women and children. Poverty makes women more vulnerable to male violence because it deprives them of their autonomy. Therefore, financial autonomy of women is a major precondition to curb violence. Refugee and migrant women and girls are particularly vulnerable and exposed to gender-based violence.

Girls and women in rural areas have less access to protection as the most women's organisations that work for increased protection of women and promote women's rights are situated in big cities. Violence against women and honour killings in some countries tend to be much more common and early marriage is

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/strategic_engagement_en.pdf.

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/joint-staff-working-document-gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment-transforming-lives-girls-and_en.

⁶ 1993 United Nations General Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (A/RES/48/104) - <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>.

widespread. Young women are particularly affected by violence and the public space is increasingly unequal and sexist.

Furthermore, women are also facing institutional violence: in most countries, women do not have the same citizenship rights and nationality rights as men. In all countries in the Middle East and North Africa women face legal discrimination in personal status law and under the penal code. Lack of legal status of refugee and migrant women can expose them to further institutional violence.

International and Euro-Mediterranean policy frameworks

Harmonising legislation with international standards, notably the Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and Beijing Platform for Action has been seen as a pre-condition for the elimination of all forms of violence against women. In this respect, lifting the reservations to the CEDAW which allow formal, legal discrimination against women in personal status matters (divorce, marriage, inheritance, property, custody), remains a means and a goal. Through these reservations women are denied their status of full citizens. Furthermore, the reservations concern fundamental articles of the CEDAW as well as the object and purpose of the treaty and hence they are invalid according to Article 19 of the Vienna Convention on the Laws of Treaties.

The EU has signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) on 13th of June 2017. The Istanbul Convention is the first legally binding regional instrument in Europe that comprehensively addresses different forms of violence against women including psychological violence, stalking, physical violence, sexual violence and sexual harassment. This is an open convention that all countries can sign and ratify and, beyond the CEDAW, represents the most comprehensive framework on violence against women in Europe to date.

At the 4th Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Ministerial Conference on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society, held in Cairo on 27th of November 2017, the Ministers strongly condemned all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG), including domestic violence, human trafficking, harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and early marriage as well as public harassment. They reasserted that gender-based violence is a violation of human rights and acknowledged that not only violence against women undermines the physical and psychological health, dignity, security and autonomy of its victims, but it weakens society as a whole by preventing women from playing their full social, economic and political part in our societies. The Ministers agreed to promote, among other actions to empower women, specific actions to combat VAWG such as enforcing the existing legal and policy framework to eradicating VAWG and developing national campaigns for zero tolerance towards VAWG. This conference was the occasion for the Ministers to decide to launch a regional campaign to prevent VAWG. As a follow-up of the Declaration adopted by the Ministers, the European Commission agreed to fund and implement the regional campaign.

The European Commission sponsored the organisation of a Civil Society back to back Conference with the 4th UfM Women Ministerial Conference in Cairo on 22th and 23rd of November 2017. Building on the achievements of the Gender Regional Platform, developed from 2015 to 2017 with EU funding, the Civil Society Conference issued recommendations (Cairo Declaration⁷) for concrete policy measures to the 4th UfM Women Ministerial Conference and to be implemented by the governments before the 5th UfM Women Ministerial Conference that shall take place in 2021 at the latest.

1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

The **global objective** of this call for proposals is to contribute to gender equality and improving the status of women and girls in the Southern Neighbourhood countries.

The **specific objectives** of this call for proposals are: (i) to support national stakeholders in developing and implementing practical and targeted information, awareness-raising and education activities aimed at

⁷ <http://www.efi-ife.org/declaration-euro-med-women%E2%80%99s-rights-civil-society-conference>.

preventing and combating violence against women and girls (VAWG) in the Southern Neighbourhood countries; (ii) to develop the capacity of civil society organisations in the Southern Neighbourhood countries, and notably women's organisations, promoting legislation criminalising VAWG and (iii) the establishment of a civil society mechanism to follow the achievements on VAWG made by the national governments in the Southern Neighbourhood countries.

