

2020 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**

(2020/C 12/07)

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 ⁽¹⁾ 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. 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 2020

The Commission's Annual Work Programme for 2020, adopted by implementing decision ⁽⁴⁾ on 18 November 2019, sets out the details for the award of co-financing and the priorities for simple and multi programmes in the internal market and in third countries. It is available at the following address:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/market-measures/promotion-eu-farm-products_en

1.3. Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency

The Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (hereinafter '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 launch of calls for proposals and evaluation of applications for 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 on the adoption of the work programme for 2020 of information provision and promotion measures concerning agricultural products implemented in the internal market and in third countries, C(2019)8095.

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 (actions under thematic priority 1: simple programmes in the internal market) and 1.2.1.2 (actions under thematic priority 2: simple programmes in third countries) of Annex I of the 2020 Annual Work Programme.

2. **Objectives — Priorities — Topics**

Section 1.2.1.1 and 1.2.1.2 of Annex I of the 2020 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). Applications submitted in response to this call must fall under the scope of one of the six topics given in these sections of the Annual Work Programme, otherwise they will not be considered for funding. Applicants may submit several applications for different projects under the same priority topic. Applicants may also submit several applications for different projects under different thematic priorities or topics.

3. **Timetable**

The deadline for submission is 15 April 2020, 17.00 CET (Central European Time).

	Stages/Deadlines	Date and time or indicative period
(a)	Publication of the call for proposals	14.1.2020
(b)	Deadline to submit non-IT related questions	1.4.2020 17.00 CET
(c)	Deadline to reply to non-IT related questions	8.4.2020 17.00 CET
(d)	Deadline for submitting applications	15.4.2020 17.00 CET
(e)	Evaluation period	April-August 2020
(f)	Decision by the Commission	October 2020
(g)	Information to applicants by the Member States	October 2020
(h)	Grant adaptation phase	October 2020-January 2021
(i)	Signature of the grant agreement between Member States and the beneficiaries	< January 2021
(j)	Starting date of the action	> 1.1.2021

4. **Budget available**

The total budget earmarked for the co-financing of actions under this call is EUR 95 000 000. The indicative amounts available per topic are indicated in the table 'Eligible activities' under point 6.2 below.

This amount is subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the EU for 2020 following its adoption 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 three 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 'Funding & Tender Opportunities' portal (electronic submission system available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/programmes/agrip>).

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 grant agreements 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 the Member State concerned has indicated its agreement to sign the grant agreement in English ⁽⁵⁾.

To facilitate the review of proposals by independent experts who provide technical input to the evaluation, an English translation of the technical part of the proposal (part B) should preferably accompany the proposal if it is written in another EU official language.

6. Eligibility Criteria

6.1. Eligible applicants

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 197(2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 (hereinafter 'Financial Regulation') ⁽⁶⁾.

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 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽⁷⁾ and groups as defined in point 2 of Article 3 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽⁸⁾, 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 Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829, 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 ⁽⁹⁾;
- (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;

⁽⁵⁾ This information is available at <https://ec.europa.eu/chafea/agri/funding-opportunities/simple-and-multi-programmes>

⁽⁶⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 (OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1).

⁽⁷⁾ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 671.

⁽⁸⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

⁽⁹⁾ OJ L 354, 28.12.2013, p. 1.

- (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.

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 may be submitted by one or more proposing organisations, which shall all be from the same EU Member State.

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

For British applicants: Please be aware that eligibility criteria must be complied with for the entire duration of the grant. If the United Kingdom withdraws from the EU during the grant period without concluding an agreement with the EU ensuring in particular that British applicants continue to be eligible, you will cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the project on the basis of Article 34.3 of the grant agreement.

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.
- In addition, all applicants are requested to submit the relevant documentation proving that the applicant meets the representativeness criteria set out in Article 1 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829.

6.2. *Eligible actions and 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 Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829). 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 grant agreement (see Article 10 of 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 their marketing, be of significant scale, have a Union dimension and comply with all other provisions of Article 3(1) of 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 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 Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1831.

For applicants submitting proposals targeting the UK: please note that the withdrawal of the UK from the EU may lead to changes in the implementation of the programmes.

