

INFORMATION SESSION
Call for Proposals: Support to Mine Action: Reducing risk and supporting landmine victims

Key notes
from the session held on 28 October 2016,
at the premises of the EU Delegation to BiH

Introduction

Deadline for requesting clarification	24 November 2016
Clarifications to be issued by the EU latest by	5 December 2016
Deadline for submission of applications	16 December
Notification of award	March 2017

Questions and answers

Question 1

Clarification was requested regarding the eligibility of traveling costs outside BiH i.e. regional exchange of best practices.

Answer:

Costs related to international traveling abroad can be considered eligible if they are linked to the duly justified activities and absolutely necessary for the implementation of the Action. The proposed Action should be implemented in the territory of BiH (in the 11 municipalities indicated in the Guidelines for Applicants) and may consist of various activities including travelling, if necessary. Based on the recommendation of the Evaluation Committee, and prior to the contract signature, activities can be excluded if they are not fully justified and necessary for the Action.

Question 2

At page 9 it states: "*Purchasing of the equipment is ineligible unless necessary for the successful execution of the project*". In the case of demining we usually refer to two types of equipment: metal detectors and protection equipment. Could you explain if metal detectors and protection equipment are eligible costs?

Answer:

Metal detectors and other equipment (e.g. protection equipment) will be eligible if duly justified. For all procurement procedures Annex IV of the Special Conditions is applicable.

Question 3

The cost of salaries for the local administration staff is listed as ineligible (page 13). Can you please clarify?

Answer: The cost of salaries mentioned at page 13 of the Guidelines for the Applicants refers to the national administration salaries i.e. employees working in the public administration of the beneficiary country paid from the national budget and not to the employees working in the project (project staff).

Question 4

Is there any other ineligible costs which are not listed in the Guidelines for Applicants?

Answer:

In principle the list of ineligible cost is complete. However, before the contract is signed the Contracting Authority will clear the budget and check again all costs to ensure their compliance with the eligibility rules.

Question 5

Can you please explain the evaluation mechanism at the concept note stage describe in page 18 of the Guidelines for Applicants? Is it correct to understand that given the maximum amount of Lot 1 from all the submitted applications only two concept notes will be selected as soon as max of 200% of budget is reached?

Answer:

The aforementioned provision aims to objectively regulate the number of concept notes which will go to the next step of the evaluation. The Guidelines for Applicants state: *"The concept notes will receive an overall score out of 50 in line with the evaluation grid below. Concept notes with a score lower than 30 will be rejected. Concept notes that reach the above threshold will be ranked by score. The highest scoring applications will be pre-selected until the limit of 200% of the available budget for this call for proposals is reached"*. However, the Evaluation Committee can decide to pre-select more concept notes and to go beyond the limit indicated before.

Question 6

Do we need to upload the Statute in PADOR and at which stage? (reference to page 22 of the Guidelines for Applicants, article 2.4.1.).

Answer:

The eligibility of the applicant and co-applicant(s) can be assessed at any step of the evaluation process therefore the PADOR profile of the applicant should be updated simultaneously with the application submission.

Question 7

What is the definition of a PA Grant (page 24, item 2.6)?

Answer:

"PA Grant" stands for Grant Agreement for Pillar Assessed Organisations. It is the special type of agreement signed between the Contracting Authority and International Organisations.

Question 8

Please clarify if the list of locations published in the Call for Proposals applies to both Lots or just to Lot 1 (demining)?

Answer:

The aim of the Call is to optimise the use of available funds. The geographical targeting is applied to both Lots. By focusing the Call for Proposal activities to 11 municipalities, the EU Delegation endeavours to contribute to the three Mine Action strategy objectives: demining, mine awareness and mine victims assistance in a coordinated manner.

Question 9.a)

Is a bank guarantee necessary for Lot 1?

Answer:

Article 15.8 of the General Conditions states that: "*If the grant exceeds EUR 60 000 the Contracting Authority may request a financial guarantee for the amount of the initial pre-financing payment*". In Lot 1, the duration of the Action is up to 12 months therefore the initial pre-financing payment will be 80 % of the maximum amount as the Option I for payment is applicable in this case.

