

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

2017 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

SIMPLE PROGRAMMES

Grants to information provision and promotion measures concerning agricultural products implemented in the internal market and in third countries in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council

(2017/C 9/06)

1. Background and purpose of this call

1.1. Information provision and promotion measures concerning agricultural products

On 22 October 2014, the European Parliament and the Council adopted Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 on information provision and promotion measures concerning agricultural products implemented in the internal market and in third countries and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 3/2008⁽¹⁾. This Regulation is supplemented by the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829⁽²⁾, and the rules for its application are laid down in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1831⁽³⁾.

The general objective of the information provision and promotion measures is to enhance the competitiveness of the Union agricultural sector.

The specific objectives of the information provision and promotion measures are to:

- (a) increase awareness of the merits of Union agricultural products and of the high standards applicable to the production methods in the Union;
- (b) increase the competitiveness and consumption of Union agricultural products and certain food products and to raise their profile both inside and outside the Union;
- (c) increase the awareness and recognition of Union quality schemes;
- (d) increase the market share of Union agricultural products and certain food products, specifically focusing on those markets in third countries that have the highest growth potential;
- (e) restore normal market conditions in the event of serious market disturbance, loss of consumer confidence or other specific problems.

1.2. The Commission's Annual Work Programme for 2017

The Commission's Annual Work Programme for 2017, adopted by Implementing Decision⁽⁴⁾ on 9 November 2016, sets out the details for the award of co-financing and the priorities for actions for proposals for simple and multi-programmes in the internal market and in third countries. It is available at the following address:

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/promotion/annual-work-programmes/2017/index_en.htm

1.3. Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency

The Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (hereafter Chafea) is entrusted by the European Commission with the management of certain parts of the information provision and promotion measures concerning agricultural products implemented in the internal market and in third countries, including the evaluation of simple programmes.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 on information provision and promotion measures concerning agricultural products implemented in the internal market and in third countries and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 3/2008 (OJ L 317, 4.11.2014, p. 56).

⁽²⁾ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829 of 23 April 2015 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on information provision and promotion measures concerning agricultural products implemented in the internal market and in third countries (OJ L 266, 13.10.2015, p. 3).

⁽³⁾ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1831 of 7 October 2015 laying down rules for application of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on information provision and promotion measures concerning agricultural products implemented in the internal market and in the third countries (OJ L 266, 13.10.2015, p. 14).

⁽⁴⁾ Commission Implementing Decision of 9 November 2016 on the adoption of the Work Programme for 2017 of information provision and promotion measures concerning agricultural products implemented in the internal market and in third countries, C(2016) 7100 final.

1.4. *The present call for proposals*

The present call for proposals relates to the implementation of simple programmes, in the framework of Section 1.2.1.1 and 1.2.1.2 of Annex I of the 2017 Annual Work Programme related to actions under thematic priority 1 and 2, namely simple programmes in the internal market and in third countries.

2. **Objective(s) — Themes — Priorities**

Section 1.2.1.1 and 1.2.1.2 of Annex I of the 2017 Annual Work Programme sets out the thematic priorities for actions to be co-financed through the present call (see also section 6.2 on eligible activities below). Only proposals which directly correspond to the topic and description given in this section of the Annual Work Programme will be considered for funding. Therefore, 8 topics for proposals are announced with the present call document. Applications submitted under this call must fall under the scope of one of these priority topics. It is possible for a proposing organisation to submit several applications for different projects under the same priority topic. It is also possible to submit several applications for different projects under different priority topics.

3. **Timetable**

The deadline for submission is **20 April 2017, 17.00** CET (Central European Time).

	Stages	Date and time or indicative period
(a)	Publication of the call	12.1.2017
(b)	Deadline for submitting applications	20.4.2017
(c)	Evaluation period (indicative)	21.4-31.8.2017
(d)	Decision by the Commission (indicative)	October 2017
(e)	Information to applicants (indicative)	October 2017
(f)	Signature of the contract with Member State (indicative)	January 2018
(g)	Starting date of the action (indicative)	> 1.1.2018

4. **Budget available**

The total budget earmarked for the co-financing of actions under this call is EUR 85 500 000. The indicative amounts available per topic are indicated in the table 'Eligible activities' under point 6 below.

