



Montenegro

Ministry of Finance

Directorate for Finance and Contracting of the EU Assistance Funds

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1st Set of the Contracting Authority's Clarifications

4th Call for Proposals for the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Montenegro-Albania for years 2019 and 2020, Reference: EuropeAid/177415/ID/ACT/Multi

The answers on questions raised by the potential grant applicants during the Information Sessions held in: Shkoder and Lezha (29th and 30th March 2023) and Berane and Podgorica (11th and 12th April 2023)

Also, the table contains the answers to questions received to the e-mail address cfpmne.al@mif.gov.me until 25th May, 15:00h.

NOTE: Due to the technical issues caused by the cyber-attack on the government information platforms, the contracting authority's official e-mail address (cfpmne.al@mif.gov.me) could be non-functional for some period from the moment the call was published until the deadline for asking questions. Therefore, the potential applicants who have already submitted questions are invited to re-send questions to the mentioned e-mail address by the new deadline for requesting any clarifications from the contracting authority defined in point 2.5.2. Indicative timetable of Corrigendum no.1.

Q1	How much in percentage the applicants are obliged to provide for co-financing?
A1	<p>As regards the co-financing, according to the article 1.3. of the Guidelines for grant applicants, <i>Any grant requested under this call for proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum percentages of total eligible costs of the action:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Minimum percentage: 50% of the total eligible costs of the action.</i><i>Maximum percentage: 85% of the total eligible costs of the action (see also Section 2.1.5.).</i> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p>Therefore, the applicants are obliged to provide co-financing of minimum 15% and maximum of 50% of the total eligible costs of the action.</p>
Q2	Is the private university eligible to apply?

A2	<p>According to the article 2.2.4. of the Guidelines for grant applicants and 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.</p> <p>The Guidelines for grant applicants of this Call define the eligibility criteria and these shall be used during the assessment of the application. Please refer to section 2.1.1. of the Guidelines for applicants <i>Eligibility of applicants (i.e. lead applicant and co-applicant(s))</i></p> <p>Lead applicant</p> <p>(1) In order to be eligible for a grant, the lead applicant must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be a legal person, and • be non-profit-making, and • be effectively established in³ either Montenegro or Albania, 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 one of the following institutions or organisations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Central, regional and local government units (ministries, municipalities, agencies, departments, etc) ○ Tourism and cultural organisations, ○ Associations of municipalities, ○ Development agencies, ○ Local business support organisations, ○ NGOs, ○ Public and private bodies supporting the workforce, ○ Vocational and technical training institutions,
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³ To be determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes, which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned and that its head office is located in an eligible country. The effective establishment of applicants should be proved not only with the statutes but with the registration certificate. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has been concluded.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bodies and organisation for nature protection, ○ Schools, colleges, universities and research centres including vocations and technical training institutions. <p>.....</p> <p>Co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant himself.</p>
Q3	Is there a rule about percentage of costs for each budget category?
A3	<p>The Guidelines for grant applicants do not establish any restriction regarding the distribution of percentage of costs for each budget heading.</p> <p>However, please refer to the section 2.1.4. <i>Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made</i> of the Guidelines for applicants: <i>Note applicable to both priorities: Applicants are encouraged to include an investment component (supply of equipment or small scale infrastructure related to specific objective of the project) but it must not exceed 60% of the EU requested funds.</i></p> <p>In addition, please see section 2.1.5. <i>Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included</i> for restrictions regarding the contingency reserve and indirect costs:</p> <p><u>Contingency reserve</u></p> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p><u>Eligible indirect costs</u></p> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p>Please note that it is in the applicants' interest to provide a realistic and cost-effective budget.</p>
Q4	Is the applicant promoting work in theatre and in the field of sports (taekwondo) eligible?

According to the article 2.2.4. of the Guidelines for grant applicants and 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.

Regarding the eligibility of applicants, please refer to A2.

Further on, please refer to the point **2.1.4. of the Guidelines for grant applicants** ***Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made*** of the Guidelines for applicant.

