



**Contracting Authority:** European Commission

EU Civil Society Facility for the Republic of Serbia 2023-2024

## **Guidelines for grant applicants**

### **Budget line(s):**

- IPA III/2023/JAD.977654/CIVIL SOCIETY FACILITY AND MEDIA PROGRAMME 2021-2023-ALLOCATION 2023 (15.020101.01)
- IPA III/2024/JAD.1299145/CIVIL SOCIETY FACILITY AND MEDIA PROGRAMME 2024-2025-ALLOCATION 2024 (15.020101.01)

Reference:

EuropeAid/180894/DD/ACT/RS

Deadline for submission<sup>1</sup> of concept notes:

**10/05/2024 at 12:00 (Brussels date and time)**

(in order to convert to local time click [here](#)<sup>2</sup>)

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<sup>1</sup> Online submission via PROSPECT is mandatory for this call for proposals (see Section 2.2.2). In PROSPECT all dates and times are expressed in Brussels time. Applicants should note that the IT support is open Monday to Friday from 08:30 to 18:30 Brussels time (except during European Commission public holidays in Belgium as published in the Official Journal). Applicants should take note of the weekly maintenance hours mentioned in the PROSPECT user manual.

<sup>2</sup> An example of a time converter tool available online: <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html>

# NOTICE

Please note that the awarding of grant contracts under this call for proposals is subject to the condition of the prior conclusion of a financing framework partnership agreement (FFPA), which does not modify the elements of the call for proposals (this will be the case, for instance, if the budget initially foreseen is different or if the timeframe, the nature or the condition of the implementation are altered). If the precedent condition is not met, the contracting authority will either abandon the procurement or cancel the award procedure without the candidates or applicants being entitled to claim any compensation.

This is a restricted call for proposals. In the first instance, only concept notes (Annex A.1 – Grant application form - Concept note) must be submitted for evaluation. Thereafter, lead applicants who have been pre-selected will be invited to submit a full application (Annex A.2 – Grant application form – Full application). After the evaluation of the full applications, an eligibility check will be performed for those which 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.

**To apply to this call for proposals organisations must register in PADOR and submit their application in PROSPECT (see section 2.2.2 of the guidelines).** The aim of PROSPECT is to increase the efficiency of the management of the call for proposals and to offer a better service to civil society organisations through a new panel of functionalities such as the on-line submission and the possibility to follow up online the status of their application.

**Preparation:** Information session will be held on 08/04/2024 at 11:00 hrs (CET) and user manuals

To help applicants familiarise themselves with the system before the online submission, an information session will be organised on 08/04/2024 at 11:00 (CET). The session will be held online.

Should you be interested in this session, please send an email by 02/04/2024 to **DELEGATION-SERBIA-FCS@eeas.europa.eu**, indicating: name, surname, nationality and email address of the persons who are going to participate as well as their organisation (max. two participants per organisation). No costs incurred by the applicants for attending this information session are reimbursable.]

All organisations may find more information regarding PROSPECT in the [user's manual](#) and the [e-learning videos](#). You may also contact our technical support team via the online support form in PROSPECT<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> If PROSPECT is unavailable, the IT support can also be reached via email: [INTPA-SUPPORT-SERVICES@ec.europa.eu](mailto:INTPA-SUPPORT-SERVICES@ec.europa.eu)

# Table of contents

<b>1. «EU CIVIL SOCIETY FACILITY FOR THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA 2023-2024»</b>	<b>ERROR!</b>
<b>BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>	
1.1. Background.....	4
1.2. Objectives of the programme and priority issues .....	6
1.3. Financial allocation provided by the contracting authority .....	7
<b>2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1. Eligibility criteria.....	9
2.1.1. Eligibility of applicants (i.e. lead applicant and co-applicant(s)).....	9
2.1.2. Associates and contractors .....	12
2.1.3. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made.....	12
2.1.4. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included .....	18
2.1.5. Ethics clauses and Code of Conduct .....	20
2.2. How to apply and the procedures to follow .....	21
2.2.1. Concept note content .....	22
2.2.2. Where and how to send concept notes .....	23
2.2.3. Deadline for submission of concept notes.....	23
2.2.4. Further information about concept notes.....	23
2.2.5. Full applications .....	24
2.2.6. Where and how to send full applications .....	26
2.2.7. Deadline for submission of full applications.....	26
2.2.8. Further information about full applications.....	27
2.3. Evaluation and selection of applications .....	27
2.4. Submission of supporting documents .....	34
2.5. Notification of the Contracting Authority's decision .....	34
2.5.1. Content of the decision.....	34
2.5.2. Indicative timetable .....	35
2.6. Conditions for implementation after the contracting authority's decision.....	35
<b>3. LIST OF ANNEXES</b>	<b>37</b>

# 1. EU CIVIL SOCIETY FACILITY FOR THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA 2023-2024

## 1.1. BACKGROUND

The Treaty on European Union provides the legal basis for any European country to join the EU (Article 49) and the values on which the EU is based (Article 2). In this context the enlargement policy aims to guide, support and monitor changes in countries wishing to join the European Union in line with the values enshrined in the Treaty on European Union, its laws and standards.

The IPA III programming framework provides under Window 1 “Rule of Law, Fundamental Rights and Democracy” and the DG NEAR Guidelines for EU support to Civil Society in the enlargement region 2021 – 2027, provide a strong emphasis for a strong, independent and capacitated civil society. The EU Guidelines focus in particular on:

- A conducive environment for civil society to carry out its activities is in place,
- Strengthened cooperation and partnership between CSOs and IPA beneficiary authorities/institutions,
- Reinforced CSO Capacity and Resilience to carry out their activities effectively

In relation to the above, the Serbia 2023 annual report of the European Commission demonstrates the challenges civil society is operating under by stating that “CSOs and human rights defenders continued to raise awareness about civil and political rights. This took place in a polarised environment. Verbal attacks and smear campaigns against several CSOs and their financing continued, including by high-level officials. Serbia started implementing the 2022-2030 Strategy and action plan for creating a stimulating environment for the development of civil society, but measurable progress has yet to be demonstrated. A council for cooperation and development of civil society was established, as foreseen in the action plan, in September 2023. (...) In terms of public funding of civil society, the transparency and fairness of award procedures need to be significantly improved. Some of the key challenges acknowledged in the aforementioned strategy include the lack of consultations with CSOs when planning priority activities, discretionary decisions of managers in funding procedures, the lack of transparent criteria for approving financial and non-financial support to CSOs or for selecting independent experts in evaluation commissions, and insufficient transparency of public authorities in the reporting of spent funds on an annual basis”.

**Social inclusion** in Serbia is a multifaceted endeavour that strives to create a society where every individual, regardless of background, enjoys equal opportunities, rights, and participation in community life. Rooted in the principles of democracy and human rights, Serbia recognizes the importance of embracing diversity and fostering a sense of belonging among its citizens.

Serbia is actively working to enhance the social inclusion of persons with disabilities. This involves improving accessibility, both physical and digital, and ensuring that individuals with disabilities have equal opportunities in education, employment, and community engagement. Advocacy groups and organizations play a vital role in promoting the rights of persons with disabilities.

While progress has been made, challenges persist. Economic disparities, regional variations, and lingering stereotypes are among the hurdles that need attention. Ongoing efforts include refining policies, enhancing awareness, and fostering collaborations between government, civil society, and the private sector to address these challenges and promote a more inclusive society.

Serbia has a complex **healthcare system** that has undergone transformations in recent years. The healthcare system is primarily publicly funded and operated, with the Ministry of Health overseeing policy implementation and coordination.

