



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

Social Affairs
Social Investment Strategy

**FAST TRACK INTEGRATION INTO THE LABOUR MARKET
FOR THIRD COUNTRY NATIONALS TARGETING EXCLUSIVELY ASYLUM
SEEKERS, REFUGEES AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS**

EASI
PROGRESS AXIS

BUDGET HEADING 04.03.02.01

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

VP/2016/015

**Any questions should be sent by email to:
empl-vp-2016-015@ec.europa.eu**

**To ensure a rapid response to requests for information, applicants are invited
to send their queries in English, where possible**

This text is available in English, French and German. The English version is the original.

**Applicants are invited to read the present document in conjunction with the Financial
Guidelines for Applicants and the model grant agreement(s) published with this call as well as
the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and their rules of application:**

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/biblio/documents/regulations/regulations_en.cfm

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1. INTRODUCTION – BACKGROUND

1.1. Programme/Legal base

This call for proposals is published under the **European Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" 2014-2020**¹. This is a European-level financing instrument managed directly by the European Commission to contribute to the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy, by providing financial support for the Union's objectives in terms of promoting a high level of quality and sustainable employment, guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection, combating social exclusion and poverty and improving working conditions.

Social innovation as promoted by the EaSI programme can help addressing social challenges – such as the current refugee integration challenge - by providing better and innovative responses to identified social needs, in order to deliver better social outcomes.

The EaSI Programme shall, in all its axes and actions, aim to:

- a) pay particular attention to vulnerable groups such as young people;
- b) promote equality between women and men,
- c) combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation;
- d) promote a high-level of quality and sustainable employment, guarantee adequate and decent social protection, combat long-term unemployment and fight against poverty and social exclusion.

The vulnerable groups mentioned in a) include asylum seekers and refugees arriving to Europe in the context of the on-going migration crisis, as well as their family members.

Hence, in designing, implementing and reporting on the activity, beneficiaries/contractors must address the issues noted above and will be required to provide detail, in the final activity report on the steps and achievements made towards addressing those aims.

This call for proposals has been designed to seek synergies with activities conducted under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and other initiatives or pilot projects from other EU institutions.

1.2. Policy and economic background

The EU has recently witnessed a dramatic increase in migratory flows. This unprecedented influx, largely composed of people seeking international protection, remains a challenge for the European Union and its Member States not only in terms of reception, but also in terms of their long-term integration in the host societies, as recalled by the President of the European Commission in his speech on the State of the Union in September 2016.

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1081>

The Commission Communication on the 2016 European Semester² also pointed out the fact that economic and social policies also needed to cater for the recent inflow of migrants and refugees, in particular to provide for their immediate needs and integration in the labour market and society.

The EU Action Plan for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals adopted on 7 June 2016 provides a comprehensive framework to support Member States' efforts in developing and strengthening their migrant integration policies, and describes the concrete policy, operational and financial measures that the Commission will implement. While it targets all third country nationals in the EU, it contains actions to address the specific challenges faced by refugees³.

The Action Plan also refers to the gender dimension of migration, and to the situation of migrant women, and notably refugee women. Refugee women face more serious challenges in securing employment than their male peers but also than all other groups of migrant women. The employment rate for refugee women is on average 45%. It is lower than for other non-EU born female and native born women and 17 percentage points lower than that of refugee men. Moreover, refugee women have the highest rate of unemployment, 21%, versus 19% for refugee men and 17% for non-refugee migrant women. Targeted and tailor-made initiatives to ensure equal access for these women to integration measures must thus be foreseen. These initiatives may include access to childcare and other care facilities so as to ensure equal access by parents to integration measures.

As mentioned in the Action Plan, while labour market inclusion is fundamental to becoming part of the host country's economic and social life, integration is more than having a job; it is a dynamic two-ways process, with rights and obligations on both sides: the hosting society and the third country nationals. In that respect civil society has a crucial role to play in creating the conditions conducive to the social and labour market integration, as well as in helping in the implementation of the integration policies.

Recent experiences⁴ and research⁵ highlight common key findings to the multi-dimensional challenge of the integration into the labour market. An early intervention with tailor-made approaches to facilitate the labour market access, in particular for refugees and asylum seekers, is an essential feature. Allowing access to decent and affordable accommodation, identifying mental and physical health issues early and providing adequate support, as well as promoting equal access to integration services across the country are other key factors of a successful integration policy. Recording and assessing the qualifications, work experiences and skills are also acknowledged as an essential requirement to ensure the individuals' talents are used to their full potential. At the same time, one must acknowledge that the integration of very poorly educated migrants requires long term training and support, in particular for the

² COM(2016) 95 final: http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2016/cr2016_comm_en.pdf

³ COM(2016) 377 final: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160607/communication_action_plan_integration_third-country_nationals_en.pdf

⁴ See the Repository of promising practices of labour market integration and social inclusion of asylum seekers and refugees across EU Member States <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1208> and the European website on Integration <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/home>.

