

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS – DG EAC No EAC/ S03 / 2012

### Pilot projects for the development of knowledge partnerships/knowledge alliances<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

The European Parliament has provided under the budget 2012 - budget line 15 07 79 - specific funds for a pilot project “Knowledge Alliances”<sup>2</sup>.

The European University Business Forum<sup>3</sup> has demonstrated that many good practices are already underway throughout Europe, promoting and developing deeper cooperation between Business and Academia to actively address the innovation skills gap. The Forum has also shown there is an appetite on both sides for working in partnerships with a strong focus on educational aspects. These partnerships aim at ensuring that education delivers high-level and highly valued skills, underpinned at all times by high levels of adaptability, entrepreneurship and creative and innovative capacities.

The European strategy EU2020 for Smart Sustainable and Inclusive growth has the Innovation Union as one of the flagship initiatives for Smart Growth. In this flagship, the key activity "*Promoting excellence in education and skills development*" foresees that the Commission "*will also support business-academia collaborations through the creation of 'Knowledge Alliances' between education and business to develop new curricula addressing innovation skills gaps*".

The "*Higher Education Modernisation Agenda*"<sup>4</sup>, adopted by the Commission in September 2011 highlights the importance of "*Making the knowledge triangle work: Linking higher education, research and business for excellence and regional development*".

The Commission has recently proposed the *Erasmus for All* programme for the period 2014-2020, which includes an ambitious proposal for the development of future Knowledge Alliances.

The present call for proposals builds on the successful experience of the pilot project launched in 2011<sup>5</sup>, providing direct support for the implementation of Knowledge Alliances. These pilot projects are a first concrete step at a European level. The call and the selected projects should also help prepare for the implementation of the upcoming Erasmus for All programme.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Knowledge Partnerships' and 'Knowledge Alliances' in this context, have the same meaning. 'Knowledge Partnership' is the term used in the Europe 2020 Strategy and in the decision of the European Parliament, 'Knowledge Alliances' is the term used in the 'Innovation Union' flagship initiative.

<sup>2</sup> Pilot Project within the meaning of Article 49(6)(a) of the Financial Regulation

<sup>3</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/education/universitybusinessforum.html>

<sup>4</sup> COMM(2011)567 final

<sup>5</sup> More information on [http://ec.europa.eu/education/higher-education/knowledge\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/higher-education/knowledge_en.htm)

## 2. OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The general objective of the call for proposals is to support the implementation of Knowledge Alliances which should ensure stronger societal and economic relevance, and outreach in higher education, by strengthening the role of higher education institutions as engines of innovation and increasing the employability, creativity and innovative potential of graduates, professors and company staff.

Through this pilot project, the grant from the European Commission will support the implementation of Knowledge Alliances, helping the partner organisations implement structured partnerships which should lead to innovative and collaborative approaches in their field beyond the lifetime of the project.

Knowledge Alliances are structured partnerships aimed at stimulating innovation by bringing together businesses and higher education institutions. Knowledge Alliances should foster the role of Higher Education institutions as engines of innovation, through the flow and active exchange of knowledge between higher education and business, in turn leading to the development of long-term strategic partnerships between Higher Education Institutions and companies. These partnerships should support companies in providing new approaches to the professional development of their staff. Knowledge Alliances should also provide incentives to try out new and innovative teaching methods, to promote entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial mindsets, to foster the generation of new ideas and interdisciplinarity through cooperation.

The core features and main aspects of added value of the Knowledge Alliances are:

- **Focus on innovation:** Unleashing the innovation potential of higher education institutions and companies is the main objective and '*raison d'être*' of these Alliances,
- **Focus on the partnership:** rather than on a given sector and/or an individual activity. Knowledge Alliances build partnerships to develop cooperative activities and need to demonstrate the engagement of all partners involved. Business involvement is therefore vital and obligatory. The quality and combined strength of the partnership is essential and co-operation with a diversity of partners – cross-disciplinary & cross-sector – is encouraged.
- **Bottom-up approach:** The partners must share common objectives and goals and, on this basis, decide the content of the work plan together and agree on the specific activities that will be implemented through the Knowledge Alliance.
- **Emphasis on dissemination and outreach:** to maximise the impact of the proposals each Knowledge Alliance should provide a clearly thought-out dissemination plan, integral to the joint work plan

Knowledge Alliances will support a comprehensive set of activities, designed and developed jointly by the partnership. The range of activities is broadly defined so as to be flexible and adaptable to different contexts across the Union and should be structured along three principal axes:

- a) **New learning and teaching methods,**
- b) **Fostering entrepreneurial skills and attitudes,**
- c) **Structured mobility.**

The set of activities to be developed by the partnerships is further elaborated in section 5.4 of the present call for proposals.