Serbia faces a range of health **challenges**, including both predominantly non-communicable diseases but also communicable as of late. Common health concerns include cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases, cancer, and infectious diseases. The country has been actively involved in efforts to combat diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and vaccine-preventable illnesses. Public health initiatives in Serbia focus on health promotion and education to raise awareness about preventive measures. Campaigns target lifestyle factors, vaccination programs, and initiatives to address specific health issues. Efforts are made to educate the population about the importance of healthy living, nutrition, and physical activity.

**Mental health** has gained increased attention in Serbia, with efforts to reduce stigma and improve access to mental health services. Initiatives focus on community-based mental health programs, awareness campaigns, and integrating mental health services into primary care. While progress has been made, challenges persist. These include disparities in healthcare access, workforce shortages, and the need for ongoing infrastructure improvements. The country continues to work on healthcare reforms to enhance efficiency, equity, and the overall quality of healthcare services.

In Serbia, **environmental protection** is one of the most pressing issues causing significant challenges, both in the context of EU integration and the aim of achieving sustainable development, reducing inequalities and preserving the environment and climate for future generations. Serbia is witnessing degradation of environment, with the air pollution sector taking a lead. Major pollutant causing exceedance in number of days with increased air pollution across Serbia is particulate matters. Vulnerable groups and minorities, including e.g. Roma settlements, often endure the most due to environmental injustice<sup>4</sup>.

Though awareness about environment and climate is on the rise, it has not yet resulted in action with an impact on policymaking. Individuals are not equipped with sufficient knowledge and evidence to participate in the policy debates even when processes are open.

Civil society organisations can make a substantial contribution to addressing many of the challenges that pre-accession countries are typically facing, through their lobbying, advocacy and oversight activities at national, regional and local levels. In addition, the involvement of civil society in the pre-accession process contributes to deepening citizens' understanding of the reforms a country needs to complete in order to qualify for EU membership.

The main challenges facing the Serbian economy:

**High unemployment rate:** Serbia has been grappling with a relatively high unemployment rate, particularly among the youth. Creating job opportunities and reducing unemployment is a significant challenge for the country. **Structural issues:** Serbia's economy has been undergoing a transition from a centrally planned system to a market-oriented one. There are still structural issues, including a large informal sector, bureaucratic hurdles, and limited market competition. Addressing these structural challenges is crucial for sustained economic growth.

**Regional disparities:** There are serious regional disparities in terms of economic development within Serbia. **Limited foreign direct investment (FDI):** While Serbia has made efforts to attract foreign direct investment, the inflow of FDI has been relatively low compared to some neighbouring countries. Enhancing the business environment, ensuring legal stability, and improving infrastructure can help increase foreign investment.

**Corruption and governance:** Addressing issues related to corruption and improving governance is crucial for promoting transparency, strengthening the rule of law, and creating a favourable investment climate. Continuing efforts to combat corruption and enhance transparency will be essential for long-term economic development.

**Economic diversification:** Serbia's economy is still heavily reliant on a few sectors, such as agriculture, automotive manufacturing, and energy. Promoting diversification into knowledge-based industries, technology, innovation, and services can contribute to sustainable economic growth and resilience.

The preservation of Europe's shared **cultural heritage**, support for and promotion of art and creative industries in Europe is one of the goals pursued by the European Union. Culture in the EU is recognised for its wider socio-economic value which, in turn, contributes to cohesion, inclusion and wellbeing of our societies and communities.

For the EU, protection and promotion of cultural heritage is a way to enhance peace and development worldwide. Cultural heritage fosters tolerance, mutual understanding, reconciliation, inter-cultural and inter-

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<sup>4</sup><https://eeb.org/library/pushed-to-the-wastelands-environmental-racism-against-roma-communities-in-central-and-eastern-europe/>

faith dialogue. It has a strong potential to mitigate social tensions and prevent conflicts. At the same time, it is a bridge towards the next generations – it can set foundations for better future and more tolerant societies. Serbian cultural heritage brings incredible value to the richness and cultural diversity of our common European heritage - a heritage we share together.

Serbia's civil society engaged in culture must play an important role in protecting and preserving cultural heritage, fostering dialogue and tolerance and upgrading culture and creative industries in the forefront of socio-economic development.

**Agriculture** in Serbia already faces challenges associated to climate changes. Ranging from periods without rainfalls to flooding these challenges are likely to intensify in the years to come. Further, consumers are concerned with potential adverse effects of traditional agriculture including the excessive use of pesticides and industrial inorganic fertilisers while the demand for organic and other food produced in more sustainable ways was on the rise over the past decade both in Serbia and international markets.

Some of the biggest market players at the food market are starting to demand from their suppliers to switch to more sustainable ways of food production (e.g. regenerative agriculture) in order to fulfil their internal decarbonisation targets.

## 1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

The overall objective of the Action is to strengthen participatory democracies and the EU integration and approximation process in Serbia, through an enhanced contribution by civil society.

The action will focus on:

- Improving the conducive environment for civil society,
- Improving cooperation and partnership between the Civil Society and all levels of the government institutions,
- Increasing capacities and effectiveness of the Serbian Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to monitor and participate in reform processes and the overall capacities of grassroots movements through flexible financial support to third parties mechanisms in all fields relevant to Serbia's accession to the EU.

The **global objective** of this call for proposals is to strengthen participatory democracy and the EU integration and approximation process in Serbia, through an enhanced contribution by civil society.

The **specific objective(s)** of this call for proposals are:

1. To strengthen more gender-responsive civil society organisations through a more conducive environment,
2. To strengthen cooperation and partnership between CSOs and public institutions at all levels, and
3. To reinforce CSO capacity and resilience.

The priority(ies) of this call for proposals are:

- To contribute to expanding the space to policymaking and community engagement for civil society;
- To expand and strengthen civil society's active engagement with their constituency, allowing citizens to become active participants of Serbia's EU accession process;
- To promote the values at the core of the EU, as enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty of the EU<sup>5</sup>, by engaging with the citizens through participatory and deliberative methods;
- To support youth initiatives and dialogue in relation to the above priorities.

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<sup>5</sup>[https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:2bf140bf-a3f8-4ab2-b506-fd71826e6da6.0023.02/DOC\\_1&format=PDF](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:2bf140bf-a3f8-4ab2-b506-fd71826e6da6.0023.02/DOC_1&format=PDF)

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

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is EUR 6,700,000 €. The contracting authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

#### **Indicative allocation of funds by lot:**

LOT 1: Rule of Law (anti-corruption, migration, LGBTI) 1,200,000.00€

LOT 2: Social inclusion, public and mental health, support to the most vulnerable women and men, girls and boys – 1,000,000.00€

LOT 3: Environment and climate change, biodiversity – 1,500,000.00 €

LOT 4: Local and regional development, social enterprises – 1,000,000.00 €

LOT 5: Culture (Culture heritage, culture initiatives) - 1,000,000.00 €

LOT 6: Sustainable agriculture and cooperation, urban planning and mobility, consumer protection – 1,000,000.00 €

If the allocation indicated for a specific lot cannot be used due to insufficient quality or number 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 following minimum and maximum amounts:

#### **LOT 1:**

- minimum amount: 300,000.00 EUR, maximum amount: EUR 600,000.00 EUR

#### **LOT 2:**

- minimum amount: 300,000.00 EUR, maximum amount: EUR 500,000.00 EUR

#### **LOT 3:**

- minimum amount: 500,000.00 EUR, maximum amount: EUR 750,000.00 EUR

#### **LOT 4:**

- minimum amount: 300,000.00 EUR, maximum amount: EUR 500,000.00 EUR

#### **LOT 5:**

- minimum amount: 300,000.00 EUR, maximum amount: EUR 500,000.00 EUR

#### **LOT 6:**

- minimum amount: 300,000.00 EUR, maximum amount: EUR 500,000.00 EUR

Any grant requested under this call for proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum percentages of total eligible costs of the action:

- Minimum percentage: 60 % of the total eligible costs of the action.
- Maximum percentage: 90 % of the total eligible costs of the action (see also Section 2.1.4).

