



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)

## **CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

European Destinations of Excellence –Promotion of EDEN  
destinations and awareness raising

*Call Identifier:* COS-TEDEN-2015-3-05

**COSME Work Programme 2015**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## 1.1. Introduction

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) play a crucial role in reaching the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy<sup>1</sup>. Whereas they are considered as crucial engines for growth and job creation, their competitiveness is affected by a limited exploitation of international opportunities and innovation prospects in the Single Market and beyond.

In this context, the Programme for the competitiveness of enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises (2014-2020)<sup>2</sup>, hereinafter referred to as “COSME”, aims to promote growth and to strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of enterprises in the European Union.

This call constitutes part of the COSME Work Programme 2015 adopted on the 29 October 2014<sup>3</sup>.

The contracting authority is the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises<sup>4</sup> (hereinafter referred to as "EASME"). EASME is, *inter alia*, entrusted by the European Commission with the implementation of parts of the COSME programme and the Horizon 2020 programme.

## 1.2. Policy Context

This call for proposals aims at setting-up an action to develop and support transnational cooperation projects in tourism sector with involvement of SMEs and in close cooperation with the Member States.

It comes as a continuation of the initiative “European Destinations of Excellence” (EDEN) launched in 2006 by the European Commission. It was seen as a means of initiating a European Union action in support of European tourism which was implemented as a pilot project<sup>5</sup> and a preparatory action<sup>6</sup> in 2007-2011. Since 2011 it has been continued under the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP)<sup>7</sup> and as of 2014 under the COSME programme<sup>8</sup>.

The overall aim of the initiative is “to draw attention to the value, diversity and shared characteristics of European tourist destinations and to promote destinations where the economic growth objective is pursued in such a way as to ensure the social, cultural and environmental sustainability of tourism”.

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<sup>1</sup> COM (2010)2020 final of 3 March 2010 “Europe 2020. A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth”.

<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EU) No 1287/2013 of 11 December 2013 (Official Journal of the European Union L 347/33 of 20.12.2013).

<sup>3</sup> Commission Implementing Decision C(2014)8044 of 29 October 2014 on the adoption of the work programme for 2015 and the financing for the implementation of the Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises.

<sup>4</sup> EASME was set up by Commission Implementing Decision 2013/771/EU of 17 December 2013 establishing the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and repealing Decisions 2004/20/EC and 2007/372/EC (Official Journal of the European Union L 341/73 of 18.12.2013).

<sup>5</sup> Pilot projects are projects of an experimental nature that can be proposed by the Budget Authority for implementation by the Commission to test the feasibility of an action and its usefulness. They are limited to a period of no more than two consecutive years.

<sup>6</sup> Preparatory actions are project initiatives that can be proposed by the Budget Authority for implementation by the Commission to prepare proposals with a view to the adoption of future actions. They are limited to a period of no more than three consecutive years.

<sup>7</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/cip/documents/work-programmes/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/cip/documents/work-programmes/index_en.htm)

<sup>8</sup> Regulation (EU) No 1287/2013 of 11 December 2013 (Official Journal of the European Union 2013/L347/33 of 20 December 2013)

The more specific aims of the EDEN initiative are to:

- enhance visibility of the emerging European tourist destinations of excellence, especially the lesser known,
- create awareness of Europe's tourist diversity and quality,
- promote all European countries and regions,
- help decongestion, combat seasonality, rebalance the tourist flows towards the non-traditional destinations,
- award sustainable forms of tourism,
- create a platform for the exchange of good practices at European level,
- promote networking between awarded destinations which could persuade other destinations to adopt sustainable tourism development models,
- trigger a greater support from national tourism organisations at local level and an increase in private sector investment in the destinations,
- prompt a sense of pride of the local community which will lead to addition enthusiasm for further improvement of their sustainable tourism offer.

The EDEN initiative is organised through *two types of calls for proposals* directed to all EU Member States and other countries participating in the COSME programme:

- **First type of calls:**

The first type of calls for proposals aim at co-financing the eligible costs of the procedures for the selection of the national destinations of excellence and for the organisation of EDEN promotion/awareness raising campaigns.

