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Guidelines for applicants
For the call of proposals for sub-granting
Advocacy NGOs networks for sustainable use of energy and natural resources in
the Western Balkans and Turkey – ETNAR

PROJECT CODE: IPA-CSF-2012/306-573, under IPA Civil Society call
EuropeAid/132438/C/ACT/Multi

Deadline for submission for the applications is 8th October 2013 at 23.59

Background /description of activity

Sub-grants for the capacity building on public advocacy in WB and Turkey

Call for tender is open for the groups in the WB region, so they can apply for public advocacy work in their home country. The focus will be energy / transport and natural resources use. We aim to have 8-10 preferably national, but also possibly local campaigns in 8 different countries from the region. All proposals should have **background problem analysis, achievable goals, overall objective, results, actions and budgets**. They have to include **media-work elements, mobilization of citizens, visibility and individual fundraising strategy to provide sustainability after the project funding ends**. The public advocacy campaigns **have to be rooted in the local/national context and relevant to society**. The contracts will be signed for **10 months**. This will allow time to include reports from the sub-grantees into the mid term evaluation. After the mid-term evaluation and approval of the partnership for the next 24 months we will have new call for sub-granted proposals for the next period. Ideally, it would be kind of continuation of the grants from the first 24 months period and such continuations will have advantage in the call, however, it might happened that there is a new excellent proposal from the NGO not being involved in the 1st round so we will leave open for this possibility. On other hand, if the sub-granted NGO has not performed well in 1st round we will terminate this cooperation. Outputs: call for proposals launched and 8-10 grants sub-granted.

OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES OF THE CALL

We are looking for the advocacy actions / campaigns related to the natural resources and energy, climate and transport issues. Other environmental issues are also welcome, if linked with natural resources protection and energy and climate. For instance, working on waste management campaign in protected areas or using horizontal EU legislation in protecting natural resources. The objective of this call is to increase capacity of CSOs in the Western Balkans and Turkey to implement public advocacy campaigns with focus in the natural resources and energy, climate and transport issues.

The public advocacy campaigns **have to be rooted in the local/national context and relevant to society**. They have to have plan of work with **media** (how to engage them), have to follow **EU visibility guidelines** and have to have **individual fundraising strategy to provide sustainability after the project funding ends (income generating activities)**.

Who can apply?

The applicant organisations have to be local or national civil society organisations (registered) working on environmental issues in Western Balkans (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Albania, Montenegro) and Turkey. International CSOs cannot benefit from this call. However, cross borders and regional projects are allowed if done in partnership of local and national organisations.

Location

Actions must take place in the IPA Beneficiaries in the Western Balkans (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Albania, Montenegro) and Turkey. Exceptionally, some actions can take place out of the region, if they contribute to the goals of the project. For instance, presentation of the project in EU Parliament, or other activity that must take place out of the region.

Project duration

The project will start upon signing of the contract, tentative date is November 1st 2013. Activities happened prior this date cannot be funded. Maximum duration of the project is 10 months. In exceptional situations there is a possibility to extend the project for 2 more months. There is also a possibility of funding a continuation of the project / campaign in 2015/2016 under a new call for proposals.

Size of grants

In this call we will distribute maximum 100000 euros. The grants are size 5000 – 10000 euros each and we expect at least 20% of the matching fund and maximum of 50% of the matching fund.

Activities:

The following types of activity (the list is not exhaustive) may qualify:

- Direct advocacy actions

- Desk research
- Baseline-studies
- Training actions, study visits, field trips and internships
- Facilitating contact, consultation and discussion between different stakeholders
- Communication and information activities aimed at supporting consultation with stakeholders
- Organisation of conferences, roundtables, workshops and seminars
- Promotion of the implementation of adopted laws and regulations
- Advocacy for the revision of existing legislation and adoption of new legislation in accordance with EU standards and requirements
- Establishment of dialogue with political parties, groups of parliamentarians or legislative bodies
- Monitoring activities, for example in the context of the accession process, as well as monitoring international commitments
- Publication of monitoring reports
- Drafting policy or legislation recommendations
- Public awareness raising campaigns
- Publication of leaflets, manuals on best practice

