

## Public Call for Proposals for Business Support Organisations (CFP EUPROPLUS 03-2021)

### Frequently Asked Questions- 24 January, 2022. godine

*This document serves as a record of clarifications provided to interested parties related to the Public Call CFP 03-2021 in response to their inquiries received verbally through phone calls and on EU PRO Plus info sessions related to the Call, as well as clarifications provided in writing in response to emails received through channels defined by the Call. The answers to received questions are summarised in this document.*

#### I. General eligibility criteria

**Q1. Are Local Public Companies eligible for support under this Public Call?**

The Local Public Companies (Utility Companies) are not eligible as applicants, but they can be engaged in the project implementation by the Local Self Governments who are eligible as partners.

**Q2. Does the Public Call support the projects within Agricultural Households and Startup Enterprises?**

The target group of the projects under this Public Call are supposed to be Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises and Entrepreneurs. The Call does not support the projects that have unemployed people or agricultural households as their primary target group.

**Q3. Aside from the organizations listed in the Public Call (Regional Development Agencies, Clusters, Business Incubators), can the companies which participate in improving, educating, promoting and networking of business entities within the defined territory of the Programme be considered eligible for support? Specifically, is a consulting company eligible for support?**

The organizations which can be applicants / partners within this Public Call should have support for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises defined as an activity in their Founding Act (Statute), as well as a minimum of three references for similar three projects implemented in the last five years. Consulting companies that provide business support to small and medium enterprises on a commercial basis do not belong to the group of eligible applicants, but can be engaged in the project as service providers, in accordance with the procedures for the implementation of approved projects.

**Q4. Can a vocational IT organization which has experience in working with economy, commerce and entrepreneurs apply for the support?**

Vocational organizations can be applicants/partners if they fulfil all other criteria defined by the Call.

**Q5. Can the Cooperatives apply for the support if defined as Clusters? Can Higher Educational Institutions be an applicant under the category of Academic Organization? Is a Center for professional development (registered for research and education) eligible for support?**

The organizations which can be applicants/partners within this Public Call should have support for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises defined as a goal in their Founding Act (Statute), as well as a minimum of three references for similar three projects implemented in the last five years. The Center for professional development is eligible for support if it meets this and all other criteria of the Public Call. **Higher Educational Institutions** are considered as Academic Institutions and can apply if they fulfil the criteria of the Call. Agricultural Cooperatives cannot be applicants/partners within this Public Call.

**Q6. Could an organization registered outside of the defined Programme territory, which will implement the activities within the Programme territory, apply for the support?**

Organizations registered outside of the defined Programme territory can participate in the Call, either as lead or partner organization, but they need to be in the partnership with the Business Support Organisation registered in the Programme area. All activities need to relate to the beneficiaries from the defined Programme territory.

**Q7. Can an organization apply once as a partner and once as a lead partner?**

An organization can apply with only one project proposal, either as the main applicant or as a partner organization on the project.

**Q8. Can ongoing projects be specified as references?**

Yes. But it is necessary to state what has been realised from the activities so far, how big is the value of the implemented activities and which results have been achieved so far.

**Q9. Are the projects in which we have participated in as partners eligible to be specified as references?**

Yes. The projects in which the organization participated in as the partner can be stated as a references, but it is necessary to describe what the role of the organization in these projects was: which activities was implemented by the organisation, for which activities was responsible, which was the value of these project activities, ie. Budget as well as achieved results.

**Q10. Is it necessary that the partner organization in the income statement for 2020 has recorded revenues of at least 500,000 dinars as well as having references on implemented projects?**

Partner organizations as well as the leading organization in the project, must meet general criteria that are defined in the Public call for proposals. However, in addition to formal partners in the project implementation, you can predict the participation of other organizations if it is in line

with the achievement of the project goals, but their capacities will not be evaluated.

**Q11. Can the Local Self Government be the project applicant?**

No. Local self-government can be a project partner.

**Q12. Can there be more than one project partner?**

Yes. The project can have more than one partner organisation, but it is necessary for everyone to meet general criteria that are defined in the Public call for proposals.

**Q13. Is it possible for applicant BSO - Business Support Organisation to include as members of the project team professionals that are not currently employed by the organisation??**

The business support organisation may hire staff who are not currently employed in that organisation as members of the project team. In that case, it is necessary to enclose CVs as well as a letter on the intentions that they are intending to engage an external professional in the project implementation, if its funding is approved.

**Q14. Is it necessary to include Balance Sheet for 2021??**

Enclosing the Balance sheets and the statistical annex (organisations that do not have the legal obligation to compile the statistical annexes need to provide a written statement of the average number of employees) for 2021 is not necessary, but it is necessary to submit Balance Sheets for 2019 and 2020. If the project is carried out in partnership, the Balance Sheets of the Partner Organisation for 2019 and 2020 need to be submitted, also.