(...) Sectors or themes

As stipulated in Section 1.2 above, actions or operations will fall under only one of the following thematic priorities/specific objectives and will have to prove their contribution to attain one or more of their intended results:

<i>THEMATIC PRIORITIES/SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES</i>	<i>RESULTS</i>
<i>1. The competitiveness of the tourism sector is enhanced by the economic valorisation of the cultural and natural heritage</i>	<i>Result 1.1 - The quality of tourism services and products is upgraded;</i>
	<i>Result 1.2 - Cooperation in the field of cultural and natural heritage preservation is increased (e.g. around the Shkodra/Skadar Lake area)</i>
<i>3. Employability and social inclusion is fostered</i>	<i>Result 3.1 - Access to the labour market improved, especially for vulnerable groups</i>

In their application, the lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) will have to refer the programme's specific objective under which their action is meant to contribute, as well as the programme's result(-s) affected by the action, and the programme's core and specific indicators that will be instrumental to measure the action's success.

Therefore, proposed actions should contribute to the above specified thematic priorities/specific objectives.

A4

Q5

When it comes to the budget heading 4. Local office which costs are acceptable?

A5

Please refer to the ***Annex B to the Guidelines for grant applicants - Budget of the action***, heading 4 referring to the Local office which includes the following cost categories: *"If accepted and subsequently provided for in Article 7.2 of the special*

	<p>conditions, costs actually incurred in relation to a project office used for the action or a portion of these costs can be declared as direct eligible costs by applying a cost apportionment approach.</p> <p>Examples of possible cost distribution keys are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the number of staff assigned to the action as a percentage of the maximum total number of staff that could work in the project office; - the office space occupied for the purpose of the action as a percentage of the total available office space. <p>A description of the project office, the services or resources it makes available, its overall capacity (where applicable), the costs to be apportioned and the proposed distribution key have to be included in the proposal.</p> <p>The proposed cost apportionment approach has to be presented as an annex to the Budget. The budgeted amount of the costs for which apportionment is proposed has to be indicated in the column ""TOTAL COSTS"" and ""APPORTIONMENT"" has to be indicated in the column ""units"". The proposed cost apportionment approach will be assessed by the evaluation committee and the contracting authority. If the proposed cost apportionment approach is not accepted, there are two options: 1) adjust the distribution key in line with the conclusions of the evaluation committee; 2) exclude the costs from the budget. "</p> <p>Furthermore, Article 7.2.3 of the special conditions stipulates the following:</p> <p>" Where the implementation of the action requires the setting up or the use of a project office, the beneficiary(ies) may declare as direct eligible costs the portion of the operating costs of the project office described in the proposal which corresponds to the duration of the Action either based on costs actually incurred by the project office for the action or on the cost apportionment approach presented as part of the proposal."</p>
<p>Q6</p>	<p>To which address should the documentation regarding application, supporting documentation, etc. be sent? Is it to the Delegation of European Commission in Albania, Delegation of European Commission in Montenegro, or to Ministry of Finance of Montenegro?</p>
<p>A6</p>	<p>Please refer to the section 2.2.2. of the Guidelines for grant applicants - Where and how to send applications. Applications must be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) at the address below:</p> <p>Postal address Ministry of Finance Directorate for Finance and Contracting of the EU Assistance Funds Stanka Dragojevića 2,</p>

