



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

Employment and Social Governance
Social dialogue

BUDGET HEADING 04 03 01 08

Improving expertise in the field of industrial relations

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

VP/2018/004

Any questions should be sent by email to:

empl-vp-industrial-relations@ec.europa.eu

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

This text is only available in English.

Applicants are invited to read the present document in conjunction with the Financial Guidelines for Applicants for this call (see Annex I) 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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION – BACKGROUND	3
1.1.	Programme/Legal base	3
1.2.	Policy and economic background	3
2.	OBJECTIVES – PRIORITIES – ACTIVITIES – EXPECTED RESULTS	4
2.1.	Objectives – Priorities	4
2.2.	Type of activities to be funded - Expected results	5
2.3.	Other elements to be taken into account	6
3.	TIMETABLE	7
3.1.	Starting date and duration of the projects	7
4.	AVAILABLE BUDGET AND CO-FINANCING RATE	8
4.1.	Available budget and indicative grant amounts	8
4.2.	Co-financing rate	8
5.	ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS	8
6.	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	9
6.1.	Eligibility of the applicants (applicants, lead applicants, co-applicants and affiliated entities)	9
6.2.	Eligible activities	11
6.3.	Ineligible activities	11
7.	EXCLUSION CRITERIA	11
7.1.	Exclusion	11
7.2.	Rejection from the call for proposals	12
8.	SELECTION CRITERIA	12
8.1.	Financial capacity	12
8.2.	Operational capacity	13
9.	AWARD CRITERIA	14
10.	LEGAL COMMITMENTS	15
11.	FINANCIAL PROVISIONS	16
12.	PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS	16
13.	COMMUNICATION	18
14.	INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PRESENTATION OF THE APPLICATION AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS	19
14.1.	Instructions for the presentation of the application	19
14.2.	Required documents	20
	ANNEX I FINANCIAL GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS	26
	ANNEX II MODEL FOR TENDER SPECIFICATIONS FOR SUBCONTRACTING EXTERNAL EXPERTISE	27

1. INTRODUCTION – BACKGROUND

1.1. Programme/Legal base

The legal basis of this call for proposal is the Commission Decision C(2017)5636¹ of 14 August 2017 on the adoption of the 2018 annual work programme for grants and procurement for DG EMPL prerogatives and specific competencies, serving as a financing decision.

1.2. Policy and economic background

In line with the remarks in the budget of the European Union, budget heading 04 03 01 08 is intended to cover actions to support industrial relations, in particular those designed to develop expertise and the exchange of EU-relevant information, as well as actions to improve knowledge on industrial relations institutions and practices across the EU and dissemination of results.

As such, by improving expertise and knowledge on industrial relations, the financed measures should contribute to addressing the overarching EU employment and social policy challenges as laid down in particular in:

- the Commission Communication *On steps towards Completing Economic and Monetary Union* (COM(2015)600)²;
- the Commission Communication *Establishing a European Pillar of Social Rights* (COM(2017)0250)³ as well as the related joint proclamation of European Parliament, Council and Commission of November 2017 and the Commission Communication *Monitoring the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights* (COM(2018) 130 final)⁴;
- the Annual Growth Survey, the Joint Employment Report and the recommendations addressed to the Member States in the context of the European Semester;
- the Political Guidelines presented by Jean-Claude Juncker in the Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change and the Commission Work Programmes;
- The *White Paper on the Future of Europe* (COM(2017)2025) and the five related thematic Reflection Papers, in particular the *Reflection paper on the social dimension of*

¹<http://ec.europa.eu/social/search.jsp?advSearchKey=Commission+Decision+C%282017%295636&mode=advancedSubmit&langId=en&x=0&y=0>

²<https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2015/EN/1-2015-600-EN-F1-1.PDF>

³<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52017DC0250>

⁴https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-monitoring-implementation-european-pillar-social-rights-march2018_en.pdf

Europe (COM(2017) 206) and the *Reflection paper on the deepening of the Economic and Monetary Union* (COM(2017) 291)⁵.

The budget heading can be used to finance actions involving partners from the Candidate Countries⁶.

2. OBJECTIVES – PRIORITIES – ACTIVITIES – EXPECTED RESULTS

2.1. Objectives – Priorities

General objective

The overarching objective of this call is to improve expertise and knowledge on industrial relations through **analysis and research**, at **EU level** as well as in **comparative terms** (identifying convergences and differences in the industrial relations systems in place in the EU Member States and in Candidate Countries), thereby contributing to developing and reinforcing quality and effectiveness of industrial relations structures and processes in the Member States and in Europe as a whole.

