



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
Enterprise and Industry  
Directorate E : Service Industries

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

### Design, Implementation, Promotion and Marketing of Accessible Tourism Itineraries

**102/G/ENT/PPA/13/511**

## GRANT PROGRAMME 2013

The present call for proposals is composed of a set of Grant Submission Documents,  
which form an integral part of this call:

The call for proposals,  
The Guide for Applicants  
The Submission Set

The terms set out in the call for proposals document shall take precedence over those in  
the other parts of the Grant Submission Documents.

1.	CONTEXT.....	3
2.	OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL.....	4
3.	TIMETABLE.....	8
4.	EU FINANCING.....	8
4.1.	GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF EU FUNDING .....	9
4.2.	ELIGIBLE COSTS.....	10
4.2.1.	Eligible direct costs.....	10
4.2.2.	Eligible indirect costs.....	12
4.2.3.	Non-eligible costs .....	12
4.3.	CO-FINANCING AND JOINT AND SEVERAL RESPONSIBILITY .....	12
4.4.	IMPLEMENTATION CONTRACTS/SUBCONTRACTING .....	13
4.5.	FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THIRD PARTIES .....	13
4.6.	FINAL GRANT AND PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS.....	13
5.	ELIGIBILITY.....	14
5.1.	ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS .....	14
5.2.	ADMISSIBLE AND ELIGIBLE PROPOSALS.....	17
6.	EXCLUSION CRITERIA.....	18
6.1.	EXCLUSION FROM PARTICIPATION.....	18
6.2.	EXCLUSION FROM AWARD.....	18
6.3.	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS .....	19
7.	SELECTION.....	20
7.1.	FINANCIAL CAPACITY .....	20
7.2.	OPERATIONAL CAPACITY.....	20
8.	AWARD .....	21
9.	SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS.....	21
10.	CONTACTS .....	21
11.	DATA PROTECTION.....	22
12.	PUBLICITY .....	23
13.	ANNEX 0 ELIGIBILITY AND RELEVANCE ASSESSMENT FORM.....	24
14.	ANNEX 1 SUBMISSION SET .....	26
15.	ANNEX 2 GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS .....	27
16.	ANNEX 3 EVALUATION CRITERIA .....	28
17.	ANNEX 4 - AGREEMENT.....	29

**INTERESTED PARTIES ARE INVITED TO READ CAREFULLY THE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW, AND TO USE THE QUESTIONNAIRE PROVIDED IN CHAPTER II OF THE GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT APPLICATIONS ARE COMPLETE WHEN SUBMITTED.**

## 1. CONTEXT

This call for proposals is published in the framework of the Preparatory action "**Tourism and accessibility for all**"<sup>1</sup>.

In 2010, further to the entry into force of the Lisbon treaty which lays down specific competences for the EU in the tourism sector, the European Commission adopted an ambitious political agenda to boost the competitiveness of the European tourism industry, make it fit for the challenges of globalisation, and maintain Europe's position as the leading world tourism destination for the years to come. In response to the Commission's initiative, in 2011 the European Parliament adopted a Report (the "Fidanza" Report<sup>2</sup>) pleading for sustainable, high quality tourism, accessible to everyone, as one of the challenges that must be achieved to strengthen the European tourism industry.

To foster this important objective, the European Parliament included in its budget for 2012 a Preparatory Action "Tourism Accessibility for All"<sup>3</sup> aimed at laying down the foundations for future initiatives in the area of tourism and accessibility. The financing has been confirmed also in the Budget for 2013.

The purpose of this action is to call for proposals aimed at the

- **designing**
- **implementation**
- **promotion**
- **marketing**

**of accessible tourism itineraries.**

There is no commonly agreed definition of "**Accessible Tourism**" – however all definitions concur that "Accessible Tourism" (sometimes referred to as "Universal Tourism" or "Inclusive Tourism") refers to the set of "*services and facilities (such as physical environment, transportation, information, communication) which enable persons with special access needs, either permanent or temporary, to enjoy a holiday and leisure time with no particular barrier or problem*"<sup>4</sup>.

According to this definition, therefore, "**Accessible Tourism**" includes tourism services directed **to all** and especially to people with special access needs, i.e. people with disabilities, but also people with limited mobility (due to disability or not), such as, for example, people on crutches, or the elderly, and all people that can benefit from more accessible services, such as travellers carrying heavy luggage, parents pushing prams, etc.

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<sup>1</sup> Preparatory action pursuant to Article 54(2)(b) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1).

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&language=EN&reference=P7-TA-2011-0407>

<sup>3</sup> Preparatory action within the meaning of Article 49 (6) of Council Regulation n. 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities.

<sup>4</sup> Source: ENAT

For the purpose of this call, “**accessible tourism itineraries**” encompasses commercial tourism products which are combinations or packages of different tourism services, from the essential ones, (such as hospitality, catering, information, booking, local transport, activities and attractions, etc...) to more sophisticated and varied ones (e.g. different types of hospitality services, different types of attractions and activities – eco-routes, gastronomy routes, diving tourism etc...). Key features of such itineraries are that each element in the package is able to provide “accessible tourism” services and the whole package ensures a seamless, continuous accessible experience to the potential traveller.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL

For those who have reduced mobility, because of permanent or temporary physical disabilities, or because of ageing, travelling can be a real challenge. Physical barriers (architectural, urban and transportation barriers), social and communication barriers (access to information and information on accessible products and services), or lack of right attitudes either discourage the potential traveller from setting on a journey or can quickly turn a travel experience into an adventure to forget.