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 publicly available sources that prove that the quality scheme is officially 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. The justification shall 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 2020 Annual Work Programme for simple programmes. Below are extracts of the 2020 Annual Work Programme detailing the six 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</p> <p>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 12 000 000</p>	<p>The objective is to increase the awareness and recognition of the Union quality schemes, namely:</p> <p>(a) quality schemes: protected designation of origin (PDO), protected geographical indication (PGI), traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG) and optional quality terms;</p> <p>(b) organic production method;</p> <p>(c) the logo for quality agricultural products specific to the outermost regions of the Union.</p> <p>Information and promotion programmes on 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. According to special Eurobarometer (No 473), only 18 % of European consumers recognise the logos of products that benefit from a protected designation of origin (PDO) and a protected geographical indication (PGI), and 15 % recognise the Traditional Speciality Guaranteed, these being the main Union quality schemes. Although awareness of the organic farming logo has increased by four points since 2015, still only 27 % of European consumers recognise the EU logo of organic farming.</p>

Topics	Total amount foreseen	Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results
		The expected ultimate impact is to increase awareness of the Union quality schemes and to enhance the competitiveness and consumption of products registered under a Union quality scheme, raise their profile and increase their market share.
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 8 000 000	The objective is to highlight at least one of 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. The expected ultimate 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 Union agri-food products, raise their profile and increase their market share.

Actions under thematic priority 2: Simple programmes in third countries

Applicants can refer to Section 1.2.1 of Annex I of the Work Programme for additional background information.

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 Southern Asia ⁽¹⁾	EUR 27 500 000	The information and promotion programmes shall target one or more countries identified in the corresponding topic. The objectives of these programmes shall comply with the general and specific objectives set out in Articles 2 and 3 of Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014. 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 the targeted countries.
Topic 4 Information provision and promotion programmes targeting one or more of the following countries: Canada, USA or Mexico	EUR 20 000 000	
Topic 5 Information provision and promotion programmes targeting other geographical areas	EUR 22 500 000	
Topic 6 (*) Information provision and promotion programmes on beef and/or veal targeting any third country(ies) (*). 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	EUR 5 000 000	

⁽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>

(*) Simple programmes on beef and/or veal targeting third countries shall apply under Topic 6. They cannot apply under Topics 3, 4 or 5, except if beef and/or veal is/are associated with (an)other product(s).

In case a proposing organisation wishes to target several of the prioritised regions in third countries, it shall either submit several applications and one application per topic. Alternatively, it could apply under topic 5 'information provision and promotion programmes targeting other geographical areas'. This topic relates to the geographical areas that have not been listed in topic 3 and topic 4, but it may also concern a combination of several prioritised regions listed in topic 3 and topic 4.

Types of eligible activities

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

1. Management of the 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

Tastings and distribution of samples are not allowed in the context of campaigns on responsible drinking implemented in the internal market; these activities are however acceptable if ancillary to and supportive of the provision of information measures on the quality schemes and organic production method.

Implementation period

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

Proposals should specify the duration of the action.

7. Exclusion Criteria ⁽¹⁰⁾

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:

- (a) the applicant is bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by a court, it is in an arrangement with creditors, its business activities are suspended, or it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under EU or national laws or regulations;
- (b) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the applicant is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions in accordance with the applicable law;
- (c) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the applicant is guilty of grave professional misconduct by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the applicant belongs, or by having engaged in any 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 eligibility or selection criteria or in the performance of a contract, a grant agreement or a grant decision;
 - (ii) entering into agreement with other applicants with the aim of distorting competition;
 - (iii) violating intellectual property rights;
 - (iv) attempting to influence the decision-making process of the Agency during the award procedure;
 - (v) attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon it undue advantages in the award procedure;
- (d) it has been established by a final judgment that the applicant is guilty of any of the following:
 - (i) fraud, within the meaning of Article 3 of Directive (EU) 2017/1371 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹¹⁾ and Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995;
 - (ii) corruption, as defined in Article 4(2) of Directive (EU) 2017/1371 or 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, or conduct referred to in Article 2(1) of Council Framework Decision 2003/568/JHA ⁽¹²⁾, or corruption as defined in the applicable law;
 - (iii) conduct related to a criminal organisation, as referred to in Article 2 of Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA ⁽¹³⁾;
 - (iv) money laundering or terrorist financing within the meaning of Article 1(3), (4) and (5) of Directive (EU) 2015/849 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁴⁾;
 - (v) terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities, as defined in Articles 1 and 3 of Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA ⁽¹⁵⁾, 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 offences concerning trafficking in human beings as referred to in Article 2 of Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁶⁾;
- (e) the applicant has shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations in the performance of a contract, a grant agreement or a grant decision financed by the Union's 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;

⁽¹⁰⁾ Articles 136, Article 137 and Article 142 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.

⁽¹¹⁾ OJ L 198, 28.7.2017, p. 29.

⁽¹²⁾ OJ L 192, 31.7.2003, p. 54.

⁽¹³⁾ OJ L 300, 11.11.2008, p. 42.

⁽¹⁴⁾ OJ L 141, 5.6.2015, p. 73.

⁽¹⁵⁾ OJ L 164, 22.6.2002, p. 3.

⁽¹⁶⁾ OJ L 101, 15.4.2011, p. 1.