This amount is subject to the availability of the appropriations after the adoption of the budget for 2018 by the EU budgetary authority or provided for in the provisional twelfths. This amount is also subject to the availability of appropriations for the following 3 years taking into account the non-differentiated nature of the appropriations.

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

5. **Admissibility requirements**

Applications must be sent no later than the submission deadline referred to in section 3.

Applications must be submitted online by the coordinator via the participant portal (electronic submission system available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/agrip/index.html>).

Failure to comply with the above requirements will lead to the rejection of the application.

Proposals may be submitted in any official language of the European Union. Nevertheless, when preparing their proposals, applicants should take into account that contracts will be managed by the Member States. Consequently, applicants are encouraged to submit their proposal in the language(s) of the Member State of origin of the proposing organisation(s) unless if the Member State concerned has indicated its agreement to sign the contract in English⁽¹⁾. To facilitate the review of proposals by independent experts who provide technical input to the evaluation, an English translation of the technical part (part B) should preferably accompany the proposal if it is written in another EU official language.

6. Eligibility criteria

6.1. Eligible applicants

The proposals for simple programmes can only be submitted by legal persons or other entities which do not have a legal personality under the applicable national law, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on behalf of the entity and offer guarantees for the protection of the Union's financial interests equivalent to those offered by legal persons as referred to in Article 131(2) of the Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012.

More specifically, applications from the following organisations and bodies are eligible, as referred to in Article 7(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014:

- (i) trade or inter-trade organisations, established in a Member State and representative of the sector or sectors concerned in that Member State, and in particular the interbranch organisations as referred to in Article 157 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 and groups as defined in point 2 of Article 3 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012, provided that they are representative for the name protected under the latter Regulation which is covered by that programme;
- (ii) producer organisations or associations of producer organisations, as referred to in Articles 152 and 156 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 that have been recognised by a Member State; or
- (iii) agri-food sector bodies the objective and activity of which is to provide information on, and to promote, agricultural products and which have been entrusted, by the Member State concerned, with a clearly defined public service mission in this area; those bodies must have been legally established in the Member State in question at least two years prior to the date of the call for proposals referred to in Article 8(2).

The abovementioned proposing organisations may submit a proposal provided that they are representative of the sector or product concerned by the proposal complying with conditions set out in Articles 1(1) or 1(2) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829 of 23 April 2015, namely:

- (i) trade or inter-trade organisation, established in a Member State, as referred to in Article 7(1)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 respectively, shall be deemed to be representative of the sector concerned by the programme:
 - where it accounts for at least 50 % as a proportion of the number of producers, or 50 % of the volume or value of marketable production of the product(s) or sector concerned, in the Member State concerned, or
 - where it is an interbranch organisation recognised by the Member State in accordance with Article 158 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council or with Article 16 of Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council;
- (ii) a group as defined in point 2 of Article 3 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council and referred to in Article 7(1)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014, shall be deemed to be representative of the name protected under Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 and covered by the programme, where it accounts for at least 50 % of the volume or value of marketable production of the product(s) whose name is protected;
- (iii) a producer organisation or an association of producer organisations as referred to in Article 7(1)(c) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 shall be deemed to be representative of the product(s) or sector concerned by the programme where it is recognised by the Member State in accordance with Articles 154 or 156 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 or with Article 14 of Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013;
- (iv) an agri-food sector body as referred to in Article 7(1)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 shall be deemed to be representative of the sector(s) concerned by the programme by means of having representatives of that product(s) or sector among its memberships.

⁽¹⁾ This information will be available at http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/promotion/member-states/index_en.htm

By way of derogation from points (i) and (ii) above, lower thresholds may be accepted if the proposing organisation demonstrates in the submitted proposal that there are specific circumstances, including the evidence on the structure of the market, which would justify treating the proposing organisation as representative of the product(s) or sector concerned.

Proposals can be submitted by one or more proposing organisations from the same EU Member State.

Only applications from entities established in EU Member States are eligible.

Non-eligible entities: applicants who already receive Union financing for the same information provision and promotion measures that are part of their proposal(s) shall not be eligible for Union financing for those measures under Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014.

In order to assess the applicants' eligibility, the following supporting documents are requested:

- private entity: extract from the official journal, copy of articles of association, or extract of trade or association register,
- public entity: copy of the resolution or decision establishing the public company, or other official document establishing the public-law entity,
- entities without legal personality: documents providing evidence that their representative(s) have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf,
- documentation proving that the applicant meets the representativeness criteria set out in Article 1 of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829.

