

Youth in Action

Action 4.1. Support for bodies active at European level in the field of youth

Call for proposals

No 1/2007

1. INTRODUCTION

The European Commission's proposal concerning the 'Youth in Action' programme for the 2007–2013 period has not yet been formally adopted by the EU legislature. Nonetheless, the Commission and the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency ('the Agency') have decided to publish this call for proposals now to enable prompt implementation of this programme after the adoption of its legal basis by the EU legislature, which should take place soon, and to enable potential beneficiaries of Community grants to prepare their proposals as soon as possible.

This call for proposals concerns programme action 4.1, whereby bodies active at European level in the field of youth will receive support. Neither the Commission nor the Agency are bound by this call for proposals which refers to grants to be awarded for 2007. It may be cancelled and calls for proposals with different specifications may be issued, with appropriate time limits for response, should the legal basis be substantially altered by the EU legislature.

Furthermore, implementation of the 2007 call for proposals is subject to the following conditions being met, over which the Commission and the Agency have no control:

- ✓ adoption by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union of the final text of the legal basis establishing the programme;
- ✓ adoption of the annual work programme for the 'Youth in Action' programme, after its referral to the programme committee;
- ✓ adoption of the 2007 budget of the European Union by the budgetary authority.

2. OBJECTIVES

The 'Youth in Action' programme aims to promote active citizenship in young people, encourage solidarity and tolerance, foster mutual understanding between young people from different countries and develop European cooperation on youth matters. In addition the programme will contribute to improvements in the quality of support systems for youth activities and further develop the capabilities of civil society organisations working with youth.

The programme's objectives are set out in the proposal for a Decision creating the 'Youth in Action' programme and also appear in the programme guide.

The programme provides bodies pursuing an aim of general European interest in the field of youth with support for their regular activities in this field. These activities must help encourage young people to participate as citizens in public life, in society, and in the development and implementation of EU cooperation actions in the broadly defined field of youth.

An annual grant may be awarded to help such bodies meet their operating costs. These bodies may be:

- ✓ a non-profit-making body working solely for the benefit of young people or a body with broader aims whose work includes activities dedicated to young people;
- ✓ a European network representing non-profit-making bodies working for the benefit of young people.

The grant will be awarded with due regard for the body's right to independently select its members and autonomously determine its plan of activities.

3. TIMETABLE

Applications must be sent to the Agency **no later than 22 December 2006** (please read carefully section 12.3 of this call for proposals concerning application submission procedures). The funding decision should be taken during the first quarter of 2007 and the Agency should be able to inform applicants in writing of the outcome of the selection procedure at the end of March 2007. Beneficiaries should receive their grant agreements for signature before 30 April 2007.

4. BUDGET

The total budget earmarked for cofinancing the operation of bodies active at European level in the field of youth is estimated at **EUR 2 400 000** for 2007. Community financial assistance cannot exceed **80% of the total eligible operating costs**. The maximum Community grant for each body will be **EUR 35 000**. The Agency reserves the right not to allocate all the funds available.

5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applications that meet the following criteria will be the subject of an in-depth evaluation.

5.1. Eligible bodies

To be eligible for an operating grant, a body must:

- ✓ be non-governmental;
- ✓ have been legally established for at least one year;
- ✓ be non-profit-making;
- ✓ be a youth organisation, or a network with a wider scope but focussing part of its activities exclusively on young people;
- ✓ involve young people in managing activities conducted for their benefit;
- ✓ have at least one (salaried or non-salaried) permanent member of staff. An exception will be made for bodies that have never received a grant provided as support for bodies active at European level in the field of youth and intending to recruit a permanent member of staff if the grant is awarded.

5.2. Eligible countries

Bodies established in any one of the following countries are eligible to apply:

- ✓ **Member States of the European Union at 1 January 2007;**
- ✓ **European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries belonging to the European Economic Area (EEA):** Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway;
- ✓ **countries applying for membership of the European Union and benefiting from a pre-accession strategy:** Turkey;
- ✓ **countries of the Western Balkans, in accordance with arrangements to be decided on with those countries following the framework agreements allowing them to take part in EU programmes:** Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia;
- ✓ **certain eastern European countries:** Belarus, Moldova, Russian Federation, Ukraine;
- ✓ **the Swiss Confederation,** subject to a bilateral agreement being concluded with this country.

Those bodies applying must have active member organisations in at least **eight** of the aforementioned countries.

In the event of parallel applications from a European body and a body covering a wider geographical area where the majority of the members in the European Union are common to both and both have similar aims, then a single grant will be awarded; in principle, priority will be given to the European

body. Where appropriate, the bodies concerned will be requested to consult and submit just one single application.

5.3. Eligible activities

Organisations must schedule within their annual programme a series of activities which comply with the principles underpinning Community activity in the field of youth.

