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Developing and Managing EU-Funded Projects



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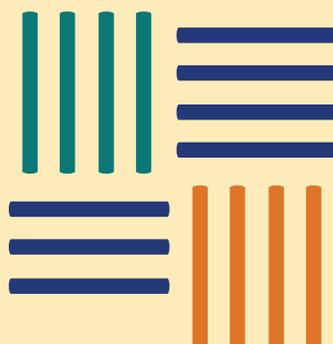
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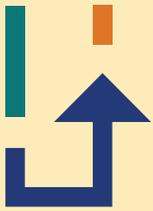


Developing and Managing EU-Funded Projects



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Foreword

Foreword

With activities in eight countries of the Western Balkans and Turkey Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organisations – TACSO – is providing support and opportunities for the development of a strong and influential Civil Society sector. This investment in Civil Society is based on our conviction that in the context of EU affiliation ongoing political, economic and social processes require an engaged and well-functioning Civil Society as an important precondition for democratic developments.

An important project component of TACSO is Capacity Development of CSOs with the main objective being to increase the capacity of CSO representatives in a number of key areas by offering them new knowledge on contemporary methodologies and techniques as well as the opportunity for exchange and practical knowledge.

During the spring of 2010 TACSO implemented five Regional Training Programs targeting experienced and well-established CSOs and their representatives. Following the successful completion of these Training Programs and in order to further strengthen the capacities of CSOs, TACSO has decided to develop five manuals as follows:

- Fundraising and Accessing EU Funds;
- Civil Society Organisation Management - Practical Tools for Organisational Development Analysis;
- *Developing and Managing EU-Funded Projects;*
- Advocacy and Policy Influencing for Social Change;
- Citizens' Participation in the Decision-Making Processes.

The present manual *Developing and Managing EU-Funded Projects* is aimed to increase the CSOs capacities in the area of accessing and managing projects funded by the EU.

We sincerely hope that you will find the Manual useful for your work.

Palle Westergaard

Team Leader



An Overview of EU Funding for CSOs

Introduction

Welcome

The European Union is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law. Among these fundamental freedoms is the right of citizens to form associations that pursue a common purpose and which respect the above-mentioned principles. Citizens also have a right to participate actively in society, and to be involved in political parties and trade unions. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are therefore a significant component of the EU and as such constitute an increasingly important channel for EU investments. However, it can be extremely challenging for individual CSOs which are trying to understand how investment decisions are made within EU institutions and how to successfully apply for EU funding. Indeed, for many CSOs the challenge seems like an insoluble mystery, and for organisations in the Western Balkans region and Turkey, despite being geographically and, in terms of forthcoming accession, close to the EU, the EU's funding processes can appear mysterious and at times frustrating.

To help clarify and explain this process we have produced this Manual. It and the accompanying Toolkit is aimed at assisting CSOs in the Western Balkans and Turkey to understand the process of accession to and subsequent successful management of EU funds. It is not a comprehensive guide to EU funds nor a guarantee of success when making applications for them. It is, however, intended to show CSOs how they can become both more efficient and more effective in accessing and managing EU funds.

The Manual is made up of three sections: firstly, this introduction which explains the nature of EU funding and the specific opportunities in the region; secondly, a section describing how CSOs can navigate their way from the very beginning of the process of identify funding opportunities to the very end, where they're reporting on funds spent; and thirdly, a brief section to explain how to use the accompanying Toolkit, and finally a glossary of terms and references.

Both the Manual and Toolkit have been designed to be used as either self-directed learning guides or in the context of more formal training. So, anyone working with or volunteering to work for a CSO should feel comfortable using the publications. There are also plenty of references and examples of real experiences of CSOs in the region, and details of where to find more information, so it is hoped that any reader will feel inspired and confident to proceed from there as they feel is most appropriate and as best suits their individual organisational agenda.



EU Funds and Civil Society Organisations in the Western Balkans and Turkey

Civil Society Organisations in the Western Balkans and Turkey can access EU funding in three different ways. The first, and by far the biggest in terms of amounts of funding, is through programmes that fall under the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA). The second way is through the Community Programmes that any of the countries are participating in, and the third area of opportunity is under the themed-based programmes managed through EuropeAid. Details on all three of these mechanisms are provided below under the paragraphs on ‘**The Different Funding Instruments**’.

For the region as a whole, each mechanism has some common elements. This is particularly true in the case of funding under the IPA and is the main reason why this Manual and Toolkit is specifically designed for CSOs in the Western Balkans and Turkey. Within this region we find eight countries all of which are, in one way or another, on a formal track towards EU membership. Some of them are recognised by the EU as official Candidate Countries and some are seen as potential Candidate Countries. The countries include: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244/99), the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey.



In addition to the common regional elements, CSOs in each of the eight countries can find various country-specific opportunities funded both through the IPA and through some of the Community Programmes. The main theme-based programmes under EuropeAid which are operational in the region, namely the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) and the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), also have some country-specific characteristics.

In whatever way funding is managed, all of the EU investments made outside of the EU must be managed according to a very specific set of guidelines. These guidelines are commonly referred to as 'PRAG' (**Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EU External Actions**)¹ and it is crucial that CSOs have an understanding of the basic principles on which the guidelines are based and know how to use them as a reference source. To better understand these guidelines and the methods the EU uses to disburse and administer funds, just look below under '**Key Concepts and How the EU Manages Assistance**'. CSOs need to understand the concept of a 'grant' and how to successfully complete a grant application form, and to implement the latter, CSOs must be able to design and undertake project-based work.

Although PRAG is a universal set of guidelines, amongst the three main mechanisms by which CSOs in the eight countries of the region can access funds there are a number of different managerial institutional arrangements. For most of the Candidate Countries, the IPA funds available to CSOs are managed by public institutions in their own countries; whereas for the potential candidate countries, IPA funds are mostly managed by the EU itself, through the country-based Delegations. For the Community Programmes and EuropeAid programmes, funding is mostly managed either through an accredited national agency or directly through the relevant EU directorate in Brussels. To understand the various arrangements in each of the eight countries, CSOs should see the section below on '**EU Funds in Your Country**' as a starting point.



¹ Most recent version of PRAG is dated November 2010

Key Challenges for CSOs

In the Welcome above, we have explained that the purpose of this manual is to help CSOs to demystify the process of management and accession of EU funds. This process of understanding and demystification is very much dependent on CSOs having a certain set of skills, as clearly stated by Ivana Koprivica, an NGO Director in Serbia and an experienced CSO trainer:

“The formal requirements (of the EU) are extensive, and the procedures are demanding. But it is a skill like any other. The first time is tough, but when you understand the logic and system of project proposal writing, each time will be easier. It should also be clear that for writing a well-researched, high-quality project proposal you will need at least two months – six months if you are a beginner”.

Within this Manual we have identified six key challenges that CSOs face and so have accordingly set out ways in which skills can be strengthened and knowledge increased so as to be best able to handle these main challenges. The challenges are:

- **Identifying EU funding opportunities that are appropriate** to the size, status, and mission of the organisation, and which can be identified in a timely fashion. Unfortunately many CSOs are poorly informed of funding opportunities and therefore either completely miss them, and the opportunities, as most are time-dependent, or make applications which for one reason or another are judged by the EU to be ineligible. It is also common for CSOs to find out about funding opportunities at a very late stage and therefore be ill-prepared to make applications, or they make applications for funding which are actually aimed at objectives beyond their core mission.
- **Developing effective partnerships** for project-based work. Increasingly, one of the eligibility criteria of EU funding opportunities is that CSOs must make applications in partnership with at least one other CSO. Often the criteria are for partner CSOs to be located in either an EU Member State or a Candidate Country or other geographically-specific locations. Establishing partnerships with other organisations, in order to jointly implement a project, is difficult for many CSOs, particularly if the partner is in a different country. CSOs struggle to identify suitable partners and often form partnerships with little preparation and poor mutual understanding.
- **Preparing project proposals** which are robust and credible, and well presented, is a universal challenge for CSOs, particularly for smaller organisations and for organisations which are unused to project-based work. The majority of EU funding for CSOs is made available in the form of grants to support projects, and it is essential that CSOs can undertake credible problem analysis and formulate their project designs using logical frameworks. Without these skills CSOs are unable to

present their proposals in a format matching EU requirements.

- **Being competitive**, which refers to that the EU mostly makes funds available to CSOs on a limited and competitive basis. This means that funds are only awarded to CSOs that make applications which both meet all the necessary eligibility requirements and which are objectively judged to be of the highest quality. Thus, unfortunately, many CSOs fail to access funding because they either do not meet all the advertised eligibility criteria or submit applications of poor quality. To address this, CSOs need to learn how to make their applications for funding as competitive as possible, and one of the ways of doing this is to better understand how applications are evaluated by the EU.
- **Effective project management** and having the capacity to appropriately manage EU grant contracts is another set of skills that CSOs need to have. Very often, CSOs recruit staff on a project-by-project basis and therefore they frequently do not have sufficient institutional memory to know how to manage EU funded projects according to EU procedures and following internationally-recognised good practices. Making project management mistakes can be very costly to CSOs and for smaller organisations can be very destabilising.
- **Reporting on the use of EU funds** and ensuring compliance to EU procedures is all part of good project management, as explained above. However, it is stressed here as a separate challenge, as many CSOs lack the capacity to provide the quality of financial management and reporting that the EU expects, and consequently many CSOs find the burden too heavy to bear. But, by following sound and simple financial management advice, the experience of having to report on EU funds can significantly strengthen a CSO's long term capacity for transparency and accountability.



TACSO Regional Training „Developing and Managing EU Projects“, Turkey, 2010

How This Manual and Toolkit Can Help

This Manual and accompanying Toolkit are designed to assist all kinds of CSOs operating in the eight countries of the Western Balkans and Turkey region to more effectively access and manage EU funds. The assistance is provided in a number of ways by:

- providing information and advice that will strengthen a CSO's knowledge and understanding of how the EU makes funding decisions - remember that programmes and priorities that direct EU funding decisions can change year-by-year, and so it is essential that CSOs know how to research the most up-to-date information about funding opportunities and do such research on a regular basis.
- showing how skills for developing project proposals and partnerships, and for making high quality funding applications can be enhanced, and by providing tips to help build skills for managing and reporting on EU finances.
- demonstrating a range of tools that can be used in many different types of learning activities for CSO managers and staff, local trainers and consultants, interested in building capacity for access and management of EU funds.
- providing access to guidelines and templates related to EU grant applications and to links for further information on EU funding for CSOs in the Western Balkans and Turkey.



Round Table discussions in Serbia on "Media and CSOs – Challenges and Opportunities", 2010

Understanding EU Assistance for Your Country

Key Concepts and How the EU Manages Assistance

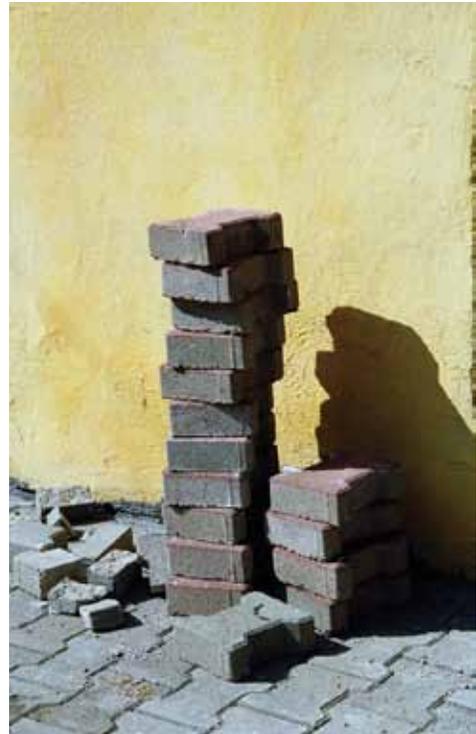
The EU distributes its external funding in a number of ways: through specific projects, via a sector approach or by budget support to recipient governments. The ‘project approach’ is particularly used to support initiatives outside the public sector, such as through civil society and the private sectors. Thus, it is essential for CSOs to understand the concept of ‘the project’ and to have the capacity to design and implement projects. (see the section on ‘Preparing Successful Project Proposals’)

There are a variety of definitions of what a project is, but a useful starting point is the definition used in the EU’s own Project Cycle Management Guidelines:

Definition of a Project: ‘a series of activities aimed at bringing about clearly specified objectives within a defined time-period and with a defined budget. A project should also have:

- clearly identified stakeholders, including the primary target group and the final beneficiaries;
- clearly defined coordination, management and financing arrangements;
- a monitoring and evaluation system to support performance management; and
- an appropriate level of financial and economic analysis, which indicates that the project’s benefits will exceed its costs.’

Development projects are a way of clearly defining and managing investments and change processes. They can vary significantly in their objectives, scope and scale. Smaller projects might involve modest financial resources and last only a few months, whereas a large project might involve many millions of Euro and last for many years.



EU's Project Cycle Management Guidelines

In 1992 the European Commission adopted “Project Cycle Management” (PCM) as its primary set of project design and management tools (based on the Logical Framework Approach), and a first PCM manual was produced in 1993. Subsequently this has been updated and the latest version (2004) is available to download in English from the online Multimedia Library on the web site of Europa Aid (http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/publications/manuals-tools/t101_en.htm).

Primarily the PCM Guidelines have been designed for use by officials of the EU, however, they can also be used to assist the partners of the EU, including CSOs. The Guidelines cover EU assistance policy, an introduction to the concept of the ‘project approach’, an overview of operational guidelines, and, perhaps most importantly, a tools section, with methodologies on how to develop and implement projects.

In order to channel finances to support the implementation of projects, the EU uses two basic approaches: **grants and public procurement contracts**. These two approaches can be simply differentiated as follows:

- in the case of a **grant**, it makes a contribution either to a project carried out by an external organisation or directly to that organisation because its activities contribute to EU policy aims;
- in the case of a **public contract**, a Contracting Authority (of, or accredited to the EU) receives the product or service it needs in return for payment.

For CSOs in Western Balkans and Turkey, the mechanism of providing grants is by far the most relevant in terms of accessing and managing EU funds. However, some CSOs may also be in a position to bid to provide products or services under public contracts. Thus it is important to explain these concepts in a bit more detail.

Grants are direct financial contributions from the EU budget or from the European Development Fund. They are awarded to third parties, such as CSOs, to implement projects or activities that relate to EU policies and the EU's external aid programmes. EU grants have some particular characteristics:

- they are a form of complementary financing. The EU does not usually finance projects up to 100%, but rather expects a proportion of the costs to be covered by the other parties;
- they enable a given operation to break even financially and cannot lead to a profit for their beneficiaries;

- they cannot be awarded retroactively for actions that are already completed;
- additionally, only one grant may be awarded for the same action.

Grants are not awarded on a case-by-case basis. Instead, they are subject to annual, or multi-annual programming by the EU and its partners, with opportunities then publicised through ‘Calls for Proposals.’

The Calls for Proposals invite candidates to present, within a given deadline, a proposal for action that corresponds to the objectives pursued and fulfils the required conditions. These Calls for Proposals are published through a range of media at different locations (which are explained further in section A, **‘Identifying Funding Opportunities For Your Organisation’**.)

All applications for grants are examined and evaluated on the basis of criteria that have clearly been announced in the Calls for Proposals, while ensuring equal treatment. Candidates are individually informed of the final decision concerning their proposal.

Grants are based on the reimbursement of eligible costs. In other words, costs effectively incurred by grant recipients that are deemed necessary for carrying out the activities in question. Thus, of course, any CSOs receiving a grant from the EU must be able to maintain adequate financial records to demonstrate satisfactorily that costs have been incurred for agreed items, following agreed procedures. Grants are subject to a written agreement signed by the two parties and, as a general rule, require co-financing by the grant beneficiary. Since grants cover a very diverse range of fields, the specific conditions that need to be fulfilled may vary from one area of activity to another.



Public Contracts are generally much less of a channel for EU funding for CSOs, but in the region there are increasingly some specialised CSOs that work in partnership with the private sector to provide products and services. Procurement procedures are launched when a Contracting Authority of the EU wants to purchase a service, goods or work in exchange for remuneration. A procurement procedure leads to the conclusion of a public contract. Procurement procedures are governed by specific rules which vary depending on the nature of the contract (service, supplies, work) and the threshold.

The detailed procedures for managing both EU Grants and Public Contracts for CSOs and others in the Western Balkans and Turkey (and elsewhere outside of the EU) are contained within the **Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EC External Actions** (commonly referred to as PRAG). It is not necessary for CSOs to have a thorough knowledge of PRAG, however, in order to appropriately manage EU funds (whether as a grant or public contract) they do need to be able to access and understand certain parts of PRAG. (see '**Managing An EU Grant Contract**' and '**Compliance Monitoring and Reporting on EU Funds**')

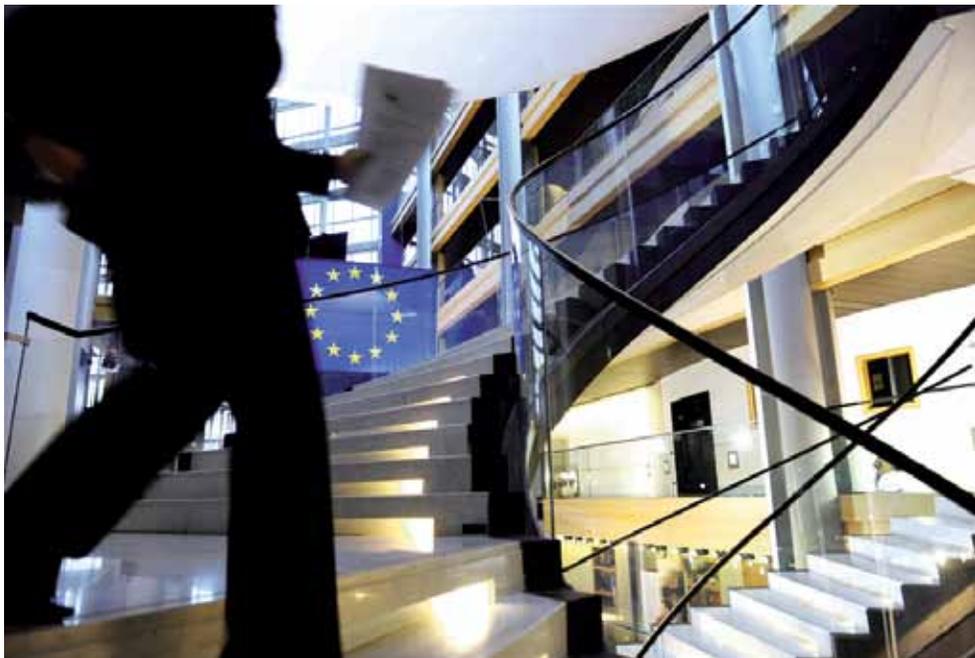
In terms of the **institutional arrangements for managing EU grants and public contracts**, the EU favours three different approaches presented below:

- **Centralised implementation:** the European Commission or its Delegations implement the programmes directly and is responsible for the award of grants and procurement contracts;
- **Decentralised implementation:** a public administration in the receiving country implements the programme on the basis of a financing agreement signed with the European Commission. The country's administration is responsible for the award of grants and contracts but with a procedure controlled by the EC. The EC services are in regular contact with the concerned implementing partners to ensure that the publication of beneficiaries is addressed in the countries concerned;
- **Joint management with international organisations and programmes managed by EU member states agencies:** the European Commission (EC) contributes to a project implemented by an international organisation or an EU member state agency which is responsible for the award of grants and procurement contracts on the basis of its own procedures. The EC verifies the appropriate use of the funds and is in regular contact with the concerned international organisations to ensure that the publication of beneficiaries is properly addressed.