⁵ OECD (2016), Making Integration Work, refugees and others in need of protection, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264251236-en> and "From refugees to workers: Mapping labour-market integration support measures for asylum seekers and refugees in EU Member States", Bertelsmann Stiftung, October 2016.

unaccompanied minors who need adequate services as well as tailored education and training programmes.

The "New Skills Agenda for Europe - Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness"⁶ adopted on 10 June 2016 provides a number of actions to ensure that the right training, the right skills and the right support is available to people in the European Union. It includes a "Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals" that should be launched early in 2017 to support early identification and profiling of skills and qualifications of asylum seekers, refugees and other migrants. Such a tool could be used under this call.

1.3. Main Purpose

The present call for proposals aims at funding innovative transnational projects to test and implement innovative policy schemes and delivery mechanisms that will ensure and facilitate a swift labour market integration of the specific target groups of third country nationals listed below. Proposals could also include the replication of successful innovative initiatives already implemented in other(s) country(ies).

Only applications targeting specifically the support to the following groups of third country nationals will be considered eligible for further evaluation:

- **asylum seekers,**
- **refugees and their family members.**

Specific measures targeting the labour market integration of migrant women will be considered favourably.

For the sake of simplicity, "refugees" is used in these specifications to refer to all beneficiaries of international protection (be they Geneva Convention refugees or beneficiaries of subsidiary protection).

2. OBJECTIVE(S) – PRIORITIES – TYPES OF ACTIONS - EXPECTED RESULTS

2.1. Objectives - Priorities

Rapid labour market integration is key to successful integration in the receiving society. It is therefore important to promote good practices allowing the target groups to integrate quickly into the labour market, matching the labour market needs of the hosting countries, while equipping the target groups with the necessary skills to ensure their integration into the labour market and society more broadly.

The inclusion of the gender dimension through an integrated approach responding to the specific needs of migrant women must be taken into account in the applications.

⁶ COM(2016) 381 final: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=15621&langId=en>

The objectives of this Call are:

- to promote the development and testing of innovative and effective mechanisms to ensure fast-track integration into the labour market;
- to develop sustainable multi-level partnerships models conducive towards the integration of the targeted groups into the labour market;
- to foster knowledge- and experience-sharing between different Member States of already functioning swift and successful insertion mechanisms into the labour market of the targeted groups, with a strong emphasis on the challenges faced by women⁷.

2.2. Type of actions/activities to be funded

Actions must result in effective integration into the labour market within the timeframe of the project. In particular they shall:

- be **instrumental** for achieving the objectives set out in point 2.1
- take into account the **job market needs** of the **receiving country(ies)**;
- help the target groups **matching those needs**;
- cover **the different dimensions of a fast integration of the target groups**;
- demonstrate a **long-term vision**;
- challenge **stereotypes** as to gender roles among migrant communities and ensure that work practices promote gender equality and do not reinforce gender stereotypes, segregation and inequalities;
- be **sustainable** beyond the grant period;
- build up the **main actors' capacity** to implement these schemes;
- include **mechanisms for transfer/replication** for other host countries/groups.

Proposed actions should be **creative** and propose **innovative** measures whilst building on existing good practice where relevant⁸.

Testing innovative approaches and/on scaling-up effective proven policy schemes should be supported by robust and documented evaluation method and validation mechanisms. At each step of the project, the roles of the various actors should be precisely described

The **examples** below are a **non-exhaustive list** of activities that could be foreseen:

- design and implementation of comprehensive integration mechanisms ensuring the fast-track integration into the labour market, including
 - civic courses, intercultural skills;
 - information on labour market rules, existing social benefits, etc.;
 - specific training for teachers and for other bodies involved in the project to ensure a focused support to the target groups;
 - language courses, including evening classes;

⁷ See the repository of promising practices of labour market integration and social inclusion of asylum seekers and refugees across EU Member States <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1208> and the European website on Integration <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/home>.

- integrated courses combining languages and professionals skills;
 - specialised/individualised support by trained professionals;
 - mentoring programmes, including mentoring at workplaces;
 - procedures for mapping the educational background and previous work experiences as well as skills profiling including the use of the Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals⁸;
 - efficient and transparent procedures for the recognition and validation of competences acquired abroad;
 - monitoring the extent of discriminatory practices and raising awareness of the issue;
 - access to services such as childcare and other care facilities to ensure participation to introduction/training programmes, including flexible hours and other arrangement;
 - digital applications, IT tools;
 - access to support in case of discrimination and violence, in particular against women.
- development of sustainable multi-level partnerships models encompassing:
 - coordination mechanisms between the various actors;
 - development of integration strategy across actions;
 - exchange of information.
 - fostering of knowledge- and experience- sharing between different Member States including:
 - surveys;
 - data collection;
 - development of guidelines and practical tools.

