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(Announcements)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

HERCULE III Programme**Call for proposals — 2017****Technical Assistance for the fight against EU fraud**

(2017/C 196/04)

1. Objectives and description

This notice of call for proposals is based on Regulation (EU) No 250/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾ establishing the Hercule III Programme, in particular Article 8 (a) ('Eligible Actions'), as well as the Financing Decision 2017 adopting the annual work programme ⁽²⁾ for the implementation of the Hercule III Programme in 2017, in particular section 6.1.1, actions: 1 - 4 ('Technical assistance: actions'). The Financing Decision 2017 provides for the organisation of a call for proposals 'Technical Assistance'.

2. Eligible applicants

The bodies eligible for funding under the Programme are national or regional administrations ('Applicants') of a Member State which promote the strengthening of European Union action to protect the European Union's financial interests.

3. Eligible actions

The purpose of this call is to invite national and regional administrations to submit applications for actions under one of the following four topics:

1. The purchase and maintenance of investigation tools and methods, including specialised training to operate these tools ('Investigation tools and methods');
2. The purchase and maintenance of devices and animals to carry out inspections of containers, trucks, railway wagons and vehicles at the Union's external borders to detect smuggled and counterfeited goods ('Detection tools');
3. The purchase, maintenance and interconnection of systems for the recognition of vehicle number plates (Automated Number Plate Recognition Systems — ANPRS) or container codes. Specialised training needed to operate these systems is included;
4. The purchase of services to support Member States' capacity to analyse, store and destroy seized cigarettes ('Analysis and Destruction of seizures').

An applicant can submit only one application under this call. The application shall be made for an action under only one of the four topics mentioned above: an application for an action under more than one of these topics will not be accepted.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) No 250/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 establishing a programme to promote activities in the field of the protection of the financial interests of the European Union (Hercule III programme) and repealing Decision No 804/2004/EC (OJ L 84, 20.3.2014, p. 6).

⁽²⁾ Commission Decision concerning the adoption of the annual work programme and the financing of the Hercule III Programme in 2017 C(2017) 1120 final of 22 February 2017.

4. Budget

The indicative available budget for this call is EUR 9 150 000. The financial contribution will take the form of a grant. The financial contribution awarded will not exceed 80 % of the eligible costs. In exceptional and duly justified cases, the financial contribution may be increased to cover a maximum of 90 % of the eligible costs. The call document lists the criteria that will be applied to determine these exceptional and duly justified cases. The minimum threshold for the budget of an action submitted in an application has been set at: EUR 100 000.

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

5. Submission of an application and deadline

Applications must be submitted no later than: **Wednesday, 9 August 2017**, and can only be submitted by making use of the Participant Portal for the Hercule III programme:

<https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/herc/index.html>

6. Further information

All documents related to this call for proposals can be downloaded from the Participant Portal mentioned under point 5 above or from the following internet website:

http://ec.europa.eu/anti-fraud/policy/hercule_en

Questions and/or requests for additional information in relation to this call have to be submitted via the Participant Portal.

The questions and answers may be anonymously published in the Guide for Applicants made available on the Participant Portal and on the Commission's internet website if they are relevant to other applicants.
