

CALL FOR PROPOSALS (EAC/10/04)**Networking of pilot projects promoting youth participation**

(2004/C 113/02)

1. Background

The Commission White Paper 'A new impetus for European Youth' ⁽¹⁾ identifies as a political priority the development of active citizenship of young people. Participation in the decision-making process is the basis of active citizenship and contributes to participative democracy.

According to the White Paper, citizenship and participation of young people have to be developed primarily at local level.

A budget line was created for 2003 and 2004 to fund pilot-projects on youth participation and to network them.

Simultaneously, and in order to complement the implementation of common objectives adopted by the Member States, the outcomes of the present action also aim to strengthen the exchange of experiences and good practices and the development of proposals for action in favour of young people in the framework of the new programme.

2. Objectives

In the framework of a new cooperation policy in the area of youth, and based on the proposals contained in the White Paper on Youth, the aim of this action is to fund innovative and networkable projects at European level for active youth participation.

These projects must associate young people (aged 13 to 30 years) including marginalised young people, in local participation projects and in their networking.

The specific added value of this action is twofold: as a successor of the action carried out in 2003, it brings a transnational dimension to the participation projects, thus promoting political cooperation and the exchange of good practice at European level. It will also facilitate the improvement of measures to promote active citizenship on the part of young people in the framework of the new programme.

3. Timetable

Applications must be submitted by 18 June 2004 at the latest as per postmark.

The activities must start between 1 December 2004 and 1 March 2005. The maximum duration of the projects is 24

months. Projects with a longer duration than the one specified in the present call will not be accepted.

As an indication, the Commission has envisaged the following timetable:

- September 2004: finalisation of the evaluation of applications,
- October 2004: final decision,
- November 2004: written communication of the selection results to applicants. It is envisaged that the beneficiaries will receive the agreements for their signature in November.

4. Budget

The budget available for this call for proposals is EUR 2,1 million. On the basis of this amount, the Directorate-General for Education and Culture envisages supporting a limited number of pilot-projects, normally at a level of funding between EUR 80 000 and EUR 120 000.

The request for Community co-funding cannot exceed 65 % of the project's total budget.

5. Eligibility criteria

Only the proposals corresponding to the following criteria will be the subject of an in-depth evaluation.

5.1. Who may submit an application?

All non-profit making institutions or organisations with a legal identity.

5.2. Eligible countries

Applications are eligible if submitted by organisations with a legal identity and established in one of the following countries:

- EU: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, Sweden, United Kingdom, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Finland, Greece,
- Countries whose accession to the European Union is envisaged for 1 May 2004: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia,
- EFTA and EEA countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway.

⁽¹⁾ COM(2001) 681 final of 21.11.2001

5.3. Eligible activities

Projects submitted must promote networkable participation projects.

To be considered, applications must consist of:

- local projects (at local community level) in the eligible countries,
- the participation of several partners in each local project,
- the networking of local projects.

The actions must target the creation and development of sustainable similar projects promoting the exchange of good practice, the identification and/or resolution of common problems, the elaboration of common methodologies and the dissemination of results.

The diversity of partnerships is also an important element: each project must associate several types of partners (municipalities, NGOs, associations, schools, etc.) and must be implemented, both at local and at networking level, with the participation of young people.

Networking must have an important European dimension. Applications must include:

- at least 1 local project in 5 different countries,
- at least 3 different partners in each local project,
- the networking of all local projects.

There must be a single application per proposal.

Participation in local projects must be certified by a statement bearing the original signature of the responsible person for each of the 5 (or more) local projects.

Only proposals submitted on the original and official application form, completed in full, duly signed, accompanied by all requested annexes and received by the specific closing date (see point 12.3) will be considered. Besides the original, two full copies of the proposal must also be provided.

6. Exclusion criteria

Applicants must produce proof that they are not in one of the situations specified in Articles 93 and 94 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002) and described hereafter. Applicants will be excluded if:

- (a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure under national legislation or regulations;
- (b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgement which has force of *res judicata*;

- (c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the authorising officer can justify;
- (d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security obligations or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the authorising officer or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- (e) they have been the subject of a judgement which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interest;
- (f) following another procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Community budget, they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations;
- (g) they are subject to a conflict of interest.

According to Articles 93 to 96 of the Financial Regulation, administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants who are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying information or are declared to be in serious breach of previous contractual obligations.

7. Selection criteria

The organisation submitting the application must have stable and sufficient financial resources to carry out its activities throughout the implementation period of the action. It must dispose of the professional competencies and qualifications required to implement effectively the action or work programme proposed.

The technical and financial capacity of the candidates will be evaluated on the basis of documents provided with the application.