### **3. TIMETABLE**

Applications must be sent no later than 28th June 2012 (please read carefully section 14.3 of this call for proposals concerning the procedures for submitting applications).

The intention is to inform applicants of the outcome of the selection procedure no later than the end of October 2012.

It is planned that beneficiaries will receive their agreements for signing in November 2012.

The cost eligibility period will start either on: i) the day on which the contract is signed by the last of the relevant parties, ii) the starting day foreseen in the grant agreement<sup>6</sup>. If the beneficiaries can demonstrate the need to start the action before the grant agreement is signed, expenditure may be authorised before the grant is awarded. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the submission date of the grant application.

The minimum duration for all projects is 12 months with a maximum duration of 18 months. No applications will be accepted for projects scheduled to run for a longer or shorter period than that specified in this call for proposals.

However, if after signing the agreement and the start of the project it becomes impossible for the beneficiary, for fully justified reasons beyond their control, to complete the project within the scheduled period, an extension of maximum 3 months may be granted. This extension can only be granted if requested at the latest one month before the original deadline specified in the agreement.

### **4. BUDGET AVAILABLE**

The total budget earmarked for co-financing of projects amounts to 1 million Euros. The financial contribution from the Commission for projects cannot exceed 75% of the total eligible costs. The grants are expected to be between 200.000 and 400.000 Euros maximum.

The consortia are invited to maximise their contributions in order to ensure the highest possible impact of the project.

It is estimated that up to three pilot projects will be financed.

Consortia must allow in their budgets and planning provision for two meetings in Brussels bringing all the successful projects together – an inception meeting, probably in December 2012, and a further monitoring meeting during the project's lifetime. It is expected that each consortium will take part with two representatives.

The European Commission reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

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<sup>6</sup> If the contract is signed by all parties after the foreseen starting date this will mark the start date for cost eligibility.

## 5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applications which comply with the following criteria will be subjected to an in-depth evaluation.

### 5.1 Eligible organisations

This call is open to organisations established in the Member States of the European Union.

Applications must be submitted by a legal person having a legal capacity. Natural persons may not apply for a grant.

The proposal must contain at least three independent partner organisations established in at least three EU Member States.

Eligible organisations are higher education institutions, research institutes and training institutions; public and private large, medium or small companies; intermediaries and associations, national or regional organisations.

The partnerships must include at least one higher education establishment and one private company<sup>7</sup>.

Applicants must submit letters from partner organisations confirming their commitment to participation in the project (original signatures required).

#### 5.1.1 Legal entities

In order to demonstrate its existence as a legal person, the applicant must provide the following documents:

***Legal entities governed by private law:***

- The **legal entity identification form**<sup>8</sup> duly completed and signed by the person authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant organisation;
- A **copy of the official document attesting to the establishment of the private-law entity**, such as official gazette or trade register (this document must show the name, address and registration number of the private-law entity);
- A **copy of the certificate of liability to VAT** (in countries where the trade register number and the VAT number are identical, only one of these documents is required);
- **Articles of association** (statute of entity);
- The **financial identification form**<sup>9</sup> duly completed and signed by the bank account holder and certified by the bank (original signatures required) – please note that this certification by the bank is not required if the financial identification form is accompanied by a copy of a recent bank statement.

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<sup>7</sup> It is expected that both should have a significant role in the project.

<sup>8</sup> Forms are available on the following website: [http://ec.europa.eu/budget/execution/legal\\_entities\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/execution/legal_entities_en.htm).

<sup>9</sup> The form for the country where the bank is located should be completed even if the applicant organisation's statutory head office is in another country. Forms are available on the following website: [http://ec.europa.eu/budget/execution/ftiers\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/execution/ftiers_en.htm)

***Legal entities governed by public law:***

- The **legal entity identification form**<sup>4</sup> duly completed and signed by the person authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant organisation;
- A **copy of the official document attesting to the establishment of the public-law** entity, such as the legal resolution, law decree or decision;
- The **financial identification form**<sup>5</sup> duly completed and signed by the bank account holder and certified by the bank (original signatures required) – please note that this certification by the bank is not required if the financial identification form is accompanied by a copy of a recent bank statement.