Selection of the EDEN destinations is based on national competitions that result in the award of one tourist “destination of excellence” and up to 4 runners-up for each participating country. The recipients of the award are emerging, non-traditional and little known European destinations.

Through this first type of calls, by the end of 2015, around 140 destinations from 27 different countries will have been awarded the EDEN prize since 2007, under different annual themes chosen by the European Commission together with the relevant national tourism authorities. To date, the themes have focused on rural tourism (2007), local intangible heritage (2008), protected areas (2009), aquatic tourism (2010), tourism and regeneration of physical sites (2011), accessible tourism (2013) and tourism and local gastronomy (2015).

- **Second type of calls:**

The present call for proposals falls under this second category.

The second type of EDEN calls for proposals focuses on promotion and awareness raising campaigns of European Destinations of Excellence already selected through the first type of calls.

Such calls were already launched in 2011 and 2013, to support National Administrations in charge of tourism for the purpose of promoting the EDEN destinations (winners and runners-up of the previous editions) and for enhancing awareness of the EDEN rationale in partnerships.

The promotional campaigns of 2011 and 2013 resulting from the calls for proposals have increased awareness of the EDEN destinations through different communications and promotional activities, such as organisation of press/familiarisation trips/study tours for foreign and domestic journalists to the EDEN destinations, participation in the domestic and international tourism fairs and exhibitions, promotion of EDEN in classic and social media, development of specialised EDEN websites, producing promotional materials in several languages for domestic and overseas markets;

organisation of online/photo competitions, TV reality shows on different EDEN destinations or EDEN themes.

### Additional information

For the implementation of the EDEN initiative, the Commission (and the EASME from 2014) also organise award events at European-level and a number of flanking communication activities (i.e. a dedicated EDEN webportal <http://ec.europa.eu/eden> , media and online campaigns, production and distribution of audio-visual materials, brochures, information leaflets, participation in tourism fairs, etc.) in order to create awareness of EDEN as a brand of sustainable tourism in Europe's non-traditional tourist destinations.

Among the different aims of the EDEN initiative, one is to create a platform for the exchange of good practices in the field of sustainable tourism at European level and to promote networking between awarded destinations. Aiming at achieving these objectives, in 2008 the European Commission set-up a European Network of Destinations of Excellence for Sustainable Tourism (hereinafter called "EDEN network") which comprises all EDEN winning destinations (and as of 2012 all runners-up) of the EDEN project and is a unique network in the field of sustainable tourism worldwide. The members have signed the "Declaration of Brussels" and officially committed themselves to collaborate with each other and guarantee constant exchange of information and knowledge on tourism development. In 2012 the majority of the EDEN Network members established an international non-profit organisation, the EDEN Network Association (AISBL).

More information on the EDEN initiative may be found by following these links: <http://ec.europa.eu/eden> and <http://edenpost.org> .

## **2. OBJECTIVE(S) – THEME(S) – ACTIVITIES – OUTPUTS**

### **2.1. General objective**

The objective of the present call for proposals is to support eligible National Administrations in charge of tourism, or other public bodies corresponding to the definition set up in point 6 below (hereafter 'the applicant') for the purpose of promoting the EDEN destinations (winners and runners-up of the previous editions) and enhancing awareness of the EDEN rationale, in countries which have already selected at least one "European Destination of Excellence" (EDEN) under the calls for proposals in 2007-2014,.

### **2.2. Description of the work**

It is proposed to the applicants to design and implement a coherent promotional campaign in order to raise awareness of the EDEN project and increase visibility of the European Destinations of Excellence selected in 2007-2015.

Cooperation is required with such marketing partners as National Tourism Organisations, Regional Tourism Organisations and other organisations, which have in their remit responsibility to carry out promotional and marketing activities in the field of tourism.

#### **2.2.1. Project Impact**

The expected impact of the promotional campaign is to increase the domestic and international tourism flows to EDEN destinations within a timeframe of 2 years from the end of the project. The key indicators to measure the impact are the number of "arrivals" and "overnight stays".

To make a stronger case for impact, it is suggested to carry out specific surveys to estimate the share of tourist flows influenced by the promotional campaign activities.

In addition, the National Tourism Administrations may prove the impact of the project in terms of increase of tourism expenditure and/or change of seasonality of tourist flows<sup>9</sup>.