6.2. Eligible activities

The proposals shall comply with the criteria of eligibility listed in Annex II of the Annual Work Programme, namely:

- (a) proposals can only cover products and schemes listed in Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014;
- (b) proposals shall ensure that measures are implemented through implementing bodies as referred to in Article 13 of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014. Proposing organisations must select bodies responsible for implementing programmes ensuring best value for money and absence of conflict of interest (see Article 2 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829 and point (e) of section 11.1 of the call). The proposing organisation shall undertake that the body responsible for the implementation of the programme shall be selected at the latest before the signature of the contract (see Article 10 of the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1831);
- (c) if a proposing organisation proposes to implement certain parts of the proposal itself, it shall ensure that the cost of the measure which it plans to carry out itself is not in excess of the normal market rates;
- (d) proposals shall comply with Union law governing the products concerned and with all the provisions described under Article 3(1) of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829;
- (e) if a message conveyed concerns information on the impact on health, proposals shall comply with the rules as referred to in Article 3(2) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829;
- (f) if the proposal proposes to mention origin or brands, it shall comply with the rules as referred to in Chapter II of the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1831.

For the purposes of assessing the eligibility of the planned activities, the following information must be provided:

- proposals covering national quality schemes shall provide documentation or a reference to publically available sources that prove that the quality scheme is recognised by the Member State,
- proposals targeting the internal market and relaying a message on proper dietary practices or responsible alcohol consumption shall describe how the proposed programme and its message(s) are in line with the relevant national rules in the field of public health in the Member State where the programme will be carried out. Justification should include references or documentation in support of the claim.

In addition, a proposal shall also comply with one of the thematic priorities listed in the 2017 Annual Work Programme for simple programmes. Below are extracts of the 2017 Annual Work Programme detailing the 8 topics for which applications may be submitted. The text describes the topic, related amount foreseen, objectives and expected results.

Actions under thematic priority 1: Simple programmes in the internal market

Topics	Total amount foreseen	Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results
<p>Topic 1 — Information provision and promotion programmes aiming at increasing the awareness and recognition of Union quality schemes as defined in Article 5(4)(a), (b) and (c) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014</p>	<p>EUR 12 375 000</p>	<p>The objective is to increase the awareness and recognition of the Union quality schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) quality schemes: Protected designation of origin (PDO), protected geographical indication (PGI), traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG) and optional quality terms; (b) organic production method; (c) the logo for quality agriculture products specific to the outermost regions of the Union. <p>Information and promotion programmes targeting Union quality schemes should be a key priority in the internal market since such schemes provide consumers with assurances on the quality and characteristics of the product or the production process used, achieve added value for the products concerned and enhance their market opportunities.</p> <p>One of the expected results is to increase the levels of recognition of the logo associated with the Union quality schemes by the European consumers knowing that, according to special Eurobarometer (No 440), only 20 % of Europeans consumers recognise the logos of products that benefit from a protected designation of origin (PDO), 17 % for a protected geographical indication (PGI) and 15 % for the Traditional Specialty Guaranteed, these being the main Union quality schemes. In addition, only 23 % of European consumers recognise the logo of organic farming.</p> <p>The expected ultimate impact is to enhance the competitiveness and consumption of Union agri-food products registered under a Union quality scheme, raise their profile and increase their market share.</p>

Topics	Total amount foreseen	Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results
Topic 2 — Information provision and promotion programmes aiming at highlighting the specific features of agricultural methods in the Union and the characteristics of European agricultural and food products, and quality schemes defined in Article 5(4)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014	EUR 10 125 000	<p>The objective is to highlight the specific features of agricultural production methods in the Union, particularly in terms of food safety, traceability, authenticity, labelling, nutritional and health aspects (including proper dietary practices and responsible consumption of eligible alcoholic beverages), animal welfare, respect for the environment and sustainability, and the characteristics of agricultural and food products, particularly in terms of their quality, taste, diversity or traditions.</p> <p>The expected impact is to increase the awareness of the merits of Union agricultural products by the European consumers and to enhance the competitiveness and consumption of the concerned Union agri-food products, raise their profile and increase their market share.</p>