Within the Western Balkans and Turkey region, CSOs in the eight different countries may find a combination of the above arrangements. On the whole, countries which are formally approved as candidate countries will mostly have 'decentralised arrangements', which means that grants are awarded through Contracting Authorities within the country's public administration. At the time of writing this Manual, this was true for Croatia and Turkey,

with Macedonia and Montenegro moving towards decentralisation. Whereas for CSOs in the potential candidate countries grants are mostly awarded through the EU Delegations. In the case of some programmes which are either thematic and/or regional, grants are awarded through the centralised system and usually directly by the EC.

In order to streamline aspects of the management of grant schemes, and in particular, the screening of eligibility requirements, under 'centralised implementation' arrangements the EU has established a database called PADOR, to which all potential CSO grant recipients can apply to join. The '**Potential Applicant Data Online Registration**' (PADOR) database is managed by EuropeAid and contains information about organisations applying for grants of the European Commission in the field of external assistance. For more information about PADOR and how to use it, please go to '**Identifying Funding Opportunities for Your Organisation**'.



In terms of the institutional arrangements for managing EU grants and public contracts, the EU favours three different approaches: centralised implementation, decentralised implementation and joint management with international organisations and programmes managed by EU member states agencies.

The Different Funding Instruments

CSOs in the Western Balkans and Turkey may find resource opportunities under three different funding mechanisms of the EU. Accordingly, CSOs must be familiar with the nature and purpose of each mechanism:

- the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA), under the EC's Directorate General for Enlargement;
- thematic Programmes, under the EC's Directorate General for Cooperation and Development;
- the Community Programmes, under various Directorate Generals of the EC.

We will briefly look at all three of these mechanisms, but mostly concentrate on IPA, as for CSOs in the region this offers the most opportunities.

IPA - the Instrument for Pre-Accession

The EU provides focused pre-accession financial aid to the candidate countries (Croatia, Iceland, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) and to the potential candidates (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244/1999). This financial assistance is made available both to individual and multiple beneficiaries. It is intended to help these countries to introduce the necessary political, economic and institutional reforms to bring them into line with EU standards.

The reforms necessary for EU membership also serve to improve the lives of citizens in the beneficiary countries. A key aim of assistance is to support political reform, in particular institution building, strengthening the rule of law, human rights, protection of minorities and the development of civil society.

Before joining the EU, a country must have a functioning market economy, as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the EU. Assistance is therefore provided to support economic reform, leading to faster growth and better employment prospects. Assistance with the adoption of the obligations related to membership improves quality of life in EU Member States too, as candidates and potential candidates align to and gradually adopt EU rules, for example concerning protection of the environment and the fight against crime, drugs and illegal immigration. Furthermore, pre-accession aid encourages regional cooperation and contributes to sustainable development and poverty reduction.

Since 2007, both candidate countries and potential candidates have received focused EU funding and support through a single channel, the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance or IPA. The total pre-accession funding for the region for the period 2007-2013 is € 11.5 billion. This funding is programmed through five different components:

Component I - Transition Assistance and Institution Building - provides financing for institution-building and associated investments. It supports measures to drive stabilisation and the transition to a democratic society and market economy. Component I is open to all candidates and potential candidates and is managed by Directorate-General Enlargement. It should also be noted that Component 1 funds a number of regional and 'multi-beneficiary' programmes, including the Civil Society Facility (see below).

Component II - Cross-Border Cooperation - supports cross-border cooperation between candidates and potential candidates and with EU Member States. It may also fund participation in transnational cooperation programmes (under the Structural Funds) and Sea Basin programmes (under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument or ENPI). Component II is open to all candidates and potential candidates and is managed by DG Enlargement and DG Regional Policy.

Component III - Regional Development - finances investments and associated technical assistance in areas such as transport, environment and economic cohesion. It is open to candidate countries only and is managed by Directorate-General Regional Policy.

Component IV - Human Resources Development - aims to strengthen human capital through education and training and to help combat exclusion. It is open to candidate countries only and is managed by Directorate-General Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

Component V - Rural Development - contributes to sustainable rural development. It provides assistance for the restructuring of agriculture and its adaptation to EU standards in the areas of environmental protection, public health, animal and plant health, animal welfare and occupational safety. It is open to candidate countries only and is managed by Directorate-General Agriculture and Rural Development.

All of the IPA components may offer opportunities for funding for CSOs, as the national programming of the components often includes grant schemes (and related Calls for Proposals) which are open to CSOs. For example, under Component III, it might be possible that there will be grant schemes that will seek proposals from CSOs to promote implementation of EU environmental policy, or under Component V, grant schemes that are open to CSOs to finance projects which promote youth employment. However, only Candidate Countries benefit from Components III to V, and thus as a region as a whole it is Component I and (to some extent) Component II which provide the most opportunities for CSOs. This, in part, is due to the new Civil Society Facility, which is explained further below.

The importance of Civil Society has been highlighted in the Communication from the Commission to the Council and European Parliament on the Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2007–2008. In order to better meet the needs of the region, support to Civil Society development and dialogue will be coordinated and streamlined by focusing on three areas of intervention, constituting a new Civil Society Facility:

Support to local civic initiatives and capacity building enforcing the role of civil society;

People 2 People Programme (P2P) supporting visits to EU institutions and bodies to exchange experience, know-how and good practices between beneficiaries, EU and Member States civil society organisations;

Activities carried out in partnerships between civil society organisations in the Beneficiary countries and the EU leading to a transfer of knowledge and networks

Thematic Programmes

The EU's thematic instruments and programmes are designed to provide support where the national programmes funded by other instruments (such as IPA) may have 'gaps'. Thus, for the CSOs in the Western Balkans and Turkey there are two main thematic opportunities for funding:

- the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI); and
- the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR).



ENPI

Since 2007 the EU has been implementing a comprehensive European Neighbourhood Policy and in support of this it has the ENPI to channel funds. Thus, ENPI has replaced the previous instruments of TACIS and MEDA, and as part of the programming of the funds often has grant schemes for which CSOs are eligible to apply. The eight countries in the Western Balkans and Turkey are not directly covered by ENPI, however, and in the many Calls for Proposals, CSOs from the region are often eligible as partners (in addition to CSOs in the Member States). Thus, it is important for CSOs in the region to understand ENPI and track possible opportunities.

The ENPI has the following strategic objectives:

- supporting democratic transition and promoting human rights;
- the transition towards the market economy;
- the promotion of sustainable development and policies of common interests (anti-terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, conflict resolution and the rule of international law).

The ENPI has a financial envelope of €11.2 billion for the period 2007-2013. This budget is allocated as follows: 95% for national and multi-country programmes, and 5% for cross-border cooperation programmes. The funds allocation is policy driven, and depends on the needs and absorption capacity of the beneficiary countries as well as on their implementation of agreed reforms.

Programmes implemented in the field follow a specific programming process based on:

- multiannual programming papers (for national, multi-country and cross-border strategies) and multiannual indicative programmes;
- annual action programmes and joint programmes for cross-border cooperation.

EIDHR

EIDHR funds are programmed on a multi-annual basis, with Calls for Proposals from eligible CSOs in the Western Balkans and Turkey and elsewhere. The funding is quite limited (a total of approximately 100 million euros for the period 2007-2013) and generally relates to achieving the following universal objectives:

- enhancing respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in countries and regions where they are most at risk;
- strengthening the role of Civil Society in promoting human rights and democratic reform, in supporting the peaceful conciliation of group interests and in consolidating political participation and representation;

- supporting actions in areas covered by EU Guidelines: dialogue on human rights, human rights defenders, the death penalty, torture, children and armed conflicts and violence against women;
- supporting and strengthening the international and regional framework for the protection of human rights, justice, the rule of law and the promotion of democracy;
- building confidence in and enhancing the reliability and transparency of democratic electoral processes, in particular through monitoring electoral processes.

The EIDHR 2011-2013 Strategy Paper will be implemented through two global calls for proposals every year and around 90 local calls for proposals launched by EU Delegations annually or bi-annually.

The Community Programmes

The EU's Community Programmes are a series of integrated measures accepted by the European Commission aiming to strengthen the co-operation among the Member States regarding Community policies over a given period of time. Thus, Community Programmes can be tied to almost every Community policy. The Community decides on the type of programmes and their duration, with financing from the general budget of the Community.

Accession and Candidate countries have the opportunity to participate in the programmes, although as a main condition of participation, an annual fee, negotiated for each programme, has to be paid to the budget. Within the Western Balkans and Turkey, the eight countries participate in a large number of the Community Programmes, but the participation of each country is slightly different. In order to understand which programmes your country is participating in, the first place to visit for information is the web portal of the EU Delegation in your country.

For many of the Community Programmes the majority of the funding is channelled through public institutions such as schools, universities, hospitals, museums. However, there are also opportunities for CSOs and individual citizens to benefit from the funding in a number of the programmes.

The key Community Programmes of interest to CSOs in the region are probably as follows:

- **The Culture Programme:** The EU's Culture Programme (2007-2013) has a budget of €400 million for projects and initiatives to celebrate Europe's cultural diversity and enhance our shared cultural heritage through the development of cross-border co-operation between cultural operators and institutions.
http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc411_en.htm
- **Europe for Citizens:** The Europe for Citizens programme has a number of key priorities geared at fulfilling its mission to give the citizen an active role in the

development of the European Union; including promoting participation and democracy at the EU level; the future of the Union and its basic values; intercultural dialogue; employment, social cohesion and sustainable development and boosting awareness of the societal impact of EU policies.

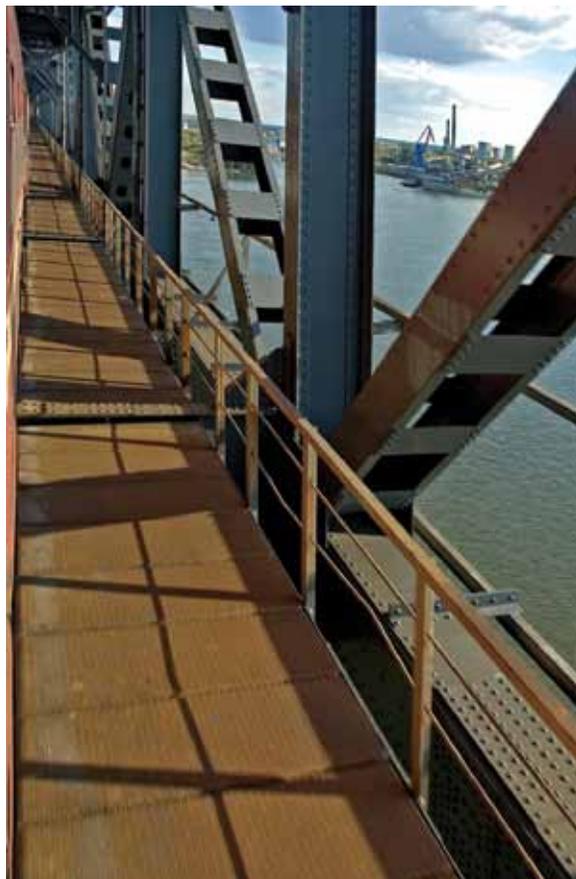
http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/programme-priorities/doc16_en.htm

- **FP7:** The Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7) is the EU's main instrument for funding research in Europe and it will run from 2007-2013. FP7 is also designed to respond to Europe's employment needs, competitiveness and quality of life.
http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html
- **LIFE+:** This is the EU's financial instrument supporting environmental and nature conservation projects throughout the EU, as well as in some candidate, acceding and neighboring countries.
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/>
- **Lifelong Learning (including Erasmus, Leonardo, Socrates):** Lifelong Learning Programme supports learning opportunities from childhood to old age in every single life situation. The European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme enables people at all stages of their lives to take part in stimulating learning experiences, as well as helping to develop the education and training sector across Europe.
http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78_en.htm
- **Public Health:** The EU is required by its founding treaty to ensure that human health is protected as part of all its policies, and to work with the EU countries to improve public health, prevent human illness and eliminate sources of danger to physical and mental health. The EU's strategy for protecting and improving human health is chiefly implemented through Commission health programmes.
http://ec.europa.eu/health/index_en.htm
- **Youth in Action:** It is the Programme the European Union has set up for young people. It aims to inspire a sense of active European citizenship, solidarity and tolerance among young Europeans and to involve them in shaping the Union's future.
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.php

For all the instruments and programmes mentioned above, it is essential that CSOs make regular research to identify exactly what funding opportunities might be available to them during one year. (see **Identifying Funding Opportunities for Your Organisation**). Sources for information on the opportunities for each of the eight countries in the region are briefly covered in the paragraphs below.

EU Funds in Your Country

It is NOT possible for this Manual to provide a definitive list of all the funding opportunities available for CSOs in the Western Balkans and Turkey, as the opportunities are different at any given time. Indeed any such lists can be very misleading for CSOs, as they are highly unlikely to be up-to-date or comprehensive for each of the eight countries. Thus, this Manual highly recommends that CSOs in the region adopt systems that ensure that their organisations are undertaking regular research into EU funding opportunities, and that this research is conducted in a structured fashion. (see **Identifying Funding Opportunities for Your Organisation**). However, to introduce this process, below is a snapshot of the key information sources on EU funding in each country and some advisory notes from CSOs active in the countries, but beginning with key central sources at the EC. Please note that some of these web pages are only navigible in English.



European Commission

DG for Cooperation and Development (Europe Aid) at http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/index_en.htm

DG for Enlargement at http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/index_en.htm which has separate sections on Candidate Countries, Potential Candidates, and Regional Cooperation.

Albania

EU Delegation web pages at <http://ec.europa.eu/delegations/albania> particularly the section on 'Funding Opportunities.'

EU Information Centre in Albania (<http://euinfocentre.al>)

Civil Society Development Centre (<http://www.vloracivilsociety.org>)

Bosnia and Herzegovina

EU Delegation web pages at <http://www.delbih.ec.europa.eu/> which has a dedicated section on 'EU Assistance to BiH', with a drop-down menu that has 6 sub-sections. The sub-section on Justice and Home Affairs includes information about funding for Civil Society.

Croatia

EU Delegation web pages at <http://www.delhrv.ec.europa.eu/?lang=hr> provides comprehensive information on the accession process of the country and available EU funding opportunities.

The Association Informo say that as a result of their experience: "we found particularly useful newsletters and a free web platform offered by the European Projects Association (EPA) (<http://www.europeanprojects.org>). Now, our work is much easier. In fact, through EPA's 'Project Factory' we have at our disposal a unique place full of useful tools and news".

Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244/99)

The European Commission's Liaison Office <http://www.delprn.ec.europa.eu/> has dedicated a section on 'EU Assistance' to Kosovo, where it not only explains different funding opportunities and programmes, but also provides information on past successful projects per programme.

Fatmir Curri, of the Kosovar Civil Society Foundation notes: "The best way for NGOs operating in Kosovo to find out about EU funding is to follow the yearly and multi-annual plans of the EC Liaison Office to Kosovo. However, also being a member of various networks and umbrella organisations provides added value to information on EU funding available through regional programmes and centrally managed from Brussels."

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The Delegation of EU provides compact information on EU's policy on Civil Society under the 'EU Assistance' subsection at its webpage: <http://www.delmkd.ec.europa.eu/en/index.htm>. There is another subsection dedicated to tender opportunities.

Montenegro

EU Delegation web pages at <http://www.delmne.ec.europa.eu/code/navigate.php?Id=1> provides thorough information on EU's assistance to Montenegro and tendering opportunities at two different sub-sections.

Serbia

EU Delegation web pages at <http://www.delscg.ec.europa.eu/code/navigate.php?Id=1> has a separate section of funding opportunities, which provides information on open and closed calls, administrative tenders, awarded contracts and a link to the EuropeAid webpage.

Turkey

EU Delegation web pages at <http://www.avrupa.info.tr/DelegasyonPortal.html> includes a separate sub-section on Civil Society and the EU's different tools and funding opportunities for supporting Civil Society in Turkey.

Fuat Engin of TUBIDER says that, amongst other things, “we follow the web sites of CFCU (www.cfcu.gov.tr) and Turkey's Civil Society Development Centre (www.stgm.org), as well as subscribing to a number of email lists.

A number of CSOs in the region have mentioned that they use a web portal called '**Funds For NGOs.Org**' (<http://www.fundsforngos.org>). This is an online initiative, working for the sustainability of NGOs by increasing their access to donors, resources and skills. It uses online technologies to spread knowledge about organizational sustainability, promote creative ideas for long-term generation of institutional funds for development interventions, improve professional efforts in resource mobilization and advocate for increased allocation of donor resources for building the skills and capacities of NGOs.





Developing and Managing EU-Funded Projects

Identifying funding opportunities for your organisation

STEP 1

How can I match my organisation's priorities with the EU's funding opportunities?

In the previous chapter we have seen that the EU has different mechanisms for channelling funds to the eight IPA countries in the Balkans and Turkey (see '**Understanding EU Assistance for Your Country**'). These include thematic instruments, such as EIDHR, which have annual action programmes, or IPA (the Instrument for Pre-Accession), which has country-specific multi-annual operating programmes, or various Community Programmes, managed by national agencies. It is essential that CSOs find out which mechanisms are operating in their countries and what opportunities are forecast for the next one to two years. There are a number of ways of doing this forward planning. One way is to make use of the centrally managed web portals of the EC (which are available in EU languages, although some of the downloadable documents have limited language availability), or to use country-based information sources (which use a mixture of local languages and English), such as EU Delegation web sites and web portals of local Contracting Authorities, EU Information Centres, Ministries, and some CSO support organisations. These various web site addresses can be seen under '**EU Funds in Your Country**'.

Good Practice from the Organisation for Civil Initiatives (OGI) in Croatia

OGI has a strategic plan covering a three year period, with one section devoted as a fundraising plan. Within this plan there are details about how the organisation will pursue grant applications. The Development Director of OGI is responsible for the implementation of this fundraising plan and works in close coordination with the organisation's Executive Committee.

With regard to the monitoring of Calls for Proposals, OGI staff conduct a daily 15-minutes search for new Calls, checking newsletters and **websites on EU funding**, and reviewing key programming documents for any updates. "We recommend other CSOs to do the same as it is essential to take note of relevant Calls for Proposals in due time".

A good starting point is to use the EC's central web portals to research the IPA funding opportunities and then the opportunities of the thematic and Community Programmes. The steps of how to do this are covered immediately below.