### 2.2.2. Project Outcomes

It is assumed that the project impacts specified in point 2.2.1 can be achieved if the promotional campaign is able to deliver the following outcomes:

- increased awareness and visibility of the European Destinations of Excellence in the target markets<sup>10</sup>, that will trigger higher number of potential tourists arrivals and local spill-over revenues.
- increased recognition of diversity, uniqueness and quality of each EDEN destination in the target markets,
- approval and implementation of agreements between travel enablers<sup>11</sup> and EDEN destinations for promotional activities for 18-months. Travel enablers are envisaged to raise tourists' awareness, attitude and purchase intentions towards the EDEN destinations.

Applicants shall propose key indicators and a methodology to measure these outcomes at the end of the project.

### 2.2.3. Project Activities

Given the expected impacts and outcomes of the promotional campaign, specified in points 2.2.1 and 2.2.2, applicants shall propose a communication strategy of a transnational dimension (covering at least 2 different countries, including the applicant country) to reach the travel enablers at domestic and international level.

The communication strategy shall be presented through a detailed description of promotional activities and its methodology. It is recommended to draft it with the marketing partners and the EDEN destinations.

Proposals shall indicate the most effective activities to develop and implement the proposed communication strategy. Applicants are free to propose the activities they consider relevant. However, it is essential that all activities must clearly aim at achieving the outcomes indicated in point 2.2.2.

Examples of communication and promotional activities which could be considered (the list is not exhaustive and is given for an ease of reference) are:

- Inserting EDEN destinations in specific National Tourist Offices (NTOs) marketing packages linked to the EDEN themes;
- Promotion of EDEN destinations in classic and social media (e.g. issuing newsletters, press releases and publications of articles in the press, organisation of press-conferences, briefings for journalists, broadcasting of the available audio-visual material, including video clips produced by the European Commission for each of the winning destination);

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<sup>9</sup>

For definitions and measurement of key indicators, please refer to Regulation (EU) No 692/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 July 2011 concerning European statistics on tourism and repealing Council Directive 95/57/EC.

<sup>10</sup>

Target markets are groups of tourists that are separated by distinguishable and noticeable aspects such as: geographic segmentations, (location, climate region), demographic/socioeconomic segmentation (gender, age, income, occupation, education, household size, and stage in the family life cycle), psychographic segmentation (similar attitudes, values, and lifestyles), etc.

<sup>11</sup>

Travel enablers are media agents, travel agents, tour operators, bloggers and in general all type of individuals and organizations that can influence travel decisions of tourists.

- Organisation of workshops/seminars/trainings/familiarisation trips (press trips, study trips, etc) for travel enablers;
- Participation in the domestic and international tourism fairs/exhibitions to present EDEN destinations;
- Development of promotional materials (e.g. information leaflets, brochures, posters, roll-ups, take-away gadgets) for participation at the above-mentioned events;
- Inserting information on EDEN destinations and relevant tourism businesses of the destinations in the Internet websites, mobile devices and web-based marketplace of tour/travel operators acting in the tourism sector;
- Showcasing EDEN destinations in the web-based and mobile device channels of relevant media operators (bloggers, magazines, travel section of newspapers, etc.).
- Development/maintenance of a specialised EDEN website.

In all the communication actions visibility of the EU support to the project shall be raised and the EDEN logo and the EC logo shall be used. The applicants are also asked to make reference to the EDEN web-portal <http://ec.europa.eu/eden> wherever appropriate.

#### **2.2.4. Description of the project**

The description of the project shall follow the structure indicated in the Technical Annex 1 – Description of the Action.

In the proposed communication strategy the applicant shall explain how the strategy will deliver the intended outcomes, which indicators and methodology will be used to measure the impacts and outcomes of the project. It is important that the proposal contains at least a first set of the indicators as reference of the starting point.

The strategy shall clearly identify the target markets (a clear reference of market segments to be targeted and geographic focus) and the target audience (a list of travel enablers playing a relevant role in the target markets). The applicant shall be able to assess the potential reach of targeted travel enablers (e.g. to engage a travel magazine, the applicant shall get data on its readership).