## **5.2 Eligible countries**

Only applications from legal entities established in the EU Member States are eligible. This applies to the main applicant and to the partners involved in the application (with the exception of associated partners as defined in 5.3).

## **5.3 Associated Partners**

The partnership can include associated partners that bring additional value to the partnership. Associated partners will not receive any funding from the European Union either directly or indirectly (e.g. travel costs are not considered eligible even if funded by one of the main partners). However, they are expected to be actively involved in the project.

Associated partners can be:

- Organisations which are not considered eligible either due to their nature or their nationality;
- Organisations which could be eligible as partners but have chosen to be involved as associated partners. In this case, an explanation should be provided in the application form giving the reasons for this choice.

## **5.4 Eligible activities**

The proposed activities should have a clear link with the objectives set out in section 2. The set of planned activities should be consistent and coherent as a whole. A non-exhaustive list of activities eligible under this call can be found below. This list is indicative only and can be adapted to different contexts:

- a) **New learning and teaching methods**, which can involve joint design and delivery of new multidisciplinary curricula and courses; organisation of educational activities within the companies; participation of students and professors in solving real business problems; supporting multi-disciplinarity, learner-centred and problem-based learning; development/provision of platforms for matching company needs and student projects; development of open education across companies and/or countries; incentives schemes addressed to professors to test out new innovation and business models, update and improve their skills through exposure to business and real-life situations; other solutions to promote University Business Cooperation by fostering the involvement of a broader set of actors in the medium-term.

b) **Fostering entrepreneurial skills and attitudes**, by promoting transversal skills; inclusion of entrepreneurship education throughout higher education programmes; development of new learning opportunities from the practical application of entrepreneurial skills (development of new services, products and prototypes with commercialisation potential).

c) **Structured mobility**, including inter alia placements or internships of students in companies; researchers or professors working for limited periods in companies; company staff involved in teaching; staff mobility between academia and business; involvement of teaching staff in company projects, aiming at exchange / transfer of knowledge and innovation and/or the development of tailor made innovations.

Activities which do not contribute to the objectives of this call are not eligible for funding.

## 5.5 Eligible proposals

- Be dispatched by the specified deadline to the correct address.
- Be submitted by a legal person having the legal capacity; natural persons may not apply for a grant.
- Be submitted by organisations from eligible countries, complying with the criteria set in section 5.2 and comprising a minimum of 3 organisations from 3 different eligible countries.
- The partnership includes at least one higher education establishment and one private company.
- Be submitted using the official application package, in one of the official European Union languages (which should also be the language which will be used in the partnership for the implementation of the work programme), the declaration of honour (included in the application package) must be signed by hand (no electronic signatures) by the person who is authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant organisation.
- Include mandate letters<sup>10</sup> from partners, and letters of intention from the associated partners, carrying the signature of the person who is authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the partner organisation; the mandate letters must use the models provided. Signed fax versions of the mandate letters will be accepted at proposal stage but the originals will have to be provided when the agreement is established.
- Comply with the minimum project duration of 12 months and maximum of 18 months.
- Include a budget in Euros that is balanced in terms of expenditure and revenue and complies with the ceiling for a European Union grant (max. 400.000 Euros) and cofinancing (max. 75%).
- Be accompanied by documents attesting to the financial and technical capacity of the applicant organisation, a copy of their articles of association and/or legal registration documents and all the other documents referred to in the application package and its annexes.

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<sup>10</sup> With the 'Mandate' a 'Partner' grants power of attorney to the 'Applicant' to act in his/her name and on his/her account during the implementation of the action. This document clearly describes the role and responsibilities of the 'Partner' in the design and implementation of the action. As part of the application form, this document must be signed bilaterally by the applicant and each partner and addressed to the European Commission (originals). **Any proposal not including all mandates bilaterally signed will be declared ineligible.**

- Comply with all conditions set out in section 13 of this call for proposals.

## 6. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Applicants must state that they are not in any of the situations described in Articles 93(1), 94 and 96(2)(a) of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002) and set out below.

Applicants will be excluded from participating in the call for proposals 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 have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment 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;
- d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- e) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- f) following another procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Community budget, they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations.

