



## **Contracting authority**

Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States

(ACP Secretariat)

# **Supporting the cultural and creative sectors in the ACP countries**

Guidelines  
for grant applicants

## **11th European Development Fund**

Reference: EuropeAid/167697/IH/ACT/MULTI

Deadline for submission of the application:

**20<sup>th</sup> March 2020, 4pm (Brussels date and time)**

## **PLEASE NOTE:**

This is an open call for proposals, where all documents are submitted together (concept note and full application). In the first instance, only the concept notes will be evaluated. Thereafter, for the lead applicants who have been pre-selected, the full applications will be evaluated. After the evaluation of the full applications, an eligibility check will be performed on applicants who have been provisionally selected. Eligibility will be checked on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the contracting authority and the signed 'declaration by the lead applicant' sent together with the full application.

**The French version of the guidelines and the annexes should be regarded as authentic.**

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# 1. ACP-EU PROGRAMME TOWARDS A VIABLE CULTURAL INDUSTRY (ACP-EU CULTURE): SUPPORTING THE CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTORS IN THE ACP COUNTRIES

## 1.1. BACKGROUND

The Partnership Agreement between the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States, of the one part, and the European Union (EU), of the other part, signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000 and revised in 2005 (the Cotonou Agreement), identifies culture as an integral part of the cooperation strategy in the partnership between the ACP countries and the EU. The '2014-2020 Strategy Paper and Indicative Programme' for intra-ACP cooperation, 11th EDF, provides for the implementation of a programme designed to increase the revenue of creative industries in ACP countries by fostering recognition of their work, encouraging its commercial exploitation and improving its accessibility both locally and internationally.

In 2005, the adoption of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions established for the first time a cultural pillar in global governance.

The Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development adopts 17 goals to transform our world. Culture is explicitly mentioned in the objectives relating to education, reducing inequalities and sustainable growth.

Centred on Agenda 2030, the new European Consensus on Development (2017) specifies in Article 35 that "culture is both an enabler and an important component of development and may facilitate social inclusion, freedom of expression, identity building, civil empowerment and conflict prevention while strengthening economic growth".

Moreover, according to the Final Report of the Joint Assessment of Intra-ACP Programmes in Support of Culture (July 2016), the intra-ACP programmes were particularly relevant with regard to EU-ACP cooperation strategies and the development of the ACP countries' cultural sectors.

At the 4th meeting of Ministers held in Brussels in November 2017, the ACP States adopted a new Declaration on Culture. The Ministers of the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries recognised the key role of culture as a driver for economic growth and sustainable human development and reaffirmed their commitment to making culture a priority sector in their countries by implementing concrete actions and programmes.

## 1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

The **global objective** of this call for proposals is to foster the economic and social development of the ACP countries by stimulating the whole of the cultural and creative sector.

The **specific objective(s)** of this Call for Proposals are:

- growth of the creative sector's economic revenue,
- creation of jobs linked to the cultural sector,
- improved accessibility and recognition and commercial exploitation of artists and their work

In order to achieve these objectives, **there will be support for four strands:**

- a) creating/producing high-quality goods and services, at competitive prices, and in increased quantities,
- b) access to national, regional and international markets, circulation/dissemination/promotion of ACP goods and services,
- c) visual literacy,
- d) improving access to financing through innovative mechanisms that allow co-financing and aim to reduce ACP cultural operators' dependency on international financing.

Digital input is recommended for the implementation of the four strands set out above.

### 1.3. FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is **€26,000,000**, divided into six lots of equal amounts.

The contracting authority reserves the right not to award all available funds. In the same manner, it is possible to increase the foreseen amount should other funds be available.

– Lot 1 – Western Africa:	<b>€6,200,000</b>
– Lot 2 – Eastern Africa:	<b>€6,000,000</b>
– Lot 3 – Central Africa:	<b>€4,200,000</b>
– Lot 4 – Southern Africa:	<b>€3,800,000</b>
– Lot 5 – Caribbean:	<b>€3,000,000</b>
– Lot 6 – Pacific:	<b>€2,800,000</b>

**See Annex L for the list of countries belonging to the different lots.**

If the allocation indicated for a specific lot cannot be used due to insufficient number or quality of proposals received, the contracting authority reserves the right to reallocate the remaining funds to (an)other lot(s).

#### **Size of grants**

Any grant requested under this call for proposals must fall between the same minimum and maximum amounts per lot as the total of available funds:

<b>Lot 1 – Western Africa:</b>	<b>Minimum amount and maximum amount: €6,200,000</b>
<b>Lot 2 – Eastern Africa:</b>	<b>Minimum amount and maximum amount: €6,000,000</b>
<b>Lot 3 – Central Africa:</b>	<b>Minimum amount and maximum amount: €4,200,000</b>
<b>Lot 4 – Southern Africa:</b>	<b>Minimum amount and maximum amount: €3,800,000</b>
<b>Lot 5 – Caribbean:</b>	<b>Minimum amount and maximum amount: €3,000,000</b>
<b>Lot 6 – Pacific:</b>	<b>Minimum amount and maximum amount: €2,800,000</b>

The eventual difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the contracting authority must be financed from sources other than the European Union budget or the European Development Fund<sup>1</sup>.

The grant may exceptionally cover the entire eligible costs of the action to ensure a clear visibility of the European Union contribution and of the ACP Group of States role. If that is the case, the lead applicant must justify full financing in Section 2.1 of Part B of the grant application form. The validity of the justification provided will be examined during the evaluation procedure.

As per section 6.3.10. of the Practical Guide, **the grant must not give rise to profits for neither the Beneficiaries (Coordinator/lead applicant and co-beneficiaries/co-applicants) nor any affiliated entity** (in the context of this call, profit is defined as a surplus of the receipts over the eligible costs approved by the

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<sup>1</sup>Where a grant is financed by the European Development Fund, any mention of European Union financing must be understood as referring to European Development Fund financing.

Contracting Authority when the request for payment of the balance is made). Expected revenue of the action may be accepted as co-financing. However, action revenues in excess of the total costs will be considered as profit. As such, it will need to be deducted when calculating the final amount of the EU grant.