The proposal shall provide a brief description of the message strategy (i.e. a positioning declaration for each EDEN destination being promoted), the creative strategy (i.e. how to bring the message) and the message source (e.g. who is delivering a message: an opinion leader, an actor, a tourist, etc.). The ultimate goal is to make the target markets clearly understand what makes EDEN destinations excellent and different.

The applicant shall also describe the communicational channels to be used to involve the target audience estimating the related costs in cash and in kind (in any).

### **2.3 Reports**

The expected reports of the project are:

- A Progress Report (at the end of month 9 of the project) describing the practical work undertaken and the tangible results achieved.
- a Final Implementation Report, composed of two parts:
  - (a) a Technical part.
  - (b) a Financial part.

Instructions for submission of the reports will be communicated to the beneficiaries in due time by EASME.

### 3. TIMETABLE

	Stages	Dates
a)	Publication of the call	28/04/2015
b)	Deadline for submitting applications	25/06/2015 17:00h Brussels time
c)	Evaluation period*	July – September 2015
d)	Information to applicants*	October 2015
e)	Signature of grant agreements*	December 2015
f)	Starting date of the action*	January 2016

\* indicative

#### Key milestones

Projects co-financed under this invitation to submit a proposal shall be carried out according to the following calendar to be considered as tentatively (January is considered as Month 1).

Implementation of the communication campaign	From January 2016 on
Dispatch of the Progress Report	October 2016
Completion and dispatch of the “Final Implementation Report”	From July 2017 to September 2017

### 4. BUDGET AVAILABLE AND FUNDING OF PROJECTS

The total budget earmarked for the co-financing of projects is estimated at **EUR 600,000**.

The maximum grant per project will be **EUR 55,000**.

The grant is limited to a maximum reimbursement rate of 75% of eligible costs.

The EASME reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

## 5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be complied with:

- Applications must be submitted no later than the deadline for submitting applications referred to in section 3;
- Applications must be submitted as explained in section 14;
- Applications must be drafted in one of the EU official languages.

Failure to comply with those requirements will lead to the rejection of the application from the onset and without any evaluation process.

## 6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

### 6.1. Eligible applicants

- Proposals may be submitted by one single applicant individually, or in consortium with partner organisations.
- Applicants must be legal entities properly constituted and registered under national law.
- The single applicant or coordinator in case of consortium must correspond to the definition of the following target organisations: National Administration in charge of tourism from the countries specified below. If the responsibility for the tourism sector is decentralised, then the proposal may be submitted by the competent regional administration. National Tourist Offices or other public bodies in charge of tourism can submit an application, provided that the competent National Administration gives its consent in writing.
- In addition, for consistency and continuity reasons, it is necessary that the single applicant or the consortium coordinator must be established in one of the countries which have selected at least one “European Destination of Excellence” (EDEN) through the first type of calls for proposals launched during the period 2007-2014.

Legal entities having a legal or capital link with applicants, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation, may take part in the action as affiliated entities, and may declare eligible costs as specified in section 11.2.

For that purpose, applicants shall identify such affiliated entities in the application form.

- Only applications from legal entities established in the following countries are eligible:
  - EU Member States;
  - or countries participating in the COSME programme pursuant to Article 6 of the COSME Regulation<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> The following groups of countries are eligible for participation in COSME:

- a. European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries which are members of the European Economic Area (EEA), in accordance with the conditions laid down in the EEA Agreement, and other European countries when agreements and procedures so allow;
- b. acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidates in accordance with the general principles and general terms and conditions for the participation of those countries in the Union's programmes established in the respective Framework Agreements and Association Council Decisions, or similar arrangements;

- Only one application per country is eligible.

## 6.2. Eligible consortia

In case of consortia, the coordinator must correspond to the definition mentioned in article 6.1 third bullet point.

