

# **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)**

## ***FOR GLOBAL CALLS FOR PROPOSALS UNDER THE THEMATIC PROGRAMMES***

### **DISCLAIMER**

This document is intended as useful information for applicants.

Given varying call requirements and specificities, the replies included in this document cannot and do not replace or overrule the information contained in the respective Guidelines for grant applicants that are published for each call for proposals. They also do not substitute the provisions in the Practical Guide to Contract Procedures in External Actions.

In case of discrepancy, the Guidelines for grant applicants are the only legally binding document.

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# I. GENERAL QUESTIONS

## 1. What are the funding opportunities at EuropeAid?

Grants are awarded through calls for proposals. For general information on funding please access the following website: [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/funding/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/funding/index_en.htm)

Information about calls for proposals published by EuropeAid and EU Delegations to third countries are available at the following website: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1224846858672&do=publi.welcome&userlanguage=en>

At the aforementioned website you may search for calls for proposals by entering the reference number of the specific call in the "Reference" field, which will then direct you to the specific website that will contain all available documents related to the call for proposals. Alternatively, you may search for calls for proposals by choosing from different search criteria. Go to "advanced search" and you will be able to search for calls for proposals by Thematic Programme (for example "Migration", "Environment", "Investing in People", "Human Rights" or "Non-State Actors and Local Authorities"), by geographical zone, by publication date, etc.

Please note that proposals must be sent in response to a published call for proposals and in line with the provisions of the relevant Guidelines for grant applicants available at the above-mentioned website.

For information on ongoing and upcoming global thematic calls for proposals go to the tables 'Ongoing global calls for proposals' and 'Forecast of upcoming global calls' at the following website: [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/funding/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/funding/index_en.htm)

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## 2. How do I apply?

**Step 1:** check the EuropeAid website to see the Calls for proposals published by EuropeAid and EU Delegations to third countries at: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1224846858672&do=publi.welcome&userlanguage=en> and search for Calls for proposals by themes/geographical zone, etc (see also [Question n° 1](#))

**Step 2:** read the Guidelines for grant applicants of the Call for proposals you would like to apply for, in order to see who can apply (eligibility criteria) as well as the objectives of the Call for Proposals in question

**Step 3:** register in PADOR (or update the PADOR profile of your organisation) (see also [Question n° 12](#)) and upload your supporting documents (see section 2.2 and 2.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants)

**Step 4:** if you are applying for a restricted Call for proposals (the majority of the global Calls for proposals under the thematic programmes are restricted), fill in Part A (Concept Note) of the Grant application form (Annex A to the Guidelines)

**Step 5:** fill in the checklist

**Step 6:** sign the declaration of the applicant

**Step 7:** send Concept Note by the deadline (see section 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 of the Guidelines).

If, further to the phase of "Open and Administrative Checks and Concept Note Evaluation" (see section 2.3 of the Guidelines for grant applicants) you receive an invitation from the EC asking you to submit the Full application form, you must:

**Step 8:** fill in Part B (Full application form) of the Grant application form

**Step 9:** fill in Annex B – Budget to the Guidelines for grant applicants

**Step 10:** fill in Annex C – Logical Framework to the Guidelines for grant applicants

**Step 11:** remind your partners who are not yet registered in PADOR to do so and to upload all required supporting documents into PADOR (see section 2.2 and 2.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants)

**Step 12:** send the Full application form and its annexes by the deadline (see section 2.2.6 and 2.2.7 of the Guidelines).

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### **3. Does the European Commission provide technical support for the preparation of proposals?**

The European Commission does not provide technical support for the preparation of proposals. Applicants must follow the instructions in the Guidelines for grant applicants published for each call for proposals together with the relevant annexes, such as the Grant application form, budget, logical framework, available at the following address: <https://WebGate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome>.

As regards methodology and project management, the European Commission has adopted the "Project Cycle Management" guidelines as a tool for design and project management, based on the logical framework approach. "Project Cycle Management" guidelines are published on the EuropeAid website at the following address: [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/publications/manuals-tools/t101\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/publications/manuals-tools/t101_en.htm) and can help potential applicants in the elaboration and implementation of envisaged future actions that may be submitted for possible funding to calls for proposals published by the European Commission.

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### **4. Is there a database where we can look for potential partners?**

There is a PADOR *search for partner* function module (once you access your profile at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/onlineservices/pador/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/onlineservices/pador/index_en.htm) you will find the "search for partner" field in the left side of the screen) which may allow you to identify potential partners amongst organisations wishing to make their details accessible to third parties through PADOR.

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## II. ADMINISTRATIVE QUESTIONS

### 5. When will the indicative calendar be published?

As indicated in section 2.5.2 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, the indicative calendar will be published on the EuropeAid website together with the other documents related to the call and will be updated in the course of the evaluation procedure.

The current practice for Global Calls is that such calendars are only published after the submission deadline, when the total number of concept notes received is known, since the duration of each evaluation step depends on the number of proposals received.

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### 6. Are there any requirements as concerns fonts, font size or page margins?