	<p>81000 Podgorica, Montenegro</p> <p><i>Address for hand delivery</i> <i>Ministry of Finance</i> <i>Directorate for Finance and Contracting of the EU Assistance Funds</i> <i>Stanka Dragojevića 2, room 5</i> <i>81000 Podgorica, Montenegro</i></p> <p><i>Please note that the opening hours of the Contracting Authority are 07:00h-15:00h. Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.</i></p>
Q7	When should the full application form be submitted?
A7	<p>Please refer to the Notice of the Guidelines of grant applicants:</p> <p><i>“This is an open call for proposals, where all documents are submitted together (concept note and full application). In the first instance, only the concept notes will be evaluated. Thereafter, for the lead applicants who have been pre-selected, the full applications will be evaluated. After the evaluation of the full applications, an eligibility check will be performed 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.”</i></p> <p>Also, please refer to A6.</p> <p>As regards the deadline for submission of the application (concept note and full applications) please refer to the Corrigendum no.1.</p>
Q8	Is it eligible for international organization which had established the offices in Albania to submit application?
A8	<p>According to the article 2.2.4. of the Guidelines for grant applicants and 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.</p> <p>Please refer to article 2.1.1. of the Guidelines for grant applicants - <i>Eligibility of applicants (i.e. lead applicant and co-applicant(s))</i>:</p> <p><i>“Lead applicant</i></p> <p><i>(1) In order to be eligible for a grant, the lead applicant must:</i></p> <p><i>(...)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• be effectively established in³ either Montenegro or Albania (...).”</i>

	<p>(...)</p> <p><i>Co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant himself.</i></p> <p>(...)</p> <p><i>The applicant must act with at least one co-applicant as specified hereafter.</i></p> <p><i>If the applicant is established in Montenegro, at least one co-applicant must be established in Albania, and vice versa. (...)</i></p> <p>Also, please refer to A2 and, in particular, the associated footnote³.</p>
<p>Q9</p>	<p>Is it eligible for organization established on the territory of Tirana to submit application?</p>
<p>A9</p>	<p><i>Please refer to the A8.</i></p> <p><i>Additionally, please refer to article 2.1.4. of the Guidelines for grant applicants - Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made, where it is stated that: Actions or operations must have as final beneficiaries the population of the programme area. They must take place in one or more of the following territorial units:</i></p> <p><i>1. For Montenegro:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>o Andrijevica;</i> <i>o Berane;</i> <i>o Plav;</i> <i>o Gusinje;</i> <i>o Petnjica;</i> <i>o Rožaje;</i> <i>o Podgorica;</i> <i>o Tuzi ;</i> <i>o Zeta ;</i> <i>o Cetinje;</i> <i>o Danilovgrad;</i> <i>o Budva;</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>o Bar and</i> <i>o Ulcinj</i> <p>2. <i>For Albania:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>o County of Shkodra including the following municipalities: Malesi e Madhe, Shkoder, Vau i Dejes, Puke, Fushe-Arrez;</i> <i>o County of Lezha including the following municipalities: Lezha, Mirdite, Kurbin and</i> <i>o Municipality of Tropoja.</i>
Q10	Is it possible for public servants to be engaged through contract for supplementary work?
A10	<p>Please refer to point 2.1.5 of the Guidelines for grant applicants - <i>Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included</i></p> <p><i>“Salary costs of the personnel of national, regional or local administrations, as well as those of other publicly owned or controlled institutions or enterprises, may be eligible to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the action or operation were not undertaken.</i></p> <p><i>These personnel shall not receive for the engagement in the project activities any other remuneration than their standard, regular salaries in their respective institutions.</i></p> <p><i>The total sum of the salaries of these personnel shall not exceed the amount of co-financing provided by the applicant, co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(-ies).</i></p> <p><i>Prior to the signature of a grant contract, the contracting authority may require from the relevant beneficiaries the appointment of these staffers by their authorised representative in writing (indicating their names, project function and gross salaries).</i></p> <p><i>Please note that this does not apply to professional staff recruited by the national, regional or local administrations, as well as other publicly owned or controlled institutions or enterprises, for the sole purpose of managing the project resulting from the grant award.”</i></p>
Q11	Is it possible to perform works under the grant and is there limit how much money can be spent for that cost?
A11	The Guidelines for applicants do not establish any restriction to the implementation of works under a grant contract. However, please refer to article 2.1.4. of the Guidelines for grant applicants - <i>Eligible actions: actions for which an application</i>