Actions under thematic priority 2: Simple programmes in third countries ⁽¹⁾

Topics	Total amount foreseen	Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results
Topic 3 (*) — Information provision and promotion programmes targeting one or more of the following countries: China (including Hong-Kong and Macao), Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, south-east Asian region or India	EUR 14 750 000	<p>The information and promotion programmes should target one or more countries identified in the corresponding topic.</p> <p>The objectives of these programmes should comply with the general and specific objectives set out in Article 2 of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014.</p>
Topic 4 (*) — Information provision and promotion programmes targeting one or more of the following countries: USA, Canada or Mexico	EUR 11 600 000	<p>The expected ultimate impact is to enhance the competitiveness and consumption of Union agri-food products, raise their profile and increase their market share in these targeted countries.</p>
Topic 5 (*) — Information provision and promotion programmes targeting one or more countries of Africa, Middle East (**), Iran or Turkey	EUR 8 450 000	
Topic 6 (*) — Information provision and promotion programmes targeting geographical areas other than those included under Topics 3, 4 and 5.	EUR 11 600 000	

⁽¹⁾ The composition of regions follows the United Nations country and regional classification. For more details on the list of countries composing the geographical areas, see: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm>

Topics	Total amount foreseen	Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results
<p>Topic 7 — Information provision and promotion programmes on milk products, pigmeat products or a combination of those two targeting any third country</p> <p>Products eligible under this Topic are those listed in Part XVII of Annex I to Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council(***) for pigmeat products and Part XVI of Annex I to that Regulation for milk and milk products, respectively.</p>	EUR 12 600 000	
<p>Topic 8 — Information provision and promotion programmes on beef products targeting any third country.</p> <p>Products eligible under this topic are those listed in Part XV of Annex I to Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council</p>	EUR 4 000 000	

(*) Programmes shall not cover milk/dairy products, pigmeat products, beef products or a combination of these three. They may however cover these if they are associated with other agri-food products.

(**) Middle East is also referred to as 'Western Asia'.

(***) Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products and repealing Council Regulations (EEC) No 922/72, (EEC) No 234/79, (EC) No 1037/2001 and (EC) No 1234/2007 (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 671).

In case a proposing organisation wishes to target several of the prioritised regions in third countries in one programme, it should submit several applications (one application per topic). Alternatively, it could also apply under the topic 'information and promotion programmes targeting other geographical areas'. This topic relates to the geographical areas that have not been listed in topic 3 to topic 5, but it may also concern a combination of several prioritised regions listed in topic 3 to topic 5.

Types of eligible activities

Promotion and information provision actions may notably consist of the following activities, eligible under this call:

1. Management of project
2. Public relations
 - PR activities
 - Press events
3. Website, social media
 - Website setup, updating, maintenance
 - Social media (accounts setup, regular posting)
 - Other (mobile apps, e-learning platforms, webinars, etc.)

4. Advertising

- Print
- TV
- Radio
- Online
- Outdoor
- Cinema

5. Communication tools

- Publications, media kits, promotional merchandise
- Promotional videos

6. Events

- Stands at trade fairs
- Seminars, workshops, B2B meetings, trainings for trade/cooks, activities in schools
- Restaurant weeks
- Sponsorship of events
- Study trips to Europe

7. Point-of-sale (POS) promotion

- Tasting days
- Other: promotion in retailers' publications, POS advertising.

Implementation period

The co-financed action (information provision/promotion programmes) shall be implemented over a period of at least one but not more than three years.

Proposals should specify the duration of the action.

7. Exclusion criteria

7.1. Exclusion from participation

Applicants will be excluded from participating in the call for proposals procedure if they are in any of the exclusion situations ⁽¹⁾:

- (a) the economic operator is bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, where its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by a court, where it is in an arrangement with creditors, where its business activities are suspended, or where it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under national laws or regulations;
- (b) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the economic operator is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions in accordance with the law of the country in which it is established, with those of the country in which the contracting authority is located or those of the country of the performance of the contract;

⁽¹⁾ Articles 106 of the Financing Regulation and its corresponding Rules of Application adopted by Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 as lastly amended by Regulation (EU) 2015/1929 and Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/2462 respectively.

