



EU PROGRAMME FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION (EaSI)

CALL FOR PROPOSALS VP/2016/018

European Solidarity Corps *Occupational Strand (Cross Border Mobility)*

*Any questions shall be sent by email to:
empl-vp-2016-018@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 – LEGAL BACKGROUND

1.1. Programme /Legal base

This call for proposals is published under REGULATION (EU) N° 1296/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on an European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation ("EaSI")¹ and amending Decision No 283/2010/EU establishing a European Progress Microfinance Facility for employment and social inclusion.

The **European Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" 2014-2020**² 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.

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.

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.

2. POLICY AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

2.1. The European Solidarity Corps

President Juncker announced in his State of the Union address on 14 September 2016 the idea of a European Solidarity Corps:

"There are many young, socially minded people in Europe willing to make a meaningful contribution to society and help show solidarity. We can create opportunities for them to do so [...] Solidarity is the glue that keeps our Union together [...] Young people across the European Union will be able to volunteer their help where it is needed most, to respond to crisis situations [...] These young people will be able to develop their skills and get not only work but also invaluable human experience"

1 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:0238:0252:EN:PDF>

2 REGULATION (EU) No 1296/2013, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1081>

Young Europeans need greater and more easily accessible opportunities to express their solidarity. The European Solidarity Corps will connect enthusiastic and committed young people ready and willing to work on a common solidarity project. It will offer an inspiring and empowering experience for young people who want to help, learn and develop, while gaining valuable experience. The aim is to see the first 100,000 young Europeans joining the European Solidarity Corps by 2020.

The European Solidarity Corps will strengthen the foundations for solidarity work across Europe. It will provide an extended basis for supporting organisations around Europe that provide solidarity opportunities for young people. It will serve the needs of vulnerable communities, of public national and local structures on a wide range of areas such as providing food to the persons in need, cleaning forests and beaches, supporting disaster stricken regions or helping with the integration of refugees.

Young people will be able to engage in a broad range of activities. The activities could be linked to services of general interest. These can cover areas such as education and youth activities, health, social and labour market integration, assistance in the provision of food and non-food items, shelter construction, site construction, renovation and management, reception, support and integration of migrants and refugees, post-conflict reconciliation, environmental protection and the conservation of *Natura 2000* sites, or prevention of natural disasters (but excluding immediate response to disasters which requires more specialised skills and training).

The increased participation of young people in these activities will be of benefit to themselves and to national and local authorities and bodies, non-governmental organisations and companies in their efforts to cope with various challenges and crises.

The European Solidarity Corps will bring together **two complementary strands:** volunteering and occupational.

- The **volunteering strand** will enhance and expand the existing European Voluntary Service scheme³, which is funded through the Erasmus+ programme. Other volunteering activities will be financed by existing programmes such as *LIFE, Europe for Citizens, the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, the European Regional development Fund as well as the Health programme*;
- The **occupational strand** will provide young people with an opportunity for a job, traineeship or apprenticeship in a wide range of sectors engaged in solidarity activities in another or their own country and needing highly motivated and socially-minded young people. It will build on the experience and concept of the "Your first EURES job" mobility scheme (YFEJ)⁴. Beyond the EaSI programme, activities can also be co-financed through other programmes like the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and Europe for Citizens.

The activities under the occupational strand will complement the work done by the national employment Services and in particular the European jobs network ("EURES"), which supports information and placements of workers across EU Member States in general.

3 This strand is managed by Directorate-General for Education and Culture
https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities-for-individuals/young-people/european-voluntary-service_en

4 <http://ec.europa.eu/social/yourfirsteuresjob>

Thanks to its focus on solidarity values, the European Solidarity Corps will enrich existing recruitment practices at national level and offer new opportunities to other categories of young people than those who have benefitted so far from assistance.

The European Solidarity Corps will be set up gradually. In the first phase, launched with the Communication 'A European Solidarity Corps' on 7 December 2016⁵, young people wishing to express their interest in joining the European Solidarity Corps will be able to do so through a dedicated registration page under the European Youth Portal (<http://europa.eu/youth/solidarity>).

The first phase will include the use of existing financing programmes including the EaSI programme to support placements of participants in the European Solidarity Corps.