	<p>may be made:</p> <p><i>“Note applicable to both priorities: Applicants are encouraged to include an investment component (supply of equipment or small-scale infrastructure related to specific objective of the project) but it must not exceed 60% of the EU requested funds.”</i></p>
Q12	<p>When it comes to the supporting documentation, is it necessary to provide translation from Albanian?</p>
A12	<p>Please refer to the article 2.2.1 of the Guidelines for grant applicants – <i>Application forms: “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 language 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.</i></p> <p><i>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.”</i></p>
Q13	<p>Is registration in PADOR required under this Call? Furthermore, we found some difficulties regarding the fulfillment of Annex F, taking into consideration that it is dedicated for the online PADOR registration.</p>
A13	<p>Please refer to the article 2.2.1 of the Guidelines for grant applicants – <i>Application forms: “With the application the lead applicant also has to submit completed PADOR registration form (Annex F) for the lead applicant, each co-applicant (if any) and each affiliated entity (if any).</i></p> <p><i>Please note that the following documents should be submitted together with the PADOR registration form and the application form:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>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.</i> <i>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,</i>

	<p><i>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 sheet and supporting documents, the legal entity number may be provided, unless a change in legal status occurred in the meantime.</i></p> <p><i>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.”</i></p> <p>In the application package, folder "Documents to be completed", you can find Annex F - EuropeAid offline registration form.</p>
Q14	<p>In regard to the financial capacity of an entity, is it a reason for rejection if the NGO managed low budget projects in the past?</p>
A14	<p>According to point 2.3, (2) Step 2 – evaluation of the full application of the Guidelines for grant applicants:</p> <p>...</p> <p><i>“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:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• 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);”</i> <p>Please note that, 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.</p> <p>Furthermore, footnote for the Section 1.4 of the full application evaluation grid states following: <i>This section will be scored from 1 to 5 as follows: 1 = very poor, if the lead applicant had an average turnover or equivalent for last three years for which accounts have been closed below the 30 % of the requested grant amount under this call; 2 = poor, if the lead applicant had an average turnover or equivalent during latest year for which account has been closed above 30 % but below the 50 % of the requested grant amount under this call; 3 = adequate, if the lead applicant had an average turnover or equivalent during latest year for which account has been closed above 50 % but below the 70 % of the requested grant amount under this call; 4 = good, if the lead applicant had an average turnover or equivalent during latest year</i></p>

	<p>for which account has been closed above 70 % but below the 90 % of the requested grant amount under this call; 5 = very good, if the lead applicant had an average turnover or equivalent during latest year for which account has been closed amounting to at least 100 % of the requested grant amount under this call.</p>
Q15	<p>Referring to this call for proposal under the IPA CBC programme MNE-AL, please clarify the point 2.1 "Number of applications and grants per applicants/affiliated entities" at the respective guidelines for the grant applicants document. Specifically, please clarify "The lead applicant may be a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in another application at the same time".</p> <p>Please confirm does "another application " means "1 application" or not?</p>
A15	<p>Please refer to point 2.1.4 of the Guidelines for grant applicants <i>Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made:</i></p> <p><u>„Number of applications and grants per applicants / affiliated entities</u></p> <p>The lead applicant may not submit more than 2 applications under this call for proposals.</p> <p>The lead applicant may not be awarded more than 1 grant under this call for proposals.</p> <p>The lead applicant may be a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in another application at the same time.</p> <p>A co-applicant/affiliated entity may not be the co-applicant or affiliated entity in more than 2 application(s) under this call for proposals.</p> <p>A co-applicant/affiliated entity may not be awarded more than 1 grant under this call for proposals.</p> <p>Please note that in the event of failure to fulfil these requirements, the applications of all concerned entities will be rejected.”</p> <p>Specifically, “The lead applicant may be a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in another application at the same time” means that lead applicant may be co-applicant or an affiliated entity in only one application.</p> <p>For the sake of better understanding, one entity can be at the same time lead applicant in 2 applications and co-applicant/affiliated entity in 1 application.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>One entity can be co-applicant/affiliated in 2 applications.</p> <p>However, as a lead applicant may be awarded 1 grant and as co-applicant/affiliated</p>

	may be awarded 1 grant.
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