Compulsory activities to be included in the application are:

- a **comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan**⁹ of the intervention including a clear and fully developed methodology identifying relevant results and outcome indicators;
- the **participation in two events** to be organised in Brussels by the Commission (max. two nights, two people);
- the organisation of **at least one coordination meeting** with all members of the consortium;
- a detailed **dissemination plan** to promote at EU level the results of the action, including a dissemination event.

⁸ COM(2016) 381 final: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=15621&langId=en>

⁹ Examples of the different impact evaluation methods to be used are available here <https://crie.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>
See also:

- "The Electronic Toolkit of the MIREIA e-Inclusion Intermediary Actors Impact Assessment Framework"

<http://is.jrc.ec.europa.eu/pages/EAP/eInclusion/MIREIAeI2.html>

- "Methodological framework to assess the social and economic impact of ICT-enabled social innovation initiatives"

http://is.jrc.ec.europa.eu/pages/EAP/documents/IESI_D2_i-FRAME-V1.0_JRC-IPTS_DRAFT_V1.0-20150630.pdf

Warning

Any actions under this call for proposals shall respect and shall be implemented in line with the rights and principles enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Applications should pay appropriate attention to the effects of the project on individual rights and freedoms. In addition, any action under this call for proposals should comply with all relevant ethical principles and all applicable international, EU and national law on ethical issues.

2.3. Expected results

The expected outputs of this call for proposals are the development, testing and/or implementation of innovative practices and initiatives allowing the targeted groups - in particular women - to quickly integrate into the labour market, while equipping them with the necessary skills (in particular, language proficiency) to ensure integration into the labour market and society. The outcome of actions should be the **effective integration** of the target groups into the labour market.

2.4. Monitoring and reporting

The Commission, with the support of an external contractor, **monitors regularly the EaSI Programme**. Therefore, beneficiaries will have to transmit qualitative and quantitative monitoring data on the results of the activities. These will include the extent to which the principle of equality between women and men has been applied, as well as how anti-discrimination considerations, including accessibility issues, have been addressed through the activities. Related templates will be provided to beneficiaries at a later stage.

As the monitoring of the EaSI Programme involves the collection and further processing of personal data, Regulation (EC) 45/2001, of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community Institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data, is applicable.

Moreover to ensure smooth implementation of the project, the beneficiary will provide **every six months a progress report** on the implementation¹⁰. This report will include the qualitative and quantitative state of play, any occurred deviation, and progress on the innovative aspects. Related template will be provided to beneficiaries at a later stage.

In setting up the action, beneficiaries must foresee the necessary budget for **monitoring and reporting to the Commission**.

¹⁰ Progress reports of months 12, 24 and/or 36 will support requests for further pre-financing or for payment of the balance.

3. TIMETABLE

Submission deadline: 30/03/2017

Stages	Date or period
Publication of the call	21 December 2016
Deadline for submitting proposals	30 March 2017
Evaluation period steps I and II (indicative)	April 2017- June 2017
Information to applicants on steps I and II (indicative)	July 2017
Evaluation period steps III to V (indicative)	June to September 2017
Final information to applicants (indicative)	October 2017
Signature of the grant agreement (indicative)	November 2017
Starting date of the action (indicative)	See section 3

The actual starting date of the action will either be the first day following the date when the last of the two parties signs the grant agreement, or the first day of the month following the date when the last of the two parties signs or a date agreed upon between the parties.

Applicants should note that if their project is selected, they may receive the grant agreement after the start date of the action that they have indicatively set in the application form. It is therefore advisable to number the months in the work programme instead of indicating the name of the month.

Any expenditure incurred before the signature of the Grant Agreement will be at the applicant's risk. No expenditure can be incurred before the deadline for submission.

Given the pressing need to swiftly provide answers to the issue of the integration challenge faced by the EU, it is expected that funded actions can be mobilized and deliver results quickly. Indicative duration of the entire project should be between 24 and 36 months.

4. AVAILABLE BUDGET AND CO-FINANCING RATE

4.1. Available Budget

The total budget earmarked for the EU co-financing of projects under this call is estimated at **EUR 14.200.000**.

The Commission expects to fund **approximately 5 to 7 proposals**.

However, the Commission reserves the right not to distribute all the available funds.