Such activities must be connected with the priority themes of the programme presented in section 8.1.

The main activities that are likely to contribute to the strengthening and effectiveness of Community action are:

- ✓ **Group 1:** representation of the views and interests of young people in all their diversity at Community level;
- ✓ **Group 2:** youth exchanges and voluntary service;
- ✓ **Group 3:** informal and non-formal learning and youth activity programmes;
- ✓ **Group 4:** promoting intercultural learning and understanding;
- ✓ **Group 5:** debate on European matters and EU policies or youth policies;
- ✓ **Group 6:** dissemination of information on Community action;
- ✓ **Group 7:** actions promoting participation and initiative by young citizens.

5.4. Eligible proposals

Only proposals submitted using the official application form, completed in full, signed, and received by the stipulated deadline, will be considered.

The application form must be accompanied by an official grant request letter from the applicant organisation, documents attesting to its financial and operational capacity, and all the other documents referred to in the application form.

Applicants must submit a budget that is balanced in terms of expenditure and revenue and must comply with the ceiling for Community cofinancing, set at 80%.

All the other conditions set out in section 12 of this call for proposals must be complied with.

6. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Applicants must state that they are not in any of the situations described in Articles 93 and 94 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities and set out below.

Applicants will be excluded from participating in the call for proposals if they:

- a) are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning these matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of *res judicata*;
- c) have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;
- d) have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;

- e) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- f) following another procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Community budget, have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations.

Applicants will not be granted financial assistance if, on the date of the grant award procedure, they:

- ✓ are subject to a conflict of interests;
- ✓ are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition for participation in the grant award procedure, or fail to supply this information.

In accordance with Articles 93–96 of the Financial Regulation, administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants who are guilty of misrepresentation or are found to have seriously failed to meet their contractual obligations under a previous contract award procedure.

To comply with these provisions, applicants must sign a declaration on their honour (included in the application form) certifying that they are not in any of the situations referred to in Articles 93 and 94 of the Financial Regulation.

7. SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection criteria will be the basis for assessing the applicant's ability to complete the proposed work programme.

Applicants must submit a completed and signed declaration on their honour (declaration included in the application form) attesting to their status as a legal entity and to their financial and operational capacity to complete the proposed activities.

7.1. Technical capacity

Applicants must possess the necessary professional competence and qualifications to manage the proposed work programme. To enable their technical capacity to be assessed, organisations must submit, together with their applications:

- ✓ a copy of the organisation's **duly registered articles of association**;
- ✓ a recent document attesting to the organisation's existence (bank certificate, press cuttings, etc.);
- ✓ an annual report for the most recent year available.

7.2. Financial capacity

Applicants must have stable sources of funding sufficient to maintain their business throughout the period for which the grant is awarded and to participate in funding the activity concerned.

An organisation must submit, together with its application, the financial identification form duly signed by the person authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant organisation and certified by the bank (original signatures required).

8. AWARD CRITERIA

Eligible applications will be assessed on the following criteria:

8.1. Qualitative criteria

Funding applications will be assessed in the light of:

- ✓ their suitability in terms of the programme's objectives;
- ✓ the quality of the activities planned;

- ✓ the impact and likely multiplier effect of these activities on young people;
- ✓ the geographic impact of the activities carried out;
- ✓ the involvement of young people in the organisation of the bodies concerned.

Priority will be given to proposals for initiatives aimed at developing active citizenship amongst young people, involvement of young people in democratic life, recognition of cultural diversity and the inclusion of young people who have fewer opportunities.

8.2. Quantitative criteria

Consideration will be given to the number of groups of activities planned, the number of topics covered, the number of young participants and the volume of activities scheduled, the number of young people active in the member organisations, and the European dimension.

Preference will be given to those proposals that cover the widest range of topics and activities and involve the greatest numbers of young people, especially those belonging to the most disadvantaged groups and young people with disabilities.

Although counted as eligible expenditure, no account will be taken of the organisation's statutory meetings.

9. FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

The Agency's acceptance of an application does not constitute an undertaking to award a grant equal to the amount requested by the beneficiary. The awarding of a grant does not establish an entitlement for subsequent years.

Community grants are intended as incentives to carry out activities which would not be feasible without the Agency's financial support, and are based on the principle of cofinancing. They complement the applicant's own financial contribution and/or funding from other sources (national, regional or private). The amount allocated may not exceed the amount requested.

Grant applications must include a detailed forward budget in which all amounts are given in euro. Applicants from countries outside the euro zone must use the conversion rates published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*, C series, on the date of publication of this call for proposals.

The operating budget attached to the application must show revenue and expenditure in balance and clearly show the costs which are eligible for financing from the EU budget. Applicants must indicate the sources and amounts of any other funding received or applied for in the same financial year for their routine activities or for any other activities.