Concept notes and full applications should be submitted in A4, using Times New Roman 11 (or Arial 10) characters with 2 cm margins.

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### 7. What is a "lot"?

In the context of calls for proposal 'the lot number' refers to the particular sub-theme, sector or geographical area of cooperation for which a financial envelope has been indicatively allocated.

For an example of a call with "lots" you may consult the Guidelines for grant applicants of the Call for Proposals "Support to Human Rights and Democracy actions on Torture and other forms of ill-treatment" (call ref. 126224). The aforementioned Guidelines are available at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/onlineservices/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome&nbPubliList=15&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&searchtype=RS&aofr=126224>

In section 2.1.3 of the Guidelines for grant applicants it is indicated that the Call for Proposals has been divided into 2 lots with regard to sectors/themes, i.e. "Lot 1 - Prevention of torture", and "Lot 2 - Rehabilitation of victims of torture".

Not all calls for proposal are divided into lots, therefore please consult the Guidelines for grant applicants published for the call for proposals for which your organisation wishes to submit an application.

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### 8. When proposal submission by e-mail is obligatory, in which form do we have to submit documents that require signature?

When the submission of concept notes or full applications by email is mandatory, it is possible to include documents with electronic signatures or scanned versions of originally signed documents as appropriate.

In case the services of the European Commission will need at any stage any original documents either for the purposes of completing the processing of any proposal, or in the context of preparing contracts for the proposals that will be eventually selected, the applicants concerned need to be in position to send such originals by post as well in due time.

Please note that the original declaration has to be duly signed by the applicant and the scanned version sent by e-mail, together with the application.

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## 9. Following selection, when could we start with the implementation of the action?

The provisions on the commencement of the implementation of the action are set out in Article 2 of the Standard grant contract, which allows for several different options for the start date of the implementation (see annex E3h1 - Special conditions available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/index_en.htm)):

- the day following that on which the last of the two Parties signs
- the first day of the month following the date on which the first instalment of pre-financing is paid by the Contracting Authority
- a later date
- *exceptionally and subject to conditions on retroactive eligibility as stipulated in the Practical Guide, a date preceding the signature of the Contract but not preceding the Beneficiary's request for a grant or the signature of any relevant financing agreement between the European Commission and the recipient country.*

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## 10. Who are the "stakeholders"?

You may find a definition of "stakeholders" in the Glossary of key terms of the Project Cycle Management Guidelines at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/publications/manuals-tools/t101\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/publications/manuals-tools/t101_en.htm).

*Any individuals, groups of people, institutions or firms that may have a relationship with the project/programme are defined as stakeholders. They may – directly or indirectly, positively or negatively – affect or be affected by the process and the outcomes of projects or programmes. Usually, different sub-groups have to be considered.*

It is the responsibility of the applicant to identify in the proposal the relevant stakeholders in line with the specificities of the proposed action.

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## 11. What are the reporting obligations for grant beneficiaries?

The reporting obligations for grant beneficiaries are stipulated in Articles 2 and 15 of the General Conditions applicable to European Union-financed grant contracts for external actions (available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/documents/e3\\_h\\_2\\_gencond\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/documents/e3_h_2_gencond_en.pdf)).

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### III. PADOR REGISTRATION

#### 12. Where can I find more information about PADOR?

For additional information on registering in PADOR, please consult the Quick Guide for applicants, the Quick Guide for partners and the Frequently Asked Questions Document, available at the following website:

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/onlineservices/pador/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/onlineservices/pador/index_en.htm).

All questions related to the registration in PADOR should be addressed to the PADOR help desk: [europeaid-pador@ec.europa.eu](mailto:europeaid-pador@ec.europa.eu)

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#### 13. Due to technical problems I haven't managed to register/access my profile in PADOR. The deadline is approaching. What shall I do?

Registration in the PADOR system (Potential Applicant Data On-Line Registration), available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/onlineservices/pador/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/onlineservices/pador/index_en.htm) is obligatory both for applicants and partners.

Applicants must be registered before submitting the concept note, while partners must be registered prior to submission of the full application (section 2.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants).

Organisations for which it is objectively impossible to register in PADOR due to technical difficulties must complete and send the PADOR offline form (available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/onlineservices/pador/dispensation\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/onlineservices/pador/dispensation_en.htm)) together with their application to the address indicated in section 2.2 of the Guidelines for grant applicants of the Call for proposals they are applying for.

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#### 14. Where should I send the PADOR off-line form?

Organisations submitting a PADOR offline form should send the form **together with their application** to the address indicated in section 2.2 of the Guidelines for grant applicants of the Call for proposals they are applying for.

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#### 15. Is it possible to upload the Concept Note in the PADOR registration system?

It is not possible to upload the Concept Note or Full Proposal in the PADOR registration system. The Concept Note must be submitted in accordance with the provisions of sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 of the respective Guidelines for grant applicants.