4.2. Co-financing rate

Under this call for proposals, the **EU grant may not exceed 80 % of the total eligible costs** of the action. **Applicants must ensure their co-financing** of the remaining amount covered by the applicants' own resources or from other sources other than the European Union budget¹¹.

5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Applications must be sent no later than the deadline for submission referred to in section 3.
- Applications must be submitted using the electronic submission system available at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim>, and by sending one signed, printed version of the application form and all its annexes by post or courier service (see section 13).

Failure to comply with the above requirements will lead to the rejection of the application.

Applicants are encouraged to submit their project proposal in English, in order to facilitate the treatment of the proposals and speed up the evaluation process. It should be noted, however, that proposals in all official languages of the EU will be accepted.

6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

6.1. Eligibility of the applicants (lead and co-applicants)¹²

a) Place of establishment

Legal entities properly established and registered in the following countries are eligible as lead applicant and co-applicants:

- EU Member States;
- Iceland and Norway in accordance with the EEA Agreement;
- Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey¹³.

b) Type of entities

- Lead applicant must be a public body (such as national, regional and local authorities or public employment services);
- Co-applicant organisations must be public bodies, for-profit¹⁴ or non-profit-making private entities, or international organisations¹⁵.

¹¹ Letters of commitment are required from co-applicants, and any third party providing financial contributions to the eligible costs of the action (see section 14, checklist point 5).

¹² See section 2 of the Financial Guidelines for definitions.

¹³ Other candidate and potential candidate countries, would also participate in accordance with the general principles and the general terms and conditions laid down in the framework agreements concluded with them on their participation in Union programmes. However, it is not yet confirmed, therefore applicants and co-applicants from those countries should check with the secretariat of the call (empl-vp-2016-015@ec.europa.eu) their eligibility.

c) Consortium¹⁶

To be eligible, proposals must involve an international consortium made of at least 4 organisations (1 lead applicant + 3 co-applicants) with at least one established in an EU Member States and in principle at least one of the organisations in one of the candidate countries (listed under 6.1.a)

Regional offices and headquarter of international organisations are considered as the same entity and will be counted as one organisation in the consortium.

d) Affiliated entities

Affiliated entities are not eligible under this call.

6.2. Eligible activities

a) Geographical Location

To be eligible, actions must be fully carried out in eligible participating EaSI countries (see section 6.1).

b) Types of activities

To be eligible, actions must perform the activities indicated in section 2.2.

c) Core activities

The project management and coordination of the activities are considered to be core activities and may not be subcontracted.

6.3. Ineligible activities

In addition to the ineligible costs specified in section 4.2.4 of the Financial Guidelines, the following types of activities are not eligible for EU funding under this Call:

- lobbying
- acquisition of immovable property and/or vehicles
- building construction.

Failure to comply with the eligibility criteria will lead to **rejection** of the proposal.

¹⁴ As stated in the Article 125 (4) of the EU Financial Regulation, "Grants shall not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the action or the work programme of the beneficiary".

¹⁵ As defined in the rules of application of the EU Financial Regulation (Article 43). In derogation from the requirement under 6.1.a), international organisations whose registered headquarters are outside the eligible countries are also eligible.

¹⁶ Letters of mandate, authorising the lead applicant to submit the proposal and to sign any Grant Agreement on their behalf must be submitted from each co-applicant. Letters of commitment must be submitted from each co-applicant, certifying that they are willing to participate in the project with a brief description of their role and indicating any financial contribution where applicable (see section 15, checklist points 5 and 6. Letters of commitment are also required from any associate organisations (participation on a no-cost basis and no financial contribution).

7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Applicants (lead and co-applicants) must sign a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in article 106(1) and 107.1(b) and (c) of the Financial Regulation concerning exclusion and rejection from the procedure respectively, using the relevant form attached to the application form available at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/external/displayWelcome.do>.

Failure to comply with the requirements of the exclusion criteria will lead to **rejection** of the proposal.

8. SELECTION CRITERIA

The applicant (lead and co-applicant) must have the financial and operational capacity to complete the activity for which funding is requested. Only organisations with the necessary financial and operational capacity may be considered for a grant.

Failure to comply with only one of the selection criteria, will lead to **rejection** of the proposal.

8.1. Financial capacity

Applicants (lead and co-applicant(s)) must have access to solid and adequate funding to maintain their activities for the period of the action and to help finance it as necessary.

The ratio between the total assets in the applicant's (lead and co-applicant(s)) balance sheet and the total budget of the project or the part of the project budget for which that organisation is responsible according to the budget in the application form should be greater than 0.70.

The verification of financial capacity will not apply to public bodies and to international organisations.