The balance (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the contracting authority) must be financed from sources other than the general budget of the Union or the European Development Fund<sup>6</sup>

**At least 10% of co-financing for lots two, four and six must also come from the private sector (national or international) or individual donations.**

Every grant with total cost higher than 400,000 EUR must present a minimum of 30% of the total eligible costs allocated to be distributed as FSTP (financial support to third parties). More than 50% of FSTPs activities in terms of project quantity as well as expenditure amount must be outside the city of Belgrade.

## **2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of the actions financed under this call, in conformity with the practical guide, which is applicable to the present call (available on the internet at this address <https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/ExactExternalWiki/ePRAG>).<sup>7</sup>

### **2.1. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

(1) the actors (2.1.1.):

- The **'lead applicant'**, i.e. the entity submitting the application form;
- if any, its **co-applicant(s)** (**where it is not specified otherwise the lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) are hereinafter jointly referred as 'applicant(s)'**);
- and, if any, **affiliated entity(ies)** to the lead applicant and/or to a co-applicant(s);

(2) the actions (2.1.3.):

- actions for which a grant may be awarded;

(3) the costs (2.1.4.):

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

#### ***2.1.1. Eligibility of applicants (i.e. lead applicant and co-applicant(s))***

##### **Lead applicant**

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

- be a legal person **and**
- be non-profit-making **and**
- be a specific type of organisation such as: civil society organisation<sup>8</sup>, including non

<sup>6</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.

<sup>7</sup> Note that a lead applicant (i.e. a coordinator) whose pillars have been positively assessed by the European Commission and who 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 to the standard grant contract shall in this case be understood as referring to the relevant provisions of the contribution agreement template.



- governmental organisation **and** be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary **and** be established in the Republic of Serbia.

(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 practical guide;

Lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entities and, in case of legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over the lead applicant, the co-applicants and the affiliated entities 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 practical guide, personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the early detection and exclusion system, and communicated to the persons and entities concerned in relation to the award or the execution of a grant contract. In this respect, provisionally selected lead applicants, co-applicants and affiliated entities or those placed in the reserve list are obliged to declare that they are not in one of the exclusion situations through a signed declaration on honour (PRAG Annex A14). For grants of EUR 15 000 or less, no declaration on honour is required. See section 2.4.

In Annex A.1 Section 2 and Annex A.2 Section 5 ('declaration(s) by the lead applicant'), the lead applicant must declare that the lead applicant himself, the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) are not in any of these situations.

The lead applicant must act with at least two co-applicants, as specified hereafter. Majority of applicant and co-applicants must be from outside Belgrade.

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 sole interlocutor of the contracting authority. It represents and acts on behalf of any other co-beneficiary (if any) and coordinate the design and implementation of the action.

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

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 eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant himself.

Co-applicants must sign the mandate in Annex A.2 Section 5.

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

In addition, please note that contracts cannot be awarded to or signed with applicants included in the lists of EU restrictive measures (see Section 2.4. of the PRAG).

The split of functions of co-applicants with the lead applicant as well as among the co-applicants and how the work of the co-applicants will assist in their own capacity building must be well elaborated at the full application stage in the Description of Action as well as in the Budget of the action.

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<sup>8</sup> The broadest possible understanding about civil society organisations is applied under this call for proposals, as defined in 1999 by the European Economic and Social Committee (CES/1999/851) and further detailed by both the EESC (CES/1999/851, CES/2000/81) and the EC (COM/2002/0704 final, COM/2005/0290 final).

## **Affiliated entities**

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 (i.e. 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 as a e.g. network, federation, association in which the proposed affiliated entities also participate or the applicant participates in the same entity (e.g. network, federation, association,...) as the proposed affiliated entities.

The structural link shall 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 so-called '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,
- 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 proved 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 proved 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 and subcontractors) 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 lead applicant and the co-applicant(s). They must sign the affiliated entity(ies) statement in Annex A.2 Section 5.

### ***2.1.2. Associates and contractors***

The following entities are not applicants nor affiliated entities and do not have to 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 do not have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in Section 2.1.1. Associates must be mentioned in Annex A.2 Section 4 — 'Associates participating in the action'.

- Contractors

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

### ***2.1.3. 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 be lower than 24 months nor exceed 48 months.

#### Specific sectors or themes to which the actions must relate:

Any action has to include at least one of the following themes:

LOT 1: Rule of Law

**Rule of law and justice**

**Migration**

LOT 2: Social inclusion

**Public and mental health**

## **Marginalized groups**

LOT 3: Environment and climate change

**Biodiversity and nature protection**

**Green energy**

**Climate change**

LOT 4: Local and regional development

**Civil society organisation and public sector**

**Social entrepreneurship**

**Youth and local and regional development**

LOT 5: Culture

To promote the values enshrined in the Treaty on the European Union (democracy, human rights, solidarity, civic participation, social inclusion, equality, environmental rights, etc.) via:

**Cultural production**

**Promotion and protection of the cultural heritage**

LOT 6: Sustainable agriculture and cooperation, urban planning and mobility, consumer protection

**Sustainable agriculture**

**Urban planning and mobility**

**Consumer protection**

### Location

Actions must take place in the Republic of Serbia.

### Types of action

Types of action which may be financed under this call:

- Strengthening the role and capacity of civil society in advocacy and promoting human rights and good governance in the Republic of Serbia;
- Protection of social, economic and cultural rights, including persons with disabilities, children, women, elderly, homeless and the rights of persons belonging to minorities (also Roma inclusion).
- Engagement in the local communities via direct contact with the citizens/constituencies;
- Ensuring evidence-based public debates with actors of different educational and cultural backgrounds and ideological stances;
- Creation of innovative methods of participatory engagement with the citizens, including youth, both in vivo and online;

- Advocacy and public campaigns.

Specific examples based on each lot and theme are provided below:

#### LOT 1: Rule of Law

**Rule of law and justice** (promote rule of law and support to democracy; monitor policy reforms under Chapters 23 and 24)

**Migration** (Support the vulnerable groups of migrants and minors with protection, education and integration actions (complementary to those provided by state authorities); actions to monitor and protect the rights of migrants (in the reception and asylum, and in the process of being returned/readmitted); actions to promote the integration of migrants and refugees in local communities.

#### LOT 2: Social inclusion

**Public and mental health** (with particular focus on support for advancing the mental health of youth, support to marginalized groups relevant to public health, support cooperation with schools to promote measures for reducing early school leaving and desegregation, as well as to build student competencies related to gender equality, health, mental health, reproductive health, sex education, and all forms of gender-based violence, including sexual abuse, access to Vaccinations and Immunizations: Support the provision of equitable access to vaccinations and immunizations, addressing especially issues of awareness.

