



Frequently Asked Questions - FAQ -

*Calls for strategic project
proposals
published on 03/09/2012
2nd Step*



Let's grow up together

Adriatic IPA

Cross Border Cooperation 2007-2013



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Lead Applicants invited to the 2nd Step procedure of the Calls for strategic project proposals published on 3/09/2012 will be able to find in this document answers to the questions frequently addressed to the Managing Authority.

The readers are anyway encouraged to consult the source documents when these are referred to.

Please note that the Managing Authority as well as JTS cannot, for reasons of equal treatment, neither assess proposals at this stage nor help to draft proposals. Assessing the proposal is the exclusive competence of an appointed assessors. Such assessors can under no circumstances perform its duties prior to the submission of proposals.

The MA/JTS reply to submitted questions has to be considered as a clarification of the published call for proposals document and under no circumstances as an assessment of parts of a proposal.

Updated version: 30th May 2013



Sommario

- Question 1. We ask if we can accept the date of receipt today 29th April 2013, because we have got the entire letter today and not on 24th April 2013 by fax. - 5 -
- Question 2. In the invitation letter it is communicated the possibility of adding new Final Beneficiary/ies. Since one of project partners resulted to be not admissible during the 1st Step procedure, we would like to know if it possible to invite this partner one more time to participate to this project. - 5 -
- Question 3. To which address shall the Final Application Package be delivered? - 5 -
- Question 4. Which version of the Final strategic project proposal form shall be used? - 6 -
- Question 5. Concerning the “de minimis Declaration”, if a public body or a body governed by public law does not act as an undertaking into the project, may the “because: (max 2.000 characters)” part of the declaration, in the first page, be left empty? - 6 -
- Question 6. Can a project include additional Associate/s in the Final Strategic Project Proposal? - 6 -
- Question 7. Can a partner declared as not eligible under the 1st step join the project as an Associate under the 2nd step?..... - 6 -
- Question 8. Which typology of legal documents (administrative or accounting documentation) should be provided to prove the existence of branch office in the eligible area? - 7 -
- Question 9. Can compulsory outputs be changed from 1st to 2nd step?..... - 7 -
- Question 10. In case in the Final Strategic Project Proposal not all the WPs/actions and/or cross-border partnership tables have been filled in because not needed, should those pages be printed? - 7 -
- Question 11. Considering that at page 25 of the Applicants' Manual it is written that "Lead Applicants invited to the 2nd step procedure may, in duly justified circumstances, replace former Final Beneficiary under the condition that such replacing is taken within the same Participating Country" we would like to know what are the justified circumstances for the replacement of a former Final Beneficiary and if there is a specific procedure to follow..... - 7 -



- Question 12. We would like to know if the participation in the award of SUB-GRANTS contracts launched by Final Beneficiaries of strategic projects finally selected for funding could be open also to all natural persons, provided that, once the SUB-GRANT has been awarded the selected natural person will establish a legal person according to the Strategic Call for proposals requirement (in terms of eligibility of beneficiaries)..... - 8 -
- Question 13. Can the total project budget be modified? - 9 -
- Question 14. How can be demonstrated that the signature is clearly referred to the signatory person (§ 17.2 of the Calls)? - 9 -
- Question 15. Is it possible to include specific objectives in addition to the ones foreseen under the 1st Step or will this considered as a modification of the project content? - 9 -
- Question 16. Is a scholarship considered an eligible expenditure? If yes, under what category of expenditure? Under what terms may it be awarded? - 10 -
- Question 17. In our project, two partners were declared as ineligible and being these two partners excluded we are wondering if the project budget decreased for the amount attributed to these two partners, e.g. is the project budget smaller, or, is the budget still the same, provided we replace these two partners, with new partners from their countries, or if other partners take over their activities? - 10 -
- Question 18. In sheet 2 Cross-border partnership, with the exclusion of the LB and FB1, it is not possible to insert the National identification number, since a drop down list opens, the same as for the legal status line. How can we change that when the table is protected, or can you repair the table and send it to all the applicants? - 10 -



Question 1. We ask if we can accept the date of receipt today 29th April 2013, because we have got the entire letter today and not on 24th April 2013 by fax.