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

- a) are subject to a conflict of interests;
- b) are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority 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 art 93(1) of the Financial Regulation, for this grant award procedure, and
- d) they are subject to the penalty consisting in the exclusion from contracts and grants financed by the budget for a maximum period of ten years.

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

To comply with these provisions, applicants must sign a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in any of the situations referred to in Articles 93(1) and 94 of the Financial Regulation.

## **7. SELECTION CRITERIA**

The selection criteria shall make it possible to assess the applicant's ability to complete the proposed work programme.

The applicants and partners must demonstrate that they have the operational resources (technical, management) and the professional skills and qualifications needed to successfully complete the proposed action, as well as the ability to implement it.

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

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

### **7.1 Operational capacity**

In order to allow for their operational capacity to be assessed, organisations must submit the following together with their applications:

- CVs for key persons participating in the project activities, giving information on their professional experience in relevant fields;
- a list of up to 10 key projects, actions or activities already undertaken by the members of the consortium, which are linked to the objectives of this call.

### **7.2 Financial capacity**

In order to permit an assessment of their financial capacity, organisations must submit, together with their applications:

- the profit and loss accounts of the applicant organisation together with the balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed. If this is not possible, any other document attesting the financial capacity is required;
- a completed financial capacity form, available via the link to the Call web page at section -14.2 below;
- the bank details form completed by the beneficiary and certified by the bank (original signatures required), available via the link to the Call web page at section -14.2 below.

The verification of financial capacity shall not apply to public bodies. Therefore, public bodies need not send the first two documents referred to above.



NB: If, on the basis of the documents submitted, the Commission considers that financial capacity has not been proved or is not satisfactory, it may:

- reject the application;
- ask for further information;
- require a guarantee (see section -10.3);
- offer a grant agreement without prefinancing and/or make a first payment on the basis of expenses already incurred.

## 8. AWARD CRITERIA

Only the proposals which fulfil the eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria will be taken into consideration for comparative assessment.

Eligible applications/projects will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria (in parentheses the weight that is given to each criterion):

- (20) Quality of the work programme and its relevance:
  - The goal and the expected results of the project are coherent and consistent with the objectives of the Pilot Action.
  - The quality, relevance and coherence of a set of activities that complement each other logically, the approaches set out in the work programme and the expected results;
  - The overall planning, organisation and allocation of work between the different partners is clear and appropriate to achieving the goals of the project;
- (25) Quality of the Partnership, including:
  - The combined skills, recognised expertise and competences of the partnership;
  - A strong partnership with an appropriate mix of academia and business partners;
  - The proposed partnership is in line with the goals of the Pilot Action and of the project; the relevance and value of each partner is demonstrated;
  - The workload and allocation of activities demonstrates the commitment and involvement of all partners.
- (20) Innovative character, including:
  - The innovative character of the activities, and/or approaches proposed;
  - The project provides innovative solutions to clearly identified needs, including innovative learning and teaching methods;
  - The innovative nature of the partnership and the approaches to cooperation between the partners.
- (25) European added value and expected impact:

- Expected impact of the project activities of/on the approaches, learning methods, partner organisations and target groups concerned are clearly defined and measures are in place to ensure that this impact is achieved;
  - Expected impact on the partnership members beyond the project; changes in attitudes and working methods leading to new collaborations between academia and businesses;
  - Expected impact on non partnership members through dissemination activities; changing attitudes and working methods of other organisations and individuals leading to new collaborations between academia and businesses;
  - The benefits of and need for European cooperation (as opposed to national, regional or local approaches) are clearly demonstrated.
- (10) Cost-benefit ratio:
- The project demonstrates value for money in terms of the activities planned relative to the budget foreseen;
  - The budget adequately reflects the division of labour amongst the partner organisations.
  - Expected leverage of additional, non-EU resources.

## **9. EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS AND AWARD**

A committee shall be appointed in order to evaluate the proposals. Outside experts may assist the committee.

## **10. FINANCIAL CONDITIONS**

European Union grants are incentives to carry out projects which would not be feasible without the Commission's financial support and are based on the principle of co-financing. They supplement the applicant's own financial contribution and/or national, regional or private assistance that has been obtained elsewhere. The allocated amount may not exceed the amount requested.

Acceptance of an application by the Commission does not constitute an undertaking to award a financial contribution equal to the amount requested by the beneficiary. The awarding of a grant does not establish any entitlement for subsequent years.