Partner organisations in the consortium may be:

- National, regional, local tourism organisations, public and private agencies which have in their remit responsibility to carry out promotional and marketing activities in the field of tourism;
- SMEs – Small and Medium Sized enterprises - acting in the tourism sector.;
- Public governmental authorities and their networks or associations at European, international, national, regional and local level or organisations acting on behalf of a public governmental authority;
- Training or educational institutions including universities, research centres;
- Destination management organisations and their networks/associations;
- Travel Agents and Tour Operators and their umbrella associations;
- Chambers of commerce and industry, chambers of handicrafts or similar bodies and their umbrella Associations;
- Not-for profit/Non-governmental organisations, civil society organizations, foundations, think-tanks, umbrella associations, networks or federations of public or private bodies, whose core activity falls under the tourism field;
- International, European and national organisations/associations active in the field of tourism and related fields;
- Federations and associations operating in partnership across the borders of a number of countries with a proven cross-border outreach;
- Public and private bodies whose core activity falls under tourism, regional development or any other field that is strictly related to the object of the proposal.

## 6.3 Implementation period

The project duration must be between 15 and 18 months. Applications for projects scheduled to run for a shorter or longer period will not be accepted.

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- c. countries falling within the scope of the European neighbourhood policies, when agreements and procedures so allow and in accordance with the general principles and general terms and conditions for the participation of those countries in the Union's programmes established in the respective Framework Agreements, Protocols to Association Agreements and Association Council Decisions.

The updated list of eligible third countries is available on the following webpage:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/cosme/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/cosme/index_en.htm)

## 7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

### 7.1. Exclusion from participation:

Applicants will be excluded from participating in the call for proposals procedure if they are in any of the following situations:

- (a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- (b) they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of a Member State which has the force of res judicata;
- (c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify including by decisions of the EIB and international organisations;
- (d) they are not in compliance with their obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the Responsible Authorising Officer (RAO) or those of the country where the grant agreement is to be performed;
- (e) they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering or any other illegal activity, where such an illegal activity is detrimental to the Union's financial interests;
- (f) they are currently subject to an administrative penalty referred to in Article 109(1) of the Financial Regulation<sup>13</sup>.

### 7.2. Exclusion from award:

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

- (a) are subject to a conflict of interest;
- (b) are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the Commission as a condition of participation in the grant award procedure or fail to supply this information;
- (c) find themselves in one of the situations of exclusion, referred to in section 7.1.

The same exclusion criteria apply to affiliated entities.

Administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants, or affiliated entities where applicable, who are guilty of misrepresentation.

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<sup>13</sup> Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 (Official Journal of the European Union L 298 of 26.10.2012).

### 7.3. Supporting documents

Applicants must sign a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in Articles 106(1) and 107 to 109 of the Financial Regulation<sup>14</sup>, filling in the relevant form.

## 8. SELECTION CRITERIA

### 8.1. Financial capacity

Applicants must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out or the year for which the grant is awarded and to participate in its funding.

Applicants will submit a declaration on their honour at a later stage, via an online tool and only upon request of the EASME.

### 8.2. Operational capacity

Applicants must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed action

In this respect, applicants have to submit the following supporting documents:

- curriculum vitae (CV), preferably in European CV format <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu>) or description of the profile of the main persons primarily responsible for managing and implementing the different activities of the action;
- a lists of previous projects and activities performed and connected to the policy field of a given call or to the actions to be carried out.

## 9. AWARD CRITERIA

Eligible applications will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Points</i>
Relevance of the actions in view of the objectives of the call 1. How relevant is the proposal to the objectives of the published call for proposals? 2. Are the project concept and the activities proposed in line with the eligible activities and expected results? 3. Has the project proposal a real transnational dimension (does the communication strategy cover at least 2 different countries?)? 4. How well does the project fit with the expectations/needs of the identified target group?	30
Quality of the proposed actions	25

<sup>14</sup> Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 (Official Journal of the European Union L 298 of 26.10.2012)

<p>1. How clear and coherent is the overall project design (including preparedness for the evaluation and presentation of the proposal)?</p> <p>2. How coherent, appropriate and practical are the activities proposed (including the internal plan of action/work packages)?</p> <p>3. Is there a logical link between identified needs, specific objectives, proposed actions and expected results? Is this link well described and justified?</p> <p>4. Are the proposed methodology and organisation (including the timetable and monitoring) effective? Are the actions proposed sound and sustainable?</p>	
<p><b>Impact on target audience</b></p> <p>1. To what extent is the project likely to have a tangible impact on the target groups as well as on the managerial and technical capacities of the applicant organisation? Is the proposal suggesting clear, realistic and practical impact indicators?</p> <p>2. Are the expected multiplying effects (including possibilities for replication and extension of the outcomes, dissemination of information, etc.) sound?</p>	25
<p><b>Cost-effectiveness</b></p> <p>1. Does the breakdown of the budget, category by category, offer a way of ensuring that the amount of the grant awarded is the minimum necessary for the operation to be completed?</p> <p>2. Do the probable results stand in a reasonable relationship to the amount of the grant?</p> <p>3. To what extent is the proposed expenditure necessary for the implementation of the project?</p>	20

