

**Call for proposals for European Commission backing involving actions in favour of promoting and safeguarding regional or minority languages and cultures**

(95/C 322/13)

**1. General context**

With a view to a European Union which respects linguistic and cultural diversity, the European Parliament has adopted a certain number of resolutions aimed at taking steps in favour of the regional or minority linguistic communities.

In accordance with these resolutions the Commission is responsible for implementing an action in favour of regional or minority languages and cultures which is financed by budget heading B3 1006.

The languages able to benefit from this budget heading are the autochthonous languages traditionally spoken by part of the population of a European Union Member State. This definition excludes both immigrants' languages and artificially created languages.

Considering the competences of the Member States and in respect of the principle of subsidiarity, any activity with a political or statutory impact will be excluded.

**2. Principal objectives:**

- to encourage initiatives in the fields of education, culture and information,
- to safeguard and promote regional or minority languages and cultures,
- to strengthen the European dimension and stimulate cooperation between all those seeking to preserve and promote said languages and cultures,
- to improve the exchange of information and the transfer of experience,
- to systematize, improve or promote the teaching of regional or minority languages in all education channels, from nursery school to adult training.

**3. Priority areas:**

Priority will be given, within the limits of available resources, to activities and projects in the following areas:

- pilot teaching projects in the different levels of education,

- initial pilot and continued teacher training; adult training,
- publications for children and adults,
- production of teaching material,
- work on standardization of language, lexicographical work and terminology,
- research - action,
- conferences, colloquiums and seminars,
- cultural events,
- use of language through the media: production of films, videos, radio and TV programmes,
- information networks and documentation centres,
- meetings between speakers of a same language situated in different European Union countries. The meeting must have a cultural content and aim at promoting and safeguarding the language.

**4. Selection criteria:**

As funds are limited and demand high in this sector, the Commission will base selection on the following criteria:

a) the European dimension:

project involving the participation of at least 2 linguistic communities or Member States, or else capable of generating the transfer of experience and knowledge from 1 region to another.

b) the multiplier effect:

- the project has links with existing projects or initiatives, or will have lasting and widespread effects;
- the envisaged beneficiaries will be language planners, belonging to research centres or voluntary institutions or organizations promoting regional or minority languages;

— the project will use the latest methods for designing teaching media and for the widespread dissemination of information (new information, communication and teaching technologies).

c) the need for urgent action:

the project involves a sensitive region or local community.

d) quality and presentation of the application:

— the project is innovatory and of renowned quality;

— sound organization has gone into the project, especially in terms of commitment of participating establishments, real and transparent management structures, clear coordination procedures, work schedules and a precise budget.

e) cost-effectiveness ratio:

— the proportion and financing level sought are reasonable, appropriate and properly justified.

Generally speaking, these criteria are cumulative. They are not necessarily all applicable; whether or not they are applied will depend on the nature of the project as well as the circumstances.

## 5. Presentation of the proposal

The proposal must be drawn up in 1 of the official Community languages, accompanied by an official and explicit letter of application for a grant.

The grant application form may be obtained by writing to the following address:

European Commission, DG XXII, 19/95, for the attention of Mrs O. Profili, Regional or Minority Languages, B-7 6/60, rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 200, B-1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, facsimile (32-2) 296 42 58.

The application must be drawn up concisely; it must provide comprehensive and verifiable information as regards the criteria in 4. If necessary any further information must be given on a separate sheet. Furthermore, the application shall, according to the case, meet the following requirements:

— if the project concerns teaching or training: specify the number of teachers and students, the type of course, the teaching methods, the number of hours and the assessment procedure.

— if it involves a conference, seminar or colloquium: complete the special form attached to the grant application.

— if it involves a film or publication: submit a detailed description of the subject and give further information on the author(s), the number of copies, the target audience, diffusion and, possibly selling price, etc.

— if it involves the production of teaching material: indicate the nature of the material to be developed, the various production phases, the assessment system and the scheduled diffusion.

A grant can be made only to a legal person.

## 6. Financial conditions:

a) The Commission envisages only part funding, Community aid being complementary and subsidiary to own contributions and/or national, regional or local aids.

b) Financing is annual. Projects for a period exceeding 1 year are to be the subject of a new application each year involving the work schedule and the budget of the year targeted. Each application will be assessed in accordance with its quality and budget availability.

c) When the budget is submitted, the total expenditure must equal the total revenue. Should the real cost incurred be less than the total cost initially envisaged, the Commission will reduce its contribution in accordance with the difference between the 2 results. It is therefore in the tenderer's interest to submit a reasonable budget forecast.

d) The Commission cannot subsidize authorities for the financing of their statutory obligations (e.g. teachers' salaries, material for local government departments).

e) Financing cannot be used to make a profit. If a project becomes lucrative, the funds allocated by the Commission must be refunded, to the value of the profit made.

f) Financial support for selected projects cannot exceed 50 % of real costs incurred for their realization.

## 7. Instruction procedure:

Subject to availability in the 1996 and 1997 budgets the Commission will select the projects to be financed under budget heading B3-1006 during these 2 financial years.

Projects must be received by the Commission (as evidenced by the postmark):

- before 1. 3. 1996 for projects commencing 15. 6. 1996;
- before 15. 6. 1996 for projects commencing 15. 10. 1996;
- before 15. 11. 1996 for projects commencing 15. 3. 1997;
- before 15. 4. 1997 for projects commencing 15. 9. 1997.

If the project is approved by the Commission, a financing agreement (drawn up in ecus), which will detail the conditions and level of financing, will be concluded between the Community and the beneficiary. It is to be signed and returned immediately to the Commission.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing.

#### 8. Submission of the final report and detailed account

The final report must provide a succinct but comprehensive description of the project's results. It will be accompanied by 3 copies of any publications, brochures, videos, publicity material, press releases, clippings from newspapers and other documents illustrating the project. The Commission may make final reports and results available to interested persons.

The final detailed accounts, setting out real expenditure and revenue, must be submitted according to the standard form submitted when aid was applied for. The beneficiary must keep accounts for the project and all original supporting documents (for verification purposes) for a period of 5 years.