Funding Opportunities Under IPA

Use the EC's DG for Enlargement web portal, by starting at the home page (http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/index_en.htm) and then navigating to the pages for your country by using the choices in the left-hand side margin. Thus, for example, if you are looking for opportunities in Albania, first click 'potential candidates', then click on 'Albania'. You will then be able to look through various documents under the heading 'Financial Assistance'. In the case of Albania' being a potential candidate country and therefore receiving funds only under IPA Components I and II, you will be able to find documents which give the overall programming picture for each year (scroll down to the bottom of the web page and 'click' on the 'National Programme' for the latest year) and the individual documents which describe the details of the intended grant schemes and 'macro' projects for each year (scroll down and click on 'project fiches' for the latest year). Thus, for example, under the **Project Fiches** for Albania for 2009 there is a fiche entitled 'PF8 Development of Civil Society' and if this document is opened we can find out that there will be the following:

"Three calls for proposals will be launched in order to select projects proposed by Civil Society Organisations in the following sectors:

- *fight against corruption;*
- *environment protection and environmental education;*
- *support to vulnerable people (e.g. distressed women, children living in the streets etc.), minorities and poor people".*



In the fiche document (section 4) we can also learn about the planned budget (in this case, 1.43 million euros to be allocated to the grant schemes) and the indicative schedule for implementation (section 5) which in this example shows it is in the 1st and 2nd quarters of 2010 that Calls for Proposals are to be made.

For the formal Candidate Countries, under the section 'Financial Assistance' there will be a bigger selection of documents as there will be details for each of the five IPA components.

CSOs should get used to researching these pages and by opening and reading through various documents can begin to learn how EU IPA funds are programmed and what and when opportunities may arise for CSOs in grant schemes. Unfortunately, for all the countries in the Western Balkans and Turkey region benefiting from IPA funds, these important planning documents on the DG Enlargement website are usually only available in English.

A key part of the research process, including understanding what and when funds are available, involves becoming familiar with what the EU calls 'project fiches'. These are documents which are used to present in a standard format what the EU funds will be used for, the justification for the funding, the budget and intended timeframe. CSOs do not need to understand every aspect of the 'fiches', but should be able to quickly scan through the main sections and see if any proposed Calls for Proposals are within their sector or area of interest. In theory, it should also be possible to directly contact the main 'Beneficiary' organisation which will be running the programme as the name and contact details are included in section 1.7 of the fiche. However, in practice, such contact is often quite difficult.

Finally, it is fundamental to understand that the 'programming years' are not the same as the years for the implementation of projects. Typically, if a 'fiche' proposes that there will be a Call for Proposals, this Call will usually take place one or two years after the date of the fiche. This means that in order to understand what IPA funds might be available for CSOs in 2011 or 2012, it will be necessary to look through the programmes and fiches for the years 2009 and 2010. Also, there is no guarantee that funds planned in the programmes and fiches will be used, although generally most programming is realised.

Good Practice from the Albanian Helsinki Committee

AHC's guiding policy paper is its Strategic Plan, which is drafted every three years. This plan covers the areas of intervention in the human rights field, the proposed methods for intervention, and the resources required. Therefore the organisation understands that the first step in resource mobilisation is having a good and realistic strategic plan, thereafter dedicated staff are able to assess all relevant Calls for Proposals according to this plan. Also, while reviewing any Calls for Proposals the staff both consult with their direct beneficiaries in terms of the relevance of the Call and also consider AHC's own 'lessons learnt' from previous applications for funding.

Funding Under Thematic Instruments and Programmes

In order to get an overview of what funding might be available to organisations in your country, 'click' on the 'How We Work' tab in the left side margin. From here you can then get an overview of how the financing for the thematic instruments work ('how we finance') and then explore individual 'thematic instruments'. The instrument most relevant to the Western Balkans and Turkey is the EIDHR. On the pages for EIDHR in the right-hand margin you can 'click' on '**Projects – funding: planning ahead**' and you will find a document which gives an overview of the next three years of funding for the eight countries in the Western Balkans and Turkey region.

To identify any Calls for Proposals that might be open, or forecast, under EIDHR or any other EU programme, you can navigate to the section 'Work With Us'. On these pages you will find a comprehensive search mechanism by clicking on the tab marked 'Funding'. How to use this search mechanism is described on the next pages.

Bariu Zenelaj of the Kosovar Academy for Training and Technical Assistance comments that their organisation has a particular approach to ensuring robust coverage of funding opportunities: "Twice a year our organisation organises 'donor mapping' in a participatory manner, and each member of the organisation, in their monthly reports, has the duty to report new donor opportunities."

Another important feature of the DG Cooperation and Development (Europe Aid) web portal is access to **PADOR**, an online system for pre-registration of organisations interested in applying for EU external assistance. Using PADOR is also covered on the next pages.

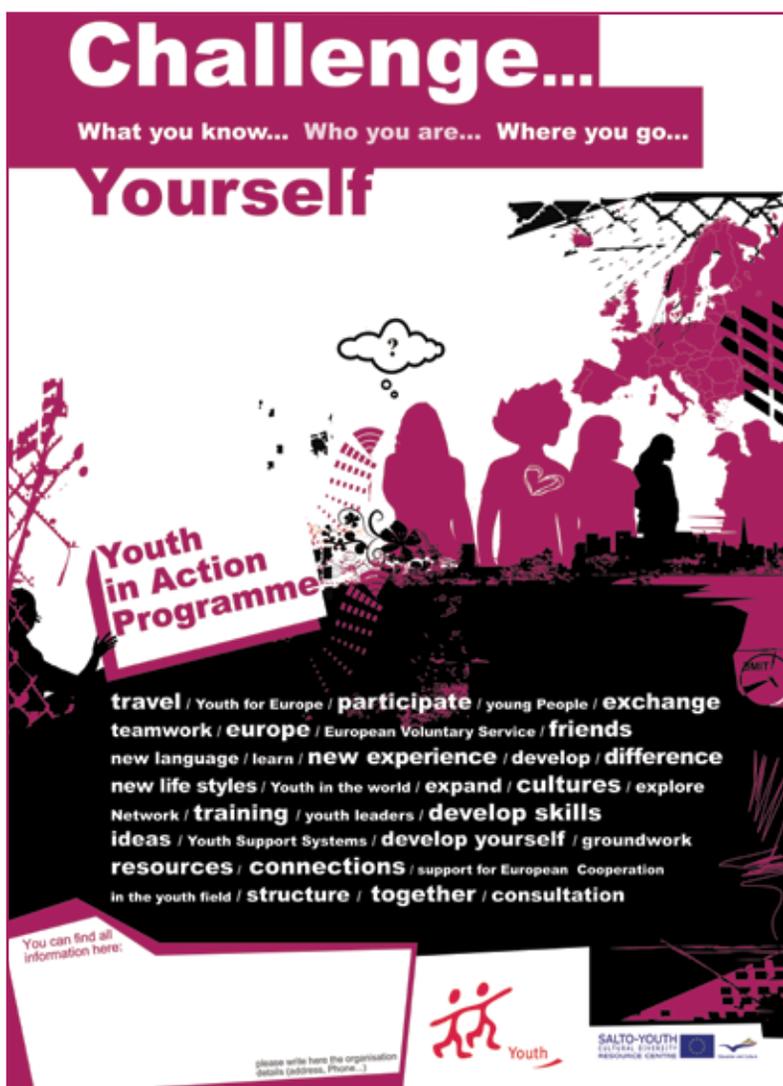
Funding Under Community Programmes

The funds under the Community Programmes are not designed primarily to support CSOs outside of the EU, but rather are mechanisms to support EU policies within the EU. However, as seen in **The Different Funding Instruments**, the countries of the Western Balkans and Turkey are participating in some of these programmes and thus, in specific policy areas, there may be some funding opportunities for CSOs. To find out which Community Programmes your country is participating in you will need to check either the web portal of the EU Delegation (as listed in 'EU Funds in Your Country') or, if your country has one, the Government's institution for managing EU Affairs. Thereafter you will be able to identify, for each Community Programme that your country is participating in, an accredited agency or institution authorised to manage the particular programme's resources.

For example, one of the most successful programmes for supporting small CSOs in the youth sector is the **Youth in Action programme**. You can find out generally about YiA by logging into http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.php

On these web pages (of the DG for Education and Culture) you will find out about **Funding Opportunities** for the next few years and how to make applications. Currently within the region only Turkey is a full programme country and has a National Agency to assist with YiA funding at the local level, but all the other seven countries are partner countries for YiA and are eligible for some of the centrally managed Calls for Proposals.

The web sites of the key Community Programmes are listed in this Manual under ‘**The Different Funding Instruments**’.





What do I need to do to apply for the funds?

When studying the various Programme documents for any one year, remember that the actual disbursement of funds usually takes place one or two years after the annual programme is agreed. Thus, for example, in order to understand what IPA funds might be available for CSOs in 2011 or 2012, it will be necessary to look through the programmes and fiches for your country for the years 2009 and 2010. This is also true for funding under the Thematic Instruments and Community Programmes.

Once you have identified strategically which funds are likely to be available and suitable for your organisation, you will need to regularly search for information on Calls for Proposals (or Open Tenders for public contracts) during the periods that were indicated in the planning documents.

The details of any one grant funding opportunity will be published in the EU's '**Call for Proposals**'. These Calls are governed by strict rules by the EU and they clearly explain how an organisation may apply to a given grant scheme.

Calls for Proposals are published on the EuropeAid web site and may also, in the case of countries which have 'decentralised' institutional arrangements, be published on local web sites. For example, in Croatia it is published under the web site of the Central Finance and Contracting Agency at <http://www.safu.hr/en/> and in Turkey under the Central Finance and Contracts Unit at <http://www.cfcu.gov.tr>. The EU Delegations in each country usually also have local language web pages with information about Calls for Proposals. On the Europe Aid web site http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/index_en.htm you will need to navigate to the '**Work With Us/Funding: Calls for Proposals**' page. There you can use the search mechanism to find 'open' calls for 'grants' for your country or region. Remember to choose dates for your search which begin for Calls published at least 3 months ago.

How to stay well informed on EU funding opportunities - advice from NGO 'ALFA' (Resource Centre for Development) in Novi Sad, Serbia

"Our organisation has developed a system for monitoring funding opportunities. For example, we have a list of donors who previously supported us and keep contact with them. They often send us information about funding opportunities. Also, we subscribe to relevant mailing lists. We regularly check the web sites of our Ministries, the EC, and other resource centres in the region. We know the cycles in which particular donor or programme launches Calls for Proposals and keep ourselves informed about them.

We also regularly attend events where people from NGOs and relevant institutions gather and exchange information."

Once you find a Call for Proposals which you think may be relevant to your organisation, you should download all the relevant documents attached to the Call. The most important of these is Guidelines for Applicants, and Grant Application Form. Often these are only available in English, if the application must be made in English, however, where applications are eligible in other languages the Guidelines may also be available in another language.

All Calls for Proposals are only open for a limited period of time and thus it is imperative that you make your application before the deadline. For Calls for Proposals with the possibility of grants of a value above 100,000 euros the 'open' period will be a minimum of 90 days; for grants of the value of less than 100,000 the minimum may be 60 days. The period for preparing a grant application will never be long enough for your organisation to make the 'perfect' application, however, if you have planned ahead (following Step 1 above), then you will have already made some preparation for your application.

Responding to a Call for Proposals can only be done following the given instructions and accurately using the EU templates. Any deviation from the procedures will result in your application being rejected. Thus, it is essential that your organisation has the capacity to fully comply with the procedures for presenting a project proposal. How to comply is covered in Sections C and D below '**Preparing Successful Project Proposals**' and '**Passing the Evaluation**'.

In addition to making the formal application in response to a Call for Proposals, most CSOs in the region will be obliged to have already completed registration on PADOR. This is required for organisations applying to grant schemes which are managed centrally by the EC (or by the country Delegations). Registration on PADOR is not necessary for organisations applying to grant schemes managed under decentralised institutional arrangements, (which at the time of writing includes IPA funding managed by Croatian and Turkish public institutions).

PADOR is a web-based database is managed by EuropeAid and contains information about organisations applying for grants of the European Commission in the field of external assistance. To find out more about PADOR and how to register go to http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/index_en.htm and navigate to 'Work With Us/PADOR'.

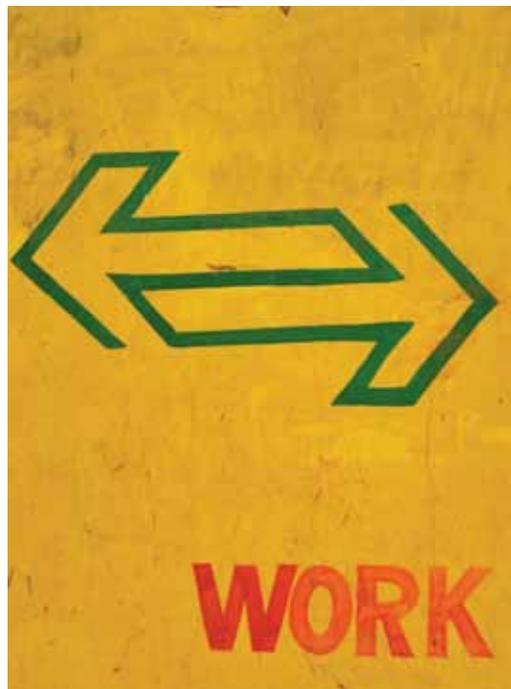
The screenshot displays the EuropeAid Development and Cooperation website. The main header includes the European Commission logo and the text 'EuropeAid Development and Cooperation'. Below this, a navigation breadcrumb shows 'European Commission > EuropeAid > Work with us > Online services > PADOR'. The page content is organized into three main sections:

- Left Sidebar:** A navigation menu with links to 'Homepage', 'Who we are', 'What we do', 'Where we work', 'How we work', and 'Work with us'. Under 'Work with us', there are sub-links for 'Funding', 'Annual Programmes', 'Online services' (with 'PADOR' highlighted), 'Procedures & documents', 'Communication material', and 'Multimedia library'.
- Main Content Area:**
 - PADOR** section: 'Online Registration for grant's applicants'. It states that the 'PADOR' database is managed by EuropeAid and contains information about organisations applying for grants of the European Commission in the field of external assistance.
 - New user?** section: Includes a link to 'Click here to get a username and password from the EC Authentication Service (ECAS)'.
 - LOGIN to PADOR** section: Contains three options:
 - UPDATE**: 'the PADOR profile of your organisation. Please "Sign and submit" your registration each time you update a PADOR profile.'
 - SEARCH**: '(and request access rights to) an existing PADOR profile'
 - CREATE**: 'the PADOR profile of an organisation. Please "Sign and submit" your registration in order to get the EuropeAid ID.'
 - Help?** section: Includes links for 'I have forgotten my username / my password' and 'I need the EuropeAid ID of my organisation'. A note says 'More help? consult the Quick guides and the FAQ or send an email to the PADOR helpline' and 'Impossible to register online? Use the PADOR off-line form'.
- Right Sidebar:**
 - PADOR Guides:** Links to 'Quick guide for applicants', 'Quick guide for partners', 'FAQ', 'PADOR for public bodies (incl. Local Authorities)', and 'Helpdesk'.
 - PADOR off-line form:** Links to 'PDF format' and 'ZIP format'.
 - Confidentiality:** Link to 'Privacy statements'.

STEP 3

Does my organisation have the capacity to meet the conditions of the funding?

Once your organisation has identified appropriate funding sources from the EU and has seen a relevant Call for Proposal and started to prepare an application for a grant, it must also consider whether or not it has the capacity to actually secure and manage any such grant. This is important for two reasons. If your organisation cannot demonstrate that it does have the appropriate capacity, it will not meet the selection criteria of the Call for Proposals and therefore the application will be rejected. Even if your organisation can demonstrate the relevant capacity, if it is not operationally ready to take on the management of a grant, it may face internal management problems which can have very negative effects on the long term future of the organisation.



For smaller and less experienced CSOs, the above two issues should be very carefully considered. For example, if your organisation's financial turnover is less than 50,000 euros for the last 3 years, it is highly unlikely that your organisation will have the capacity to manage a one-year grant-funded project of 200,000 euros. Thus, make sure that it is feasible for your organisation to successfully implement the grant that you are thinking of applying for. There are some basic practical steps to be taken.

Firstly, within the Call for Proposals Guidelines there will be a section on 'Eligibility Criteria', normally paragraphs 2.1 in the Guidelines. Check these criteria to make sure that your organisation (and partners) satisfies the legal status criteria and that it can demonstrate a track record working in the sector.

Secondly, review the 'Selection Criteria' and section 1 of the Evaluation Grid, which can usually be seen in the paragraphs 2.3 of the Guidelines (under the heading 'Evaluation and Selection of Applications'). This will help you to understand whether your organisation has sufficient resources to implement the project and the appropriate management capacity and professional competence. You will see in the Evaluation Grid that usually the Call for

Proposals will give great importance to assessing the financial and operational capacity of the organisation applying for a grant (often around 30% of the total evaluation score of the application).

See table 1 below for the key questions to be considered:

Table 1 – extract from a sample Evaluation Grid from Guidelines for a Calls for Proposals

1. Financial and operational capacity
1.1 Do the applicant and, if applicable, partners have sufficient experience of project management?
1.2 Do the applicant and, if applicable partners have sufficient technical expertise? (notably knowledge of the issues to be addressed.)
1.3 Do the applicant and, if applicable, partners have sufficient management capacity? (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?

Thirdly, before any grant can be awarded to an organisation, there will be a check of a range of **supporting documents** which demonstrate that the organisation does indeed meet the eligibility and selection criteria. These documents will relate to the legal status of the organisation, its accounts and banking arrangements, evidence of up-to-date social security and tax payments (where relevant), and other operational documentation. Thus, your organisation must ensure that it has all such documentation available. Most of this documentation check will be included in the **PADOR** registration.

The eligibility and selection criteria will also be applied to any partners in a grant application, thus it is essential that your partners are also well prepared and have the appropriate capacities and competences. The establishment of partnerships for EU-funded projects is considered in Section B below.

Developing effective partnerships for projects



Understanding the principles of partnership and the requirements of EU-funded programmes

The majority of EU funding opportunities announced through Calls for Proposals in the Western Balkans and Turkey region requires that the organisation applying for the grant does so in partnership with at least one other organisation. In cases where the partnership is not an obligatory selection criteria, it is often a status that carries additional 'scores' in the application evaluation process. Thus, any CSO considering applying for EU funds is highly likely to also need to consider which partner (or partners) will it make the application with.

Of course, the motivation behind the promotion of partnership in EU-funded Calls for Proposals is two-fold: on the one hand it is recognised universally that partnerships bring diversity and additional resources to any action or business, and are therefore likely to result in more effective and efficient impact. And secondly, within the EU Enlargement process, it is beneficial for all stakeholders to join a dialogue to get to know each other better, and project partnerships are one way to support this dialogue (whether within a country, or between countries.) This motivation for partnership and its practical consequences is considered further in the steps below, but before moving on, it is also useful to understand the EU's definition of 'partners', 'associates' and 'sub-contractors' as described in most Calls for Proposals.

Partners: *Applicants' partners participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the grant beneficiary. They must therefore satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the grant beneficiary himself, in addition to any other criteria affecting partners.*

Associates: *Other organisations 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.*

Sub-Contractors: *The grant beneficiaries have the possibility to award contracts to subcontractors. Subcontractors are neither partners nor associates, and are subject to the procurement rules set out in the Annexes to the standard grant contract.*

Over and above these definitions in Guidelines for EU Calls for Proposals, CSOs should always be aware of the universal principles which will assist the organisations in building

successful partnerships. These are the **principles of equity, transparency, and mutual benefit**. If these principles are not adhered to, it will be difficult for any partnership to be sustained and remain meaningful.