In order to be considered for funding, proposals will need to have passed an overall threshold of **60%** in terms of total score. In addition, thresholds of 50% will be applied to each individual award criterion described above in order to ensure a consistent minimum quality for all award criteria. Proposals will be ranked according to their total score.

## 10. LEGAL COMMITMENTS

In the event of a grant awarded by the EASME, a grant agreement drawn up in euro and detailing the conditions and level of funding, will be sent to the beneficiary, as well as the procedures in view to formalise the obligations of the parties.

Please note that the award of a grant does not establish an entitlement for subsequent years.

## 11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

### 11.1 General Principles

#### a) Non-cumulative award

An action may only receive one grant from the EU budget.

In no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice by the Union budget. To ensure this, applicants shall indicate the sources and amounts of Union funding received or applied

for the same action or part of the action or for its functioning during the same financial year as well as any other funding received or applied for the same action.<sup>15</sup>

b) Non-retroactivity

No grant may be awarded retrospectively for actions already completed.

A grant may be awarded for an action which has already begun only where the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the action before the grant agreement is signed.

In such cases, costs eligible for financing may not have been incurred prior to the date of submission of the grant application.

c) Co-financing

Co-financing means that the resources which are necessary to carry out the action may not be entirely provided by the EU grant. It may take the form of:

- the beneficiary's own resources;
- income generated by the action;
- financial contributions from third parties.

d) Balanced budget

The estimated budget of the action is to be attached to the application form. It must have revenue and expenditure in balance.

The budget must be drawn up in euros.

Applicants which foresee that costs will not be incurred in euros, are invited to use the exchange rate published on the Info-euro website available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts\\_grants/info\\_contracts/inforeuro/inforeuro\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/inforeuro/inforeuro_en.cfm).

e) Implementation contracts/subcontracting

Where the implementation of the action requires the award of procurement contracts (implementation contracts), the beneficiary must award the contract to the bid offering best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interests and retain the documentation for the event of an audit.

Entities acting in their capacity of contracting authorities in the meaning of Directive 2004/18/EC<sup>16</sup> or contracting entities in the meaning of Directive 2004/17/EC<sup>17</sup> shall abide

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<sup>15</sup> Directive 2004/18/EC of 31 March 2004 on the coordination of procedures for the award of public work contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts (Official Journal of the European Union L 134/114 of 30.04.2004).

<sup>16</sup> Directive 2004/18/EC of 31 March 2004 on the coordination of procedures for the award of public work contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts (Official Journal of the European Union L 134/114 of 30.04.2004).

<sup>17</sup> Directive 2004/17/EC of 31 March 2004 coordinating the procurement procedures of entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors (Official Journal of the European Union L 134/114 of 30.04.2004).

by the applicable national public procurement rules. The beneficiary is expected to clearly document the tendering procedure and retain the documentation for the event of an audit.

Sub-contracting, i.e. the externalisation of specific tasks or activities which form part of the action as described in the proposal must satisfy the conditions applicable to any implementation contract (as specified above) and in addition to them the following conditions:

- it may only cover the implementation of a limited part of the action;
- it must be justified having regard to the nature of the action and what is necessary for its implementation;
- it must be clearly stated in the proposal.

f) Financial support to third parties.

Applications may not envisage provision of financial support to third parties.

## 11.2 Funding forms

Grants are calculated on the basis of a detailed estimated budget indicating clearly the costs that are eligible for EU funding. The grant amount may neither exceed the eligible costs nor the amount requested. Amounts are indicated in euros.