The **expected results** of this call for proposals:

The regional campaign will aim to contribute to the achievement of the following:

- Changing perceptions, attitudes and behaviours towards violence against women and girls, with the overall objective and aim of preventing it from happening;
- Encouraging men and boys to challenge sexism and gender norms that promote or enhance acts of violence against women, and actively engage in the fight against violence against women;
- Informing victims, including victims along the migration routes and victims of human trafficking, about their rights and the existing support services (shelters, helplines etc.) and protection measures available in their country or country of transit/destination.

The capacity development activities targeting civil society will aim to achieve the following:

- Increasing the capacities and number of civil society organisations in the Southern Neighbourhood countries, and notably women's organisations, that promote legislation criminalising VAWG and its implementation, particularly the Istanbul Convention;
- Supporting the building of political will towards legal and policy change favouring women's rights and gender equality.

The civil society monitoring mechanism will aim to achieve the following:

Monitoring the implementation of the recommendations on combating all forms of VAWG and the recommendations on Women, Peace and Security as well as prevention and resolution of social conflicts, violence and extremism contained in the UfM Women Ministerial Declaration adopted on 27th of November 2017 by the UfM Ministers.

The proposals shall be designed according to a **Rights-Based Approach**⁸. In addition, the proposals should take into account the following **working principles**:

- a. As it is a regional campaign, the approach is to have a single regional campaign visual/identity but messages adapted to the cultural and societal specificities of each country and to the most pressing problem of each country. It is therefore important that the campaign at country level is adapted to the national context. The campaign has to address common regional challenges while responding to national realities and priorities.
- b. The campaign shall target women and girls as victims of violence but also as actors for change. It shall also target men and boys as perpetrators of violence but also as agents of social transformation by making them engaged in their families and communities on VAWG, a problem that should not be seen as a women's issue. It is widely known that an important key to eliminating violence against women is to work with men and through men. The campaign may also be targeted at specific groups of women and girls (e.g. young women, migrant or refugee women, women in rural areas, elderly women, women with disabilities).
- c. The campaign shall mainly target the Southern Neighbourhood countries. However, the participation of non-EU UfM countries (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mauritania, Montenegro and Turkey) may be envisaged. Exchange of best practices with EU countries shall be encouraged.

⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sectors/rights-based-approach-development-cooperation_en.

- d. The regional campaign and the capacity building actions targeting civil society will be prepared taking into account what the other international donors are doing in the region to raise awareness on VAWG and to combat this phenomenon, in particular the EU Delegations in the Southern Neighbourhood countries, the EU Member States and the UN agencies in view of complementing their action, promoting synergies and avoiding duplication.
- e. The civil society mechanism to monitor the implementation of the UfM Ministerial recommendations on VAWG shall be liaised and linked up with the regional and operational follow-up mechanism against agreed indicators that the UfM Secretariat will establish to monitor implementation and progress of the UfM ministerial recommendations on strengthening the role of women in society.
- f. The campaign shall not only include information and awareness raising actions but also some education actions targeting citizens, especially young people, journalists, school and judiciary staff.
- g. It is likely that television advertising will be too expensive in view of the funds available. The campaign should look at using other media such as radio, bill boards in public spaces, video clips and social media.
- h. The activities of this call for proposals shall be carried out in collaboration with the EU Delegations in the region, the national and local authorities, the civil society, the media and the Union for the Mediterranean.
- i. The beneficiary should plan and budget for sufficient measures to ensure the management of financial support to third parties, including capacity development, coaching and on-the-job training of grants beneficiaries to support the recipients of financial support in the implementation of their activities, as well as in the management of the financial support (e.g. related to financial and narrative reporting, progress monitoring, budget execution and revision, etc.), and to ensure oversight, monitoring and evaluation of the grants.
- j. Actions, especially those to be financed from the financial support to third parties, should involve and be carried out in co-operation with local authorities, public sector, decision makers of relevant sectors, and co-ordinate and complement (avoid duplication of services) with existing service providers at relevant (local and/or regional) level wherever possible (for instance: schools and education boards, providers of health and social services and their related authorities and local committees/boards, legal and judicial services, Courts, police, bodies providing entrepreneurial and vocational training or rehabilitation, etc.).
- k. Involve not only women and girls but also men and boys into actions as agents of change.
- l. Work with opinion/religious leaders such as priest, imams and theologians, village elders and youth leaders should be part of the approach whenever relevant.
- m. Focus on impact, outcome and specific and measurable results which make a concrete difference in the lives of women and girls and the community as a whole⁹.
- n. The European Commission is also financing the SUDMED-III Programme of the Council of Europe, part of which shall be devoted to lobbying for the adoption of the Istanbul Convention by Southern Neighbourhood countries, concentrating on Ministries and legislative bodies.
- o. The Delegations of the European Union in the Southern Neighbourhood countries shall be consulted on the selection of the civil society organisations benefiting from this call for proposals.

