CALL FOR PROPOSALS WITH A VIEW TO OBTAINING GRANTS IN THE FIELD OF TRANSPORT

Call for proposals DG TREN/SUB/01-2003

(2003/C 97/02)

1. POLITICAL CONTEXT

The European Commission intends to award grants to promote the objectives of the common transport policy. The policy priorities have been set in the work programme for 2003 adopted by the Commission on 21 March 2003 (C/2003/205).

2. SOURCES OF FUNDING

The operations selected will be financed from budget headings B2-702, Transport safety, and B2-704, Sustainable mobility policy.

3. ESTIMATED TOTAL AMOUNT FOR THIS CALL

The estimated total amount for 2003 is EUR 7 400 000.

Transport safety: EUR 7 200 000.

Sustainable mobility policy: EUR 200 000.

4. PERCENTAGE OF COMMUNITY CO-FINANCING

The grants are intended as incentives for carrying out an operation which could not be executed without Community financial support, and they reflect the principle of co-financing. The Commission therefore plans to grant only funds complementary and subsidiary to contributions made by the beneficiary, the national, regional or local authorities and other bodies. Accordingly, the amount granted will be between 10 % and 50 % of the total eligible costs of the operation. Contributions in kind are not regarded as eligible costs.

5. ACTIVITIES COVERED AND OBJECTIVE

In the context of the work programme for 2003, the Commission wishes to support action in the areas listed below without, however, excluding other applications for financial support which are innovatory, have a European dimension and meet the objectives set in the White Paper 'European transport policy for 2010: time to decide'.

A. TRANSPORT SAFETY

Area 1: User behaviour

Checks and penalties to enforce the rules of the road; training for both private and professional drivers; physical and mental fitness to drive; action to combat/check for driving under the influence of drugs, drink or medicines (in particular, designated drivers and trials with alcolics); safety belts and child restraint devices; vulnerable users; accident data recorders; driving hours and rest periods (for professional drivers); and safety in tunnels (in particular, driving in tunnels).

Area 2: Vehicle technology

Impact resistance; roadworthiness testing (particularly electronic passenger protection systems); active and passive vehicle safety (including tyre quality and pressure).

Area 3: Road infrastructure

Road safety audits/safety evaluations of roads and tunnels (in particular, identification of blackspots) and harmonisation of signs (roads and tunnels).

Area 4: Road technology

Freight and passenger transport by road, in particular intelligent technologies to improve road safety.

Area 5: Information and databases

Improvements in collection, analysis and dissemination of data on road accidents (conditions, causes, under-reporting, independent surveys, multidisciplinary approach, risk exposure variables).

Area 6: Evaluation of national road safety policies

Evaluation of the national road safety systems in the abovementioned areas.

A. TRANSPORT SAFETY

Road safety

Improvement of road safety in the European Union, the candidate countries and the European Economic Area by means of studies, campaigns, the establishment of best practice and demonstration activities in the following areas:
B. SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY POLICY

Area 8: Sustainable mobility policy in the maritime sector

Development of short-distance maritime and inland waterway services.

6. PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY OF COSTS

Eligible costs can be incurred only after signature of the grant agreement by all the parties, save in exceptional cases and, under no circumstances, before submission of the application for a grant. The duration of the operation may not exceed 36 months.

7. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

7.1. Legal status of applicants

Applications submitted in writing by legal persons who are citizens of a Member State of the European Union are eligible.

7.2. Grounds for exclusion

Applications will not be considered for a grant if the applicants are in any of the following situations:

(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 provided for in national legislation or regulations;

(b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;

(c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;

(d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions 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 contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;

(e) they have been the subject of a judgment 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 interests;

(f) following another procurement procedure or grant 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 faced with a conflict of interest;

(h) they have been guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required or have failed to supply this information.

Applicants must certify that they are not in one of the situations listed in point 7.2.

7.3. Administrative and financial penalties

1. Without prejudice to the application of penalties laid down in the contract, candidates or tenderers and contractors who have been guilty of making false declarations or have been found to have seriously failed to meet their contractual obligations in an earlier procedure shall be excluded from all contracts and grants financed by the Community budget for a maximum of two years from the time when the infringement is established, as confirmed after an adversarial procedure with the contractor.

That period may be extended to three years in the event of a repeat offence within five years of the first infringement.

Tenderers or candidates who have been guilty of making false declarations shall also receive financial penalties representing 10 % of the total value of the grant being awarded.

Contractors who have been found to have seriously failed to meet their contractual obligations shall receive financial penalties representing 10 % of the value of the subvention in question.

That rate may be increased to 20 % in the event of a repeat offence within five years of the first infringement.

2. In the cases referred to in points 7.2(a), (c), (d) and (f), the candidates or tenderers shall be excluded from all contracts and grants for a maximum of two years from the time when the infringement is established, as confirmed after an adversarial procedure with the contractor.

In the cases referred to in points 7.2(b) and (e), the candidates or tenderers shall be excluded from all contracts and grants for a minimum of one year and a maximum of four years from the date of notification of the judgment.

