



**Contracting authority: Standing Conference of Towns and  
Municipalities (SCTM)**

Support to sustainable community-based social services and inclusion  
policies at the local level

**Guidelines  
for grant applicants**

**Budget line: 48-00-115/2021-28/6.1.**

**Reference: 17/1**

**Deadline for submission of Concept note: 4 March 2024**

## **Notice**

This is a restricted call for proposals. In the first instance, only concept notes (Part A of the grant application form) must be submitted for evaluation. Thereafter, lead applicants who have been pre-selected will be invited to submit a full application. After the evaluation of the full applications, an eligibility check will be performed for those which have been provisionally selected. Eligibility will be checked on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the contracting authority and the signed 'declaration by the lead applicant' sent together with the full application.

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# 1. SUPPORT TO SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY-BASED SOCIAL SERVICES AND INCLUSION POLICIES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

## 1.1. BACKGROUND

The Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM) has received direct award EU grant for the implementation of the Action “Support to sustainable community-based social services and inclusion policies at the local level” which this Call for Proposals (CfP), aimed at sub-grants’ provision, is a part. Relying on previous surveys in the covered field, conducted by the SCTM itself as well as relevant institutions, this grant scheme has been designed to support two directions of the intervention – social protection services at the local level and social inclusion of Roma men and women in local communities.

The strategic orientation of the Republic of Serbia in the field of social welfare development is its alignment with the EU postulates by focusing on the processes of decentralisation and deinstitutionalisation and the development of social protection services at the level of local self-government units (LSGs). Reforms have been implemented in the last few years without a current sectoral strategy, but the basic strategic orientation is contained in the Employment and Social Reform Programme (ESRP) and the Economic Reform Programme (ERP).

This CfP relies and directly contributes to implementation of the Strategy for deinstitutionalization and development of community-based social protection services for 2022-2026 (adopted in January 2022) which envisages, among other, increasing the number of community-based social protection services (on the level of LSGs jurisdiction), increasing the coverage of these services’ beneficiaries, the obligation of LSGs to increase allocations for social protection services and adopting local strategic plans for social protection services. In addition, the main legal framework for acting in this field is defined by the Law on Social Welfare, Law on Financial Support for Families with Children, Family Law, Law on Social Cards and the Law on the Protection of Rights of the Beneficiaries of Temporary Accommodation in Social Protection.

Social protection improvement programmes that LSGs should prepare under the Law on Social Welfare should include measures and activities to encourage and develop existing and introduce new social protection services, improve quality standards of services and service providers and ensure the pluralism of social protection providers, in accordance with strategic commitments. Active social inclusion of vulnerable groups remains one of the greatest challenges of our society, which might be overcome through developing adequate, effective and efficient community-based services. Analyses performed indicate that there is significant space for the improvement of local services in terms of distribution, quality, availability, beneficiary coverage, service providers, manner of funding, monitoring and reporting on the delivery of organised local services.

Within the sector, the Roma community has been recognised as a particularly vulnerable group and, although continuous comprehensive support has been provided for Roma community social inclusion over the past years, significant challenges persist. The Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Roma men and women in the Republic of Serbia for 2022-2030 defines significant role of LSGs in the localization measures for social inclusion of Roma men and women. Further improvements in the field are needed, specifically in domains of fight against various ways of discrimination, especially widespread and persisting antigypsyism, recognised as a specific form of racism fuelled by prejudice and stereotypes, through legal framework adjustments and active inclusion of community members as well as enhancement of adequate participation of this target group in all segments of social life. Moreover, it shall be tackled by a combination of legal responses, capacity building of public authorities, legal professionals and law enforcement bodies based on relevant national and international case-law, raising capacities of civil society, as well as educational and awareness-raising initiatives toward general public.

This Call for proposals intends to contribute to bridging of existing gaps and to support further improvement of social protection measures at the local level.

## 1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

In accordance with the objectives of the Program “Support to sustainable community-based social services and inclusion policies at the local level”, the objectives of this Call for proposals are set.

The **global objective** of this call for proposals is: To improve the quality of social protection services and Roma inclusion measures at the local level.

The **specific objective(s)** of this call for proposals is: Enhanced and implemented social protection services and Roma inclusion measures at the local level through Grant Scheme.

The priorities of this call for proposals are:

- a) Social protection services enhancement on the local level
- b) Support to further Roma inclusion in local communities

The Call for proposals includes 2 (two) lots:

#### **Lot 1 – Social protection services at local level**

Development and/or improvement of local social protection services in line with minimum functional and structural standards defined by the Rulebook on detailed requirements and standards for the provision of social protection services and/or improvement of innovative, intersectoral<sup>1</sup> and/or intermunicipal community-based social protection services with special focus on those local services supporting the process of deinstitutionalisation and preventing the risk of institutionalization at the local level

#### **Lot 2 – Social inclusion of Roma community at local level**

Development of effective and efficient mechanisms to combat discrimination and to create conditions for active social inclusion of Roma men, women, and children.

### **1.3. FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY**

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is EUR 2,365,750.00. The contracting authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

#### **Indicative allocation of funds by lot:**

**Lot 1 – EUR 1,800,000.00**

**Lot 2 – EUR 565,750.00**

If the allocation indicated for a specific lot cannot be used due to insufficient quality or number of proposals received, the contracting authority reserves the right to reallocate the remaining funds to (an)other lot(s).

Size of grants

#### **For Lot 1**

Any grant requested under this call for proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

- minimum amount: EUR 40,000.00
- maximum amount: EUR 100,000.00.

#### **For Lot 2**

Any grant requested under this call for proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

- minimum amount: EUR 40,000.00
- maximum amount: EUR 60,000.00.

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<sup>1</sup> Such services, currently treated as innovative (not standardised or using inter-sectoral approach), have a legislative basis in the social protection system. Providing support to the establishment of such services would ensure that the social welfare, healthcare, and education systems cooperate at the level of securing innovative and integrated social protection services within the mandate of LSGs in accordance with the needs of beneficiaries/potential beneficiaries. By placing the social protection services formulation, governed by regulations, in the context of social innovations, it can be concluded that innovative are all those services that provide better results in meeting the needs of beneficiaries and differ from existing social protection services according to their purpose, target group or activities that are undertaken.

Any grant requested under this call for proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum percentages of total eligible costs of the action:

- Minimum percentage: 60% of the total eligible costs of the action.
- Maximum percentage: 90% of the total eligible costs of the action (see also Section 2.1.4.).

The balance (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the contracting authority) must be financed from sources other than the general budget of the Union.

## 2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of the actions financed under this call, in conformity with the practical guide, which is applicable to the present call (available on the internet at this address <https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/ExactExternalWiki/ePRAG> ).<sup>2</sup>

### 2.1. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

- (1) the actors (2.1.1.):
  - the **'lead applicant'**, i.e. the entity submitting the application form;
  - if any, its **co-applicant(s)** (**where it is not specified otherwise the lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) are hereinafter jointly referred as 'applicant(s)'**);
  - and, if any, **affiliated entity(ies)** to the lead applicant and/or to a co-applicant(s);
- (2) the actions (2.1.3.):
  - actions for which a grant may be awarded;
- (3) the costs (2.1.4.):
  - types of cost that may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant.

#### **2.1.1. Eligibility of applicants (i.e. lead applicant and co-applicant(s))**

##### **Lead applicant**

- (1) In order to be eligible for a grant, the lead applicant must:
  - for **Lot 1** be a local authority – municipality or town/city **not** already supported through the municipal support package for establishment/improvement of the local social protection system, implemented within the Programme “Support to sustainable community-based social services and inclusion policies at the local level” ,
  - for **Lot 2**, be a local authority – municipality or town/city or city municipality, **and**
  - be established in the Republic of Serbia,  
**and**
  - be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary.
- (2) Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations listed in Section 2.6.10.1 of the practical guide;

<sup>2</sup> Note that a lead applicant (i.e. a coordinator) whose pillars have been positively assessed by the European Commission and who is awarded a grant will not sign the standard grant contract published with these guidelines but a contribution agreement based on the contribution agreement template. All references in these guidelines and other documents related to this call to the standard grant contract shall in this case be understood as referring to the relevant provisions of the contribution agreement template.

Lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entities and, in case of legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over the lead applicant, the co-applicants and the affiliated entities are informed that, should they be in one of the situations of early detection or exclusion according to Section 2.6.10.1 of the practical guide, personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the early detection and exclusion system, and communicated to the persons and entities concerned in relation to the award or the execution of a grant contract. In this respect, provisionally selected lead applicants, co-applicants and affiliated entities or those placed in the reserve list are obliged to declare that they are not in one of the exclusion situations through a signed declaration on honour (PRAG Annex A14). For grants of EUR 15 000 or less, no declaration on honour is required. See Section 2.4.

In Part A, Section 3 and Part B Section 8 of the grant application form ('declaration(s) by the lead applicant'), the lead applicant must declare that the lead applicant himself, the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) are not in any of these situations.

**The lead applicant must act with co-applicant as specified hereafter except for the Lot 1 in case of standardised social protection service provision.**

If awarded the grant contract, the lead applicant will become the beneficiary identified as the coordinator in Annex G (special conditions). The coordinator is the sole interlocutor of the contracting authority. It represents and acts on behalf of any other co-beneficiary (if any) and coordinate the design and implementation of the action.

#### **Co-applicant(s)**

**In specific for Lot 1, depending on a type of social protection services to be covered by the project **the applicant must act with at least one obligatory co-applicant:**<sup>3</sup>**

- For intersectoral social protection services – institutions necessary for the provision of the social protection service/s (education institutions, health institutions etc.) developed/improved under the action;
- For intermunicipal social protection services - minimum one local authority – municipality or town/city,
- be non-profit-making and
- be a legal person and
- be established in the Republic of Serbia.

**In specific for Lot 2 the applicant must act with at least one obligatory co-applicant:**

- be a legal person **and**
- be non-profit-making **and**

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<sup>3</sup> Except in the case when the action includes only standardised social protection service(s).

- be a civil society organisation<sup>4</sup> operating on the territory covered by the action and in the sectors relevant for this Lot, established<sup>5</sup> in the Republic of Serbia<sup>6</sup>, minimum two years before the launch of the Call.

Co-applicants participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the lead applicant.

In addition to the categories stated above, the following non-mandatory co-applicants are however also eligible for **all Lots**:

- Local social welfare institutions,
- Local centres/institutions for the provision of social protection services founded by the LSG,
- Civil society organisations operating in the sectors relevant for this Call and established minimum two years before the launch of the Call,
- Red Cross of Serbia and its member organizations at the provincial and local level,
- Local authority: municipality, town/city or city municipality in the Republic of Serbia,
- Regional/ District Development Agencies registered in the Republic of Serbia,
- Public institutions operating in the sectors relevant to this Call (social protection institutions, education institutions, health institutions, cultural institutions, etc.).

Aforementioned non-mandatory co-applicants must also:

- be non-profit making and
- be a legal person and
- be established in the Republic of Serbia.

Co-applicants must sign the mandate in Part B Section 4 of the grant application form.

**NOTE:**

For the Lot 1 only:

In case when social service at local level is already established and the service is provided through public procurement, civil society organisation can only be eligible as a co-applicant if:

1) it is not a service provider within the action

or

2) it has a Framework agreement<sup>7</sup> with the Applicant for social service(s) provision to be financed within the action.

If awarded the grant contract, the co-applicant(s) (if any) will become beneficiary(ies) in the action (together with the coordinator).

<sup>4</sup> The broadest possible understanding about civil society organisations is applied under this call for proposals, as defined in 1999 by the European Economic and Social Committee (CES/1999/851) and further detailed by both the EESC (CES/1999/851, CES/2000/81) and the EC (COM/2002/0704 final, COM/2005/0290 final).

<sup>5</sup> To be determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes, which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned and that its head office is located in an eligible country. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has been concluded.

<sup>6</sup> Registered in Serbia, nongovernmental organizations include those with a following status: "udruženje", "savez udruženja", "predstavništvo stranog udruženja", "fondacija", "predstavništvo strane fondacije".

<sup>7</sup> In line with the Law on Public procurement. The agreement shall be valid for at least 20 months from the date of Full application proposal submission.



- (3) In addition, please note that contracts cannot be awarded to or signed with applicants included in the lists of EU restrictive measures (see Section 2.4. of the PRAG).

### **2.1.2. Affiliated entities**

The lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) may act with affiliated entity(ies). **Only the following entities may be considered as affiliated entities to the lead applicant and/or to co-applicant(s):**

Only entities having a structural link with the applicants (i.e. the lead applicant or a co-applicant), in particular a legal or capital link.

This structural link encompasses mainly two notions:

- (i) Control, as defined in Directive 2013/34/EU on the annual financial statements, consolidated financial statements and related reports of certain types of undertakings:

Entities affiliated to an applicant may hence be:

- Entities directly or indirectly controlled by the applicant (daughter companies or first-tier subsidiaries). They may also be entities controlled by an entity controlled by the applicant (granddaughter companies or second-tier subsidiaries) and the same applies to further tiers of control;
  - Entities directly or indirectly controlling the applicant (parent companies). Likewise, they may be entities controlling an entity controlling the applicant;
  - Entities under the same direct or indirect control as the applicant (sister companies).
- (ii) Membership, i.e. the applicant is legally defined as a e.g. network, federation, association in which the proposed affiliated entities also participate or the applicant participates in the same entity (e.g. network, federation, association,...) as the proposed affiliated entities.

The structural link shall, as a general rule, be neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation. This means that the link would exist independently of the award of the grant; it should exist before the call for proposals and remain valid after the end of the action.

By way of exception, an entity may be considered as affiliated to an applicant even if it has a structural link specifically established for the sole purpose of the implementation of the action in the case of so-called ‘sole applicants’ or ‘sole beneficiaries’. A sole applicant or a sole beneficiary is a legal entity formed by several entities (a group of entities) which together comply with the criteria for being awarded the grant. For example, an association is formed by its members.

#### What is not an affiliated entity?

The following are not considered entities affiliated to an applicant:

- Entities that have entered into a (procurement) contract or subcontract with an applicant, act as concessionaires or delegates for public services for an applicant,
- Entities that receive financial support from the applicant,
- Entities that cooperate on a regular basis with an applicant on the basis of a memorandum of understanding or share some assets,
- Entities that have signed a consortium agreement under the grant contract (unless this consortium agreement leads to the creation of a ‘sole applicant’ as described above).

#### How to verify the existence of the required link with an applicant?

The affiliation resulting from control may in particular be proved on the basis of the consolidated accounts of the group of entities the applicant and its proposed affiliates belong to.

The affiliation resulting from membership may in particular be proved on the basis of the statutes or equivalent act establishing the entity (network, federation, association) which the applicant constitutes or in which the applicant participates.

If the applicants are awarded a grant contract, their affiliated entity(ies) will not become beneficiary(ies) of the action and signatory(ies) of the grant contract. However, they will participate in the design and in the implementation of the action and the costs they incur (including those incurred for implementation contracts and financial support to third parties and subcontractors) may be accepted as eligible costs, provided they comply with all the relevant rules already applicable to the beneficiary(ies) under the grant contract.

Affiliated entity(ies) must satisfy the same eligibility criteria as the lead applicant and the co-applicant(s). They must sign the affiliated entity(ies) statement in Part B Section 5 of the grant application form.