The applicant's (lead and co-applicant) financial capacity will be assessed on the basis of the following supporting documents to be submitted with the application:

- a declaration on honour including financial capacity to carry out the activity (*see section 15.2*);
- the annual balance sheets and profit and loss accounts for the last financial year available (*see section 15.2*);
- the summary balance sheet and profit and loss accounts using the template provided in SWIM and signed by the legal representative (*see section 15.2*).
- for grant of EUR 750 000 or more, an audit report produced by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the last financial year available (*see section 15.2*).

8.2. Operational capacity

Applicant's (lead and co-applicant(s)) must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed innovative action. In particular, applicants must have:

- recorded experience of projects carried out in the last three years relating to fast track integration into the labour market for asylum seekers, refugees or their family members;
- the necessary operational resources (technical, management) to carry out the action.

The operational capacity of the applicant (lead and co-applicant) to complete the proposed action must be confirmed by the submission in the proposal of the following:

1. a list of the main projects relating to the subject of the call carried out in the last three years (*see section 15.2*);
2. the EU CVs of the proposed project co-ordinator and of the persons who will perform the main tasks, showing all their relevant professional experience (*see section 15.2*);
3. a declaration on honour signed by the legal representative including operational capacity to carry out the activity (*see section 15.2*).
4. a declaration by the project manager/coordinator of the lead applicant certifying the professional competence and appropriate qualification of the team to carry out the required tasks (*see section 15.2*);

If the lead applicant is considered not to have the required financial or operational capacity, the application as a whole will be rejected. If a co-applicant is considered not to have the required financial or operational capacity, this co-applicant will be removed from the consortium and the application will be evaluated without this co-applicant¹⁷. In addition, the costs that are allocated to the non-selected co-applicant will be removed from the budget. If the application is accepted, the work programme will have to be adapted as appropriate.

9. AWARD CRITERIA

The proposals will be assessed against the following award criteria according to the evaluation procedure in section 10.

1. Relevance to purpose, objectives and priorities of the call

This criterion measures the extent to which the project promotes the development and testing of innovative mechanisms aiming at a **fast-track integration** of the target groups into the labour market, by matching through an integrated approach the employment needs of the hosting countries and the specific challenges experienced by the target groups. The criterion measures how the project develops multi-level partnerships models conducive towards the integration of the targeted groups into the labour market and/or how it fosters knowledge- and

¹⁷ This includes a re-evaluation of the eligibility of the modified consortium.

experience sharing between different Member States of already functioning swift and successful insertion mechanisms into the labor market of the targeted groups. The inclusion of the **gender dimension** through an integrated approach will be assessed under this criterion.

2. **Overall design of the action, including the extent to which candidate countries are included in the consortium**

This criterion refers to the consistency of the overall design of the action, the intervention logic and the analysis of the problems involved. It also measures the extent to which the **action** is **feasible** and **consistent** in relation to the objectives and expected outcomes. This criterion relates also to the extent to which the specific activities envisaged as part of the intervention are concrete and have a **practical dimension**, how thorough, precise and easy to understand they are.

The **relevance of the consortium** to the proposed project as well as the role and responsibility of their members will be assessed under this criterion, including **the extent to which candidate countries are included in the consortium**.

3. **Methodology, activities and expected outcomes**

This criterion will measure the extent to which the activities and means proposed are appropriate and consistent with the expected outcomes, and are sufficiently and clearly detailed. The evaluation will measure the extent to which the **expected outcomes** are **realistic** and defined in **measurable** terms and the proposal contains clear **quantitative and qualitative outcomes**. The organisation and methodology of the proposal and its **work plan** will be assessed under this criterion. The adequacy of the communication and dissemination plan will also be assessed under this criterion.

4. **Appropriateness of the impact/outcomes evaluation method**

This criterion measures the extent to which the proposal includes a **sound and detailed impact evaluation method** that is suitable for its purposes and appropriate to provide evidence and to determine the expected outcomes. The accuracy of the evaluation methodology, the relevance of indicators, and the monitoring elements will be assessed under this criterion.

5. **Sustainability of the project**

This criterion measures the extent to which the proposed intervention is sustainable beyond the grant period and in particular whether financial means are envisaged to pursue the action. The evaluation will assess whether the proposed short-term and long-term strategy is appropriate to ensure the continuation of the project's objectives, activities and efforts to achieve the desired outcomes. The **transferability** of the intervention and the extent to which the proposed intervention could be implemented **on a larger scale** will be assessed under this criterion.

6. Cost-efficiency of the proposal

The cost-efficiency of the proposal means whether the costs of the proposed action are **adequate** to the activities and **proportionate** to the expected results. The assessment of the proposal under this criterion includes:

- the adequacy of the human and financial resources to the planned activities;
- the clarity and pertinence of the allocation of tasks and managerial responsibility;
- the overall clarity and completeness of the budget.