⁹ For details on designing and measuring interventions with concrete impact on combating violence against women and girls, see Rafael Almeida, Sousa Lourenço, Jacques & Ciriolo (2016). 'Insights from behavioural sciences to prevent and combat violence against women. Literature review': <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/publication/euro-scientific-and-technical-research-reports/insights-behavioural-sciences-prevent-and-combat-violence-against-women-literature-review>.

1.3. FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is **EUR 3,600,000**. The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

Only **one grant** will be allocated.

Size of grants

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

- minimum amount: EUR 3,000,000
- maximum amount: EUR 3,600,000

Any grant requested under this call for proposals must comply with the following maximum percentage of total eligible costs of the action:

- Maximum percentage: 90% of the total eligible costs of the action (see also section 2.1.5).

The balance (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the Contracting Authority) must be financed from sources other than the European Union Budget or the European Development Fund¹⁰.

10 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 on the Internet at this address <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/document.do?locale=en>).¹¹

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),
- 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);

(2) the actions:

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

(3) the costs:

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

2.1.1. Eligibility of applicants (i.e. 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 non-profit-making **and**
- be a civil society organisation as defined by COM(2012) 0492¹² or a representative, membership-based regional network or umbrella organisation of civil society organisations (CSOs) **and**
- be established in¹³ a Member State of the European Union¹⁴ or one of the ENI South partner countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine¹⁵, Syria¹⁶ and

¹¹ 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 PA Grant Agreement based on the PAGO DA 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 PAGO DA template.

¹² "The EU considers CSOs to include all non-State, not-for-profit structures, non-partisan and non-violent, through which people organise to pursue shared objectives and ideals, whether political, cultural, social or economic. Operating from the local to the national, regional and international levels, they comprise urban and rural, formal and informal organisations" COM(2012) 0492.

¹³ 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

Tunisia) or a country that is a beneficiary of an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) set up by Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 or a Member State of the European Economic Area (EEA) **and**

- be a CSO or a representative, membership-based regional network or umbrella organisation of CSOs whose thematic focus area is women's rights and empowerment **and**
- be a CSO or a representative, membership-based regional network or umbrella organisation of CSOs active in at least 3 countries of the Southern Neighbourhood **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 2.3.3 of the Practical Guide;

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

The lead applicant must act with co-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 (if any) and coordinate the design and implementation of the action.

Co-applicants

The lead applicant has to be in a partnership with at least two co-applicants (in addition to the lead applicant). At least, one co-applicant must be established in a country of the Southern Neighbourhood.

The partnership should involve organisations which have proven and complementary experience in the relevant areas of the call for proposals.

The partnership will have to demonstrate strong management capacities, in particular to implement grants and preferably financial support to third parties, and to monitor and coach the third parties.