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## IV. ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONS

### 16. Are recently established organisations eligible to apply?

If the Guidelines for grant applicants do not set any requirement as to the minimum time elapsed since the formal establishment of an organisation, a recently established organisation is in principle eligible to apply. This being said, applicant organisations are required to describe their project management experience and to submit accounts for the last financial year available and enter financial data in PADOR (or the PADOR offline form). The absence of any such information, in the case of very recently established organisations, would be reflected in the scores awarded for the financial and operational capacity (section 1 in the full application grid).

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### 17. Is it possible to sub-contract the management of the Action?

As indicated in the eligibility criteria in section 2.1.1 the applicant and partners must be directly responsible for the preparation and the management of the proposed action. Consequently, the applicant may not subcontract the management of the action to another organisation.

NB: Subcontracting project management to another organisation (which is prohibited) should not be confused with recruiting a member of the proposed project's personnel through a service contract: (i.e. the person will not appear on the payroll of the grant beneficiary) to perform "project management" tasks. This method of personnel recruitment must follow the procurement procedures set out in annex IV to the standard grant contract (see annex E3h3 – Contract award procedures, available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/index_en.htm)).

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### 18. We are an organisation already receiving funds from the EC through a previous Call. Are we eligible to apply?

As stipulated in Section 2.2.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants and in the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the EC cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of an applicant, a partner, an action or specific activities.

Organisations already receiving EU funding under another (or the same) financing instrument may submit applications for another call for proposals. However, of course, no "double-funding" is allowed and therefore, as indicated in section 2.1.4 "Ineligible Costs" of the Guidelines for grant applicants, items already financed in another framework cannot be considered as eligible costs.

Moreover, in the interest of avoiding duplication of funding for the same action, pre-selected applicants after Concept Note evaluation must state in the Declaration by the applicant (see table of contents of the Grant application form) all grant applications, in the same field of action, which have been submitted to the European Institutions, the European Development Fund or EU Member states, in the last 12 months. Pre-selected applicants will also have to indicate all the actions managed by their organisation over the past three years in the Full application form, under section "Applicant's experience of similar actions" (see table of contents of the Grant application form).

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### 19. Is it possible to present a Concept Note for a follow-up project for an EC-financed action, whose contract still runs until some months after the final selection of proposals?

Firstly, it is important to note that the assessment of proposals is carried out solely on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in Section 2.3 of the Guidelines for grant applicants.

Secondly, actions selected under a given call for proposals should be ready to commence implementation as soon as possible after contract signature. However, as per Article 2 of the Standard Grant Contract, there are several options for fixing the starting date of the implementation of the action, which includes the possibility of a mutually agreed date (see annex E3h1 - Special conditions available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/index_en.htm)) (see also [Question n° 9](#)).

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**20. We are an NGO from country XYZ but with field offices all over the world. Can each of the field offices apply for a grant?**

As stipulated in Section 2.2.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants and in the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the EC cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of an applicant, a partner, an action or specific activities.

For the vast majority of calls for proposals (see section 2.1.1 of the Guidelines for grant applicants) , in order to be eligible to apply for a grant, applicants and partners must be legal persons, i.e. they must be legally established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned.

If the NGO in question, with its country offices, is one single legal person, then individual country offices/branches of the said NGO could not be considered as separate applicants in the context of the provisions of section 2.1.3 of the Guidelines for grant applicants.

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**21. What is meant by reciprocal access and which countries can apply under its provisions? (only applicable if allowed by the call for proposals in question)**

If allowed by the Guidelines for grant applicants of a specific call for proposals (please see section 2.1.1), organisations from member countries of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) may be eligible to apply (as applicants or partners) exclusively for actions taking place in the least developed countries, as defined by the OECD/DAC. For the list of the OECD/DAC members please see the relevant footnote in the Guidelines for grant applicants. For the list of the least developed countries, as defined by the OECD/DAC, please consult the following link:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:270:0008:0011:EN:PDF>.

(first column of ANNEX II - OECD/DAC List of ODA recipients, entitled "Least Developed Countries").

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**22. We are a consortium of organisations. Is a consortium eligible to apply?**

As stipulated in Section 2.2.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants and in the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the EC cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of an applicant, a partner, an action or specific activities.

For the vast majority of calls for proposals, it is indicated in section 2.1.1 of the Guidelines for grant applicants that, in order to be eligible to apply for a grant, applicants (and partners) must, inter alia, be legal persons (i.e. only the organisations that are legally established are eligible to apply). Therefore, if the consortium is formally established, it may submit a proposal under the name of the legally constituted consortium. If the consortium is an informal grouping for the purposes of this call, the application must be submitted under the name of a lead organisation with the others acting as partners.

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**23. We would like to apply for this Call with organisation XYZ as partner. Is this partnership eligible?**

As stipulated in Section 2.2.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants and in the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the EC cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of an applicant, a partner, an action or specific activities.

It is up to the applicant to demonstrate that the proposed partnership complies with the requirements of and is in line with the objectives of the Call.