### ***2.1.3. Associates and contractors***

The following entities are not applicants nor affiliated entities and do not have to sign the ‘mandate for co-applicant(s)’ or ‘affiliated entities’ statement:

- Associates

Other organisations or individuals may be involved in the action. Such associates play a real role in the action but may not receive funding from the grant, with the exception of per diem or travel costs. Associates do not have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in Section 2.1.1. Associates must be mentioned in Part B Section 6 — ‘Associates participating in the action’ — of the grant application form.

- Contractors

The beneficiaries and their affiliated entities are permitted to award contracts. Associates or affiliated entity(ies) cannot be also contractors in the project. Contractors are subject to the procurement rules set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

### ***2.1.4. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made***

Definition:

An action is composed of a set of activities.

#### Duration

The initial planned duration of an action may not be lower than 10 months nor exceed 12 months.

Sectors or themes

#### *Social protection services*

The intervention is oriented towards supporting LSGs to overcome challenges in coordination, planning, financing, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of social welfare policies. The support will target projects focusing on the implementation of defined strategic priorities in local communities, i.e. the development of local social protection services, with an emphasis on services that would support deinstitutionalisation as a strategic goal of reforms in the social protection system. Through the implementation of this GS social services and inclusion mechanisms in local communities will be additionally improved and further, capacities of LSGs and relevant stakeholders to develop and implement projects will be strengthened.

#### *Social inclusion of Roma community*

The intervention is oriented towards supporting LSGs to overcome challenges in coordination, planning, financing, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of measures for social inclusion of Roma at the local level. Through the implementation of this GS inclusion mechanisms aiming Roma population in local communities will be additionally improved and strengthened.

## Location

Actions must take place in the Republic of Serbia.

## Types of action

### *Under the Social protection services*

For **Lot 1** actions aiming at:

- 1) Development/improvement and provision of new/already existing standardised social protection services, including improvement of social protection system, at the local level. Priority will be on services that contribute to process of deinstitutionalization and preventing the risk of institutionalization, in line with the needs of local communities;  
and/or
- 2) Development/improvement and provision of innovative, intersectoral, or intermunicipal social protection services, including improvement of social protection system, at the local level. Priority will be on services that contribute to process of deinstitutionalization and preventing the risk of institutionalization, in line with the needs of local communities.

Actions proposed under this lot shall contribute to the fulfilment of the specific objective of this Call, primarily measured by the following indicators:

- Number of adopted/improved planning documents (Programmes on improvement of social protection) and legal acts (decisions / regulations) in the field of social protection system including ones contributing to deinstitutionalisation or preventing the risk of institutionalisation;
- Number of social protection services provided at the local level with priority on those supporting deinstitutionalisation or preventing the risk of institutionalization;
- Number of beneficiaries who benefit from the social protection services implemented under the project.

and/or

- Number of innovative social protection services provided at the local level

and/or

- Number of intersectoral social protection services provided at the local level

and/or

- Number of intermunicipal social protection services provided.

### *Under the Social inclusion of Roma community*

**Lot 2** - Actions aiming at:

- 1) Encouraging positive action of the local community towards the Roma population in order to prevent discrimination and antigypsyism – recognised as a specific form of racism by establishing new and improving efficiency and effectiveness of existing mechanisms for exercising and protecting the rights the Roma community members.

and/or

- 2) Promotion and affirmation of Roma culture and the cultural heritage of the Roma national minority.

Actions proposed under this lot shall contribute to the fulfilment of the specific objective of this Call, primarily measured by the following indicators:

- Indicator applicable only for the actions under type 1) - The number of newly established and/or improved innovative services and mechanisms contributing to the social inclusion of Roma men and women (including free legal aid, social inclusion measures, etc.) for the purpose of support in human and minority rights practicing of the most vulnerable members of Roma national minority and other marginalised groups;
- Number of implemented measures on combating antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma referring to the ECRI General Policy Recommendation N°13<sup>8</sup>;
- Indicator applicable only for the actions under type 2) - Number of actions (workshops, exhibitions, events, round tables, etc.) aiming at positive representation of Roma culture and cultural heritage;
- Number of Roma people (specifically Roma women, children, elderly and persons with disabilities) included in and benefit from the project activities;
- Number of public actions/events and media reports with the purpose to raise public awareness and enhance fight against discrimination and antigypsyism – recognised as a specific form of racism.

The following types of action are ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- actions whose budgets consist of the purchase of tools, furniture, equipment, vehicles and small-scale works related to the social service provision in total amount more than 50% of the eligible costs;
- actions whose budgets consist of the purchase of tools, furniture and equipment and small-scale works related to the inclusion of Roma in total amount more than 30% of the eligible costs;
- actions in which purchase of tools, equipment, vehicles and small-scale works are not related to activities of this Call;
- actions consisting of capital investments, such as land or buildings;
- actions consisting solely of the development of strategies, plans or other similar documents;
- actions linked to political parties or such nature;
- actions including commercial and profit making activities;
- actions covered and financed by other EU funded programmes.

**NOTE:**

In addition to the limitations of the total eligible costs the following limitations applies:

**For Lot 1**, for the purpose of local protection service(s) provision to be financed under the action/project: (i) costs of tools, furniture and equipment (including necessary IT equipment) in total amount of max. 30% of the total eligible costs; (ii) cost of specialised vehicle in total amount of max. 50% of the total eligible costs; (iii) cost of passenger vehicle in the total amount of max. 25% of the total eligible costs; and (iv) costs of small-scale works in total amount max. 30% of the total eligible costs.

**For Lot 2**, (i) costs of tools, furniture and equipment (including necessary IT equipment) for the project purposes in total amount of max. 30% of the total eligible costs; (ii) costs of small-scale works of the local cultural institutions' or other LSGs property in total amount of max. 30% of the total eligible costs.

<sup>8</sup> Adopted on 24 June 2011 and amended on 1 December 2020; available on: <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-13-on-combating-anti-gypsyism-an/16808b5aee>

## Types of activity

The following activities could qualify for financing under this Call.

However, only examples are given in the list, which is not exhaustive, but illustrative, thus, other activities appropriate to the Call, not mentioned below, will also be considered for financing.

### **For Lot 1:**

- Mapping the needs for new community-based services, and/or the need for quality improvement and availability of existing social protection services at local level - the assessment could cover needs of all prioritised groups of beneficiaries, not only those that will be covered by the service/services to be implemented within the project proposal,
- Identification of resources for service provision at the local level,
- Provision of social protection service(s) at local level, established or improved within the project - priority should be on those services which particularly contribute to deinstitutionalization and prevention of institutionalisation according to the Strategy for deinstitutionalization and development of community-based social protection services for 2022-2026. Examples of services in line with the groups of services: (i) day care community-based services: day care for different groups of beneficiaries (children, adults, elderly), drop-in centre, etc.; (ii) services for independent living: supportive housing for persons with disabilities, personal assistance for adults with disabilities, etc.; (iii) emergency and temporary accommodation services: shelters, respite care, etc.; (iv) counselling and socio-educational services: counselling centres, family outreach worker, outreach worker etc.,
- Preparation of public policy documents in accordance with the Law on Social Welfare and the Law on Planning System - mainly development/improvement of Programmes for improvement of social protection (as a three-year policy document),
- Improving the local normative framework and its alignment with the Law on Social Welfare and relevant by-laws - development of a new/revision of the existing Decision on social protection, development/revision of the rulebook on conditions and standards for the provision of social welfare services, development/revision of the rulebook on beneficiaries' participation in the service costs, development of a decision on methodology of defining the service price, intermunicipal/intersectoral MoUs for service delivery etc.,
- Capacity building activities (trainings, workshops, etc.) for improvement of planning, ensuring, providing, monitoring and evaluating the social protection services,
- Improving procedures for (public) procurement of social protection services,
- Small-scale works on properties used by LSGs/institutions founded by LSGs which will contribute to social protection service(s) provision,
- Provision of tools and equipment which will contribute to social protection service(s) provision,
- Study tour to LSG unit in the Republic of Serbia with the purpose of transfer of knowledge on good practice examples applied within targeted sector– maximum 1 study tour not longer than one week (five working days) is allowed,
- Promotion and visibility activities to raise awareness on available social protection services, criteria and possibilities for the citizens to ensure their rights.