For more information on the European Solidarity Corps, please consult the dedicated website: <http://europa.eu/youth/solidarity>

2.2. The call under the EaSI programme

This call is part of a series of actions planned for the European Solidarity Corps first phase launched on the 7 December 2016 and it targets cross border placements for the purpose of the occupational strand.

The action under the call aims to offer remunerated work opportunities in line with the values of the European Solidarity Corps to young nationals within the age bracket 18 – 30 in EU countries other than their country of residence.

The placements, either in a job, apprenticeship or traineeship, will have a duration varying between 2 and 12 months, will be enshrined in a legally binding work relationship with the employer, either full or part-time, will have a solidarity dimension and must be performed in the territory of one of the afore-mentioned countries.

The placements will enable employers to find the skills they need and to help integrate and train the young recruited employees.

The action intends also to be an EU labour market activation and inclusion measure for unemployed young people, fostering the exercise of workers' freedom of movement as set out in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU, Art. 45 & 46);

A mix of tailor-made matching, recruitment and placement services with financial support for target groups should be made available. These can consist of:

- support services such as information, matching, recruitment and placement, pre- and post-placement support to young people in relation to their participation in the European Solidarity Corps (e. g. profiling and pre-selection of the persons, language training, mentoring etc.);
- direct financial support to European Solidarity Corps participants and to employers offering them these opportunities (e.g. interview trip allowance, relocation allowance and return allowance, training and integration programmes, language training, recognition of qualifications, subsistence allowance for trainees and apprentices).

⁵ COM (2016) 942 final

The allocation of direct financial support under the action is optional and it may not be necessary to have recourse to all measures to secure placements in each individual case, depending on the profile of the participants and the specific needs of the employer concerned.

The purpose of this financial support is not to cover with the EU budget the totality of costs incurred by employers and young people but rather to alleviate the burden related to the mobility: the move of the young people to another country and the integration by the employers recruiting them. Further details on the eligible activities are specified in section 3 below.

2.3. Main purpose for the target groups

The action under this call targets young people who are willing to take up a remunerated work opportunity in another Member State to give concrete expression to the solidarity values of this initiative.

Taking part in the European Solidarity Corps activities can offer young people a unique opportunity to gain experience, acquire knowledge and develop their skills. The Corps seeks to promote social inclusion and enhance young people's career perspectives.

Having been a participant in the Corps is a valuable achievement for any young person (in particular for the most vulnerable and detached from the labour market) and will be an asset when applying for a job.

This is expressed in the mission statement of the European Solidarity Corps:

MISSION STATEMENT

The European Solidarity Corps brings together young people to build a more inclusive society, supporting vulnerable people and responding to societal challenges. It offers an inspiring and empowering experience for young people who want to help, learn and develop.

The action also targets employers who are looking for a pool of socially-minded young people with varied qualifications and skills who can contribute to the future of their businesses or organisations. They can use this precious resource to strengthen their activities on the ground for the benefit of citizens and society as a whole. They may have a bigger choice of potential employees with the skills they are looking for. They could additionally benefit from showcasing the socially responsible heart of their businesses or organisations.

Through the European Solidarity Corps, the EU aims to contribute to alleviate the difficult conditions endured by the most disadvantaged people in society and offer young people, and in particular those having a difficulty in getting a foothold in the labour market, the opportunity to put their personal commitment and skills at someone's service. All young people should be able to participate, irrespective of their background, education, level of skills, or disability. Consequently, it is important that this action is implemented in accordance with the fundamental values of the EU and in particular the principle of equal treatment. Pursuant to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the European Solidarity Corps will aim to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

3. OBJECTIVES – TYPE OF ACTION AND EXPECTED RESULTS

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Guidelines on the operation of the action and the conditions for financial support are laid down in the following annexes:

ANNEX I: Implementing Guide

ANNEX II: Financial Guidelines for Applicants

3.1. Objectives

The occupational strand of the European Solidarity Corps aims at providing young people with the opportunity of a job, traineeship or apprenticeship in sectors that are engaged in solidarity activities and have a demand for highly motivated and socially-minded young people. In this context, the overall objective is to test and apply selection and matching processes to secure cross border placements of such young people.