Further on, the same Article 15.8 of the General Conditions referring to the Bank guaranty states: "*Provision shall not apply if the coordinator (lead applicant) is non-profit organisation, organisation which has signed framework partnership, government department or public body unless otherwise stipulated in Special conditions*".

Question 9.b)

Since the administrative cost of bank guarantee is substantial can this be included in the budget?

Answer:

Article 14.2 of the General Conditions states: "*Subject to Article 14.1 and, where relevant, to the provisions of Annex IV being respected, the following direct costs of the Beneficiary(ies) shall be eligible:*

a)...

b)...

c)...

d)...

e)...

f)...

g) costs deriving directly from the requirements of the Contract (dissemination of information, evaluation specific to the Action, audits, translation, reproduction, insurance, etc.) including financial service costs (in particular the cost of transfers and financial guarantees where required according to the Contract).

Question 10

Have the EU had any discussions with the concerned municipalities regarding the co-financing of the project (10%) considering that the co-financing can be a substantial amount for smaller NGOs?

Answer:

The EU Delegation did not address the co-financing aspect with the concerned municipalities and will not take a proactive role in this regard. It is up to the applicant(s) to ensure for the co-financing. The EU held consultation meetings with the mine action focal points in the municipalities for the identification and the selection of the locations. The municipalities are aware that IPA funding will be available to cover tasks from the 2016 priority list and they were also informed by BH MAC in October 2016.

As stated in the Guidelines for Applicants (Size of grants):" The grant may cover the entire eligible costs of the action if this is deemed essential to carry it out. If that is the case, the lead applicant must justify full financing in Annex A.2., section 2.1. The validity of the justification provided will be examined during the evaluation procedure. The absence of any justification may lead to the rejection of the application".

Question 11

The implementation period for Lot 1 is very tight in particular when considering the surface to be demined (approx. 800.000 m² for clearance and 1.300.000 m² for technical survey). This task would require the engagement of 10-12 teams and it would be difficult for one organisation to implement it within a period of 8 to 12 months. Would the EU Delegation consider a priori an extension of the implementation period?

Answer:

For the sake of efficiency and in order to keep the administrative costs at an acceptable level a maximum period of 12 months is envisaged as implementation period. In principle the implementation period will not be extended. The EU Delegation encourages the interested applicants to seek for co-applicants that can contribute to the timely implementation of the Action.

Question 12

The PADOR application allows from the start of the process to choose registering as "leading applicant" or "co-applicant". This registration determines the volume of documents which need to be up-loaded. For example are the financial and audit report necessary both for the applicant and the co-applicant?

Answer:

The PADOR profile can be used for several Calls while the PROSPECT application is linked to a specific Call for Proposals. Both applications are linked. While in PADOR the potential applicants are invited to up-load documents related to their profile, in PROSPECT applicants must indicate their role ("lead applicant" or "co-applicant") for that specific Call for Proposals.

The best practise is to up-load in PADOR all relevant documents regardless from the role you may undertake in a specific Call for Proposals. Support can be requested from the PADOR team through the functional mailbox indicated in the Guidelines for Applicants.

Question 13

Is there a limit to the number of co-applicants allowed for this Call for Proposals?

Answer

No, there is no limit to the number of co-applicants allowed for this Call.

Question 14

Is there a PADOR Help Desk in BiH?

Answer:

There is no PADOR helpdesk in BiH. All questions related to registration in PADOR or the on-line submission via PROSPECT should be addressed to the IT helpdesk at "EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu" via the on-line support form in PROSPECT. Please note that the working languages of the IT support are English, French and Spanish. Therefore, users are invited to send their questions in those languages should they wish to benefit from an optimum response time.

The Technical Assistance to Civil Society Organisations in BiH (TACSO) office, located in Danijela Ozme1, 71000 Sarajevo, phone number +387 (0)33 269 315 provides advice upon request. You may contact the TACSO office or write to "info.ba@tacso.org" or to deniza.sovtic@tacso.org.