Grant applications must include a detailed estimated budget in which all prices are given in euro. Applicants from countries outside the euro zone must use the conversion rates published in the Official Journal of the European Union, series C, on the date of publication of this call for proposals (<http://ec.europa.eu/budget/inforeuro/>).

The budget for the action attached to the application must have revenue and expenditure in balance and show clearly the costs which are eligible for financing from the European Union budget. The allocated amount may not exceed the amount requested.

The applicant must indicate the sources and amounts of any other funding received or applied for in the same financial year for the same action or for any other action and for routine activities.

The beneficiary shall supply evidence of the co-financing provided, either by way of own resources, or in the form of financial transfers from third parties. The applicants shall provide an explicit undertaking from each co-financing organisation to provide the amount of funding stated in the grant application for the operation.

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

The account or sub-account indicated by the beneficiary must make it possible to identify the funds transferred by the Commission. If the funds paid into this account give rise to interest or equivalent profits in accordance with the legislation of the country where the account is held, such profit or interest will be recovered by the Commission where it results from the pre-financing payment.

### **10.1 Payment procedures**

In the event of definitive approval of the proposal by the Commission, a financial agreement, drawn up in euro and detailing the conditions and level of funding, will be entered into between the Commission and the beneficiary. This agreement (the original) must be signed and returned to the Commission immediately. The Commission will sign it last.

The account or sub-account indicated by the beneficiary must make it possible to identify the funds transferred by the Commission. If the funds paid into this account give rise to interest or equivalent profits in accordance with the legislation of the country where the account is held, such profit or interest will be recovered by the Commission where it results from the pre-financing payment if this payment exceeds 50 000 Euros.

A pre-financing payment of 50% will be transferred to the beneficiary within 45 days of the date when the last of the two parties signs the agreement and all the possible guarantees are received.

The Commission will establish the final amount of the grant on the basis of the final reports. If the eligible costs actually incurred by the organisation during the project are lower than anticipated, the Commission will apply its rate of funding to the actual costs, and the beneficiary will, where applicable, be required to repay any excess amounts already transferred by the Commission under the pre-financing payments.

### **10.2 Certificate on the financial statements and underlying accounts**

A certificate on the financial statements and underlying accounts, produced by an approved auditor or in case of public bodies, by a competent and independent public officer, may be

demanded by the authorising officer responsible in support of any payment on the basis of his assessment of risks.

The certificate shall be attached to the request for payment. The certificate shall certify, in accordance with a methodology approved by the contracting authority, that the costs declared by the beneficiary in the financial statements on which the request for payment is based are real, accurately recorded and eligible in accordance with the grant agreement.

### **10.3 Guarantee**

The Commission may require any organisation which has been awarded a grant to provide a guarantee first, in order to limit the financial risks linked to the prefinancing payment.

The purpose of this guarantee is to make a bank or a financial institution, third party or the other beneficiaries stand as irrevocable collateral security for, or first-call guarantor of, the grant beneficiary's obligations.

This financial guarantee, in Euro, must be provided by an approved bank or financial institution established in one of the Member States of the European Union.

The guarantee may be replaced by a joint and several guarantees by a third party or by a joint guarantee of the beneficiaries of an action who are parties to the same grant agreement.

The guarantee will be released as the pre-financing is gradually cleared against interim payments or payments of balances to the beneficiary, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the grant agreement.

This requirement does not apply to public bodies and international organisations under public law established by inter-governmental agreements and specialised agencies created by such organisations.

### **10.4 Double financing**

Subsidised projects may not benefit from any other European Union funding for the same activity.

Applicants' attention is drawn to the fact that in the case of organisations receiving an operating grant, indirect costs are no longer eligible under specific actions.

### **10.5 Eligible costs**

Eligible costs of the action/project are costs actually incurred by the beneficiary, which meet the following criteria:

- they are incurred during the duration of the action/project as specified in the grant agreement, with the exception of costs relating to final reports and certificates on the project's financial statements and underlying accounts;

- they are connected with the subject of the agreement and they are indicated in the estimated overall budget of the action/project;
- they are necessary for the implementation of the project 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.