Definition

"**Industrial relations**" concern the collective – rather than individual – aspects of the employment relationship between workers, employers and their respective representatives. This includes the tripartite dimension where public authorities (at different levels) are involved. As such, industrial relations refer to the set of rules governing employment and relations at the workplace, together with the ways in which the rules are made, changed, interpreted and implemented by trade unions, employers and the state.

Topics of specific interest

Actions that address the **following themes** will be particularly welcome:

- The role and contribution of industrial relations, including social dialogue at different levels
 - in responding to the major challenges/opportunities brought by digitalisation, globalisation, demographic evolutions, climate change and technological change, including artificial intelligence;
 - to addressing the employment, social and economic challenges as identified in the European Pillar of Social Rights;

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/white-paper-future-europe-reflections-and-scenarios-eu27_en

⁶ Where reference is made to the Candidate Countries in this call for proposals, it concerns the Candidate Countries at the time of the deadline for the submission of applications of this call: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/check-current-status/index_en.htm.

- in the context of the European Semester and Economic and Monetary Union;
- to reaching economic and social outcomes in terms of: economic growth and competitiveness; social inclusion and fairness; job creation and job quality.
- Functioning and effects of coordination of collective bargaining across different levels and territories.

General remark

Access for people with disabilities should be guaranteed for measures funded under this call for proposals.

2.2. Type of activities to be funded - Expected results

The following **categories of actions** are targeted:

- Activities to further deepen the analysis on topics/key findings that were examined in the European Commission's Industrial Relations in Europe series and/or the chapters on social dialogue in Employment and Social Developments in Europe (ESDE) Report;
- Research activities on industrial relations and social dialogue, such as studies, surveys and other forms of data collection, monitoring exercises, action research;
- Measures to enhance the collection and use of (comparative) information on industrial relations systems in EU Member States and Candidate Countries and on developments at European level;
- Initiatives to promote awareness of effective industrial relations practices, at both national and European level, including by bringing together relevant actors such as academia, social partners and policy makers;
- Measures to identify and exchange information in the area of industrial relations, including through the activities of networks between industrial relations parties and/or experts;
- Actions to disseminate such findings in publications, round tables, seminars, conferences, training measures and training tools.

Expected results and outputs under this call for proposals include: production and diffusion/promotion of studies, reports, data repositories and analytical tools related to industrial relations expertise at EU level (including in comparative terms), as well as dissemination of the knowledge generated in this area through appropriate means and towards relevant target publics, such as academia, social partners and policy makers.

Measures mainly aimed at **directly supporting European social partners' initiatives and processes**, such as consultations, meetings, negotiations and other actions related to the work of European Social Dialogue Committees at both sectoral and cross-industry level, are **not** covered by this call for proposals. These types of actions are funded under the call for proposals "Support for Social Dialogue".

2.3. Other elements to be taken into account

When drafting the proposal, applicants are invited to pay particular attention to the following elements:

- The proposal should provide a clear explanation of the rationale and problem definition/analysis underpinning the proposed action, as well as the specific contribution of the action to the objectives of the call for proposals and its expected impact.
- This call for proposals aims at funding projects with a strong research/analysis focus are sought. Project proposals should therefore clearly describe the **research methodology**, covering at least the following elements:
 1. The proposal should specify one or several **research question(s)**. In doing so, applicants are strongly encouraged to explain how the project will contribute:
 - a. on the one hand to the EU policy agenda;
 - b. on the other hand to improving expertise in the field of industrial relations (including references to existing research on the given topic).
 2. The key **concepts or variables** of the research project should be defined with a sufficient level of detail, indicating how the concepts will be measured.
 3. The work plan should specify which **data** will be used to inform the analysis.

Projects building on existing data should indicate which sources will be used, including, where relevant, the provisions to access the data.

Where collection of new data is envisaged, the proposal should outline a data collection strategy, including measures to ensure data quality (envisaged number of cases, criteria according to which these will be selected).
 4. The work plan should include an **analytical strategy**, indicating how the data will be scrutinised in a systematic manner to shed light on the research question(s).
 5. Finally, the work plan should provide details on **reporting** of the research findings.
- In case of recurrent applications by the same applicant on similar or related topics, the added value of the new proposal as compared to ongoing and previous actions⁷ should be clearly explained.
- The choice of organisations involved and countries covered should be duly explained and justified as regards their relevance towards the specific objectives of the action.