STEP 2

Identifying the right partner

As with all aspects of project work and project preparation, good planning is the key to identifying the right partner or partners for your project. In addition to the considerations discussed above regarding the formal 'eligibility criteria' of partners in any Call for Proposals, your organisation needs to have well-structured internal discussions in order to be clear about what kind of partner it wants to have as part of a grant application. In many cases, it might be that the 'right' partner is already in partnership with your organisation and that you already have a working relationship. However, as is often the case, the prospect of implementing an innovative project can demand that new partners are identified.

Identifying a potential partner in your own country can be difficult, but identifying partners in other countries can be extremely challenging for CSOs. Thus it is essential that the process of identifying partners for projects begins as early as possible. For example, it may be that during a stakeholder analysis exercise (in the project preparation stage - '**Preparing Successful Project Proposals**') potential partners are identified. The worst scenario is when an organisation attempts to find a partner after it has designed a project and just a few days before the grant application deadline!



If you're looking for a partner, particularly for a partner in another country, it might be useful to consider the questions and tasks in the checklist below:

Checklist
Be precise about what your organisation needs from a partnership. Expertise, project management experiences, access to networks, lobbying support, financial resources: then write down these needs.
What kind of organisation are you looking for? Big or small? Service-oriented, or one that concentrates on advocacy? In the same or a different sector?
Beware of 'mismatches'.
Have you considered the location of the partner and how are you going to communicate?
Do you have a written introduction to your organisation and team?
Do you have resources to establish the partnership? (For example to cover travel costs to have face-to-face meetings).
What networks or intermediaries can help you?
Present the potential partner with a clear written request.
Establish contact with an appropriately authorised person.
Be clear about timelines and deadlines;
Make your partner feel well-informed, clear on any resource issues, and empowered.

In most of the countries in the Western Balkans and Turkey there are plenty of geographical and sector-based **networks of CSOs**, and a number of national **NGO Support Organisations**, which you should use to find the names and contact details of potential partners. However, to identify partners in EU Member States and other countries can be difficult. If you have failed to find contacts through your own local and or national networks, you may seek assistance from some EU umbrella organisations and federations. A list of some of these can be found in the accompanying Toolkit.



Building a relationship

There are a lot of published materials, web sites, and organisations dedicated to helping CSOs build more effective partnerships. So in this Manual we will not provide any details on this subject, but do highly recommend that your organisation invest time and effort to

build capacity for supporting partnerships. A good starting point for this is the 'Partnership Toolkit' prepared (and free to download, but only in English) at the Partnering Initiative: <http://thepartneringinitiative.org>

Good Practice from the Civil Rights Programme (CRP) in Pristina, Kosovo under UNSCR 1244/99

CRP has considerable experience in partnering with a range of organisations (the EC, UNHCR, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NGO Civil Rights Defenders) and they base their success on building partnerships following 7 principles:

- i. shared vision or goals;
- ii. inter-dependence between partners;
- iii. mutual trust and transparency;
- iv. mutual accountability;
- v. Sharing of resources;
- vi. Shared capacity building and learning.



CRP's meeting in Rtanj with partners and beneficiaries

One of the useful frameworks suggested by the Partnering Initiative is the Partnership 'cycle', which guides organisations round the critical aspects of maintaining effective partner relationships. A version of this 'Partnership Cycle' can be found in the relevant section in the Toolkit.

STEP 4

Joint development of a project proposal and completing a grant application

With regard to responding to a particular Call for Proposals, CSOs need to undertake two important practical activities with their partners. Firstly, it is vital to ensure that any partner feels a strong sense of ownership for the proposed project, at least for a part of the project. To do this, the project should be prepared in collaboration. Ideally, partners should be involved in every step of the project preparation, for example by participating in problem analysis sessions, joining planning meetings, undertaking cost-analysis and budgeting, meeting other parties involved and drafting the project document. However, given that there are often not enough resources available, in terms of things like time and travel budgets, to support this full engagement, the proposal can be developed online with the partner via email or teleconferencing.

Secondly, one of the reasons for involving a partner in a project is often that the partner has some particular form of expertise to offer the project. Use this both in the implementation and design phases of the project, and among other things it will ensure that the written project proposal is technically strong and credible. CSOs should rely on partners to make critical inputs to the project design and subsequent drafting of the application.

A third important aspect of collaborative proposal preparation is that clear arrangements and agreements should be made as to whom will put the project activities into practice, how, and what this will cost. The organisation applying for the grant must present the budget in a clear way so that any partner is fully aware of what resources are being allocated for each activity. The cost-analysis at the preparation stage is particularly sensitive when the project



Strategic Planning and Fundraising Training, Turkey, 2010.

involves international partners and where there can easily be misunderstandings over the budgeting.

Ekrem Tufan from the Canakkale Association of Science, Art and Culture (Turkey) stresses that robust communication amongst partners is essential and that, particularly with partnerships with governmental agencies and local authorities, it is important to communicate with tools that the partners are comfortable with. Thus, for example, in many partnerships it is important to keep formal minutes of meetings with partners and to give polite, but timely reminders on decision points where actions are expected.

A final practical step for partners is ensuring that they provide the appropriate documentation for the application. This usually includes a **Partnership Statement**, which is a standard template, including information about the partner organisation's legal status, location, capacity, experience, and a history of the relationship with the applicant (see Toolkit sample).

Lessons Learnt by the Catholic Relief Services Network for Building Peace, based in Sarajevo, BiH

The Director of the Network recalls one EU grant application which was not successful due to misunderstandings amongst partners. "We were rejected as two of the proposal's partners also applied for grants with other networks, and for that reason all three applications were rejected! One of the organisations said they didn't know that there was a condition that they could only apply with one proposal. We shared the Calls for Proposals guidelines and draft proposal with these partners, but none of them read it!



Maintaining close collaboration during project implementation

If your organisation has been notified that it has been successful with a grant application, be sure to immediately inform any of your partners in the project. Indeed, one of the most common reasons why partnerships fail is the lack of good, timely communication. Throughout the life of the project it is essential that you keep your partners fully informed at all times. The practical aspects to this may include:

- having clear, written Partnership Agreements - these are in addition to any Partnership Statement signed for the grant application, and are confidential documents between partners and not shared with the Contracting Authority;

- holding a ‘project start-up’ meeting with all partners to confirm implementation arrangements, work plans, and an internal communication strategy. If this is not possible face-to-face, try to arrange a teleconference;
- ensuring partners have access to all the necessary project documents and that they have them in a language they understand, and that they are invited to contribute to project progress reports and other monitoring tools;
- ensure the leading Project Manager/Coordinator observes a protocol on decision-making so that partners are involved as and when needed as per the Partnership Agreement. This is especially important in terms of any financial decisions;
- do not ignore any break-down in communication or tensions with partners, but be proactive in mitigating disputes and motivating your partners.

Advice from Ereandra Taiplari of the Civil Society Development Centre in Korce (Albania)

To establish a productive project-based partnership I would recommend:

- think over common interests and objectives that your NGO might share with other stakeholders;
- how will you and your partners fulfil your joint objectives?
- always listen to your project partners and ask them for feedback, and give feedback to them on your opinions;
- transparency with project partners is essential, especially on administrative and financial issues;
- establish a mutually agreed set of ‘regulations’ to guide your partnership relationships;
- Project partners should share experiences in order to build capacity.

According to EU procedures, it is important to remember that any formal partner (an organisation that has signed and submitted a Partnership Statement) in a grant-funded project does not have contractual obligations to the Contracting Authority, but is an integral part of the grant application and subsequent grant contract between the Grant Beneficiary and Contracting Authority. Thus, if a partner wishes to withdraw from a project for any reason and or there is the necessity to change partners, the approval of the Contracting Authority must be requested.

Preparing successful project proposals

STEP 1

Is your project meeting real and urgent needs?

We have seen in the first part of this Manual that the EU uses the concept of ‘the project’ to channel most of its external assistance funding (**Key Concepts and How the EU Manages Assistance**). This means that CSOs need to be competent in identifying problems and designing solutions to those problems in the format of a project. Within the scope of this Manual and Toolkit we cannot provide full guidance on how you identify and formulate a project, but in the **Passing the Evaluation** we will highlight some critical points for CSOs in preparing project proposals for the EU.

For those needing guidance and training materials on the basics of Project Development, please see the **EC’s Project Cycle Management Guidelines**, available to download in English from the online Multimedia Library on the web site of EuropaAid (<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia>)

Lessons Learnt by the Blue World Institute of Marine Research and Conservation in Croatia

“It is important to identify the needs of society in your environment and to design a project which serves both the needs of your community and of your organisation. In the past we made the mistake of proposing a project which had specific objectives that were very important to our organisation, but not very relevant to our community. Thus the project was rejected!”



“Training on Project Proposal Writing for EU Funds”, Serbia, 2010.

If your organisation is working to a longer term strategic plan and you have done your research into up-coming EU funding opportunities (as described in section A in this Manual), you have probably already researched the issues that your project is intending to address and are well positioned to design the details of your project. In this case, you will probably be able to draft a comprehensive and well-informed project proposal, which will have a good chance of being awarded an EU grant. However, if your organisation has no strategic plan and you have not done any background research, you will probably be in the position of responding to a Call for Proposal on an 'ad hoc' basis. This means that you're interested in getting the funds, but are poorly positioned to produce a strong project proposal. It is important to be aware that project ideas that are based only on a 'whim' and which are not supported by strong evidence are highly unlikely to be funded. Thus, you must make sure that your project proposal is based on a robust process of analysis:

- collect as much information as you can about the problem your organisation is intending to address. The information must be valid and credible. You can use official reports and publications, academic research papers, newspaper articles, and collect your own data through interviews and surveys and other research techniques;

Nexhip Menekshe of NGO 'Durmish Aslano' in Kosovo notes that "in order to find a suitable project our organisation always follows the situation of the community and its difficulties. Wherever there is a need to intervene we make our best to improve the situation which affects the community"

- use tools such as 'the problem tree' and 'objective tree' to analyse the problem and identify what project is actually feasible given the size and nature of the problem, the capacity of your organisation, and the context of the problem. You also need to ensure that both your organisation and the community which it serves agree that the problem is a priority to be addressed. If no-one else agrees it is a priority, you will find it difficult to implement a project;
- conduct a stakeholder analysis and gather the opinions and advice of as many stakeholders and potential partners as you can. The more allies you have for the design and implementation of your project, the stronger your proposal will be;
- ensure that your project preparation takes into consideration any special needs and responds appropriately to challenges related to any forms of discrimination or environmental impact issues. Remember that in many Calls for Proposals, there are specific criteria related to actions involving gender, environmental, and ethnic minority issues.

STEP 2

Using the logical framework as a tool to strengthen project design

One of the best ways to formulate a project is to use Logical Framework Analysis. Indeed the EU stresses the importance of this tool and in most Grant Application Forms it is obligatory to submit a Logical Framework (logframes, for short) as an annex to the project proposal. Thus, it is essential for your organisation to be able to use and draft high quality logframes. For any EU Grant Application Form you must NOT consider that the logframe is just a form to be filled in, but rather it must be your starting point for your project design. Therefore, we highly recommend that you draft a full logframe BEFORE you begin drafting your grant application form.

The logical framework helps to organise the overall purpose and objectives of your project, the activities that will contribute towards achieving those objectives, and to draft indicators which you (and other stakeholders) can use to track progress towards the objectives. As with all the analytical tools that can be used in the early project development stages, CSOs need to be technically competent in using logframes and a good reference point is the **EU's Guideline on Project Cycle Management**. In the paragraphs below we stress some of the key points from those Guidelines.



Advice from Marlena Plavsic of 'Suncokret' in Pula, Croatia

"I would say that the difference between a 'winning' and a 'losing' grant application is understanding the coherence between the problems, the activities and the expected outcomes. If a logical line cannot be followed between these, then hardly anything else can be persuasive enough".

The Logical Framework consists of a matrix with four columns and four (or more) rows, which summarise the key elements of a project plan, namely:

- the project's hierarchy of objectives, in other words the Project Description or Intervention Logic;
- the key external factors critical to the project's success, called Assumptions; and
- how the project's achievements will be monitored and evaluated, also known as Indicators and Sources of Verification.

The typical structure of a Logframe Matrix is shown below. The Logframe also provides the basis on which resource requirements, or inputs, and the costs or budget are determined.

	Intervention Logic	Objectively verifiable indicators of achievement	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Overall Objectives	What is the overall broader objective to which the project will contribute?	What are the key indicators related to the overall objective?	What are the sources of information for these indicators?	
Project Purpose (Sometimes written as 'Specific Objectives')	What are the specific objectives which the project shall achieve?	What are the quantitative or qualitative indicators showing whether and to what extent the project's specific objectives are achieved?	What are the sources of information that exist or can be collected? What are the methods required to get this information?	What are the factors and conditions not under the direct control of the project which are necessary to achieve these objectives? What risks have to be considered?
Expected Results	What are the concrete outputs envisaged to achieve the specific objectives? What are the envisaged effects and benefits of the project? What improvements and changes will be produced?	What are the indicators to measure whether and to what extent the Project achieves the envisaged results and effects?	What are the sources of information for these indicators?	What external factors and conditions must be realised to obtain the expected outputs and results on schedule?
Activities	What are the key activities to be carried out and in what sequence in order to produce the expected results?	Means: What are the means required to implement these activities, e.g. personnel, equipment, training, studies, supplies, operational facilities, etc.?	What are the sources of information about project progress?	What pre-conditions are required before the project(s) start(s)? What conditions outside the project's direct control have to be present for the implementation of the planned activities?

When constructing a logframe for your project, it is essential that you continually 'test' the logic of your framework as you must maintain the discipline of the logframe. So your drafting must follow the logic described in the boxes below.

IF adequate **inputs/resources** are provide, **THEN activities** can be undertaken;

IF the **activities** are undertaken, **THEN results** can be produced;

IF results are produced, **THEN** the **purpose** will be achieved; and

IF the **purpose** is achieved, **THEN** this should contribute towards the overall **objective**.

IF we wish to contribute to the overall **objective**, **THEN** we must achieve the **purpose**;

IF we wish to achieve the **purpose**, **THEN** we must deliver the specified **results**;

IF we wish to deliver the **results**, **THEN** the specified activities must be implemented; and

IF we wish to implement the specified **activities**, **THEN** we must apply identified **inputs/resources**.

In order to maintain the logic of the framework, it is important that you begin your drafting from top to bottom. A common mistake for CSOs is that they often begin by describing 'activities' (because they are the easiest part of the logframe to complete!) and then try to make up 'results' and a 'purpose' to fit the activities. You must always begin by defining the overall objective, the purpose of the project, and its expected results, and then design the activities.

Fatmir Curri of the Kosovar Civil Society Foundation comments that: "the winning grant application responds to the objectives and desired results of the Call for Proposals. The key parts where attention should be focussed are where relevance and methodology are described. Often, the weakest part of proposals is the 'relevance' section, where NGOs have difficulties to explain why their project is important and relevant for a particular Call."

Drafting the statement to describe the **purpose of the project** can often be challenging, but you must attempt to describe the purpose of your project in a very clear and precise way. Try to describe the purpose in just one, short sentence. The EU's PCM Guidelines has some good advice in this respect:

BAD PRACTICE	GOOD PRACTICE
Purpose is <u>sum</u> of results: <i>"Water treatment is improved and levels of direct discharge into the river reduced"</i>	Purpose is <u>consequence</u> of results: <i>"Improved quality of river water"</i>
Results: 1.1 Direct discharge of waste-water into the river reduced 1.2 Waste water treatment standards improved and enforced 1.3 Public awareness of environmental management responsibilities improved	

Another common problematic area of the logframe for CSOs, are the middle columns, describing 'indicators' and the 'sources or means of verification' of the indicators. These are vital parts of the logframe as they will be used both by the CSO and by various other stakeholders (including the EU) to help determine whether the project is achieving its purpose or not. At some point during the project's life-cycle judgements will be made about the success or failure of the project, largely based on what is written in these columns of the logframe. These are issues to do with 'monitoring' and 'evaluation' of projects, which again can be very technical and for which there are many good reference documents and guidelines. One particular series of guidelines to be recommended to CSOs is a handbook specially written for CSOs on the subject of monitoring and evaluation, called '**Sharpening the Development Process: A Practical Guide to Monitoring and Evaluation**' by Oliver Bakewell (published by INTRAC - see References for details.)

Drafting appropriate indicators can be very challenging, thus it is useful to be clear on the definition of **indicators**. An **indicator is an observable change or event which provides evidence that something has happened** – whether an output delivered, immediate effect occurred or long-term change observed. They do not provide proof so much as reliable signs that the event or process being claimed has actually happened or is happening. The evidence from a number of indicators will provide a convincing case for the claims being made.

A common error is to assume that indicators are the same as 'targets' and therefore to draft indicators which actually end up looking like the same statements for the 'results'. Remember, indicators are NOT targets.

Advice from Veprora Shehu of the NGO 'Medica Kosova'

One of the weakest parts of the Application Form which we have significantly improved over the years is that part dealing with the monitoring and evaluation of the project. The problem of measuring the results, and documenting the work, has always been the weakest part of the organisations working at the grassroots level. So it is important to give as much attention to the operational aspects of the project design as it is on how the project will be evaluated and how lessons learnt will be documented.

Lastly, it is important to think about the context of your proposed project and to identify the prevailing conditions necessary for success. Assumptions are external factors that have the potential to influence (or even determine) the success of a project, but lie outside the direct control of project managers. They are the answer to the question: "What external factors may impact on project implementation and the long-term sustainability of benefits, but are outside project management's control?"

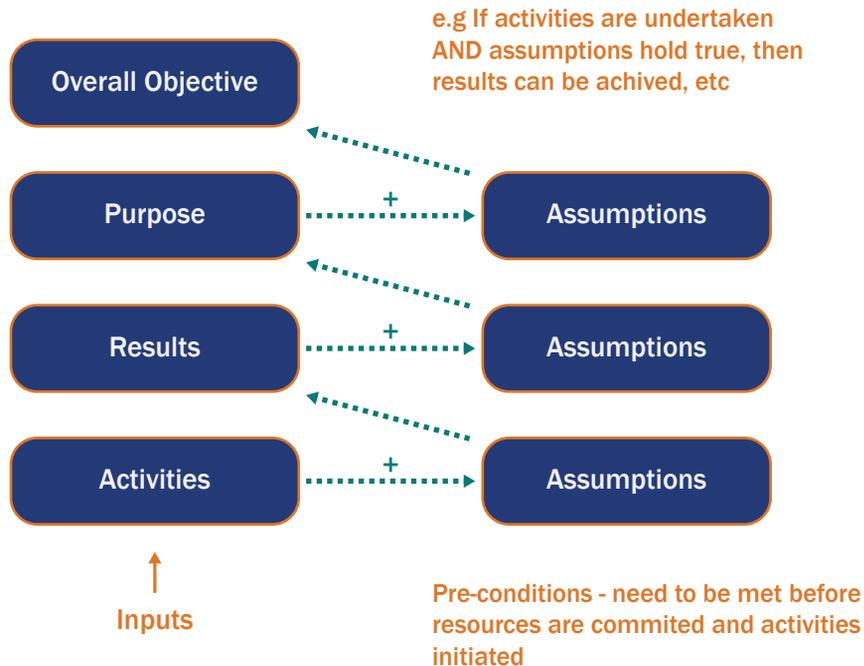
The assumptions are usually recorded in the fourth column of the vertical logic in the logframe. This works as follows:

- once the Activities have been carried out, and if the Assumptions at this level hold true, results will be achieved;
- once these Results and the Assumptions at this level are fulfilled, the Project Purpose will be achieved; and
- once the Purpose has been achieved and the Assumptions at this level are fulfilled, contribution to the achievement of the Overall Objectives will have been made by the project.