- (f) it has been established by a final judgment or final administrative decision that the applicant has committed an irregularity within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95 ⁽¹⁷⁾;
- (g) It has been established by a final judgement or final administrative decision that the applicant has created an entity in a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or any other legal obligations of mandatory application in the jurisdiction of its registered office, central administration or principal place of business;
- (h) it has been established by a final judgement or final administrative decision that an entity has been created with the intent referred to in point (g);
- (i) for the situations referred to in points (c) to (h) above, the applicant is subject to:
 - (i) facts established in the context of audits or investigations carried out by European Public Prosecutor's Office after its establishment, the Court of Auditors, the European Anti-Fraud Office or the internal auditor, or any other check, audit or control performed under the responsibility of an authorising officer of an EU institution, of a European office or of an EU agency or body;
 - (ii) non-final judgments or non-final administrative decisions which may include disciplinary measures taken by the competent supervisory body responsible for the verification of the application of standards of professional ethics;
 - (iii) facts referred to in decisions of persons or entities being entrusted with EU budget implementation tasks;
 - (iv) information transmitted by Member States implementing Union funds;
 - (v) decisions of the Commission relating to the infringement of Union competition law or of a national competent authority relating to the infringement of Union or national competition law; or
 - (vi) decisions of exclusion by an authorising officer of an EU institution, of a European office or of an EU agency or body.

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 141 of the Financial Regulation, i.e. if they

- (a) are in an exclusion situation established in accordance with Article 136 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;
- (c) were previously involved in the preparation of documents used in the award procedure where this entails a breach of the principle of equality of treatment, including distortion of competition, that cannot be remedied otherwise.

In order to demonstrate compliance with the exclusion criteria, the coordinator has to check the relevant box while submitting its online application. If selected for co-funding, all beneficiaries (in case of a multi-beneficiary grant) have to sign a declaration on honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in Articles 136(1), 136(2), 141 and 142 of the Financial Regulation. The applicants should follow the instructions in the Funding and Tenders 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. 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 last 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.

⁽¹⁷⁾ OJ L 312, 23.12.1995, p. 1.

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.

If the audit report is not available and a statutory report is not required by law, a self-declaration signed by the applicant's authorised representative certifying the validity of its accounts for the last financial year available must be provided.

8.2. Operational capacity

Applicants must have the appropriate professional qualifications required to complete the proposed actions.

Applicants shall demonstrate that at least one natural person working under employment contract with the applicant, or assigned to the action on basis of an equivalent appointing act, secondment against payment or on the basis of other types of direct contracts (e.g. covering provision of services) will be appointed as a project coordinator. The project coordinator shall have at least three years' experience in project management. As evidence, the following information must be provided in the annex 'CVs':

- Curriculum Vitae (qualifications and professional experience) of the person/s primarily responsible for managing and implementing the proposed action ⁽¹⁸⁾.

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. As evidence, the following information must be provided in the annex 'Additional information':

- 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).

9. Award criteria

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

Applications must propose an efficient management structure and provide a clear and precise description of the strategy and of the 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. Quality of the technical proposal	40	24
3. Quality of the project management	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.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Applicants are advised to submit curricula vitae in the European format. Template available at: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/>

2. Quality of the technical proposal
 - (a) Quality and relevance of the market analysis.
 - (b) Coherence of the programme strategy, objectives, and key messages.
 - (c) Suitable choice of activities with respect to objectives and programme strategy, adequate communication mix, synergy between the activities.
 - (d) Concise description of activities and deliverables.
 - (e) Quality of the proposed evaluation methods and indicators.
3. Quality of the project management
 - (a) Project organisation and management structure.
 - (b) Quality control mechanisms and risk management.
4. Budget and cost-effectiveness
 - (a) Justification of the overall level of investment.
 - (b) Suitable allocation of budget in relation to the objectives and scope of the activities.
 - (c) Clear description of the estimated costs and accuracy of the budget.
 - (d) Consistency between the estimated costs and deliverables.
 - (e) Realistic estimation of costs of project coordination and of activities implemented by the proposing organisation, including number and rate of person/days.

Following the evaluation, all eligible proposals are ranked according to the total number of points awarded. Financial contributions shall be awarded to the highest scoring proposals up to the available budget.

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 prioritised. This means that between *ex aequo* proposals, the 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 higher ranked proposals. 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 'Quality of the technical proposal', and finally for 'Budget and cost-effectiveness'.

If for a given topic there are not enough proposals on the ranked list to exhaust the whole foreseen amount, the remaining amount may be reallocated to other topics according to the following criteria:

- (a) the total of the remaining foreseen amount for the two topics on the internal market shall be allocated to the projects targeting the internal market with the highest quality score, irrespective of the topic for which they have applied;
- (b) the same approach shall be taken for proposals targeting third countries (Topics 3-6);
- (c) if the foreseen amount is still not exhausted, the remaining amounts for both internal market and third countries shall be merged and assigned to projects with the highest quality score, irrespective of the priority and topic for which they have applied.