The Commission welcomes in particular projects that provide for a full project cycle, including preparatory, implementation and dissemination, follow-up and reporting activities.

Taking account of beneficiaries' interest, the Commission may organise a **networking day** in Brussels for beneficiaries under the 2018 call (date to be defined). Applicants must therefore ensure that the travel, daily subsistence allowances and accommodation costs for up to 2 persons – the Project Manager and possibly the Financial Manager – to attend

⁷ Including projects funded under other budget headings.

this meeting are included in their proposed project budget. If the applicant fails to do this, the Commission will not be able to fund the beneficiary's participation in the networking day.

3. TIMETABLE

	Stages	Date or period
a)	Publication of the call	April 2018
b)	Deadline for questions and requests for clarification	5 June 2018
c)	Deadline for submitting proposals	15 June 2018 Swim, Courier and Post: 24:00 Brussels' time (CET) Hand deliveries: 16:00 Brussels' time (CET)
d)	Evaluation period (indicative)	Until September 2018
e)	Information to applicants (indicative)	October 2018 ⁸
f)	Signature of the grant agreement (indicative)	November 2018 ⁹
g)	Starting date of the action (indicative)	As of 1 December 2018

3.1. Starting date and duration of the projects

The actual starting date of the action will be the first day of the month following the date when the last of the two parties signs the Grant Agreement 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 plan instead of indicating the precise name of the months.

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

The indicative duration of projects should be 24 months.

⁸ And in any case no later than 6 months after the submission deadline.

⁹ And in any case no later than 3 months after the date of information to applicants.

4. AVAILABLE BUDGET AND CO-FINANCING RATE

4.1. Available budget and indicative grant amounts

The total budget earmarked for the EU co-financing of projects under this call is estimated at **EUR 4 292 250**.

The EU grant requested should indicatively be between EUR 150 000 and EUR 500 000.

The Commission reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

The Commission reserves the right to increase the amount of the funds and distribute them to proposals admitted in the reserve list, if available. This top-up is limited to 20% of the initial budget of the call.

4.2. Co-financing rate

Under this call for proposals, the EU grant may not exceed 90 % of the total eligible costs of the action. The applicants must guarantee their co-financing of the remaining amount covered by the applicants' own resources or from other sources other than the European Union budget¹⁰.

5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Applications (application form including budget and description of the action including work plan) must be submitted using the electronic submission system available at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim>, and by sending a signed, printed version of the application form and the other afore-mentioned documents by post or courier service (one original dossier and one copy; see also section 12).
- Applications must be sent no later than the deadline for submission referred to in section 3(c).

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, French or German 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. In this case, applications should be accompanied by an executive summary in English, French or German (see section 14, checklist point 3).

¹⁰ Letters of commitment are required from co-applicants, any affiliated entity and any third party providing financial contributions to the eligible costs of the action (see section 14, checklist point 5).

6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

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, British beneficiaries will cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the project on the basis of the article of the Grant Agreement allowing termination due to a change of the legal situation of the beneficiary (Article II.7.2.1(a) for mono-beneficiary and Article II.17.3.1(a) for multi-beneficiary Grant Agreements).

6.1. Eligibility of the applicants (applicants, lead applicants, co-applicants and affiliated entities)¹¹

a) Place of establishment

Legal entities properly established and registered in the following countries¹² are eligible as applicants or lead applicants:

- EU Member States;

Legal entities properly established and registered in the following countries¹³ are eligible as co-applicants:

- EU Member States;
- Candidate Countries: Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey¹⁴.

b) Types of entities

- The applicants, lead applicants, co-applicants and affiliated entities must be legal entities. In application of Article 131 of the Financial Regulation, social partner organisations without legal personality are also eligible provided that the conditions of the Financial Regulation related thereto are met¹⁵;

¹¹ See section 2 of the Financial Guidelines for definitions.

¹² In derogation from this requirement, international organisations whose registered headquarters are outside the eligible countries are also eligible.

¹³ In derogation from this requirement, international organisations whose registered headquarters are outside the eligible countries are also eligible.

¹⁴ Other candidate and potential candidate countries could 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, this is not yet confirmed, therefore applicants and co-applicants from those countries should check with the secretariat of the call (empl-vp-industrial-relations@ec.europa.eu) their eligibility.