Pursuant to paragraphs 12 and 17.3 of the Call for proposal, as *lex specialis* of the selection procedure, the requirement related to the deadline within which the Final Application package for the 2nd Step procedure must be received by the Managing Authority, namely “*at latest on the sixtieth day from when the letter of invitation to apply to the second step procedure was sent by fax*”, must be duly respected, otherwise the project will be rejected according to criterion A) of the List of admissibility criteria under the 2nd step procedure (§ 13).

Consequently, this requirement could not be in any case postponed, having the Managing Authority the formal proof that the fax communication was duly delivered to the contact person of the Lead Applicant on 24th April 2013, through the reception of the fax by the addressee fax machine.

Additionally, permitting to some Lead Applicants to postpone the submission deadline would breach the EU principles of equal treatment and clearness established by EU Regulations, besides the public administration principles of efficiency, effectiveness, impartiality and sound financial implementation.

The proposal has to be then duly **received by the Managing Authority at latest on the next 24th June 2013 by 17:00 Rome time** (UTC/GMT+1 hour), being the sixtieth day, the 23rd of June, Sunday.

Question 2. In the invitation letter it is communicated the possibility of adding new Final Beneficiary/ies. Since one of project partners resulted to be not admissible during the 1st Step procedure, we would like to know if it possible to invite this partner one more time to participate to this project.

Project partners resulted to be not admissible under the 1st Step procedure, when assessed against the admissibility criteria established in § 13.2 of the Call for the motivations communicated to Lead Applicants, are not admissible to join (again) the proposal.

Question 3. To which address shall the Final Application Package be delivered?

Since the name of the regional office where the Managing Authority, responsible for the procedures management of the Calls (§ 9 of the Calls), is located has been modified, the address where to deliver the Final Application Package is the following (§ 12 of the Calls):

Regione Abruzzo – Servizio Cooperazione Territoriale - IPA Adriatic
Autorità di Gestione - IPA Adriatic CBC Programme
Via Salaria Antica Est, n. 27
I-67100, L'Aquila - ITALY



Question 4. Which version of the Final strategic project proposal form shall be used?

Lead Applicants have been informed by the Managing Authority with letter Prot. No. RA125356 as of 14/05/2013, that the Final strategic project proposal (excel form) has been amended in its version No. 2 as of 14/05/2013. The modifications on this second version concerns:

- **Sheet 2.a Associates:** it is now possible to list up to 10 Associates, against 5 as in the previous version;
- **Sheet 4. Workplan:** update of the starting and ending dates of actions according to the expected date of start of each WP;
- **Sheet 5. Budget:** modification of tables 5.4 and 5.6 "Beneficiaries' spending forecast per WP and per period, for what concerns WP0 periods (extended up to 30/06/2013);

Lead Applicants are then invited to use this second version of the Final strategic project proposal, which can be downloaded in the "How to apply - 1st Calls for Strategic Project Proposals" Section of the Programme website.

Question 5. Concerning the "de minimis Declaration", if a public body or a body governed by public law does not act as an undertaking into the project, may the "because: (max 2.000 characters)" part of the declaration, in the first page, be left empty?

If that section is left blank this will not affect the correct drafting of the declaration, being that space provided only to justify (up to 2.000 characters):

- (a) for **private project partners** (profit or no-profit making), that they ARE not acting in the project as undertakings and for private interest;
- (b) for **Public bodies and bodies governed by public law**, why they retain TO ACT in the project as undertakings and for private interest.

When filling in this declaration, Final beneficiaries are recommended to read carefully § 5.7 "State aid and de minimis regime" of the Applicants Manual.

Question 6. Can a project include additional Associate/s in the Final Strategic Project Proposal?

In the Final Strategic Project Proposal, additional Associate/s can be included. Lead Applicants are recommended to read § 6.2.3 "Associates" of the Applicants Manual.

Question 7. Can a partner declared as not eligible under the 1st step join the project as an Associate under the 2nd step?