- (c) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the economic operator is guilty of grave professional misconduct by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the economic operator belongs, or by having engaged in any wrongful conduct which has an impact on its professional credibility where such conduct denotes wrongful intent or gross negligence, including, in particular, any of the following:
- (i) fraudulently or negligently misrepresenting information required for the verification of the absence of grounds for exclusion or the fulfilment of selection criteria or in the performance of a contract;
 - (ii) entering into agreement with other economic operators with the aim of distorting competition;
 - (iii) violating intellectual property rights;
 - (iv) attempting to influence the decision-making process of the contracting authority during the procurement procedure;
 - (v) attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon it undue advantages in the procurement procedure;
- (d) it has been established by a final judgment that the economic operator is guilty of any of the following:
- (i) fraud, within the meaning of 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⁾;
 - (ii) corruption, as defined 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⁾, and in Article 2(1) of Council Framework Decision 2003/568/JHA ⁽³⁾, as well as corruption as defined in the law of the country where the contracting authority is located, the country in which the economic operator is established or the country of the performance of the contract;
 - (iii) participation in a criminal organisation, as defined in Article 2 of Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA ⁽⁴⁾;
 - (iv) money laundering or terrorist financing, as defined in Article 1 of Directive 2005/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽⁵⁾;
 - (v) terrorist-related offences or offences linked to terrorist activities, as defined in Articles 1 and 3 of Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA ⁽⁶⁾ respectively, or inciting, aiding, abetting or attempting to commit such offences, as referred to in Article 4 of that Decision;
 - (vi) child labour or other forms of trafficking in human beings as defined in Article 2 of Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽⁷⁾;
- (e) the economic operator has shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations in the performance of a contract financed by the budget, which has led to its early termination or to the application of liquidated damages or other contractual penalties, or which has been discovered following checks, audits or investigations by an authorising officer, OLAF or the Court of Auditors;
- (f) it has been established by a final judgment or final administrative decision that the economic operator has committed an irregularity within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95.

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 316, 27.11.1995, p. 48

⁽²⁾ OJ C 195, 25.6.1997, p. 1.

⁽³⁾ Council Framework Decision 2003/568/JHA of 22 July 2003 on combating corruption in the private sector (OJ L 192, 31.7.2003, p. 54).

⁽⁴⁾ Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA of 24 October 2008 on the fight against organised crime (OJ L 300, 11.11.2008, p. 42).

⁽⁵⁾ Directive 2005/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2005 on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering and terrorist financing (OJ L 309, 25.11.2005, p. 15).

⁽⁶⁾ Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA of 13 June 2002 on combating terrorism (OJ L 164, 22.6.2002, p. 3).

⁽⁷⁾ Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA (OJ L 101, 15.4.2011, p. 1).

7.2. *Exclusion from award*

Applicants will be excluded from the award of co-financing if, in the course of the grant award procedure, they fall under one of the situations described under article 107 of the Financial Regulation:

- (a) are in an exclusion situation established in accordance with article 106 of the Financial Regulation;
- (b) have misrepresented the information required as a condition for participating in the procedure or have failed to supply that information in the grant award procedure or fail to supply this information;

In order to demonstrate compliance with the exclusion criteria, the applicant has to check the relevant box while submitting its online application. If selected for co-funding, all beneficiaries have to sign a declaration on honour certifying they are not in one of the situations referred to in articles 106(1) and 107 to 109 of the Financial Regulation. The applicants should follow the instructions in the participant portal.

8. **Selection criteria**

8.1. *Financial capacity*

Applicants must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period of implementation of the action and to participate in its funding.

The financial capacity of all applicants will be assessed in line with the requirements of the Financial Regulation No 966/2012. This assessment will not be carried out if:

- the EU-contribution requested by the applicant is \leq EUR 60 000,
- the applicant is a public body.

The supporting documents that need to be annexed to the online application to allow the assessment of the financial capacity include:

- the annual accounts (including the balance sheet and the profit and loss statement) for the past financial year for which the accounts were closed (for newly created entities, the business plan shall be submitted to replace the accounts),
- a pre-filled financial viability form summarising the necessary data from the annual accounts contributing to the assessment of the applicant's financial capacity.

In addition for a coordinator or other beneficiary requesting an EU-contribution of \geq EUR 750 000 (threshold applicable per beneficiary):

- an audit report produced by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the last financial year available. This provision shall not apply to public bodies.