¹⁵ For organisations without legal personality, a signed letter of the legal representative certifying his/her capacity to undertake legal obligations on behalf of the organisation must be submitted (see section 14, checklist point 8).

- Applicants, lead applicants and co-applicants must fall within one of the following categories: non-profit-making organisations such as universities and research institutes¹⁶; social partners; public authorities; international organisations.
- International organisations may apply as applicants, lead applicants or co-applicants as well as associate organisations.

c) Applicants or Consortia¹⁷

Actions may involve consortia.

Proposals may be submitted by either:

- one applicant: applicable only for international organisations;

Or by:

- a lead applicant on behalf of a consortium which must be composed of the lead applicant with one (or more):
 - co-applicant, or/and
 - affiliated entity, or/and
 - associate organisation
- The consortium must be composed of at least one non-profit-making university or research institute as lead or co-applicant. This requirement is not applicable if the lead applicant is an international organisation.
- If the lead applicant is not a European-level or international organisation, it must be in consortium with at least one organisation (co-applicant, affiliated entity or associate organisation) from a different eligible country to that of the lead applicant.

If a proposal submitted by one applicant (applicable only for international organisations) is not considered to be eligible, the application will be rejected.

For consortia, if the lead applicant is considered not to be eligible, the application will be rejected. If a co-applicant is considered not to be eligible, this organisation will be removed from the consortium and the proposal evaluated on that basis. In addition, the costs that are allocated to a non-eligible co-applicant will be removed from the budget.

d) Affiliated entities

¹⁶ Research institutes are required to provide the relevant excerpt of their statutes or equivalent demonstrating that their primary missions include pursuing research and analysis, as well as its translation into English, French or German (see section 14, checklist point 9b).

¹⁷ Letters of mandate, authorising the lead applicant to submit the proposal and to sign any Grant Agreement on their behalf, must be submitted by each co-applicant. Letters of commitment must be submitted by each co-applicant and affiliated entity, 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 14, 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).

Legal entities having a legal or capital link with applicants, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation and which satisfy the eligibility criteria, may take part in the action as affiliated entities, and may declare eligible costs.

For that purpose, applicants shall identify such affiliated entities in the application form.

6.2. Eligible activities

a) Geographical Location

To be eligible, actions must be fully carried out in the Member States of the European Union or the Candidate Countries. This applies equally to International Organisations. However, in duly justified circumstances, project management costs incurred in the headquarters of International Organisations established outside the EU Member States or the candidate countries could be considered eligible.

b) Types of activities

The grant will finance inter alia the activities indicated in section 2.2.

c) Core activities

The project management of the action and the role of coordinator (in the case of a multi-beneficiary Grant Agreement) as laid down in Article II.2.3 of the Grant Agreement, are considered to be core activities and may not be subcontracted¹⁸.

6.3. Ineligible activities

Financial support to third parties as defined in point 3 of the Financial Guidelines is not eligible under this call.

National capacity-building activities which could be funded under the European Social Fund (Regulation (EU) No 1304/2013¹⁹ on the European Social Fund, Article 6.2) are not eligible.

7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

7.1. Exclusion

Applicants (lead and co-applicants) must sign a declaration on their honour (see section 14, checklist point 4) 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

¹⁸ See section 4.2.2.3 of the Financial Guidelines for detailed information on procedures regarding subcontracting and implementing contracts.

¹⁹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R1304>

from the procedure respectively, using the relevant form attached to the application form available at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/external/displayWelcome.do>.

The same exclusion criteria apply to any affiliated entities.

7.2. Rejection from the call for proposals

The Commission shall not award a grant to an applicant who:

- a. is in an exclusion situation;
- b. has misrepresented the information required as a condition for participating in the procedure or has failed to supply this information;
- c. was previously involved in the preparation of calls for proposals documents where this entails a distortion of competition that cannot be remedied otherwise.

The same exclusion criteria apply to any affiliated entities which must, therefore, be included in the above-mentioned declaration(s).

Administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants, or affiliated entities where applicable, who are guilty of misrepresentation.

8. SELECTION CRITERIA

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

8.1. Financial capacity

Applicants, lead applicants and co-applicants 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 verification of financial capacity will NOT apply to public bodies and to international organisations.

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

- Declaration on honour, including financial capacity to carry out the action (see section 14, checklist point 4);
- Annual balance sheet and profit and loss accounts for the last financial year available (see section 14, checklist point 13);

- Information on the financial capacity provided by the applicant and in particular the information provided in section "Financial Resources" of the SWIM application form;
- For grants of EUR 750 000 or more per beneficiary or affiliated entity, an audit report produced by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the last financial year available (see section 14, checklist point 14).