### **For Lot 2:**

#### **NOTE:**

For the 10 local governments supported through the comprehensive support for planning and implementing local measures for the inclusion of Roma within this Programme, activities foreseen to be implemented within the comprehensive support are not eligible for Lot 2.

- Development of public policy documents on the inclusion of Roma men and women in accordance with the law on planning system (e.g. strategy for Roma inclusion, action plan for Roma inclusion);
- Strengthening the awareness of the Roma community members on the legal mechanisms for protection of human and minority rights;
- Capacity building activities (trainings, workshops, etc.) for members of the Coordination Bodies for social inclusion of Roma which is important for planning, monitoring and evaluating of local policy for Roma inclusion;
- Development of Operational plan of the Mobile Team, as well as support in its implementation, monitoring and evaluation of achievements;
- Activities which contribute to the provision of effective and efficient mechanisms to combat discrimination and antigypsyism, as a form of racism towards the Roma national minority, as well as those improving the participation, equality and equity of Roma men and women in all social processes;
- Establishment/improvement and provision of innovative services (e.g. free legal aid) and mechanisms contributing to the social inclusion of Roma men and women, intended for the specific needs of most vulnerable Roma men and women;
- Implementation of programmes and actions of importance for the promotion of Roma culture and Roma cultural heritage, realised within the programme of local cultural institutions and/or within Roma citizens' associations, including the small-scale works of the local cultural institutions' on properties used by LSGs/institutions founded by LSGs and the procurement of equipment necessary for the realisation of the activities planned under the project;
- Raising awareness of public, media representatives, civil servants, public workers/servants and representatives of civil society organizations on equal rights of Roma and on antidiscrimination policies, social inclusion, including antigypsyism as a way of racism (through educations, presentations, public debates, round tables, media campaigns<sup>9</sup> and other visibility activities, etc.);
- Capacity building activities for local associations to take more active role in promoting positive image of the Roma community and to work on preservation of Roma identity.

#### Financial support to third parties<sup>10</sup>

Applicants may not propose financial support to third parties.

#### Visibility

The applicants must take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the European Union has financed or co-financed the action. Unless the European Commission agrees otherwise, actions that are wholly or partially funded by the European Union must ensure the visibility of EU financing by displaying the EU emblem in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Operational guidelines for recipients of EU funding, published by the European Commission. If applicable, communication activities may be undertaken to raise the awareness of specific or general audiences of the reasons for the action and the EU support for the action in the country or region concerned, as well as the results and the impact of this support.

All measures and activities relating to visibility and, if applicable, communication, must comply with the latest Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU-funded external action, laid down and published by the European Commission ([Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU External Actions | International Partnerships \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/easip/en/communication-visibility-requirements)).

#### Number of applications and grants per applicants / affiliated entities

The lead applicant may not submit more than 1 (one) application per lot under this call for proposals.

<sup>9</sup> In line with the recommendation no. 10 of the ECRI General Policy Recommendation N°13, available on: <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-13-on-combating-anti-gypsyism-an/16808b5aee>

<sup>10</sup> These third parties are neither affiliated entity(ies) nor associates nor contractors.

The lead applicant may not be awarded more than 1 (one) grant per lot under this call for proposals.

The lead applicant may not be a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in another application of the same lot at the same time.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity may not be the co-applicant or affiliated entity in more than 1 (one) application per lot under this call for proposals.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity may not be awarded more than 1 (one) grant per lot under this call for proposals.

### **2.1.5. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included**

Union contributions under this call for proposals take the following form(s):

- Reimbursement of eligible costs that may be based on any or a combination of the following forms:

- (i) actual costs incurred by the beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies);
- (ii) one or more simplified cost options (see below).

Only 'eligible costs' can be covered by a grant. The categories of costs that are eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and an overall ceiling for 'eligible costs'.

Simplified cost options (SCOs) may take the form of:

- **unit costs:** covering all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by reference to an amount per unit.
- **lump sums:** covering in global terms all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance.
- **flat-rate financing:** covering specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by applying a percentage fixed ex ante. This form is not applicable to output or result based SCOs.

Simplified costs options which can be proposed are the following:

"output or result based SCOs": they include costs linked to outputs, results, activities, deliverables in the framework of a specific project (for example the determination of a lump sum for the organization of a conference, or for the realisation of a determined output/activity). Where possible and appropriate, lump sums or unit costs shall be determined in such a way to allow their payment upon achievement of concrete outputs and/or results. This type of SCO can be proposed by the beneficiary (no threshold is applicable) at proposal's stage (Grant application form – Full application). In case the evaluation committee and the contracting authority are not satisfied with the quality of the justification provided, reimbursement on the basis of actually incurred costs is always possible.

Please refer to Annex K for the details of the procedure to be followed depending on the type and amount of the costs to be declared as SCO.

Applicants proposing this form of reimbursement, must clearly indicate in worksheet no.1 of Annex B, each heading/item of eligible costs concerned by this type of financing, i.e. add the reference in capital letters to 'UNIT COST', 'LUMPSUM' in the Unit column (see example in Annex K).

Additionally in Annex B, in the second column of worksheet no.2, 'Justification of the estimated costs' per each of the corresponding budget item or heading applicants must:

- describe the information and methods used to establish the amounts of unit costs and/or lump sums, to which costs they refer, etc for output or result based SCO;
- clearly explain the formulas for calculation of the final eligible amount for output or result based SCO.

Where SCOs are proposed the evaluation committee and the contracting authority decide whether to accept the proposed amounts or rates on the basis of the provisional budget submitted by the applicants, by analysing factual data of grants carried out by the applicants or of similar actions. In case the evaluation committee and the contracting authority are not satisfied with the quality of the justification provided reimbursement on the basis of actually incurred costs is always possible.

No threshold is set ex-ante for the total amount of financing that can be authorised by the contracting authority on the basis of simplified cost options.

Recommendations to award a grant are always subject to the condition that the checks preceding the signing of the grant contract do not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget (such as arithmetical errors, inaccuracies, unrealistic costs and ineligible costs). The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the contracting authority to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. It is not possible to increase the grant or the percentage of EU co-financing as a result of these corrections.

It is therefore in the applicants' interest to provide a **realistic and cost-effective budget**.

The grant may take the form of a single lump-sum covering the entire eligible costs of an action or a work programme.

Single lump sums may be determined on the basis of the estimated budget, which should comply with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Compliance with these principles shall be verified ex ante at the time of evaluation of the grant application.

When authorising single lump sums the authorising officer responsible shall comply with the conditions applicable to output or result based SCOs.

When using this form of financing, the description of the action shall include detailed information on the essential conditions triggering the payment, including, where applicable, the achievement of outputs and/or results.

#### Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under this call for proposals, costs must comply with the provisions of Article 14 of the general conditions to the standard grant contract (see Annex G of the guidelines).

The applicants (and where applicable their affiliated entities) agree that the expenditure verification(s) referred to in Article 15.7 of the general conditions to the standard grant contract (see Annex G of the Guidelines) will be carried out by the contracting authority or any external body authorised by the contracting authority.

Salary costs of the personnel of national administrations may be eligible to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the action were not undertaken.

The amount of time actually spent on a given action by staff declared by the beneficiary will be checked by means of time sheets signed by the staff concerned and their immediate superior.

The cost of such staff must be actual salaries plus social security charges and other statutory costs included in the remuneration provided that this does not exceed the average rates corresponding to the beneficiary's usual policy on remuneration.