Associated institutions do not have to respect the eligibility rules established by the Call as they are not Final Beneficiaries. Therefore in the Final Strategic Project Proposal, a not-eligible partner under the 1st step can be included as an Associate in the 2nd Step.

Lead Applicants are recommended to read § 6.2.3 "Associates" of the Applicants Manual.



Question 8. Which typology of legal documents (administrative or accounting documentation) should be provided to prove the existence of branch office in the eligible area?

Final Beneficiary located outside the Programme eligible area, but which participates with a branch office in the eligible area, has to provide official documents (as statute or registered act) stating clearly the existence of such branch office.

Accounting documents - such as the electricity bills, for instance, of year 2010 - can demonstrate the use of that office in 2010 (and then that the branch office has more than one year of operation), but they cannot be considered as sufficient to demonstrate the existence of the branch office in general.

Instead, in order to prove that the leader of the branch office is "*an authorised representative of the final beneficiary, entitled to act for the implementation of the project activities*" according to what required under § 7 of the Calls, the Final Beneficiary can provide a general act (as its Statute) or a specific act (as a delegation act specifically drafted for project purposes) which could be the same delegation act provided to sign the de minimis declaration, clearly showing that the authorized person (e.g. the Dean of the Faculty) is entitled to act for the implementation of project activities once the project will be financed.

Question 9. Can compulsory outputs be changed from 1st to 2nd step?

In the 2nd step Applicants should describe the expected results and outputs as defined in the 1st step. They can be slightly modified under the 2nd step with the aim to improve the project proposal based on the criticism underlined in the 1st step quality assessment.

With the same aim to improve the proposal, additional outputs not mentioned in the first step can be added.

Question 10. In case in the Final Strategic Project Proposal not all the WPs/actions and/or cross-border partnership tables have been filled in because not needed, should those pages be printed?

In order not to waste paper, ink and toner and being environmental sensitive, it is possible not to print the part of the Final Strategic Project Proposal left blank. However it is important to print all the filled in sections as well as the "Cover" and the "Timetable" sheets.

Question 11. Considering that at page 25 of the Applicants' Manual it is written that "Lead Applicants invited to the 2nd step procedure may, in duly justified circumstances, replace former Final Beneficiary under the condition that such replacing is taken within the same Participating Country" we would like to know what are the justified circumstances for the replacement of a former Final Beneficiary and if there is a specific procedure to follow.

As general principle (§ 4 of the Calls), project partners should have been involved on the basis of the following criteria:

Representativeness:

- ✓ *Territorial coverage.*
- ✓ *Capacity of developing activities that meet a general interest.*
- ✓ *Capacity of target groups and stakeholders mobilization.*
- ✓ *Capacity in achieving the outputs and results.*



Cross border dimension.

Capacity of awareness raising, spreading and capitalization of achievements.

Capacity to promote sustainability, secure the continuation of project benefits after the completion of the project and maximize its impact.

Moreover, Strategic projects shall allow for the building of active high-quality partnerships around key actors who have competences in the Strategic themes, involving decision makers, thematic experts, specialised bodies and end-users. As a result, partnership should be diverse and complementary and should refer to a multi-level governance model as well as to a multi-dimensional governance system. Besides, strong cross-border cooperation must be ensured with harmonious, fair and balanced involvement of all partners.

This being said, the following situations may occur which could be considered as duly justified circumstances for the replacement of a Final beneficiary involved in the 1st Step:

- (a) from the verification of the supporting documents provided (§ 12 of the Call) it emerges that ***the Final beneficiary is not eligible*** according to the Call's requirement (f.i. it does not have legal personality);
- (b) the Final Beneficiary decide to withdraw the project;
- (c) from the 1st Step quality Assessment Final Report it emerged that *the proposed partnership* (block of criteria C) *is not so adequate* for the achievement of the project results or that it is not harmonious, not well balanced or not complementary in terms of representativeness, competences and active involvement in the project activities per Country regarding the Strategic Theme concerned.

Provided that the new Final Beneficiary belongs to the same Country of the replaced partner, no specific procedure is required for such replacement and the replacing Final beneficiary will be considered as a new one (thus its expression of Interest has to be provided with the other commitment and supporting documents).