10. EVALUATION PROCEDURE

The composition of applications is detailed under section 15.

The applications will be examined and assessed by an evaluation committee with the possible assistance of external experts following the below procedure.

I. Assessment of the eligibility and exclusion criteria

If the examination of the application reveals that it does not meet the eligibility and exclusion criteria stated in sections 6 and 7, the application will be rejected on this sole basis.

II. Assessment of the concept note

The concept note (see section 15) will be assessed against the award criteria 1 and 2 (see section 9) as follows:

Concept note	Maximum score
Relevance to purpose, objectives and priorities of the call	25
<i>including the extent to which the gender dimension is taken into account</i>	5
Overall design of the action	15
<i>including the extent to which candidate countries are included in the proposal</i>	5
<i>Total</i>	50

Applications the concept notes of which scored **below 35** will be rejected.

III. Assessment of the selection criteria

The pre-selected applications will be evaluated against the selection criteria (i.e. financial and operational capacity of the applicants (see section 8)) and only those which satisfy these criteria will be further assessed.

IV. Assessment of the description of the action and of the work plan

The description of the action and the work plan will be assessed against award criteria 3, 4, 5 and 6 (see section 9):

Assessment of the description of the action and of the work plan		Maximum Score
3.	Methodology, activities and expected outcomes	15
4.	Appropriateness of the impact/outcomes evaluation method	15
5.	Sustainability of the project	10
6.	Cost-efficiency of the proposal	10
<i>Total</i>		50

Applications must score **at least 60%** of the maximum possible points for each criterion and **70% in total**. The applications who will reach this minimum target will be selected for the next step.

V. Consolidated evaluation

Consolidated evaluation	Score maximum
Score of the assessment of the concept note (see II)	50
Score of the assessment of the description of the action and of the work plan (see IV)	50
Total	100

Applications will be ranked according to the total score awarded. Taking into account the available budget, only the **proposals with the highest total scores** will be recommended for award.

11. LEGAL COMMITMENTS

In the event of a grant being awarded by the Commission, a grant agreement, drawn up in euro and detailing the conditions and level of funding, will be sent to the beneficiary.

The 2 copies of the original agreement must be signed by the beneficiary and returned to the Commission immediately. The Commission will sign it last.

The grant agreement may include corrections and deletion of ineligible costs or activities made by the Commission – therefore the applicant should carefully read the whole agreement and the budget and work programme sections in particular, before signing and returning the copies to the Commission.

A model Grant Agreement is published on the Europa website under the relevant call: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en>.

Please note that the award of a grant does not establish an entitlement for subsequent years.

11.1. Sources of funding

Beneficiaries must acknowledge in writing that the project has been supported by the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation ("EaSI") 2014-2020. In practice, **all products** (publications, brochures, press releases, videos, CDs, posters and banners, and especially those associated with conferences, seminars and information campaigns) must state the following:

"This (publication, conference, video, xxx) has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020)". For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>

The European emblem must appear on every publication or other material produced. Please see: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/services/visual_identity/pdf/use-emblem_en.pdf

Every publication must include the following:

"The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Commission."

12. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

Details on financial provisions are laid out in the Financial Guidelines for Applicants and the model Grant Agreement, both published on the Europa website under the relevant call: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en>.

13. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

The procedure to submit proposals electronically is explained in point 14 of the "Financial Guidelines for Applicants". Before starting, please read carefully the SWIM user manual:

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/calls/pdf/swim_manual_en.pdf

Once the application form is filled in, applicants must submit it **both electronically and in one hard copy (put in a two-hole A4 folder)**, before the deadline set in section 3 above.

The SWIM electronic application form is available until midnight on the day of the submission deadline. Since the applicants must first submit the form electronically, and then print, sign and send it by post service or hand delivery by the submission deadline, it is **the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the appropriate postal or courier services are locally available on the day of the deadline**.

The hard copy of the proposal must be duly signed and sent in one marked "original", including all documents listed in section 15.2, by the deadline (the postmark or the express courier receipt date serving as proof) to the following address:

<p style="text-align: center;">European Commission Call for proposals VP/2016/015 DG EMPL.C1 – Social Investment Strategy DAV 1 Courier Central B-1049 Bruxelles – BELGIUM</p>

Please send your proposal by **registered post, express courier service or by hand delivery only**. Proof of posting or express courier receipt should be kept as it could be requested by the European Commission in cases of doubt regarding the date of submission.

Hand-delivered proposals must be received by the European Commission **before 4 p.m.** on the date of the deadline for submission as indicated in section 3 at the following address:

European Commission
Service central de réception du courrier
Call for proposals VP/2016/015
DG EMPL.C1 - Social Investment Strategy
Avenue du Bourget, 1
B-1140 Evere

At that time the European Commission's Mail Service will provide a signed receipt which should be conserved as proof of delivery.