8.2. *Operational capacity*

Applicants must have the professional competencies and qualifications required to complete the action.

As evidence, the following information must be provided in part B of the proposal:

- general profiles (qualifications and experiences) of the applicant's staff primary responsible for managing and implementing the proposed action,
- the proposing organisation(s) activity report or a description of activities performed in connection to the activities that are eligible for co-financing as described under point 6 (above).

In cases where proposing organisations propose to implement certain parts of the proposal, evidence shall be given that they have at least three years' experience in implementing information provision and promotion measures.

9. **Award criteria**

Part B of the application serves to evaluate the proposal against the award criteria.

Generally, projects are expected to have an efficient management structure, a clear strategy and a precise description of expected results.

The content of each proposal will be assessed according to the following criteria and sub criteria:

Criteria	Maximum points	Threshold
1. Union dimension	20	14
2. Technical quality of the project	40	24
3. Management quality	10	6
4. Budget and cost-effectiveness	30	18
TOTAL	100	62

Proposals falling below the overall and/or the individual thresholds announced above shall be rejected.

The following sub-criteria shall be taken into account in the assessment of each of the main award criteria:

1. Union dimension

- (a) Relevance of proposed information and promotion measures to the general and specific objectives listed in Article 2 of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014, aims listed in Article 3 of that Regulation, as well as to priorities, objectives and expected results announced under the relevant thematic priority;
- (b) Union message of the campaign;
- (c) Impact of project at Union level.

2. Technical quality of the project

- (a) Quality and relevance of the market analysis;
- (b) Suitability of the programme strategy, objectives, and key messages;
- (c) Suitable choice of activities with respect to objectives and programme strategy, balanced communication mix, synergy between activities;
- (d) Concise description of activities;
- (e) Quality of the proposed evaluation methods and indicators.

3. Management quality

- (a) Project organisation and management structure;
- (b) Quality control mechanisms and risk management.

4. Budget and cost-effectiveness

- (a) Return on investment;
- (b) Suitable split of budget in relation to the objectives and scope of the activities;
- (c) Consistency between the estimated costs and deliverables;
- (d) Realistic estimation of person/days for activities implemented by the proposing organisation, including costs of project coordination.

Following the evaluation, all eligible proposals are ranked according to the total number of points awarded. The highest ranked proposal or proposals will be awarded co-financing depending on budget availability.

A separate ranked list shall be established for each of the priority topics listed under section 6.2 of the present call.

If there are two (or more) proposals with the same number of points on the same ranked list, then the proposal(s) which allows for diversification in terms of products or targeted markets shall be retained. It means that between two *ex aequo* proposals, Commission shall first select the one the content of which (firstly in terms of products, secondly in terms of targeted market) is not yet represented in the ranked list. If this criterion cannot be applied, then the Commission shall select first the programme which got the highest score for the individual award criteria. It will first compare the scores for 'Union dimension', then for 'Technical quality', and finally for 'Budget and cost-effectiveness'.

10. Legal commitments

Following the evaluation, Chafea establishes a list of proposals recommended for funding, ranked according to the total number of points awarded.

According to Article 11(2) Regulation (UE) No 1144/2014, the European Commission shall adopt an implementing act, determining the simple programmes selected, any changes to be made to them, and the corresponding budgets (award decision).

This Commission decision will list the selected programmes accepted for a financial contribution from the Union under Article 15 of Regulation (UE) No 1144/2014. This Decision will be addressed to the competent Member States. The Member States concerned shall be responsible for the proper implementation of the simple programmes selected and for the relevant payments.

As soon as the Commission adopts this implementing act, it shall forward the copies of the selected programmes to the Member States concerned. Member States shall without delay inform the proposing organisations concerned whether or not their applications have been accepted.

Member States shall conclude contracts for the implementation of programmes with the selected proposing organisations in accordance with the requirements mentioned under Article 10 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1831. The contract will notably detail the conditions and level of funding, as well as the obligations of the parties.

11. Financial provisions

11.1. General principles

(a) Non-cumulative award

An action may only receive one grant from the EU budget.

In no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice by the Union budget.

Applicants shall indicate the sources and amounts of Union funding received or applied for the same action or part of the action or their functioning (operating grants), as well as any other funding received or applied for the same action.

(b) Non-retroactivity

No grant may be awarded retrospectively for actions already completed.

