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Presentation on the Concept Note Info Session

CALL FOR PROPOSALS: EuropeAid/170212/ID/ACT/AL
IPA 2019 - EU Support to Inclusive Education in Albania

Institutional Framework of the 2019 Call for Proposals (CfPs)

- The **Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth** is the main institution coordinating this CfPs and ensures close cooperation and coordination with the CFCU and the grantee during all stages of CfPs implementation.
- The **Ministry of Finance and Economy**, its General Directorate for Financing and Contracting of EU, World Bank and Other Donor Funds (**CFCU**) will be the Contracting Authority for this CfPs and will be responsible for all procedural and administrative aspects of the tendering process, contracting matters and financial management including payment of project activities.

Global objective of the IPA II 2019 Call

The **global objective** of this call for proposals is to enhance inclusive quality learning and promote educational attainment in pre-university education for all girls and boys - with a special focus on children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Specific Objectives of the IPA II 2019 Call

- Review and update the professional development curriculum for in-service teachers based on the new key competency-based curriculum in pre-university education, and design the training plan and methodology for training at least 15,000 teachers in new competency-based curriculum in 24 educational profiles for Grades 1-5 and 15,000 teachers and education managers in EU inclusive education teaching methods;
- Deliver a Training of Trainers (ToT) programme of a minimum length of 22 training days for at least 320 teacher trainers, support and monitor the roll-out of training for 15,000 teachers and education managers.
- Specific support to refurbish rooms and install basic equipment devices for the provision of social work and psychological services in 320 schools across the country in close coordination and complementarity with the initiatives addressed to the schools affected by the earthquake under EU4Schools Programme (tasked to UNDP);
- Provide support to the School for Deaf children and the School for Blind children as part of their transformation into resource centres for inclusive education.

Financial allocation under this Call for proposals is EUR 2,000,000

Size of grants

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

- minimum amount: **EUR 2.000.000**
- maximum amount: **EUR 2.000.000**

The contracting authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

Main features of the grants

- **Duration of the Action**

minimum duration: **30** months

maximum duration: **36** months

- **Co- Financing**

minimum percentage: **10%**

maximum percentage: **40 %**

Eligibility Criteria (three sets)

1) the actors:

- The **'lead applicant'**, i.e. the entity submitting the application form (2.1.1),
- if any, its **co-applicant(s)** (where it is not specified otherwise the lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) are hereinafter jointly referred as 'applicant(s)') (2.1.1),
- and, if any, **affiliated entity(ies)** to the lead applicant and/or to a co-applicant(s). (2.1.2);

2) the actions:

- Actions for which a grant may be awarded (2.1.4);

3) the costs:

- types of cost that may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant (2.1.5)

The Lead Applicant must:

- be a legal person, **and**
- be non-profit making,
- be a public body, or a relevant mandated body of a Government Department of a European Union Member State **or**
- civil society organization officially registered in the Republic of Albania since **at least three years** before the call is launched (assessed in section 1.2 of the full application evaluation grid). **or**
- be an international (inter-governmental) organisation as defined by Article 156 of the EU Financial Regulation, established in a Member State of the European Union **or** in an accession or official candidate country as recognised by the European Union **or** in Member State of the European Economic Area.
- The lead applicant **must have at least three years' experience** in implementing actions in the specific field of the proposed action (assessed in section 1.2 of the full application evaluation grid)
- Be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

1. **The Lead applicant must act with at least one co-applicant.**

If the lead applicant is not legally established in Albania, the involvement in the action of one co-applicant legally established in Albania is mandatory.

2. **The awarding of the contract under this call for proposals is subject to the condition of the prior conclusion of financing agreement under which the awarded contracts will be funded. This does not modify the elements of the procurement procedure (this will be the case, for instance, if the budget initially foreseen is different or if the timeframe, the nature or the conditions of the implementation are altered).**

If the precedent condition is not met, the contracting authority will either abandon the procurement or cancel the award procedure without the candidates or tenderers being entitled to claim any compensation.

Co-Applicants, Affiliated entities, Associates and Contractors

Co-applicants participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the lead applicant. Co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant:

- a legal person; and
- non- for profit making;
- be a public body, or a relevant mandated body of a Government Department of a European Union Member State or
- civil society organization officially registered in the Republic of Albania since at least three years before the call is launched (assessed in section 1.2 of the full application evaluation grid) or
- be an international (inter-governmental) organisation as defined by Article 156 of the EU Financial Regulation, established in a Member State of the European Union or in an accession or official candidate country as recognised by the European Union or in Member State of the European Economic Area.
- **Affiliated entity(ies)** must satisfy the same eligibility criteria as the lead applicant and the co-applicant(s)
- **Associates:** Other organisations or individuals may be involved in the action. Such associates play a real role in the action but may not receive funding from the grant, with the exception of per diem or travel costs. Associates do not have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in Section 2.1.1. Associates must be mentioned in Annex A2; Section 4 — ‘Associates participating in the action’ — of the grant application form.
- **Contractors:** The beneficiaries and their affiliated entities are permitted to award contracts. Associates or affiliated entity(ies) cannot be also contractors in the project. Contractors are subject to the procurement rules set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