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#### **24. Should the partner country organisation or the EU-based organisation apply as applicant?**

It is the responsibility of the members of the partnership to judge their respective role in the said partnership in order to best contribute to the implementation of the proposed action in conformity with the eligibility criteria stipulated in section 2.1 of the Guidelines for grant applicants.

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#### **25. What are the differences between partners, associates and subcontractors?**

Please refer to section 2.1.2 of the Guidelines for grant applicants for information on partners, associates and subcontractors.

Partners are actively involved in the design and implementation of the action and therefore have the right to be reimbursed for the related eligible costs. Partners are subject to the eligibility rules set out in the Guidelines for grant applicants (section 2.1). Associates are an interested party taking part in the implementation of the action but are not involved in its design and their costs are not covered by the grant except for travel and per diem costs.

Associates cannot be taken into account with regard to any partnership composition requirements of a Call.

As also indicated in the above-mentioned section, the grant beneficiaries have the possibility to award contracts to subcontractors for services, supplies and works. Subcontractors are neither partners nor associates. For all contracts above 10 000 EUR the procurement rules set out in annex IV to the standard grant contract shall apply (see annex E3h3 – Contract award procedures, available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/index_en.htm)).

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#### **26. We would like to implement an action on theme XYZ. Is this in line with the objectives and priorities of the Call?**

As stipulated in section 2.2.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants and in the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the EC cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of an applicant, a partner, an action or specific activities.

Information on the objectives and priorities of each call for proposals is available in section 1.2.1 of the Guidelines for grant applicants. In this regard, please note that it is up to the applicant to justify in its proposal how the proposed action is in line with the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals in question. The relevance of the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the call will be evaluated at Concept Note stage (please see concept note evaluation grid in section 2.3 of the Guidelines for grant applicants).

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#### **27. We would like to implement the activity XYZ. Is this activity eligible?**

As stipulated in section 2.2.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants and in the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the EC cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of an applicant, a partner, an action or specific activities.

It is the applicant's responsibility to indicate the various activities proposed and to demonstrate how these activities contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the action in line with the priorities and objectives of the call.

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**28. We are a Department of the University XYZ. Can we submit the proposal under the department's name or shall we do so under the name of the university?**

As stipulated in Section 2.2.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants and in the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the EC cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of an applicant, a partner, an action or specific activities.

For the vast majority of Calls for proposals, it is indicated in section 2.1.1 of the Guidelines for grant applicants that, in order to be eligible to apply for a grant, applicants (and partners) must, inter alia, be legal persons (i.e. only the organisations that are legally established are eligible to apply).

If the department has a legal entity separate from that of the university, the proposal can be presented by the said department. If, on the other hand, the department shares the same legal entity as the university, the proposal must be presented under the name of the university.

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**29. Is it possible to change the applicant organisation between Concept Note and Full Application stage?**

As indicated in Section 2.2.5 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, the elements contained in the Concept Note cannot be modified in the Full application form.

Please refer to Section 2.1.1 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, where it is stipulated that, in order to be eligible for a grant, applicants must be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with their partners, not acting as an intermediary.

This being said, if an applicant considers that it is indispensable to modify an element, it may still submit a proposal. However, the modification should be clearly stated in the Full application form and due justification should be provided in the Declaration by the applicant (see table of contents of the Grant application form). Such justification will be taken into consideration during the evaluation of the full application.

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**30. Where can we find the definition of "private sector organisations"?**

Strictly speaking every organisation that is not established under public law is governed by private law including NGOs, foundations, cooperatives, associations, churches, charities, companies, firms, etc.

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## V. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

### 31. How will the Concept Notes be assessed?

Concept Notes will be assessed in conformity with the procedure explained in section 6 of the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EU external actions (PRAG), available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/practical\\_guide/documents/2010\\_prag\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/practical_guide/documents/2010_prag_en.pdf)

Concept Notes are independently assessed by (at least) two assessors having expertise in both the targeted countries as well as in the particular area of development cooperation relevant to the call, one of which is usually in the EU Delegation in one of the countries concerned by the action. An Evaluation Committee deliberates on the basis of these assessments in order to make a recommendation on pre-selection, whilst guaranteeing equality of treatment of applicants.

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### 32. Does the project have a chance to be financed if it is based on replication of experience and has already been implemented in other countries?

At Concept Note stage, the application is evaluated mainly on relevance – in particular with regard to the call's objectives and priorities, to the needs and constraints of the targeted countries/region(s) and to the needs of the final beneficiaries. Applicants must therefore ensure that an action previously implemented in one country not only addresses the objectives and priorities of the call but can be “translated” and is appropriate in the targeted countries of the proposed action.

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### 33. We are a small NGO with a small yearly turnover. What are our chances of being selected?

The evaluation of the financial capacity of applicant organisations is not evaluated at concept note stage but only at full application stage. As indicated in section 2.3 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, in the full application grid under section 1, "Financial and Operational Capacity", sub-criteria 1.1-1.3 relate to the capacities of both applicant and partners in terms of project management experience, technical expertise and financial management, whilst sub-criterion 1.4 relates to the sources of finance of the applicant only. It is therefore important that the scale of the proposed action and its related budget is coherent with the size, past experience and available resources of the organisations involved in the partnership.