If the ratio between the total assets in the applicants' (lead and co-applicants) 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, is equal or greater than 0.70 (formula in the case of sole applicant: own assets/total cost of the action > 0.70; formula for each applicant in the case of consortia: applicant's own assets/part of the cost of the action corresponding to that applicant > 0.70), then the financial capacity is strong.

If the applicant or lead applicant is considered not to have a strong financial capacity, the application as a whole will be rejected.

If a co-applicant or several co-applicants are considered not to have a strong financial capacity, the Commission will also take into account any other relevant information on the financial capacity provided by the applicant and in particular the information provided in section "Financial Resources" of the SWIM application form.

After this further analysis, the Commission will take various proportional measures depending on the level of weaknesses identified, which may be to:

1. reject the whole application;
2. remove the co-applicant from the consortium and re-evaluate the proposal without this co-applicant;
3. propose a grant agreement without pre-financing;
4. propose a grant agreement with a pre-financing paid in several instalments;
5. propose a grant agreement with pre-financing payment(s) covered by (a) financial guarantee(s);
6. propose a grant agreement with joint financial liability of 2 or more applicants/co-applicants;
7. propose a grant agreement with a mix of the measures 4, 5 and 6.

8.2. Operational capacity

Applicants, lead applicants and co-applicants must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed action. In particular, applicants must have demonstrable competence and experience in the field of social dialogue and/or industrial relations and in particular in the type of action proposed.

The operational capacity of the applicants, lead applicants and co-applicants to complete the proposed action must be confirmed by the submission of the following supporting elements:

- the information provided in section F.1 of the SWIM application form on the operational structure of the lead applicant and co-applicants and on previous and current actions undertaken by them;
- The CVs of the proposed project manager and of the persons who will perform the main tasks, showing their relevant professional experience (see section 14, checklist point 12).
- Declaration on honour signed by the legal representative, including operational capacity to carry out the action (see section 14, checklist point 4).

If the applicant or lead applicant for consortia is considered not to have the required operational capacity, the application as a whole will be rejected. If a co-applicant is considered not to have the required operational capacity, this co-applicant will be removed from the consortium and the application will be evaluated on that basis²⁰. In addition, the costs that are allocated to the non-eligible co-applicant will be removed from the budget. If the application is accepted, the work plan may have to be slightly adjusted.

9. AWARD CRITERIA

The proposals which fulfil the eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria will be assessed according to the following award criteria.

- i. The extent to which the action meets the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals and contributes to the understanding of industrial relations, at EU level as well as in comparative terms²¹ (maximum possible score: 10/10)
- ii. The extent to which the action has a genuine transnational dimension (maximum possible score: 10/10)
- iii. The quality of the consortium and broader partnership, including the degree of involvement and commitment of the partners in the action²² and the appropriateness of the internal working arrangements²³ (maximum possible score: 10/10)
- iv. The cost-effectiveness of the action and the clarity and completeness of the budget explanation²⁴ (maximum possible score: 10/10)
- v. The quality of the arrangements to publicise the action and disseminate the results, and to ensure the action's impact and/or multiplier effect²⁵ (maximum possible score: 10/10)
- vi. The quality of the overall research methodology and its composing elements (maximum possible score: 10/10)

²⁰ This includes a re-evaluation of the eligibility of the modified consortium.

²¹ The Commission reserves the right when assessing proposals to take into account the added value of the proposed action compared to previous or ongoing projects undertaken by the applicant(s) as well as to any other work in the area at hand of which the applicant(s) can reasonably be expected to be aware (see also section 2.3 of the call).

²² Letters of commitment must be submitted from each co-applicant and affiliated entity, demonstrating that they are willing to participate in the project with a brief description of their role and indicating any

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

- **the total score reaches at least 60% of the maximum possible total score;**
- **the score for each of criteria i, ii and vi is at least 50% of the maximum possible score for these criteria.**

10. LEGAL COMMITMENTS

In the event of a grant 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, or to the coordinator in the case of multi-beneficiary Grant Agreements.

The 2 copies of the original agreement must be signed by the beneficiary, or the coordinator in the case of multi-beneficiary Grant Agreements, and returned to the Commission immediately. The Commission will sign it last.

The Commission may have made relevant corrections and deletion of ineligible costs or activities in the Grant Agreement sent to the applicant – 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.