**Marginalized groups** (Support for social and economic integration of marginalized groups in particular youth and young women, support the development of social enterprises for facilitation of employment of marginalized groups, support to social inclusion of the most vulnerable women and men, girls and boys through establishment and/or enhancement of innovative, open community-based services (any services to be provided in this context has to be done in official cooperation with the relevant local self-government with a written commitment of the LSG that it will take over the provision of the service with its own resources upon completion of the project), Health Education Workshops: Support targeted health education workshops to improve health literacy within vulnerable populations. Cover topics such as preventive care, nutrition, and managing chronic conditions, substance abuse prevention and treatment: Support the development of prevention programs and treatment options tailored to the needs of vulnerable populations, addressing substance abuse and addiction issues. Support the promotion of youth participation in decision making on the national and local level, as well as cooperation with local self-governments on relevant issues

#### LOT 3: Environment and climate change

**Biodiversity and nature protection** (raising awareness of the importance of biodiversity; support CSOs operating in the field of biodiversity in cooperation with the local authorities,

**Green energy** (support to grass-root CSOs, particularly those operating in the coal regions (establishing community-driven green energy (or just transition) information hubs can play a vital role in building capacities related to climate policies, energy transition, energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and combating energy poverty);

**Climate change** (promotion of actions for reducing the emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and enhancing their sinks to slow down climate change, promotion of actions to adapt to the impacts of climate change, like preventing flooding, preparing for heatwaves and reducing other climate risks)

#### LOT 4: Local and regional development

**Civil society organisation and public sector** (promote citizen participation in local development planning and budgeting; systematic mechanisms of cooperation between civil and public sectors; ensuring public participation in decision-making processes on measures, programs and investments with potentially significant socio-economic impacts)

**Social entrepreneurship** (self-sustainable economic activity or corporate social responsibility activities with the business sector)

**Youth and local and regional development** (support the development and establishment of local and regional youth councils, promote employments skills for local economy stakeholders, conducive business environment, enhance opportunities for employment generation)

#### LOT 5: Culture

To promote the values enshrined in the Treaty on the European Union (democracy, human rights, solidarity, civic participation, social inclusion, equality, environmental rights, etc.) via:

**Cultural production** (organisation festivals, initiatives, and cultural events on a regular basis promoting culture, authors and artists from Serbia, region, and EU Member States, and stronger cultural cooperation on specific topics, such as civic engagement, human rights, gender equality, green agenda, social inclusion, etc.)

**Promotion and protection of the cultural heritage** (promotion and education about European green policies in cultural heritage, strengthening local participation and community engagement for sustainable development of cultural heritage; exchange of best European practices with awarded European projects and European networks in sustainable development and preservation of cultural heritage; protection of moveable and immovable cultural heritage through networking of Serbian CSOs, initiatives, national minority associations, ethno-cultural co-operatives and tourist associations, social entrepreneurship, initiatives for protection of architectural heritage, etc; networking of international cultural heritage stakeholders in civic, government and private sector to strengthen dialogue on the role of cultural heritage in the green transition and the creation of a sustainable society and economy)

#### LOT 6: Sustainable agriculture and cooperation, urban planning and mobility, consumer protection

**Sustainable agriculture** (capacity building for farmers associations and their improved cooperation; awareness rising, promotion, training, finding ways for potential added value of food produced in a more sustainable ways including without or with limited use of: pesticides (except for those used in organic production) and inorganic fertilisers (e.g. through certification and labelling), and improving market links between potential producers, sellers/intermediaries, and buyers; Food Security Initiatives: support activities to address food insecurity, such as community gardens, food banks, or nutrition education classes. Adequate nutrition is foundational to overall health).

**Urban planning and mobility** (capacity-building and resiliency-building activities focused on legal awareness, business and financial understanding, constituent engagement, and sectoral cooperation and accountability for CSOs, improvement of the policy of urban and spatial development, addressing urban youth needs, managing rural-urban linkages and rapid urbanisation).

**Consumer protection** (develop citizens` awareness of EU standards for consumer protection (the right to health protection and safety, the right to protection of economic interests, the right to damages, the right to information and education, the right to representation; monitor of the implementation of existing laws and harmonisation of the legislation of the Republic of Serbia related to consumer protection; improving cooperation between consumer associations and local self-government; raising consumer and retailer awareness of the new challenges posed by expanding e-commerce, trainings on understanding consumer protection acquis).

The following types of action are ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- actions essentially focused on construction activities, purchase of equipment, purchase and/or renovation of building or offices;

- actions aiming predominantly at charitable donations and profit making activities;
- actions which are already funded by other Community programmes and undertaken before the date of contract signature.

### Types of activity

Types of activity which may be financed under this call

- Advocacy, lobbying and development of strategies by civil society organisations to push for legal reform, to influence policy-making, or to counter restrictions imposed by States on CSOs and other non-state actors;
- Promoting the signature, ratification and the effective implementation of the relevant international and regional human rights instruments, including fundamental ILO Conventions;
- Capacity-building through trainings of civil society organisations active in the human rights/democracy field and of human rights defenders;
- Awareness-raising and communication campaigns to inform on specific democracy/human rights issues;
- Ensuring access to remedy for victims, accountability and prosecution of perpetrators;
- Promoting inclusive and strategic partnerships, networking and cooperation with CSOs and other relevant stakeholders or among CSOs;
- Supporting CSOs and the media in promoting accountability and transparency at national and local level;
- Promoting the inclusion of women, youth, and other marginalised groups into formal and informal decision making structures, including the political party system;
- Capacity building of civic and political actors to develop responsive policy platforms, adequately representing citizen's interests;
- Sub-granting (financial support to third parties) to local registered and non-registered civil society organisations.
- Organisation of innovative cultural events, performances, exhibitions, remediation activities aiming at awareness raising and triggering of civic participation in fields related to the priorities of this Call for Proposals:
  - Conducting citizens' panels or other forms of direct/deliberative engagement with the constituencies;
  - Explore drivers of interest in EU-accession related topics of the citizens through innovative research and engagement methods (i.e. Q method focus groups, deliberative democracy polling, and similar);
  - Focus on the citizens that are not socially active in their local communities or interested in Serbia's EU accession process and devise strategies for their engagement/attracting their interest.
- Production of policy and advocacy outputs (reports, campaigns, etc.), based on gained experience and lessons learned from the conducted citizen engagement activities.

### Financial support to third parties<sup>9</sup>

The maximum amount of financial support per third party is EUR 60,000 during the complete

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<sup>9</sup> These third parties are neither affiliated entity(ies) nor associates nor contractors.

implementation period of the project.

In compliance with the present guidelines and notably of any conditions or restrictions in this Section, the lead applicant should define mandatorily in Section 2.1.1 of Annex A.2 (Grant application form – Full application):

- (i) the overall objectives, the specific objective(s) and the outputs<sup>10</sup> (i.e. the results) to be achieved with the financial support
- (ii) the different types of activities eligible for financial support, on the basis of a fixed list
- (iii) the types of persons or categories of persons which may receive financial support
- (iv) the criteria for selecting these entities and giving the financial support
- (v) the criteria for determining the exact amount of financial support for each third entity, and
- (vi) the maximum amount which may be given.

In all events, the mandatory conditions set above for giving financial support (points (i) to (vi)) have to be strictly defined in the grant contract as to avoid any exercise of discretion.

For this Call for proposals the following specific conditions or restrictions apply for financial support to third parties:

Recipients of financial support to third parties shall:

- be a legal person, and
- be non-profit-making, and
- be a specific type of organisation such as: non-governmental organisations (NGOs). They may include: civil society organisations<sup>11</sup> (CSOs), professional associations, chambers of commerce, employers' associations and trade unions, cultural centres, independent foundations, and independent research based institutions, public universities, non-profit media organizations, legally registered civil society networks, and
- be legally established in the Republic of Serbia

In addition,

- The minimum duration of actions/activities eligible for financial support is 3 months.
- No co-financing can be requested from third parties.