If an applicant submits more than one proposal, each proposal must be submitted separately.

Additional documents sent by post, by fax or by electronic mail after the deadlines mentioned above will not be considered for evaluation unless requested by the European Commission.

The applicant's attention is also drawn to the fact that incomplete or unsigned forms, hand-written forms and those sent by fax or e-mail will not be taken into consideration.

14. COMMUNICATION

The information contained in the present call document together with the Financial Guidelines for Applicants provides all the information you require to submit an application. Please read it carefully before doing so, paying particular attention to the priorities of the present call.

All enquiries must be made by e-mail only to:

empl-vp-2016-015@ec.europa.eu

For any technical problems with the application form please contact:

empl-swim-support@ec.europa.eu

Questions may be sent by to the above address **no later than 10 calendar days before the deadline** for the submission of proposals. The Commission has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 5 calendar days before the deadline for submission of proposals. To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Commission will not give a prior opinion on the eligibility of applicants, an action or specific activities.

No individual replies to questions will be sent but all questions together with the answers and other important notices will be published (FAQ in EN) at regular intervals on the Europa website under the relevant call:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en>.

It is therefore advisable to **consult the above mentioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.**

The Commission may, on its own initiative, inform interested parties of any error, inaccuracy, omission or clerical error in the text of the call for proposals on the mentioned Europa website.

No modification to the proposal is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. If there is a need to clarify certain aspects or to correct clerical mistakes, the Commission may contact the applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process.

Applicants will be informed, in writing, about the results of the selection process. Unsuccessful applicants will be informed about the reasons for rejection. No information regarding the award procedure will be disclosed until the notification letters have been sent to the beneficiaries.

15. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PRESENTATION OF THE APPLICATION AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

15.1. Instructions for the presentation of the application

At the submission of the application, **copies of the signed originals** will be accepted for most of the documents to be submitted by the co-applicants. However, the lead applicant shall keep the original signed versions for its records, because **originals** may have to be submitted for certain documents at a later stage. **If the lead applicant fails to submit these original documents within the deadline given by the Commission, the proposal will be rejected for lack of administrative compliance.**

Application file will be composed of all required documents mentioned in the checklist below. The following items will be clearly identified:

- the application form
- the concept note
- the description of the action and the work plan
- the budget
- the budget explanation

Regarding the compilation of the application file, please:

1. **follow the order of documents as listed in the checklist;**
2. attach a **ticked checklist** as below to the proposal;
3. print the documents **double-sided**;
4. **use 2-hole A4 folders** (do not bind or glue or put in 2-hole sleeves; stapling is acceptable).

15.2. Required documents

The table in annex includes the documents that must be provided on submission of the proposal. It also indicates where originals are required. We recommend that applicants **use the table as a checklist** in order to verify compliance with all requirements.

While some information must be supplied using the templates available in SWIM, other documents may need to be completed and/or attached electronically, usually either administrative documents or free format text descriptions. The SWIM application indicates in each section where SWIM templates should be used as well as which and where free format documents can be uploaded electronically.

CHECKLIST for required documents

This 4 pages table includes the documents that must be provided for the proposal and where originals are required. Keep the same order in your application. We strongly recommend using the table as a checklist in order to verify compliance with all requirements.

Notes: highlighted documents *do not need to be provided by public entities.*

*All documents marked with * must be attached online in SWIM (scanned when needed) as well as being sent in hard copy.*

No.	Document	Specification and content	The document must be provided by each				Originally signed?	Checkbox
			Lead applicant	Co-applicant	Affiliated entity	Associate organisation/ third party		
1.	Official cover letter of the application*	The template is available in SWIM, This letter must quote the reference of the call for proposals, be originally signed and dated by the authorised representative and include the proposal reference number generated by SWIM (e.g. VP/2016/015/xxxx)	✓	--	NA	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Declaration on honour*	The template is available in SWIM and must be written on the official letterhead of the organisation, bearing the original signature of the authorised legal representative.	✓	✓	NA	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Declaration certifying the competence of the project team*	Free format - please upload Declaration of the project manager/coordinator certifying the competence of the complete project team to carry out the required task and demonstrating operational capacity. It should include a job specification of the project manager and the persons (from lead applicant, co-applicants and affiliated entities) performing the main task, with a brief description of their outputs related to the subject of the proposal.	✓	--	NA	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Statutes*	Free format - please upload The articles of association/statutes or equivalent proving the eligibility of the organisation.	✓	✓	NA	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	List of main projects*	Free format - please upload A list of the main projects carried out, if any, in the last three years relating to the subject of the call <u>other than those already indicated</u> in the SWIM online application form (section D.3)	✓	✓	NA	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Curricula vitae of key staff*	Free format - please upload Detailed EU CVs of the person responsible for managing the action (named in section A.3 of the online application form) and the persons who will perform the main tasks . The CVs should indicate clearly the current employer.	✓	✓	NA	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>