## 2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of actions financed under this call for proposals, in accordance with the practical guide (PRAG) on contract procedures applicable to EU external action: <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/document.do?locale=en>.  
<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/document.do?locale=en>)<sup>2</sup>.

### 2.1. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

(1) the actors:

- the **lead applicant**, i.e. the entity submitting the application form (2.1.1),
- if any, its **co-applicant(s)** (unless specified otherwise the lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) are hereinafter jointly referred to as ‘applicant(s)’) (2.1.1),
- and, if any, **affiliated entity(ies)** to the lead applicant and/or to a co-applicant(s) (2.1.2);

(2) the actions:

- actions for which a grant may be awarded (2.1.4);

(3) the costs:

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

<b>2.1.1. Eligibility of applicants (i.e. lead applicant and co-applicant(s))</b>
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#### Lead applicant

(1) In order to be eligible for a grant, the lead applicant must:

- be a legal person **and**
- be a specific type of organisation such as: a foundation, association, non-governmental organisation, public/private sector operator, local authority, higher education institution and university, international (intergovernmental) organisation, as defined by Article 156 of the Financial Regulation of the European Union<sup>3</sup> (including the International Development Bank and regional financial institution) **and**
- have been established<sup>4</sup> in one of the eligible countries listed in Annex L, for at least three years from the date of publication of the call for proposals.

<sup>2</sup>Please note that a lead applicant (i.e. a coordinator) whose pillars have been positively assessed by the European Commission and which is awarded a grant will not sign the standard grant contract published with these guidelines but a contribution agreement based on the contribution agreement template. All references in these guidelines and other documents related to this call for proposals to the standard grant contract must in this case be understood as referring to the relevant provisions of the contribution agreement template.

<sup>3</sup> International organisations are international public-sector organisations set up by international agreements, and also the specialised agencies set up by these organisations; the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are also assimilated to international organisations.

<sup>4</sup> The place of establishment is determined on the basis of the organisation’s statutes, which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned and that its head office is

*For UK applicants: Please be aware that eligibility criteria must be fulfilled for the entire duration of the grant. Unless sector-specific eligibility rules provide otherwise<sup>5</sup>, if the United Kingdom withdraws from the EU during the grant period without concluding an agreement with the EU ensuring in particular that UK applicants continue to be eligible, you will cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or will be required to leave the project on the basis of Article [insert reference to the Article allowing termination of the grant agreement (change of the legal situation of the beneficiary)].*

This requirement does not apply to international organisations, **and**

- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), and not be acting as an intermediary **and**
- demonstrate three years' experience over the **period 2015-2019** in awarding and monitoring the implementation of support funds, including in supporting third parties in the fields of culture and/or creative industries and/or social and human development, with the following specific features:
  - they must have awarded third parties at least two grants meeting **all** the following criteria:
    - the grants were implemented during the same year over the reference period (**2015-2019**); **and**
    - each grant was implemented in an ACP country **and**
    - the annual amount of grants awarded was at least €100,000 over the past three years (**2017-2019**).

This experience must be verifiable as required in point 7 of Section 2.4. **and**

- demonstrate an average annual turnover or annual revenue of at least €400,000 during the last three years (**2017-2019**) as demonstrated by the supporting documents required under point 4 of Section 2.4).

(2) Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations listed in Section 2.6.10.1 of the PRAG;

Lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entities and, in the case of legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over the lead applicant, are informed that, should they be in one of the situations of early detection or exclusion according to Section 2.6.10.1 of the PRAG, their personal details (company name or full name if natural person; address, legal form and full names of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control if a legal person) may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES), and communicated to the persons and entities concerned in relation to the award or the execution of a grant contract. In this respect, lead applicants, co-applicants and affiliated entities are required to declare that they are not in one of the exclusion situations by means of a signed declaration on honour (PRAG Annex A14). For grants of €60,000 or less, no declaration on honour is required.

In Section 8 of Part B of the grant application form ('declaration(s) by the lead applicant'), the lead applicant must declare that neither the lead applicant nor the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) are in any of these situations.

**Actions must be implemented by a partnership between the lead applicant and at least one co-applicant. The partnership must comply with the following minimum criteria:**

- in addition to the lead applicant, the partnership must include at least one co-applicant

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located in an eligible country. In this respect, a legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has been concluded.

<sup>5</sup> For instance, Article 9(1)(f) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 provides for eligibility of member countries of the OECD, in the case of contracts implemented in a Least Developed Country or a Highly Indebted Poor Country, as included in the list of ODA recipients.

- At least one of the applicants (i.e. lead applicant and co-applicants) must be established in the ACP country of the referred Region lot, as defined in Annex L, **and**
- the number of applicants (lead applicant and co-applicants) established in the ACP countries must always be equal or greater than the number of applicants (lead applicant and co-applicants) established in non-ACP countries.

If awarded the grant contract, the lead applicant will become the beneficiary identified as the coordinator in Annex G (special conditions). The coordinator is the main interlocutor of the contracting authority, represents any other beneficiaries and acts on their behalf. The coordinator coordinates the development and implementation of the action.

### **Co-applicant(s)**

**The partnership** (lead applicant and co-applicant) (the number of ACP applicants must always be equal or greater) will have to demonstrate its expertise, on the basis of the CVs, in one or more of the strands of this call for proposals: a) quality of cultural goods production, b) distribution and dissemination of cultural goods and services, c) visual literacy education for young people, d) access to financing mechanisms and innovative technological approaches. (see point 1.2.)

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

Co-applicants participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the lead applicant.

**Co-applicants must satisfy the same eligibility criteria as the lead applicant, with the exception of the following:**

- demonstrate three years' experience over the **period 2015-2019** in awarding and monitoring the implementation of support funds, including in supporting third parties in the fields of culture and/or creative industries and/or social and human development, with the following specific features:
  - they must have awarded third parties at least two grants meeting **all** the following criteria:
    - the grants were implemented during the same year over the reference period (**2015-2019**); **and**
    - each grant was implemented in an ACP country **and**
    - the annual amount of grants awarded was at least €100,000 over the past three years (**2017-2019**). This amount must be verifiable as required in point 7 of Section 2.4 **and**
- demonstrate an average annual turnover or annual revenue of at least €400,000 during the last three years (**2017-2019**) as demonstrated by the supporting documents required under point 4 of Section 2.4).