Those periods may be extended to five years in the event of a repeat offence within five years of the first infringement or the first judgment.
3. The cases referred to in point 7(e) cover:

(a) cases of fraud as referred to in Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995 (1);

(b) cases of corruption as referred to in Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of Member States of the European Union, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 May 1997 (2);

(c) cases of participation in a criminal organisation, as defined in Article 2(1) of Joint Action 98/733/JHA of the Council (3);

(d) cases of money laundering as defined in Article 1 of Council Directive 91/308/EEC (4).

8. SELECTION CRITERIA

The applicant must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain his activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out or the year for which the grant is awarded and to participate in its funding. He must have the professional competences and qualifications required to complete the proposed action or work programme.

8.1. Financial capacity of applicants

Applicants must show that they exist as a legal person and have the financial capacity and operational capability to complete the operation to be supported and must provide their balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed. The last of these provisions does not apply to public bodies and international organisations.

8.2. Technical capacity of applicants

Applicants must have the technical capacity and operational capability to complete the operation to be supported and must provide the documents requested (CVs of the persons responsible for carrying out the operation, description of projects and activities undertaken in the last three years, etc.).

9. AWARD CRITERIA

The operation supported must be designed to further one of the objectives referred to in point 5 above. The Commission will base the choice of operations and the rate of Community co-financing on the following criteria, listed in descending order of weighting in per cent.

9.1. Quality of the operation (70 %)

— European dimension: the Commission will assess the extent to which the proposed operation will create and contribute genuine added value to the common transport policy (20 %).

— Innovative character: the Commission will assess the extent to which the proposed operation will generate new approaches and practices. The results of the operation supported will, where appropriate, be incorporated into proposals for legislation, communications and other European Commission documents (10 %).

— Multiplier effect: the Commission will assess the extent to which the proposed operation will enable the transfer, generalisation, dissemination or application on a large scale of results, experience, knowledge and good practice (10 %).

— Cost-effectiveness: the budget, broken down by category of expenditure, should demonstrate excellent value for money for the operation (balance between expected results and amount of grant) (10 %).

— Evaluation: the Commission will assess the evaluation method proposed and the quality of the results indicators with reference to the expected objectives (10 %).

— Visibility: the description of the operation should give details of the means whereby the Community operation will be publicised (publications, organisation of events, websites, CD-ROM, etc.) (10 %).

9.2. Quality of the application (30 %)

The organisation of the operation should be set out in detail, in particular as regards the following aspects:

— work plan (clarity and achievability of the objectives, achievability of the expected results) (10 %),

— timetable for the operation (10 %),

— proposed methodology (10 %).

Only applications with a total score of 70% or higher and of at least 60% for each individual criterion will be taken into consideration for Community funding.

10. GENERAL CONDITIONS FOR AWARDING GRANTS

The general conditions for awarding grants, particularly the definition of the eligible costs and the methods of payment, are set out in the draft grant agreement in Annex II.

For all applications for pre-financing of over EUR 100,000, a financial guarantee equivalent to the amount pre-financed will be required. In addition, the Commission reserves the right to require a financial guarantee for amounts of under EUR 100,000.

The budget for the action attached to the application must have revenue and expenditure in balance and show clearly the costs which are eligible for financing from the Community budget.

For actions where the cost to be financed exceeds EUR 300,000, the application must be accompanied by an external audit report produced by an approved auditor. This report must certify the accounts for the last year available and give an assessment of the financial viability of the applicant.

11. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS FOR A GRANT

Applications must be submitted using the standard application form in Annex I. For each application, one signed original and five copies must be supplied by the applicant.

12. CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS FOR A GRANT

Applicants interested in these grants are invited to submit their applications to the European Commission.

Applications may be submitted:

(a) **by registered letter** postmarked **no later than 10 June 2003** addressed to:

European Commission
Directorate-General for Energy and Transport
DM 28 0/91 Courrier/archives
B-1049 Brussels

(b) **or by delivery to the central mail service of the European Commission** (personal delivery or delivery by any authorised representative of the applicant, including private delivery services) at the following address:

By **16h00 (Brussels time) on 10 June 2003** at the latest. In this case, proof of submission will be by means of a dated and signed receipt issued by the receiving official in the abovementioned department.

Applications received by the Commission after the closing date will not be taken into consideration.

Applications may not be delivered to the Directorate-General for Energy and Transport (whether personal delivery or delivery by any authorised representative of the applicant, including private delivery services).

Bids must be submitted inside two sealed envelopes. The inner envelope must bear the words:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Call for proposals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TREN/SUB/01-2003</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area . . .</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOT TO BE OPENED BY THE POSTAL SERVICE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DM 28 0/91 Courrier/archives</td>
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If self-adhesive envelopes are used, they must be sealed with adhesive tape and the sender must sign across that tape.

13. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Any questions regarding this call for proposals should be sent by e-mail (stating the reference number of the area, as indicated in point 5) to:

TREN-CALL-2003@cec.eu.int.

14. TIMETABLE

Closing date for submission of applications: **10 June 2003**

Date of opening of applications: **20 June 2003**

Estimated date of completion of the evaluation: **15 July 2003**

Notification of unsuccessful applicants: from **22 July 2003** on

Notification of successful applicants: from **28 July 2003** on.