Here are some indicative actions:

- Actions enhancing the inclusion of pupils in mandatory education in urban, rural and remote areas;
- Actions that contribute in improving the competencies and skills of teaching staff and school personnel in inclusive quality learning in pre-university education;
- Actions that will support delivering the amended standards for competence-based learning and inclusive education. Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of education commissions to assess children with disabilities and increase their enrolment rates in school,
- Actions that ensure expansion of the network of teaching support, psychological and social work services to schools;

... type of actions

- Actions that ensure services and necessary conditions for reducing risks of exclusion and drop out of boys and girls from school;
- Actions that support better planning systems for delivering inclusive education in accordance with EU standards a better range of quality assurance and inspection functions closer to schools and communities;
- Actions that support learning and exchange of experiences from best European practices, including exchange visits to similar institutions in EU countries.
- Actions that support transformation into resource centres for two schools, the school for Deaf children and the School for Blind children

Ineligible actions:

- Actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- Actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- Actions concerned only or mainly with academic research, feasibility studies and other one-off events with no direct impact on the target group;
- Projects for the exclusive benefit of individuals or restricted groups of individuals;
- Projects supporting political parties or of political/partisan nature;
- Core funding of the applicant or its partners;
- Retrospective financing for projects already in implementation or completed;

Ineligible actions:

- Actions where a considerable part of the budget is planned for the provision of external services and do not involve the active participation of the lead applicant and co-applicant organisation(s).
- Action focusing only on humanitarian activities and not related to the main objective of the grant;
- Actions concerned only or mainly with infrastructure investments; Nevertheless, activities limited to renovation or refurbishment of the School for Deaf children and Blind children can be eligible as long as they do not represent more than 20 % of the total budget, and that they clearly contribute to the main specific objective of the Action).
- Actions concerned only or mainly with the procurement of equipment;

Other aspects of the CfPs

- Information in **PADOR will not be drawn upon** in the present call.
- **Restricted CfPs**
- **All applications will be assessed to the following stages:**
- **1st stage:** Opening & administrative checks and concept note evaluation
- **2nd stage:** Pre-selected Lead Applicants (LAs) will be invited to submit Full Application (FA) (in English).
- Deadline for FAs will be indicated in the letter sent to LAs whose application has been pre-selected.
- **3rd stage:** Verification of eligibility of the applicants and affiliated entity(es)

Where and How to send Concept Notes

- The CN, checklist and declaration by LA must be submitted in **one original** and **three copies**. Incomplete CNs may be rejected.
- A CN electronic version must also be submitted. A CD-Rom, along with the paper version, to be part of in a sealed envelope as described below. The electronic file **must contain exactly the same application** as the paper version enclosed.
- The envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the call for proposals**, together with the **full name and address of LA**, and the **words “Not to be opened before the opening session”** and **“Të mos hapet përpara sesionit të hapjes”**.
- CN must be submitted in a **sealed envelop** by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery to:

***General Directorate for Financing and Contracting of EU, World Bank and Other Donor Funds/ (CFCU), Ministry of Finance and Economy
Bulevardi Deshmoret e Kombit, No. 3, 1001 Tirana Albania***

The deadline for the submission of concept notes is 10.11.2020, 16:00 local hrs.

CONCEPT NOTE

How to fill in the form and prepare a Concept Note

Key mandatory CN elements to be considered...

...when filling out the CN form (Annex A1 – Concept Note Grant Application Form), you must:

- Include **Page 1 of the Grant Application Form**, filled in and submitted as a cover page of the CN
- Include **the Table of the Summary of the Action** (no limitation of size)
- Describe the **Action** (not exceeding 2 pages), and **Relevance** (no more than 3 pages).
Format: A4; 2 cm margins, Arial 10 font; single line spacing;
- Provide the information requested under the headings (**Summary** of the action, **Description** of the action, **Relevance** of the action) in the order requested and in proportion to its relative importance (see the relevant scores in the evaluation grid in the GfAs);

Also note that....

