

CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS

The South East Europe (SEE) Programme 2007 – 2013 aims at improving the territorial, economic and social integration process and contribution to cohesion, stability and competitiveness through the development of transnational partnerships and joint actions on matters of strategic importance. The Managing Authority of the SEE Programme (Hungarian National Development Agency) and the partner states (Albania, Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine) are launching the first call for projects for transnational cooperation in the South Eastern area of Europe to be co-financed by ERDF and IPA under this programme.

1. FORMAL REQUIREMENTS

In order to develop their project ideas and submit an Expression of Interest as well as a project Application Form, applicants will need to conform to the requirements laid down in this call for project proposals and in the following documents:

- South East Europe Operational Programme
- South East Europe Programme Manual

General procedure

The call for proposals will follow the open competitive procedure according to chapter 7.2 of the Operational Programme and the section 4.1.1 of the Programme Manual. It will follow a two step application procedure. In the first step, applicants are requested to submit an Expression of Interest (Eoi) based on a short form (see Annex 1). Applicants have to describe the problem or the challenge the project wants to address, the envisaged objectives and results, the foreseen budget and partnership. In the second step, pre-selected project ideas will be invited to submit an Application Form (AF) which will be the basis for the selection of projects. If appropriate, applicants will be given recommendations on how to further elaborate the project proposal to shape it to the expectations of the programme.

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Priorities

Under the present call, projects can be submitted under all programme Priorities and Areas of Intervention.

Budgetary restrictions

At the project level no specific ERDF budget restrictions are foreseen. The minimum amount of IPA funding that can be requested by Project Partners from an IPA beneficiary country is EUR 50,000. The maximum amount of IPA funding that can be requested by Project Partners from an IPA beneficiary country is EUR 300,000. These limits apply regardless of the number of Project Partners from the country concerned.

The consistency of the budget with the envisaged activities/outputs will be carefully assessed. In order to avoid an over-exhaustion of the programme budget not more than 30% of ERDF at the programme level shall be committed to projects in the current call. All the IPA funds available for the year 2007 can be committed, as indicated in the following table (each country may use up to 10% of these totals for technical assistance activities):

ERDF		58,287,044.00
IPA	Croatia	400,000.00
	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	453,020.00
	Albania	200,020.00
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	453,020.00
	Montenegro	670,000.00
	Serbia	1,114,228.00

ENPI funds are not available.

Public funding

The ERDF and IPA co-funding is based on public funds. The co-funding rate of both ERDF and IPA funds is 85%.

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Project duration

The duration of projects must not exceed 36 months. This limit applies for the operative phase of the project and does not comprise of the preparation phase of the project.

Time schedule

The call will be open from 05.05.2008.

The EoI has to be submitted to the Joint Technical Secretariat by 4 am Central European time on 13.06.08.

The AF has to be submitted to the Joint Technical Secretariat between the beginning of August 2008 and 10.10.2008.

Submission

EoI and AF have to be submitted by electronic upload. In addition, but only for the second step, the applicant is requested to confirm the electronic upload by mailing a signed hardcopy of the Application Form and related documents. All documents shall be mailed to:

SEE JTS

Gellértheagy str. 30-32

H-1016 Budapest,

Hungary

Submission must of course be before the submission deadline (date of the postmark) and it should reach the JTS not later than three weeks from the deadline.

Further documents may be requested at a national level. Thus, we encourage applicants and their partners to contact their SEE Contact Points (SCPs) well in advance of the submission deadline.

2. ELIGIBILITY

Programme area

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Project beneficiaries should be located within the programme area as indicated in section 1.3 of the OP and 2.5 of the Programme Manual.

Eligibility of partners

The eligibility of partners is indicated in the section 3.2.1 of the Programme Manual. In particular, for this call the following bodies are eligible for ERDF funding:

- Public bodies
- Bodies governed by public law
- Bodies governed by private law

All types of eligible partners can act as Lead Partner in a particular project. In all cases the outcome and results of the projects must be made available for the general public free of charge.

Public bodies

Public bodies are organizations which were founded and governed by public law. Their main purpose is to fulfil the needs of the public.

Bodies governed by public law

The definition of a body governed by public law is the following according to Article 1 of Directive 2004/18/EC:

A "body governed by public law" means any body:

- (a) established for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest, not having an industrial or commercial character;
- (b) having legal personality; and
- (c) financed, for the most part, by the State, regional or local authorities, or other bodies governed by public law; or subject to management supervision by those bodies; or having an administrative, managerial or supervisory board, more than half of whose members are appointed by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law.

Bodies governed by private law

Bodies governed by private law, can be considered all the organizations which were funded by private law, such as chambers of commerce, trade unions or non-governmental organisations, may receive ERDF funding if they fulfil the following criteria:

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- they are established for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest, not having an industrial or commercial character;
- they have legal personality;
- they make available the results of the project to the general public;
- they apply the principles of public procurement.

Please note that it may vary from country to country whether a certain type of organisation falls under public or private law.

International organizations acting under international law cannot be eligible.

However, international organizations acting under the national law of any SEE Partner State can be considered as eligible if they fulfil the criteria foreseen for the bodies governed by private law.

Eligibility for IPA funds

(1) In order to be eligible for a grant, applicants **must**:

- be legal persons **and**
- be non profit making **and**
- be specific types of organisations such as:
 - o Associations: non-governmental organisations, trade unions, employers' associations, professional associations etc.
 - o Institutions: public sector operators, educational and research institutions,¹ etc.
 - o Foundations;
 - o Chambers of Commerce, Chambers of Crafts and Trade, public employment services
 - o Canton, municipalities/towns and the district
 - o Regional development agencies, business incubators, entrepreneurship centres, research and development Institutes and other business support institutions.