#### Eligible direct costs

The eligible direct costs for the action/project are those costs which, with due regard for the conditions of eligibility set out above, are identifiable as specific costs directly linked to performance of the action and which can therefore be booked to it directly. In particular, the following direct costs are eligible, provided they satisfy the criteria set out in the previous paragraph:

- the cost of staff assigned to the action/project, comprising actual salaries plus social security charges and other statutory costs included in their remuneration, provided this cost does not exceed the average rates corresponding to the usual remuneration policy of the beneficiary or, where applicable, its partners. NB: this cost must be the actual cost incurred by the beneficiary and its partners; the staff cost of other organisations is eligible only if it is paid directly or reimbursed by the beneficiary; the corresponding salary costs of personnel of public organisations are eligible to the extent that they relate to the costs of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the project concerned were not undertaken.
- subsistence allowances for staff taking part in the project (for meetings, European conferences, etc.), provided that they do not exceed the scales approved annually by the Commission;
- travel allowances for staff taking part in the action/project (for meetings, European conferences, etc.), provided that they are reasonable, justified, and that they comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency;

- purchase cost of equipment (new or second-hand), provided it is written off in accordance with the tax and accounting rules applicable to the beneficiary and generally accepted for items of the same kind. 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 project may be taken into account by the Commission, except where the nature and/or the context of its use justifies different treatment by the Commission;
- costs of consumables and supplies, provided they are identifiable and assigned to the action/project;
- costs entailed by other contracts awarded by the beneficiary or its partners for the purposes of carrying out the action/project, provided the conditions laid down in the agreement are met;
- costs arising directly from requirements linked to performance of the action/project (dissemination of information, specific evaluation of the action/project, audits, translations, reproduction, etc.), including, where applicable, the costs of any financial services (especially the cost of financial guarantees).

#### Eligible indirect costs (administrative costs)

- a flat-rate amount, not exceeding 7% of the 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.

Indirect costs are not eligible where the beneficiary already receives an operating grant from the European Commission.

#### **10.6 Ineligible costs**

The following costs are not considered eligible:

- return on capital;
- debt and debt service charges;
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- interest owed;
- doubtful debts;
- exchange losses;
- VAT, unless the beneficiary can show that he is unable to recover it;
- costs declared by the beneficiary and covered by another action or work programme receiving a Community grant;
- excessive or reckless expenditure;
- costs of replacing persons involved in the project;
- expenses for travel to or from countries other than those participating in the project, unless explicit prior authorisation is granted by the Commission.

Contributions in kind do not constitute eligible costs.

## **11. SUB-CONTRACTING AND AWARD OF PROCUREMENT CONTRACT**

Where implementation of the action/project requires sub-contracting or the awarding of a procurement contract, the beneficiary and, where applicable, its partners must obtain competitive tenders from potential contractors and award the contract to the bid offering best value for money, observing the principles of transparency and equal treatment of potential contractors and taking care to avoid conflicts of interests.

Where implementation of the assisted actions requires the award of a procurement contract with a value of more than EUR 60 000, the authorising officer responsible may require beneficiaries to abide by special rules. Those special rules shall be based on rules contained in the Financial Regulation and determined with due regard for the value of the contracts concerned, the relative size of the Community contribution in relation to the total cost of the action and the risk. Such special rules shall be included in the grant decision or agreement.

The beneficiary must clearly document the tendering procedure and retain the documentation for any audit.

## **12. PUBLICITY**

All grants awarded in the course of a financial year must be published on the Internet site of the European Union institutions during the first half of the year following the closure of the budget year in respect of which they were awarded. The information may also be published using any other appropriate medium, including the Official Journal of the European Union.

With the agreement of the beneficiary (taking account of whether information is of such a nature as to jeopardise its security or prejudice its financial interests), the Commission will publish the following information:

- name and address of the beneficiary,
- subject of the grant,
- amount awarded and rate of funding.

Beneficiaries must clearly acknowledge the European Union's contribution in all publications or in conjunction with activities for which the grant is used. Furthermore, beneficiaries are required to give prominence to the name and logo of the European Union and the European Commission on all their publications, posters, programmes and other products issued under the co-financed project.

To do this they must use the logo of the European Union (available at: [http://europa.eu/abc/symbols/emblem/download\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/abc/symbols/emblem/download_en.htm)) and the logo of the European Commission. If this requirement is not fully complied with, the beneficiary's grant may be reduced.

### **13. DATA PROTECTION**

All personal data (such as names, addresses, CVs, etc.) will be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the European Union institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data.