This call has three specific objectives:

- i. to establish one large-scale consortium which is able to collect and offer occupational opportunities to European Solidarity Corps participants in a broad range of solidarity activities throughout the Union;
- ii. To implement the activities necessary for matching to and placing European Solidarity Corps participants in such opportunities in an EU country other than their country of residence and to help the participants and the employers concerned address the related mobility obstacles.
- iii. To report on targets and results achieved and identify recommendations, where appropriate, in the interest of the development of the European Solidarity Corps.

3.2. Types of action

The name of the action proposal must be (mandatory):

"European Solidarity Corps" – occupational strand

The action will ensure the provision of customised employment and mediation services for the placement and integration of young mobile workers in the host country(ies), combined with financial support (cf. section 2.2).

To this end, the consortium (i.e. the Lead Applicant and co-applicants) will implement the following activities addressed to the target audience of the action on the basis of the guidelines set out in Annex I:

- a) Carry out outreach and information activities towards stakeholder organisations and employers involved in solidarity activities to share opportunities, offers or job vacancies eligible for the Solidarity Corps participants with the consortium.

- b) Provide information on the opportunities under the occupational strand of the European Solidarity Corps to young people.
- c) Provide guidance and support with selection, matching and placement for European Solidarity Corps participants who have registered on the registration tool built into the European Youth portal.
- d) Promote and develop for this action practical cooperation with Public Employment Services, for instance through an operational link with the PES network at EU/EEA level
- e) Work with employers to identify opportunities under the occupational strand for European Solidarity Corps participants and develop concrete offers for placement suitable to such participants, involving training, integration and other support measures.
- f) Manage direct financial support for participants and the organisations with a view to facilitating the placement and its outcomes.
- g) Ensure appropriate certification detailing what the participants have done during their placement.
- h) Accompany participants and employers throughout the duration of the placement and in particular ensure follow up during the placement by offering mentoring support to the selected European Solidarity Corps participants.
- i) Assist participants with the return formalities at the end of the contract and, where appropriate, provide information on access to further job search assistance, including for new intra-EU job opportunities⁶.

Moreover, the consortium will implement the following activities in the interest of the development of the European Solidarity Corps initiative, in close cooperation with the European Commission:

- a) Publish regularly information on the state of play and present progress on the implementation of the action at the occasion of events or activities relating to youth opportunities, EU employment and education policies.
- b) Establish cooperation with other organisations implementing both the occupational and the voluntary strand of the initiative and where possible, create synergies in communication and outreach activities.
- c) Monitor implementation challenges of the action, report on targets and results achieved and identify recommendations for improvements, where appropriate.

The consortium should be ready to provide information and support to all nationals from EU countries who are registered on the European Solidarity Corps portal and who are residing in the EU Member States.

European Solidarity participants, all members of the consortium and employers concerned under the action must adhere to the **European Solidarity Corps Charter**⁷.

⁶ E.g. through the European Solidarity Corps or YFEJ

⁷ More info in Annex I

3.3. Expected outputs/results

The actions will be **quality**-oriented and **outcome**-driven, i.e. they must offer quality remunerated work opportunities and accompanying employment services with a view to enhance the skills and employability of the European Solidarity Corps participants.

This call aims to ensure **around 4000 to 6000** placements⁸ of European Solidarity Corps participants **in the EU countries**, other than their country of residence.

Applicant organisations are free to choose the methods, tools, etc. to implement the action, provided they comply with the Implementing Guide (Annex I).

Proposals submitted under this call must clearly indicate the expected outcome in terms of placements and the number of support measures. This information will be included in the "*description of the action*". The expected outcome must be quantified according to the solidarity sectors according to NACE or ISCO classification and by type of placement (job, traineeship or apprenticeship).

3.4. Monitoring

Lead applicants shall monitor the action and make data available. The Commission, with the support of separate external contractors, will monitor regularly the action at two different levels:

a) *During the lifetime of the action*: collection of data on qualitative and quantitative indicators (in principle twice a year). The data will be analysed and compiled in a monitoring report and contribute to the overall progress monitoring of the overall Solidarity Corps initiative (for more info, please see also sections 15.1.1 and 15.1.4 of the call and Annex I, Part F).

b) *For the EaSI Programme*: The Commission, with the support of an external contractor, will monitor 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 principles 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 are attached or will be provided.