The applicable model Grant Agreement is published on the Europa website under the relevant call webpage:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=630&callId=528&furtherCalls=yes>

There is no alternative to this model in the context of this call. In specific cases, international agreements conditions may apply.

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

financial contribution as applicable. Associate organisations must submit a letter of commitment showing their willingness to participate in the project with a brief description of their role. See section 14, checklist point 5.

²³ Please note that the Commission does not consider it appropriate to include independent consultants, conference organisers, etc., as project partners. Please read chapter 4.2.2.3 Costs of services of Annex I carefully.

²⁴ The cost-effectiveness of actions will be evaluated on the basis of the proposed budget. The Commission reserves the right to make corrections and/or delete non-eligible expenditure from the proposed budget, but it will not make adjustments in order to improve cost-effectiveness of proposals.

²⁵ The multiplier effect refers to how the project and its results will promote change in other fields, such as geographical, sectoral and thematic.

11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

Details on financial provisions are laid out in the Financial Guidelines for Applicants (Annex I to the call) and the model Grant Agreement, both published on the Europa website under the relevant call webpage:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=630&callId=528&furtherCalls=yes>

a) Specific procurement provisions

Implementation contracts/subcontracting

Where the implementation of the action requires the award of procurement contracts (implementation contracts/subcontracting), the beneficiary must award the contract to the bid offering best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interests.

Specific procurement procedures

Where the value of a foreseen procurement contract for subcontracting external expertise exceeds EUR 60 000, in addition to the rules indicated in the Financial Guidelines for applicants, the following shall apply:

- if selected, beneficiaries must be able to prove, if requested, that they have sought bids from at least five different tenderers, including proof that they have publicised their intention on their website and provided a detailed description of the selection procedure.
- the applicant must provide with the grant application a copy of the draft tender specifications. To assist applicants, a model for tender specifications is included in Annex II to this call. The draft tender specifications should be submitted in English, French or German.

This requirement does not apply to public authorities which are already governed by a system of public procurement rules.

b) Daily subsistence allowances and travel expenses

Travel expenses and daily subsistence allowances will be accepted as eligible costs only for participants and speakers travelling between and within EU MS and/or Candidate countries.

By derogation, this provision does not apply to staff of international organisations whose registered headquarters are outside the eligible countries and who are partners of the consortium.

12. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

The procedure to submit proposals electronically is explained in point 14 of the "Financial Guidelines for Applicants" (Annex I to this call). 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 hard copy**, before the deadline set in section 3(c) 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 **2 copies** (one marked "original" and one marked "copy"), including all documents listed in the checklist in section 14, by the deadline set in section 3(c), either by registered post, express courier service or hand delivery.

Address for registered post or express courier service:

European Commission
NOT TO BE OPENED BY CENTRAL MAIL SERVICE
Call for proposals VP/2018/004
DG EMPL/CAD, J-27 – 00/120
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium

Evidence of posting or express courier deposit slip should be kept as it could be requested by the European Commission in cases of doubt regarding the date of submission.

- a) registered post evidence: postmark
- b) express courier service evidence: deposit slip of express courier service

Hand-delivered proposals must be received by the European Commission by 4 p.m. of the date indicated in section 3(c) at the following address:

European Commission
Central Mail Service
NOT TO BE OPENED BY CENTRAL MAIL SERVICE
Call for proposals VP/2018/004 – DG EMPL/A.2
Avenue du Bourget 1
B-1140 Evere
Belgium

At that time the European Commission's Mail Service will provide a signed and dated proof of receipt which should be conserved as evidence 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 (see section 13).

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

13. COMMUNICATION

Contacts between the Commission and potential applicants can only take place in certain circumstances and under the following conditions only:

Before the final date for submission of proposals

Any requests for additional information must be made by e-mail only to the coordinates stated below.

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-industrial-relations@ec.europa.eu

For technical problems please contact: empl-swim-support@ec.europa.eu

The Commission has no obligation to reply to requests for additional information received after the deadline for questions and clarifications set in Section 3(b).

Replies will be given no later than 5 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 or affiliated entities, 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 – Frequently Asked Questions) at regular intervals on the Europa website under the relevant call webpage:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=630&callId=528&furtherCalls=yes>

At the request of the applicant, the Commission may provide additional information solely for the purpose of clarifying the nature of the call.

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

It is therefore advisable to consult this website regularly in order to be informed of updates and of the questions and answers published. It is the applicant's responsibility to check for updates and modifications regularly during the submission period.