Co-applicants must sign the mandate in Section 4 of Part B of the grant application form.

If awarded the grant contract, the co-applicant(s) (if any) will become beneficiary(ies) in the action (together with the coordinator).

(3) Applicants included in the lists of EU restrictive measures (see Section 2.4. of the PRAG) at the moment of the award decision cannot be awarded a grant<sup>6</sup>.

### **2.1.2. Affiliated entities**

Affiliated entity(ies)

The lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) may act with affiliated entity(ies).

**Only the following entities may be considered as affiliated entities to the lead applicant and/or to co-applicant(s):**

Only entities having a structural link with the applicants (the lead applicant or a co-applicant), in particular a legal or capital link.

This structural link encompasses mainly two notions:

- i) Control, as defined in Directive 2013/34/EU on the annual financial statements, consolidated financial statements and related reports of certain types of undertakings:

Entities affiliated to an applicant may hence be:

- Entities directly or indirectly controlled by the applicant (daughter companies or first-tier subsidiaries). They may also be entities controlled by an entity controlled by the applicant (granddaughter companies or second-tier subsidiaries) and the same applies to further tiers of control;
  - Entities directly or indirectly controlling the applicant (parent companies). Likewise, they may be entities controlling an entity controlling the applicant;
  - Entities under the same direct or indirect control as the applicant (sister companies).
- ii) Membership, i.e. the applicant is legally defined, for example, as a network, federation or association in which the proposed affiliated entity also participates or the applicant participates in the same entity (e.g. network, federation, association, etc.) as the proposed affiliated entity.

The structural link must as a general rule be neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation. This means that the link would exist independently of the award of the grant; it should exist before the call for proposals and remain valid after the end of the action.

By way of exception, an entity may be considered as affiliated to an applicant even if it has a structural link specifically established for the sole purpose of the implementation of the action in the case of 'sole applicants' or 'sole beneficiaries'. A sole applicant or a sole beneficiary is a legal entity formed by several entities (a group of entities) which together comply with the criteria for being awarded the grant. For example, an association is formed by its members.

What is not an affiliated entity?

The following are not considered entities affiliated to an applicant:

- Entities that have entered into a (procurement) contract or subcontract with an applicant, act as concessionaires or delegates for public services for an applicant;

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<sup>6</sup>The updated lists of sanctions are available at: [www.sanctionsmap.eu](http://www.sanctionsmap.eu).

Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The sanction stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In the event of a discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website, the OJ version should be regarded as authentic.

- Entities that receive financial support from the applicant;
- Entities that cooperate on a regular basis with an applicant on the basis of a memorandum of understanding or share some assets;
- Entities that have signed a consortium agreement under the grant contract (unless this consortium agreement leads to the creation of a ‘sole applicant’ as described above).

#### How to verify the existence of the required link with an applicant?

The affiliation resulting from control may in particular be demonstrated on the basis of the consolidated accounts of the group of entities the applicant and its proposed affiliates belong to.

The affiliation resulting from membership may in particular be demonstrated on the basis of the statutes or equivalent act establishing the entity (network, federation, association) which the applicant constitutes or in which the applicant participates.

If the applicants are awarded a grant contract, their affiliated entity(ies) will not become beneficiary(ies) of the action and signatory(ies) of the grant contract. However, they will participate in the design and in the implementation of the action and the costs they incur (including those incurred for implementation contracts and financial support to third parties) may be accepted as eligible costs, provided they comply with all the relevant rules already applicable to the beneficiary(ies) under the grant contract.

#### **Affiliated entity(ies) must satisfy the same eligibility criteria as the co-applicant(s).**

They must sign the affiliated entity(ies) statement in Section 5 of Part B of the grant application form.

#### **2.1.3. Associates and contractors**

The following entities are not applicants or affiliated entities and need not sign the ‘mandate for co-applicant(s)’ or ‘affiliated entities’ statement’:

- **Associates**

Other organisations or individuals may be involved in the action. Such associates play a real role in the action but may not receive funding from the grant, with the exception of per diem or travel costs. Associates need not meet the eligibility criteria listed in Section 2.1.1. Associates must be mentioned in Section 6 of Part B – ‘Associates participating in the action’ – of the grant application form.

- **Contractors**

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

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

##### Definition

An action is composed of a set of activities.

##### Duration

The initial planned duration of an action may not exceed **40 months**.

##### Sectors or themes

The actions must relate to improving creation and production of cultural goods and services, both in qualitative and quantitative terms; improving distribution/dissemination of cultural goods and services, with access to

national, regional and international markets, increasing visual literacy education for young people and improving access to financing mechanisms and innovative technological approaches.

The programme is aimed at the cultural and creative sector as a whole. It includes architecture, archives, museums and libraries, artistic crafts, audiovisual fields (including film, television, video games and multimedia), tangible and intangible cultural heritage, design, fashion, festivals, music, literature, performing arts, publishing, radio, and visual arts.

### Geographical coverage

Actions must be implemented in **one or more of the ACP countries** listed in Annex L.

Applicants have to specify in the first page of the grant application form for which lot they are applying.

Some activities may be carried out in ACP countries belonging to other lots than the one chosen by the applicant, or in non-ACP countries (Annex L). The applicant should explain in the application form how the location of activities is justified within the context of the overall action and how these activities benefit the target populations in the ACP countries.

### Types of action

The actions must meet the specific objectives of the call as specified under point 1.2.

The following types of action are ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with financing individuals' participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- actions intended to raise funds or promote the visibility of the applicant and its partner(s);
- actions which discriminate against individuals or groups of people on grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status;
- actions giving direct or indirect support to political parties, actions of a propagandist, proselytising or pornographic nature or actions which are contrary to the policies of the European Union.

### Types of activities

Applicants and co-applicants, as defined in Section 2.1.1, are the direct beneficiaries of the present call for proposals.