Accessible tourism is not only a matter of ensuring equal opportunities for all, but is also a compelling business case. According to data from EUROSTAT (2005), the general demand for accessible tourism services could be up to 127 million tourists per year, generating potential revenues for more than 160 billion €.

General demand for accessibility	70% that have the economical and physical ability to travel	Multiplier effect for friends & family members	Accompanying friends and family	TOTAL potential travel market	Average expenditure per person per holiday*	Potential tourism revenues
127.5 million	89.3 million	2	178.6 million	267.9 million	€ 620	166 billion euro

Although much has been achieved in recent years, and many tourism businesses have been increasingly recognising the business opportunity in Accessible Tourism, there is still a lot of ground to cover.

Despite the existence of different legal provisions in the EU dealing with equal opportunities or banning discrimination, there is still a general "inertia" among providers of tourism services in fully engaging in "accessible tourism".

At the same time, an emphasis on legal obligations can deter operators of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) from making their business more inclusive of disabled customers. Communication to SMEs should focus on the business opportunities and benefits, rather than on obligations and regulations.

SME also find it difficult to find the guidance they need. On this, in the past, guidance has been predominantly focussed on accommodation, and on mobility impairments. The focus has to be shifted to extending guidance also to other sectors in the tourism supply chain and fully including in the supply other potential groups (elderly, persons with sensory impairments and hidden disabilities) which constitute the bulk of the demand of accessible tourism.

On this point, it is essential to dispel widespread misconceptions whereby accessibility relates primarily to significant alterations of the building environment (e.g. taking down walls, installing lifts, widening entrances...) for the wheelchair users. Such misconceptions easily lead business to dismiss accessibility as a very costly exercise.

Insensitive and poorly trained staff members, who do not understand disabled people's, needs, can threaten the perfect holiday. In a recent survey, the top three issues that most upset disabled visitors about some tourism businesses were: poor staff attitudes, bad customer service and a lack of

information about accessible facilities<sup>5</sup>. Prejudices in relating with customers with disabilities due to the lack of knowledge and understanding of their needs, very limited capabilities of operators to involve people with disabilities in recreational activities, and lack of staff and tourist guides trained in interacting properly with tourists with sensory impairments or learning disabilities are commonly reported as being amongst the most discouraging barriers to accessible tourism.

Developing adequate skills is therefore essential for accessible tourism, as most of the complaints reported above can be easily resolved with the right training.

Where good practices and solutions are in place, often their marketing and promotion has been quite erratic and not fully integrated in the mainstream distribution channels. At the same time, there are currently major gaps in the information provided by mainstream organisations and websites, both in terms of **contents** and **of access** to the information.

Against this background the **specific objectives** of this call are:

- To foster **adaptation of tourism products and services** to the needs of people with special access needs.
- To promote **equal opportunity and social inclusion** of people with special access needs
- To **improve skills and training** with relation to accessibility in the tourism supply chain
- To help **mainstreaming** accessibility in all segments of the tourism supply chain, while at the same time creating a seamless chain of accessibility in tourism
- To **promote, market and disseminate best practices** in accessible tourism
- To **provide adequate support and guidance to SMEs**
- To enhance **the quality and diversify the offer** of accessible tourism experiences in Europe

## A) Financed actions

The present call will provide co-financing to proposals dealing with the design, implementation, promotion, and marketing of **accessible tourism itineraries**, allowing tourists with special access needs to fully enjoy exciting, and diverse tourism experiences which are the **right value-for-their-money** and **on equal basis with all tourists**. **The results of the proposals shall be subject to a final evaluation.**

The proposals will identify tourism businesses that already provide accessible services of generally recognized high quality/excellence to visitors with special access needs. In the design phase, these services will be combined to provide a comprehensive tourism experience, encompassing different aspects of travel (information, booking, accommodation, local transport, catering, entertainment, cultural visits, nature outings, etc).

New services and products can be added to these “packages”, or existing services and products can be extended (see section C-Requirements). The ultimate purpose is to improve and make the supply chain more accessible by including new businesses and operators which were not accessible (or very little) before the action and thanks to this action have made their offer more accessible.

In the implementation phase, special attention will be dedicated to **training of staff, provision of adequate skills and dissemination** of guidance/support tools, to ensure a consistent level of accessibility and quality.

The “packages” will be subsequently promoted, and marketed, as any other tourism product or package, using primarily **mainstream** communication and distribution channels.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.capability-scotland.org.uk/news-events/latest-news/capability-scotland-and-visitscotland-launch-accessible-tourism-training-in-inverness/>

## B) Expected results

The proposals should aim at achieving the following expected results:

- New partnerships and better cooperation amongst local authorities/relevant tourism authorities and agencies, tourism operators, in particular SMEs, training providers and disability stakeholders
- A stronger focus on accessibility in local tourism development agendas and strategies
- Creation of a "critical mass" of accessible destinations, attractions, sites and tourism-related services, as **mainstream** products providing quality and value-for-money
- Better trained staff, better skills, higher satisfaction levels from travellers and a more positive image of the destinations concerned, thus boosting the overall image of Europe as a tourism destination
- Attracting more tourists, and maintaining viable tourism flows in the low-season.
- Positive returns for businesses, especially SMEs and micro-SMEs

## C) Requirements

The project proposal must fulfil the following characteristics:

- The proposals should target services and tourism products aimed at fulfilling a wide range of potential travellers' **special access needs and functional impairments**. Please refer to the definition of "Accessible Tourism" in Section 1 above.
- The proposals should aim at delivering **excellence and quality of services**, not just "any" accessible service. More specifically, the proposals should demonstrate how existing excellence will be "inbuilt" in the package to ensure a successful result. Therefore **emphasis on training and skills development of staff is essential**.
- The proposals should demonstrate a clear shift from the traditional approach "tourism services to people with disabilities" to a new vision of "inclusive/universal tourism services". More specifically, the proposals should design, implement, promote and market the packages as **mainstream products, promoted and distributed through mainstream channels**.
- The proposals should present accessible itineraries **encompassing as many segments and tourism products as possible**. Accessibility should be ensured across the different elements of the package: it should be possible for a potential traveller with special access needs to enjoy any element of the "itinerary" of his/her choice free of any access concerns.
- **Comprehensiveness of the package, variety and originality** of the tourism products and services included in the package will be evaluated favourably. However, proposals should encompass as a minimum the following core services:
  - i. **Information** (at all stages of the experience, from pre-booking until returning home)
  - ii. **Amenities** (namely Accommodation and Catering)
  - iii. **Customer care**
  - iv. at least one activity **in each** of the following areas:
    - a. **"Cultural"** (e.g. museums, architecture, archaeology, national heritage, historical landmarks, etc.....),

- b. **“Natural”** (e.g. outdoors activities, beach, lake, mountain, park, garden etc....)
- c. **“Recreational”**( e.g. amusement parks, sports, shopping, events, festivals,.)
- The proposals should present a **high potential for the development of accessible tourism**. The aim is to support the market uptake and further dissemination of products and services that already exist and have been implemented and marketed successfully, and promote the uptake and dissemination of new ones. **The proposals will be essentially projects that combine existing successful products and services into comprehensive tourism packages or itineraries, to provide fully accessible tourism experiences.** Existing products and services can be further extended (e.g number of participating operators, geographic coverage, facilities concerned, etc...).

Additional products and services shall be added to the package to make it as comprehensive, and varied as possible. It will be the onus of the applicant to provide the description and evidence on the above. For this purpose, the project proposals have to include also a thorough description of the **existing** products and services (**See ANNEX 0**), indicating actions implemented and demonstrating its success, as well as a through description of the potential of the proposed package for the development of accessible tourism. (**ANNEX 1** of the Submission Set, **Form B6** “Description of the proposal”).

- The proposals should create **real, measurable and time-dependant effects on tourism development**. The expected specific results of the project (See Section B, above) should be clearly outlined and it should be indicated how the results will be measured, and what indicators will be used. The evaluation should put, amongst other criteria, particular emphasis on customers/travellers satisfaction with the packages and evidence of supply chain improvement in accessibility.
- The proposals should deliver packages that are **technically and financially sustainable**. The project should identify its management structure and explain how it will enable the project to meet its goals, identify the staff to be involved with distribution of tasks between partners and participants. The proposals should aim at the creation of successful packages of tourism products and services, which have excellent marketing potential, that are attractive and interesting for travellers and can continue after the end of the project period. Therefore, the description of the proposal should also refer to how the action could be further developed and improved both technically and financially, after the end of the project period, and with regards to its evaluation.
- The proposals **should present substantial geographic coverage**, at least within the relevant EU Member State. More specifically, the packages should deliver tourism itineraries involving products and services **located in at least 3 different destinations within the same EU Member State**. Proposals can be transnational, but this is not a requirement.
- The proposals should **maximise visibility to the European Union's involvement** in the project.

#### **REPORTING to the Commission:**

2 interim technical implementation reports and financial statements (including a consolidated statement and a breakdown between each beneficiary where applicable), respectively after 1/3 and 2/3 of the project duration (e.g. for 18 months projects, after 6 months and 12 months following the start date of the action);

1 final technical implementation report (including all deliverables) and financial statement (including a consolidated statement and a breakdown between each beneficiary, where applicable): within 3 months following the closing date of the action.

Reports must be submitted by the project coordinator in English.

### 3. TIMETABLE

Scheduled start-up date for the action: February 2014

Maximum duration of actions is: **18 months**

No applications will be accepted for projects scheduled to run for a longer period than that specified in this call for proposals

The period of eligibility of costs will start at the earliest on the day the agreement is signed by the last of the parties. If a beneficiary can demonstrate the need to start the action before the agreement is signed, the expenditure may be eligible as from a date before the agreement is signed. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant application.

	Stages	Date and time or indicative period
a)	Publication of the call	26 August 2013
b)	Deadline for submitting applications	22 October 2013 17:00 Brussels time
c)	Information to applicants	End November-December 2013
d)	Signature of grant agreement or notification of grant decision	December 2013 -January 2014
e)	Starting date of the action	February 2014
f)	End of action (including evaluation of results)	Starting date of action +18 months

### 4. EU FINANCING

**Maximum budget** allocated for EU financing under this call: € 950.000

**Indicative number of projects:** up to 8

**Maximum EU financing rate** of eligible costs: 75 %

**Maximum EU financing amount** per project: € 125.000

**Proposals with an EU co-financing beyond any of the above two maxima will not be eligible.**

The Commission reserves the right to award a grant of less than the amount requested by the applicant. In such a case, applicants will be asked either to increase their co-financing, propose other co-financing means or to decrease the total costs without altering the substance of the proposal. Grants will not be awarded for more than the amount requested.

Publication of the call (on the Commission Internet site and/or in the Official Journal) does not guarantee the availability of funds for the above action.