The order of the ranked lists will be strictly followed.

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

11. Financial provisions

11.1. General principles applying to grants ⁽¹⁹⁾

(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) The co-financing principle

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.

11.2. 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/infoeuro/infoeuro_en.cfm

11.3. 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 ⁽²⁰⁾.

The beneficiary is expected to clearly document the tendering procedure 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 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽²¹⁾, it must select the subcontractors in accordance with the national legislation transposing that Directive.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Article 188 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.

⁽²⁰⁾ For guidance on the competitive procedure, please refer to the following webpage:
https://ec.europa.eu/chafea/agri/sites/chafea/files/agri-2016-61788-00-00_en.pdf

⁽²¹⁾ OJ L 94, 28.3.2014, p. 65.

Subcontracting, 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 fulfill the following conditions:

- it must be justified with regard to the nature of the action and what is necessary for its implementation,
- the core tasks of the actions (i.e. the technical and financial coordination of the action and the management of the strategy) can neither be subcontracted nor delegated,
- the estimated costs of subcontracting must be clearly stated in the technical and financial parts of the proposal,
- any recourse to subcontracting, if not provided for in description of the action, is communicated by the beneficiary and approved by the Member State. The Member State may grant approval:
 - (i) before any recourse to subcontracting, if the beneficiaries requests an amendment;
 - (ii) after recourse to subcontracting, if the subcontracting:
 - is specifically justified in the interim or final technical report, and
 - does not entail changes to the grant agreement which would call into question the decision awarding the grant or be contrary to the equal treatment of applicants,
- the beneficiaries ensure that certain conditions applicable to beneficiaries, enumerated in the grant agreement (e.g. visibility, confidentiality, etc.), are also applicable to the subcontractors.

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.

11.4. *Funding forms, eligible and ineligible costs*

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 ⁽²²⁾.

— **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 eligible costs,
- for simple programmes in third countries: 80 % of the 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 ⁽²³⁾: 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.

The two latter 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).

⁽²²⁾ Applicant's attention is drawn to the fact that in case they receive an operating grant, indirect costs are not eligible.

⁽²³⁾ At the date of the publication of this call: none of the Member States are under financial assistance.

— **Eligible costs**

Eligible costs are actually incurred by the beneficiary of the grant and meet all the criteria indicated in Article 6.1 and 6.2 of the model grant agreement and in Article 4 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829.

— **Ineligible costs**

Ineligible costs are costs that do not comply with the conditions set out in Article 4 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1829. They are listed under Article 6.4 of the model grant agreement.

— **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 grant 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 Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1831.

11.5. *Payment arrangements*

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

11.6. *Advance guarantee*

In accordance with Article 13 of 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 ⁽²⁴⁾.

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 ⁽²⁵⁾.

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 ⁽²⁶⁾.

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.

⁽²⁴⁾ 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).

⁽²⁵⁾ <http://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-5000100.htm>

⁽²⁶⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/market-measures/promotion-eu-farm-products_en

13. Data protection

The reply to any call for proposals involves 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 (EU) 2018/1725 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data⁽²⁷⁾. 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/the 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 Funding and Tenders Portal:

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/support/legalnotice>

and the Agency's website:

https://ec.europa.eu/chafea/about/data-protection/index_en.htm

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 Funding and Tenders 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 135 and 142 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 3 via the Electronic Submission System:

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>

Before submitting a proposal:

1. Find a call:

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/programmes/agrip>

2. Create an account to submit a proposal:

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/beneficiary-register>

3. Register all partners via the beneficiary registry:

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/beneficiary-register>

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

Applicants shall respect the page limit and formatting requirements for the technical proposal (part B) indicated in the submission system.

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/the Agency may contact the applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process⁽²⁸⁾.

Contacts

For questions on the online submission tools, please contact the IT helpdesk set-up for this purpose via the Funding and Tenders Portal:

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/support/helpdesks>

For non-IT related questions, a helpdesk at Chafea is available via: CHAFEA-AGRI-CALLS@ec.europa.eu. The deadline to submit questions is 1.4.2020 17.00 CET (Central European Time). Answers to relevant questions will be published on <http://ec.europa.eu/chafea/agri/faq.html> by 8.4.2020 17.00 CET (Central European Time).

⁽²⁷⁾ OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39.

⁽²⁸⁾ Recital 89 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.

Frequently asked questions are published on the website of 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.

Related documents

- Guide for Applicants with the relevant annexes
 - Application form
 - Model Grant Agreement (mono- and multi- beneficiary version)
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