These entities will be responsible for awarding financial support to third parties, as the main activity, in accordance with the conditions set out in these Guidelines and in Annex M.

At least **75% of the total amount of the grant** must be redistributed to third parties.

**At least 15% of the total amount of the grant** must be allocated to robust mechanisms designed to ensure the transfer to third parties of skills, know-how, experience of providing support, and monitoring and evaluation, all of which must be related to the objectives of the call.

**The costs necessary for the implementation of the action must be reflected in the budget for the action** (see Annex B of these Guidelines).

The following items must be listed in the budget:

- the allocation of at least 75% of the total amount of the grant, to financial support for third parties, which must be included under the budget heading '6. Other';

- the allocation of at least 15% of the total amount of the grant, to the transfer to third parties of skills, know-how, experience of providing support, and monitoring and evaluation, which must be included under the budget heading '6. Other';

The budget must contain a specific sheet (to be filled in by the applicant) for the breakdown of the two percentages.

- the action must include participation in one annual stakeholders' meeting organised either in Brussels, Belgium, or an ACP member country by the contracting authority. The related costs must be included as appropriate in the budget;
- each financial report must be accompanied by an expenditure verification report. For instance, an action lasting four years will have three expenditure verification reports. The templates for expenditure verification reports can be found in Annex VII to these Guidelines;
- the action as a whole includes the financial support to third parties. Costs related to expenditure verification must be included under budget line '5.3. Expenditure verification/Audit';
- the action must include at least one evaluation. Costs related to evaluations must be included under the budget line '5.4. Evaluation costs'.

#### Financial support to third parties<sup>7</sup>

**Applicants must offer financial support for third parties; this must be the principle objective of the action and must occur at least once a year.**

Financial support to third parties in excess of **€180,000 per third party** is allowed only where achieving the objectives of the actions would otherwise be impossible or overly difficult; in such an event, no ceiling applies and prior consent must be obtained from the contracting authority, with the European Commission's approval.

**Annex M** to the Guidelines sets out the conditions that apply to support for third parties.

In accordance with these conditions, **in particular under the conditions or restrictions laid down in Annex M**, the lead applicant must indicate the following information in Section 2.1.1 of the grant application form:

- the overall objective, the specific goals and the outputs<sup>8</sup> (i.e. the results) to be achieved with the financial support;
- the different types of activities eligible for financial support, on the basis of a fixed list;
- the types of persons or categories of persons eligible for financial support;
- the criteria for selecting these entities and awarding them financial support;
- the criteria for determining the exact amount of financial support for each third party; and
- the maximum amount which may be awarded;
- establishment of the control system to verify the eligibility of costs.

In any event, the mandatory conditions set out above for awarding financial support (points (i) to (vi)) must be strictly defined in the grant contract so as to avoid any awarding of funding on a discretionary basis.

<sup>7</sup> These third parties must not be affiliated entities, associates or contractors.

<sup>8</sup>As per the OECD DAC definition, the term 'results' includes 'impact' (overall objective), 'outcomes' (specific goals) and 'outputs'.

## Visibility

Applicants must take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the European Union has financed or co-financed the action and that the Secretariat of the ACP Group of States is implementing the programme. The phrase ‘With the financial contribution of the European Union and the support of the Secretariat of the ACP Group of States’ must appear on all documents and information and communication material produced as part of the action.

As far as possible, actions that are wholly or partially funded by the European Union must include information and communication activities designed to raise the awareness of specific or general audiences concerning the reasons for the action and EU support for the action in the country or region concerned, as well as the results and the impact of this support.

Applicants must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of EU financing (cf. Communication and Visibility Manual for EU-financed external actions, produced and published by the European Commission: [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/communication-and-visibility-manual-eu-external-actions\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/communication-and-visibility-manual-eu-external-actions_en)).

### Number of applications and grants per applicant/affiliated entity

- The lead applicant may not submit more than one application per lot under this call for proposals.
- The lead applicant may not be a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in another application for the same lot at the same time.
- A co-applicant/affiliated entity may not be the co-applicant or affiliated entity in more than one application per lot under this call for proposals.
- A co-applicant/affiliated entity may not be awarded more than one grant per lot under this call for proposals.

#### ***2.1.5. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included***

Only ‘eligible costs’ may be covered by a grant. The categories of costs that are eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and an overall ceiling for ‘eligible costs’.

The reimbursement of eligible costs may take one or more of the following form:

- actual costs incurred by the beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies).

Recommendations to award a grant remain subject to the condition that the checks preceding the signing of the grant contract do not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget (e.g. arithmetical errors, inaccuracies, unrealistic costs or ineligible costs). The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the contracting authority to require changes or reductions in order to correct such mistakes or inaccuracies. It is not possible to increase the grant or the percentage of EU co-financing as a result of such corrections.

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

### Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under this call for proposals, costs must comply with the provisions of Article 14 of the general conditions of the model grant contract (see Annex G to the Guidelines).

### Contingency reserve

The budget may include a contingency reserve not exceeding 5% of estimated eligible direct costs. It may only be used with the **prior written consent** of the contracting authority.

### Eligible indirect costs

The indirect costs incurred when implementing the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding of no more than 7% of estimated total eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another budget heading in the model grant contract. The lead applicant may be asked to justify the percentage requested before the grant contract is signed. However, once the flat rate has been fixed in the special conditions of the grant contract, no supporting documents need to be provided.

If any of the applicants or affiliated entities is in receipt of an operating grant financed by the EU, it may not claim indirect costs on its costs incurred within the proposed budget for the action.

### Contributions in kind

‘Contributions in kind’ refers to the provision of goods or services to beneficiaries or affiliated entities free of charge by a third party. As contributions in kind do not involve any expenditure for beneficiaries or affiliated entities, they are normally not eligible costs.

However, contributions in kind may include personnel costs for work carried out by volunteers under an action or work programme (which are eligible costs).

Volunteer work may comprise up to 50% of the co-financing. For the purposes of calculating this percentage, contributions in kind in the form of volunteer work must be calculated using the unit cost provided by the contracting authority. This type of costs must be presented separately from other eligible costs in the estimated budget. The value of the volunteer work must always be excluded from the calculation of indirect costs.