TACSO Regional Training „Developing and Managing EU Projects“, Turkey, 2010

The EU’s PCM Guidelines have a useful diagram to summarise the relationship between a project’s assumptions and the hierarchy of objectives in the logframe:



As a final piece of advice about drafting a logframe, CSOs should make sure that they do the following:

- make the drafting of the logframe the cornerstone of the project design;
- ensure that the logframe drafting is a team effort - involve as many staff as possible; involve partners; seek external advice wherever it is available;
- vigorously test the logframe to make sure that it is truly logical. Especially check that all the activities are directly relevant to achieving the expected results, and that there are enough activities to achieve all the results.

STEP 3 Making sure the proposal presentation follows the guidelines

Once you have a robust logframe, supported by various data that you have collected and analysed, the process of completing the full grant application form should be quite straight forward. However, because EU grant application forms are quite long and detailed, there

are plenty of opportunities for making mistakes. And the first fundamental mistake that many CSOs make is to consider that the 'guidelines' and accompanying **Grant Application Form** are just an optional method for presenting your proposal and request for funding. This is not the case. It is of paramount importance that for any CSO wishing to make a Grant Application they must absolutely follow every detail of the Call for Proposals documents. This means that you **MUST**:

- read ALL the details in the Guidelines and accompanying documents;
- complete EVERY SECTION of the Application Form, following the guidelines carefully. For example, if the guidelines suggest that one particular section should only be a maximum of 3 pages, do not exceed 3 pages!;
- carefully follow the instructions regarding deadlines and how to make the application. If the deadline is missed or if your application documents are not complete, your application will not be considered.

This advice may seem obvious and over-simplified, but the failure to be awarded funding is most often due to CSOs not following the guidelines. So we would like to highlight the common sections in the Guidelines:

Eligibility criteria

There are four elements of your application which must meet eligibility criteria, before the application will be considered:

- i. eligibility of applicants;
- ii. partnerships and eligibility of partners;
- iii. eligible actions - actions for which an application may be made;
- iv. eligibility of costs - costs which may be taken into consideration for the grant.

How to apply and the procedures to follow

Pay careful attention to the parts of the Guidelines which include:

- the Application Form;
- where and how to send the Applications;
- deadline for submission of Applications;
- further information for the Application.

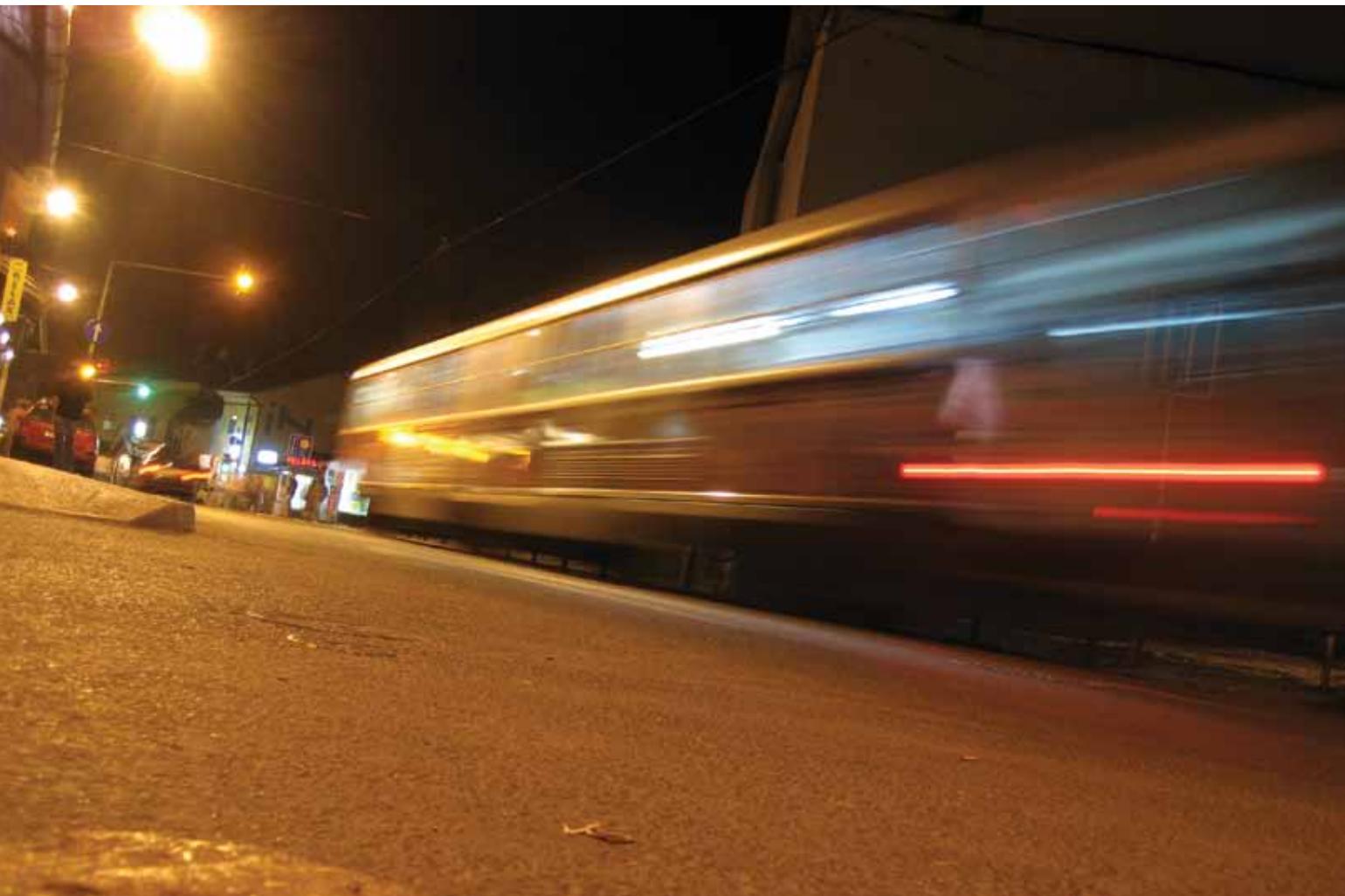
It is also advisable to consider carefully the sections of the Guidelines which explain the **evaluation and selection procedure and criteria**, as this will help you draft a winning application. (This is covered further in **Passing the Evaluation - an insider's guide**). And finally to understand clearly which documents you will be required to submit if your

application is provisionally selected to be awarded a grant, and under what conditions the implementation of the grant-funded project must follow.

In addition to the full Grant Application Form, the guidelines under Calls for Proposals often describe a process whereby prior to the evaluation of the Full Application, a shorter **Concept Note** will be first evaluated. Thus, if the guidelines ask for your organisation to complete a Concept Note, be sure to draft the Note using the relevant template and follow the instructions. Your Concept Note must be as equally robust and credible as your full application, otherwise your proposal will not pass the first evaluation review.

STEP 4 Getting the budget right

Annex 3 of most Grant Applications is the project budget. Before completing this Annex, any potential Applicant should undertake the necessary preparation:



- understand the concept of the budget in terms of EU procedures. This means understanding that the budget can only include items which meet the eligibility criteria and that the budget represents an estimate of anticipated costs. Remember that if your organisation is successful in being awarded a grant, it only entitles you to have a % of actual costs reimbursed: you will NOT be given a cash lump sum equal to the total of the budget;
- research carefully the full costs of implementing all your project's proposed activities. Take into consideration not only the costs of the actions now, but also the likelihood of any increase in the costs due to inflation over the coming 12-24 months;
- if the Guidelines state that you may budget for 'Contingency', remember that you will only be able to access the contingency with approval from the EU, and approval will only be given with a strong justification;
- prepare your budget closely following the budget template and guidelines that describe the permitted budget lines.

Aleksandra Janjic of OGI (Croatia) makes the point that it is essential to ensure any application looks like it is 'feasible'. When drafting the Application Form it is important to stand back and check what has been proposed: "Activities have to be realistic, as well as the expected results and objectives. The ability of the organisation making the application to realize the activities must be explicit in the application. Similarly, the budget must be realistic and closely aligned to the proposed activities, and it is important to take into account the guidelines in PRAG."

It is also important to be aware that if your Application is successful, the EU may ask you to make amendments to the submitted budget before the grant is awarded. Therefore it is advisable to draft your budget with some room for negotiation.

Passing the evaluation – an insider’s guide



Understand how EU grant applications are evaluated

Applications received by the EU from Calls for Proposals are checked and assessed through a vigorous set of procedures which are set out in full in PRAG (**Practical Guide for Contract Procedures for EU External Actions 2010**). PRAG guides how any organisation can spend EU funds and is based on principles that ensure funds are used in an accountable, transparent and fair manner, and that they are spent to ensure the best possible value for money allocated is achieved. If you are interested in the details, please go to Section 6 of PRAG, which is dedicated to the specific procedures for managing grant schemes.

Proposals are evaluated by an Evaluation Committee appointed by the Contracting Authority comprising a non-voting Chairperson, a non-voting Secretary and an odd number of voting members (a minimum of three). The voting members must possess the technical and administrative capacities necessary to give an informed opinion on the proposals. They must have a reasonable command of the language in which the proposals are submitted. They must represent at least two organisational entities of the Contracting Authority with no hierarchical link between them, unless there are no separate entities (e.g. in an EU Delegation). The Evaluation Committee is often supported by external ‘assessors’, who are professionals, hired against the same criteria as above, also with specific experience and expertise matching the sector and field of the Call for Proposals. Similarly, the Evaluation Committee may also be supported by staff of the Contracting Authority in the process of registering receipt of applications and their initial opening and the administrative check.

The process for assessing applications follows the order given below:

- receipt and registration of proposals;
- opening session and administrative check;
- where relevant, evaluation of the Concept Note;
- evaluation of the application form;
- verification of eligibility;
- conclusions of the Evaluation Committee.

From this process it is possible to identify three key stages at which applications may fail. CSOs need to be acutely aware of these three important stages and how they can ensure that

their applications overcome these hurdles and have a chance to be awarded a grant. Two of these potential stumbling-blocks are directly related to the administration of the CSO making the application and should be 100% within the control of the CSO, and the third relates to the quality of the project proposal, which is subject to competition. This latter issue is covered under Step 2 below, and the administrative checks can be controlled through the use of the checklist reproduced in the Toolkit. So, any CSO making an application for an EU-funded grant advertised through a Call for Proposals, must check that their application answers 'yes' to all the 18 issues listed in the checklist - **see page 102 of the Toolkit**.

Secondly, any CSO making an application must be aware of the 'eligibility' criteria of the Call for Proposals and must ensure that their application satisfies ALL the criteria. Basically these criteria fall into three categories:

- i. CSO making the application (and its formal partners) must match the eligibility criteria for applicants and must have the appropriate documentation to demonstrate this (required documentation will be listed in the Guidelines under the Call for Proposals and will follow the types of documentation requested on the PADOR system. See Step 3 under **Identifying EU Funding Opportunities for Your Organisation** for more information about Eligibility and PADOR.);
- ii. proposed action of the project must take place at a location (or locations) which are eligible as per the Guidelines;
- iii. type of proposed actions and their related costs such as training activities, conferences, establishing a web site, producing a publication, facilitating an exchange visit or installing new equipment must also match the criteria listed in the Guidelines.

Lesson Learnt by NGO 'ALFA' in Novi Sad, Serbia

All CSOs making applications for EU grants must learn to pay attention to every detail of their application. We, for example, once made an application with partners and had the application rejected as the signed supporting documents provided by one of the partners were not the originals, but scanned documents!

The **actual design of the proposed project** - its justification, the objectives and purpose of the project, the proposed methodology and activities to be used to achieve the objectives, and the means for ensuring sustainability and long term impact - is then the third in a series of possible stumbling blocks that any CSO applicant must address, and the CSO can be best prepared for this by following Step 2.

STEP 2

Test your draft application against the Evaluation grid

One of the most important and most useful sections of the Guidelines under any Call for Proposals is the section which explains the process of scoring a proposal. It is strongly advised that CSOs should ‘test’ their own draft proposal using this **Evaluation Grid**, before they finalise their application (see the respective exercise in the Toolkit). Better still, it is ideal if the CSO can find an external advisor, who has some experience of project work and projects design, to read their draft application and to evaluate it using the Evaluation Grid. This type of feedback will greatly increase the chances for any application to score the highest possible marks.

Below is a standardised type of Evaluation Grid and ‘scoring’ explanation.

Scoring guidelines

The evaluation grid is divided into sections and sub-sections. Each subsection must be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following guidelines:

Score	Meaning
1	very poor
2	poor
3	adequate
4	good
5	very good



These scores are added to give the total score for the section concerned. The totals for each section are then listed in section 6 and added together to give the total score for the proposal.

Each section contains a box for comments. These comments should address the issues covered by that section. Comments must be made on each section. If an evaluator gives a score of 1 (very poor), 2 (poor) or 5 (very good) to a sub-section, the reasons for giving such a score must be explained in the comments box.

EVALUATION GRID

1. Financial and operational capacity	Score	Relevant part of the Application Form
1.1 Do the applicant and partners have sufficient experience of project management?	/ 5	II.4.1 and III.1
1.2 Do the applicant and partners have sufficient technical expertise? (notably knowledge of the issues to be addressed.)	/ 5	II.4.1 and III.1
1.3 Do the applicant and partners have sufficient management capacity? (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	/ 5	II.4.2 and III.1
1.4 Does the applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	/ 5	II.4.2
Total score:	/ 20	
Comments:		

NB. If a total score lower than "adequate" (12 points) is obtained for section 1, the proposal will be eliminated by the Evaluation Committee. The evaluation grid must nevertheless be completed (except in the case of restricted calls for proposals).

2. Relevance	Score	Relevant part of the Application Form
2.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and one or more of the priorities of the call for proposals? Note: A score of 5 (very good) will only be allocated if the proposal specifically addresses at least one priority. Note: A score of 5 (very good) will only be allocated if the proposal contains specific added-value elements, such as promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities	/ 5x2	I.1.6.1
2.2 How relevant to the particular needs and constraints of the target country/countries or region(s) is the proposal? (including avoidance of duplication and synergy with other EC initiatives.)	/ 5	I.1.6.2
2.3 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	/ 5x2	I.1.6.3 and I.1.6.4
Total score:	/ 25	
Comments:		

NB. If a total score lower than 16 points is obtained for section 2, the proposal will be eliminated by the Evaluation Committee. The evaluation grid must nevertheless be completed (except in the case of restricted calls for proposals).

3. Methodology	Score	Relevant part of the Application Form
3.1 Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	/ 5	I.1.7 and I.1.8.5
3.2 How coherent is the overall design of the action? (in particular, does it reflect the analysis of the problems involved, take into account external factors and anticipate an evaluation?)	/ 5	I.1.8
3.3 Is the partners' level of involvement and participation in the action satisfactory? Note: If there are no partners the score will be 1.	/ 5	I.1.7 and I.1.8.5
3.4 Is the action plan clear and feasible?	/ 5	I.1.9
3.5 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the action?	/ 5	Log-frame
Total score:	/ 25	
Comments:		
4. Sustainability	Score	Relevant part of the Application Form
4.1 Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	/ 5	I.2.1
4.2 Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects? (including scope for replication and extension of the outcome of the action and dissemination of information.)	/ 5	I.2.2 and I.2.3
4.3 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable: - financially (how will the activities be financed after the EC funding ends?) - institutionally (will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the action? Will there be local ownership of the results of the action?) - at policy level where applicable (what will be the structural impact of the action – e.g. will it lead to such things as improved legislation, codes of conduct and method?)	/ 5	I.2.4
Total score:	/ 15	
Comments:		
5. Budget and cost-effectiveness	Score	Relevant part of the Application Form
5.1 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	/ 5	I.3
5.2 Is the proposed expenditure necessary for the implementation of the action?	/ 5x2	I.3
Total score:	/ 15	
Comments:		


STEP 2

Be competitive!

It is important for CSOs to remember that the process for applying for an EU-funded grant is a competitive process, and in the Western Balkans and Turkey region the competition is getting stronger and stronger. Thus, it is paramount for CSOs to identify ways in which their proposals can clearly maximise the number of evaluation points and which will get the Evaluation Committee enthused and interested in the proposal. Remember that the Evaluation Committee is likely to have to read hundreds of proposals and therefore poorly written and poorly presented proposals will not impress them.

Several experts in the region who have previously been involved in Evaluation Committees for assessing applications for EU-funded grants, have suggested the following ‘tips’ to make your proposal more competitive:

- use clear and simple language, and make sure your explanations are easy to follow and logical. Do not assume that the Evaluation Committee will know the context of your project, so make sure any reference points are clear and don't use any jargon without explaining what it means;
- do not be too ambitious. Projects should be designed to achieve feasible objectives in a sensible way;
- do not cut and paste someone else's project design or plagiarise from previous projects that you or some other organisation has already implemented. Ensure your project is innovative and adding value to other activities;
- do not respond to a Call for Proposals(CfP) that is not in your organisation's scope of work. The project will win when it is in line with the mission of the organisation;
- demonstrate strong relevance to the CfP priorities. Even if you present a very innovative and well structured proposal, it may still be rejected if it demonstrates weak relevance to that specific CfP;
- be realistic. Projects should address the real needs of the target group. Do not try to exaggerate one need in order to fit it into your project rationale. Explain the needs you're addressing with your project clearly and precisely;
- involve your project beneficiaries. Include them in project formulation process especially when identifying the needs. This practice would help you identify the real needs, most effective activities and ensure their participation at the implementation phase, which is significantly valued by the Contracting Authorities and the beneficiaries.

More tips from the experts:

- **emphasize your experience.** Mention your previous experience with the proposed activities. If this is the first time you'll be undertaking such an activity, explain with concrete steps how you'll manage the activity in order to show the Evaluator/ Assessor how you'll overcome your lack of experience and whether you can establish a balance between your institutional strengths and weaknesses;
- **involve your partners.** Partners are not just for meeting the pre-conditions of a CfP. They're a part of this process to bring different experiences and knowledge to the table and they should add a substantial value to the proposed project. Explain how they will reinforce your proposed action and how they have already contributed.
- **identify your activities carefully.** An experienced Evaluator/Assessor can tell whether the project is proposed so as to obtain finance for a certain activity, like financing a festival or study tour, rather than achieving the proposed objective. Correlate your activities with each need and explain how you will meet the needs and thus reach your project objectives clearly. The activities must serve as a way of achieving the project's goals, not the other way around;
- **pay more attention to monitoring and evaluation.** Show the Evaluator/Assessor that you have already thought about and planned the monitoring and evaluation tools that you'll use during project implementation;
- **give a strong argument on sustainability.** Show the Evaluator/Assessor that you have already given considerable thought about how you will ensure the sustainability of your action. Make your argument realistic and do make it dependent on external factors, but within your responsibility and capacity.