- In the CN, lead applicants **must only provide an estimate of the requested EU contribution** as well as **an indicative percentage of that contribution** in relation to the eligible costs of the action.
- The elements outlined in the concept note may **not be modified** in the full application. The **EU contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 20 %**.
- Only the **concept note form** will be evaluated. It is therefore of **utmost importance that this document contains ALL relevant information** concerning the action. No additional annexes (related to the action) should be sent.
- **Lead applicants must verify that their concept note is complete using the checklist for concept note (Checklist for selfguidance page 12/12 of Annex 1 Concept Note Grant Application Form). Incomplete concept notes may be rejected.**
- **Any error or major discrepancy related to the concept note instructions may lead to the rejection of the concept note.**
- **Hand written applications will not be accepted.**

Concept Note Summary Table

Title of the Action	Give a name to your Action; avoid using the same text of the Lot as Action title
Location(s):	Republic of Albania, but also list region(s) and/or city(ies) that will benefit from the action
Total duration (months):	Minimum duration 30 months and maximum duration 36 months
Requested EU contribution (amount):	Requested <u>amount</u> to be expressed in EUR
Requested EU contribution as a percentage of total eligible costs of the action (indicative)	Provide <u>%</u> of requested EU contribution (min 60% and max 90%)

... concept note summary table

TOTAL indicative budget	Provide the <u>Action total amount</u> in EUR
Objective of the action	OVERALL Objective is related to the impact of the action (and there should be one) SPECIFIC Objective(s) are related to the outcome(s) and can be several but it is advisable to focus and have up to three
Target groups	The groups/entities directly benefiting from the action at the action purpose level (e.g. 10 CSO representatives whose capacities are to be strengthen through trainings in advocacy for consumer protection)
Final beneficiaries	Those benefiting from the action in the long term at the level of the society or sector at large
Expected Outputs	Must contribute to the action outcome(s) ; you may list them and explain
Main activities	Must produce the (above mentioned) outputs ; list all activities and if relevant, divided by group/cluster

Elements of the Concept Note

1. **Description of the** action (instructions are provided in Grant Application Form- Concept Note)
2. **Relevance** of the action (instructions are provided in Grant Application Form- Concept Note)

Changes that may be done in the full applications stage

Please note that:

- Lead applicants are free to adapt the percentage of co-financing required within the minimum and maximum amount and percentages of co-financing, as laid down in the GfA.
- The lead applicant may replace a co-applicant or an affiliated entity only in duly justified cases (e.g. bankruptcy of initial co-applicant or affiliated entity). In this case the new co-applicant/affiliated entity must be of a similar nature as the initial one.
- The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the action if unforeseen circumstances outside the scope of the applicants have taken place following the submission of the concept note and require such adaptation (risk of action not being carried out). In such cases the duration must remain within the limits imposed by the guidelines for applicants. An explanation/justification of the relevant replacement/adjustment shall be included in an accompanying letter or email.

Own contributions by the applicants can be replaced by other donors' contributions at any time.

STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION

*During the **opening and administrative check**, the following will be assessed:*

- **If the deadline has been met.** Otherwise, **the application will be automatically rejected.**
- If the concept note **satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist page 12/12 of Annex 1 - Concept Note** grant application form. This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. **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.
- **Clarifications** will only be requested when information provided is not sufficient to conduct an objective assessment.

The concept notes that pass this check are declared eligible and will be evaluated on the relevance and design of the proposed action.

.... OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION

- The concept notes will receive an overall score out of 50 using the breakdown in the evaluation grid (GfAs p.26-27). The evaluation will also check on compliance with the instructions on how to complete the concept note, which can be found in Annex 1 – Concept Note grant application form.
- 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.

..... OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION

1. Relevance of the action	Sub-score	20
1.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals and to the specific themes/sectors/areas or any other specific requirement stated in the guidelines for applicants? Are the expected results of the action aligned with the priorities defined in the guidelines for applicants (section 1.2)?	5	
1.2 How relevant is the proposal to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies), region(s) and/or relevant sectors (including synergy with other development initiatives and avoidance of duplication)?	5	
1.3 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs (as rights holders and/or duty bearers) and constraints been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5	
1.4 Does the proposal contain particular added-value elements (e.g. innovation, best practices) and the other additional elements indicated under 1.2. of the guidelines for applicants	5	

.... OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION

2. Design of the action	Sub-score	30
2.1 How coherent is the overall design of the action? Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale to achieve the expected results?	5x2**	
2.2 Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved, and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?	5	
2.3 Does the design take into account external factors (risks and assumptions)?	5	
2.4 Are the activities feasible and consistent in relation to the expected results (including timeframe)? Are results (output, outcome and impact) realistic?	5	
2.5 To which extent does the proposal integrate relevant cross-cutting elements such as environmental/climate change issues, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of indigenous peoples, youth, combating HIV/AIDS (if there is a strong prevalence in the target country/region)?	5	
TOTAL SCORE		50

..... OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION

- **Firstly**, only the concept notes with a score of **at least 30** will be considered for pre-selection.
- **Secondly**, the number of concept notes will be reduced, taking account of the ranking, to the number of concept notes whose total aggregate amount of requested contributions is at least 200% of the available budget for this call for proposals. The amount of requested contributions of each concept note will be based on the indicative financial envelopes, where relevant.
- **After the evaluation of concept notes**, the Contracting Authority will send letters to all lead applicants, indicating whether their application was submitted by the deadline, informing them of the reference number they have been allocated, whether the concept note was evaluated and the results of that evaluation. **The pre-selected lead applicants will subsequently be invited to submit full applications.**

**Please note the total score of the Relevance of the Action
will be included in the Full application total score!**

Questions and Answers

- Questions: no later than 21 days before the deadline for CN submission. The deadline for receiving questions is 20 October 2020.
- No individual replies
- All questions, answers, and notices will be published at the following websites: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome> ; <http://cfcu.financa.gov.al> and <http://arsimi.gov.al/ministria> ;
- Kindly consult the above mentioned websites to be informed of the questions and answers published!
- Answers will be published on Europe Aid website within 30 October 2020.

Where to find information on the CfPs and relevant documents for applying:

EC Calls for Proposals and Tenders website:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome&nbPubliList=15&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&searchtype=RS&aofr=170212;>

CFCU website:

<https://cfcu.financa.gov.al/sq/kreu/>

Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth website:

<http://arsimi.gov.al/ministria/>

Indicative timetable

	DATE	TIME
1. Information meeting (if any)	15.10.2020	Online
2. Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the contracting authority	20.10.2020	16:00
3. Last date on which clarifications are issued by the contracting authority	30.10.2020	
4. Deadline for submission concept notes	10.11.2020	16:00
5. Information to lead applicants on opening, administrative checks and concept note evaluation (Step 1)	January 2021 (provisional date)	
6. Invitations to submit full applications	January 2021 (provisional date)	

QUESTIONS

1. Could you please clarify whether it would be a maximum number of co-applicants or affiliated entities?

There is no maximum number of co-applicants or affiliated entities as per GfA.

2. When we say the minimum is 2,000,000 Euro, does this amount include the co-funding or we add the 10% to this amount?

This amount includes only the EU financing. Please refer to Section 1.3 of the GfA “Financial allocations provided by the Contracting Authority”

3. The proposed project is expected to contribute to one of the specific objectives of the CfP or it can contribute to more than one?

The proposed project should contribute to all specific objectives of the CfP.

4. Could you please state once again the role of the Ministry of Education Sports and Youth in the call?

The ministry is the main institution coordinating this CfPs. It ensures close cooperation and coordination with the CFCU and the grantee during all stages of CfPs implementation.

QUESTIONS

5. What is the budget for this call? how many projects can be accepted?

The budget for this call is 2 million Euros. Only one project will be accepted. Please refer to Section 1.3 of the GfA “Financial allocations provided by the Contracting Authority”

6. So does this mean that Ministry of education or its affiliated bodies CANNOT participate in the call as co applicants or support any consortium?

Yes the Ministry of Education or its affiliated bodies CANNOT participate in the call as co applicants or support any consortium

7. Can an organisation/public entity submit more than one application as a lead?

No. Please refer to Section 2.1.4 of the GfA “Eligible actions”

8. In the call for proposal it is stated that minimum available to apply is 2 mil euro and max available to apply is 2.mil euro. This requirement unfortunately will result to exclude national networks, which, even though work hard on improving the education sector in Albania, do not have that kind of experience to manage the fund. This in turn will exclude them

National entities are eligible to apply and also have the possibility to form consortiums with other applicants.

QUESTIONS

9. Is UK eligible?

Yes, UK is eligible. Please refer to the Annex a2a of the PRAG “Rules on participation in procurement procedures and grants for External action financial instruments and European Development Fund” under IPA II.

10. The co-funding requirement is extensive at least 200 000 Euros. Should it be expressed also in in kind or it should only be cash in hand that consortium should have?

As an exception, contributions in kind may include personnel costs for the work carried out by volunteers under an action or work programme (which are eligible costs). Volunteers' work may comprise up to 50 % of the co-financing. Please refer to section 2.1.5 of the GfA “Eligibility of costs- Contribution in Kind”

11. Public universities are considered public bodies and in Albania are non profit, so can they be the Lead?

Albanian entities applying should also be non governmental organisation officially registered in the Republic of Albania since **at least three years** before the call is launched, not only non-profit, in order to be eligible. Please refer to section 2.1.1 of the GfA “Eligibility of applicants”

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

FALEMINDERIT PER VEMENDJEN!