When the estimated costs include volunteer work, the grant must not exceed the estimated eligible costs other than the costs for volunteer work.

Other co-financing must be based on estimates provided by the applicant.

### **Despite the foregoing, contributions in kind may not be treated as co-financing.**

However, if the description of the action as proposed includes contributions in kind, these contributions have to be made.

### Ineligible costs

The following costs are ineligible:

- debts and debt service charges (interest);
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- costs declared by the beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme receiving a European Union grant (including through the EDF);
- purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary for the direct implementation of the action, in which case ownership must be transferred in accordance with Article 7.5 of the general conditions of the model grant contract, by no later than the end of the action;
- exchange losses;

- loans to third parties.

## **Ethics clauses and Code of Conduct**

### a) Absence of conflict of interest

The applicant must not be affected by any conflicts of interest and must have no equivalent relations with other applicants or parties involved in the project. Any attempt by an applicant to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the evaluation committee or the contracting authority during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing applications will lead to the rejection of its application and may result in administrative penalties under the Financial Regulation in force.

### b) Respect for human rights as well as environmental legislation and core labour standards

The applicant and its staff must uphold human rights. In particular, in accordance with applicable law, applicants who have been awarded a grant must comply with environmental legislation including multilateral environmental agreements, and with core labour standards as applicable and as defined in the relevant International Labour Organisation conventions (such as the conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining, on elimination of forced and compulsory labour and on abolition of child labour).

### **Zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and sexual abuse:**

The European Commission applies a policy of ‘zero tolerance’ in relation to all wrongful conduct which has an impact on the professional credibility of the applicant.

Physical abuse or punishment, or threats of physical abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation, harassment and verbal abuse, as well as other forms of intimidation are prohibited.

### c) Anti-bribery and anti-corruption

The applicant must comply with all applicable laws, regulations and codes of conduct relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption. The European Commission reserves the right to suspend or cancel project financing if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process or during the execution of a contract or if the contracting authority fails to take all appropriate measures to remedy the situation. For the purposes of this provision, ‘corrupt practices’ denotes any offer of a bribe, gift, gratuity or commission to any person as an inducement or reward for performing or refraining from any act relating to the award of a contract or execution of a contract already concluded with the contracting authority.

### d) Unusual commercial expenses

Applications will be rejected or contracts terminated if it emerges that the award or execution of a contract has given rise to unusual commercial expenses. Such unusual commercial expenses are commissions not mentioned in the main contract or not stemming from a properly concluded contract referring to the main contract, commissions not paid in return for any actual and legitimate service, commissions remitted to a tax haven, commissions paid to a payee who is not clearly identified or commissions paid to a company which has every appearance of being a shell company.

Grant beneficiaries found to have paid unusual commercial expenses on projects funded by the European Union are liable, depending on the seriousness of the facts observed, to have their contracts terminated or to be permanently excluded from receiving EU/EDF funds.

### e) Breaches of obligations, irregularities or fraud

The contracting authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to breaches of obligations, irregularities or fraud. If breaches of obligations, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the contract, the contracting authority may refrain from concluding the contract.

## 2.2. HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

Information in PADOR will not be drawn upon in the present call for proposals.

### 2.2.1. *Application forms*

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the instructions on the concept note and the full applications in the grant application form annexed to these Guidelines (Annex A).

Applications must be submitted **in English or French**. Applicants must apply in the language most commonly used by the target population in the country in which the action takes place.

Any error or major discrepancy related to the points listed in the instructions for the concept note or any major inconsistency in the application (e.g. if the amounts in the budget worksheets are inconsistent) may lead to the rejection of the application.

Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is unclear and thus prevents the contracting authority from conducting an objective assessment.

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Please note that only the grant application form and the published annexes which need to be filled in (budget and logical framework) will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL the relevant information concerning the action.

**The lead applicant must also submit with its application the completed PADOR registration forms (Annex F) for itself and, if applicable, for each co-applicant and affiliated entity.**

Additional annexes may not be sent.

### 2.2.2. *Where and how to apply ?*

Applications must be submitted in 1 x original and 2 x copies in A4 size, each bound separately. The full application form (Part A: concept note and Part B: full application form), budget and logical framework must also be supplied in electronic format (on a CD-ROM or other IT storage device) in a separate and single file (i.e. the application must not be split into several different files). The electronic file must contain **exactly the same** application as the paper version enclosed.

The checklist (Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form) and the declaration by the lead applicant (Section 8 of Part B of the grant application form) must be stapled separately and enclosed in the envelope.

Where lead applicants send several different applications (if allowed to do so by the Guidelines of the call), each one must be sent separately.

The outer envelope must bear **the reference number and the title of the call for proposals**, together with the title and number of the lot, the full name and address of the lead applicant, and the words 'Do not open before the opening session'.

Applications must be sent in a sealed envelope by registered mail or private courier service or delivered by hand (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) to the address below.

Postal address

**Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States**

Mr Léonard Emile OGNIMBA  
Deputy Secretary General, Department for Policy Affairs and Human Development  
Avenue Georges Henri 451  
B-1200 Brussels  
Belgium

Address for delivery by hand

**Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States**

Mr Léonard Emile OGNIMBA  
Deputy Secretary General, Department for Policy Affairs and Human Development  
Avenue Georges Henri 451  
B-1200 Brussels  
Belgium

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

**Lead applicants must verify that their application is complete using the checklist (Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form). Incomplete applications may be rejected.**

**2.2.3. *Deadline for submitting applications***

Applicants' attention is drawn to the fact that there are two different systems for sending applications/full proposals: one is by post or private courier service, the other is by hand delivery.

In the first case, the application/full proposal must be sent before the date for submission, as evidenced by the postmark or deposit slip; in the second case, the acknowledgment of receipt given at the time of delivery of the application/full proposal will serve as proof.