Managing an EU Grant Contract

STEP 1

Understanding the grant contract

If a CSO is awarded a grant, the first thing they should do is remind themselves what exactly a grant is according to EU principles and procedures. A grant is NOT a gift, but a contribution of funding conditional on a number of issues and procedures. The 'conditionality' of the award is described in detail in the **Grant Contract**, a legal document mutually agreed and signed between the Contracting Authority and the Grant Beneficiary i.e. the CSO being awarded the grant. It is essential that CSOs, particularly the senior management of the organisation, clearly understand the contents of the Grant Contract document.

A standard Grant Contract is made up of the following parts:

- Special Conditions - *which describe the specific context and parameters of the Call for Proposals, detailing the cost eligibility criteria, criteria for eligible actions, as well as the duration and location of the action, and information about the two contact parties;*
- Annex I: Description of the Action - *the project proposal as described by the completed Application Form. Although no major changes can be made to the Application Form, prior to contract signature the Contracting Authority may negotiate with the Applicant to make minor changes (for example, to account for any contextual changes due to a lapse in time between the date of application and date of award of the grant.);*
- Annex II: General Conditions - *universal conditions set by the EU, based on PRAG;*
- Annex III: Budget for the Action - *as included in the Application, but may be modified by negotiation with the Contracting Authority prior to contract signature. The budget is a breakdown of all eligible project related costs. It is important to have a clear and easy to understand budget attached to the contract as it directly impacts on the smooth implementation of the project. It should also be remembered that the budget is only an estimate of costs and that the final disbursement will depend upon actual project outputs and their related eligible costs;*
- Annex IV: Contract-award Procedures;
- Annex V: Standard 'Request' templates for Payment and Financial Identification Form;
- Annex VI: Template for Reports;
- Annex VII: Expenditure Verification Report.

Given that the agreement on the award of the grant takes the form of a legally-binding 'grant contract', CSOs must be aware that changes to the contract can only be made through an agreed process with the Contracting Authority. Any deviations from the grant contract that do not follow the appropriate procedures are likely to result in the CSO losing parts of the funding.



STEP 2

Managing any changes to the contract

Because there is always a difference in time between when a project proposal and grant application is made and when a grant is awarded and grant contract signed, it is usual for project design to be slightly modified during implementation. Indeed, good project management invariably involves a degree of managing changes to the project. However, there are strict procedures to be followed before any changes in an agreed project can be made, so as to ensure the rules of fair competition are observed. Clearly it would be unfair to make big changes to an awarded Application Form that might have resulted in a lower evaluation score being given.

The types of modifications which are made to grant contracts are usually categorised as being either 'minor changes' or 'major changes'. The details of these types of changes can be seen in PRAG and are often also repeated in Grant Implementation Manuals given to awarded CSOs.

■ Examples of Minor Changes:

- changes in activities or budget that do not affect the basic purpose of the project;
- transfer between budget headings involving a variation of 15% or less;
- changes of address or phone number;
- changes of bank account;
- change of project manager or key experts;
- changes to HR unit rates.

■ Examples of Major Changes:

- significant changes in activities affecting the basic purpose and indicators of the project;
- transfer amongst budget headings outside the limits of minor modification (15%);
- addition of a new budget line or spending zero against a budget line;
- change of Project partners;
- extension of Contract;
- changes in grant beneficiary status or name.

CSOs must discuss with representatives of their Contracting Authority in order to learn more about the implications of any changes that they may need to make during project implementation. For both minor and major modifications to the grant contract there are usually specific forms that need to be completed and approved by both parties before any change is recognised as being valid.

STEP 3**Undertaking any procurement**

In addition to the legal obligations enshrined within the grant contract documents, CSOs need to make sure that all EU funds are spent according to the EU's guidelines. (**Practical Guide for Contract Procedures for EU External Actions**). The use of funds may relate to the procurement of goods or services, in addition to any salary costs of project personnel. There are strict procedures for making any such procurements and thus CSOs will need, for example, to make sure that they:

- a. use the models published on the Commission's web site, relating to external actions;
- b. ensure time-limits for receipt of tenders and requests to participate must be long enough to allow a reasonable and appropriate period to prepare and submit tenders;
- c. allow requests to participate and tenders declared as satisfying the requirements to be evaluated and ranked by an Evaluation Committee.

Following these types of procurement procedures can be very challenging for CSOs, as they often do not have experience in managing public funds and being accountable for them and often struggle to understand the language and terminology used in PRAG. Accordingly, CSOs are strongly advised to seek advice on these issues (from the Contracting Authority, from any NGO support structures, from their partners, or from any experienced individuals) and to draft a '**Procurement Plan**', alongside any other project management tools, such as the Work Plan and Budget (templates for this are in the Toolkit).



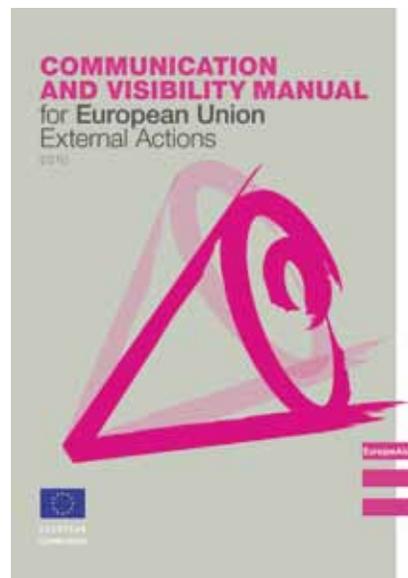
STEP 4

Ensuring the EU's rules on 'Visibility' are applied

The EU Member States ask recipients of EU funds to clearly acknowledge the source of the funding and to promote the principles on which the EU is founded. For this reason the EU has developed a simple, but comprehensive, set of guidelines on Communication and Visibility. These are contained in a **Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions**. This manual contains compulsory requirements for all contractors and implementing Partners under contracts and financing agreements which specifically refer to them, whether signed by the European Union or by any other Contracting Authority.

Amongst other things, the manual contains advice and instructions relating to:

- identifying target audiences;
- drafting a Communications Plan;
- templates and EU Visual Identity Elements;
- seeking advice from the EC - Delegations, Communications Department;
- materials that do not meet the Visibility requirements and may have costs considered as ineligible!



CSOs Fair in Serbia, 2010

Handy Hints from CSO Practitioners on Managing EU-Funded Projects

During the compilation of this Manual, the authors received lots of great, practical advice from CSOs from across the Western Balkans and Turkey. Below is a summary of the top twelve tips from those CSOs.

‘Do’s’

- establish a functional project team and ensure that those team members that are involved in the design and drafting of the project are also involved in the implementation. The project team must also include leadership that will be accountable for the project’s progress and reporting;
- set-up and maintain an organised system of administration for the project, and pay particular attention to keeping financial records - remember that you must have valid receipts for all the project expenditure;
- make sure that your organisation has enough cashflow to enable you to start-up your project and implement activities prior to you receiving instalments of the grant, but don’t make any expenditure until you’ve signed the grant contract;
- read your grant contract carefully and in detail;
- keep your target group and participants in your project activities well informed about the project and ask them for their feedback;
- stay well informed about what’s going on in your region and sector, so that your project management can make any timely adjustments in response to any changes in the environment of the project. And do remember to seek advice from the Contracting Authority about any changes to your project;
- be aware that your grant contract is for a limited duration and therefore you need to carefully plan the implementation of activities and give yourselves enough time to complete not only the activities, but also the reporting.

‘Don’ts’

- don’t wait until the middle or end of the project to think about how the achievements of the project will be evaluated, but ensure that the project has a well designed Monitoring and Evaluation framework from the very beginning;
- don’t hesitate to ask any external Monitors of your EU-funded grant for advice and assistance in the implementation and administration of your project. The external Monitors are very well informed and usually very experienced in the management of EU-funded projects and are there to help you;
- don’t forget about your partners. Involve them in every stage of the project, particularly when you need advice on project management and reporting issues;
- don’t wait until the last minute to do your project reporting, but draft brief reports after every project activity and use these to compile your formal reports to the Contracting Authority. Also keep your financial reporting fully up to date, so that every activity report has matching book-keeping, complete with all expenditure receipts;
- don’t try to change the objectives or purpose of your project as this will contradict the terms and conditions of your grant contract.

Compliance Monitoring and Reporting on EU Funds



Readiness for any monitoring visits

During the implementation of grant-assisted projects, CSOs need to be able to undertake specific aspects of project management demanded by the conditionality of the EU grant contracts. This means that the CSOs must be able to:

- a. manage their own **internal monitoring and administration** of the project;
- b. facilitate **external monitoring of the project** and provide **obligatory reports** to the Contracting Authority.

Systems must thus be in place to ensure that there is compliance to the **Grant Contract** and **PRAG**, and that there is also the management of data to help show progress or otherwise towards the project's objectives.



Tatjana Obradovic of NGO 'ALFA' is clear with her advice to other NGOs managing EU grants: "perform systematic internal monitoring, use it to learn, and keep records on everything you do, including all correspondence with donors and Contracting Authorities."

Usually during the implementation of a grant-assisted project, there will be one or two monitoring visits made by 'monitors' external to the CSO. These monitors are arranged through the Contracting Authority and require any grant beneficiary to facilitate their visit. In addition, alongside any occasional field visit, the Contracting Authority will require regular monitoring information and progress reports. So CSOs should be ready to provide answers and supporting documentation to questions from monitors such as:

- Were the correct procedures used for the tender value?*
- Are the equipment/supplies there?*
- Is it being used for the purpose it was intended?*
- Do the serial numbers match the invoice?*
- Is the EU being given appropriate visibility?*
- What will happen at the end of the project?*
- Check for a list of equipment.*

Advice from the Kosovar Civil Society Foundation

'Clarification of reports is a burdensome procedure and requires extra energy just when you least have it at the end of a project! The reports should be submitted in clear and concise version and fully comply with the application form and activities, including references to the log frame, since these were the basis of the grant award in the first place. Remember that the final evaluation and reimbursement of costs will be based on evidence and results achieved in comparison to what was written in your grant application form.'

STEP 2

Reporting on EU funds

In addition to external monitoring of EU-grant assisted projects, CSOs that have been awarded a grant are required to provide regular written technical and financial reports, supported by relevant and original documentation. This reporting process, which is usually done every six months and at the end of a project is often very challenging for CSOs. Not only do CSOs find it difficult to actually draft such reports, but they also often struggle to be able to provide the necessary supporting documents, and as a consequence sometimes fail to get full reimbursement for costs incurred during the implementation of a grant-assisted project. Not surprisingly, therefore, it is highly recommended that even before applying for a grant, CSOs should consider the capacities needed to fulfil all the reporting and record keeping responsibilities. And once awarded a grant, CSOs must take the appropriate measures to meet all their reporting requirements. This is initially a huge task for many organisations, but, with full senior management support, can often have long term capacity-building benefits.



The full reporting requirements are contained within the Grant Contract and PRAG, but as a summary it can be noted that the required capacity is for the drafting of both technical reports and financial reports, the contents of which include:

Indicative Contents of Obligatory Technical Reports	Indicative Contents of Obligatory Financial Reports
<p>Information on progress of activities;</p> <p>Information on Project results;</p> <p>Information on Project impact;</p> <p>Follows the structure of the reporting template.</p> <p>Description of Activities;</p> <p>If any modifications have occurred should be well documented and justified!</p> <p>Detailed description of what the Project's achieved;</p> <p>Level of achievement of the Project's stated objectives;</p> <p>May include annexes.</p>	<p>Project costs in table format which are standardised;</p> <p>Copies of supporting documents are requested;</p> <p>Copies of Time-sheets.</p> <p><i>Checking of financial reports against the contract and the supporting documentation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eligible expenditure - Consistent with application - Correct exchange rates being used - Appropriate supporting documentation - VAT is not included - Significant deviance from planned expenditure



Encapsulating lessons learnt

The final part of the complex process of managing EU-funded projects is being able to go beyond the formal reporting requirements of the grant contract as described in Step 2 above and being able to identify exactly what have been the achievements and failures of the project. Try and establish how they have come about, and document them all for the future benefit of all concerned.

Monitoring and evaluation not only measures how well you are doing, but also help you to be more effective. Evaluation has two main purposes.

1) For learning and development

Monitoring and evaluating your services will help you assess how well you are doing in order to help you do it better. It is about asking what has happened and why - what is and what is not working. It is about using evaluation to learn more about an organisation's activities, and then using what has been learnt.

2) For accountability - to show others that you are effective

Funders (like the EU) and other stakeholders want to know whether a project has spent its money appropriately. There is pressure from funders to provide them with evidence of success. Many projects have to respond to this demand in order to survive.

From the EU-side, the processes for encapsulating and taking stock of important information both during and after project implementation, is neatly summarised in the columns below looking at 'monitoring', 'evaluation' and 'audit':

	Monitoring and regular review	Evaluation	Audit
Who?	Internal management responsibility – all levels	Usually incorporates external inputs (objectivity)	Incorporates external inputs
When?	Ongoing	Periodic - mid-term, completion, ex-post ongoing and upon	Ex-ante (system reviews), completion
Why?	Check progress, take remedial action, update plans	Learn broad lessons applicable to other programmes/projects and as an input to policy review Provide accountability	Provide assurance and accountability to stakeholders Provide recommendations for improvement of current and future projects
Link to Logframe objective hierarchy	Inputs, activities, results	Results, purpose, overall objective (and link back to relevance)	Inputs, activities and results

CSOs should also ensure that they have systems in place to not only support external monitoring and evaluation and audits but also to ensure that any monitoring and evaluation activity contributes to the organisation's own development. Very often CSOs use and employ specific personnel in order to implement projects, and therefore once the project is complete and the funding exhausted those personnel are lost from the organisation and with them all the experience of project implementation. CSOs must find a way to retain their project experience, particularly the lessons learnt about accessing and managing EU funds, which in turn will not only assist their future applications, but can also be shared with other less experienced CSOs.



Toolkit for Developing and Managing EU-Funded Projects

Using the Toolkit

Contents of the Toolkit

The aim of the accompanying Toolkit to this Manual is to demonstrate a range of tools that can be used in many different types of learning activities for CSO managers and staff, local trainers and consultants, who are interested in helping CSOs gain access to, and manage EU funds. The Toolkit also builds on the references made in the Manual by providing access to guidelines and templates related to EU grant applications and to links for further information on EU funding for CSOs in the Western Balkans and Turkey. So the Toolkit is designed to be used by both practitioners developing and implementing projects, and by anyone planning to provide training on this topic.



The Toolkit is organised in the following way. There are six chapters corresponding to the six chapters used in the Part Two of the Manual to highlight the most important areas on which CSOs wishing to access and manage EU funding should specifically concentrate.

These chapters are:

- a. identifying EU funding opportunities for your organisation;**
- b. developing effective partnerships for projects;**
- c. preparing successful project proposals;**
- d. passing the evaluation - an insider's guide;**
- e. managing an EU Grant Contract;**
- f. compliance monitoring and reporting on EU funds.**

How to use the Toolkit

It should be noted that this is not a comprehensive collection of tools required to develop and manage an EU-funded project, but rather complimentary and additional tools to those that are already freely available to CSOs. In other words, this Toolkit does not repeat the explanations of all the tools that are published elsewhere (particularly the formal templates published in the EC's PRAG) nor is it designed to supersede the required Application formats published in the Guidelines of Calls for Proposals. Therefore, in order to maximise the benefits of this Manual and Toolkit, readers are strongly advised to ensure that they have access to the following documents published elsewhere:

- any **specific Guidelines and Application Form and Annexes of a given Call for Proposals** that your organisation is interested in, or recent examples of such Guidelines in your country (downloadable from the web sites listed by Country in Section 1 of the Manual);
- **PRAG (Practical Guide for Contract Procedures for EU External Actions 2010)** and all its Annexes related to Grant Contracts available at http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/practical_guide;
- **EC's Project Cycle Management Guidelines**, available to download in English from the online Multimedia Library of Europa Aid available at <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia>;
- Manual for using PADOR available at http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/index_en.htm and navigate to 'Work With Us/PADOR'.

Within each section the materials are organised as follows:

- i. Tools: Guidance Notes and Checklists - These can be used by those who are actively involved in developing or implementing a project, or by those leading training activities on the topics, where the tools can be reproduced as handouts;
- ii. Tools: Exercises and Templates - these are instructions on how to run practical training exercises, including any case study notes or templates that participants might need to complete the exercise, and templates that can be used for project development.



The author leading TACSO's regional training on Developing & Managing EU Projects

Toolkit: Identifying Funding Opportunities

Tools: Guidance Notes and Checklists

Tool: Guidance Notes on defining EU-funded Grants and Public Contracts

Grant / Public Contracts - some definitions

Below are descriptions taken from the EuropeAid web portal:

Grants

Grants are direct financial contributions from the EU budget or from the European Development Fund. They are awarded as donations to third parties that are engaged in external aid activities. The Contracting Authority awards grants that are used to implement projects or activities that relate to the EU's external aid programmes.

Grants fall into two categories:

- grants for actions: their aim is to achieve an objective that forms part of an external aid programme;
- operating grants: they finance the operating expenditure of an EU body that is pursuing an aim of general European interest or an objective that forms part of an EU policy.

Grants are based on the reimbursement of the eligible costs, in other words, costs effectively incurred by the beneficiaries that are deemed necessary for carrying out the activities in question. The results of the action remain the property of the beneficiaries. Grants are subject to a written agreement signed by the two parties and, as a general rule, require co-financing by the grant beneficiary. Since grants cover a very diverse range of fields, the specific conditions that need to be fulfilled (eligibility, etc.) may vary from one area of activity to another.

Those intending to apply for a grant should consult the [Calls for Proposals](#).

Contracts

Procurement procedures are launched when the Contracting Authority wants to purchase a service, goods or work in exchange for remuneration. A procurement procedure leads to the conclusion of a public contract.

The difference between a public contract and a grant is clear: in the case of a contract, the Contracting Authority receives the product or service it needs in return for payment; in the case of a grant, it makes a contribution either to a project carried out by an external organisation or directly to that organisation because its activities contribute to Community policy aims.