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### 34. Is it possible to change elements from the Concept Note to the Full application form?

As stipulated in section 2.2.5 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, the elements contained in the concept note cannot be modified in the Full application form. In exceptional cases, when it is indispensable to modify an element (such as adding or replacing partners, associates or activities), this modification should be clearly stated in the Full application form and due justification should be provided in the Declaration by the applicant (see table of contents in the Grant application form). Such justification will be taken into consideration during the evaluation of the full application.

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### 35. How will the financial capacity of applicant organisations from the beneficiary countries be taken into account in the evaluation?

In the full application grid under Section 1, "Financial and Operational Capacity", sub-criteria 1.1 – 1.3 relate to the capacities of both applicant and partners in terms of project management experience, technical expertise and financial management, whilst sub-criteria 1.4 relates to the sources of finance of the applicant only. It is therefore important that the scale of the proposed action and its related budget is coherent with the size, past experience and available resources of the organisations involved in the partnership.

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### **36. What does a pre-selection based on twice the available budget refer to?**

The phrase "those [Concept Notes] whose sum of requested contributions amounts to at least twice the available budget" in the context of Section 2.3 of the Guidelines for grant applicants refers to the procedure to be applied by the Evaluation Committee for the pre-selection of Concept Notes.

After their evaluation Concept Notes are placed in a list ranked by score. The Concept Notes awarded a minimum total score of 30 points could be considered for pre-selection but, depending on the number of Concept Notes submitted, not all of them will normally be pre-selected. Amongst those Concept Notes having been awarded 30 points, the Evaluation Committee will pre-select only those that have obtained the highest scores and whose cumulative amount of the contribution requested from the European Commission will be equal to at least twice the available budget for this Call for Proposals. The available budget is indicated in Section 1.3 of the Guidelines for grant applicants.

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## VI. BUDGETARY QUESTIONS

### 37. How should the Budget be distributed between applicant and partners?

As stipulated in sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, if the proposal is selected, the applicant will act as the only contracting party to the EU (the "beneficiary").

The applicant is in charge of the overall project management and is responsible to the EU for the implementation of the contract and for the use of funds. The applicant signs the contract, receives funds, reports (both technical and financial) on the implementation of the action and on the use funds.

It is up to the applicant to decide how the funds advanced by the EU are allocated and distributed to and between the partners, in line with the objectives of the action.

Each partner must provide evidence of expenditure modalities and that they have been indeed incurred to the applicant, who in turn reports to the EC. In this respect it may be advisable that the applicant and the partners sign an agreement including reporting modalities and an internal budget breakdown between the applicant and the partners.

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### 38. The budget template does not have any formulae. Can we add formulas?

Please do not introduce formulas, in order not to interfere with the document's configuration.

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### 39. The budget template has one column for year one. Are we free to add columns for subsequent years?

You must only fill in the column "All years" and the column "Year 1", and should not add any other years. The column "Year 1" allows for the calculation of how much the first pre-financing will be.

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### 40. The budget does not have detail for activities. Should this be the case or do you need details to be added?

The budget must be filled in by category of expenditure ("Human Resources", "Travel", etc) and activities cannot be listed. Activities must be listed in the Logical Framework (Annex C to the budget), as well as under section II "The action", of the Full application form (Annex A, Part B).

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### 41. How are salaries paid for people involved in the project?

Salaries of the staff involved in the project are eligible costs and should be included at real cost in the budget of the proposed action. Refer to Article 14.2 of the General Conditions applicable to European Union-financed grant contracts for external actions (available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/documents/e3\\_h\\_2\\_gencond\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/documents/e3_h_2_gencond_en.pdf)), where it is indicated that the cost of staff assigned to the action corresponding to actual gross salaries including social security charges and other remuneration-related costs are eligible; salaries and costs

must not exceed those normally borne by the Beneficiary or its partners, as the case may be, unless it is justified by showing that it is essential to carry out the action.

Salaries of project staff are paid, as any other professional remuneration, in conformity with the applicable legislation. One should however distinguish between project's staff employed through a work contract (corresponding costs to be indicated under budget sub-heading 1 of the project's budget) and project staff hired through a service contract (corresponding costs to be indicated under budget sub-heading 5 of the project's budget – see also [Question n° 42](#)).

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#### **42. Where in the budget shall we put the salaries of consultants?**

Salaries for the use of consultants must be introduced under sub-heading 5 - *Other costs, services* (you may also add rows if need be). Please note that for all contracts above 10 000 EUR the procurement rules set out in annex IV to the standard grant contract shall apply (see annex E3h3 – Contract award procedures, available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/index_en.htm)).

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#### **43. Is there an indicative percentage of the budget to be used for infrastructure?**

For eligible costs please refer to article 14.1 of the General Conditions applicable to European Union-financed grant contracts for external actions (available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/documents/e3\\_h\\_2\\_gencond\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/documents/e3_h_2_gencond_en.pdf)) and also to the Section 2.1.4 - *Eligibility of costs* in the Guidelines for grant applicants.