The deadline for the submission of applications is **20<sup>th</sup> March 2020, 4pm** as evidenced by the date of dispatch, the postmark or the date of the deposit slip. In the case of deliveries by hand, the deadline for receipt is **20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 4pm**, as evidenced by the signed and dated receipt. Any applications submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

The contracting authority may, for reasons of administrative efficiency, reject any applications submitted in time to the postal service but received, for any reason beyond the contracting authority's control, after the effective date of approval of the first evaluation (i.e. concept note), if accepting applications that were submitted in time but arrived late might unduly delay the award procedure or jeopardise decisions already taken and notified (see indicative timetable in Section 2.5.2).

**2.2.4. *Further information about applications***

Information sessions on this call for proposals will be held in January/February 2020 in Brussels and in the regions concerned.

As soon as the dates have been set, they will be published on the website of the DG for International Cooperation and Development:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome&userlanguage=en> and on the the ACP Secretariat' website <https://www.acp.int>.

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of applications to the address(es) shown below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: [callforproposals.culture@acp.int](mailto:callforproposals.culture@acp.int)

The contracting authority has no obligation to provide clarifications in response to questions received after this date.

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

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

Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with their answers, will be published on the website of the DG for International Cooperation and Development : <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome&userlanguage=en>, as the need arises. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of questions and answers that have been published.

### **2.3. EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS**

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the contracting authority with the possible assistance of external assessors. All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in Section 2.1, the application will be rejected on this sole basis.

## (1) STEP 1: OPENING AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION

During the opening and administrative checks the following will be assessed:

- whether the deadline has been met. If not, the application will be automatically rejected;
- whether the application satisfies all the criteria in the checklist in Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form. This includes an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

Concept notes that pass this check will be evaluated in terms of the relevance and design of the proposed action.

Concept notes will receive an overall score out of 50 using the breakdown in the evaluation grid below. The evaluation will also check compliance with the instructions on how to complete a concept note, which can be found in Part A of the grant application form.

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

**Scores\***

<b>1. Relevance of the action</b>	Sub-score	<b>20</b>
1.1. How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals and to the specific themes/sectors/areas or any other specific requirement stated in the Guidelines for applicants? Are the expected results of the action aligned with the priorities defined in the Guidelines for applicants (Section 1.2)?	5	
1.2. How relevant is the proposal to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies), region(s) and/or relevant sectors (including synergy with other development initiatives and avoidance of duplication)?	5	
1.3. How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs (as rights holders and/or duty bearers) and constraints been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5	
1.4. Does the proposal contain elements providing particular added value (e.g. innovation or good practices)?	5	
<b>2. Design of the action</b>	Sub-score	<b>30</b>
2.1 How coherent is the overall design of the action? Does the proposal indicate the results expected to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale for achieving the expected results?	5(x2) (*)	
2.2 Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?	5	
2.3 Does the design take into account external factors (risks and assumptions)?	5	

2.4 Are the activities feasible and consistent in relation to the expected results (including the timetable)? Are the results (output, outcome and impact) realistic?	5	
2.5 To what extent does the proposal include relevant cross-cutting elements such as environmental/climate change issues, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of indigenous peoples, youth and combating HIV/AIDS (if there is a high incidence in the target country/region)?	5	
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>		<b>50</b>

(\* ) This score will be multiplied by two because of its importance.

Once all concept notes have been assessed, a list will be drawn up with the proposed actions ranked according to their total score.

Firstly, only concept notes with a score of at least 30 will be considered for pre-selection.

Secondly, the number of concept notes will be reduced, taking account of the ranking, to the number of concept notes whose total aggregate amount of requested contributions is equal to 200% of the available budget for this call for proposals. The amount of requested contributions for each concept note will be based on the indicative financial envelopes for each lot, where relevant.

After the evaluation of the concept notes, the contracting authority will send letters to all lead applicants, indicating whether their application was submitted by the deadline and informing them of the reference number they have been allocated, whether the concept note was evaluated and the results of that evaluation. The evaluation committee will then proceed with the lead applicants whose proposals have been short-listed.

## (2) STEP 2: EVALUATION OF THE FULL APPLICATION

Firstly, the following will be assessed:

- whether the full application satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist (Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form). This includes an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

Full applications that pass this check will be evaluated further for quality, including the proposed budget and capacity of the applicants and affiliated entity(ies). They will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria in the evaluation grid below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and award criteria.

**Selection criteria** help to evaluate the operational capacity of the applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) and the financial capacity of the lead applicant and are used to verify that they:

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

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

*Scoring:*

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

## Evaluation grid

Section	Maximum score
<b>1. 1. Financial and operational capacity</b>	<b>20</b>
1.1 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient in-house experience in project management?	5
1.2 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient in-house technical expertise? (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)	5
1.3 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient in-house management capacity? (in particular as regards staff, equipment and ability to manage the budget for the action)	5
1.4 Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5
<b>2. Relevance</b>	<b>20</b>
<i>Score transferred from concept note evaluation</i>	
<b>3. Design of the action</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1 How coherent is the design of the action? Does the proposal indicate the results expected to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale of the expected results? Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical and consistent with the envisaged outputs and outcomes?	5
3.2 Does the proposal/logical framework include credible baseline targets and sources of verification? If not, is a baseline study scheduled (and budgeted for appropriately in the proposal)?	5
3.3 Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?	5
<b>4. Implementation approach</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1 Is the action plan for implementing the action clear and feasible? Is the timetable realistic?	5
4.2 Does the proposal include an effective and efficient monitoring system? Is an evaluation planned (before, during and/or at the end of implementation)?	5
4.3 Is the level of involvement and participation of the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) in the action satisfactory?	5
<b>5. Sustainability of the action</b>	<b>15</b>
5.1 Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5

5.2 Is the action likely to have multiplier effects, including scope for replication, extension, capitalisation on experience and knowledge sharing?	5
5.3 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- financially (<i>e.g. financing of follow-up activities, sources of revenue for covering all future operating and maintenance costs</i>)</li> <li>- institutionally (<i>will the structures allow the results of the action to be maintained at the end of the action? Will there be local 'ownership' of the results of the action?</i>)</li> <li>- at policy level (where applicable) (<i>what will be the structural impact of the action – e.g. improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods?</i>)</li> <li>- environmentally (where applicable) (<i>will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?</i>)</li> </ul>	5
<b>6. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action</b>	<b>15</b>
6.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	/ 5
6.2 Is the ratio of estimated costs to results satisfactory?	/ 10
<b>Maximum total score</b>	<b>100</b>

If the total score for Section 1 (financial and operational capacity) is less than 12, the application will be rejected. If the score for at least one of the subsections under Section 1 is 1, the application will also be rejected.