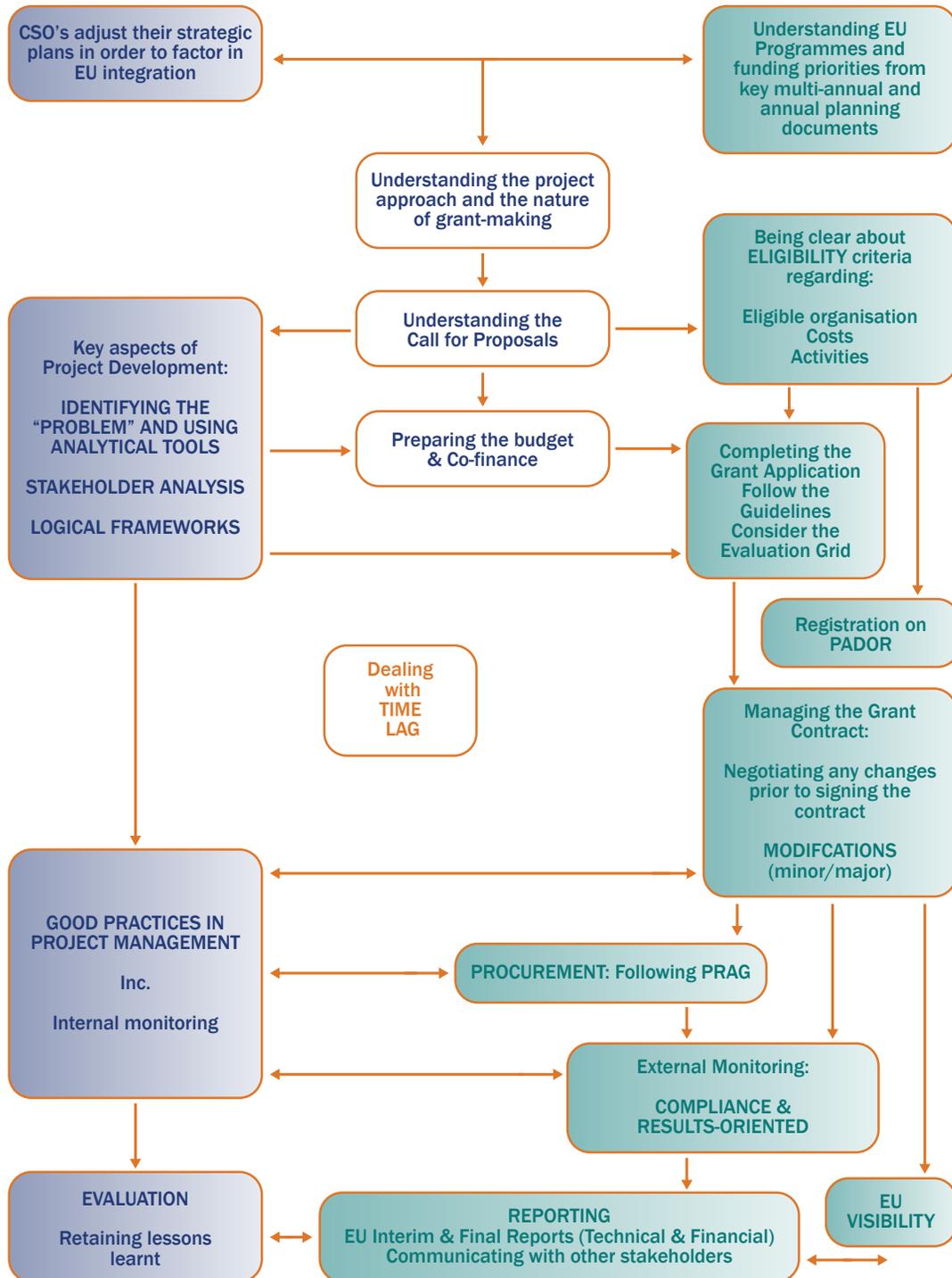
Procurement procedures are governed by specific rules which vary depending on the nature of the contract (service, supplies, work) and the threshold.

Those intending to apply for a contract should consult the [Procurement Notices](#).

Procedures for grants and contracts under the relevant EU external aid programmes are consolidated in the [Practical Guide](#).

Tool: Guidance Notes on identifying critical points for CSOs in developing and managing EU funds

CRITICAL PATH ANALYSIS:



Tool: Guidance Notes on web-based sources of information on Calls for Proposals

Europe Aid web portal

Calls for Proposals are published on the EuropeAid web site and may also, in the case of countries which have 'decentralised' institutional arrangements, be published on local web sites. (For example, in Croatia under the web site of the Central Finance and Contracting Agency at <http://www.safu.hr/en/> and in Turkey under the Central Finance and Contracts Unit at <http://www.cfcu.gov.tr>). The EU Delegations in each country usually also have local language web pages with information about Calls for Proposals. On the EuropeAid web site http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/index_en.htm you will need to navigate to the 'Work With Us/Funding: Calls for Proposals' page. There you can use the search mechanism to find 'open' calls for grants for your country or region. Remember to choose dates for your search which begin for Calls published at least 3 months ago.

The screenshot shows the EuropeAid web portal interface. At the top, it says 'European Commission Development and Cooperation - EuropeAid'. Below this is a navigation breadcrumb: 'European Commission > EuropeAid > Work with us > Funding > Calls for proposals & Procurement notices'. The main heading is 'Calls for proposals & Procurement notices'. There are buttons for 'Latest Publications', 'Search by reference', 'Advanced Search', and 'Help'. A search filter section includes 'Programme' (dropdown), 'Type' (Grants, Supplies, Services, Works), 'Status' (Closed, Open, Forecast), 'Geographical Zone' (Europe apart from EU), 'Published After' (01/01/2011), and 'Published before' (dropdown). A 'Search' button is present. Below the search filters, it says 'Your selection returned 26 record(s)' and 'Display 10 - 15 - 25 - 30 calls per page.' The main content is a table of search results with columns: Ref. # - Title, Published, Updated, Status, Type, Geographical Zone, and Programme. The table lists 26 records, with the first few visible as follows:

Ref. # - Title	Published	Updated	Status	Type	Geographical Zone	Programme
131286 - Call for Proposals - EU Support to the area of law enforcement	11/04/2011	11/04/2011	Open = 12/07/2011	Action Grants	Bosnia and Herzegovina	PreAccession Countries / New Member States
131258 - Covenant of Mayors Going East - Supporting the participation of Eastern Partnership and Central Asian cities in the Covenant of Mayors Neighbourhood	09/04/2011	09/04/2011	Forecast	Action Grants	Eastern Europe Region	
131225 - Country-Based Support Scheme for Georgia	11/03/2011	6/04/2011	Open = 23/05/2011	Action Grants	Georgia	Human Rights
131022 - Scholarships for the Turkish Cypriot community Programme for the academic year 2011/12	09/03/2011	09/04/2011	Open	Action Grants	Cyprus	PreAccession Countries / New Member States
131266 - Preparatory actions for preserving and restoring cultural heritage in conflict areas in the Western Balkans for the year 2010	6/04/2011	6/04/2011	Open = 20/05/2011	Action Grants	Region IPA instrument	PreAccession Countries / New Member States
131064 - EU Return and Reintegration in Kosovo phase III (EU-RKK III)	13/02/2011	4/04/2011	Open = 25/05/2011	Action Grants	Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244/99)	PreAccession Countries / New Member States
131192 - Support to the Implementation of the state Programme on Health Care Reform and Development	2/04/2011	1/04/2011	Open = 20/05/2011	Action Grants	Kazakhstan	Asia & Central Asia
131220 - Cross-border Cooperation Programme for BiH-Montenegro - 2009 and 2010	29/04/2011	29/04/2011	Open = 1/07/2011	Action Grants	Region IPA instrument	PreAccession Countries / New Member States
131194 - Support to Local Self-government Reform: Municipal development grants for small infrastructure projects	30/03/2011	1/04/2011	Open = 4/07/2011	Action Grants	Montenegro	PreAccession Countries / New Member States
131231 - Modernisation of school curricula in VET schools in line with the changing needs of the labour market/economy	17/04/2011	1/04/2011	Open = 20/05/2011	Action Grants	Croatia	PreAccession Countries / New Member States
131079 - Supporting access to rights, employment and livelihood enhancement of refugees and IDPs in Serbia 09SER01/02/31	21/02/2011	29/03/2011	Open = 22/05/2011	Action Grants	Serbia	PreAccession Countries / New Member States
131065 - EU Support for Regional Economic Development	29/01/2011	29/03/2011	Open = 30/05/2011	Action Grants	Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244/99)	PreAccession Countries / New Member States
131229 - Call for Proposals - Strengthening the RCC Secretariat	28/03/2011	28/03/2011	Open = 12/05/2011	Action Grants	Region IPA instrument	PreAccession Countries / New Member States
131063 - Support to the Establishment of EU Centres in the Russian Federation II	28/02/2011	24/01/2011	Open = 31/05/2011	Action Grants	Russia	Neighbourhood
130853 - Institution Building and Partnership Programme (IBPP)	11/01/2011	15/03/2011	Open = 31/05/2011	Action Grants	Uzbekistan	Asia & Central Asia
131114 - Call for Proposals - Civil Society Facility: Partnership actions- Empowerment of Women	17/03/2011	1/03/2011	Open = 31/05/2011	Action Grants	Region IPA instrument	PreAccession Countries / New Member States

At the bottom right of the table, it says 'Display 10 - 15 - 25 - 30 calls per page.'

Tool: Guidance Notes on PADOR

Registration for PADOR

PADOR registration has 3 phases:

1. Identification/authentication

1.1. For accessing PADOR you need a username (login). This username is unique per person and can be used for accessing various databases at the European Commission.

1.2. Your username is linked to the email address that you provide on the “Identification” screen. E-mails concerning access to PADOR will be sent only to this mailbox! Make sure you will remember this e-mail address and the username for accessing PADOR in the future!

1.3. If you already have a username:

1.3.1. Go to the PADOR homepage and click on “You have an ECAS username”

1.3.2. You can update/consult an organisation: continue at point 3

1.3.3. You can create an organisation: continue at point 1.4.2.

1.4. You have never had a username at the European Commission:

1.4.1. Go to the PADOR homepage and click on “You do not have an ECAS username”

1.4.2. Introduce the data that identifies your organisation and submit it

1.4.3. If a list of organisations appears:

- either you select, if possible, the one whose data matches with your own organisation, uppermost the “Type 6”

- or you click on “My organisation is not on the list”

1.4.4. Confirm your registration

2. Obtaining the ECAS username and password

2.1. Check the mail account that you provided previously as Personal login on the “Identification” screen (see point 1.4.2.)

2.2. Read the email with the subject Availability of your account in the European Commission Authentication Service (check your spambox as well)

2.3. Click on “this link” in order to obtain your username and password

2.4. Write down your username, create your password and click on “Submit”

2.5. Continue at point 3.2.

3. Filling in/Updating information in PADOR screens in order to obtain the EuropeAid ID

3.1. Start on the PADOR homepage and click on “You have an ECAS username”. On the next screen, click on “You want to update/consult the account of your organisation”

3.2. Introduce your username (or login email) and password

3.3. Click on the name of your organisation (written with blue letters)

3.4. Fill in and save the “Administrative data” screen first. The “Profile” screen (option in the menu on the left side of the screen) will be activated afterwards.

3.5. Click on each of the “Screens to be filled in” (menu on the left hand side of the screens) and fill in ALL the obligatory fields (written with orange characters)

3.6. Sign your data, with the option SIGN (in the menu on the left side of the screen)

3.7. Once you have signed your data, the EuropeAid ID appears automatically on each PADOR screen, just under the title of the screen.

3.8. AFTER HAVING UPDATED YOUR DATA: SIGN AGAIN to confirm the modifications!

If you have forgotten your password:

1. Start on the PADOR homepage and click on “You have forgotten your ECAS password”

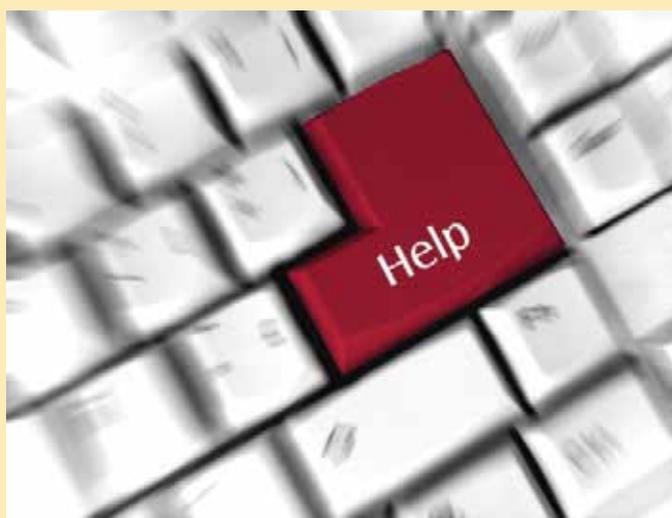
2. Click on « Don't yet have a password » or « Forgot your password »

The domain for accessing PADOR is always “EXTERNAL”

3. Introduce your username or “login email” (that you have provided previously as Personal login on the “Identification” screen (see point 1.4.2.)

4. Click on “Request ECAS password”

5. Consult your “login email” address (also check your spambox) and continue at point 2.4.



Tools: Exercises and Templates

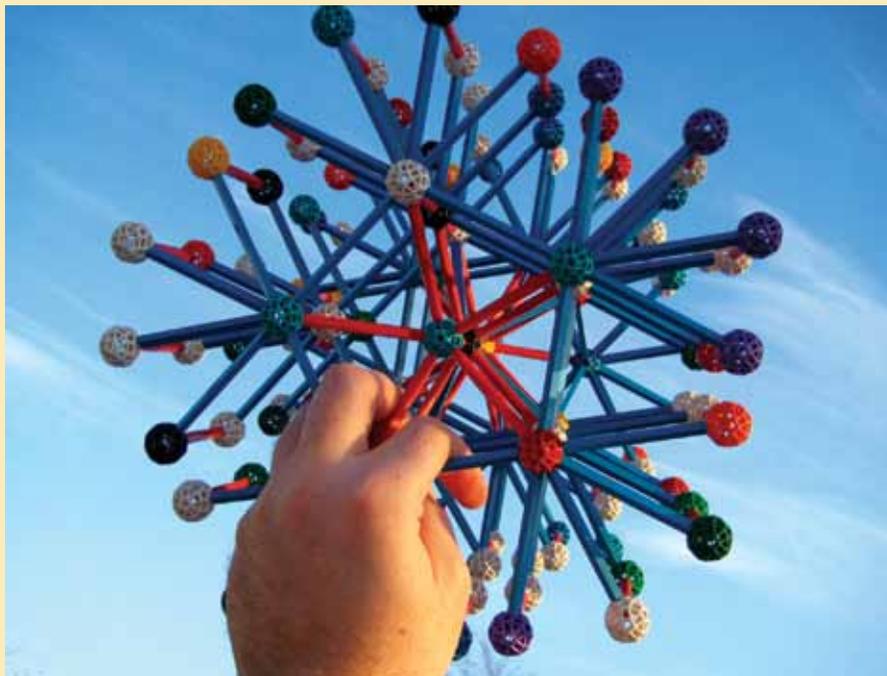
Tool: Exercise on searching for EU funds

This is an exercise which can be carried out as a piece of 'action-research' for CSOs, or as a practical exercise in a training environment. The exact task of the exercise should be tailored depending on the context of the CSO and/or the training and profile of participants. But as an example, if the exercise is for members from environmental CSOs in country XYZ, the task could be threefold:

1. find out about any forecast Calls for Proposals on environmental issues in Country XYZ;
2. find out about any forecast Calls for Proposals aimed at CSOs funded through any non-IPA programmes for which the region is eligible and which have environmental actions;
3. Find out about any Calls for Proposals under the IPA-funded regional Civil Society Facility which might benefit environmental CSOs in Country XYZ.

Participants can work in groups of 2 or 3 using one laptop per group. The research should take around 20-30 minutes. Once the research is complete and every group has some information to share, it should be possible to go back through each task, with different groups providing information about task. The feedback and discussion will take another 20-30 minutes.

The exercise should be concluded by a CSO manager/trainer facilitating a discussion on 'how easy or difficult was the task', 'how were any difficulties overcome', 'what extra information was found of interest?' For CSOs committed to accessing EU funding, this 'action-research' should be conducted on a regular basis.

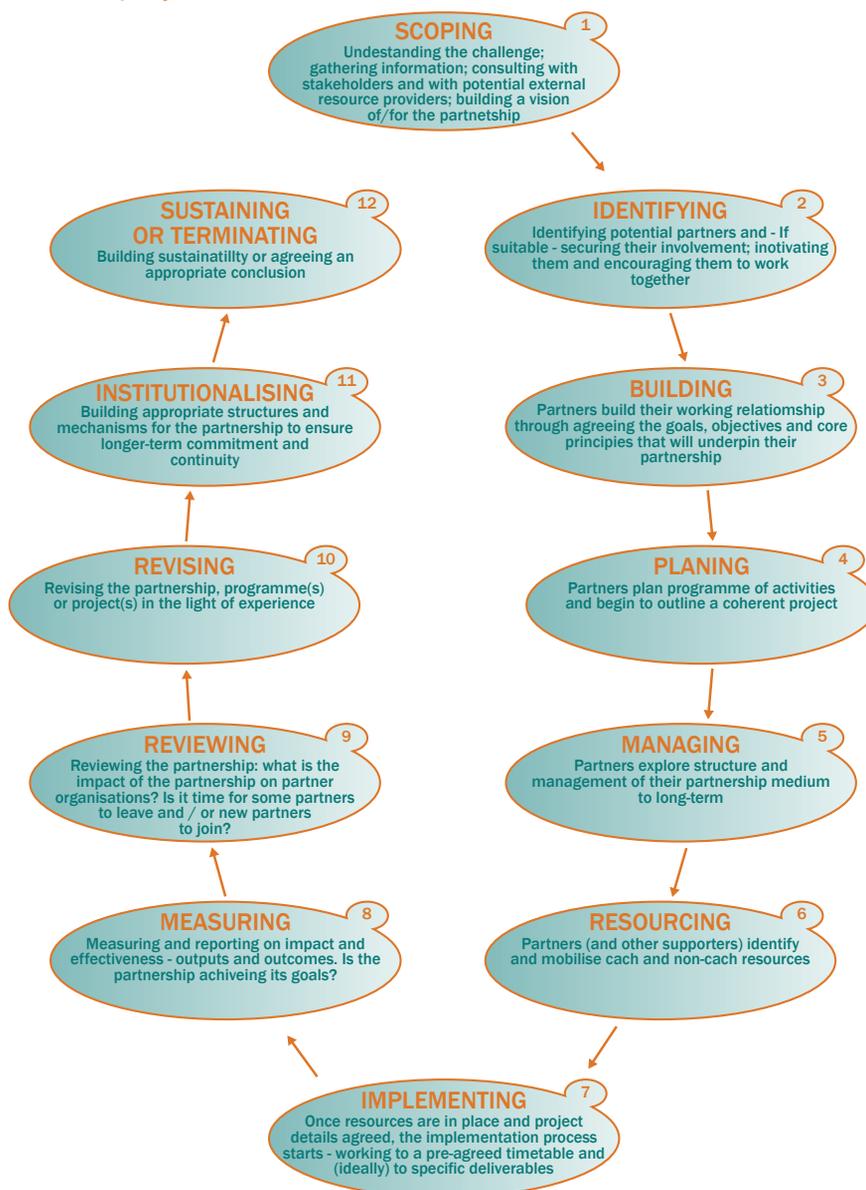


Toolkit: Developing effective partnerships for projects

Tools: Guidance Notes and Checklists

Tool: Guidance Notes on the Partnership Cycle

Partnership “Cycle”



Tool: Guidance Notes on searching for partners in the EU

EU civil society umbrella organisations and platforms:

In most of the countries in the Western Balkans and Turkey there are plenty of geographical and sector-based networks of CSOs, and a number of national NGO Support Organisations, which you should use to find the names and contact details of potential partners. However, to identify partners in EU Member States and other countries can be difficult. If you have failed to find contacts through your own local and/or national networks, you may seek assistance from some EU umbrella organisations and federations. Many of these are specifically mandated and resourced to give assistance in building networks, so can often help to provide links to potential partners. Some of these organisations are listed below.