The Community grant may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit for the beneficiary. Profit is defined as a surplus of receipts over costs. The amount of the grant will be reduced by the amount of any surplus.

The account or sub-account indicated by the beneficiary must be such that the funds deposited there by the Agency can be identified. If the funds paid into this account give rise to interest or equivalent profits under the legislation of the country where the account is held, any such profit or interest resulting from the prefinancing payment must be recovered by the Agency.

9.1. Payment procedures

In the event of definitive approval by the Agency, a grant agreement, drawn up in euro and detailing the conditions and level of funding, will be entered into between the Agency and the beneficiary.

A prefinancing payment of 80% will in general be transferred to the beneficiary within 45 days of the date when the agreement is signed by both parties. Prefinancing is intended to provide the beneficiary with working capital.

The Agency will determine the amount of the final payment to be made to the beneficiary on the basis of the final report drawn up by the latter.

If the eligible costs actually incurred by the organisation during 2007 are lower than anticipated then, without prejudice to the provisions in paragraph 5 of point 9 above, the Agency will apply its rate of funding to the actual costs, and the beneficiary will, where applicable, be required to repay any excess amounts already paid by the Agency as prefinancing.

9.2. Double financing

Pursuant to the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities, applicants may receive only one grant per financial year towards their operating costs from the Community budget. They must therefore give details in their application form of any other grant requests which they have submitted or intend to submit to the EU institutions during the same financial year, stating in each case the budget heading, the Community programme and the amount concerned.

Applicants' attention is drawn to the fact that for organisations receiving an operating grant indirect costs are no longer eligible under the specific actions financed, even partially, by the Community budget.

Furthermore, membership fees paid to organisations applying for the operating grant for Actions 4.1 (Support for bodies active at European level in the field of youth) and 4.2 (Support for the European Youth Forum) of the 'Youth in Action' programme may result in double financing and do not therefore count as eligible expenditure.

9.3. Eligible costs

To be eligible under this call for proposals, costs must:

- ✓ be essential for the implementation of the programme of activities, be included in the forward budget attached to the agreement and be consistent with the principles of sound financial management, in particular in terms of necessity, value for money and cost-effectiveness;
- ✓ be incurred during the period corresponding to the beneficiary's budgetary year for 2007;
- ✓ actually be incurred by the beneficiary, be recorded in the beneficiary's accounts in accordance with the applicable accounting principles, and be declared in accordance with the requirements of the applicable tax and social legislation;
- ✓ be identifiable and verifiable and be backed up by original supporting documents.

The beneficiary's internal accounting and auditing procedures must permit direct reconciliation of the costs and revenue declared with the corresponding accounting statements and supporting documents.

For the purposes of the assessment, eligible **operating costs**, provided they satisfy the criteria set out in the previous paragraph, include:

- ✓ personnel costs, comprising actual salaries plus social security contributions and other statutory costs included in the remuneration. These costs must be actual costs incurred. The annual ceiling allowed as eligible wage costs for each member of the personnel will be EUR 55 000. Personnel costs of other organisations are eligible only if they are paid directly or reimbursed by the beneficiary;
- ✓ overheads, namely rental and associated costs, equipment (in the case of purchases of durable equipment with a value in excess of EUR 1 000, only annual depreciation at the rate of 33.33% may be taken into account – this provision shall not apply to tenderers established in an eligible country whose national legislation stipulates otherwise), telecommunications and postal costs, office supplies;
- ✓ costs incurred in eligible countries (as specified in section 5.2 above) in relation to the holding of statutory meetings and any other working meetings necessary for the normal operation of the organisation;
- ✓ travel and subsistence costs incurred by the organisation's staff in eligible countries with regard to its statutory meetings and any other working meetings necessary for the normal operation of the organisation;
- ✓ publication, information and dissemination costs;

- ✓ other costs, such as bank charges, insurance costs and fees.

Estimated costs must be presented clearly and precisely, by supplying the data requested in the financial part of the application form, in order to be deemed eligible.

The Agency may accept that the cofinancing of the activities be made up entirely or in part of contributions in kind. In this case, the value calculated for such contributions must not exceed:

- ✓ the actual costs as substantiated by accounting documents of the third parties who made these contributions to the beneficiary free of charge but bear the corresponding costs;
- ✓ the costs generally accepted on the market in question for the type of contribution concerned when no actual costs are borne.

Contributions involving buildings are not covered by this possibility.

