III

(Notices)

COMMISSION

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

‘Support for information measures relating to the common agricultural policy’. Implementation of annual work programmes and specific measures under budget heading 05 08 06 for 2007

(2006/C 236/07)

1. Introduction


It specifies the priority topics and measures and the deadlines for submitting applications and commencing the measures concerned.

This is a call for proposals for funding annual work programmes or specific measures from appropriations in the 2007 budget.

2. Priorities and Objectives for 2007

Under this call for proposals the Commission wishes to give priority to

— communicating the reformed common agricultural policy (CAP) and its emphasis on decoupling and rural development as a contribution to employment, competitiveness, growth and stability in EU-25,

— discussing the opportunities and benefits the two pillars of the CAP offer for the agricultural sector and for the balanced development of rural regions,

— communicating the reformed CAP as an essential contribution to reaching the Community’s objectives in international trade negotiations,

— communicating the European model of agriculture and its benefits to civil society in general.

2.1. Messages to be communicated

The main messages the Commission wishes to communicate to the target audiences are the following:

— The reformed CAP contributes to the sustainable development of the agricultural sector, reinforces its market orientation and thereby strengthens its competitiveness.

— The forthcoming reforms of the Common Market Organisations for the wine, fruits and vegetables and bananas, as well as measures taken to simplify the CAP are designed on the basis of these overall objectives. They will ensure a long term sustainable future for the concerned sectors.

— The Biomass Action Plan and the EU Strategy on biofuels contribute to the sustainable development of biomass energy from wood, waste and agricultural crops in heating, electricity and transport, and offer new opportunities to farmers and forest holders.

— The European Action Plan on Organic Food and Farming offer new opportunities for producers and encourages innovation through promoting organic farming.

— The Rural Development Policy 2007-2013 promotes more integrated approaches to the development of rural areas and aims to preserve the environment and the countryside, to improve quality of life in rural areas and to foster the diversification of rural economies.

— The reformed CAP provides increased value for money by linking direct support to the respect of standards on environment and animal welfare, as well as plant, animal and human health on the one hand and by financing projects that foster the development of rural communities, not only farmers on the other.

— The reformed CAP allows the Community to offer its partners improved trading conditions whilst ensuring food safety and security.

It will be for applicants to demonstrate which channel or channels of communication they believe are most appropriate in this field for particular issues and particular target audiences, and why. They are also asked to submit a Media Plan for their proposed projects, which should include details of project implementation, message delivery and measurement of effectiveness. In preparing applications, applicants are requested to pay particular attention to the Media Plan.

2.2. Types of measures

Under this Call for Proposals the Commission wishes to receive applications for the following types of measures:

— Information campaigns running through the countryside, such as mobile workshops.
— Conferences and seminars, especially in rural areas.
— TV and radio campaigns (such as advertisements, talk shows, etc).
— Exchange information visits, especially between old and new Member States.
— Workshops in rural areas targeted at information multipliers for farmers and potential beneficiaries of rural development measures.
— Information stands of national authorities responsible for agriculture and rural development at agricultural fairs that would distribute information material provided by the Commission and the national authorities.
— Other types of measures, such as publications and web portals will only be considered if applicants demonstrate that these offer a significant added value in comparison to similar measures already carried out by the Commission itself. Applicants from the 10 new Member States are especially encouraged to apply for such measures in their own language.

The Commission will be looking for projects with high added value, where more than one element of the media can be utilised. For example, a conference might be attended by delegates, televised at a later date and the issues raised published and disseminated, reported in local or regional press and posted on the Internet.

2.3. Target audiences

The target audiences for projects under this call for proposals are:

— rural communities, farmers and other potential beneficiaries of rural development measures;
— the general public.

Applicants should demonstrate how they are planning to reach the target audiences and whether their project proposal will target audiences in more than one country, and if so, which countries and by what means.

3. Definitions

As described in Article 2(1) of Council Regulation (EC) No 814/2000 and Article 2 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 2208/2002, two kinds of measures are allowed under this call for proposals, specific information measures and annual work programmes.

A specific information measure is an independent and self-contained information event of short duration, organised on the basis of a single budget. Examples of a specific measure are one conference, one seminar, or one information visit, or one audiovisual production, etc. Other types of events such as series of small seminars on the same subject in different villages or towns of the same region, or mobile information campaigns, or audiovisual works with several episodes, can also be accepted as specific measures provided that they are based on a single budget, they are completed in a short period of time and the different activities that comprise them cannot be considered independently.

An annual work programme is a set of two to five specific information measures.