The lead applicant and co-applicants will have to demonstrate their expertise in the field of women's rights and empowerment, as well as their experience implementing raise awareness, information and communication actions and capacity building activities targeting civil society organisations in the Southern Neighbourhood countries.

considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has been concluded.

¹⁴ For British applicants: Please be aware that eligibility criteria must be complied with for the entire duration of the grant. If the United Kingdom withdraws from the EU during the grant period without concluding an agreement with the EU ensuring in particular that British applicants continue to be eligible, you will cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the project on the basis of Article 12.2 of the General Conditions to the grant agreement (Annex E3h2).

¹⁵ This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

¹⁶ At the time this document was prepared, EU cooperation with Syria (government entities) was suspended due to the political situation in the country. In the light of future decisions, the Commission shall assess the opportunity to involve Syrian authorities in the action's implementation.

It is recommended not to involve more co-applicants than is needed. All co-applicants must be carefully chosen and play a strategic and an active role in the activities proposed. All proposals must demonstrate the value-added that all co-applicants bring to the programme and its activities.

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.

In addition to the categories referred to in section 2.1.1, the following are however also eligible:

- profit organisations¹⁷ such as, but not limited to, marketing and communication agencies.

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-applicants:

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.

¹⁷ Actions and activities under this grant shall not generate profit for the Beneficiaries. 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.

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 delegates 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-applicants. They must sign the affiliated entity(ies) statement in Annex A.2, section 5.

In addition to the categories referred to in section 2.1.1, the following are however also eligible:

- specific types of organisations such as: public sector operator, local authority, higher education and research institutions, think tanks, media operators, international organisations.

2.1.3. *Associates and Contractors*

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

- Associates

Other organisations or individuals may be involved in the action. Such associates play a real role in the action but may not receive funding from the grant, with the exception of per diem or travel costs. Associates do not have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in section 2.1.1. Associates must be mentioned in Annex A.2, section 6 — ‘Associates participating in the action’.

- Contractors

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

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

Definition

An action is composed of a set of activities.

Duration

The initial planned duration of an action may not exceed 36 months.

Sectors or themes

- Awareness raising, information and communication campaigns on violence against women and girls.
- Capacity development actions targeting civil society organisations in the Southern Neighbourhood, notably women's organisations, that are promoting legislation criminalising violence against women's and girls and its implementation, particularly the Istanbul Convention, and supporting the building of political will towards legal and policy change to prevent and combat violence against women's and girls.
- Monitoring the achievements and progresses made by the national governments in the region to prevent and combat violence against women, in particular the implementation of the recommendations made by the UfM Ministers at the 4th UfM Women Ministerial Conference on combating all forms of violence against women and girls, on Women, Peace and Security as well as on prevention and resolution of social conflicts, violence and extremism.

Location

Actions must cover at least 5 of the following Southern Neighbourhood partner countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel¹⁸, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine¹⁹, Syria²⁰ and Tunisia). Additionally they can also take place in the non-EU UfM countries (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mauritania, Montenegro and Turkey).

Applicants must ensure inclusiveness of participation (regarding the diversity of actors in the region) of civil society organisations from all countries within the Southern Neighbourhood region.

Types of action

All applicants should propose an intervention strategy and methodology that is adequate and efficient in relation to the implementation of the objectives and priorities referred in section 1.2.

Types of action which may be financed under this call for proposals include:

¹⁸ See Guidelines on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the EU from 2014 onwards on http://eurlex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2013.205.01.0009.01.ENG.

¹⁹ This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

²⁰ EU cooperation with the Syrian government has been suspended since 2011 until the political situation improves. However, the EU can invite, involve and support Syrian civil society representatives in its cooperation activities.