¹ Private research and educational institutions are eligible to apply if they will not derive profit from the project

- be nationals² of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia; a Member State of the European Union or Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Turkey, and;
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with their partners, not acting as an intermediary and
- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to ensure the continuity of their organisation throughout the lifespan of the project and whose financial resources are not exclusively made up of subsidies and grants from the European Union or other foreign donor organisations.

(2) Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations which are listed in Section 2.3.3 of the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions (available from the following Internet address: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/index_en.htm).

Only legal entities, listed in the Application Form, considered eligible for funding may report their costs. In order to ensure the proper audit trail the MA has to know which organisations receive programme funding and whether they are eligible according to the programme rules. Therefore, an “umbrella” type of partnership structure, where one partner receives funding and represents other partners without naming them is not possible.

Eligibility of activities

Activities and related expenditures are eligible according to the eligibility rules set out in Operational Programme and Annex 1 of the Programme Manual.

Please note that the SEE Transnational Programme 2007 – 2013, is fully integrated within the Objective 3 of the Cohesion Policy, strongly concentrated on the achievement of the Lisbon and Gothenburg objectives. Therefore, projects should clearly consider the following aims:

- contribution to sustainable territorial development;

2 Such nationality being determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the internal law of the country concerned. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if they are registered locally or accompanied by a Memorandum of Understanding.

- leverage effect on investment, development perspectives and policy development;
- facilitation of innovation, entrepreneurship, knowledge economy and information society by concrete cooperation action and visible results (creation of new products, services, development of new markets and the improvement of human resources based on the principles of sustainability);
- contribution to integration by supporting balanced capacities for transnational territorial cooperation at all levels (systems building and governance).

The orientation on research, technology and innovation involves a significant entrepreneurial development aspect. Hence pure academic research activities cannot be supported under this programme.

Projects could include activities such as studies and operational plans, capacity building activities, promotion actions, set-up of services, preparation and conduction of investments proposed by transnational strategic concepts, including infrastructure investment if appropriate and justifiable. Additional activities could include networking and exchange of information, but not as stand alone purely networking activities, as these will NOT be supported.

Special eligibility rules

Following the indications of the Operational Programme and the Programme Manual, projects are allowed to make use of the so called “10% ERDF flexibility rule” when planning the budget for their proposals. Detailed information has to be provided when filling in the full Application Form (2nd step).

For this call, the so called “20% ERDF flexibility rule” will not apply. Therefore, the participation is limited to Project Partners located within the programme area.

Please, note that Italian and Ukrainian public authorities or bodies governed by public law which are competent in their scope of action for certain parts of the eligible area but which are located outside of it (e.g., ministries) are to all effects assimilated, both in terms of rights and of obligations, to partners located in the SEE Programme area.

3. SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection criteria are detailed in the Operational Programme and Programme Manual.

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	1. Step Light Assessment	2. Step Full Assessment
1. Formal Check		
Timely submission	X	X
Completeness of submitted application	X	X
The Application Form includes:		
1) The Signed Declaration from each partner (standardised document)	-	X
2) The Common Partnership Agreement	-	X
3) The Lead Partner Declaration	-	X
4) The Legal Entity Sheet duly signed and stamped together with the relevant document certifying the existence of the legal person	-	X
2. Eligibility Check		
1) Project fulfils minimum requirements for transnational partnerships	X	X
2) Project complies in general with the Operational Programme and has impact in the programme area	X	X
3) Requested grant is within the fixed thresholds (if and where applicable)	-	X
4) Beneficiaries have secured public co-financing	X (only indication of type of sources)	X
5) Beneficiaries are eligible	X	X
6) The proposed types of activities are eligible	X	X
7) Project implementation has not started and it will not start prior to the submission of the Application Form and can be finalised within the programme period (before 31 December 2014)	X	X
8) Beneficiaries shall cooperate in at least two of the following ways: joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing and joint financing (according Art. 19 ERDF Regulation)	X	X
3. Quality Check		
Quality of Partnership		
1.1 Composition of transnational partnership	X	X
1.2 Quality of transnational co-operation	X	X
1.3 Project management and coordination	-	X
1.4 Internal and external communication / dissemination, knowledge management	-	X
Quality of Content		
2.1 Project's contribution to the overall objectives of the programme and to EU principles	X	X
2.2 Project's specific contribution to the Priority Axes and Areas of Intervention of the programme	X	X
2.3 Quality of work plan and description of types of activities	-	X
2.4 Concreteness and usability of the projects deliverables	X	X
2.5 Value for money	X (only overall coherence)	X
2.6 Synergies with other policies, programmes and projects	X	X

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4. PROJECT EVALUATION PROCEDURE

The technical evaluation of the EoI will be carried out by the JTS with the support of the SEE Contact Points (SCPs). The evaluation results will be presented to the Monitoring Committee that will decide if the project proposal presented in the EoI will be invited to present a full application.

In very limited and specific cases, the applicants will be provided with comments on their proposal and furthermore might be asked to amend their proposal (e.g. extending the partnership, merging with other project proposals, changing the geographical scope of the project, etc.)

Only project proposals matching a certain readiness and quality level and responding to the selection criteria indicated in the Programme Manual will be invited to enter the second step of the application procedure. The Monitoring Committee may give some additional recommendations for the preparation of the application to improve the quality of the project.

Second step applications will be evaluated by the JTS with the support of SCPs and, if necessary, external experts.

Proposals that in the second step present radically changed information in the partnership composition, indicated activities, or budgets will be rejected.

A shortlist ranking the proposals will be prepared which serves as a basis for project decisions by the Monitoring Committee. Rejected projects will be informed about the reasons for rejections upon request. Applicants are free to resubmit their application in the following appropriate calls.

5. ANNEX

Annex 1: Expression of Interest Form

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