Your replies to the questions in the application form are necessary in order to assess your grant application and they will be processed solely for that purpose by the department responsible for the European Union grant programme concerned. On request, you may be sent personal data and correct or complete them. For any question relating to these data, please contact the Agency department to which the application must be returned. Beneficiaries may lodge a complaint against the processing of their personal data with the European Data Protection Supervisor at any time.

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 mentioned in:

- the Commission Decision of 16.12.2008 on the Early Warning System (EWS) for the use of authorising officers of the Commission and the executive agencies (OJ, L 344, 20.12.2008, p. 125), or

- the Commission Regulation of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database – CED (OJ L 344, 20.12.2008, p. 12),

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 EWS only or both in the EWS and CED, and communicated to the persons and entities listed in the above-mentioned Decision and Regulation, in relation to the award or the execution of a procurement contract or a grant agreement or decision.

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

#### **14.1 Publication**

The call for proposals is being published on the Internet site of the Education and Culture DG at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/calls/grants\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/calls/grants_en.html)

#### **14.2 Application form**

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



The Application package (application form, financial tables, declaration of honour) and the required annexes can be obtained on the Internet at the following address:

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/calls/grants\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/calls/grants_en.html)

### 14.3 Submission of the grant application

Only applications submitted no later than the 28th of June 2012, using the correct form, duly completed, dated, showing a balanced budget (revenue = expenditure), containing the required annexes, submitted in one original clearly identified as such and signed on the declaration of honour by the person authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant organisation, plus three copies, will be accepted.

Applications which are not submitted before the deadline will not be considered.

Applications dispatched by post, (registered mail recommended) **no later than 28th of June 2012**, date as postmark, must be sent to the following postal address:

**European Commission – Directorate-General for Education and Culture  
Directorate C - Lifelong learning: higher education and international affairs  
Unit C2 - European Institute of Innovation and Technology, economic partnerships  
MADO – 11/45  
Pilot project on Knowledge Alliances  
Call for proposals No EAC/ S03 /2012  
B-1049 Brussels  
Belgium**

Applications must be submitted in a sealed envelope itself enclosed within a second sealed envelope addressed as indicated above. The inner envelope must bear, in addition to the address above, the words "*Call for Proposals EAC/S03/2012 – Not to be opened by the mail services*". If self-adhesive envelopes are used, they must be sealed with adhesive tape and the sender must sign across that tape.

Hand delivery of the proposal is possible, **before 16:00 p.m. no later than 28 of June 2012** at the following address:

**European Commission – Directorate-General for Education and Culture  
Unit C2 - European Institute of Innovation and Technology, economic partnerships  
Pilot project on Knowledge Alliances - Call for proposals No EAC/S03/2012  
Avenue du Bourget, 1  
B-1140 Evere  
Belgium**

Please note that this address is different from the postal address mentioned above.

In addition to the paper version please send an electronic version of the application package (application form and budgetary tables) without its annexes on or before the deadline of 28<sup>th</sup> June 2012 through the submission tool accessible online:

<http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=SubmissionsKA12>

To submit using this link you must upload two digital documents: the application form and the budget form. Each file has a size limit of 1 Megabyte.

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

No changes can be made to the dossier after the application has been submitted. However, if there is a need to clarify certain aspects, the Commission may contact the applicant for this purpose.

Only applications that fulfil the eligibility criteria will be considered for a grant. If an application is deemed ineligible, a letter indicating the reasons will be sent to the applicant.

All unsuccessful applicants will be informed in writing.

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

#### **14.4 Rules applicable**

Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities. (OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p. 1, as last amended by Regulation (EC) No 1525/2007 of 17 December 2007 (OJ L 343, 27.12.2007, p. 9).

Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities. (OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p. 1, as last amended by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 478/2007 of 23 April 2007 (OJ L 111, 28.4.2007, p. 13).

#### **14.5 Contacts**

Contacts between the Commission and the applicants are forbidden, save, exceptionally, in cases where clarification of the call for proposals dossier is necessary. Should the applicant require any clarification prior to the deadline for submission of applications, the request should be addressed to [\*\*EAC-knowledge-alliances@ec.europa.eu\*\*](mailto:EAC-knowledge-alliances@ec.europa.eu).

Request for clarifications received at least 15 calendar days before the deadline for submission of applications, will be answered no later than 10 calendar days before the deadline. If requests are received 14 days or less before the deadline, these may go unanswered. Responses which provide additional information to the call for proposals dossier will be available to all applicants via the website on which the call is published.

#### **Annexes:**

- Application package