After the deadline for submission of proposals

No modification to the proposal is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed.

If clarification is requested or if obvious clerical errors in the proposal need to be corrected, the Commission may contact the applicant by email provided the terms of the proposal are not modified as a result.

It is the applicant's responsibility to provide a valid e-mail address and contact details and to check this e-mail address regularly. In case of any change of contact details, please send an e-mail with the application VP reference and the new contact details to empl-vp-industrial-relations@ec.europa.eu.

In the case of consortia, all communication regarding an application will be done with the lead applicant only, unless there are specific reasons to do otherwise.

Information on the outcome of the procedure

Applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the selection process.

Unsuccessful applicants will be informed of the reasons for rejection. No information regarding the award procedure will be disclosed until the notification letters have been sent to the beneficiaries.

Participation of the Commission in project events

Following the award of a grant, if the successful applicant would like the Commission to participate in any project events, the applicant must take immediate contact (in any case, at least 2 months before the event) with the Commission official responsible for following the action (named in the letter accompanying the Grant Agreement). The successful applicant should therefore not finalise the programming of such events without the Commission's prior approval and confirmation of participation.

The Commission's acceptance of the grant application does not prejudice its decision on whether to attend an event included in the work plan. Such a decision is always subject to a separate examination of the event programme and prior agreement on the dates and practicalities. In this context it should be noted that the probability of Commission officials participating in project events will be higher if the latter take place in Brussels.

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

14.1. Instructions for the presentation of the application

The application comprises an application form including the budget, a description of the action and work plan plus a series of other required documents (see section 14.2).

The description of the action and work plan must be written using a free format document. All the information related to the description of the action and the work plan must be presented in one single document. The budget must be presented using the application form in SWIM and a separate budget explanation must also be provided (section 14 checklist, point 11).

In case of subcontracting any tasks comprising part of the action (see the 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 activities as defined in section 6.2(c) of the call cannot be subcontracted.

The **detailed work plan** (see checklist point 10) should **not repeat information that is already provided in the SWIM application form**²⁶.

²⁶ The corresponding section in the SWIM form can therefore be kept rather succinct.

- It should provide a detailed and structured overview of the different project activities, the foreseen timing (indicating numbers of months, *not* names of months) and the role and responsibility of each partner organisation (*not* individual staff members) in the implementation of these activities, as well as, to the extent possible, draft agendas of the main project events.
- Where appropriate, risk factors as regards implementation and/or impact of the activities should be identified and mitigating measures defined.
- It offers an opportunity to develop further the rationale and problem analysis underpinning the action.
- If any subcontracting of tasks is foreseen, the detailed work plan must provide detailed information on the tasks to be subcontracted and the reasons for doing so.
- All other information on the action should in principle be given in the SWIM application form. The detailed work plan is therefore expected not to be much longer than 5 pages, with an absolute maximum of 10 pages.

14.2. Required documents

The two tables below include the documents that should be provided, including the documents mentioned under section 14.1. Except for Legal entity form, VAT Certificate and Financial identification form which can be submitted later only for successful applications, please note that all other documents are necessary either for the admissibility (see section 5) or for the analysis of the eligibility (see section 6) or selection criteria (see section 8). The tables also indicate where originals are required. We recommend that applicants use the tables as a **checklist** in order to verify compliance with all requirements.

While some information must be supplied using the templates available in the 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.

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 may be rejected for lack of administrative compliance.**

Regarding the compilation of the application file, it is recommended to:

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

CHECKLIST for required documents at application stage

This table includes the documents that must be provided and indicates where originals are required. 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 and international organisations. Documents marked with * are obligatorily to be attached online in SWIM. Legal entity form, VAT Certificate and Financial identification form can either be submitted at application stage or be submitted later in case of successful application (see second table below).