The Commission will also follow the implementation of the action. To that end, four meetings will be held between the Commission and the project coordinator of the consortium (lead applicant and, where appropriate, co-applicant organisations) in Brussels (one meeting every six months). The purpose is to take stock of progress made, map the strengths and weaknesses of the project and identify mitigation measures.

Lead applicants may also be invited to other ad hoc meetings or events during the lifetime of the action. These venues can be an opportunity for raising awareness to the action and disseminating information.

The estimated budget should include provisions for participation in the monitoring activities and meetings above as well as in, at least, four EU level events (for further information, see section 15 below). In setting up the action, beneficiaries must budget the necessary funding for monitoring and reporting to the Commission.

⁸ Depending on final budget available for this call (see section 5.1)

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.

4. TIMETABLE

DEADLINE FOR PROPOSAL SUBMISSION: 17 MARCH 2017

Stages		Date or period
a)	Publication of the call	December 2016
b)	Deadline for submitting proposals	17 March 2017
c)	Evaluation period (indicative)	March/April 2017
d)	Information to applicants (indicative)	April 2017 ⁹
e)	Signature of the grant agreement (indicative)	April 2017 ¹⁰
f)	Starting date of the action (indicative)	2 May 2017

4.1. Starting date and duration of the projects

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, 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.

The **indicative starting date** of the action is set for **2 May 2017**, 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.

Applicants are invited to consider ways and means to develop a rapid launch of actual placements. First placements in various actions under the first phase of the European Solidarity Corps are planned for June 2016.

The indicative duration of the project should be **24 months**.

⁹ In any case no later than 6 months after the submission deadline.

¹⁰ In any case no later than 3 months after the date of information to applicants.

5. AVAILABLE BUDGET AND CO-FINANCING RATE

5.1. Available budget

The total budget earmarked for the EU co-financing of projects under this call is **estimated at EUR 8.243.895**. The Commission plans to increase the budget for this call up to EUR 14,243.895. The final decision is expected by the end of January 2017 and will be announced in a corrigendum to the present call.

The Commission intends to fund **a single proposal covering the entire budget**.

The Commission reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available or to fund more than one proposal.

5.2. Co-financing rate

Under this call for proposals, the EU grant may not exceed 95 % 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 budget¹¹.

6. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Applications must be sent no later than the deadline for submission referred to in section 4(b);
- Applications 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 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 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 15.2, checklist).

¹¹ 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 15.2, checklist).

7. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

7.1. Eligibility of applicants (lead and co-applicants) and affiliated entities¹²

a) Place of establishment

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

— EU Member States

b) Consortia¹³

To be eligible, applications must:

- be presented by a consortium composed of a minimum of five organisations established in at least five different Member States;
- include in the consortium at least two Public Employment Services at central level with responsibility in the area of cross border matching and placement in the EU territory, being either the National Coordination Office or the PES appointed as a Member of the EURES network in accordance with Article 10 of the EURES Regulation¹⁴.

Other members of the consortium could include other member organisations in the EURES network (Members and Partners according to the EURES Regulation), Private Employment Services, humanitarian NGO's, employers' organisations, public bodies, third sector organisations with a social mission and international organisations such as the Red Cross (in derogation from section 7.1a) above international organisations whose registered office is outside the EU Member States are also eligible).

c) Affiliated entities

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 SWIM application form.

¹² See section 2 of the Financial Guidelines for definitions

¹³ 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, 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 15.2, checklist). Letters of commitment are also required from any associate organisations (participation on a no-cost basis and no financial contribution).

¹⁴ Regulation (EU) 2016/589 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 April 2016 on a European network of employment services (EURES), workers' access to mobility services and the further integration of labour markets, and amending Regulations (EU) No 492/2011 and (EU) No 1296/2013 (Official Journal L107 of 22/04/2016)
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L:2016:107:TOC>

d) Associate organisations

In addition, depending on the scope of the action, other organisations – **associate organisations** (i.e. organisations which are not applicants, co-applicants or affiliated entities¹⁵) can participate where their contribution may be necessary to the accomplishment of the objectives of the call. Associate organisations can be involved in the action at different levels **but their costs will not be eligible**. The nature and scope of the activities under their responsibility must be specified in the application.