#### **Indicative types of activities eligible for financial support to third parties:**

- Development of policy papers, monitoring reports created by citizens, public opinion surveys;
- Statistical analysis, focus group discussions, questionnaires to specific groups to build evidence-based work, opinion polls, and other tools related to public policies analysis;
- Travel costs, organisation and participation to public debates, seminars, workshops;
- Fieldwork to collect information, opinions, and suggestions for policy improvement;

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<sup>10</sup> As per OECD DAC definition, the term 'results' includes: 'impact' (overall objective), 'outcome(s)' (specific objective(s) and 'output(s)'.

<sup>11</sup> The broadest possible understanding about civil society organisations is applied under this call for proposals, as defined in 1999 by the European Economic and Social Committee (CES/1999/851) and further detailed by both the Majority of actions EESC (CES/1999/851, CES/2000/81) and the EC (COM/2002/0704 final, COM/2005/0290 final).



- Advocacy activities, including those related to the dissemination of findings, suggestions and recommendations;
- Communication and visibility activities related to dissemination of findings, suggestions, and recommendations, through channels of social media, television, radio and other innovative communication channels.
- Conducting citizens' panels or other forms of direct/deliberative engagement with the constituencies;
- Explore drivers of interest in EU-accession related topics of the citizens through innovative research and engagement methods (i.e. Q method focus groups, deliberative democracy polling, and similar);
- Focus on the citizens that are not socially active in their local communities or interested in Serbia's EU accession process and devise strategies for their engagement/attracting their interest.

**More than 50% of actions in each proposal within this Call for proposals must be performed outside the city of Belgrade.**

**If Informal Groups are foreseen to benefit from FSTP in the submitted proposal, they need to be supported via an intermediary CSO. The maximum total amount of financial support per Informal Group during the full implementation period of the project is EUR 5,000 per informal group.**

### Visibility

The applicants must take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the European Union has financed or co-financed the action. Unless the European Commission agrees otherwise, actions that are wholly or partially funded by the European Union must ensure the visibility of EU financing by displaying the EU emblem in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Operational guidelines for recipients of EU funding, published by the European Commission. If applicable, communication activities may be undertaken to raise the awareness of specific or general audiences of the reasons for the action and the EU support for the action in the country or region concerned, as well as the results and the impact of this support.

All measures and activities relating to visibility and, if applicable, communication, must comply with the latest Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU-funded external action, laid down and published by the European Commission [Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU External Actions | International Partnerships \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/visibility-requirements).

### Number of applications and grants per applicants / affiliated entities

The lead applicant may not submit more than **1** application under this call for proposals.

The lead applicant may not be awarded more than **1** grant under this call for proposals.

The lead applicant may not be a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in another application of the same lot at the same time.

The lead applicant may be a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in another application in maximum 1 other lot under this call for proposals.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity may not be the co-applicant or affiliated entity in more than **1** application per lot under this call for proposals.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity may be the co-applicant or affiliated entity in maximum 2 lots under this call for proposals.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity may not be awarded more than **1** grant per lot under this call for proposals.

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

Union contribution under this call for proposals take the following form(s):

- Reimbursement of eligible costs that may be based on any or a combination of the following forms:

- (i) actual costs incurred by the beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies);
  - (ii) one or more simplified cost options (see below).
- Only 'eligible costs' can 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'.

Simplified cost options may take the form of:

- **unit costs:** covering all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by reference to an amount per unit.
- **lump sums:** covering in global terms all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance.
- **flat-rate financing:** covering specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by applying a percentage fixed ex ante.

Simplified costs options (SCOs) which can be proposed are the following :

"output or result based SCOs": they include costs linked to outputs, results, activities, deliverables in the framework of a specific project (for example the determination of a lump sum for the organization of a conference, or for the realisation of a determined output/activity). Where possible and appropriate, lump sums or unit costs shall be determined in such a way to allow their payment upon achievement of concrete outputs and/or results. This type of SCO can be proposed by the beneficiary (no threshold is applicable) at proposal's stage (in Annex A.2 – Grant application form – Full application). In case the evaluation committee is not satisfied with the quality of the justification provided reimbursement on the basis of actually incurred costs is always possible.

Refer to Annex K for the details of the procedure to be followed depending on the type and amount of the costs to be declared as SCO.

Applicants proposing this form of reimbursement, must clearly indicate in worksheet no.1 of Annex B, each heading/item of eligible costs concerned by this type of financing, i.e. add the reference in capital letters to 'UNIT COST', 'LUMPSUM' in the Unit column (see example in Annex K).

Additionally in Annex B, in the second column of worksheet no.2, 'Justification of the estimated costs' per each of the corresponding budget item or heading applicants must:

- describe the information and methods used to establish the amounts of unit costs and/or lump sums, to which costs they refer, etc for output or result based SCO;

- clearly explain the formulas for calculation of the final eligible amount for output or result based SCO.

In case of output or result based SCOs the evaluation committee decides whether to accept the proposed amounts or rates on the basis of the provisional budget submitted by the applicants, by analysing factual data of grants carried out by the applicants or of similar actions. In case the evaluation committee is not satisfied with the quality of the justification provided reimbursement on the basis of actually incurred costs is always possible.

No threshold is set ex-ante for the total amount of financing that can be authorised by the contracting authority on the basis of simplified cost options.

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

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

The grant may take the form of a single lump-sum covering the entire eligible costs of an action or a work programme.

Single lump sums may be determined on the basis of the estimated budget, which should comply with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Compliance with these principles shall be verified ex ante at the time of evaluation of the grant application.

When authorising single lump sums the authorising officer responsible shall comply with the conditions applicable to output or result based SCOs.

When using this form of financing, the description of the action shall include detailed information on the essential conditions triggering the payment, including, where applicable, the achievement of outputs and/or results.

#### Eligible direct costs

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

#### Contingency reserve

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

#### Eligible indirect costs

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding, but the total must not exceed 7 % of the estimated total eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another budget heading in the standard 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 entity(ies) is in receipt of an operating grant financed by the EU, it may not claim indirect costs on its incurred costs within the proposed budget for the action.

#### Contributions in kind

Contributions in kind mean 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 not eligible costs (except for personnel costs for the work carried out by volunteers under an action or operating grant if so authorised).

Contributions in kind may not be treated as co-financing

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

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

#### Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- 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 (including through EDF) grant;
- 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 standard grant contract, at the latest at the end of the action;
- currency exchange losses;
- in kind contributions;
- bonuses included in costs of staff;
- negative interest charged by banks or other financial institutions;
- credit to third parties;
- salary costs of the personnel of national administrations.

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

### a) Absence of conflict of interest

The applicant must not be affected by any conflict of interest and must have no equivalent relation in that respect with other applicants or parties involved in the actions. 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 according to 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 comply with human rights. In particular and in accordance with the applicable act, applicants who have been awarded contracts must comply with the environmental legislation including multilateral environmental agreements, and with the 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; elimination of forced and compulsory labour; abolition of child labour).

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

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 shall be prohibited.

Applicants (and affiliated entities) other than (i) natural persons (ii) pillar-assessed entities and (iii) governments and other public bodies whose application has been pre-selected or placed in a reserve list, shall assess their internal policy against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEA-H) through a self-evaluation questionnaire (Annex L). For grants of EUR 60 000 or less no self-evaluation is required. Such self-evaluation questionnaire is not part of the evaluation of the full application by the contracting authority, but is an administrative requirement. See section 2.5.6 of the PRAG.