#### Contingency reserve

The budget may include a contingency reserve not exceeding 5 % of the estimated direct eligible costs. It can only be used with the **prior written authorisation** of the contracting authority.

#### Eligible indirect costs

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat rate funding, but the total must not exceed 7 % of the estimated total eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another budget heading in the standard grant contract. The lead applicant may be asked to justify the percentage requested before the grant contract is signed. However, once the flat rate has been fixed in the special conditions of the grant contract, no supporting documents need to be provided.



If any of the applicants or affiliated entity(ies) is in receipt of an operating grant financed by the EU, it may not claim indirect costs on its incurred costs within the proposed budget for the action.

### Contributions in kind

Contributions in kind mean the provision of goods or services to beneficiaries or affiliated entities free of charge by a third party. As contributions in kind do not involve any expenditure for beneficiaries or affiliated entities, they are not eligible costs (except for personnel costs for the work carried out by volunteers under an action or an operating grant if so authorised).

Contributions in kind may not be treated as co-financing.

However, if the description of the action as proposed includes contributions in kind, the contributions have to be made.

Other co-financing shall be based on estimates provided by the applicant.

### Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- debts and debt service charges (interest);
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- costs declared by the beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme receiving a European Union (including through EDF) grant;
- purchases of land or buildings,;
- second-hand equipment;
- any leasing costs;
- currency exchange losses;
- in kind contributions;
- bonuses included in costs of staff;
- negative interest charged by banks or other financial institutions;
- credit to third parties;
- taxes, including VAT, duties and charges;
- expenditure verification costs (will be carried out by the contracting authority or any external body authorised by the contracting authority).

## ***2.1.6. Ethics clauses and Code of Conduct***

### a) Absence of conflict of interest

The applicant must not be affected by any conflict of interest and must have no equivalent relation in that respect with other applicants or parties involved in the actions. Any attempt by an applicant to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the evaluation committee or the contracting authority during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing applications will lead to the rejection of its application and may result in administrative penalties according to the Financial Regulation in force.

### b) Respect for human rights as well as environmental legislation and core labour standards

The applicant and its staff must comply with human rights. In particular, and in accordance with the applicable act, applicants who have been awarded contracts must comply with the environmental legislation including multilateral environmental agreements, and with the core labour standards as applicable and as defined in the relevant International Labour Organisation conventions (such as the

conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining; elimination of forced and compulsory labour; abolition of child labour).

### **Zero tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment**

The European Commission applies a policy of 'zero tolerance' in relation to all wrongful conduct which has an impact on the professional credibility of the applicant.

Physical abuse or punishment, or threats of physical abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation, harassment and verbal abuse, as well as other forms of intimidation shall be prohibited.

Applicants (and affiliated entities) other than (i) natural persons, (ii) pillar-assessed entities and (iii) governments and other public bodies, whose application has been provisionally selected or placed in a reserve list shall assess their internal policy against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEA-H) through a self-evaluation questionnaire (Annex L). For grants of EUR 60 000 or less no self-evaluation is required. Such self-evaluation questionnaire is not part of the evaluation of the full application by the contracting authority, but is an administrative requirement. See Section 2.5.6 of the PRAG.

#### c) Anti-corruption and anti-bribery

The applicant shall comply with all applicable laws, regulations and codes relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption. The contracting authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel project financing if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process or during the execution of a contract and if the contracting authority fails to take all appropriate measures to remedy the situation. For the purposes of this provision, 'corrupt practices' are the offer of a bribe, gift, gratuity or commission to any person as an inducement or reward for performing or refraining from any act relating to the award of a contract or execution of a contract already concluded with the contracting authority.

#### d) Unusual commercial expenses

Applications will be rejected or contracts terminated if it emerges that the award or execution of a contract has given rise to unusual commercial expenses. Such unusual commercial expenses are commissions not mentioned in the main contract or not stemming from a properly concluded contract referring to the main contract, commissions not paid in return for any actual and legitimate service, commissions remitted to a tax haven, commissions paid to a payee who is not clearly identified or commissions paid to a company which has every appearance of being a front company.

Grant beneficiaries found to have paid unusual commercial expenses on projects funded by the European Union are liable, depending on the seriousness of the facts observed, to have their contracts terminated or to be permanently excluded from receiving EU/EDF funds.

#### e) Breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud

The contracting authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud. If breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the contract, the contracting authority may refrain from concluding the contract.

## **2.2. HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW**

### **2.2.1. *Concept note content***

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the concept note instructions in the grant application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex A).

Applicants must apply in English.

Please note that:

1. In the concept note, lead applicants must only provide an estimate of the requested EU contribution as well as an indicative percentage of that contribution in relation to the eligible costs of the action. A detailed budget is to be submitted only by the lead applicants invited to submit a full application in the second phase.

2. The elements outlined in the concept note may not be modified in the full application, except for the changes described below:
  - The EU contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 20%. Lead applicants are free to adapt the percentage of co-financing required within the minimum and maximum amount and percentages of co-financing, as laid down in these guidelines in Section 1.3.
  - The lead applicant may add, remove or replace one or more co-applicant(s) or affiliated entity(ies) only in duly justified cases.

The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the action if unforeseen circumstances outside the scope of the applicants have taken place following the submission of the concept note and require such adaptation (risk of action not being carried out). In such cases, the duration must remain within the limits imposed by the guidelines for applicants. Own contributions by the applicants can be replaced by other donors' contributions at any time.

**An explanation/justification of the relevant replacements/adjustments shall be included in section 2.1.1. of the full application form. Should the explanation/justification not be accepted by the evaluation committee, the proposal may be rejected on that sole basis.**

3. Only the concept note form will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that this document contains ALL relevant information concerning the action. No additional annexes should be sent.

Please complete the concept note form carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly.

Any error or major discrepancy related to the concept note instructions may lead to the rejection of the concept note.

Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is not sufficient to conduct an objective assessment.

### **2.2.2. Where and how to send concept notes**

The concept note and declaration by the lead applicant (to be found in **Part A Section 3** of the grant application form) must be submitted in one original and 1 copy in A4 size, each bound. Hand-written concept notes will not be accepted.

An electronic version of the concept note must also be submitted. A CD-Rom or USB stick with the concept note in electronic format will be included, along with the paper version, in a sealed envelope as described below. The electronic file must contain **exactly the same** application as the paper version enclosed.

Where lead applicants send several different concept notes (if allowed to do so by the guidelines of the call), each one must be sent separately.

The envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the call for proposals**, together with the lot number and title the full name and address of the lead applicant, and the words 'Not to be opened before the opening session' and 'Ne otvarati pre početka sesije za otvaranje predloga projekata'.

To reduce expense and waste, we strongly recommend that you do not use plastic folders or dividers. Please also use double-sided printing if possible.

Concept notes must be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) to the address below:

**Postal and hand delivery address**

Stalna konferencija gradova i opština  
Makedonska 22/VIII  
11000 Beograd, Srbija

Concept notes sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

**Please note that incomplete concept notes may be rejected. Lead applicants are advised to verify that their concept note is complete using the checklist for concept note (Part A Section 2 of the grant application form).**

### ***2.2.3. Deadline for submission of concept notes***

The applicants' attention is drawn to the fact that there are two different systems for sending concept notes: one is by post or private courier service, the other is by hand delivery.

In the first case, the concept note must be sent before the date for submission, as evidenced by the postmark or deposit slip<sup>11</sup>, but in the second case it is the acknowledgment of receipt given at the time of the delivery of the concept note which will serve as proof.