An eligible application must be accompanied by the following documents:

1. the application form – *three copies, of which one is the original* – duly completed and signed by the person legally responsible for the organisation;
2. the detailed calculation method of all budget headings of an amount higher than EUR 5 000, including unit costs;
3. a copy of the profit and loss and the balance sheet of the promoter for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed. This requirement is waived for public bodies;
4. a copy of the legally registered statutes as well as a copy of the official registration certificate of the promoter. This requirement is waived for public bodies. These documents must be provided in one of the official EU languages;
5. a declaration of honour (a model is annexed to the application form) signed by the applicant, certifying that the applicant organisation exists as a legal identity;

6. proof that the applicant organisation has the financial and operational capacity to undertake and complete the proposed actions;
7. proof that the applicant organisation is not in one of the situations described in point 6 of the present call for proposals;
8. a declaration confirming that, in case its proposal is selected, the beneficiary agrees with the publication of its name, address and a brief project description on the Internet;
9. the bank details form completed by the promoter and certified by the bank (original signatures required);
10. the CVs of the key persons responsible for implementing the project;
11. endorsement letters of all participating partner organisations (original signatures required);
12. a letter requesting the award of a grant dated and duly signed by the person legally responsible for the applicant organisation.

8. Award criteria

The Commission will award the grants after having taken into consideration the following criteria.

8.1. Evaluation of the contents and quality of the proposals

The quality of the partnerships will be evaluated at two levels:

1. At the level of local projects, the following aspects will be assessed:
 - (a) the diversity and complementarity of the project partners;
 - (b) the role of each partner and the place reserved for young people including in the decision-taking process;
2. At the level of networking, the following aspects will be assessed:
 - (a) the quality of the organisation and content of activities proposed as well as the methods proposed;
 - (b) the coordinated and integrated approach where the tasks and responsibilities of the different project partners are clearly defined within the network;
 - (c) the capacity to develop a sustainable network and to enable the inclusion of new partners after the eligibility period of the project;
 - (d) the impact of the participation of young people in general;
 - (e) the contribution to the implementation of other transversal policies such as:
 - non-formal and informal learning,
 - economic and social cohesion,
 - social inclusion,
 - equal opportunities;

- (f) the quality of the activities related to dissemination/valorisation of the results outside the partnership members.

8.2. Organisational and budgetary aspects of the proposals

The following elements will be assessed:

- (a) work plan (for its clarity and its appropriateness with regard to the objectives and means proposed);
- (b) project calendar;
- (c) coherence of the budget with the work plan;
- (d) monitoring and evaluation methodology.

9. Financial conditions

Community grants are an incentive to carry out an action that would not be able to be carried out without the financial support of the Commission, and are based on the principle of co-financing. They complement the applicant's its partners' own financial contributions, and national, regional or local support that has been obtained elsewhere.

The subsidised project may not benefit from any other Community funding for the same activities.

The grant awarded by the Commission may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit for the beneficiary. Profit is defined as a surplus of revenue over the costs of the action in question. Any surplus will lead to a proportional reduction of the amount of the grant.

The Commission may require the organisation, which was awarded a grant to lodge a guarantee in advance in order to limit the financial risks connected with the payment of pre-financing.

9.1. Financial contribution of the Community

Up to 65 % of the eligible costs (see below). Only costs incurred after the signature of the agreement will be taken into consideration

The grant application must include a detailed, provisional budget with all costs drawn up in Euro. The budget for the project (a model of which is contained in the application form) must have expenditure and revenue in balance and show clearly the costs, which are eligible for financing from the Community budget.

9.2. Eligible and ineligible costs

In the context of the present call, costs will be deemed as eligible, in so far as:

- they are necessary to implement the project, they are foreseen in the agreement's provisional budget, they meet the principles of sound financial management, namely in terms of economy and cost-efficiency,
- they are incurred during the project's duration,

- they are actually incurred by the beneficiary or its partners, they are registered in the beneficiary's accounting system according to the fiscal principles applicable, and they have been the object of declarations prescribed by the fiscal and social legislation applicable,
- they are identifiable, verifiable and certified by original justification documents.

Eligible costs:

- costs of personnel contracted for working on the implementation of the action described in the proposal (actual salaries plus social charges),
- travel, accommodation and subsistence costs related to the carrying out of the action (meetings, etc.),
- costs linked to the organisation of conferences (room hire, interpretation, etc.),
- publication and dissemination costs,
- other direct costs,
- indirect costs up to 7 % of the direct costs, unless the beneficiary receives an operating grant financed from the Community budget,
- costs incurred by a third party and reimbursed by the beneficiary organisation.

Ineligible costs (they are excluded from the co-financing budget request):

- costs incurred by a third party and not reimbursed by the beneficiary organisation,
- expenditure related to infrastructure acquisition (with the exception of the annual depreciation of the material purchased),
- expenditure not related to the specific activities of the project (notably, running costs and/or expenditure related to statutory obligations),
- expenditure that is clearly unnecessary or excessive,
- capital investment costs,
- general provision (for losses, possible future liabilities, etc.),
- contingency reserve, debts and charges for financial services, exchange losses, unless specifically provided for in exceptional cases.