## 4.1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF EU FUNDING

### Non-cumulative award

Each action may give rise to the award of only one grant from the budget to any one beneficiary.

In no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice by the Union budget.

Applicants have to inform the Commission immediately of any multiple applications and multiple grants relating to the same action. The applicant shall inform about sources and amounts of EU funding received or applied for the same action or for part of the action. Applicants shall indicate if they receive EU funding for their functioning during the financial year in which the action takes place.

### Non-retroactivity

No grant may be awarded retrospectively for actions already completed.

A grant may be awarded for an action which has already begun, provided 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.

### Co-financing

Grants shall involve co-financing, which implies that the resources necessary to carry out the action or the work programme shall not be provided entirely by EU contribution. EU financing may not cover 100% of the total costs of the action.

Co-financing of the action or of the work programme may take the form of:

- the beneficiary's own resources,
- income generated by the action or work programme,
- financial contributions from third parties.

### Non-profit rule

EU grant may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the action or the work programme of the beneficiary.

Where a profit is made, the Commission is entitled to recover the percentage of the profit corresponding to the EU contribution to the eligible costs actually incurred. For this purpose, profit shall be defined as a surplus of the receipts over the eligible costs incurred, when the request for payment of the balance is made.

### Balanced budget

The estimated budget of the action or work programme 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, who foresee that costs will not be incurred in euros, are invited to use the exchange rate published on the Infor-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)

## **4.2. ELIGIBLE COSTS**

In order to be eligible for funding, costs should be actually incurred by the beneficiary and meet the following criteria:

- they are incurred during the duration of the action or work programme, as indicated in the grant agreement, with the exception of costs relating to the request for payment of the balance and the corresponding supporting documents (audit certificates);
- they are indicated in the estimated budget of the action or work programme;
- they are necessary for the implementation of the action or of the work programme, in accordance with the description of the action, attached to the grant agreement;
- 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 principle 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 costs made by affiliated entities can be eligible, provided that:

- the entities concerned are identified in the grant agreement;
- the entities concerned abide by the rules applicable to the beneficiary under the grant agreement with regard to eligibility of costs and rights of checks and audits by the Commission, OLAF and the Court of Auditors.

**Please note that the exact scope of the eligibility of costs is defined by the grant agreement, which will be signed with the successful applicants.**

### **4.2.1. Eligible direct costs**

Direct costs of the action are those specific costs which are directly linked to the implementation of the action and can therefore be attributed directly to it. They shall not include any eligible indirect costs.

The following categories of costs can be considered as eligible direct costs:

- the costs of personnel working under an employment contract with the beneficiary or an 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 beneficiary's usual policy on remuneration. Those costs may also include additional remunerations, including payments on the basis of supplementary contracts regardless of the nature of those contracts, provided that they are paid in a

consistent manner whenever the same kind of work or expertise is required, independently from the source of funding used.

- salary 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.
- SME owners and other natural persons who do not receive a salary may declare eligible personnel costs for the work carried out under an action or work programme, on the basis of unit costs specific to the programme under which the call is launched. In other cases, owner managers that do not receive a salary cannot claim any reimbursement for their activities.

The standard number of productive hours shall be equal to 1 575.

The reference rate for early-stage researchers shall apply to SME owners of start ups with a professional experience of up to two years.

The reference rates for experienced researchers shall apply to

- (a) SME owners with a professional experience of two to ten years;
- (b) SME owners with more than ten years of experience.

Hourly rate calculation tool: [http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/find-doc\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/find-doc_en.html)

- costs of travel and related subsistence allowances, provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel;
- the depreciation costs of equipment or other assets (new or second-hand) as recorded in the accounting statements of the beneficiary, provided that the asset has been purchased in accordance with the conditions applicable to implementation contracts and that it is written off in accordance with the international accounting standards and the usual accounting practices of the beneficiary
- costs of consumables and supplies, provided that they are purchased in accordance with the conditions applicable to implementation contracts;
- costs arising directly from requirements imposed by the grant agreement (dissemination of information, specific evaluation of the action, audits, translations, reproduction), including the costs of requested financial guarantees, provided that the corresponding services are purchased in accordance with the conditions applicable to implementation contracts;
- costs entailed by subcontracts, concluded for the externalisation of specific tasks or activities which form part of the action or workprogramme as described in the proposal, provided that the conditions with the conditions applicable to implementation contracts are met;
- costs of financial support to third parties, in accordance with the conditions set by the grant agreement for such financing;
- duties, taxes and charges paid by the beneficiary, notably value added tax (VAT), provided that they are included in eligible direct costs, and unless specified otherwise in the Agreement.
- costs relating to a pre-financing guarantee lodged by the beneficiary of the grant, where that guarantee is a condition for the payment of a pre-financing;
- not deductible value added tax (VAT) except for activities engaged in as a public authority by the beneficiary where is a State, regional or local government authority or another body governed by public law.

#### **4.2.2. Eligible indirect costs**

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.

Indirect costs are not eligible for beneficiaries that receive an operating grant from the European Commission.