4. Duration and budget

This call for proposals concerns specific information measures and annual work programmes to be implemented (including preparation, implementation, follow-up and evaluation) between 1 June 2007 and 31 May 2008.

The total budget available for the measures to be carried out under this call for proposals is EUR 3 000 000. This amount will be distributed among the measures considered of highest quality by the evaluation committee, as described in Annex III, point 2.

Eligible costs are defined in Annex IV. The contribution from the Commission to the selected measures is limited to 50 % of the total eligible costs (including the single fixed amount to be paid for the personnel costs). In exceptional cases, this may rise up to 75 %. A measure will be recognised as being of exceptional interest as referred to in Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 2208/2002 if it is awarded at least 75 out of 100 points for award criteria (1) to (4) as set out in Annex III, point 2.

No prefinancing will be allowed for the measures that have been awarded a grant under this call for proposals.

Selecting an application does not commit the Commission to granting the full amount requested by the applicant. In no circumstances will the grant exceed the amount requested. In the case of annual work programmes, the Commission reserves the right to accept only part of the programme.
5. General instructions for submitting applications

5.1. How to prepare an application

Applications for financing must be submitted in one of the official languages of the Community. Applicants are however encouraged to write their application in English or French, and where that is not possible, at least include a description of the measure in English or French in order to facilitate a timely treatment of their application.

Applications must be drawn up by using the appropriate forms available at the following internet address:


A complete application will consist of:

- The application letter signed and dated by the legally authorised representative within the applicant organisation
- The declaration of honour concerning the exclusion criteria signed and dated by the legally authorised representative within the applicant organisation
- The forms 1-4 of the application
- The budget of the measure(s) signed and dated by the legally authorised representative within the applicant organisation
- All additional documents listed in Annex I

As all incoming documents to the Commission services have to be scanned page by page, please do not staple the pages of your application letter and supporting documents together.

5.2. When and to whom to send your application

Applicants must send by 24 November 2006 one copy of their full application by registered post with acknowledgement of receipt (the postmark on the envelope being taken as proof of the date of sending) to the following address:

European Commission
Unit AGRI. K.1
Call for proposals 2006/.../...
For attention Mr H.-E. Barth
L130 4/148A
B-1049 Brussels

At the same time and no later than 24:00 h (Brussels time) on 24 November 2006, applicants will also send an electronic copy of their application, containing only the electronic version of the application letter, the forms 1-4 and the budget, identical to the ones sent by post, to the following e-mail address:

AGRI-GRANTS@ec.europa.eu

6. Procedure and timetable

The Commission will first verify whether applications contain all documents required to apply for a grant under this call for proposals. If necessary, the Commission might request additional information from the applicants.

Subsequently, an ad-hoc evaluation committee will proceed to the evaluation of the applications. This evaluation consists of three successive stages as described below. Only applications meeting the requirement of one stage will pass on to the next.

1. Evaluation of the applicants under the eligibility and exclusion criteria as indicated in Annex II;

2. Evaluation of the applicants under the selection criteria concerning their technical and financial capacity as indicated in Annex III point 1;

3. Evaluation of the applications in the light of the award criteria as indicated in Annex III point 2.

Following the evaluation, the evaluation committee will draw up the list of measures of highest quality (see Annex III, point 2).

The decision of the Commission to award a grant may differ from the proposal issued by the evaluation committee.

The Commission expects to draw up the list of beneficiaries and the amounts approved by 31 May 2007.

If the grant requested is awarded, the beneficiary will receive a grant agreement, denominated in euros, specifying the conditions and level of financing. If the grant requested is not awarded, the applicant will receive a written information giving the reasons for the rejection of the application, with reference in particular to the eligibility, selection and award criteria.

7. Publicity

The beneficiaries will be under a contractual obligation to ensure, by all appropriate means and in accordance with the conditions laid down in the grant agreement, that the funding awarded to the information measure by the Commission is publicised during the life of the measure and acknowledged in any publications and permanent or ongoing publicity material subsequent to this and that the sole responsibility on the content of the measure lies with the author of the communication or publication, and that the Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein. Evidence of this publicity must be included in the final technical implementation reports.