The Guidelines for grant applicants do not establish any limit for investment and costs on infrastructure. It is therefore up to each applicant to consider the infrastructure costs that would be indispensable for the direct implementation of the proposed action and to justify how these would contribute to meet the objectives of this call for proposals.

This being said, as stipulated in section 2.1.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, purchases of land or buildings (except where necessary for the direct implementation of the action, in which case ownership must be transferred to the final beneficiaries and/or local partners, at the latest by the end of the action) are considered ineligible costs.

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#### **44. What types of cost can be considered as eligible costs?**

For eligible costs, please refer to section 2.1.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants and to article 14 of the General Conditions applicable to European Union-financed grant contracts for external actions (available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/documents/e3\\_h\\_2\\_gencond\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/documents/e3_h_2_gencond_en.pdf)), where it is stipulated, inter alia, that to be considered eligible, costs "must be necessary for the implementation of the action which is the subject of the grant" and "must be reasonable, justifiable and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency".

It is up to each applicant to consider the costs that would be indispensable for the direct implementation of the proposed action and to justify how these would contribute to meeting the objectives of this call for proposals.

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#### **45. Can tuition fees be considered as eligible costs?**



For eligible cost please refer to section 2.1.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants and to article 14 of the General Conditions applicable to European Union-financed grant contracts for external actions (available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/documents/e3\\_h\\_2\\_gencond\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/documents/e3_h_2_gencond_en.pdf)). Despite the fact that tuition fees are not listed as ineligible costs as such, the need for such costs should only be considered in the context of a particular action/activity, the eligibility of which will be evaluated by the Evaluation Committee in line with the Section 1.2 of the Guidelines for grant applicants of the respective Call.

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#### **46. From which sources should the balance be financed?**

As stipulated in section 1.3 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, the balance (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the EC) must be financed by the applicant's and/or partner's own resources or other sources apart from the European Union budget or the European Development Fund.

This being said, it is up to the applicant to decide on the most appropriate sources of funding for the action.

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#### **47. What are eligible indirect costs (overheads)?**

As indicated in article 14.4 of the General Conditions applicable to European Union-financed grant contracts for external actions (available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/documents/e3\\_h\\_2\\_gencond\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/documents/e3_h_2_gencond_en.pdf)) and also in section 2.1.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, a fixed percentage not exceeding 7% of the total amount of direct eligible cost of the action may be claimed as indirect costs to cover the administrative overheads incurred by the Beneficiary for the action. This is a flat-rate that covers the indirect costs of the action and for which the grant beneficiary does not need to provide supporting documents.

If the applicant is in receipt of an operating grant financed from the EU budget no indirect costs may be claimed within the proposed budget for the action.

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#### **48. How must overheads be accounted for in the budget?**

Overheads of up to 7% of the total amount of direct eligible cost can be charged to the action's budget for administrative and running costs. However, in cases where administrative and running costs can be accurately identified and accounted for in the budget as direct eligible costs and backed up with documents that prove that those costs are related to the proposed action only, the applicant may choose to budget such costs as eligible direct costs instead of asking for the overheads percentage.

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#### **49. How can costs related to the recruitment of consultants for preparatory activities be accounted for in the budget?**

Use of consultants for any preparatory activities is not an eligible cost because it has been incurred prior to the date of the signature of the contract (or submission of the Concept Note) and in any case, as per the eligibility provisions of section 2.1.1 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, the applicants should be directly responsible for the preparation of the action with their partners.

In general, where a member of project staff is recruited through a services contract, in addition to an invoice from consultants, it is suggested that a time/attendance sheet also be provided. All such expenses must be justified and included in the intermediary/final reports which will be certified by the auditor and examined by the EC.

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## **50. When do we have to submit a detailed budget?**

As stipulated in section 2.2.1 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, in the Concept Note the applicant shall provide only an estimate of the EC contribution requested (Part A, 1. *Summary of the Action* - Amount (in Euros) of the requested EC contribution). Only the applicants invited to submit a Full application must present a detailed budget (Annex B – Budget to the Guidelines for grant applicants).

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## **51. When does payment occur?**

With regard to the payment system under EU grant contracts, please refer to Article 15.1 (option 2) of the General Conditions applicable to European Union-financed grant contracts for external actions (available at

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/documents/e3\\_h\\_2\\_gencond\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/documents/e3_h_2_gencond_en.pdf)).

The EU makes pre-financing payments. Following signature of the contract and upon submission of an original request for payment, a pre-financing payment, amounting to 80% of the EU share of the budget for the first year of implementation (last column of budget template), will be paid.

Then, generally on a yearly basis, interim payments will be made. The amount of these interim payments is based upon consumption of the previous pre-financing/interim payment and upon a forecast of expenditure for the subsequent year of project implementation.