#### **4.2.3. Non-eligible costs**

In addition to any other costs which do not fulfill the conditions set out in Article II.19.1, the following costs shall not be considered eligible:

- return on capital;
- debt and debt service charges;
- provisions for losses or debts;
- interest owed;
- doubtful debts;
- exchange losses;
- costs of transfers from the Commission charged by the bank of a beneficiary;
- costs declared by the beneficiary in the framework of another action receiving a grant financed from the Union budget (including grants awarded by a Member State and financed from the Union budget and grants awarded by other bodies than the Commission for the purpose of implementing the Union budget);
- in particular, indirect costs shall not be eligible under a grant for an action awarded to a beneficiary which already receives an operating grant financed from the Union budget during the period in question;
- contributions in kind from third parties;
- excessive or reckless expenditure;
- deductible VAT.
- participation by any staff of the institutions in actions receiving grants
- any other costs which have been specified as ineligible in the call for proposal

In addition to the above, the Commission can refuse to finance certain costs included in the proposal. The beneficiary can decide to maintain and finance these costs out of his own resources, but they will not be taken into account as eligible costs.

### **4.3. CO-FINANCING AND JOINT AND SEVERAL RESPONSIBILITY**

The beneficiary has to supply evidence of the co-financing provided. It can be provided either by way of own resources, or in the form of financial transfers from third parties,

In case of a joint application, all partners shall agree upon appropriate arrangements between themselves for the proper performance of the action.

By way of derogation from point (c) of Article II.26.3 of the draft agreement, the beneficiaries shall be jointly and severally liable for any amount due to the Commission by any one of them which could not be honoured, up to the maximum amount specified in Article I.3 of the draft grant agreement. The beneficiaries shall also be jointly and severally liable for interest on late payment, when applicable.

The final grant agreement shall be signed by each applicant. Alternatively it shall be signed by the appointed co-ordinator, provided that a power of attorney has been conferred to this entity (Annex IV of the draft grant agreement).

#### **4.4. IMPLEMENTATION CONTRACTS/SUBCONTRACTING**

Where the implementation of the action or the work programme requires the use of contracts (implementation contracts), the beneficiary must ensure that the contract is awarded 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 shall abide by the applicable national public procurement rules, in the meaning of Directive 2004/18/EC on the coordination of procedures for the award of public work contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts or contracting entities in the meaning of Directive 2004/17/EC coordinating the procurement procedures of entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors.

##### **Sub-contracting for the purpose of the action**

Sub-contracting refers to contracts concluded for the externalisation of specific tasks or activities which form part of the action or work programme as described in the proposal. Such contracts must satisfy the conditions applicable to any implementation contract and, in addition, the following conditions:

- Subcontracting may only cover the implementation of a limited part of the action up to 50 % of the eligible costs.
- It must be justified having regard to the nature of the action and what is necessary for its implementation;
- The proposal should clearly identify the subcontracted activities

**Subcontracting does not in any way limit the responsibility of beneficiaries for the implementation of the action. Please note that the beneficiary(ies) should have the necessary capacity to perform the project. Only tasks that are not core business can be sub-contracted to consultants.**

**It is not necessary to have already selected subcontractors at the time the proposal is submitted. However, cost of contractors not selected in accordance with the applicable rules for procurement will not be eligible.**

#### **4.5. FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THIRD PARTIES**

The applications may not envisage provision of financial support to third parties.

#### **4.6. FINAL GRANT AND PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

The draft grant agreement annexed to this call for proposals specifies the calculation of the final grant and the payment arrangements.

Your attention is in particular drawn to the General Conditions of the grant agreement, where the eligibility of costs is described. Detailed explanations and a description how costs should be budgeted and reported can be found in the Guide for Applicants.

EU grant may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the action of the work programme of the beneficiary. Where a profit is made, the Commission is entitled to recover the percentage of the profit corresponding to the EU contribution to the eligible costs actually incurred. For this purpose, profit is 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. Where such a surplus occurs, the

Commission is entitled to recover the percentage of the profit corresponding to the EU contribution to the eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiary.

The Commission may require the beneficiary to lodge a guarantee for grants exceeding € 60 000, based on a risk analysis.

In the event that the applicant's financial capacity is not satisfactory, a pre-financing guarantee for up to the same amount as the pre-financing may be requested in order to limit the financial risks linked to the pre-financing payment.

The financial guarantee, in euro, shall be provided by an approved bank or financial institution established in one of the Member State of the European Union. When the beneficiary is established in a third country, the authorising officer responsible may agree that a bank or financial institution established in that third country may provide the guarantee if he considers that the bank or financial institution offers equivalent security and characteristics as those offered by a bank or financial institution established in a Member State. Amounts blocked in bank accounts shall not be accepted as financial guarantees.

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.

## 5. ELIGIBILITY

**APPLICATIONS MUST COMPLY WITH ALL OF THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA SET OUT IN THIS SECTION.**

### 5.1. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Applications from legal entities established in one of the following countries are eligible:

- **EU Member States**

Several applicants, submitting a joint proposal should choose within their midst a lead organisation, referred to as the coordinator. All applicants must satisfy the same eligibility criteria

In what follows “partners” are to be understood as any potential co-signatory of the future grant agreement subject to this call, and as proposed by the applicant co-ordinator.

1. **Applicants** should act **in consortium** with partner organisations. The consortium should include:

- 1.1. **At least four (4) SME – Small and Medium Sized enterprise - acting in the tourism sector.** Enterprises qualify as micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) if they fulfil the criteria laid down in the Commission Recommendation of 3 April 1996 concerning the definition of small and medium-sized enterprises (Text with EEA relevance) (96/280/EC) which are summarized in the table below. In addition to the staff headcount ceiling, an enterprise qualifies as an SME if it meets either the turnover ceiling or the balance sheet ceiling, but not necessarily both.