If the beneficiary organisation does not comply with the aforementioned obligation, the Commission reserves the right to reduce the grant amount allocated to the concerned measure or refuse completely the payment of the grant to the beneficiary.
In order to be complete, applications must include (in addition to the application form and the budget available from the web address mentioned in point 5.1 of this Call for Proposals) all the following additional documents. Please note that failure to include in the application one or more of the documents described below may result to additional correspondence between the Commission and the applicants, which could cause significant delays to the delivery of the Commission's decision to award a grant. For this reason, the Commission reserves the right to reject applications that do not contain all the required documents presented in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents required</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal entity identification sheet (and all related supporting documents)</td>
<td>All applicants. Available from the web address mentioned in point 5.1 of this Call for Proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial identification sheet</td>
<td>All applicants. Available from the web address mentioned in point 5.1 of this Call for Proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form relating to conflicts of interest</td>
<td>All applicants and partners. Drawn up in accordance with the model available from the web address mentioned in point 5.1 of this Call for Proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles of association (statutes) and most recent general report</td>
<td>For all applicants and partners that are not public bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent excerpt of the applicant’s enrolment in the professional register provided for under the legislation of the Member State of establishment</td>
<td>Not necessary for public bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance sheets and profit and loss accounts of the last two financial years for which the accounts have been closed, or any other document (such as bank certificate) proving the applicant’s financial situation and their capacity to maintain their activity throughout the period in which the measure is being carried out</td>
<td>Not necessary for public bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum vitae of the staff that will carry out the preparation, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the proposed measure</td>
<td>All applicants and partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proof of the financial contributions from other providers of funds (including partners) to the measure proposed (which must consist at least of an official attestation of financing from each of the expected providers mentioning the title of the measure and the amount to be contributed)</td>
<td>If applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An external audit report, produced by an approved auditor, certifying the accounts for the last closed financial year and giving an assessment of the financial viability of the applicant</td>
<td>Only in the case where the grant applied for is equal or higher than EUR 300 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where the applicant intends to use suppliers/sub-contractors and where the amount of all services to be rendered by one supplier/subcontractor exceeds EUR 10 000, the applicant will have to present the proofs that they have asked for at least three tenders, and annex the tender chosen. Applicants will have to show that the supplier/subcontractor selected represents the best value for money and must justify that choice where the tender selected is not the cheapest</td>
<td>If not already available at the time of application, this information must be provided at the moment of submission of the final technical and financial implementation reports after the end of the measure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX II
ELIGIBILITY AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

1. Eligibility Criteria

(a) General conditions for submitting applications

In order to be considered, all applications submitted under this Call for Proposals must fulfil the following criteria:

— They must be submitted by post on 24 November 2006 by the latest (the post stamp serving as proof);
— They must be written in one of the official languages of the Community;
— The application letter mentioning the title of the measure and the amount of the requested grant must be signed by the person responsible within the applicant organisation;
— The application and the budget must be typed using the original forms available from the web address mentioned in point 5.1 of this Call for Proposals;
— Applicants are allowed to submit only one application per budget year.

Applications that do not comply with one or more of the above mentioned criteria will be rejected.

(b) Eligibility criteria applicable to specific measures

Applications for a specific measure must comply with the following criteria:

— The applicant must be a legal person established in a Member State for at least two years;
— The amount of the grant requested must be between EUR 12 500 and EUR 100 000;
— The measure must be implemented (including preparation, implementation and follow-up) between 1/6/2007 and 31/5/2008;
— The application must contain one form No 4 and one budget (comprising of one expenditure and one income table).

(c) Eligibility criteria applicable to annual work programmes

Applications for an annual work programme must comply with the following criteria:

— The applicant must be a non profit making private entity and must have been established in a Member State for at least two years;
— All the partners of the annual work programme must also be private;
— The annual work programme must contain minimum two and maximum five specific information measures;
— The amount of the grant requested must be between EUR 50 000 and EUR 500 000. The amount of the grant requested for each specific action contained in the programme must comply with the limits mentioned at point (b) above;
— The measure must be implemented (including preparation, implementation and follow-up) between 1 June 2007 and 31 May 2008;
— The application must contain one form No 4 and one budget (expenditure and income table) per specific measure contained in the annual programme.

(d) Eligibility criteria applicable to all applications

The following apply to all applications, irrespectively of the type of the measure proposed:

— Apart from the measures listed in Article 2(3) of Regulation (EC) No 814/2000, the following are not eligible:
  — profit-making measures;
  — general assemblies or statutory meetings.
— The budget of the proposed measure must:
  — comprise of expenditure and income parts;
  — be signed and dated in both the expenditure and income part by the legally authorised representative within the applicant organisation;
  — have revenue and expenditure in balance. The expenditure side of the budget will show clearly the costs which are eligible for financing as indicated in Annex IV;
— indicate the detailed calculations and specifications used in drawing it up;
— be presented without VAT if the applicant is subject to VAT and entitled to deduct it;
— include on the revenue side the direct contribution from the applicant, the requested Commission funding,
and (if applicable) details of any contributions from other providers of funds, as well as all revenue generated
by the project, including, where appropriate, the fees required of participants.