The deadline for the submission of concept notes is 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024 as evidenced by the date of dispatch, the postmark or the date of the deposit slip. In the case of hand-deliveries, the deadline for receipt is on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024 until 15h local time, as evidenced by the signed and dated receipt. Any concept note submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

The contracting authority may, for reasons of administrative efficiency, reject any concept note submitted on time to the postal service but received, for any reason beyond the contracting authority's control, after the effective date of approval of the concept note evaluation, if accepting concept notes that were submitted on time but arrived late would considerably delay the evaluation procedure) or jeopardise decisions already taken and notified (see indicative calendar under Section 2.5.2).

### ***2.2.4. Further information about concept notes***

An information sessions on this call for proposals will be held during January and February 2024. Detailed information will be published on the Contracting Authority (the SCTM) website and invitations will be sent to all local authorities.

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of concept notes to the address(es) below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: [pitanjaGS@skgo.org](mailto:pitanjaGS@skgo.org)

The contracting authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for submission of concept notes.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the contracting authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entity(ies), an action or specific activities.

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure will be published on the website [www.skgo.org](http://www.skgo.org) as the need arises. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

Please note that the contracting authority may decide to cancel the call for proposals procedure at any stage according to the conditions set out in Section 6.5.9 of the PRAG.

### ***2.2.5. Full applications***

Lead applicants invited to submit a full application following pre-selection of their concept note must do so using Part B of the grant application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex A). Lead applicants should then keep strictly to the format of the grant application form and fill in the paragraphs and pages in order.

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<sup>11</sup> It is recommended to use registered mail in case the postmark would not be readable.

Please note that the elements outlined in the concept note may not be modified in the full application except for the changes described below:

- The EU contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 20 %. Lead applicants are free to adapt the percentage of co-financing required within the minimum and maximum amount and percentages of co-financing, as laid down in these guidelines in Section 1.3.
- The lead applicant may add, remove or replace one or more co-applicant(s) or affiliated entity(ies) only in duly justified cases.
- The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the action if unforeseen circumstances outside the scope of the applicants have taken place following the submission of the concept note and require such adaptation (risk of action not being carried out). In such cases, the duration must remain within the limits imposed by the guidelines for applicants.

**An explanation/justification of the relevant replacements/adjustments shall be included in section 2.1.1. of the full application form. Should the explanation/justification not be accepted by the evaluation committee, the proposal may be rejected on that sole basis.**

Lead applicants must submit their full applications in the same language as their concept notes.

Please complete the full application form carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly.

Any error related to the points listed in the checklist (Part B, Section 7 of the grant application form) or any major inconsistency in the full application (e.g. if the amounts in the budget worksheets are inconsistent) may lead to the rejection of the application.

Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is unclear and thus prevents the contracting authority from conducting an objective assessment.

Please note that only the full application form and the published annexes which have to be filled in (budget, logical framework) will be transmitted to the evaluators (and assessors, if used). It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL the relevant information concerning the action. **With the full application the lead applicant also has to submit completed PADOR registration form (Annex F) for the lead applicant, each co-applicants (if any) and each affiliated entities<sup>12</sup> (if any).**

Please note that the following documents should be submitted together with PADOR registration form and the full application:

1. The statutes or articles of association<sup>13</sup> of the lead applicant, of each co-applicant (if any) and of each affiliated entity (if any). Where the contracting authority has recognised the lead applicant's, or the co-applicant(s)'s, or their affiliated entity(ies)'s eligibility for another call for proposals under the same budget line within 2 years before the deadline for receipt of applications, what should be submitted, instead of the statutes or articles of association, is a copy of the document proving their eligibility in a former call (e.g. a copy of the special conditions of a grant contract received during the reference period), unless a change in legal status has occurred in the meantime. This obligation does not apply to international organisations that have signed a framework agreement with the European Commission.
2. Legal entity form (see Annex D of these guidelines) duly completed and signed by each of the applicants (i.e. by the lead applicant and by each co-applicant, if any), accompanied by the justifying documents requested there. If the applicants have already signed a contract with the contracting authority, instead of the legal entity form and supporting documents, the legal entity number may be provided, unless a change in legal status occurred in the meantime.
3. A financial identification form of the lead applicant (not from co-applicant(s)) conforming to the model attached as Annex E of these guidelines, certified by the bank to which the payments will be made. This bank should be located in the country where the lead applicant is established. If the lead applicant has already submitted a financial identification form in the past for a contract where the European

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<sup>12</sup> Natural persons who apply for a grant (if so allowed in the guidelines for applicants) do not have to provide an organisation data form. In this case, the information included in the grant application form is sufficient.

<sup>13</sup> Where the applicant and/or partner(s) is a public body created by a law, a copy of the said law must be provided

Commission was in charge of the payments and intends to use the same bank account, a copy of the previous financial identification form may be provided instead.

In addition, for the purpose of the evaluation of the financial capacity, the following documents should be submitted<sup>14</sup>:

1. For action grants exceeding EUR 750 000 and for operating grants above EUR 100 000, the lead applicant must provide an audit report produced by an approved external auditor where it is available, and always in cases where a statutory audit is required by EU or national law. That report shall certify the accounts for up to the last three available financial years.

In all other cases, the applicant shall provide a self-declaration signed by its authorised representative certifying the validity of its accounts for up to the last three available financial years. Such self-declaration shall be dated and signed, either by hand or by applying a qualified electronic signature (QES)<sup>15</sup> by an authorised representative of the signatory.

This requirement shall apply only to the first application made by a beneficiary the same contracting authority in any one financial year.

The external audit report is not required from the co-applicant(s) or affiliated entities (if any).

2. For action grants not exceeding EUR 750 000 and for operating grants below EUR 100 000, a copy of the lead applicant's profit and loss account and the balance sheet for up to the last three financial years for which the accounts were closed<sup>16</sup>. A copy of the latest account is neither required from the co-applicant(s) (if any) nor from affiliated entity(ies)(if any).

Documents must be supplied in the form of originals, photocopies or scanned versions (i.e. showing legible stamps, signatures and dates) of the said originals.

Where such documents are not in one of the official languages of the European Union or in the language of the country where the action is implemented, a translation into the language of the Call for proposals of the relevant parts of these documents proving the lead applicant's and, where applicable, co-applicants' and affiliated entity(ies)' eligibility, must be attached for the purpose of analysing the application.

Where these documents are in an official language of the European Union other than the language of the Call for proposals, it is strongly recommended, in order to facilitate the evaluation, to provide a translation of the relevant parts of the documents, proving the lead applicant's and, where applicable, co-applicants' and affiliated entity(ies)' eligibility, into the language of the Call for proposals.

If the abovementioned supporting documents are not provided by the deadline for the submission of the full application, the application may be rejected.

**No additional annexes should be sent.**

## **2.2.6. Where and how to send full applications**

Full applications (i.e. the full application form, PADOR registration form the budget, the logical framework and the declaration by the lead applicant) must be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) to the address below:

### **Postal and hand delivery address**

Stalna konferencija gradova i opština

<sup>14</sup> No supporting documents will be requested for applications for a grant not exceeding EUR 60 000.

<sup>15</sup> Please note that only the QES within the meaning of Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 (eIDAS Regulation) will be accepted. Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market and repealing Directive 1999/93/EC.

<sup>16</sup> This obligation does not apply to natural persons who have received education support or who are in most need or in receipt of direct support, nor to public bodies and to international organisations. It does not apply either when the accounts are in practice the same documents as the external audit report already provided pursuant to Section 2.2.5, point 1.

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

Applications must be submitted in one original and 1 copy in A4 size, each bound. The full application form, budget and logical framework and PADOR registration form must also be supplied in electronic format (CD-Rom or USB stick) in a separate and single file (i.e. the full application must not be split into several different files). The electronic file must contain **exactly the same** application as the paper version. Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

The declaration by the lead applicant (Section 8 of Part B of the grant application form) must be stapled separately and enclosed in the envelope.

