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(Announcements)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

HERCULE II

Call for proposals — OLAF/2012/D5/05

Technical Support for Detecting the Presence of Cigarettes and Tobacco

(2012/C 162/08)

1. Objectives and description

This notice of call for proposals is based on Decision No 878/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2007 establishing a Community action programme to promote activities in the field of the protection of the Community's financial interests (Hercule II programme), OJ L 193 of 25 July 2007. This call relates to the activities under Article 1a(a) of the Hercule II Decision, which consists of:

- technical assistance for national authorities through the provision of specific knowledge, equipment and information technology (IT) tools facilitating transnational cooperation and cooperation with the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF),
- the support for joint operations, and
- the enhancement of staff exchanges,

in order to fight against fraud, corruption and other illegal activities as well as the development and implementation of fraud prevention and detection policies.

2. Eligible applicants

This notice is aimed at national or regional administrations ('Applicants') of a Member State or a country outside the European Union which promote the strengthening of European action to protect the European Union's financial interests.

3. Eligible actions

Eligible actions for Technical Assistance consist of:

- technical support to strengthen inspections of containers and trucks at the EU's external borders, dedicated to the fight against cigarette smuggling and counterfeiting,
- equipment as part of an action of law enforcement agencies to improve the detection and investigation of illicit consignments of tobacco products,
- equipment as part of an action of law enforcement agencies to detect smuggled and counterfeited goods on the basis of its scent characteristics.

4. Award criteria

Each submitted eligible action will be assessed in the light of the following award criteria:

1. Consistency of the proposal with OLAF's objectives for combating fraud and, in particular, preventing, detecting and investigating the flow of illicit tobacco products into the EU,
2. Suitability of the proposed equipment in the location where it will be deployed,
3. Technical quality and performance of the proposed equipment to meet the needs expressed by the grant applicant,
4. Cost-effectiveness: the project's costs should be consistent with its objectives,
5. Compatibility of the project with the work carried out or planned in connection with the EU's policy priorities for preventing fraud against the EU budget (prevention; information analysis, methods of cooperation, etc.),
6. Compatibility of the project with similar projects carried out in other Member States and carried out by other national law enforcement and customs agencies,
7. Possibility for using the methods and/or results of the project to enhance cooperation and effectiveness in the fight against fraud and cigarette smuggling ('mainstreaming').

If several projects have equal merit in the light of these award criteria, funding priority may be given to, in descending order:

- those law enforcement agencies which do not have, or which are not considered having sufficient, equipment to combat cigarette smuggling and cigarette counterfeiting,
- proposals that make fair geographical distribution possible,
- applicants who have not received grants in previous years for the same or a similar project.

5. Budget

The total budget available is EUR 3 300 000.

The financial contribution will take the form of a grant. The financial contribution awarded will not exceed 50 % of the eligible costs.

The Commission reserves the right not to allocate all the funds available.

6. Further information

The technical specifications and the application form can be downloaded from the following site:

http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud/about-us/funding/techn-assist/items/call_proposals_2012_en.htm

Question and/or requests for additional information in relation to this call have to be sent by e-mail to:

OLAF-FMB-HERCULE-TA@ec.europa.eu

The questions and answers may be anonymously published in the Guidelines for filling in the Application Form on OLAF's internet website if they are relevant to other applicants.

7. Deadline for submission of applications

Applications must be submitted no later than **Friday, 31 August 2012**.

Only applications submitted by using the official application form, duly signed by the person entitled to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant organisation, will be accepted. The sealed envelope must clearly mention:

'Application for OLAF Technical Assistance Grant Programme ("Cigarettes") (OLAF/2012/D5/05) — Hercule II 2012'

The applications (original and one copy) must be sent by post to the following address:

European Commission — European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)
For the attention of Mr Johan KHOUW
Head of Unit Hercule, Pericles & EURO Protection
Office: J-30 10/62
1049 Bruxelles/Brussel
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

An electronic copy of the grant application form and containing all necessary Annexes should also be sent by electronic mail to the following mailbox:

OLAF-FMB-HERCULE-TA@ec.europa.eu