2. Exclusion criteria

The Commission will exclude all applicants that find themselves in one of the situations described in article 5 of

Applicants must include in their application a declaration on honour, signed and dated by the legally authorised
representative within the applicant organisation, stating that they are not in one of the above situations (see the appli-
cation form available from the web address mentioned in point 5.1 of this Call for Proposals). The Commission may,
depending on the analysis of management risks, request additional evidence. Applicants who are found guilty of false
declarations may be subject to administrative and financial penalties.
ANNEX III

SELECTION AND AWARD CRITERIA

1. Selection Criteria

In order to demonstrate their technical capacity applicants must demonstrate for themselves and for the partners that:
— they have the necessary technical skills of direct relevance to the preparation, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the type measure proposed;
— they have at least three years experience in dealing with the subject(s) proposed.

In order to demonstrate their financial capacity applicants must demonstrate for themselves and for the partners that:
— their financial situation is sound to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the measure is being carried out. This will be evaluated based on the documents provided as listed in Annex I and all other information the Commission may judge useful.

2. Award Criteria

Each measure will be evaluated in the light of the following criteria:

(1) (maximum 25 points) The relevance and general interest of the measure are to be appraised, in particular, in the light of:
— the extent to which the goals and the content of the measure are in line with the objectives laid down in Article 1 of Regulation (EC) No 814/2000 and cover the priority topics set out in the call for proposals (15 points),
— the overall quality of the proposal. Project proposals should be clear in their conceptual approach and the results to be achieved. The description of the action and the messages must be precise and the respective roles and responsibilities of each partner should be clear. The work schedule should be appropriate with regard to the project goals and realistic (10 points).

(2) (maximum 25 points) The overall added value of the proposal is to be appraised, in particular, in the light of:
— the number of countries covered by the measure (10 points),
— the number and representativeness of the organisations — not including subcontractors — involved in drawing up, implementing and disseminating the measure (5 points),
— The financial quality of the proposal. Proposals should demonstrate that the project will offer good value for the financial support requested from the Commission and that it will be cost-effective (10 points).

(3) (maximum 25 points) The dissemination policy chosen will be assessed, in particular, in the light of:
— The dimension, quality and representativeness of the target audience (including the indirect beneficiaries) in relation to the type of measure (15 points),
— the dissemination channels used (in particular the press, radio and television, Internet, direct distribution) and their role in the measure (10 points),

(4) (maximum 25 points) The evaluation of the measure will be appraised, in particular, in the light of:
— the motivation of the expected interest of the measure and the assessment of the results after the execution of the measure (15 points),
— the techniques used (surveys, questionnaires, statistics, etc.) to measure the impact of the messages sent (10 points).

Measures will be considered of highest quality and will be proposed for a grant if they receive at least 60 out of 100 points allocated for the criteria (1) to (4) as described above, and have at least 50 % of the points available for each criterion. The Commission may raise the minimum acceptable rating in the light of the budget resources available.
ANNEX IV

ELIGIBLE COSTS

1. To be eligible, costs must:
   a) arise directly and exclusively from the measure (preparation, implementation, follow-up and evaluation) and be essential for the implementation of the measure;
   b) be reasonable and justified and must accord with the principles of sound financial management, in particular in terms of value for money and cost-effectiveness;
   c) have actually been incurred, i.e., supported by the original supporting documents (see table in point (3) hereafter) and by the respective proofs of payment, be recorded in the beneficiary's accounts or tax documents and be identifiable and verifiable.

Where eligible costs are directly covered by another provider of funds, this must be specified on the revenue side of the forward budget and the final budget under 'Other contributions' and confirmed in writing by the provider of funds as specified in Annex I;

Where the applicant intends to use suppliers/sub-contractors and where the amount of all services to be rendered by one supplier/sub-contractor exceeds EUR 10 000, the applicant will have to present the proofs that he has asked for at least three tenders, to annex the tender chosen and the reason of this choice. These documents have to be annexed to final technical and financial report. Failure to do this will entitle the Commission to consider those costs as non eligible.

d) arise during the period determined for the duration of the measure as specified in the grant agreement. It is understood that any expenditure incurred before the agreement is signed is at the risk of the applicant and will not be legally or financially binding on the Commission;

e) be provided for in the forward budget.

2. The following are not eligible:
   a) contributions in kind;
   b) non-specified or flat-rate expenditure, except in the particular cases referred to in this call for proposals;
   c) indirect costs (rent, electricity, water, gas, insurance, taxes, etc.);
   d) invested capital costs, contingency reserves, interest on debts owed, exchange rate losses, gifts and expenditure on luxuries;
   e) costs arising from the purchase of new or second-hand equipment;
   f) deductible VAT;
   g) costs not provided for in the forward budget.