Where lead applicants send several different applications (if allowed to do so by the guidelines of the call), each one must be sent separately.

The envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the call for proposals**, together with the number and title of the lot, the full name and address of the lead applicant, and the words 'Not to be opened before the opening session' and 'Ne otvarati pre početka sesije za otvaranje predloga projekata'.

**Applicants are advised to verify that their application is complete using the checklist (Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form). Incomplete applications may be rejected.**

### ***2.2.7. Deadline for submission of full applications***

The applicants' attention is drawn to the fact that there are two different systems for sending full applications: one is by post or private courier service, the other is by hand delivery.

In the first case, the full application must be sent before the date for submission, as evidenced by the postmark or deposit slip, but in the second case it is the acknowledgment of receipt given at the time of the delivery of the full application that will serve as proof.

The deadline for the submission of full applications will be indicated in the letter sent to the lead applicants whose application has been pre-selected.

The contracting authority may, for reasons of administrative efficiency, reject any application submitted on time to the postal service but received, for any reason beyond the contracting authority's control, after the effective date of approval of the full application evaluation, if accepting applications that were submitted on time but arrived late would considerably delay the award procedure or jeopardise decisions already taken and notified (see indicative calendar under Section 2.5.2).

Any application submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

### ***2.2.8. Further information about full applications***

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of full applications to the addresses listed below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: [pitanjaGS@skgo.org](mailto:pitanjaGS@skgo.org)

The contracting authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for the submission of full applications.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the contracting authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entity(ies), or an action.

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure will be published on the website [www.skgo.org](http://www.skgo.org) as the need arises. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

Please note that the contracting authority may decide to cancel the call for proposals procedure at any stage according to the conditions set out in Section 6.5.9 of the PRAG.

### **2.3. EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS**

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the contracting authority with the possible assistance of external assessors. All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in Section 2.1, the application will be rejected on this sole basis.



## (1) STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION

During the opening and administrative check the following will be assessed:

- If the deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will be automatically rejected.
- If the Concept note satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist in Section 2 of Part A of the grant application form. This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The concept notes that pass this check will be evaluated on the relevance and design of the proposed action.

The concept notes will receive an overall score out of 50 using the breakdown in the evaluation grid below. The evaluation will also check on compliance with the instructions on how to complete the concept note, which can be found in Part A of the grant application form.

The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheadings. Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

### Scores

<b>1. Relevance of the action</b>	Sub-score	<b>20</b>
1.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals and to the specific themes/sectors/areas or any other specific requirement stated in the guidelines for applicants? Are the expected results of the action aligned with the priorities defined in the guidelines for applicants (Section 1.2)?	5	
1.2 How relevant is the proposal to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies), region(s) and/or relevant sectors (including synergy with other development initiatives and avoidance of duplication)?	5	
1.3 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs (as rights holders and/or duty bearers) and constraints been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5	
1.4 Does the proposal contain particular added-value elements (e.g. innovation, best practices)?	5	
<b>2. Design of the action</b>	Sub-score	<b>30</b>
2.1 How coherent is the overall design of the action? Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale to achieve the expected results?	5x2*	
2.2 Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved, and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?	5	
2.3 Does the design take into account external factors (risks and assumptions)?	5	

2.4 Are the activities feasible and consistent in relation to the expected results (including timeframe)? Are results (output, outcome and impact) realistic?	5	
2.5 To which extent does the proposal integrate relevant cross-cutting elements such as environmental/climate change issues, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of indigenous peoples, youth, combating HIV/AIDS (if there is a strong prevalence in the target country/region)?	5	
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>		<b>50</b>

\*this score is multiplied by 2 because of its importance

Once all concept notes have been assessed, a list will be drawn up with the proposed actions ranked according to their total score.

Firstly, only the concept notes with a score of at least 30 will be considered for pre-selection.

Secondly, the number of concept notes will be reduced, taking account of the ranking, to the number of concept notes whose total aggregate amount of requested contributions is equal to 200% of the available budget for this call for proposals. The amount of requested contributions of each concept note will be based on the indicative financial envelopes for each lot, where relevant.

After the evaluation of concept notes, the contracting authority will send letters to all lead applicants, indicating whether their application was submitted by the deadline, informing them of the reference number they have been allocated, whether the concept note was evaluated and the results of that evaluation.

The pre-selected lead applicants will subsequently be invited to submit full applications.

## **STEP 2: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND EVALUATION OF THE FULL APPLICATION**

Firstly, the following will be assessed:

- If the submission deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will automatically be rejected.]
- If the full application satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist (Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form). This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The full applications that pass this check: they will be further evaluated on their quality, including the proposed budget and capacity of the applicants and affiliated entity(ies). They will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria in the evaluation grid below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and award criteria.

**The selection criteria** help to evaluate the applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s operational capacity and the lead applicant's financial capacity and are used to verify that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the proposed action and, where appropriate, to participate in its funding (this only applies to lead applicants);
- have the management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed action. This applies to applicants and any affiliated entity(ies).

**The award criteria** help to evaluate the quality of the applications in relation to the objectives and priorities set forth in the guidelines, and to award grants to projects which maximise the overall effectiveness of the call for proposals. They help to select applications which the contracting authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities. They cover the relevance of the action, its consistency with the objectives of the call for proposals, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

*Scoring:*

The evaluation grid is divided into Sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

## Evaluation grid

Section	Maximum Score
<b>1. Financial and operational capacity</b>	<b>20</b>
1.1 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient in-house experience of project management?	5
1.2 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient in-house technical expertise? (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)	5
1.3 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient in-house management capacity? (Including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4 Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5
<b>2. Relevance</b>	<b>20</b>
<i>Score transferred from the Concept Note evaluation</i>	
<b>3. Design of the action</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1 How coherent is the design of the action? Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale to achieve the expected results? Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the envisaged outputs and outcome(s)?	5
3.2 Does the proposal/Logical Framework include credible baseline, targets and sources of verification? If not, is a baseline study foreseen (and is the study budgeted appropriately in the proposal)?	5
3.3 Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved, and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?	5
<b>4. Implementation approach</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1 Is the action plan for implementing the action clear and feasible? Is the timeline realistic?	5
4.2 Does the proposal include an effective and efficient monitoring system? Is there an evaluation planned (previous, during or/and at the end of the implementation)?	5
4.3 Is the co-applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s level of involvement and participation in the action satisfactory?	5
<b>5. Sustainability of the action</b>	<b>15</b>
5.1 Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5

5.2 Is the action likely to have multiplier effects, including scope for replication, extension, capitalisation on experience and knowledge sharing?	5
5.3 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financially (<i>e.g. financing of follow-up activities, sources of revenue for covering all future operating and maintenance costs</i>)</li> <li>- Institutionally (<i>will structures allow the results of the action to be sustained at the end of the action? Will there be local 'ownership' of the results of the action?</i>)</li> <li>- At policy level (where applicable) (<i>what will be the structural impact of the action — e.g. improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods</i>)</li> <li>- Environmentally (if applicable) (<i>will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?</i>)</li> </ul>	5
<b>6. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action</b>	<b>15</b>
6.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	/ 5
6.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the results satisfactory?	/ 10
<b>Maximum total score</b>	<b>100</b>

If the total score for Section 1 (financial and operational capacity) is less than 12 points, the application will be rejected. If the score for at least one of the subsections under Section 1 is 1, the application will also be rejected.

If the lead applicant applies without co-applicants or affiliated entities the score for point 4.3 shall be 5 unless the involvement of co-applicants or affiliated entities is mandatory according to these guidelines for applicants.

#### *Provisional selection*

After the evaluation, a table will be drawn up listing the applications ranked according to their score. The highest scoring applications will be provisionally selected until the available budget for this call for proposals is reached. In addition, a reserve list will be drawn up following the same criteria. This list will be used if more funds become available during the validity period of the reserve list.