7.2. Eligible activities

a) Geographical location of the placements

Applications must ensure the implementation of the cross border placements in at least five different eligible EU Member States.

b) Types of activities

The grant will finance the activities indicated in section 3 of this call text and in Annex I.

c) Core activities

The following activities are considered to be core activities and may not be subcontracted:

- Project coordination and management

d) Financial support to third parties

Financial support to third parties as defined in point 3 of the Financial Guidelines **is eligible under this call** provided that the overall amount allocated to this type of support **does not exceed EUR 30 000 per third party** (see also section 15.1.3 and Annex I, part E3.3.2). For further details on the rules and ceilings governing financial support to third parties (i.e. young people and employers) please refer to Annex I.

8. 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>.

The same exclusion criteria apply to any affiliated entities.

Only proposals which comply with the requirements of the above eligibility and exclusion criteria will be considered for further evaluation.

15 For further information, please refer to 'Financial Guidelines for Applicants', section 2

9. 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.

9.1. Financial capacity

Applicants (lead applicant 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 or international organisations.

The applicant's (lead applicant and co-applicants) 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) (section 15.2, checklist);
- The annual balance sheet and profit and loss accounts available for the last financial year (section 15.2, checklist).
- Summary balance sheet and profit and loss accounts using the template provided in SWIM (see section 15.2), and signed by the legal representative, for the lead and co-applicant organisations.
- For grants 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, checklist).

9.2. Operational capacity

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

- a strong track record of competence and experience in the field of at least three years and in particular in the type of action proposed;
- the necessary operational resources (technical, management) to carry out the action and ensure placements in at least five different Member States.

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

- Declaration on honour (including operational capacity to carry out the action) (section 15.2, checklist);
- A list of the main projects carried out, if any, in the last three years relating to the subject of the call (section 15.2, checklist).
- The curriculum vitae of the persons responsible for managing the action and the persons who will perform the main tasks (section 15.2, checklist).

If the lead applicant is considered not to have the required financial and operational capacity, the application as a whole will be rejected. If a co-applicant is considered not to have the required financial and operational capacity, this co-applicant will be removed from the consortium and the application will be evaluated without this co-applicant¹⁶. 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.

Only proposals which comply with the requirements of the above selection criteria will be considered for further evaluation.

10. AWARD CRITERIA

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

- **Relevance of the proposal to the call (max. 25 points)**
 - The degree to which the proposed action meets the objectives of the call.
 - The degree to which the action takes account of the European Solidarity Corps initiative as presented by the Commission in the Communication from 7 December 2016 and develops the solidarity dimension in all its activities.
- **Quality of the methodology and the proposed activities (max. 25 points)**
 - The consistency of the planned timetable for activities and rapidity of the launch of actual placement activities.
 - Demonstration that the activities are open to young people and Solidarity Corps participants coming from all eligible EU Member States who have registered for the occupational strand.
 - Clarity in the description of the tasks, responsibilities, resources and management tools of the consortium (lead and co-applicants).
 - The extent to which the methodology and proposed activities are adequate to ensure an efficient delivery of services to both employers and European Solidarity Corps participants and to make cross-border placements in at least five different Member States.
 - The methods and procedures for securing effective and prompt direct financial support for target groups, for monitoring the overall budget expenditure for all forms of financial support and for ensuring sound financial management.
 - The measures to ensure adequate quality control relating to the information and assistance with offers and vacancies, matching these with candidates and the preparation of the placement /recruitment.
- **Expected impact of the proposal (max. 20 points)**
 - The extent to which the proposed action is likely to ensure the expected number of work placements in other Member States, in light of inter alia the distribution of the roles of the members in the consortium involved with the scheme and the resources allocated for its implementation.

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

- The degree to which members of the consortium who are managing relevant other actions, e.g. EURES, Erasmus+ or other EU programmes or national initiatives on (cross-border) matching or placements, capitalise on their existing competences, data bases, resources and tools to run efficiently the scheme under the project.
- **Visibility of the action (max. 10 points)**
- The suitability of the information and communication activities (including online information and social media) towards the target groups.
 - The (online) tools offered to target groups, enabling access to information and participation.
 - The appropriateness of the activities involving monitoring and reporting on the action and the dissemination of its final results.
- **The cost-effectiveness of the operation (max. 20 points)**
- Coherence of the overall budget breakdown and the degree to which the amount of the requested grant is proportional to the scale and scope of the project.
 - Clarity and consistency of the estimated budget description and justification of costs including the calculation of the funding modalities applicable to financial support to third parties (i.e. jobseekers/ employers).