### ➤ **Maximum amount requested**

The EU grant is limited to a maximum reimbursement rate of eligible costs indicated in section 4. Consequently, part of the total eligible expenses entered in the estimative budget must be financed from sources other than the EU grant (see section 11.1c).

### ➤ **Eligible costs**

Eligible costs are costs actually incurred by the beneficiary of a grant which meet all the following criteria:

- ✓ they are incurred during the duration of the action, with the exception of costs relating to final reports and audit certificates;

The period of eligibility of costs will start as specified in the grant agreement. If a beneficiary can demonstrate the need to start the action before the agreement is signed, expenditure may be authorised before the grant is awarded. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant application (see section 11.1b).

- ✓ they are indicated in the estimated budget of the action;
- ✓ they are necessary for the implementation of the action which is the subject of the grant;
- ✓ they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiary is established and according to the usual cost accounting practices of the beneficiary;
- ✓ they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;

- ✓ they are reasonable, justified, and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

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

The same criteria apply to the affiliated entities.

### Eligible direct costs

The eligible direct costs for the action are those costs which, **with due regard for the conditions of eligibility set out above**, are identifiable as specific costs directly linked to the performance of the action and which can therefore be booked to it directly, such as :

- the costs of personnel working under an employment contract with the applicant or equivalent appointing act and assigned to the action, comprising actual salaries plus social security contributions and other statutory costs included in the remuneration, provided that these costs are in line with the applicant's usual policy on remuneration. Those costs may include additional remuneration, including payments on the basis of supplementary contracts regardless of their nature, provided that it is paid in a consistent manner whenever the same kind of work or expertise is required and independently from the source of funding used;
- costs of the personnel of national administrations to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the project concerned were not undertaken;
- subsistence allowances (for meetings, including kick-off meetings where applicable, conferences etc.) provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices;
- costs of travel (for meetings, including kick-off meetings where applicable, conferences etc.), provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel;
- depreciation cost of equipment (new or second-hand): only the portion of the equipment's depreciation corresponding to the duration of the action/project and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the action may be taken into account by the EASME;
- costs of consumables and supplies, provided that they are identifiable and assigned to the action/project;
- costs entailed by implementation contracts awarded by the beneficiaries for the purposes of carrying out the action/project, provided that the conditions laid down in the grant agreement are met;
- costs arising directly from requirements linked to the implementation of the action/project (dissemination of information, specific evaluation of the action, translations, reproduction);
- costs relating to a pre-financing guarantee lodged by the beneficiary of the grant, where required;
- costs relating to external audits where required in support of the requests for payments;
- non-deductible value added tax ("VAT").

### Eligible indirect costs (overheads)

A flat-rate amount of 7% of the total eligible direct costs of the action, is eligible under indirect costs, representing the beneficiary's general administrative costs which can be regarded as chargeable to the action/project.

Indirect costs may not include costs entered under another budget heading.

Applicants's attention is drawn to the fact that in the case of organisations receiving an operating grant, indirect costs are not eligible under specific actions.

#### ➤ **Ineligible costs**

- (a) costs related to return on capital;
- (b) debt and debt service charges;
- (c) provisions for future losses or debts;
- (d) interest owed;
- (e) doubtful debts;
- (f) currency exchange losses;
- (g) bank costs charged by the beneficiary's bank for transfers from the EASME;
- (h) excessive or reckless expenditure;
- (i) deductible VAT;
- (j) costs incurred during suspension of the implementation of the action;
- (k) in-kind contributions provided by third parties;
- (l) costs declared under another EU or Euratom grant (including grants awarded by a Member State and financed by the EU or Euratom budget and grants awarded by bodies other than the EASME for the purpose of implementing the EU or Euratom budget); in particular, indirect costs if the beneficiary is already receiving an operating grant financed by the EU or Euratom budget in the same period.

#### ➤ **Calculation of the final grant amount**

The final amount of the grant to be awarded to the beneficiary is established after completion of the action, upon approval of the request for payment containing the following documents:

- a final report providing details of the implementation and results of the action;
- the final financial statement of costs actually incurred;

EU grants may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the action. **Profit shall be defined as a surplus of the receipts over the eligible costs incurred by the beneficiary**, when the request is made for payment of the balance. In this respect, where a profit is made, the EASME shall be entitled to recover the percentage of the profit corresponding to the Union contribution to the eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiary to carry out the action.