(c) Co-financing

Co-financing means that the resources which are necessary to carry out the action are not entirely provided by the EU grant.

The remaining expenditure shall be borne exclusively by the proposing organisation.

Financial contributions given to a beneficiary by its members, specifically to be used for costs that are eligible under the action, are allowed and will be considered as receipts.

(d) Balanced budget

The estimated budget of the action must be presented in part A of the application form. It must have revenue and expenditure in balance.

The budget must be drawn up in euros.

Applicants who foresee that costs will not be incurred in euros, are invited to use the exchange rate published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/inforeuro/inforeuro_en.cfm

(e) Implementation contracts/subcontracting

Where the implementation of the action requires the award of procurement contracts (implementation contracts), the beneficiary must award the contract to the bid offering best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interests and retain the documentation for the event of an audit.

Where the proposing organisation is a body governed by public law within the meaning of Article 2(1)(4) of Directive 2014/24/EU, it must select the subcontractors in accordance with the national legislation transposing that Directive.

Sub-contracting, i.e. the externalisation of specific tasks or activities which form part of the action as described in the proposal must satisfy the conditions applicable to any implementation contract (as specified above) and in addition to them the following conditions:

- it must be justified having regard to the nature of the action and what is necessary for its implementation,
- it must be clearly stated in the technical and financial parts of the proposal.

(f) Subcontracting to entities having a structural link with the beneficiary

Subcontracts may also be awarded to entities that have a structural link with the beneficiary, but only if the price is limited to the actual costs incurred by the entity (i.e. without any profit margin).

The tasks to be implemented by such entities must be clearly stated in the technical part of the proposal.

11.2. Funding forms

Co-financing shall take the form of reimbursement of a specified proportion of eligible costs actually incurred; it will also comprise a flat rate covering indirect costs (equal to 4 % of eligible personnel costs) that are linked with the implementation of the action ⁽¹⁾.

Maximum amount requested

The EU grant is limited to the following maximum co-funding rate of:

- for simple programmes in the internal market: 70 % of the programme's eligible costs,
- for simple programmes in third countries: 80 % of the programme's eligible costs,
- for simple programmes in the internal market of beneficiary established in Member States receiving on or after 1 January 2014 financial assistance in accordance with Article 136 and 143 TFEU ⁽²⁾: 75 % of the programme's eligible costs,
- for simple programmes in third countries of beneficiary established in Member States receiving on or after 1 January 2014 financial assistance in accordance with Article 136 and 143 TFEU: 85 % of the programme's eligible costs.

These two latest percentages shall apply to those programmes decided upon by the Commission before the date from which the Member State concerned no longer receives such financial assistance.

Consequently, part of the total eligible expenses entered in the estimative budget must be financed from sources other than the EU grant (co-financing principle).

Eligible costs

Eligible costs are actually incurred by the beneficiary of the grant and meet all the criteria indicated in Article 4 of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829.

Ineligible costs

Ineligible costs are costs that do not comply with the conditions set out in Article 4 of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829, in particular:

- return on capital,
- debt and debt service charges,

⁽¹⁾ Applicant's attention is drawn to the fact that in case they receive an operating grant, indirect costs are not eligible.

⁽²⁾ At the date of the publication of this call: Greece.

- provisions for losses or debts,
- interest owed,
- doubtful debts,
- exchange losses,
- costs of transfers from the Commission charged by the bank of a beneficiary,
- costs declared by a beneficiary and covered by another action receiving a European Union grant. In particular, indirect costs shall not be eligible under a grant for an action awarded to a beneficiary who already receives an operating grant financed from the Union budget during the period in question,
- contributions in kind,
- excessive or reckless expenditure,
- deductible VAT,
- costs incurred during suspension of the implementation of the action.

Calculation of the final grant amount

The final grant amount is calculated after completion of the programme, upon approval of the payment request.

The 'final grant amount' depends on the actual extent to which the programme is implemented in accordance with the Agreement's terms and conditions.

This amount is calculated by the Member State — when the payment of the balance is made — in accordance with Article 15 of the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1831.

11.3. *Payment arrangements*

The proposing organisation may submit an application for an advance payment to the Member State concerned in accordance with Article 13 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1831.

Applications for an interim payment of the Union's financial contributions shall be submitted by the proposing organisation to the Member States in accordance with Article 14 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1831.