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 70% of the total (100) available points.**

11. 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 two 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 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

In addition to the obligations with regard to visibility of Union funding foreseen in the General conditions to the grant agreement, 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

General details on financial provisions are laid out in the Financial Guidelines for Applicants (Annex II) 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>.

The above mentioned documents, together with Annex I (Implementing Guide) to the present call for proposals, provide more details for the applicant organisations, especially guidelines for presenting the proposals' provisional budget along with the rules governing which categories of expenditure are eligible and which are not.

Reporting periods and Specific Payment Procedures

In derogation from section 7 of the Financial Guidelines for Applicants and in the context of this call, for all actions financed under this call, the reporting period for the second and third pre-financing payments shall be 9 and 18 months from the start of the action respectively and the following payment schedule is applicable:

- a **first pre-financing payment**, representing **10% of the total grant** within 30 calendar days from the entry into force of the Agreement; in the case a guarantee is required, the pre-financing payment will be subject to the receipt of the guarantee.
- a **second pre-financing payment**, representing **30% of the total grant** within 60 calendar days from receipt by the Commission of a request for payment, a progress report on implementation of the action and detailed statement on the use of the previous pre-financing instalment. The request for payment must be submitted within 60 calendar days following the end of the reporting period in question. Where the consumption of the previous pre-financing is less than 70%, the amount of the new-pre-financing payment shall be reduced by the unused amounts of the previous pre-financing payment. If a guarantee is required, the pre-financing payment will be subject to the receipt of the guarantee;

- a **third pre-financing payment**, representing **40 % of the total grant** within 60 calendar days from receipt by the Commission of a request for payment, a progress report on implementation of the action and detailed statement on the use of the previous pre-financing instalment. The request for payment must be submitted within 60 calendar days following the end of the reporting period in question. Where the consumption of the previous pre-financing is less than 70%, the amount of the new-pre-financing payment shall be reduced by the unused amounts of the previous pre-financing payment. If a guarantee is required, the pre-financing payment will be subject to the receipt of the guarantee.
- the **balance** will be paid within 90 calendar days from receipt by and subject to the approval of the Commission of the request for payment of the balance, the final technical implementation report and final financial statement (and, if required, a certificate on the financial statements and underlying accounts). If the total amount of earlier payments is greater than the final amount of the grant, the payment of the balance will take the form of a recovery.

13. SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

The procedure to submit proposals electronically is explained in section 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 hard copy, before the deadline set in section 4 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 duplicate (one marked "original" and one marked "copy"), including all documents listed in the checklist (section 15), by the deadline (the postmark or the express courier receipt date serving as proof) to the following address:

<p>European Commission Call for proposals VP/2016/018 – DG EMPL.D.1 J-27 – 05/050 B-1049 Brussels BELGIUM</p>
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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 4 at the following address:

European Commission
Service central de réception du courrier
Call for proposals VP/2016/018 – DG EMPL.D.1
Avenue du Bourget, 1
B-1140 Evere
BELGIUM

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 may 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-2016-018@ec.europa.eu

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

Questions may be sent to the above address no later than 10 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 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 entity(ies), 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>.

The Commission may, on its own action, inform interested parties 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 the above mentioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

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 of 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 PROPOSALS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

15.1. Instructions for the presentation of the proposal

The description of the action and work plan must be written using a free format document (see section 15.2, checklist). All the information related to the description of the action and the work plan must be presented in one single document.

The proposal description should clearly reply to the different items of the award criteria following the same structure of section 10. It should also justify the corresponding expenditure in the budget estimate. The work plan should indicate the timeline for implementation of the different actions/milestones throughout the duration of the action.

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 tasks as defined in section 7.2(c) of the call cannot be subcontracted.

Proposals should include inter alia the following mandatory activities in the description of the action and the work plan and foresee the corresponding expenditure in the budget estimate.