### 11.3 Payment arrangements

#### Pre-financing payment

A pre-financing payment corresponding to 70% of the grant amount will be transferred to the beneficiary within 30 days of the date when the last of the two parties signs the agreement.

#### Final payment

The EASME will establish the amount of the final payment to be made to the beneficiary on the basis of the calculation of the final grant amount (see section 11.2 above). If the total of earlier payments is higher than the final grant amount, the beneficiary will be required to reimburse the amount paid in excess by the EASME through a recovery order.

## **12. PUBLICITY**

### 12.1 By the beneficiaries

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

In this respect, beneficiaries are required to give prominence to the name and emblem of the European Commission on all their publications, posters, programmes and other products realised under the co-financed project.

To do this they must use the text, the emblem and the disclaimer in accordance with the details provided in the grant agreement.

If this requirement is not fully complied with, the beneficiary's grant may be reduced in accordance with the provisions of the grant agreement.

### 12.2 By EASME

With the exception of scholarships paid to natural persons and other direct support paid to natural persons in most need, all information relating to grants awarded in the course of a financial year shall be published on an internet site of the European Union institutions no later than the 30 June of the year following the financial year in which the grants were awarded.

The EASME will publish the following information:

- name of the beneficiary
- address of the beneficiary when the latter is a legal person, region when the beneficiary is a natural person, as defined on NUTS 2 level<sup>18</sup> if he/she is domiciled within EU or equivalent if domiciled outside EU,
- subject of the grant,
- amount awarded.

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<sup>18</sup> Commission Regulation (EC) No 105/2007 of 1 February 2007 amending the annexes to Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS) (Official Journal of the European Union L 39 of 10.02.2007).

Upon a reasoned and duly substantiated request by the beneficiary, the publication shall be waived if such disclosure risks threatening the rights and freedoms of individuals concerned as protected by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union or harm the commercial interests of the beneficiaries.

### **13. DATA PROTECTION**

The reply to any call for proposals involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CV). Such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001<sup>19</sup> on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. Unless indicated otherwise, the questions and any personal data requested are required to evaluate the application in accordance with the specifications of the call for proposal will be processed solely for that purpose by the Head of Unit A.1 of the EASME. Details concerning the processing of personal data are available on the privacy statement at: <http://ec.europa.eu/easme/sites/easme-site/files/privacy-statement-calls-EASME.pdf>

Personal data may be registered in the Early Warning System (EWS) only or both in the EWS and Central Exclusion Database (CED) by the Accounting Officer of the Commission, should the beneficiary be in one of the situations mentioned in:

- the Commission Decision of 13 November 2014 on the Early Warning System to be used by authorising officers of the Commission and by the executive agencies<sup>20</sup> (for more information see the Privacy Statement on:

[http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts\\_grants/info\\_contracts/legal\\_entities/legal\\_entities\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm)),

or

- the Commission Regulation 2008/1302 of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database (for more information see the Privacy Statement on

[http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm)).

### **14. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**

Proposals must be submitted in accordance with the formal requirements and by the deadline set out under section 3.

No modification to the application is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. However, if there is a need to clarify certain aspects or for the correction of clerical mistakes, the EASME may contact the applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process.

Applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the selection process.

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<sup>19</sup> Official Journal of the European Union L 8/1 of 12.01.2001.

<sup>20</sup> OJ L 329/68 of 14.11.2014.

➤ **Electronic submission**

Applicants are requested to log in at <https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/cos-teden-2015-3-05-european-destinations-excellence-promotion-eden-destinations-and-awareness> and follow the procedure for submitting an application.

➤ **Contacts**

The EASME is available to answer questions relating to the content of the present call for proposals. All questions must be sent by e-mail to [EASME-COSME-EDEN-CALL-2015@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EASME-COSME-EDEN-CALL-2015@ec.europa.eu).

Answers will be published at <https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/cos-teden-2015-3-05-european-destinations-excellence-promotion-eden-destinations-and-awareness>.

Annexes:

- Guide for applicants
- Description of the Action template
- Budget template
- Model Grant agreement
- List of previous projects
- EDEN logo and EC logo