The following types of action are ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- actions including market promotion activities;
- “one-off” conferences, and similar events;
- actions concerned only or mainly with academic research and/or feasibility studies;
- actions including grant-making activities (i.e. the use of funds to make grants or loans to other organisations);
- actions concerned only or mainly with infrastructure investments and/or the procurement of equipment;
- actions linked to political parties or of political/partisan nature;
- actions dealing with emergency relief or charitable donations;
- actions that fall within the general activities of competent state institutions or state administration services, including local government;
- actions in relation to:
 - the tobacco industry (CAEN code 16)
 - production of alcoholic distilled beverages (CAEN code 1591)
 - arms and munitions (CAEN code 296).

Visibility

Note that the applicant must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU-financing (see the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU external actions laid down and published by the European Commission at (see http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index_en.htm).

Number of applications and grants per applicant

An applicant can apply with one proposal only.

Eligibility of costs: costs which may be taken into consideration for the grant

Only "eligible costs" can be taken into account for a grant. The categories of costs considered as eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and a ceiling for "eligible costs". Note that the eligible costs must be based on real costs based on supporting documents (except for subsistence costs and indirect costs where flat-rate funding applies).

Recommendations for the award of a grant are always subject to the condition that the checking process preceding the signature of the contract does not reveal any problems requiring changes to the budget (for instance arithmetical errors, inaccuracies or unrealistic costs and other ineligible costs). The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and lead the Contracting Authority to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. The amount of the grant and the percentage of the EU co-financing as a result of these corrections may not be increased.

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

Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under the Call for Proposals, costs must comply with the provisions of Article 14 of the EU General Conditions applicable to European Union-financed grant contracts for external actions.

Note that taxes, including VAT will only be accepted as eligible costs when the following conditions are fulfilled:

- i. The value added taxes are not recoverable by any means;
- ii. It is established that they are borne by the final beneficiary; and
- iii. They are clearly indicated in the project proposal.

Contributions in kind

Contributions in kind are not considered actual expenditure and are not eligible costs. Contributions in kind may not be treated as co-financing by the Lead CSO and its partners.

Notwithstanding the above, if the description of the action as proposed by the Lead CSO and its partners foresees contributions in kind, such contributions have to be provided.

Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- taxes, including value added taxes (except for when the conditions set out under Direct Eligible Costs above are fulfilled);
- customs and import duties, or any other charges;
- purchase, rent or leasing of land and existing buildings;
- fines, financial penalties and expenses of litigation;
- operating costs;
- second-hand equipment;
- bank charges, costs of guarantees and similar charges;

- conversion costs, charges and exchange losses with any of the component specific euro accounts, as well as purely financial expenses;
- contributions in kind;
- any leasing costs;
- depreciation costs;
- debts and debt charges;
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- interest owed;
- costs declared by the beneficiary and covered by another action or work programme;
- credits to third parties.

HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

Applicants must submit their applications in English. The application consist of the application form and budget in forms provided under this call of proposals.

Any error or major discrepancy relating to the points listed in the instructions in the application form (e.g. the amounts mentioned in the budget worksheets are inconsistent) may lead to the rejection of the application. Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is unclear, thus preventing the Contracting Authority from conducting an objective assessment.

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Please note that only the application form and the budget will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL relevant information concerning the action. No additional annexes should be sent.

If an application is selected following the evaluation, additional documentation might be requested but it should not be submitted at this stage. Therefore **unsolicited supplementary annexes should not be sent with the Application Form.**

Where and how to send the Applications

The applications MUST be sent by e-mail to info@etnar.net, by October 8th 2013 at 23.59. In the subject it has to be stated the following: **Project proposal under the call Advocacy NGOs networks for sustainable use of energy and natural resources in the Western Balkans and Turkey – ETNAR, IPA-CSF-2012/306-573, under IPA Civil Society call EuropeAid/132438/C/ACT/Multi.**

Further information for the Application

Questions are to be sent by e-mail no later than 26th September, of applications to the address below indicating clearly the reference of the Call for Proposals: info@etnar.net

The call and the advice about the grants will be presented at ETNAR conference in Palic, Serbia, from 24th to 26th of September.

EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the ETNAR project team with the possible assistance of external assessors. All actions submitted by applicants 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, the application shall be rejected on this sole basis.

STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS

The following will be assessed:

- The submission deadline has been respected. If the deadline has not been respected the application will automatically be rejected.
- The Application Form satisfies all the criteria specified in points of the Checklist in the grant application form. 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.

EVALUATION OF THE APPLICATION

First, the following will be assessed:

The application form satisfies all the criteria specified in the Checklist of the grant application form. 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.

An evaluation of the quality of the applications, including the proposed budget, and of the capacity of the applicant, will then be carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in the Evaluation Grid included below.

There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and award criteria.

The selection criteria are intended to help evaluate the applicants' financial and operational capacity to ensure that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is to be carried out and, where appropriate, to participate in its funding;
- have the management capacity, professional competence and qualifications required to complete the proposed action successfully.

The award criteria allow the quality of the applications to be evaluated in relation to the set objectives and priorities, and grants to be awarded to actions that will maximise the overall effectiveness of the Call for Proposals. They will enable the selection of applications that the Contracting Authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities. They cover such aspects as the relevance of the action, its consistency with the objectives of the Call for Proposals, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

Portfolio considerations are secondary to the selection and award criteria, i.e. the Contracting Authority will in the first instance select the strongest proposals for funding. However, in the interest of ensuring that the Partnership Programmes cover a wide range of themes, the Contracting Authority may reject a proposal which has scored highly if there are other proposals covering the same theme that have received a better score. Similarly, the Contracting Authority may accept a proposal which has scored lower than other proposals, if this proposal fills a thematic gap.

Scoring:

The evaluation criteria are divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following guidelines: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Evaluation Grid

Section	Maximum Score
1. Financial and operational capacity of the partnership	20
1.1 Does the applicant and its partners have sufficient technical expertise? (notably knowledge of the issues to be addressed.)	5
1.2 Does the applicant have sufficient experience of project management? Is it clear whom they will involve in delivering their programme, why they will involve them (including justification) and how they will be involved	5
1.3 Does the applicant have sufficient management capacity? (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4 Does the Lead CSO applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5
2. Relevance of the partnership	30
2.1. How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the Call for Proposals?	10
2.2. How relevant is the proposal to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies) or region(s)?	10
2.3. Have the needs of the stakeholders (i.e. those who will affect or be affected by the project) been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately? Have any issues of exclusion and discrimination been identified and dealt with?	10
3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the partnership	20
3.1 Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	10
3.2 Is the action plan clear and feasible?	5
3.3 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the action? Does it present an adequate monitoring and evaluation plan?	5
4. Sustainability of the partnership	20
4.1 Is the proposed project likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5
4.2 Is the proposed project likely to have multiplier effects? (Including scope for replication and extension of the outcome of the action and dissemination of information.)	5
4.3 Does the proposal identify and risk mitigation adequately. Have the main preconditions and assumptions for the programme been described and addressed?	5
4.3 Are the expected results sustainable: - institutionally (will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the	5

end of the action? Will there be local “ownership” of the results of the action?) - at policy level (what will be the structural impact of the action — e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc?) - environmentally (if applicable) (will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?)	
5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the partnership	10
5.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	5
5.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	5
Maximum total score	100

Provisional selection

Following the evaluation, a table listing the applications ranked according to their score and within the available financial envelope will be established as well as a reserve list following the same criteria.

2.5 NOTIFICATION OF THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY’S DECISION

2.5.1 Content of the decision

Applicants will be informed in writing of the Contracting Authority’s decision concerning their application and, in case of rejections, the reasons for the negative decision.

2.5.2 Indicative time table

	DATE	TIME*
Deadline for request for any clarifications from the Contracting Authority	26 September 2013	16h00
Last date on which clarifications are issued by the Contracting Authority	1 October 2013	-
Deadline for submission of Application Form	8 October 2013	23.59
Information to applicants on the evaluation of the Application Form	25 October 2013**	-
Contract signature	1 November 2013**	-

** **Provisional date.** All times are in the time zone of the country of the Contracting Authority

This indicative timetable may be updated by the Contracting Authority during the procedure. If so, the updated timetable will be published on the project web site www.etnar.net