

## **Guidelines for applicants**

### **Title of the call**

#### **Involving citizens for a greener Europe**

**(small scale action scheme for the benefit of CSOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro)**

### **Deadline for submission for the applications:**

**15<sup>th</sup> March 2014 at 15h00 hours (Italy time)**

### **In the framework of the EU-funded project:**

**Development of the ENV.net in West Balkan and Turkey: giving citizens a voice to influence the environmental process reforms for closer EU integration**

**PROJECT CODE: 2012/306-642**

## **Background of the ENV.net project**

The ENV.net project builds on the experience of the Environment Forum (<http://www.envforum.eu/doku.php>), implemented in the period 2009-2012, aiming at developing capacities of environmental NGOs to establish a constructive dialogue with national authorities. The present project strategy has been designed to achieve a greater commitment and capacity of a group of CSOs coming from Environment Forum experience and which have agreed on the creation of a new network, the ENV.net, to support the civil activism, give citizens a voice and influence the public reform processes in the approximation to the environment *acquis*.

The project strategy is expected to consolidate the partner CSOs role in fostering the state-civil society dialogue at national and regional levels, in analysing and monitoring the on-going process reforms and finally at providing actual opportunities to give citizens and CSOs a voice in the environmental reform process and in the integration with EU.

The improved dialogue civil society - state institutions is the key expected impact of the action, as result of the dissemination of more information on the EU environmental *acquis* and of greater opportunities for information and experience sharing. This will also have an impact on the awareness of the single citizens of the ongoing reforms and on ownership of the dialogue with the state institutions. Thanks to the project activities, at least one topic on key sensitive environment issues is expected to be suggested by CSOs to be discussed with the relevant national authorities to favour the ongoing reform process.

### **1.1. ENV.net Project objective**

Greater commitment and capacity of the ENV.net to give citizens a voice and influence public sector reform processes in the environment sector through analysis, monitoring and advocacy.

### **1.2. ENV.net project expected results**

1. The ENV.net is able to analyse and monitor the progress in the approach to the environment *acquis* in the partner countries and the gaps in the policies at national level are identified for joint strategies for action
2. Public environmental awareness ensured and state-civil society dialogue improved on environmental issues at national and regional level
3. ENV.net is recognised as a leading network in the promotion of effective transparency and accountability of the CSOs in the region

### **1.3. ENV.net Project website**

More information on the project, the network, the activities implemented so far is available in the [ENV.net website](#) and in the [facebook page](#).

## **1. Objectives and priorities of the present call for proposals**

The objective of this call is to expand the ENV.net, by involving other CSOs in the Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The main aim of these actions is to promote awareness among citizens and influence public sector reform processes on the approximation of target countries to the EU environmental standards.

The specific objective of this call is to promote innovative actions aimed at involving citizens in the protection of the environment.

## **2. Activities that may be financed under this call**

Only the following types of activity are eligible for funding:

- Organisation of public events aiming at sensitise citizens or particular group of citizens on environmental issues (e.g. air pollution, water quality, climate change, waste management, GMOs):
  - o Street actions (e.g. anti-car street party, critical mass, performances of street theatre, guerrilla gardening)
  - o Environmental educational activities in schools: games, competitions, site visits, other educational activities
  - o Organisation of neighbourhood activities (e.g. cleaning day)
  - o Organisation of concerts with local groups to raise awareness around sensitive environmental issue in the country and organisation of press conference
- Setting up of info points for citizens on environment issues (e.g. waste hierarchy, energy efficiency, air pollution) to promote awareness among citizens, through various public initiatives and distribution of material
- Design and printing of leaflets, brochures, booklets to be distributed during the public events
- Organisation of other innovative activities involving citizens (e.g. dedicated on-line communities, e-petitions, Wikis – coproduction of new knowledge)
- Participation to big public events involving citizens (e.g. festivals, fairs) organised by other organisations

The following actions are considered not eligible for funding:

- Organisation of conferences and round tables
- Actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses
- Actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training course;
- Actions supporting political parties
- Core funding of the applicant for the functioning of its organisation
- Actions including market promotion activities

- Actions including grant-making activities (i.e. the use of funds to award grants or loans to other organisations)
- Actions concerned only or mainly with infrastructure investments and/or the procurement of equipment
- Actions linked to political parties or of political/partisan nature
- Actions dealing with emergency relief or charitable donations
- Actions that fall within the general activities of competent state institutions or state administration services, including local government
- Action aimed mainly at reinforce the capacity of the applicant or other civil society organisations (i.e. training activities, purchase of materials and equipment)

### **3. Size of Grants**

Any grant requested under this Call for Proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

- minimum amount: € 3,000
- maximum amount: € 4,500

Any grant requested under this Call for Proposals may not exceed 90% of the total eligible costs of the action.