3. Specific provisions relating to eligible costs and the supporting documents required

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of expenditure</th>
<th>Eligible</th>
<th>Supporting document required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff costs</td>
<td>1) Employees</td>
<td>No supporting documents are required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If total cost of the action (staff costs excluded) is above EUR 15 000: a single fixed amount of maximum EUR 10 000 will be paid, including staff costs for preparation, implementation, follow-up and evaluation. If total cost of the action (staff costs excluded) is less than, or equal to EUR 15 000: a single fixed amount of maximum EUR 5 000 will be paid, including staff costs for preparation, implementation, follow-up and evaluation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) Self-employed persons</td>
<td>Invoice indicating at least the title of the measure, the nature of the work carried out and the dates when the work was carried out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category of expenditure</td>
<td>Eligible</td>
<td>Supporting document required</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Transport costs</td>
<td>1) Train</td>
<td>Ticket</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cost of second-class travel using the shortest route (1).</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) Air</td>
<td>Ticket or electronic online reservation (including price), Used boarding pass. The boarding pass should state the name, the date, the place or origin and destination. If applicable, the travel agency invoice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Booking fees and the cost of air travel in economy class, using the lowest available promotional fare (APEX, PEX, Excursion, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3) Coach, ferry and other public means of transport (2)</td>
<td>Invoice indicating at least the place of departure and arrival, the number of passengers and the dates of travel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intercity travel by the shortest route</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4) Private or rented car (3)</td>
<td>A signed statement (Car Journey Declaration) must be presented using the original model that can be downloaded from the web address mentioned in point 5.1 of this Call for Proposals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For a return journey of up to 300 kilometres, an allowance of EUR 0.25 per kilometre.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and meals</td>
<td>1) For persons staying at a hotel: one daily allowance (4) per night (including accommodation and meals for 24 h). The rate of the daily allowance is to be found in the web address mentioned in point 5.1 of this Call for Proposals.</td>
<td>For the allowance to be reimbursed, the hotel bill must be presented. This bill should state the name of the person, the dates and the number of nights. If the bill relates to a group, the same information must be given.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) For persons not staying at a hotel: 1/2 daily allowance per 24 hours (including accommodation and meals). The total amount of daily allowances is calculated as follows:</td>
<td>For the allowance to be reimbursed, a declaration of each participant (Participant’s declaration) must be presented using the original model that can be downloaded from the web address mentioned in point 5.1 of this Call for Proposals.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(½ Daily allowance × number of hours)/24 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The number of hours is calculated from the beginning to the end of the stay at the venue.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation</td>
<td>1) Employees: the costs for employees are included in the maximum costs for employees under category ‘staff costs’.</td>
<td>No supporting documents are required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) Self-employed persons: up to a maximum amount of EUR 600 per day (VAT excluded).</td>
<td>Invoice indicating at least the title of the measure, the languages from and into which interpretation has been provided, the dates when the work has been carried out, and number of hours worked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category of expenditure</td>
<td>Eligible</td>
<td>Supporting document required</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Translation</strong></td>
<td>1) Employees: the costs for employees are included in the maximum costs for employees under category ‘staff costs’.</td>
<td>No supporting documents are required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) Self-employed persons: up to a maximum amount of EUR 45 per page (VAT excluded).</td>
<td>Invoice indicating at least the title of the measure, the languages from and into which translation has been provided, and the number of pages translated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consultants’ and speakers fees (†)</strong></td>
<td>Up to a maximum amount of EUR 600 per day (VAT excluded).</td>
<td>Invoice indicating at least the title of the measure, the nature of the work carried out and the dates when the work was carried. Accommodation, meals and transport costs: please refer to these categories of expenditure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hire of conference halls and equipment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Invoice indicating at least the title of the measure, the nature of the equipment and the dates when the conference rooms and the equipment were rented.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(†) Where another class is used, expenses are eligible only on presentation of an attestation by the transport company indicating the cost of second-class travel, in which case the eligible expenditure will be limited to that amount.

(‡) Bus, underground, tram and taxi fares are not eligible.

(§) Expenditure incurred by users on petrol, parking, road tolls and meals is not eligible. Costs of car hire are not eligible.

(*) Restaurant bills, bill for catering, coffee breaks etc will not be accepted. These costs are included in the daily allowance.

(†) The fees of experts or speakers are not eligible where the persons concerned are national, Community or international civil servants or members or employees of the organisation receiving the grant or an associated or affiliated organisation.