15.1.1. Travel and subsistence costs

As indicated in section 3.4, applicant organisations must include in their budget proposal a provision to cover the costs for the participation of

- a. the consortium leader in the meetings with the Commission in Brussels (four meetings over the lifetime of the action, maximum four persons/one day);
- b. the lead applicant and possibly other members of the consortium (maximum four persons, project coordinator included) in communication or large public events at European level. An estimation could be made for four events (twice a year) during the lifecycle of the project (two days per event). These events shall be included in the budget proposal, indicating '*EU level or EU Presidency event" in Brussels or other European city*¹⁷;
- c. project staff in other activities required by the action as, for instance, national visits or working groups with co-applicants in other project countries.

¹⁷ For calculation purposes, please consider the hotel and DSA rates for Belgium as the reference (to be corrected at final report level against actual declared costs and the country rates authorised in the "Financial Guidelines for Applicants")

15.1.2. Online information costs

Applicant organisations must include an estimate of costs to create an EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS webpage embedded on their national website or a dedicated website. This requirement is mandatory for the **lead applicant**.

Co-applicants must also ensure online information, at least through links to the lead applicants' web address.

Further information on the above is provided in section C3 of Annex I.

15.1.3. Financial support to target groups

Applicant organisations must earmark credits and specify the requested amount for direct support to young people and SMEs as well as for "Other support measures" under the heading 'Costs of services', item 'Other services' of the estimated budget in SWIM (see section 13). The application must include, in the description of the action, a detailed breakdown of costs per support measure and direct funding, in line with the guidelines set out in Annex I, Part E and Annex II.

15.1.4. Monitoring of activities

Applicant organisations must make a provision in their budget proposal for the costs of staff involved in the monitoring activities specified in section 3.4 above and Annex I, Parts D and F.

15.1.5. Audit costs

Applicants (i.e. lead applicant) must submit certified final accounts after the end of the action as laid down in the grant agreement conditions. They must therefore make a provision for audit costs in their budget proposal (for further details, please consult Annex II).

15.1.6. Other action costs

According to the project needs, applicants may also consider budget entries to cover the costs of videoconference interviews for pre-selected candidates as well as of print-outs of publications and/or translations of online/ printed information material or other eligible project needs (please see parts C3 and E 3.1. of Annex I).

Applicants are reminded to, in setting up the project, budget the necessary funding for the final reporting (final technical implementation report and final financial statement) to the Commission (please see Annex II).

15.2. Required documents

The table hereunder specifies 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 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 will be rejected for lack of administrative compliance.**

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

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

CHECKLIST

This table includes the documents that must be provided for the application to be eligible and 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. Documents marked with * are obligatorily to be attached online in SWIM 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	This letter (free format) 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/2016/018/xxxx). This letter must include a declaration that the Public Employment Services joining the consortium are in compliance with the eligibility criteria set out in section 7 of the call text.	✓	--	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Signed SWIM application form submitted online + hard copies	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 13. <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 (if necessary)	Executive summary in EN (maximum 2 pages) – free format	✓	--	--	--	--	<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.	✓	✓	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
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.	--	✓	✓	✓	✓	<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.	--	✓	--	--	✓	<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	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"/>
9	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).	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Statutes	The articles of association/statutes or equivalent proving the eligibility of the organisation.	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	VAT certificate	A document showing the identification number for tax purposes or the VAT number, if applicable.	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	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 <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"/>
13	Description of the action and work plan*	This is a separate free-format document which must be duly completed and submitted electronically together with the online submission form and on paper as well. The paper version must be identical to the electronic version of the detailed work programme. The document should be submitted in English, French or German.	✓	--	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	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. The paper version must be identical to the electronic version of the budget explanation. 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. The Commission may request applicants to submit additional justifications of proposed eligible costs during the evaluation procedure.	✓	--	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>

15	Curricula vitae of key staff	Detailed 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.	✓	✓	✓	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	List of main projects	A list of the main projects carried out, if any, in the last three years relating to the subject of the call other than those already indicated in the SWIM online application form (section D.3) – free format	✓	✓	✓	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	Balance sheet & profit and loss accounts	The most recent balance sheet and profit & loss accounts, including assets and liabilities, specifying the currency used.	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Summary balance sheet & profit and loss accounts	The template is available in SWIM and must be signed by the authorised legal representative	✓	✓	--	---	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
29	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"/>

16. ANNEXES

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

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ANNEX I

EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPSIMPLEMENTING GUIDE

Annex I is available on the call website:

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

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ANNEX II

FINANCIAL GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

Annex II is available on the call website:

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