9.4. Ineligible costs

The following costs are not considered eligible:

- ✓ return on capital;
- ✓ debts and debt service charges;
- ✓ reserves for possible future debts or losses;
- ✓ other interest expenses;
- ✓ bad debt expenses;
- ✓ exchange rate losses;
- ✓ VAT, unless the beneficiary shows that it cannot be recovered;
- ✓ costs declared and covered in connection with another action or work programme receiving a Community grant;
- ✓ unnecessary, inordinate or ill-considered costs;
- ✓ expenditure on infrastructure purchases (except annual depreciation of purchased equipment);
- ✓ expenditure not linked to the functioning or normal activities of the organisation.
- ✓ expenditure not linked to eligible countries, as defined in section 5.2.

9.5. Legal entity

The Agency can propose an agreement only on the basis of acceptance of documents from which it is possible to define the beneficiary's legal personality. The beneficiary must accordingly submit a legal entity form duly signed by the person authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant organisation.

This form must be accompanied by an official document serving to identify the name of the legal entity, the address of the registered office, the registration number issued by the national authorities and a copy of the VAT registration document if the entity is registered and the VAT number does not appear on one of the official documents referred to above.

10. SUBCONTRACTING AND AWARD OF PROCUREMENT CONTRACT

Where implementation of the activities requires subcontracting or the awarding of a procurement contract, the beneficiary must obtain competitive tenders from prospective contractors and award the contract to the economically most advantageous tender, namely the tender with the best quality/price ratio, observing the principles of transparency and equal treatment and taking care to avoid conflicts of interests.

The beneficiary must clearly document the competitive tendering procedure and retain these items as evidence in case of an audit.

11. PUBLICITY

All grants awarded in the course of a financial year must be published on the Internet site of the Community institutions during the first half of the year following the closure of the budgetary year in respect of which they were awarded.

The information may also be published using any other appropriate medium, including the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

The Agency will publish the following information:

- ✓ name and address of the beneficiary;
- ✓ the purpose of the grant;
- ✓ the amount awarded and the rate of funding.

If such information is liable to jeopardise its security or prejudice its financial interests, the beneficiary may request the Agency not to divulge it. The request must be properly justified. The Agency alone will be responsible for evaluating the justifications submitted.

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

Beneficiaries are also required to show clearly the name and logo of the European Commission on all their publications, posters, programmes and other items produced under the cofinanced project.

If this requirement is not fully complied with, the beneficiary's grant may be reduced.

12. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

12.1. Publication

The call for proposals is being published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* and on the Internet sites of the Education and Culture DG and the Agency at the following addresses:

- ✓ DG EAC: http://ec.europa.eu/youth/program/ingyo_en.html
- ✓ Agency: http://eacea.cec.eu.int/static/en/overview/Youth_overview.htm

12.2. Application form

Grant applications must be drawn up in one of the official EU languages, using the form specifically designed for this purpose. Please note that only typed applications will be considered.

The forms can be obtained on the Internet at the following address:

http://eacea.cec.eu.int/static/en/overview/Youth_overview.htm

Requests for these documents may also be sent to fax number (32-2) 292 13 30 or to the postal or e-mail addresses given in points 12.3 and 12.5 respectively of this call for proposals.

12.3. Submission of the grant application

Only applications submitted on the correct form, duly completed, dated, showing a balanced budget (revenue/expenditure), submitted in **triplicate (all originals)**, and signed by the person authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant body will be accepted.

Envelopes containing grant applications should be marked '**Grant application for "Youth in Action" – Action 4.1 – 2007**' and must be sent to the following address by **22 December 2006 at the latest**:

Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency
Youth Unit (P6)
Avenue du Bourget, 1 (BOUR — 1/55)
B - 1140 Brussels.

- ✓ by post (date of postmark);
- ✓ by courier service (date of receipt by the courier service).

Applications sent by fax or e-mail will not be accepted.

The Agency will give applicants the opportunity to correct errors of form.

Confirmation that their proposal has been received will normally be sent to applicants, at the e-mail address given in their application, within 15 working days.

The proposals selected will be subjected to a financial analysis, in connection with which the Agency may ask the persons responsible for the proposed actions to provide additional information and, if appropriate, guarantees.

All unsuccessful applicants will be informed in writing.

12.4. Rules applicable

The following regulations will apply:

- ✓ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities;
- ✓ Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 (rules for the implementation of the Council Regulation);
- ✓ Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1248/2006 of 7 August 2006 (detailed rules for the implementation of the Council Regulation amending Regulation No 2342/2002).

If, at any stage of the administrative processing of grant applications, the persons or entities concerned consider that they have been affected by an instance of maladministration, they may, irrespective of any other means of redress, lodge a complaint with the European Ombudsman in accordance with Article 195(1) of the EC Treaty and as provided by the European Parliament Decision of 9 March 1994 on the regulations and general conditions governing the performance of the Ombudsman's duties, published in *Official Journal of the European Communities* L 113 of 4 May 1994.

12.5. Contact

Further information is available from:

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