The balance (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the Contracting Authority) must be financed by the Applicant own sources or with other donors' contributions (other than the European Union).

### **4. Who can apply?**

In order to be eligible for a grant, the applicant must:

- be legal persons **and**
- be non-profit-making **and**
- be specific types of organisations such as: Non-Governmental Organisations/Community Based Organisations (NGO/CBO), social partners (trade unions, employers' associations), public schools and universities, cultural associations, media, etc. **and**
- be established in Bosnia and Herzegovina, or Montenegro, or Republic of Macedonia.

### **5. Location**

The project should be implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina, or Montenegro, or Republic of Macedonia.

## 6. Project duration

The project will start upon signature of the contract, tentative date is April 15<sup>th</sup>. Activities started prior this date cannot be funded. Maximum duration of the project is 5 months.

## 7. Visibility

Note that the applicant must comply with the visibility rules of the EU. For this purpose, in case of the award of contract the applicant shall follow the instruction included in the contract.

## 8. Number of applications and grants per applicant

An applicant can apply with one proposal only.

Only one contract per organisation will be signed.

## 9. Eligibility of costs: costs which may be taken into consideration for the grant

Only "eligible costs" can be taken into account for a grant. The categories of costs considered as eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. Note that the eligible costs must be based on real costs based on supporting documents.

Recommendations for the award of a grant are always subject to the condition that the checking process preceding the signature of the contract does not reveal any problems requiring changes to the budget (for instance arithmetical errors, inaccuracies or unrealistic costs and other ineligible costs). The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and lead punto.sud to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. The amount of the grant, as result of these corrections, may not be increased.

It is therefore in the applicant's interest to provide a **realistic and cost-effective budget**.

### 9.1. Eligible direct costs

Eligible costs are actual costs incurred by the Grant beneficiary, which meet all the following criteria:

- a) they are incurred during the implementation of the Action as specified in the Sub-grant contract. This means that the costs shall relate to activities performed during the implementation period.
- b) they are indicated in the overall budget for the Action (on the annexed budget format);
- c) they are necessary for the implementation of the Action;
- d) they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the Grant Beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the Beneficiary country;
- e) they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;

- f) They respect the rules of nationality and origin<sup>1</sup>

The following direct costs of the Grant Beneficiary shall be eligible:

- the cost of staff assigned to the Action, corresponding to actual gross salaries including social security charges and other remuneration-related costs; salaries and costs shall not exceed those normally borne by the Beneficiary;
- travel and subsistence costs for staff and other persons taking part in the Action, provided they are real costs backed by supporting documents;
- purchase costs for equipment and supplies (new or used) and services specifically for the purposes of the Action.

Note that taxes, including VAT, will only be accepted as eligible costs when the following conditions are fulfilled (and backed by supporting documents):

- The value added taxes are not recoverable by any means;
- It is established that they are borne by the final beneficiary; and
- They are clearly indicated in the project proposal.

## 9.2. Non-eligible costs

The following costs shall not be considered eligible:

- debts and debt service charges (interests);
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- costs declared by the Beneficiary and financed by donors or by other EU-funded actions;
- purchases and rehabilitation of land or buildings;
- currency exchange losses;
- credits to third parties.
- Costs related to non-eligible activities (see point 2)

## 9.3. Contributions in kind

Contributions in kind (e.g. valorisation of existing equipment, donations, volunteer works) are not considered actual expenditure and are not eligible costs.

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<sup>1</sup> The nationality of the contractors for services and supplies and the origin of the items purchased must be from the following countries: EU Member States, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Albania, Bosnia, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Palestinian Authority of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Russian Federation, Syria, Tunisia, Ukraine

## **10. How to apply**

Applicants must submit their applications in English. The application consists of the application form and budget in forms provided under this call of proposals.

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Please note that only the application form and the budget will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL relevant information concerning the action. No additional annexes should be sent. If an application is selected following the evaluation, additional documentation might be requested but it should not be submitted at this stage.