- Awareness raising, communication and information campaigns, including education actions targeting citizens, especially young people, journalists, school and judiciary staff, on preventing and combating violence against women and girls.
- Capacity development actions to increase the capacities of the civil society organisations in the Southern Neighbourhood countries, notably women's organisations, to advocate for legislation criminalising violence against women and girls and its implementation at national level, particularly the provisions of the Istanbul Convention.
- Support to the establishment of a civil society mechanism to monitor the implementation of the recommendations on violence against women and girls; Women, Peace and Security; and resolution of social conflicts, violence and extremism contained in the UfM Women Ministerial Declaration adopted on 27th of November 2017 by the UfM Ministers.

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;
- actions supporting individual political parties;
- actions including proselytism.

Types of activity

In order to ensure adequate design and implementation of the **awareness, information and communication campaigns**, types of activities which may be financed under this call for proposals include but are not limited to²¹:

- Preparatory research, in view of developing a tailored communication strategy, in particular to identify target audience(s) of the communication activities, its(their) characteristics, motivations, information needs and gaps as well as media access and consumption, as to design the most effective approach to influence its(their) behaviour. The preparatory research should take into account results and lessons learnt of previous campaigns and communication activities carried out in the same country, in particular by the EU delegations, the EU Member States and the targeted countries, and should use available primary and secondary data and own analysis.
- Development of a tailored communication strategy, including:
 - a) Assessment of the complementarity and synergies with similar initiatives and lessons learnt;
 - b) Definition of geographical scope, target audience(s) and their segmentation;
 - c) Identification of an overarching idea for the campaign and of key messages²²;

²¹ The list of activities proposed is not exhaustive and other relevant, creative and innovative proposals will be considered.

²² The suggested core messages around the campaign shall include:

- a) Violence against women is both a cause and a consequence of gender inequalities – gender norms and stereotypes encourage and condone violence and should be challenged;
- b) All forms of violence, be it domestic violence, violence in public spaces or public transport, cyber-violence etc., are unacceptable, yet still exist today;
- c) Culture, custom, religion, tradition or so-called "honour" is no justification for violence;
- d) Women and girls are not to blame for the violence they experience;
- e) Any act of violence should be reported, and help and protection are available;
- f) No matter your gender, sexuality, race, religious affiliation or residence status, violence is not acceptable and you are protected and provided with support on an equal basis;
- g) Men and boys are a vital part of the solution, including through support for behavioural change.

- d) Definition of appropriate channels, media and communication tools to be used in the campaign;
 - e) Defining of a monitoring and evaluation methodology and establishment of key performance indicators (KPIs);
 - f) Development of a dedicated social media campaign;
 - g) Production of a tool kit campaign including visuals delivering the messages of the campaign, one federating message capturing the objective of the campaign and slogans communicating the goals of the campaign;
 - h) A detailed plan for the roll-out and management of the campaign.
- Creation, production, implementation and dissemination of the campaign (including pre-testing of concepts and content of the campaign; production of content of the campaign; production of a toolkit campaign; rolling-out of the communication activities; social and traditional media marketing and buying as well as non-media based outreach) in the language of the country/audience addressed by the project, but also, when relevant, in English and/or French.
 - Activities used as catalyst for communication actions and helping to amplify the communication campaign messages.
 - Monitoring throughout the campaign and evaluation of the results of the communication activities.
 - Coordination with other actors to ensure complementarity and consistency of ongoing and future activities.
 - Capacity development of the partners and stakeholders from the Southern Neighbourhood countries addressed by the campaign to improve its sustainability.
 - Education activities targeting citizens, especially young people, journalist, school and judiciary staff.

In order to **increase the capacities of civil society organisations to advocate for legislation criminalising violence against women and girls**, types of activities which may be financed under this call for proposals include but are not limited to²¹:

- Identify and address capacity needs among civil society organisations (CSOs) in the Southern Neighbourhood countries, notably women's organisations, to promote and advocate for the adoption and enforcement of national laws to address and punish all forms of violence against women and girls.
- Mobilise CSOs to raise awareness of Istanbul Convention and advocate for its implementation at national level.
- Regional outreach – promote regional debates on changing discriminative legislation and support implementation of laws grounded in international Women's Rights norms and legal framework.