If the lead applicant applies without co-applicants or affiliated entities, the score for point 4.3 will be 5, unless the involvement of co-applicants or affiliated entities is mandatory according to these Guidelines for applicants.

#### *Provisional selection*

After the evaluation, a table will be drawn up listing the applications ranked according to their score. The highest-scoring applications will be provisionally selected until the available budget for this call for proposals is reached. In addition, a reserve list will be drawn up following the same criteria. This list will be used if more funds become available during the validity period of the reserve list.

### **(3) STEP 3: VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS AND AFFILIATED ENTITIES**

Eligibility will be verified on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the contracting authority (see Section 2.4). It will by default only be verified for the applications that have been provisionally selected on the basis of their score and within the available budget for this call for proposals.

- The declaration by the lead applicant (Section 8 of Part B of the grant application form) will be cross-checked with the supporting documents provided by the lead applicant. Any missing supporting documents or any inconsistencies between the declaration by the lead applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the application on that sole basis.
- The eligibility of applicants and affiliated entity(ies) will be verified according to the criteria set out in Sections 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3.

A rejected application will be replaced by the next-best-placed application on the reserve list that falls within the available budget for this call for proposals.

## 2.4. SUBMISSION OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR PROVISIONALLY SELECTED APPLICATIONS

A lead applicant whose application has been provisionally selected or placed on the reserve list will be informed in writing by the contracting authority. The contracting authority will request the following documents in order to allow it to verify the eligibility of the lead applicant and, if applicable, of the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies)<sup>9</sup>:

1. The statutes or articles of association of the lead applicant and, if applicable, of each co-applicant and affiliated entity<sup>10</sup>. Where the contracting authority has recognised the eligibility of the lead applicant, the co-applicant(s) or the affiliated entity(ies) for another call for proposals under the same budget line within the two years preceding the deadline for receipt of applications, instead of the statutes or articles of association, a copy of the document proving their eligibility in a former call (e.g. a copy of the special conditions of a grant contract received during the reference period) may be submitted, unless a change in legal status has occurred in the meantime<sup>11</sup>. This obligation does not apply to international organisations which have signed a framework agreement with the European Commission.
2. Where the application concerns a grant for an action for which the amount exceeds €750,000 or an operating grant which exceeds €100,000, the lead applicant must provide an audit report produced by an approved external auditor, where available, and in all cases where a statutory audit is required by EU or national law, certifying the accounts for no more than the last three available financial years. In all other cases, the applicant must provide a declaration signed by its authorised representative certifying the validity of its accounts for no more than the last three financial years available.

This requirement applies only to the first application made by a beneficiary to an authorising officer responsible in any one financial year.

3. The external audit report is not required from co-applicants or affiliated entities.

This obligation does not apply to public bodies or international organisations, provided that the international organisation in question offers the guarantees provided for in the applicable Financial Regulation, as described in Chapter 6 of the PRAG.

This obligation does not apply to secondary and higher education establishments.

4. A copy of the lead applicant's latest accounts (the profit and loss account and the balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed)<sup>12</sup>. A copy of the latest accounts is not required from co-applicants or affiliated entities.
5. The legal entity sheet (see Annex D to these Guidelines), duly completed and signed by each of the applicants (i.e. by the lead applicant and, if applicable, by each co-applicant), accompanied by the supporting documents requested therein. If the applicants have already signed a contract with the contracting authority, instead of the legal entity sheet and supporting documents, the legal entity number may be provided, unless a change in legal status has occurred in the meantime.
6. A financial identification form from the lead applicant (not from co-applicants) conforming to the model enclosed in Annex E to these Guidelines, certified by the bank to which the payments will be made. This bank should be located in the country where the lead applicant is established. If the lead applicant has already submitted a financial identification form in the past for a contract where the European Commission was in charge of payments and intends to use the same bank account, a copy of the previous financial identification form may be provided instead.

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<sup>9</sup> Supporting documents will not be required for grant applications of €60,000 or less.

<sup>10</sup> Where the lead applicant and/or a co-applicant and/or an affiliated entity is a public body created by a law, a copy of said law must be provided.

<sup>11</sup> To be inserted only if the eligibility conditions have not changed from one call for proposals to the other.

<sup>12</sup> This obligation does not apply to natural persons who have received a scholarship or are in great need of direct support, nor to public bodies or international organisations. Nor does it apply when the accounts are in practice the same documents as the external audit report already provided pursuant to Section 2.4.2.

7. Proof of the experience required under point 2.1.1 of the Guidelines: the lead applicant must furnish proof of their experience by submitting audit reports, documents, declarations or any other documentation from third parties or public documents (including accounts duly certified by an external auditor) proving that the applicant has in the last three years (2017-2019) awarded at least two grants to third parties in an ACP country totalling €100,000 per year. Copies of the contracts must be enclosed.
8. The lead applicant as well as all co-applicants and affiliated entities must fill in and sign the declaration certifying that they are not in any of the exclusion situations (see Section 2.6.10.1 of the PRAG).

Documents must be supplied in the form of originals, photocopies or scanned versions (i.e. showing legible stamps, signatures and dates) of the originals.

Where such documents are not in one of the official languages of the European Union, a translation into one of the languages of the call for proposals of the relevant parts of those documents proving the lead applicant's and, where applicable, co-applicants' and affiliated entities' eligibility must be enclosed for the purpose of analysing the application.

Where these documents are in an official language of the European Union other than the language(s) of the call for proposals, it is **strongly** recommended, in order to facilitate the evaluation, that a translation into one of the languages of the call for proposals be provided of the relevant parts of the documents proving the lead applicant's and, where applicable, co-applicants' and affiliated entities' eligibility.

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

After verifying the supporting documents, the evaluation committee will make a final recommendation to the contracting authority, which will decide on the awarding of grants.