**Q15. Can one organisation be a partner on two projects?**

No. Organisations can only apply for this public call with one project proposal, either as the main applicant or as a partnership organisation on the project.

## II. Financial Budget Allocation and Cost Share Contribution

**Q16. Are the costs of renting an office considered a justified cost for project implementation?**

Operational costs, including costs of renting an office space are not an eligible cost within this Call.

**Q17. Can the rental cost of a space for educational activities be considered as an eligible cost?**

Renting space for specific project activities outside the organization's office can be an eligible cost if it is needed for implementation of project activities and .

**Q18. If the experts who are employed in the organization which is the applicant are being engaged through the project, how should they be projected in the budget ?**

This cost should be projected in budget heading 1. - Human resources. Consultancy services that are to be acquired through procurement process should be under budget heading 5.

**Q19. What is the maximum amount of grant funds that can be awarded under this Public Call for Proposals?**

The maximum amount of grant funds awarded under this Call is EUR 50,000.00. If more funds are needed for the realization of the project, those funds should be provided by the applicant from its own or other sources. Project budgeting and contracting shall be in USD, and funds will be transferred to the selected grantees in RSD.

**Q20. What is the optimal percentage of total costs for human resources, and which percentage of costs is allowed for the procurement of the equipment?**

The share of human resources costs in the total cost of the project should be in line with the nature of the proposed project and the proposed project activities. There is no budgetary restriction in sense of costs share for equipment procurement, but this procurement must be accompanied by complementary support activities that will ensure the efficient use of that equipment and achieving the goals of the Public call.

**Q21. Under which project budget heading should the costs of consultants that would be engaged in the project be stated?**

Consulting services should be stated within the Budget heading 5. Other Expenses / Services.

**Q22. Under which project budget heading should the costs of the certification process be stated?**

The costs of the certification process should be stated within the Budget heading 5. Other Expenses / Services.

**Q23. Is the financial participation of the applicant in direct costs (Cost Share) desirable and whether it is additionally awarded in the evaluation process?**

Financial participation of the applicant is not obligatory and not being scored with extra points. It could be envisaged if necessary for the implementation of project activities.

### III. The scope

**Q24. Can the activities within different eligible activity themes be combined in one project on the project needs to focus only on one of the listed themes?**

The Project activities need to be aimed at enhancing competitiveness and resilience of SMEs and their ability to recover from the negative impact of COVID-19. Activities can cover more than one theme but should make a coherent project.

**Q25. Are project activities with SMEs that deal with alcoholic beverage production (companies registered for the production of wine, beer, brandy and other alcoholic beverages) justified? Are activities with fruit processors that use alcohol in the production process justified (eg export of sour cherries in alcohol)?**

Activities related to the production of alcoholic drinks are not supported by this Public Call. Activities related to the fruit processing are eligible for support under this Public Call.

**Q26. Can project activities be related to other ongoing activities of the organisation?**

Activities may succeed or be linked to other projects. However, funds from this Call cannot be used for activities already financed from other donating sources.

**Q27. Is there a possibility of applying for recertification according to the appropriate standard?**

Activities related to the recertification may be acceptable as one of the activities, but not as the sole activity within the project proposal.

**Q28. Is the company that has received support for the introduction of standards and certifications obliged to do at least one recertification after the completed project?**

It is necessary to predict that companies that receive support for the introduction of standards and certification through projects under this Public Call maintain introduced standards and certificates in a period of at least two years after the completion of the project.

**Q29. Is the engagement of foreign experts allowed?**

Yes, in order to implement project activities, engagement of foreign and domestic experts is allowed.

**Q30. If consultants from abroad are engaged, do you need to pay tax on deduction?**

Yes. When the consultants from abroad are engaged it needs to be calculated with the expense of the deduction tax and should be planned as your own financial participation.

**Q31. If the organisation has companies/SMEs that are its members, is it allowed to direct a portion of project activities to them and part to other companies?**

Yes, in accordance with real needs, some of the project activities are allowed to be directed towards entrepreneurs and companies that are members of the organisation, and some of those who are not.

## IV. Application procedure

**Q32. Can the application form be filled in and submitted in the Serbian language?**

Application forms are to be filled in and submitted in English language only.

**Q33. Should all project actors be listed in the part of the application form that relates to human resources? Is it necessary to send CVs for all of them?**

The application form should include the key human resources for project realisation. CVs are needed for the key personnel (Project Manager, Finance and Procurement Manager etc.).

**Q34. Is it necessary to translate the supporting documentation, such as the founding act and the balance sheet in English?**

It is not necessary to translate the accompanying documentation. It can also be submitted in Serbian.

**Q35. Are there restrictions in choosing the font and font size when filling up an application form?**

The application form should be filled with the Font "Calibri" size 11. When filling the application form, other fonts can be used if there is a need for them, but it must be taken care that the text is easily readable.