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

The applicant shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations and codes relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption. The contracting authority 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 and if the contracting authority fails to take all appropriate measures to remedy the situation. For the purposes of this provision, 'corrupt practices' are the 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 front 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) Breach 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 substantial breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud. If substantial breach 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

To apply for this call for proposals the lead applicants need to:

- I. Provide information about the organisations involved in the action. To this end, lead applicants, co-applicants and affiliated entities must register in PADOR. Lead applicants must register at the concept note step. Co-applicants and affiliated entities must register at the full application step; lead applicants must make sure that their PADOR profile is up to date. Please note that the registration of this data in **PADOR is obligatory** for this call for proposals:

PADOR is an on-line database in which organisations register and update information concerning their entity. Organisations registered in PADOR get a unique ID (EuropeAid ID) which they **must mention** in their application. PADOR is accessible via the website: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/pador>

If it is impossible to register online in PADOR for technical reasons, lead applicants, co-applicants and/or affiliated entity(ies) must complete the 'PADOR registration form'<sup>12</sup> attached to these guidelines. This form must be sent **together with the full application**, by the submission deadline (see section 2.2.5).

- II. Provide information about the action in the documents listed under sections 2.2.2 (Where and how to send concept notes) and 2.2.5 (Full applications). Please note that online submission via **PROSPECT is obligatory** for this call.

**It is strongly recommended to register in PADOR well in advance and not to wait until the last minute before the deadline to submit your application in PROSPECT.**

Before starting using PADOR and PROSPECT, please read the user guides available on the website. All technical questions related the use of these systems should be addressed to the IT helpdesk at [INTPA-SUPPORT-SERVICES@ec.europa.eu](mailto:INTPA-SUPPORT-SERVICES@ec.europa.eu) via the online support form in PROSPECT.

### **2.2.1. Concept note content**

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the concept note instructions in the grant application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex A). Lead applicants should then keep strictly to the format of the concept note and fill in the paragraphs and pages in order.

Applicants must apply in English.

Please note that:

1. In the concept note, lead applicants must only provide an estimate of the requested EU contribution as well as an indicative percentage of that contribution in relation to the eligible costs of the action. A detailed budget is to be submitted only by the lead applicants invited to submit a full application in the second phase. 2. The elements outlined in the concept note may not be modified in the full application, except for the changes described below:

- The EU contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 20 %. Lead applicants are free to adapt the percentage of co-financing required within the minimum and maximum amount and percentages of co-financing, as laid down in these guidelines in Section 1.3.

<sup>12</sup> Which corresponds to Annex F – PADOR off-line form (PRAG annex e13).

- The lead applicant may add, remove or replace one or more co-applicant(s) or affiliated entity (ies) only in duly justified cases.
- The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the action if unforeseen circumstances outside the scope of the applicants have taken place following the submission of the concept note and require such adaptation (risk of action not being carried out). In such cases, the duration must remain within the limits imposed by the guidelines for applicants. Own contributions by the applicants can be replaced by other donors' contributions at any time.

**An explanation/justification of the relevant replacements/adjustments shall be included in Annex A.2 – Instructions for drafting the Full Application, section 2.1.1, point viii. Should the explanation/justification not be accepted by the evaluation committee, the proposal may be rejected on that sole basis.**

Only the concept note form will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that this document contains ALL relevant information concerning the action. No additional annexes should be sent.

Please complete the concept note carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly.

Any error or major discrepancy related to the concept note instructions may lead to the rejection of the concept note.

Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is not sufficient to conduct an objective assessment.

### ***2.2.2. Where and how to send concept notes***

The concept note together with the declaration by the lead applicant (Annex A.1 section 2) **must be submitted online via PROSPECT** <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/prospect> following the instructions given in the PROSPECT user manual.

Upon submission of a concept note online, the lead applicant will receive an automatic confirmation of receipt in its PROSPECT profile.

**Please note that incomplete concept notes may be rejected.** Lead applicants are advised to verify that their concept note is complete by using the checklist for concept note (Annex A.1, Instructions).

### ***2.2.3. Deadline for submission of concept notes***

The deadline for the submission of concept notes is 10/05/2024 at 12:00 (Brussels date and time). In order to convert this deadline to local time you can use any online time converter tool that takes into account timezones and winter/summer time changes (example available [here](#)) **The lead applicant is strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit** its concept note, since heavy Internet traffic or a fault with the Internet connection (including electricity failure, etc.) could lead to difficulties in submission. The contracting authority cannot be held responsible for any delay due to such afore-mentioned difficulties.

Any concept note submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

### ***2.2.4. Further information about concept notes***

An information session on this call for proposals will be held on 08/04/2024 at 11:00 CET. The session will be held online.

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

E-mail address: [DELEGATION-SERBIA-FCS@eeas.europa.eu](mailto:DELEGATION-SERBIA-FCS@eeas.europa.eu)

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

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for submission of concept notes.

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.

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure will be published on the website where the call was published: website of DG International Partnerships [https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/home\\_fr](https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/home_fr) or Funding & Tender opportunities (F&T Portal) <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>, as the need arises. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website(s) regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

All questions related to registration in PADOR or the online submission via PROSPECT should be addressed to the IT helpdesk at [INTPA-SUPPORT-SERVICES@ec.europa.eu](mailto:INTPA-SUPPORT-SERVICES@ec.europa.eu) **via the online support form in PROSPECT**: Please note that the working languages of the IT support are English French and Spanish. Therefore users are invited to send their questions in English, French or Spanish should they wish to benefit from an optimum response time.

Please note that the contracting authority may decide to cancel the call for proposals procedure at any stage according to the conditions set out in Section 6.5.9 of the PRAG.

### **2.2.5. Full applications**

Lead applicants invited to submit a full application following pre-selection of their concept note must do so using the grant application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex A.2 – Grant application form – Full application). Lead applicants should then keep strictly to the format of the grant application form and fill in the paragraphs and pages in order.

The elements outlined in the concept note may not be modified in the full application, except for the changes described below:

- The EU contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 20 %. Lead applicants are free to adapt the percentage of co-financing required within the minimum and maximum amount and percentages of co-financing, as laid down in these guidelines in Section 1.3.
- The lead applicant may add, remove or replace one or more co-applicant(s) or affiliated entity(ies) only in duly justified cases.
- The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the action if unforeseen circumstances outside the scope of the applicants have taken place following the submission of the concept note and require such adaptation (risk of action not being carried out). In such cases, the duration must remain within the limits imposed by the guidelines for applicants.

**An explanation/justification of the relevant replacements/adjustments shall be included in Annex A.2 – Instructions for drafting the Full Application, section 2.1.1, point viii. Should the explanation/justification not be accepted by the evaluation committee, the proposal may be rejected on that sole basis.**

Lead applicants must submit their full applications in the same language as their concept notes.

Please complete the full application form carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly.

Any error related to the points listed in the checklist (Annex A.2, Instructions) or any major inconsistency in the full 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.

Please note that only the full application form and the published annexes which have to be filled in (budget, logical framework) will be transmitted to the evaluators (and assessors, if used). It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL the relevant information concerning the action.