### **10.1. Where and how to send the Applications**

The applications MUST be sent by e-mail to [env.net-helpdesk@puntosud.org](mailto:env.net-helpdesk@puntosud.org), by 15<sup>th</sup> March 2014 at 15h00 hours (Italy time).

In the subject, it has to be stated the following: Project proposal under the call: Involving citizens for a greener Europe Development of the ENV.net in West Balkan and Turkey: giving citizens a voice to influence the environmental process reforms for closer EU integration.

### **10.2. Further information for the Application**

Questions related to the call for proposals must be sent by e-mail no later than 7<sup>th</sup> March 2014, to the address [env.net-helpdesk@puntosud.org](mailto:env.net-helpdesk@puntosud.org) indicating clearly the reference of the Call for Proposals.

## **11. Evaluation and selection of applications**

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the ENV.net project team with the possible assistance of external assessors. All actions submitted by applicants will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria above mentioned, the application shall be rejected on this sole basis.

### **11.1. Evaluation of the application**

First, the following will be assessed:

- The application form (and annexed budget) satisfies all the criteria specified above, in terms of eligibility of applicants, activities, costs, respect of deadline for submission
- If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that sole basis and the application will not be evaluated further
- An evaluation of the quality of the applications, including the proposed budget, and of the capacity of the applicant, will then be carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in the following Evaluation Grid:

### **11.2. Evaluation Grid**

*Scoring:*

*The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheadings. Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.*



*\*\*These scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance*

Section	Maximum score
<b>1. Operational/Technical capacity</b>	<b>Sub-score 5</b>
Does the applicant have sufficient technical expertise (notably knowledge of the issues to be addressed)?	5
<b>2. Relevance of the action</b>	<b>Sub-score 20</b>
How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the ENV.net project and of the Call for Proposals?	5x2**
How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)?	5
Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5
<b>2. Design of the action</b>	<b>Sub-score 25</b>
How coherent is the overall design of the action? In particular, does it reflect the analysis of the problems, take into account external factors and relevant stakeholders?	5x2**
Is the action feasible and consistent in relation to the objectives and expected results?	5x2**
Does the action propose innovative initiatives?	5
<b>3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the action</b>	<b>Sub-score 10</b>
Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	5
Is the action plan clear and feasible?	5
<b>4. Budget and cost-effectiveness</b>	<b>Sub-score 20</b>
Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	5x2**
Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	5x2**
<b>5. Sustainability of the action</b>	<b>Sub-score 10</b>
Is the proposed project likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5
Is the proposed project likely to have multiplier effects? (Including scope for replication and extension of the outcome of the action and dissemination of information)	5

**TOTAL MAXIMUM SCORE: 85**

### 11.3. Selection procedure



Only Applications with **a score of at least 70** will be considered for funding.

The Contracting Authority will in the first instance select the strongest proposals for funding. However, in the interest of ensuring the coverage of a wide range of themes, the Contracting Authority may reject a proposal which has scored highly if there are other proposals covering the same theme that have received a better score. Similarly, the Contracting Authority may accept a proposal which has scored lower than other proposals, if this proposal fills a thematic gap.

Following the evaluation, a table listing the applications ranked according to their score and within the limits of the funds available.

## **12. Notification of the Contracting Authority's decision**

The applicant will be informed in writing by mail of the Contracting Authority's decision concerning their application and, if rejected, the reasons for the negative decision.

Following the decision to award a sub-grant, the Beneficiary will be offered a contract (see Annex 3 of these Guidelines), provided that it accepts also the participation to an information/training event organised by punto.sud in a location to be defined. Cost of travel and accommodation will be covered by punto.sud).

The purposes of this event are:

- To familiarise with the approach governing this call;
- To exchange in-depth information on the activities to be implemented in the framework of the ENV.net project
- To be trained on the rules and procedures applicable to the contract.

## **13. Contracts, reporting and final payments**

The grantees will receive 80% of the total grant amount after the contract signed. The final payment (20%) will be transferred after the approval of the final narrative and financial report.

Grantees are also requested to submit a brief narrative interim report, according to the terms set forth in the grant contract and to actively co-operate with, for the monitoring of the activities.

## **14. List of Annexes**

1. Application form
2. Budget
3. Template of Sub-grant contract
4. Templates and instructions for narrative reporting
5. Templates and instructions for financial reporting