Moreover, the Lead Applicant has to duly explain the motivation of such replacement, providing also all the available documents to support its justifications and in case of other circumstances of replacement outside the above mentioned three cases, it has to provide all clarifications necessary to determine if the replacement can be authorized.

Question 12. We would like to know if the participation in the award of SUB-GRANTS contracts launched by Final Beneficiaries of strategic projects finally selected for funding could be open also to all natural persons, provided that, once the SUB-GRANT has been awarded the selected natural person will establish a legal person according to the Strategic Call for proposals requirement (in terms of eligibility of beneficiaries).

Paragraph 4.3 of the Programme Management and Control Manual, which establishes the Programme rules for eligibility of expenditure, for what concerns sub-granting rules that:

- o *“the sub-grant shall be assigned by the Final Beneficiary following the same provisions set out in the relevant Call for Proposals and in the IPA Subsidy Contract (eligibility of granters, selection procedure, respect of State aid provisions...)”*

which actually means that the participation in the award of sub-grant contracts financed within a Strategic Project shall be open only to legal persons which respects the same



eligibility rules established for Final Beneficiaries of the Strategic Calls for Proposals (§ 6.1 of the Calls).

Consequently, since the requirements for eligibility have to be already satisfied before the final awarding of the contract, namely when participants submit their request for the selection for the assignment of the sub-grant, only legal persons which satisfy the Strategic Call for proposals eligibility requirements can be selected for the award of the sub-grant and in no case it is then possible to select natural persons and award them the sub-grant after they establish a legal person according to the Strategic Call for proposals requirements.

Question 13. Can the total project budget be modified?

Projects are allowed to decrease their total budget up to 20%.

The total project budget can never be increased even if additional partner/s are included in the partnership.

Only projects with a total budget less than 5 Million EUR are allowed to increase their total budget but only up to 20%.

Question 14. How can be demonstrated that the signature is clearly referred to the signatory person (§ 17.2 of the Calls)?

Every time a signature is required, the signature must be readable and clearly associable to the signatory person.

Since many potential applicants have required to clarify such issue, in case the readable signature differs from the signature which is indicated on the identification document of the signatory person, it is suggested to put both the two signatures: the readable one and the one as on the identification document.

Moreover, Final Beneficiaries are even suggested to *self-declare* under the same signature that it is even “handwritten”.

Question 15. Is it possible to include specific objectives in addition to the ones foreseen under the 1st Step or will this considered as a modification of the project content?

Paragraph 4 of the Calls rule that “*specific objectives of project cannot be modified between the 1st and 2nd step of selection procedure*”, but what should be avoided is that the ones declared under the 1st step will be replaced with others under the 2nd step.

Consequently, only the case of initial objectives replaced under the 2nd step will be considered as not having satisfied the Call requirements and not the fact that additional objectives have been included.



Question 16. Is a scholarship considered an eligible expenditure? If yes, under what category of expenditure? Under what terms may it be awarded?

Under the IPA Adriatic CBC Programme, scholarships are not eligible, consisting of grants assigned to natural persons, which, according to the Programme rules for sub-granting is not admissible (only legal persons can be sub-granted, according to § 4.3 of the PMCM).

Question 17. In our project, two partners were declared as ineligible and being these two partners excluded we are wondering if the project budget decreased for the amount attributed to these two partners, e.g. is the project budget smaller, or, is the budget still the same, provided we replace these two partners, with new partners from their countries, or if other partners take over their activities?

Since the project has been subject to the exclusion of two partners, the budget to take into consideration is the sum of the budget assigned to the (only) eligible partners, thus smaller than the one initially required under the 1st Step.

Question 18. In sheet 2 Cross-border partnership, with the exclusion of the LB and FB1, it is not possible to insert the National identification number, since a drop down list opens, the same as for the legal status line. How can we change that when the table is protected, or can you repair the table and send it to all the applicants?

Not being possible to modify the excel form, Lead Applicants are authorized to leave the "National identification code" space blank for Final Beneficiaries from FB2 on.