Enterprise category	Headcount	Turnover	Balance sheet total
medium-sized	< 250	€ 50 million	€ 43 million
small	< 50	€ 10 million	€ 10 million
micro	< 10	€ 2 million	€ 2 million

For the purpose of the present call, it is considered that an SME being the partner in the consortium has to provide a proof that is established and has been operating on the market for at least 2 years and has to act in one of the following fields:

- tourist accommodation
- catering
- travel agencies and tour operators
- attractions
- leisure
- tourism related transport
- other tourism related fields if their relevance for the project proposal is duly justified by the applicant

Other kinds of SMEs (e.g. in the fields of promotion, media, ICT development and others) may be involved in the project only as subcontractors (see point 4.4), not as applicants in the consortium.

It is not mandatory, but it will be seen as an additional asset and added value positively affecting the assessment of the proposed project (see also Annex 3) if the SME involved in the project consortium is a **micro or small enterprise**.

1.2. At least one (1) of the applicants must be:

- **a Ministry** (public national governmental authority), in charge of tourism and/or regional development or any other area which is in relation to the object of the proposal.

OR

- **a National Tourist Organisation** (NTO) being in charge of national tourism promotion under condition that a letter from the Ministry is provided indicating this NTO as an organisation to which the implementation of the project is entrusted on behalf of the Ministry.

OR

- **a regional or local public governmental authority** (For the purpose of this call, a regional or local public governmental authority is considered as: region, province, department, municipality, county, city council, commune).

OR

- **a network or association** of regional or local public governmental authorities.

**ATTENTION:**

**The onus will be on the applicants to demonstrate that they fully respect the requirements set in the call. Please provide any useful supporting document and proof of the fulfilment of the above-mentioned compulsory requirements and clearly indicate in the submitted proposal, the name of the applicants fulfilling them, in order to allow the evaluation committee to accomplish its assessment.**

2. **Other Applicants** not referred under points 1.1 and 1.2 above, intending to act as coordinators or as consortium partners shall correspond to the definition of the following target organisations active in the field of tourism or any other field that is strictly related to the object of the proposal such as :

- Academic training or education establishments
- 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, disability organisations and charities

- Umbrella associations, networks or federations of public or private bodies, whose core activity falls under the following fields: tourism, regional development or any other field that is strictly related to the object of the proposal;
  - 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.
  - Enterprises (and their umbrella organisations/federations) acting in the tourism sector namely in one of the following fields:
    - tourist accommodation
    - catering
    - travel agencies and tour operators
    - attractions
    - leisure (recreational, cultural and sporting activities)
    - tourism related transport
    - other tourism related fields if their relevance to the project proposal is duly justified by the applicant
  - National, regional, local tourism organisations, public and private agencies related to **tourism promotion and marketing**
  - Public and private bodies whose core activity falls under the following fields: tourism, regional development or any other field that is strictly related to the object of the proposal.
- **Applications** must be submitted by a legal person; natural persons (i.e. individuals) are not eligible.
  - **Corporate bodies** must be properly constituted and registered under the law. If a body or organisation is not constituted under the law, a physical person must be designated to provide the legal responsibility.
  - **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. For that purpose, applicants shall identify such affiliated entities in the application form. The affiliated entities will have to comply with the eligibility and exclusion criteria.
  - **Several entities that form together one entity**, whether or not this entity is established for the purpose of implementing the action, may apply as a sole beneficiary. The entities will be considered as affiliated entities, which each will have to comply with eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria.

**IMPORTANT**

**Please note that bodies that do not fall within one of the above listed categories may not apply for the present call. Subcontracting will however be permissible for them in compliance with the rules and within the limits set at point 4.4 of this call.**

**Supporting documents**

Subject to the eligibility criteria indicated above, the applicants should provide the following supporting documents to establish **their eligibility**:



- **private entity:** extract from the official journal, copy of articles of association, extract of trade or association register, certificate of liability to VAT (if, as in certain countries, the trade register number and VAT number are identical, only one of these documents is required);
- **public entity:** copy of the resolution or decision establishing the public company, or other official document establishing the public-law entity;
- **consortium:** in addition to the supporting documents referring to their legal status, consortium members will submit letters confirming their participation to the project,
- **entities without legal personality:** documents providing evidence that their representative(s) have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf.

## 5.2. ADMISSIBLE AND ELIGIBLE PROPOSALS

Applications must comply with the following conditions in order to be eligible for a grant:

- Applications must be sent no later than the deadline for submitting applications referred to in section 9.
- Applications must be submitted in writing, using the application form and the electronic submission system, as indicated in the Guide for Applicants.
- Applications must be drafted in one of the EU official Languages. If your proposal is not in English, a translation of the full proposal would be of assistance to the evaluators. An English translation of an abstract may be included in the proposal (see Guide for Applicants).
- Proposals must be submitted in conformity with the call specifications;
- Only projects that are strictly non-profit-making and/or whose immediate objective is non-commercial shall be eligible.
- Applications must respect the maximum rate for EU co-financing.
- Applications must respect the maximum amount for EU co-financing.
- Applications must respect the maximum duration of projects.
- Applications must respect the requirements set for the start date.
- Applications may not include contributions in kind as part of their co-financing.

In this context, will be rejected any project directly or indirectly contrary to EU policy or against public health, human rights, citizen's security or freedom of expression.

## 6. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

### 6.1. EXCLUSION FROM PARTICIPATION

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

- 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;
- 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*;
- they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the Commission can justify, including by decisions of the European Investment Bank and international organisations;
- 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 contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- 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 illegal activity is detrimental to the Union's financial interests;
- they are subject to an administrative penalty referred to in Article 109(1) Financial Regulation (see section 6.3).