In order to support the establishment of **civil society mechanism to monitor progresses made by the national governments on preventing and combating violence against women and girls**, types of activities which may be financed under this call for proposals include but are not limited to²¹:

- Identify and address needs to establish a regional and operational civil society follow-up mechanism to monitor progress on combating violence against women and girls. This mechanism shall be

Due to the sensitivity of this issue, high attention should be paid to the messages conveyed:

- a) They should never directly depict violence
- b) They should never depict dead or wounded persons
- c) They should break gender stereotypes (for instance avoid representing all women as passive victims and all men as perpetrators)
- d) They should, as much as possible, convey positive messages
- e) They should not stigmatise any specific group (for example ethnic minorities)

designed and implemented in complementarity and co-ordination with the existing mechanisms in the region, and in particular with the monitoring mechanism to be developed by the Union for the Mediterranean in close coordination with countries and key stakeholders in the region.

- Develop a set of indicators to measure the progress towards practical implementation by national governments of policy measures addressing violence against women and girls.
- Evaluate the gaps and provide recommendations to policy makers and stakeholders to improve their engagement to prevent and combat violence against women and girls.
- Organise dialogues, meetings, debates, consultations, reviews among civil society organisations and relevant stakeholders (including national and local authorities, media, academic centres, international organisations, etc.).

Financial support to third parties²³

Applicants may propose financial support to third parties in order to help achieving the objectives of the action.

A maximum of 25% of the grant allocated under this call may be re-distributed as sub-grants for actions or activities.

The maximum amount of financial support per third party is EUR 60,000.

Under this call, financial support to third parties may not be the main purpose of the action.

The application procedure for the financial support scheme must be tailor-made to the capacity of target organisations with possibly weaker managerial, financial and administrative capacities, and should be published in local languages. It should foresee an evaluation and selection based on high quality and/or innovative ideas and initiatives, and a review process during which the quality of the intervention logic, the impact and sustainability of the activities can be improved and further developed.

In the event of audits, checks, monitoring or evaluations, the lead applicant is responsible for ensuring that all the necessary documents, including the accounts of the beneficiaries of financial support, copies of the most relevant supporting documents and signed contracts related to the financial support to third parties are made available. Such supporting documents depend on the nature of the financial support and may be limited to output-based or results-based supporting documents necessary to verify that the funds have been used for the purpose and in line with the contract (no exhaustive and input-based evidence-keeping per expenditure is required).

In compliance with the present guidelines and notably of any conditions or restrictions in this section, the lead applicant should define mandatorily in section 2.1.1 of the grant application form:

- (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 or organisations 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 communication tools and channels by which they will ensure publication of calls

²³ These third parties are neither affiliated entity(ies) nor associates nor contractors.

(viii) the supporting documents required from recipients of financial support

(ix) the visibility requirements relevant for the recipients of financial support

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

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 may not submit more than one application under this call for proposals.

The lead applicant may not be awarded more than one grant under this call for proposals.

The lead applicant may not be a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in another application under this call for proposals at the same time.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity may not submit more than two applications under this call for proposals.

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

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 beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies), are in line with their accounting practices, no profit is made and the costs are not already covered by other sources of funding (no double

funding). Refer to Annex K for directions and a checklist of controls to assess the minimum necessary conditions that provide reasonable assurance for the acceptance of the proposed amounts.

Applicants proposing this form of reimbursement, must clearly indicate in worksheet no.1 of Annex B, each heading/item of eligible costs concerned by this type of financing, i.e. add the reference in capital letters to "UNIT COST" (per month/flight etc), "LUMPSUM", "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 amount²⁴
- identify the beneficiary who will use the simplified cost option (in case of affiliated entity, specify first the beneficiary), in order to verify the maximum amount per each beneficiary (which includes if applicable simplified cost options of its affiliated entity(ies))

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The method of allocation has to be:

²⁴ 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.