## **(2) STEP 3: VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF THE APPLICANTS AND AFFILIATED ENTITY(IES)**

The eligibility verification will be performed on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the contracting authority (see Sections 2.2.5). It will by default only be performed for the applications that have been provisionally selected according to their score and within the available budget for this call for proposals.

- The declaration by the lead applicant (Section 8 of Part B of the grant application form) will be cross-checked with the supporting documents provided by the lead applicant. Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the declaration by the lead applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the application on that sole basis.
- The eligibility of applicants and the affiliated entity(ies) will be verified according to the criteria set out in Section 2.1.1.

Any rejected application will be replaced by the next best placed application on the reserve list that falls within the available budget for this call for proposals.

## 2.4. SUBMISSION OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The lead applicant should submit the documents listed in Section 2.2.5.

In addition, a lead applicant whose application has been provisionally selected or placed on the reserve list will be informed in writing by the contracting authority. It will be requested to supply the following documents<sup>17</sup>:

1. Declaration on honour: the lead applicant as well as all co-applicants and affiliated entities shall fill in and sign the declaration on honour certifying that they are not in one of the exclusion situations (see Section 2.6.10.1 of the PRAG) where the amount of the grant exceeds EUR 15 000. The declaration on honour shall be dated and signed, either by hand or by applying a qualified electronic signature (QES)<sup>18</sup> by an authorised representative of the signatory.
2. Self-evaluation questionnaire on SEA-H: the lead applicant as well as all co-applicants and affiliated entities shall fill in the self-evaluation questionnaire assessing the organisation's internal policy and procedure against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEA-H) (Annex L) where the amount of grant exceeds EUR 60 000 (see Section 2.5.6 of the PRAG)<sup>19</sup>.

After verifying the supporting documents, the evaluation committee will make a final recommendation to the contracting authority, which will decide on the award of grants.

NB: In the eventuality that the contracting authority is not satisfied with the strength, solidity, and guarantee offered by the structural link between one of the applicants and its affiliated entity, it can require the submission of the missing documents allowing for its conversion into co-applicant. If all the missing documents for co-applicants are submitted, and provided all necessary eligibility criteria are fulfilled, the above mentioned entity becomes a co-applicant for all purposes. The lead applicant has to submit the application form revised accordingly.

## 2.5. NOTIFICATION OF THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION

### 2.5.1. *Content of the decision*

The lead applicants will be informed in writing of the contracting authority's decision concerning their application and, if rejected, the reasons for the negative decision. Please note that the lead applicant is the intermediary for all communications between applicants and the contracting authority during the procedure.

An applicant believing that it has been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may lodge a complaint. See Section 2.12 of the practical guide.

Applicants and, if they are legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over them, are informed that, should they be in one of the situations of early detection or exclusion, their personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the early detection and exclusion system, and communicated to the persons and entities concerned in relation to the award or the execution of a grant contract. For more information, you may consult the privacy statement available on [http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm)

<sup>17</sup> No supporting documents will be requested for applications for a grant not exceeding EUR 60 000.

<sup>18</sup> Please note that only the QES within the meaning of Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 (eIDAS Regulation) will be accepted. Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market and repealing Directive 1999/93/EC.

<sup>19</sup> Applicants, co-applicants and affiliated entities who are (i) natural persons (ii) pillar-assessed entities and (iii) governments and other public bodies do not have to submit the self-evaluation questionnaire.

## 2.5.2. Indicative timetable

	DATE	TIME
<b>1. Information meeting (if any)</b>	To be published separately. Please check on the indicated website.	To be published separately. Please check on the indicated website.
<b>2. Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the contracting authority</b>	12 February 2024	15h
<b>3. Last date on which clarifications are issued by the contracting authority</b>	22 February 2024	-
<b>4. Deadline for submission of concept notes</b>	4 March 2024	15h
<b>5. Information to lead applicants on opening, administrative checks and concept note evaluation (Step 1)</b>	April/May 2024	-
<b>6. Invitations to submit full applications</b>	April/May 2024	-
<b>6. Deadline for submission of full applications</b>	June 2024	-
<b>7. Information to lead applicants on the evaluation of the full applications (Step 2)</b>	July/August 2024	-
<b>8. Notification of award (after the eligibility check) (Step 3)</b>	July/August 2024	-
<b>9. Contract signature</b>	August 2024	-

All times are in the time zone of the country of the contracting authority.

This indicative timetable refers to provisional dates (except for dates 2, 3, and 4) and may be updated by the contracting authority during the procedure. In such cases, the updated timetable will be published on the web site of SCTM [www.skgo.org](http://www.skgo.org)

## 2.6. CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AFTER THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION TO AWARD A GRANT

Following the decision to award a grant, the beneficiary(ies) will be offered a contract based on the standard grant contract (see Annex G of these guidelines). By signing the application form (Annex A of these guidelines), the applicants agree, if awarded a grant, to accept the contractual conditions of the standard grant contract. Where the coordinator is an organisation whose pillars have been positively assessed, it will sign a contribution agreement based on the contribution agreement template. In this case, references to provisions of the standard grant contract and its annexes shall not apply. References in these guidelines to the grant contract shall be understood as references to the relevant provisions of the contribution agreement.

### Implementation contracts



Where implementation of the action requires the beneficiary(ies) and its affiliated entity(ies) (if any) to award procurement contracts, those contracts must be awarded in accordance with Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

In this context, a distinction should be made between awarding implementation contracts and subcontracting parts of the action described in the proposal, i.e. the description of the action annexed to the grant contract, such subcontracting being subject to additional restrictions (see the general terms and conditions in the model grant contract).

Awarding implementation contracts: implementation contracts relate to the acquisition by beneficiaries of routine services and/or necessary goods and equipment as part of their project management; they do not cover any outsourcing of tasks forming part of the action that are described in the proposal, i.e. in the description of the action annexed to the grant contract.

Subcontracting: subcontracting is the implementation, by a third party with which one or more beneficiaries have concluded a procurement contract, of specific tasks forming part of the action as described in annex to the grant contract (see also the general terms and conditions in the model grant contract).

### 3. LIST OF ANNEXES

#### DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED

- Annex A: Grant application form (Word format)
- Annex B: Budget (Excel format)
- Annex C: Logical framework (Word format)
- Annex D: Legal entity form
- Annex E: Financial identification form
- Annex F: PADOR registration form

#### DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION<sup>20</sup>

- Annex G: Standard grant contract
  - Annex II: general conditions
  - Annex IV: contract award rules
  - Annex V: standard request for payment
  - Annex VI: model narrative and financial report
  - Annex VII: model report of factual findings and terms of reference for an expenditure verification of an EU financed grant contract for external action
  - Annex IX: standard template for transfer of ownership of assets
- Annex H: Declaration on Honour
- Annex I: Daily allowance rates (per diem), available at the following address: [https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/funding/guidelines/managing-project/diem-rates\\_en](https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/funding/guidelines/managing-project/diem-rates_en)
- Annex J: Information on the tax regime applicable to grant contracts signed under the call.
- Annex K: Guidelines for assessing simplified cost options.
- Annex L: Self-evaluation questionnaire on SEA-H

#### Useful links:

##### Project Cycle Management Guidelines

[https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/funding/managing-project\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/funding/managing-project_en)

##### The implementation of grant contracts

##### A Users' Guide

<https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=48169235>

##### Financial Toolkit

[https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/financial-management-toolkit\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/financial-management-toolkit_en)

Please note: the toolkit is not part of the grant contract and has no legal value. It merely provides general guidance and may in some details differ from the signed grant contract. In order to ensure compliance with their contractual obligations beneficiaries should not exclusively rely on the toolkit but always consult their individual contract documents.

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<sup>20</sup> These documents should also be published by the contracting authority.