If it is impossible to register online in PADOR for technical reasons, **the lead applicant has to submit with the full application the completed PADOR form (Annex F) for the lead applicant, each (if any) co-applicants and each (if any) affiliated entities<sup>13</sup>.**

Please note that the following documents<sup>14</sup> shall be uploaded in PADOR by the full application deadline or submitted together with the PADOR registration form with the full application form:

1. The statutes or articles of association of the lead applicant, (if any) of each co-applicant and (if any) of each affiliated entity . Where the contracting authority has recognised the lead applicant's, or the co-applicant(s)'s, or their affiliated entity(ies)'s eligibility for another call for proposals under the same budget line within 2 years before the deadline for receipt of applications, it should be submitted, 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), unless a change in legal status has occurred in the meantime. This obligation does not apply to international organisations which have signed a framework agreement with the European Commission.
2. Legal entity form (see Annex D of these guidelines) duly completed and signed by each of the applicants (i.e. by the lead applicant and by each co-applicant, if any), accompanied by the justifying documents requested there. If the applicants have already signed a contract with the contracting authority, instead of the legal entity form and supporting documents, the legal entity number may be provided, unless a change in legal status occurred in the meantime.
3. A financial identification form of the lead applicant (not from co-applicant(s)) conforming to the model attached as Annex E of 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 the payments and intends to use the same bank account, a copy of the previous financial identification form may be provided instead.

In addition, for the purpose of the evaluation of the financial capacity, the following documents should be submitted<sup>15</sup>:

In addition, for the purpose of the evaluation of the financial capacity, the following documents should be submitted<sup>16</sup>:

1. For action grants exceeding EUR 750 000 and for operating grants exceeding EUR 100 000, the lead applicant must provide an audit report produced by an approved external auditor where it is available, and always in cases where a statutory audit is required by EU or national law. That report shall certify the accounts for up to the last 3 financial years available.

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<sup>13</sup> Natural persons who apply for a grant (if so allowed in the guidelines for applicants) do not have to provide an organisation data form. In this case, the information included in the grant application form is sufficient.

<sup>15</sup> No supporting documents will be requested for applications for a grant not exceeding EUR 60 000.

<sup>16</sup> No supporting documents will be requested for applications for a grant not exceeding EUR 60 000.

In all other cases, the lead applicant shall provide a self-declaration signed by its authorised representative certifying the validity of its accounts for up to the last 3 financial years available.

This requirement shall apply only to the first application made by an applicant to the contracting authority in any one financial year.

The external audit report as well as the self-declaration certifying the validity of the accounts are not required from the co-applicant(s) or affiliated entities (if any).

2. 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>17</sup>. A copy of the latest account is neither required from the co-applicant(s) (if any) nor from affiliated entity(ies) (if any).

The requested supporting documents (uploaded in PADOR or sent together with the PADOR offline form) must be supplied in the form of originals, photocopies or scanned versions (i.e. showing legible stamps, signatures and dates) of the said originals. Originals should be kept on file for controls.

Where such documents are not in one of the official languages of the European Union [or in the language of the country where the action is implemented], a translation into English of the relevant parts of these documents proving the lead applicant's and, where applicable, co-applicants' and affiliated entity(ies)' eligibility, must be attached for the purpose of analysing the application.

Where these documents are in an official language of the European Union other than English, it is strongly recommended, in order to facilitate the evaluation, to provide a translation of the relevant parts of the documents, proving the lead applicant's and, where applicable, co-applicants' and affiliated entity(ies)' eligibility, into English.

Applicants have to take into consideration the time necessary to obtain official documents from national competent authorities and to translate such documents in the authorised languages while registering their data in PADOR.

If the abovementioned supporting documents are not provided by the deadline for the submission of the full application, the application may be rejected.

No additional annexes should be sent.

### ***2.2.6. Where and how to send full applications***

Full applications (i.e. the full application form, PADOR registration form (where applicable), the budget, the logical framework, and the declaration by the lead applicant) must be submitted online via PROSPECT <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/prospect> following the instructions given in the PROSPECT users' manual.

Upon submission of the full application online, the lead applicants will receive an automatic confirmation of receipt in their PROSPECT profile.

**Please note that incomplete applications may be rejected.** Lead applicants are advised to verify that their application is complete using the checklist (Annex A.2, Instructions).

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<sup>17</sup> This obligation does not apply to natural persons who have received a scholarship or that are in most need of direct support, nor to public bodies and to international organisations. It does not apply either when the accounts are in practice the same documents as the external audit report already provided pursuant to Section 2.2.5, point 1.

### ***2.2.7. Deadline for submission of full applications***

The deadline for the submission of full applications will be indicated in the letter sent to the lead applicants whose application has been pre-selected. This letter will appear online automatically in the PROSPECT profile of the lead applicant.

**Lead applicants are strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit their full applications**, since heavy Internet traffic or a fault with the Internet connection (including electricity failure, etc.) could lead to difficulties in submission. The Contacting Authority cannot be held responsible for any delay due to such afore-mentioned difficulties.

Any application submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

### ***2.2.8. Further information about full applications***

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of full applications to the addresses listed below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: [DELEGATION-SERBIA-FCS@ec.europa.eu](mailto:DELEGATION-SERBIA-FCS@ec.europa.eu)

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

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for the submission of full 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), or an action.

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure, will be published on the website of DG International Partnerships: [https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/home\\_fr](https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/home_fr), as the need arises. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

All questions related to registration in PADOR or the online submission via PROSPECT should be addressed to the IT helpdesk at [INTPA-SUPPORT-SERVICES@ec.europa.eu](mailto:INTPA-SUPPORT-SERVICES@ec.europa.eu) **via the online support form in PROSPECT**. Please note that the working languages of the IT support are English French and Spanish. Therefore users are invited to send their questions in English, French or Spanish should they wish to benefit from an optimum response time.

## **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: ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION

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

- If the deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will be automatically rejected.
- If the concept note satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist in Annex A.1, Instructions of the grant application form. This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The concept notes that pass this check will be evaluated on the relevance and design of the proposed action.

The concept notes will receive an overall score out of 50 using the breakdown in the evaluation grid below. The evaluation will also check on compliance with the instructions on how to complete the concept note, which can be found in Annex A.1.

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.

### Evaluation Grid

Section	Maximum Score
<b>1. Relevance of the action</b>	<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 particular added-value elements (e.g. innovation, best practices) ? [and the other additional elements indicated under 1.2. of the guidelines for applicants]	5
<b>2. Design of the action</b>	<b>30</b>
2.1. How coherent is the overall design of the action? Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale to achieve the expected results?	5x2**
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 timeframe)? Are results (output, outcome and impact) realistic?	5
2.5. To which extent does the proposal integrate relevant cross-cutting elements such as environmental/climate change issues, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities,	5

needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of indigenous peoples, youth, combating HIV/AIDS (if there is a strong prevalence in the target country/region)?	
<b>Maximum total score</b>	<b>50</b>

**\*\*:** this score is multiplied by 2 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 the 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 of each concept note will be based on the indicative financial envelopes for each lot, where relevant.

Lead applicants will receive a letter indicating the reference number of their application and the respective results. This letter will automatically appear online in the PROSPECT profile of the lead applicant. The pre-selected lead applicants will subsequently be invited to submit full applications.

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

Firstly, the following will be assessed:

- If the submission deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will automatically be rejected.
- If the full application satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist (Annex A.2, Instructions). This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The full applications that pass this check will be further evaluated on their 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.

**The selection criteria** help to evaluate the applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s operational capacity and the lead applicant's financial capacity 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).

For the purpose of the evaluation of the financial capacity, lead applicants must ensure that the relevant information and documents (i.e. accounts of the latest financial year and external audit report, where applicable) are up to date either in their PADOR profile or when submitting the requested documents with PADOR registration form. If the information and documents requested are outdated and do not allow for a proper evaluation of the financial capacity, the application may be rejected.