No.	Document	Specification and content	The document must be provided by each				Originally signed?	Checkbox
			Lead applicant	Co-applicant	Affiliated entity	Associate organisation/ third party		
7.	Concept note*	The template is available in SWIM and must be written in EN (maximum 5 equivalent A4 pages). This concept note will be used to analyse the relevance to purpose, objectives and priorities of the call as well as the overall design of the action. The required length of the document must be respected. If references to other documents within the application are made inside the concept note, these documents will not be considered as part of the concept note and will not be assessed.	✓	--	NA	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Signed SWIM application form	Please upload The SWIM application form submitted online must be printed and dated and signed by the authorised legal representative and send by hard copy as foreseen in Section 13. <i>Note: the online form must be electronically submitted before printing. After electronic submission, no further changes to the proposal are permitted.</i>	✓	--	NA	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Description of the action and of the work plan*	The template is available in SWIM and must be duly completed and submitted electronically together with the online submission form, as well as on paper. It is recommended to submit the document in English to speed up the evaluation. All the information related to the description of the action and the work plan must be presented in one single document. No extra documents are allowed. In case of subcontracting any tasks comprising part of the action (see Financial guidelines), the description of the action must provide details on the tasks to be subcontracted and the reasons for doing so and these tasks must be clearly identified in the budget. Core tasks as defined in section 6.2 c) cannot be subcontracted.	✓	--	NA	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>

No.	Document	Specification and content	The document must be provided by each				Originally signed?	Checkbox
			Lead applicant	Co-applicant	Affiliated entity	Associate organisation/ third party		
10.	Budget Explanation for the project*	<p>Free format - please upload</p> <p>This is a separate document in addition to the budget section of the on-line application form and it must also be submitted electronically in annex to the on-line application form. The paper version must be identical to the electronic version of the budget explanation.</p> <p>The budget explanation must provide additional information to explain and justify items of the proposed budget. It should in particular explain: how the number of working days of staff involved in the implementation of the action has been fixed; how average travel costs were calculated; unless this is self-explanatory, how costs of services and administration costs were defined.</p> <p>The Commission may request applicants to submit additional justifications of proposed eligible costs during the evaluation procedure</p>	✓	--	NA	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	Letter of mandate*	The template is available in SWIM and must be written on the official letterhead of the organisation, dated and signed by the authorised legal representative.	--	✓	NA	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	Letter of commitment*	The template is available in SWIM and must explain the nature of the organisation's involvement and specify the amount of any funding provided. The letter must be written on the official letterhead of the organisation and bear the original signature of the legal representative.	--	✓	NA	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	Proof of registration*	<p>Free format - please upload</p> <p>A certificate of official registration or other official document attesting the establishment of the entity (for public bodies: the law, decree, decision etc. establishing the entity).</p>	✓	✓	NA	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	VAT certificate*	<p>Free format - please upload</p> <p>A document showing the identification number for tax purposes or the VAT number, if applicable.</p>	✓	✓	NA	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>

No.	Document	Specification and content	The document must be provided by each				Originally signed?	Checkbox
			Lead applicant	Co-applicant	Affiliated entity	Associate organisation/ third party		
15.	Legal entity form*	The template is available in SWIM and online (http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm) and must be duly signed and dated by the legal representative. [Exclusively in the case of social partner organisations without legal personality : a signed letter of the legal representative certifying his/her capacity to undertake legal obligations on behalf of the organisation.]	✓	✓	NA	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	Financial identification form*	The template is available in SWIM and online (http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/financial_id_en.cfm) and must be duly signed and dated by the account holder and bearing the bank stamp and signature of the bank representative (or a copy of recent bank statement attached).	✓	--	NA	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	Balance sheet & profit and loss accounts*	Free format - please upload The most recent balance sheet and profit & loss accounts, including assets and liabilities, specifying the currency used.	✓	✓	NA	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	Audit report*	Free format - please upload For grant of EUR 750 000 or more, an external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the accounts for the last financial year available (Point 13.1 of the financial guidelines). The threshold applies to each co-applicant in line with their share of the action budget. The report should be submitted in English, French or German.	✓	✓	NA	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.	Summary balance sheet & profit and loss accounts*	The template is available in SWIM and must be signed by the authorised legal representative	✓	✓	NA	---	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>

ANNEX I:

FINANCIAL GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

Annex I is available on the Europa website under the relevant call:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=fr>