NB: If the contracting authority is not satisfied with the strength, solidity and guarantee offered by the structural link between one of the applicants and its affiliated entity, it may require submission of the missing documents allowing that entity to become a co-applicant. If all the missing documents for co-applicants are submitted, and provided all necessary eligibility criteria are fulfilled, the above-mentioned entity will become a co-applicant for all purposes. The lead applicant must submit the application form revised accordingly.

## **2.5. NOTIFICATION OF THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION**

### **2.5.1. *Content of the decision***

Lead applicants will be informed in writing of the contracting authority's decision concerning their application and, if rejected, the reasons for rejection.

If an applicant considers that there has been an error or irregularity during the award procedure, it may lodge a complaint (for more details see Section 2.4.15 of the PRAG).

Applicants who were unsuccessful wishing to obtain further information should send their request, by letter indicating the reference of the Call for Proposals and the reference allocated to the proposal, to:

**Secrétariat du Groupe des Etats d'Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique**  
M. Léonard Emile OGNIMBA  
Sous-Secrétaire Général Département des Questions Politiques et du Développement Humain  
Avenue Georges Henri 451  
B-1200 Bruxelles  
Belgique

Applicants and, where they are legal entities, persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control are hereby informed that, should they be in one of the situations of early detection or exclusion, their contact details (company name or full name if a natural person; address/registered office, legal form and full names of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control if a legal person) may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) and communicated to persons and entities involved in the award or performance of a grant contract.

For further information, please consult the privacy statement available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm)

### 2.5.2. *Approximate timetable*

	DATE	TIME
<b>1. 1. Information meeting (if applicable)</b>	<b>January/February 2020</b>	
<b>2. Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the contracting authority</b>	<b>20<sup>th</sup> February 2020</b>	<b>4 pm</b>
<b>3. Deadline by which the contracting authority must respond to requests for clarification</b>	<b>9<sup>th</sup> March 2020</b>	
<b>4. Deadline for submitting applications</b>	<b>20<sup>th</sup> March 2020</b>	<b>4 pm</b>
<b>5. Information for lead applicants on opening and administrative checks and concept note evaluation (Step 1)</b>	<b>Avril 2020</b>	-
<b>6. Information for lead applicants on the evaluation of full applications (Step 2)</b>	<b>Mai 2020</b>	-
<b>7. Notification of award (after eligibility check) (Step 3)</b>	<b>Juin 2020</b>	-
<b>8. Contract signature</b>	<b>Juillet 2020</b>	-

All times correspond to the time zone of the country of the contracting authority.

This indicative timetable refers to provisional dates (except for dates 2, 3 and 4) and may be updated by the contracting authority during the procedure. In such cases, the updated timetable will be published on the website of the DG for International Cooperation and Development:

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

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

Following the decision to award a grant, the beneficiary(ies) will be offered a contract based on the model grant contract (see Annex G to these Guidelines). By signing the application form (Annex A to these Guidelines), the applicants agree, if awarded a grant, to accept the contractual conditions of the model grant contract. Where the coordinator is an organisation whose pillars have been positively assessed, it will sign a contribution agreement based on the contribution agreement template. In this case, references to provisions of the model grant contract and its annexes do not apply. References in these Guidelines to the grant contract should be understood to be references to the relevant provisions of the contribution agreement.

#### Implementation contracts

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

In this context, a distinction should be made between awarding implementation contracts and subcontracting parts of the action described in the proposal, i.e. the description of the action annexed to the grant contract, such subcontracting being subject to additional restrictions (see the general terms and conditions in the model grant contract).

Awarding implementation contracts: implementation contracts relate to the acquisition by beneficiaries of routine services and/or necessary goods and equipment as part of their project management; they do not cover any outsourcing of tasks forming part of the action that are described in the proposal, i.e. in the description of the action annexed to the grant contract.

Subcontracting: 'subcontracting' is the performance, by a third party with which one or more beneficiaries have concluded a procurement contract, of specific tasks forming part of the action as described in the Annex to the grant contract (see also the general terms and conditions in the model grant contract).

### **3. LIST OF ANNEXES**

#### **DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED**

Annex A: Grant application form (Word format)

Annex B: Budget (Excel format)

Annex C: Logical framework (Excel format)

Annex D: Legal entity sheet<sup>13</sup>

Annex E: Financial identification form

Annex F: PADOR registration form

#### **DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION<sup>14</sup>**

Annex G: Grant contract

- Annex II: General conditions
- Annex IV: Contract award rules
- Annex V: Model request for payment
- Annex VI: Model narrative and financial report
- Annex VII: Model report of factual findings and technical terms of reference for the verification of expenditure on a contract concluded in the context of EU external actions]
- Annex VIII: Model financial guarantee
- Annex IX: Model template for transfer of ownership of assets]
- Annex X : Financial support to third parties

Annex H: Declaration on honour

Annex I: Daily allowance rates (per diem), available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/about-procurement-contracts/procedures-and-practical-guide-prag/diems\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/about-procurement-contracts/procedures-and-practical-guide-prag/diems_en)

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

Annex L: List of eligible countries referred to in Sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.4 of the Guidelines (sorted by ACP region)

Annex M: Detailed information on financial support to third parties

#### **Useful links:**

##### **Project Cycle Management Guidelines**

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/aid-delivery-methods-project-cycle-management-guidelines-vol-1\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/aid-delivery-methods-project-cycle-management-guidelines-vol-1_en)

##### **The implementation of grant contracts**

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<sup>13</sup> Only applicable where the European Commission will make the payments under the contracts to be signed.

<sup>14</sup> These documents should also be published by the contracting authority.

## **User Guide**

<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/companion/document.do?nodeNumber=19&locale=en>

**Financial Toolkit**      [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/procedures-beneficiary-countries-and-partners/financial-management-toolkit\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/procedures-beneficiary-countries-and-partners/financial-management-toolkit_en)

NB: The toolkit is not part of the grant contract and has no legal value. It merely provides general guidance and may in some details differ from the signed grant contract. In order to ensure compliance with their contractual obligations, beneficiaries should not exclusively rely on the toolkit but should always consult their individual contract documents.

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