9.3. Examination and follow-up of applications

The selected proposals will be subject to detailed financial examination, at which stage the Commission may request complementary information from the persons responsible for the proposed actions.

In the event of final approval by the Commission, a financial agreement, drawn up in Euro and detailing the conditions and level of funding, will be concluded between the Commission and the beneficiary. The Commission may require the beneficiary to lodge a bank guarantee. This agreement (original) must be signed and returned to the Commission immediately. The beneficiary will receive a pre-financing payment of 40 % within 45 days of the date when the two parties have signed the agreement.

9.4. Presentation of the final report and financial breakdown

According to the terms of the financial agreement, a second pre-financing payment of 40 % may be made when at least 70 % of the previous pre-financing payment has been used up. In that case, persons responsible for proposals approved and financed by the Commission must submit a detailed statement of the eligible costs actually incurred when requesting the second pre-financing instalment. On completion of the project a final report must be submitted. These reports, which should provide a succinct but complete description of the results of the activities outlined in the proposal, should also be accompanied by any publications produced (brochures, teaching material, videos, multimedia, press clippings, etc.).

The final financial statement, annexed to the final report, should show real costs and receipts. The beneficiary must set up an accounting system for the co-financed action and keep all original supporting documents for possible auditing for a period of five years as from the date of completion of the agreement. After approval of the final report, the beneficiary will receive the final payment. An external audit of accounts carried out by an approved auditor may be requested by the responsible authorising officer in support of any payment, based on his/her own risk analysis.

10. Subcontracting and award of procurement contracts

Where implementation of the assisted action requires the award of procurement contracts of an estimated amount of more than EUR 5 000, beneficiaries of grants shall request at least three offers from different tenders and shall award the contract to the tender offering the best value for money, that is to say, to the tender offering the best price-quality ratio, in compliance with the principles of transparency and equal treatment for potential contractors, care being taken to avoid any conflict of interests.

11. Publicity

Applicants will be informed of the receipt of their proposals within ten working days.

Only applications that fulfil the eligibility criteria will be considered for a possible grant. Ineligible applications will be responded to, indicating the reasons for their ineligibility.

After the evaluation is completed, all unsuccessful applicants will be informed in writing.

All grants awarded in the course of a financial year shall be published on the Internet site of the Community institutions during the first half of the year following the closure of the budget year in respect of which they were awarded. The Commission shall publish the name and address of the beneficiaries, the subject of the grant and the amount of the grant and the rate of co-financing. This information will be published with the agreement of the beneficiaries, unless publication of this information may threaten the safety of the beneficiaries or harm their commercial interests. In the event that the beneficiaries do not agree with this, they should attach a detailed justification, which the Commission will consider during the selection procedure.

In all publications or during activities for which the grant is used, beneficiaries must indicate clearly the European Union's contribution.

12. Submission, examination and follow-up procedure of applications

12.1. Publication

The call for proposals will be published on the Internet site of the Directorate-General Education and Culture, at the following address:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/call/index_en.html

and possibly in any other medium deemed appropriate, notably the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

12.2. Application forms

Proposals must be submitted on the official application form in one of the 11 official EU languages. Please note that only type-written applications will be accepted.

The application forms (available in the 11 official EU languages) can be downloaded from the following address on the Internet:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/call/index_en.html

These documents can also be requested by fax ((32-2) 299 40 38) or by mail from the address indicated hereafter. They will be sent by normal mail. This is why only the requests for application forms received in due time will be considered.

12.3. Presentation of the grant application

Only proposals (*three copies of which one is the original*) submitted on the official application form, completed in full (including the annexes) in one of the 11 Community languages, dated,

signed, and showing a balanced budget (revenue/expenditure) and sent in conformity with the procedures and conditions indicated hereafter will be considered (see also points 7 and 8 of the present call).

The applications will not be considered if they do not include all documents required or are not written in the languages concerned or have not been submitted by the deadline.

Applications must be sent to the address below *at the latest by 18 June 2004* (as per postmark):

Call for Proposals (EAC 10/04)
Mr Pierre Mairesse
European Commission
DG Education and Culture
Unit D1 — Youth
Office VM2 5/52
B-1049 Brussels

The applications bearing a postmark after *18 June 2004* will not be considered under any circumstance. Consequently, it is strongly recommended to persons submitting their application in the last days before the deadline to use a courier or registered post with proof of reception. Candidates will be informed of receipt of their proposals within ten working days at the email address provided in the application.

13. Rules applicable

- Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities.
- Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 (rules for the implementation of the Council Regulation).