The same exclusion criteria apply to affiliated entities.

### 6.2. EXCLUSION FROM AWARD

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

- are subject to a conflict of interest;
- 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;
- find themselves in one of the situations of exclusion, referred to in article 106 Financial Regulation (see section 6.3)

The same exclusion criteria apply to affiliated entities.

### 6.3. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Applicants must sign a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to by filling in the “**Exclusion Criteria Form**” (form B4).

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

By using the “Exclusion Criteria Form” applicants shall declare on their honour that they are not in one of the situations referred to in Articles 106 and 107 of the Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 966/2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (Financial Regulation).

Please note that, according to articles 109 and 131.4 of Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 966/2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (Financial Regulation) and according to article 145 of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 2342/2002 on the rules of application of the Financial Regulation, administrative and financial penalties may be imposed by the Commission on applicants who are excluded in relation to points a) to h) of the form in question.

For grants with a value exceeding € 60 000, the Commission may require further evidence, as indicated in article 143 Rules of Application.

## 7. SELECTION

### 7.1. 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. The applicants' financial capacity will be assessed on the basis of the following supporting documents to be submitted with the application:

For grants < EUR 60 000:

- a declaration on honour

For grants ≥ EUR 60 000, in addition:

- a declaration on honour and,
- form B/5 provided for in the submission set, filled in with the relevant statutory accounting figures.  
Other documents may be submitted if needed (see IV.2 Guide to applicants)

For grants for an action ≥ EUR 750 000, in addition:

- an audit report produced by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the last financial year available.

In the event of an application grouping several applicants (consortium), the above threshold applies per applicant.

In the case of affiliated entities forming together **one** sole applicant, the above requirements apply to each of the affiliated entity.

### 7.2. OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

Applicants must show they have the **operational (technical and management) capacity** to complete the operation to be supported and must **demonstrate their capacity to manage scale activity** corresponding to the size of the project for which the grant is requested. In particular, the **team responsible** for the project/operation must have **adequate professional qualifications and experience**.

In this respect, applicants have to submit a declaration on their honour, and the following supporting documents:

- curriculum vitae or description of the profile of the people primarily responsible for managing and implementing the operation (accompanied where appropriate, like in the field of research and education, by a list of relevant publications);
- the organisations' activity reports;
- an exhaustive 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;

In the case of affiliated entities forming together a sole applicant, the above requirements apply to each affiliate entity

This obligation does not apply to secondary or higher education establishments or beneficiaries who accepted joint and several liability under the grant agreement.

The selection procedure is described in further detail in the Guide for Applicants.

## 8. AWARD

An evaluation of the quality of proposals, including the proposed budget, will be carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in annex 3 to this call for proposals.

The evaluation procedure is described in further detail in the Guide for Applicants.

## 9. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

**Please note that only electronic submissions are allowed for this call.**

**Please consult the Guide for Applicants for the modalities of preparing the proposal.**

**Submission of a grant application implies acceptance of the conditions of the grant agreement, attached to this call**

**The deadline for submission of proposals is:**

**22/10/2013 [17.00:00 Brussels local time]**

## 10. CONTACTS

Contacts between the contracting authority and potential applicants can only take place in certain circumstances and under the following conditions only:

Before the final date for submission of proposals,

- At the request of the applicant, the Commission may provide additional information solely for the purpose of clarifying the nature of the call.
- Any requests for additional information must be made in writing only to the coordinates stated below.
- The Commission may, on its own initiative, inform interested parties of any error, inaccuracy, omission or other clerical error in the text of the call for proposals.
- Any additional information including that referred to above will be published on the internet in concordance with the various call for proposals documents.

After the deadline for submission of proposals:

- If clarification is requested or if obvious clerical errors in the proposal need to be corrected, the Commission will contact the applicant provided the terms of the proposal are not modified as a result.
- If the authorising officer finds that those proposals, which have been listed for award needs limited adaptations to their proposal. In such case, these applicants will receive a formal letter setting out the requested modifications. Any such modifications must stay within the limits of the request. This phase will not lead to a re-evaluation of the proposals, but a proposal might be rejected if the applicant does not wish to comply with the modifications requested.

**Contact coordinates for the call:**

European Commission

Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General

Directorate E: Service Industries

Financial Team

E-mail address: [entr-cfp-13102-ACCESS-ROUTES@ec.europa.eu](mailto:entr-cfp-13102-ACCESS-ROUTES@ec.europa.eu)

Office address: B100 04/28 B-1049 Brussels, Belgium

## 11. 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 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 ENTR E2 “Tourism and Cultural Instruments”.

Details concerning the processing of personal data are available on the privacy statement at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/dataprotectionofficer/privacystatement\\_publicprocurement\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dataprotectionofficer/privacystatement_publicprocurement_en.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 2008/969 of 16.12.2008 on the Early Warning System

(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))

## 12. PUBLICITY

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 available at [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/services/visual\\_identity/pdf/use-emblem\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/services/visual_identity/pdf/use-emblem_en.pdf). If this requirement is not fully complied with, the beneficiary's grant may be reduced in accordance with the provisions of the grant agreement or grant decision.

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 Commission will publish the following information:

- name of the beneficiary;
- address of the beneficiary (legal persons) or reference to the region (natural persons);
- subject of the grant;
- amount awarded.