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## **52. We would like to know if partner XYZ can receive funds directly or will have to receive funds as a sub-contractor?**

First of all, we would like to draw your attention to the differences between "partners" and "subcontractors". As stipulated in section 2.1.2 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, applicants' partners participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the grant beneficiary. As stipulated in the same section, "subcontractors are neither partners nor associates, and are subject to the procurement rules set out in annex IV to the standard grant contract" (see annex E3h3 – Contract award procedures, available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/index_en.htm)).

As stipulated in sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, if the proposal is selected, the applicant will act as the only contracting party to the EC (the "beneficiary") and will be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with their partners. Therefore, it will be up to the applicant (the contracting party) to manage the EC grant and to decide how the funds advanced by the EU are allocated and distributed to and between the partners in line with the objectives of the action.

If the grant beneficiary or its partners decide to award contracts to subcontractors for services, supplies or works, the procurement rules set out in annex IV to the standard grant contract for subcontractors must be followed (see annex E3h3 – Contract award procedures, available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/index_en.htm)).

If it is foreseen that subcontractors will be used, the related estimated costs must be indicated under sub-heading 5, *Other costs, services* of Annex B - Budget to the Guidelines for grant applicants (see also [Question n° 42](#)).

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**53. Can staff salaries be counted as contributions in kind?**

As set out in Section 2.1.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, the cost of staff assigned to the action is not a contribution in kind and may be considered as co-financing in the budget of the action when paid by the beneficiary or partners. Nevertheless, salaries paid to staff working for other projects cannot be charged to the new proposed action. Furthermore, unpaid staff would be considered as a contribution in kind.

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**54. When converting from a local currency into EUR, should the current exchange rate be used or the exchange rate applicable at the end of each respective financial year?**

For the purpose of preparing an application, the exchange rate used should be the most recent one published on the InforEuro website at the time of proposal submission. The InforEuro site can be accessed at the following address:

<http://ec.europa.eu/budget/inforeuro/index.cfm?fuseaction=countries&SearchField=&Period=2009-3&Delim=,&Language=en>

For your information, in the event of the proposal being selected and as stipulated in Article 15.8 of the General Conditions applicable to European Union-financed grant contracts for external actions (available at

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/documents/e3\\_h\\_2\\_gencond\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/documents/e3_h_2_gencond_en.pdf)), "any conversion into euro of the real costs borne in other currencies shall be done at the rate made up by the average of the rates published in InforEuro for the months covered by the relevant report, unless otherwise provided in the Special Conditions."

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**55. Do the applicant's latest accounts (profit/loss account and balance sheet) have to be converted into Euros? Or can they be submitted with figures given in the local currency?**

The Guidelines for grant applicants do not require that the applicant's latest accounts (the profit and loss account and the balance sheet for the most recent financial year for which the accounts have been closed) are presented in Euro. You may therefore submit a copy of your latest accounts in the respective local currency.

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**56. Are funds transferred to partners for the implementation of activities considered as sub-granting or as "normal" costs?**

Eligible costs incurred by partners are different from sub-granting.

For information on sub-granting, please see section 2.1.3 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, where it is indicated that in order to support the achievement of the objectives of the action, and in particular where the implementation of the action proposed by the applicant requires financial support to be given to third parties, the applicant may propose awarding sub-grants.

Sub-granting concerns pre-defined activities to be carried out by entities not identified at the time of submitting the application but which will be selected by the beneficiary of the Community grant using the criteria set out in the Full application form (Part B of the Grant application form). Sub-grantees are therefore neither partners nor associates nor contractors.

On the other hand, partners are pre-defined in the proposal and are expected to be involved in the design and implementation of the proposed action and must satisfy the same eligibility criteria as applicants (for a definition of partners, please see section 2.1.2 of the Guidelines for grant applicants). Their contribution to the implementation of the action is therefore greater than that foreseen for the beneficiaries of sub-granting. Costs incurred by partners are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the grant beneficiary.

Sub-grants to be awarded to third parties are limited to the maximum amount of 10 000 EUR per third party, while the total amount which can be awarded as sub-grants to third parties is limited to EUR 100 000. Sub-granting is considered as an "activity" and the total amount to be awarded under any sub-granting mechanism must appear in the budget submitted with the Full application form. A list with the types of activity which may be eligible for sub-grants must be included in the application, together with the criteria for the selection of the beneficiaries of these sub-grants.

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#### **57. Are action costs incurred before the signing of the contract eligible for co-financing?**

As indicated in section 6.2.8 of the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions (PRAG) ([http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/practical\\_guide/documents/2010\\_prag\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/practical_guide/documents/2010_prag_en.pdf)), grants may, as a rule, only cover costs incurred after the date on which the grant contract is signed. A grant may be awarded for an action, which has already begun only where the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the action before the contract is signed. In such cases, expenditure incurred *prior* to the deadline for submitting proposals will not be eligible for financing (i.e. only expenditure incurred *after* the deadline for submitting proposals may be eligible for financing). Grants may not be awarded retroactively for actions already completed.