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).

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 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.

EuropeAid/159469/DH/ACT

Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- debts and debt service charges (interest);
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- costs declared by the beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme receiving a European Union (including through EDF) grant;
- purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary for the direct implementation of the action, in which case ownership must be transferred in accordance with Article 7.5 of the General Conditions of the standard grant contract, at the latest at the end of the action;
- currency exchange losses;
- credit to third parties;
- salary costs of the personnel of national administrations.

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**²⁵ for this call for proposals:

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

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

- 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.

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

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

If it is impossible to register online in PADOR for technical reasons, the applicants and/or affiliated entity(ies) must complete the 'PADOR off-line form'²⁶ attached to these guidelines. This form must be sent **together with the application**, by the submission deadline (see sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.5).

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

²⁵ 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.

²⁶ Which corresponds to sections 3 and 4 of the full application form - Annex A.2.

2.2.1. Concept note content

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the concept note instructions in the grant application form²⁷ 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 only provide an estimate of the **requested EU contribution** as well as an indicative percentage of that contribution in relation to the eligible costs of the action. A detailed budget is to be submitted only by the 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. The EU contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 20%. 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 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.

Hand-written concept notes will not be accepted.

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.

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).

²⁷ The grant application form consists of Annex A.1 – concept note and Annex A.2 – full application form.

2.2.3. *Deadline for submission of concept notes*

The deadline for the submission of concept notes is **8 May 2018 at 12:00** (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 time zones and winter/summer time changes (example available here²⁸). **The lead applicant is strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit its concept note**, since heavy Internet traffic or a fault with the Internet connection (including electricity failure, etc.) could lead to difficulties in submission. The Contacting Authority cannot be held responsible for any delay due to such afore-mentioned difficulties.

Any concept note submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

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: **NEAR-ENI-SOUTH-TENDERS@ec.europa.eu**

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

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for 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 **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:

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-

²⁸ <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html>.

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.

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 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 Contracting Authority cannot be held responsible for any delay due to such afore-mentioned difficulties.

Any application submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

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 e-mail address listed below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: **NEAR-ENI-SOUTH-TENDERS@ec.europa.eu**

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

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

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

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure, will be published on the EuropeAid website <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome>, 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 **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 opening²⁹ and administrative check (including the eligibility check of the action) the following will be assessed:

- If the deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will be automatically rejected.
- If the concept note satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist in the instructions included in Annex A.1. This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The concept notes that pass this check will be evaluated on the relevance and design of the proposed action.

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

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

Evaluation Grid

Section	Maximum Score
1. Relevance of the action	30
1.1. How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals?	5x2**
1.2. How relevant to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies) or region(s) is the proposal (including synergy with other EU initiatives and avoidance of duplication)?	5x2**
1.3. How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5
1.4. Does the proposal contain specific added-value elements, such as environmental issues, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of indigenous peoples, or innovation and best practices and the other additional elements indicated under 1.2. of these guidelines?	5
2. Design of the action	20
2.1. How coherent is the overall design of the action? In particular, does it reflect the analysis of the problems involved, take into account external factors and relevant stakeholders?	5x2**
2.2. Is the action feasible and consistent in relation to the objectives and expected results?	5x2**
Maximum total score	50

²⁹ Only where some applications have been submitted offline.

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

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

Concept notes that reach the above threshold will be ranked by score. The highest scoring applications will be pre-selected until the limit of 300% 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.

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

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

During the opening³⁰ and administrative check (including the eligibility check of the action) for full applications the following will be assessed:

- If the submission deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will automatically be rejected.
- If the full application satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist in Annex A.2. This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Evaluation Grid³¹

Section	Maximum Score
1. Financial and operational capacity	20
1.1. Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient experience of project management?	5
1.2. Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient technical	5

³⁰ Only where some applications have been submitted offline.