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. ANNEX 0 ELIGIBILITY AND RELEVANCE ASSESSMENT FORM

**Annex B.0 - Mandatory Form to be dully filled in and uploaded in the electronic submission system, helping to assess the eligibility and relevance of the project proposal to the requirements of the call for proposals. (to be downloaded from the Participant's Portal (SEP)).**

Description of existing accessible tourism product & its potential	
Accessible Tourism product(s) name:	
Type of theme: (e.g. archaeology, , cultural, outdoors and sport, heritage , ...) if applicable	
Country (ies) where the product has been developed. Please indicate local area (region, county, commune, province etc...), as well.	
Short description of product (max ½ page). If a website is available, please include it in the description	
Describe what has already been done to develop and / or promote the product (max ½ page of text, or the applicant is free to annex the relevant information but max 10 pages – photos and images are welcomed	
Describe the impact of the product on tourism development and on the economy in general (max ½ page) (e.g. ROI, increase in visitors', occupancy rates etc...)	



**Eligibility check on the consortium partners – See Section 5.1 (Eligible applicants)**

List the partners of the consortium indicating their full official name, and an English translation of that name (in case of transnational proposals, please also indicate the countries where the different partners' head offices are registered)

Indicate which partner belongs to the following categories :

a) SME, acting in the tourism sector	<b>At least 4</b>
b) National public governmental Authority – i.e. Ministry - in charge of tourism, culture, regional development, or any other area that is strictly related to the object of the proposal	
b) National Tourism Organisation (NTO) –under condition that a letter from the Ministry is provided indicating this NTO as an organisation to which the implementation of the project is entrusted on behalf of the Ministry ( or other national public government authority)	
b) Regional or local government authority	
b) Network /association of the above said national or regional governmental Authorities	
c) other consortium participants not falling in the categories above	

## 14. ANNEX 1 SUBMISSION SET

The link to access the Submission and Evaluation Program (SEP) where you are able to submit and upload all your information is available at [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/contracts-grants/calls-for-proposals/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/contracts-grants/calls-for-proposals/index_en.htm) (please choose the corresponding call).

## 15. ANNEX 2 GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

The Guide for Applicants can be downloaded from the following page:

[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/contracts-grants/calls-for-proposals/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/contracts-grants/calls-for-proposals/index_en.htm) (please choose the corresponding call).

## 16. ANNEX 3 EVALUATION CRITERIA

When assessing the below evaluation criteria, the evaluation committee generally pays attention to the elements indicated below each criterion. Please note that these elements, which are indicative and non-exhaustive, are given on the basis of transparency and in order to help applicants to improve their applications.

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND KEY ELEMENTS LIKELY TO BE ASSESSED BY THE EVALUATION COMMITTEE	MAX. SCORE
<b>1. Relevance</b>	<b>25</b>
<i>e.g. How relevant is the proposal to the objectives of the published call?</i>	
<i>How relevant is the proposal to fostering accessible tourism?</i>	
<i>How disability experts or associations are involved in the proposal? To what extent?</i>	
<i>How clearly defined and strategically chosen are the project partners? To what extent they are involved? In particular for SMEs and micro SMEs</i>	
<b>2. Visibility</b>	<b>10</b>
<i>e.g. To what extent will the Community involvement in the project or activity be publicised?</i>	
<i>To what extent the proposals can contribute to strengthening the reputation and the image of Europe as an accessible, inclusive, responsible, and high-quality tourism destination?</i>	
<b>3. Impact</b>	<b>20</b>
<i>e.g. To what extent is the proposal likely to benefit the competitiveness of SMEs, destinations, tourism businesses?</i>	
<i>To what extent is the proposal likely to contribute to making tourism services and products more accessible to all?</i>	
<i>To what extent does the proposal contain potential multiplier effects? (Including possibilities for replication and extension of project outcomes, innovative ideas, dissemination of information, best practices...etc....)</i>	
<i>To what extent does the proposal contain robust and objectively verifiable indicators for evaluating project outcomes?</i>	
<i>To what extent the proposal can also benefit local communities?</i>	
<b>4. Quality</b>	<b>35</b>
<i>e.g. How coherent is the overall project design? (Including preparedness for evaluation.)</i>	
<i>How accessible, coherent, appropriate, feasible, and value-for-money are the activities proposed? How likely potential travellers will purchase the “packages” proposed?</i>	
<i>To what extent has the project been well thought out or prepared, with particular attention to the specific elements of the call (design, implementation, promotion and marketing)</i>	
<i>How training and skills development will be provided? To whom? How? Are these activities properly thought through in the proposal? Are they commensurate to the activities/services proposed in the itineraries?</i>	
<i>How varied, rich, comprehensive, original, geographically spread, exciting are the itineraries proposed?</i>	
<i>How clear and feasible is the plan of action of the proposal?</i>	
<i>How quality/excellence is built in the proposal and in the itineraries? How do the proposals make sure that the itineraries will deliver high-quality, sustainable products and services?</i>	
<b>5. Budget and Cost-effectiveness</b>	<b>10</b>
<i>e.g. To what extent is the budget clear and detailed? 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?</i>	
<i>Do the probable results stand in a reasonable relationship to the amount of the grant?</i>	
<i>To what extent are there no better ways of achieving the expected results?</i>	
<i>To what extent is the proposed expenditure necessary for the implementation of the project?</i>	
<b>Maximum total score</b>	<b>100</b>

If a total score lower than 70 points or a score lower than 50% for any of the above five criteria is obtained, the proposal will not be evaluated further.

## 17. ANNEX 4 - AGREEMENT

- [Multi-beneficiary Grant agreement for action](#)