However, in the case of crisis situations within the meaning of article 168, paragraph 2 of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation, expenditure incurred by a beneficiary before the date of submission of the application shall be eligible for Community financing solely in case where the expenditure relates to the constitution of stocks by the applicant for use in connection with the action for which the grant is awarded and/or by way of exception and for properly substantiated reasons. The Special Conditions of the grant contract must explicitly provide for this by setting an eligibility date earlier than the deadline for the submission of applications.

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## VII. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

### **58. When do supporting documents need to be submitted?**

As indicated in section 2.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, all supporting documents required for applicants must be uploaded in PADOR by the deadline for submission of Concept Notes. Partners must upload their supporting documents by the deadline for submission of Full Applications.

Any applicant submitting a "PADOR offline form" must send ALL relevant supporting documents for the call for proposals concerned in their e-mail together with the Concept Note. Any applicant submitting a "PADOR offline form" for its partner(s) must send ALL relevant supporting documents for the Call in their e-mail together with the Full Application (see also [Question n° 13](#)).

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### **59. As it is not possible to upload originals of the supporting documents, should copies be certified?**

It is not necessary to provide certified copies, but the copies must be true copies of the originals, that is they must be legible and clearly show the signatures, dates, stamps, etc. Copies in the form of unsigned computer printouts or in illegible hand-writing, for example, will not be accepted.

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### **60. Should translations of supporting documents (e.g. statutes or articles of association) be certified translations?**

It is not necessary for translations to be certified and only the relevant parts of the supporting documents proving the eligibility of the applicant or partner organisation (nationality, type of organisation, non-profit-making objectives etc.) need to be translated.

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### **61. Where can I find the legal entity file/sheet? Do all organisations have to submit it? How does it work?**

The required supporting documents for both the applicant and partner organisation(s) are indicated in the Guidelines for grant applicants of the respective call for proposals.

The LEF (Legal Entity File) needs to be submitted by the applicant only. This is a standard form that (needs to be filled in, signed and accompanied by the justifying documents which are requested therein, and uploaded into PADOR.

The LEF can be found in the list of annexes in section 3 of the Guidelines for grant applicants at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/grants/index_en.htm), under reference E3e (1, 2 and 3).

If the applicant has already signed a contract with the European Commission, instead of the Legal Entity Sheet and its supporting documents, the Legal Entity File Number may be provided, unless a change in its legal status occurred in the meantime (usually such LEF begins with the number 6).

For partner organisations no LEF form is required.

For further information on LEF please access the following website [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/onlineservices/pador/lef/pador-lef\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/onlineservices/pador/lef/pador-lef_en.htm)

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**62. What type of audit report must be presented and for which period?**

As indicated in section 2.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, if the grant requested exceeds EUR 500,000 an external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the applicant's accounts for the last financial year available must be provided. This obligation does not apply to public bodies. or to international (intergovernmental) organisations.

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## VIII. REQUESTS FOR RESULTS, SCORES OR COMMENTS

### **63. Our proposal was rejected. Could you send us specific comments concerning our proposal?**

As indicated in section 2.5 of the Guidelines for grant applicants, applicants wishing to obtain further information regarding the technical evaluation phases of the call procedure may send a request to the second address indicated in section 2.5.1.

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### **64. My proposal was rejected. Can you let me know the scores of the selected projects?**

The scores awarded for the different evaluation criteria are communicated only to unsuccessful applicants in order to help them improve their proposals for potential future submissions.

You may nevertheless consult the "Application statistics for the global calls of 2009/2010/2011", available on the EuropeAid website at ([http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/funding/documents/application\\_statistics\\_2009.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/funding/documents/application_statistics_2009.pdf)) where you will find the number of full applications selected and the number of full applications put in the reserve list, among other data, for global calls for proposals.

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### **65. When will we be notified whether our Concept Note/Full Application was pre-selected?**

Information on when you can expect to be notified by the European Commission regarding the evaluation results for your application can be found in the indicative timetable for the Call for Proposals concerned, which can be accessed at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome> by entering the reference number of the respective Call.

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### **66. Are the results of the Calls for Proposals published?**

The results of each Call for Proposals are published in the EuropeAid website after all the corresponding contracts have been signed. For example, if a Call for Proposals is published under the 2010 budget, all the contracts should be signed before the end of 2011. Therefore, the list should be published right after and, in any case, before the end of the first semester of 2012 in the EuropeAid website:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1292582182592&do=publi.welcome>

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### **67. Is there a realistic chance that our reserve-listed proposal will still obtain funding?**

Unfortunately we are unable to give you an indication concerning the probability of a reserve-listed proposal eventually obtaining funding.

While the Evaluation Committee is responsible for establishing the reserve list, it has no involvement in the contractualisation process and therefore cannot predict the potential future availability of funds that could be transferred to reserve-listed proposals.

However, the operational sectors in charge of calls for proposals follow up this process and ensure that any funds that become available are transferred to the highest-scoring proposals on the reserve list. If

you are not contacted before the date until which the reserve list remains valid, you should assume that your proposal was not able to benefit from a transfer of additional funds.

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