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	This free format letter must quote the reference of the call for proposals, be originally signed and dated by the authorised representative and include and the proposal reference number generated by SWIM (e.g. VP/2018/004).	✓	--	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Signed SWIM application form submitted online	The SWIM application form submitted online must be printed and dated and signed by the authorised legal representative and send by hard copies as foreseen in Section 12. <i>Note: the online form must be electronically submitted before printing. After electronic submission, no further changes to the proposal are permitted.</i>	✓	--	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Executive summary in EN (if necessary)	Free format executive summary in EN (maximum 2 pages), if required (see section 5 of the call).	✓	--	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	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. This declaration must also refer to the financial and operational capacity to carry out the action. This declaration must also cover any affiliated entity. Where applicable, the relevant documentary evidence which illustrates the remedial measures taken for applicants who declared one of the situations of exclusion listed in the declaration. <i>Copies of the original signed declaration of co-applicants are accepted at the submission of the application; originals to be submitted upon request.</i>	✓	✓	--	--	✓	<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		
5	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. <i>Copies of the original signed letters of commitment are accepted at the submission of the application; originals to be submitted upon request.</i>	--	✓	✓	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	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. <i>Copies of the original signed letters of mandate are accepted at the submission of the application; originals to be submitted upon request.</i>	--	✓	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Legal/capital link with lead or co-applicant*	Affiliated entities are required to provide proof of the legal and/or capital link with the lead or co-applicant.	--	--	✓	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Proof of registration	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). 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.	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Statutes	The articles of association/founding act/constitution/statutes or equivalent, proving the eligibility of the organisation. It is recommended not to include a paper copy of statutes in the application file, but to attach only an electronic copy in the SWIM application form. Organisations of Candidate Countries are requested to provide a translation in English, French or German of the required documents.	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
9b	Excerpt of statutes or equivalent	Research institutes must include as a separate document the relevant excerpt of their statutes or equivalent, demonstrating that their primary missions include pursuing research and analysis, as well as its translation into English, French or German.	✓	✓	--	--	--	--

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	Detailed work plan*	This is a separate free-format document in addition to the on-line application form and it must also be submitted both electronically and on paper. The paper version must be identical to the electronic version of the detailed work plan. The detailed work plan should be submitted in English, French or German.	✓	--	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Budget Explanation for the project*	This is a separate free-format 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. It must provide additional information to explain and justify items of the proposed budget as submitted in the SWIM application form. 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. The paper version must be identical to the electronic version of the budget explanation. The Commission may request applicants to submit additional justifications of proposed eligible costs during the evaluation procedure. The document should be submitted in English, French or German.	✓	--	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Curriculum vitae of the key staff	Detailed CVs of the person responsible for managing the action (named in the online application form) and of the persons who will perform the main tasks. The CVs should indicate clearly the current employer(s) of these persons. The CVs should be submitted in English, French or German.	✓	✓	✓	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Balance sheet and profit and loss account	The most recent balance sheet and profit and loss account, including assets and liabilities, specifying the currency used. Organisations that are not required by law to establish an official balance sheet must nevertheless provide information on their assets and liabilities. A statement of income and expenses is not sufficient.	✓	✓	--	--	--	<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		
14	Audit report	For grant requests of EUR 750,000: an external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the accounts for the last financial year available. 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.	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Draft tender specifications	In case of subcontracting for external expertise where the value of the contracts exceeds EUR 60 000, a copy of the draft tender specifications must be submitted. A model is included in Annex II of this call. The draft tender specifications should be submitted in English, French or German.	✓	--	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>

CHECKLIST for required documents for the proposals selected for funding

This table includes the documents that must be provided for the proposals selected for funding and where originals are required.

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	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.	✓	✓	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	VAT certificate	A document showing the identification number for tax purposes or the VAT number, if applicable.	✓	✓	--	--	--	<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		
3	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.cf_m) and must be duly signed and dated by the <u>account holder</u> and bearing the bank stamp and signature of the bank representative (or a copy of recent bank statement attached).	✓	--	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>

ANNEX I

FINANCIAL GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

Annex I is available on the call webpage:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=630&callId=528&furtherCalls=yes>

ANNEX II

MODEL FOR TENDER SPECIFICATIONS FOR SUBCONTRACTING EXTERNAL EXPERTISE

Tender Specifications –

1. **Background**
2. **Purpose of the Contract**
3. **Tasks to be performed by the Contractor**
 - 3.1 **Description of tasks**
 - 3.2 **Guidance and indications on tasks execution and methodology**
4. **Expertise required**
5. **Time schedule and reporting**
6. **Payments and standard contract**
7. **Price**
8. **Selection criteria related to the financial and technical capacity of the bidders**
9. **Award criteria related to the quality of the bids received**

The contract will be awarded to the tenderer whose offer represents the best value for money - taking into account the following criteria:

-
-
-

It should be noted that the contract will **not** be awarded to a tenderer who receives less than 70% on the Award Criteria.

10. **Content and presentation of the bids**
 - 10.1 **Content of the bids**
 - 10.2 **Presentation of the bids**