Applications for payment of the balance shall be submitted by the proposing organisation to the Member State States in accordance with Article 15 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1831.

11.4. *Advance guarantee*

In accordance with Article 13 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1831, the advance payment shall be paid on condition that the proposing organisation has lodged a security equal to the amount of that advance in favour of the Member State in accordance with Chapter IV of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 907/2014 ⁽¹⁾.

12. **Publicity**

Beneficiaries must clearly acknowledge the European Union's contribution in all activities for which the grant is used.

In this respect, beneficiaries are required to give prominence to the name and emblem of the European Union on all their publications, posters, programmes and other products realised under the co-financed project.

Rules for the graphic reproduction of the European emblem are found in the Interinstitutional Style Guide ⁽²⁾.

In addition, all visual material produced in the framework of a promotion programme co-financed by the European Union must bear the signature 'Enjoy it's from Europe'. Guidelines on the use of the signature, as well as all graphic files can be downloaded from the promotion website on Europa ⁽³⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 907/2014 of 11 March 2014 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to paying agencies and other bodies, financial management, clearance of accounts, securities and use of euro (OJ L 255, 28.8.2014, p. 18).

⁽²⁾ <http://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-5000100.htm>

⁽³⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/promotion/index_en.htm

Lastly, all written material, i.e. brochures, posters, leaflets, banners, billboards, print advertisements, articles in newspaper, webpages (with the exception of small gadgets) should include a disclaimer according to the terms detailed in the grant agreement, explaining that it represents the views of the author. The European Commission does not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains.

13. Data protection

The reply to any call for proposals involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CVs of individuals participating in the co-financed action). Such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. Unless indicated otherwise, the questions and any personal data requested are required to evaluate the application in accordance with the specifications of the call for proposal will be processed solely for that purpose by the Executive Agency/the Commission or third parties acting on behalf and under the responsibility of the Executive Agency/Commission. Data subjects may be informed regarding further details of the processing operations, their rights and how they may be enforced by referring to the privacy statement published in the participant portal:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/support/legal_notices.html

and the Agency's website:

http://ec.europa.eu/chafea/about/data_protection.html

Applicants are invited to check the relevant privacy statement at regular intervals so as to be duly informed on possible updates that may occur by the deadline for submission of their proposals or afterwards. Beneficiaries assume the legal obligation to inform their staff on the relevant processing operations that are to be performed by the Agency; in order to do so, they have to provide them with the privacy statements published by the Agency in the participant's portal before transmitting their data to the Agency; Personal data may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) of the European Commission provided for in articles 105a and 108 of the EU Financial Regulation according to the applicable provisions.

14. Procedure for the submission of proposals

Proposals must be submitted by the deadline set out under section 5 via the Electronic Submission System: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/agrip/index.html>

Before submitting a proposal:

1. Find a call:

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

2. Create an account to submit a proposal:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/organisations/register.html>

3. Register all partners via the beneficiary registry:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/organisations/register.html>

Applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the selection process.

In submitting a proposal, the applicant accepts the procedures and conditions as described in this call and in the documents to which it refers.

No modification to the application is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. However, if there is a need to clarify certain aspects or for the correction of clerical mistakes, the Commission/Agency may contact the applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process ⁽¹⁾.

Contacts

For questions on the online submission tools please contact the IT helpdesk set-up for this purpose via the participant portal website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/index.cfm?pg=enquiries>

For non-IT-related questions a helpdesk at the Chafea is available at: +352 430136611, email address: CHAFEA-AGRI-CALLS@ec.europa.eu weekdays between 9.30-12.00 and 14.30-17.00 CET (Central European Time). The helpdesk is unavailable on weekends and public holidays.

⁽¹⁾ Article 96 of Financial Regulation.

Frequently asked questions are published on the website of the Chafea:

<http://ec.europa.eu/chafea/agri/faq.html>

In all correspondence relating to this call (e.g. when requesting information, or submitting an application), reference must be clearly made to this specific call. Once the electronic exchange system allocated a proposal ID, the applicant must use this number in all subsequent correspondence.

After the deadline for submission modifications to the application are impossible.

Related documents

- Guide for applicants with the relevant annexes
 - Application form
 - Model grant agreement (mono- and multi-beneficiary version).
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