³¹ 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.

expertise (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)?	
1.3. Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient management capacity (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4. Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5
2. Relevance of the action	30
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)?	5x2**
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
3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the action	20
3.1. Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	5
3.2. Is the action plan clear and feasible?	5
3.3. Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the action? Is any evaluation planned?	5
3.4. Is the co-applicants' and affiliated entity(ies)'s level of involvement and participation in the action satisfactory?	5
4. Sustainability of the action	15
4.1. Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5
4.2. Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects (including scope for replication, extension and information sharing)?	5
4.3. Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable?:(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
5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action	15
5.1. Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	5
5.2. Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	10

Maximum total score	100
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**these scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance

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.

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.

2.4. 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)³²:

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

1. The statutes or articles of association of the lead applicant, (if any) of each co-applicant and (if any) of each affiliated entity³³. 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 meantime³⁴. 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 (if any) the co-applicant(s) or affiliated entities.

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

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 (English or French) of the relevant parts of these documents proving the lead applicant's, co-applicants' and, where applicable, affiliated entity(ies)' eligibility, must be attached for the purpose of analysing the application.

32 No supporting document will be requested for applications for a grant not exceeding EUR 60 000.

33 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.

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

Where these documents are in an official language of the European Union other than English or French, 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, co-applicants' and, where applicable, affiliated entity(ies)' eligibility, into one of the languages of the call for proposals (English or French).

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

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

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

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

2.5. NOTIFICATION OF THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION

2.5.1. *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.

2.5.2. *Indicative timetable*

	DATE	TIME
1. Information meeting (if any)	Not applicable	Not applicable
2. Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the Contracting Authority	17 April 2018	12:00
3. Last date on which clarifications are issued by the Contracting Authority	27 April 2018	-
4. Deadline for submission of concept notes	8 May 2018	12:00
5. Information to lead applicants on opening, administrative checks and concept note	May 2018	-

evaluation (Step 1)		
6. Invitations to submit full applications]	May 2018	-
7. Deadline for submission of full applications]	July 2018	-
8. Information to lead applicants on the evaluation of the full applications (Step 2)³⁵	August 2018	-
9. Notification of award (after the eligibility check) (Step 3)	September 2018	-
10. Contract signature³⁶	October 2018	-

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>.

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

Following the decision to award a grant, the beneficiary(ies) will be offered a contract based on the standard grant contract (see Annex G of these guidelines). By signing the application form (Annex A of these guidelines), the applicants agree, if awarded a grant, to accept the contractual conditions of the standard grant contract. Where the Coordinator is an organisation whose pillars have been positively assessed, it will sign a PA Grant Agreement based on the PAGoDA template. In this case references to provisions of the standard grant contract and its annexes shall not apply. References in these guidelines to the grant contract shall be understood as references to the relevant provisions of the PA Grant Agreement.

Implementation contracts

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

2.7. 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

³⁵ 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.

³⁶ 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

2.3.3.1 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 INFORMATION³⁷

Annex G: Standard Grant Contract

- Annex II: general conditions
- Annex IV: contract award rules
- Annex V: standard request for payment
- Annex VI: model narrative and financial report
- Annex VII: model report of factual findings and terms of reference for an expenditure verification of an EU financed grant contract for external action
- Annex VIII: model financial guarantee
- Annex IX: standard template for transfer of ownership of assets

Annex H: Daily allowance rates (per diem), available at the following address:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/about-procurement-contracts/procedures-and-practical-guide-prag/diems_en

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

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

Annex L: e-learning :

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

Annex M : user manual for PROSPECT :

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

³⁷ These documents should also be published by the Contracting Authority.

USEFUL LINKS

PROJECT CYCLE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

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

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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