**The award criteria** help to evaluate the quality of the 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. 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 of project management?	5
1.2. Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient technical in-house expertise (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)?	5
1.3. Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient management in-house capacity (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4. Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5
<b>2. Relevance of the action</b>	<b>20</b>
2.1. 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
2.2. 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
2.3. 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
2.4. Does the proposal contain particular added-value elements (e.g. innovation, best practices) ? [and the other additional elements indicated under 1.2. of the guidelines for applicants]	5
<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 expected results to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale to achieve the expected results? Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the envisaged outputs and outcome(s)?	5
3.2. Does the proposal/Logical Framework include credible baseline, targets and sources of verification? If not, is a baseline study foreseen (and is the study budgeted 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 timeline realistic?	5
4.2. Does the proposal include an effective and efficient monitoring system? Is there an evaluation planned (previous, during or/and at the end of the implementation)?	5

4.3. Is the co-applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s level of involvement and participation 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?- Financially (e.g. financing of follow-up activities, sources of revenue for covering all future operating and maintenance costs)- Institutionally (will structures allow the results of the action to be sustained at the end of the action? Will there be local 'ownership' of the results of the action?)- At policy level (where applicable) (what will be the structural impact of the action — e.g. improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods) - Environmentally (if applicable) (will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?)	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 between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	5x2**
<b>Maximum total score</b>	<b>100</b>

**\*\*:** this score is multiplied by 2 because of its importance

If the total score for Section 1 (financial and operational capacity) is less than 12 points, 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 shall 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 THE APPLICANTS AND AFFILIATED ENTITY(IES)**

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

- The declaration by the lead applicant (Section 5 of Annex A.2) will be cross-checked with the supporting documents provided by the lead applicant. Any missing supporting document or any incoherence 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 the affiliated entity(ies) will be verified according to the criteria set out in Section 2.1.1.

Any 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

The lead applicant shall submit the documents listed in section 2.2.5.

In addition, a lead applicant whose application has been provisionally selected or placed on the reserve list will be informed in writing by the contracting authority. It will be requested to supply the following documents via PROSPECT:

1. Declaration on honour: the lead applicant as well as all co-applicants and affiliated entities shall fill in and sign the declaration on honour certifying that they are not in one of the exclusion situations (see Section 2.6.10.1 of the PRAG) where the amount of the grant exceeds EUR 15 000. Please note that the declaration on honour should be submitted via PROSPECT.
2. Self-evaluation questionnaire on SEA-H: the lead applicant as well as all co-applicants and affiliated entities shall fill in the self-evaluation questionnaire assessing the organisation's internal policy and procedure against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEA-H) (Annex L) where the amount of grant exceeds EUR 60 000 (see Section 2.5.6 of the PRAG)<sup>18</sup>. Please note that the self-evaluation questionnaire on SEA-H should be submitted via PADOR.

If it is impossible for the lead applicants to supply the abovementioned documents via PROSPECT or PADOR for technical reasons, they must submit the requested supporting documents in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery to the postal address described in sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.6 and according to the instructions therein.

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

NB: In the eventuality that 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 can require the submission of the missing documents allowing for its conversion into co-applicant. If all the missing documents for co-applicants are submitted, and provided all necessary eligibility criteria are fulfilled, the above mentioned entity becomes a co-applicant for all purposes. The lead applicant has to submit the application form revised accordingly.

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

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

The lead applicants will be informed in writing of the Contracting Authority's decision concerning their application and, if rejected, the reasons for the negative decision. This letter will be sent by e-mail and will appear online automatically in the PROSPECT profile of the user who submitted the application. Lead applicants who, in exceptional cases (see section 2.2), had to submit their application by post, private courier or hand-delivery, will be informed by email or by post if they did not provide any e-mail address. Therefore, please check regularly your PROSPECT profile, taking into account the indicative timetable below. Please note that the lead applicant is the intermediary for all communications between applicants and the contracting authority during the procedure.

An applicant believing that it has been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may lodge a complaint. See further Section 2.12 of the practical guide.

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<sup>18</sup> Applicants, co-applicants and affiliated entities who are (i) natural persons (ii) pillar-assessed entities and (iii) governments and other public bodies do not have to submit the self-evaluation questionnaire.

Applicants and, if they are legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over them, are informed that, should they be in one of the situations of early detection or exclusion, their personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the early detection and exclusion system, and communicated to the persons and entities concerned in relation to the award or the execution of a grant contract. For more information, you may consult the privacy statement available on [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. Indicative timetable**

	<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>
<b>1. Information meeting (if any)</b>	08/04/2004	11:00 hrs
<b>2. Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the contracting authority</b>	19/04/2024	16:00 hrs
<b>3. Last date on which clarifications are issued by the contracting authority</b>	29/04/2024	-
<b>4. Deadline for submission of concept notes</b>	10/05/2024	12:00 hrs
<b>5. Information to lead applicants on [opening,] administrative checks and concept note evaluation (Step 1)</b>	June 2024	-
<b>6. Invitations to submit full applications</b>	June 2024	-
<b>7. Deadline for submission of full applications</b>	August 2024	-
<b>8. Information to lead applicants on the evaluation of the full applications (Step 2)</b>	September 2024	-
<b>9. Notification of award (after the eligibility check) (Step 3)</b>	September/October 2024	-
<b>10. Contract signature</b>	November 2024	-

All times are in 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 web site where the call was published: website of DG International Partnerships [https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/home\\_fr](https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/home_fr) or Funding & Tender opportunities (F&T Portal) <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>

### **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 standard grant contract (see Annex G of these guidelines). By signing the application form (Annex A of these

guidelines), the applicants agree, if awarded a grant, to accept the contractual conditions of the standard 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 standard grant contract and its annexes shall not apply. References in these guidelines to the grant contract shall be understood as references to the relevant provisions of the contribution agreement.

### Implementation contracts

Where implementation of the action requires the beneficiary(ies) and its affiliated entity(ies) (if any) to award procurement contracts, those contracts must be awarded in accordance with Annex IV to the standard 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 implementation, 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 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)  
A.1 – Concept note  
A.2 – Full application form
- Annex B: Budget (Excel format)
- Annex C: Logical framework (Excel format)
- Annex D: Legal entity sheet
- Annex E: Financial identification form
- Annex F: PADOR registration form

#### DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION<sup>19</sup>

- Annex G: Standard grant contract
- Annex II: general conditions
  - Annex IV: contract award rules
  - Annex V: standard request for payment
  - Annex VI: model narrative and financial report
  - Annex VII: model report of factual findings and terms of reference for an expenditure verification of an EU financed grant contract for external action
  - [-Annex VIII: model financial guarantee]
  - Annex IX: standard template for transfer of ownership of assets
- Annex H: Declaration on Honour
- Annex I: Daily allowance rates (per diem), available at the following address: [https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/funding/guidelines/managing-project/diem-rates\\_en](https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/funding/guidelines/managing-project/diem-rates_en)
- Annex J: Information on the tax regime applicable to grant contracts signed under the call.
- Annex K: Guidelines for assessing simplified cost options.
- Annex L: Self-evaluation questionnaire on SEA-H

#### Useful links:

##### Project Cycle Management Guidelines

[https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/funding/managing-project\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/funding/managing-project_en)

##### The implementation of grant contracts

##### A Users' Guide

<https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=48169235>

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<sup>19</sup> These documents should also be published by the contracting authority.

## Financial Toolkit

[https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/financial-management-toolkit\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/financial-management-toolkit_en)

Please note: 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 always consult their individual contract documents.

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