ACT FOR EUROPE: EU Civil Society Contact Group www.act4europe.org

AGE PLATFORM EUROPE: www.age-platform.eu/en

BEUC: The European Consumers' Organization www.beuc.org

BUSINESSEUROPE: www.busesseurope.eu

CONCORDE EUROPE: European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development
www.concordeurope.org

CULTURE ACTION EUROPE: The Political Platform for Arts and Culture
www.cultureactioneurope.org

EAPN: European Anti-Poverty Network www.eapn.org

ENAR: European Network against Racism www.enar-eu.org

ETUC: European Trade Union Confederation www.etuc.org

EUROPEAN CIVIC FORUM: www.cidem.org

EUROPEAN DISABILITY FORUM: www.edf-feph.org

EUROPEAN YOUTH FORUM: www.youthforum.org

EUROSTEP: European Solidarity towards Equal Participation of People www.eurostep.org

EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY: www.womenlobby.org

EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT BUREAU: www.eeb.org

EUROPEAN PUBLIC HEALTH ALLIANCE: www.eph.org

FEANTSA: European Federation of National Organizations Working with the Homeless
www.feantsa.org

SOCIAL PLATFORM: Platform of European Social NGOs www.socialplatform.org

SOLIDAR: European network of NGOs working to advance social justice in Europe and worldwide www.solidar.org

TRIALOG: Development NGOs in the Enlarged EU www.trialog.or.at

Tools: Exercises and Templates

Tool: Exercise to facilitate discussion on the process of developing partnership

Case Study for a Partnership Action – ‘The Journalists Association Project’

Introduction

The Antalya Journalists Association is a membership-based NGO serving the interests of professionals in the media industry in the southern Mediterranean region of Turkey. The Association has 3 full time staff and an active Board, and provides regular training on legislation relating to the media, as well as some technical training, and represents its members’ interests with media owners. Local journalists who are members of the Association have limited knowledge of journalistic practices within the EU and few opportunities for professional development. So the Association applied for and was awarded a grant under the EU-Turkey Civil Society Dialogue scheme. The application required an obligatory partnership agreement with a similar organisation in an EU Member State. The grant-funded project’s activities were mostly related to formal training workshops, study visits, and the production of a ‘good practice’ handbook for journalists, and had a budget of 90,000 euros and a duration of 15 months.

Project and Partnership Development

The Association had conducted a needs assessment of their members prior to the Call for Proposals and thus once the Call was announced it was easy for the Association’s Director to work with a small group of members to fully develop a logframe and project proposal. This proposal stated that the main purpose was to increase capacities of the individual members in terms of applying good practices from the EU in their work, and proposed that the objectives would be met through formal training provided by the Association and study visits to EU Member States.

The draft proposal was finished 3 weeks before the application deadline and the Association then sent the draft to 3 similar organisations in the EU that it had identified via the internet. The draft was sent with a simple email cover message in English asking the organisations if they were interested in being partners.

Only one organisation responded. This was NGO Publica, from a small town in southern Spain. NGO Publica was established 10 years ago as a cultural organisation and has since managed to generate income through the provision of various training in the culture and arts sector. They have 5 full time staff, including a Project Officer who has significant journalistic experience, and run an informative web site with cultural news and events. The organisation has been involved in 8 EU-funded projects.

NGO Publica signed the Partnership Statement and provided the necessary supporting documents. 11 months after submitting their proposal, the Antalya Journalists Association were awarded their grant and once they had mobilised their Project Coordinator and updated their project work plan, they re-contacted NGO Publica.

Project Implementation

As this was the first EU grant managed by the Association, the first 4 months of setting up the project was very difficult. However, by 5th month, the Association asked NGO Publica to help them to arrange a study trip to Spain and to help them produce a handbook of good practices. To coordinate these activities the Association in Antalya formally agreed to pay a monthly salary (based on 5 days of work per month) to a Spanish coordinator based with NGO Publica. This arrangement was as planned in the grant application, and was finalised via email correspondence. However, there was no full job description developed for the Spanish coordinator and no Terms of Reference for either the Study Visits or Handbook.

By the 11th month of the project the Antalya Association had completed all its training activities, using experts identified in Turkey, and had received about 25% of the draft pages of the Handbook, but had not yet completed the Study Visit. With only 4 months remaining of the grant contract, less than 50% of the budget had been disbursed.

The Association in Antalya stopped paying the monthly salary to the Spanish coordinator in the 11th month of the project (having paid 6 months from a budgeted total of 10 months), and asked the Contracting Authority in Turkey if they could change their partner...

Discussion Points

1. Was NGO Publica a good choice of partner?
2. How would you have advised the Journalists Association of Antalya to strengthen their relationship with NGO Publica before and during the project implementation?
3. If you were the Project Manager, what would you do to ensure a successful completion of the project in the final 4 months?



Tool: Template for a Partnership Agreement for an EU-funded Project

Specific guidelines for Calls for Proposals may include specific templates for Partnership Statements to be completed and signed by the partner(s). It is imperative that such templates are used in the application, however, on a general basis, while establishing partnerships for EU-funded projects, it is useful for all partners to understand that they will be required to sign a statement containing similar paragraphs to the one below:

SAMPLE PARTNERSHIP STATEMENT

A partnership is a relationship of substance between two or more organisations involving shared responsibilities in undertaking the action funded by the (here will be inserted the name of the EU accredited Contracting Authority responsible for the Call for Proposals). To ensure that the action runs smoothly, the Contracting Authority requires all partners to acknowledge this by agreeing to the principles of good partnership practice set out below.

1. All partners must have read the application form and understood what their role in the action will be before the application is submitted to the Contracting Authority.
2. All partners must have read the standard grant contract and understood what their respective obligations under the contract will be if the grant is awarded. They authorise the lead applicant to sign the contract with the Contracting Authority and represent them in all dealings with the Contracting Authority in the context of the action's implementation.
3. The applicant must consult with its partners regularly and keep them fully informed of the progress of the action.
4. All partners must receive copies of the reports - narrative and financial - made to the Contracting Authority.
5. Proposals for substantial changes to the action (e.g. activities, partners, etc.) should be agreed by the partners before being submitted to the Contracting Authority. Where no such agreement can be reached, the applicant must indicate this when submitting changes for approval to the Contracting Authority.
6. Where the Beneficiary does not have its headquarters in the country where the action is implemented, the partners must agree before the end of the action, on an equitable distribution of equipment, vehicles and supplies for the action purchased with the EU grant among local partners or the final beneficiaries of the action."

I have read and approved the contents of the proposal submitted to the Contracting Authority. I undertake to comply with the principles of good partnership practice

Name:

Organisation:

Position:

Signature:

Date and Place:

Toolkit: Preparing successful project proposals

Tools: Guidance Notes and Checklists

Tool: Guidance Notes on understanding the project cycle

PROJECT CYCLE MANAGEMENT

The Project Cycle follows a sequence or pattern in which projects are planned and carried out. The cycle starts with an idea and helps planners to develop their idea into a working plan which can be implemented and evaluated.

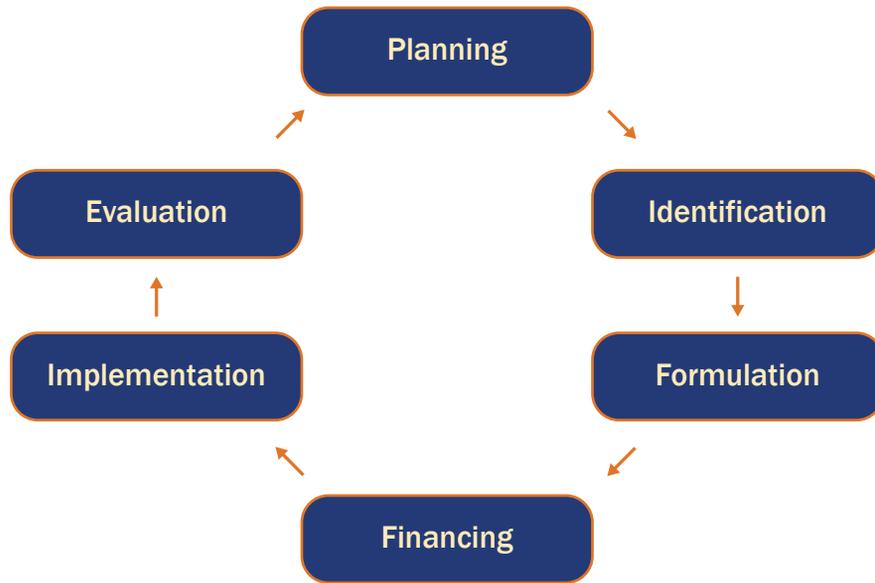
There are six stages in the project cycle:

- **Planning:** analysis of the situation at national, local and sectoral level. CSOs should review their own Strategic Plan and look to find synergies with the programming documents of the EU and national Government. In this way funding opportunities can be identified for the coming 1-3 years;
- **Identification:** formulation of the initial project idea and the design of the project addressing technical and operational aspects;
- **Formulation:** the project proposal is formatted to a template suitable for presentation to a potential funder. In the case of EU funding, this is likely to be in the format of a Grant Application Form;
- **Financing:** securing financial resources, which may be the award and contracting of an EU-funded grant;
- **Implementation and Monitoring:** implementation of project activities with ongoing checks on progress and feedback;
- **Evaluation:** periodic review of project with feedback for next project cycle.

The cycle represents a continuous process in which each stage provides the foundation for the next. Decision making is carried out at each phase.



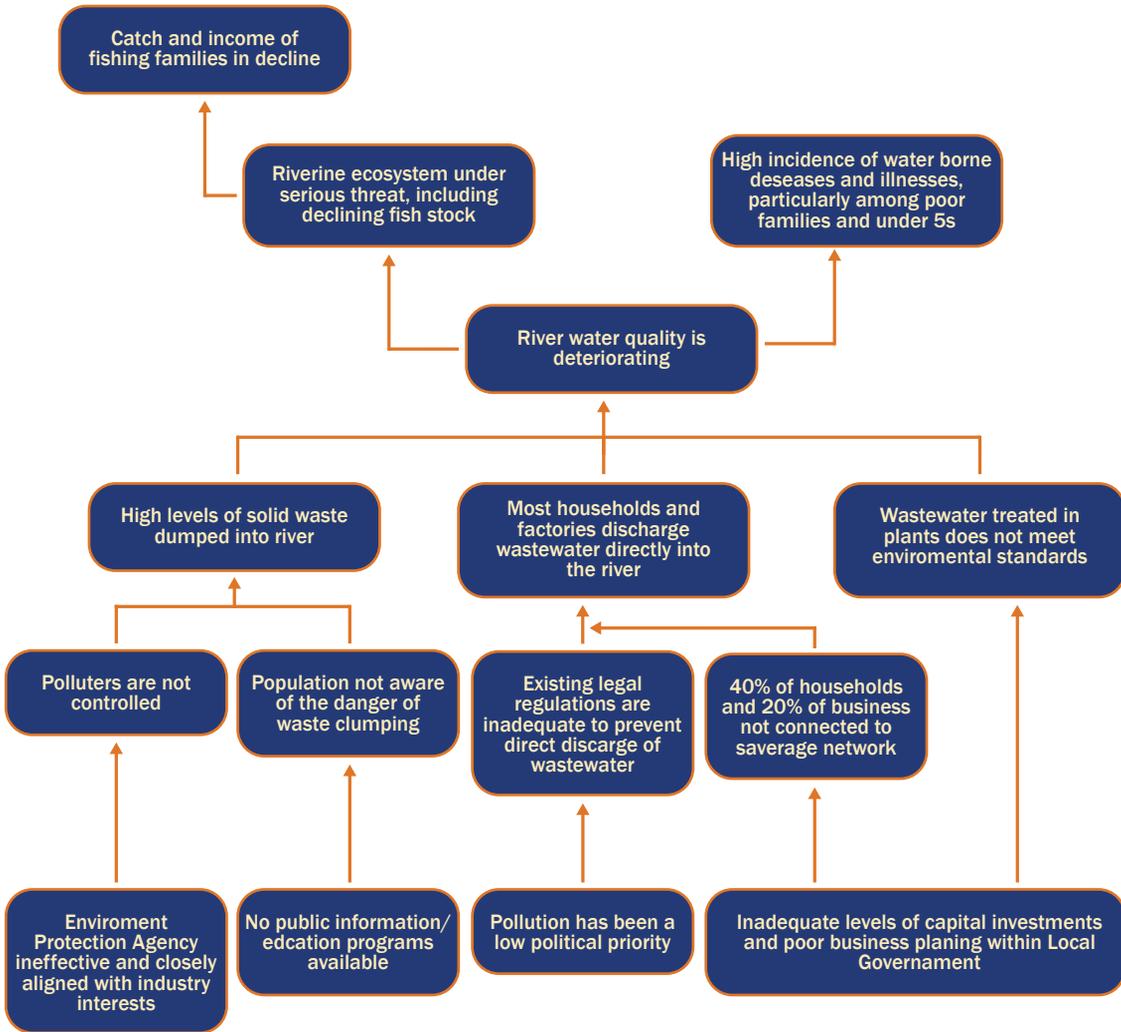
Illustration: The Project Cycle



Tool: Guidance Notes on how a 'problem tree' can be used for problem analysis.

PROBLEM TREE: River Pollution Example

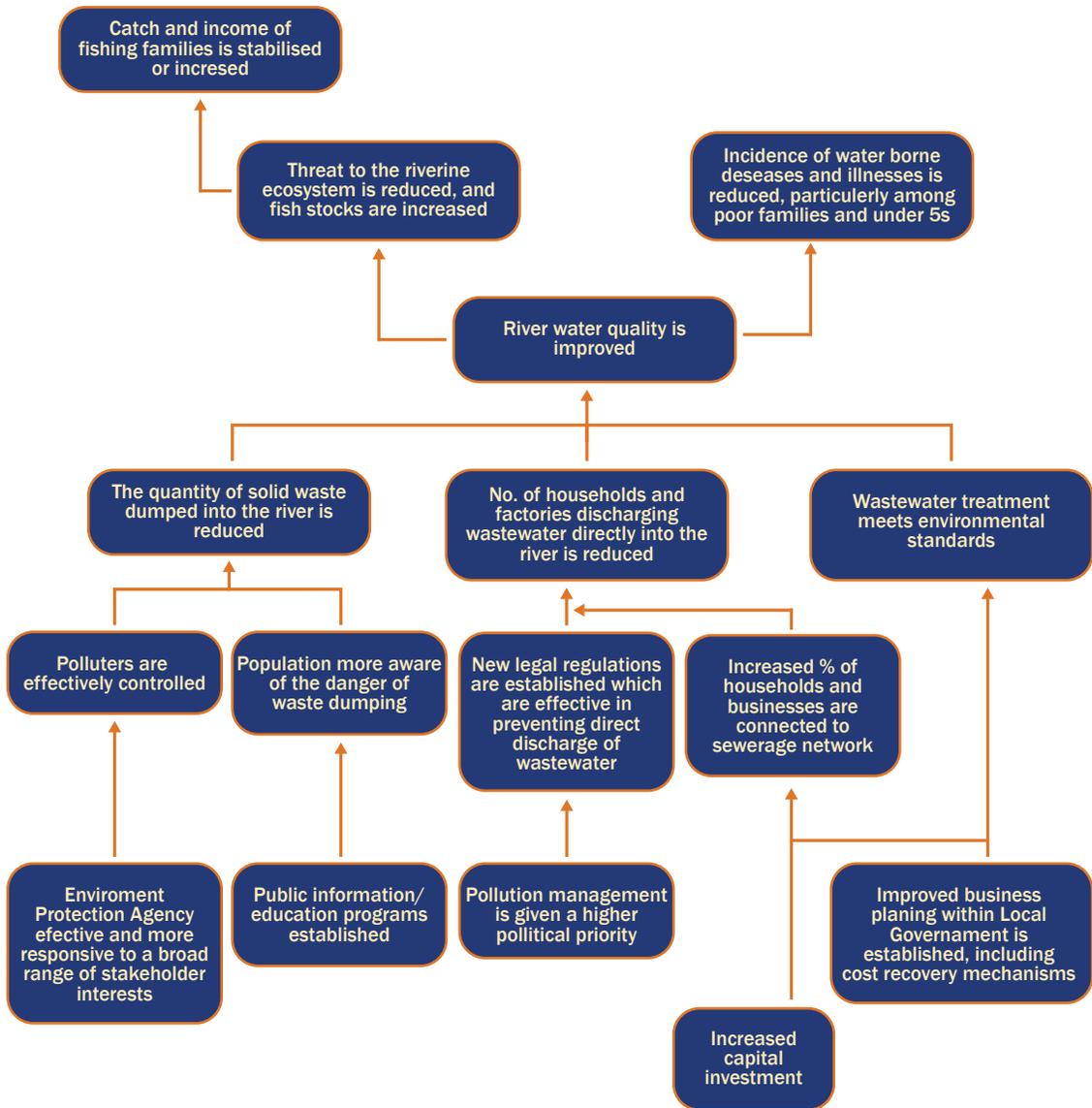
Problem analysis - river pollution



*Taken from EC's Project Cycle Management Guidelines, March 2004

OBJECTIVE TREE: River Pollution Example

Objective tree - river pollution



Tool: Guidance Notes on an extract of a sample Logical Framework

This extract is taken from a sample logical framework contained with the EC's PCM Guidelines, 2004. It can be compared to the template for a logframe in Section 2 of this Manual and the problem analysis illustrated in the tools above.

Project description	Indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions
Overall objective To contribute to improved family health, particularly the under 5s, and to improve general health of the riverine eco/system	- Incidence of water borne diseases, skin infections and blood disorders caused by heavy metals, reduced by 50% by 2008, specifically among low-income families living along the river	- Municipal hospital and clinic records, including maternal and child health records collected by mobile MCH teams. Results summarised in an Annual State of the Environment report by the EPA.	
Purpose Improved quality of the river water	- Concentration of heavy metal compounds (Pb, Cd, Hg) and untreated sewerage; reduced by 25% (compared to levels in 2003) and meets established national health/pollution control standards by end of 2007	- Weekly water quality surveys, jointly conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency and the River Authority, and reported monthly to the Local Government Minister for Environment (Chair of Steering Committee)	- The public awareness campaign conducted by the Local Government impacts positively on families sanitation and hygiene practices - Fishing cooperatives are effective in limiting their members exploitation of fish "nursery" areas
Result 1 Volume of waste-water directly discharged into the river system by households and factories reduced	- 70% of waste water produced by factories and 80% of waste water produced by households is treated in plants by 2006	- Annual sample survey of household and factories conducted by Municipalities between 2003 and 2006	- River flows maintained above X mega litres per second for at least 8 months of the year - Upstream water quality remains stable
Result 2 Waste-water treatment standards established and effectively enforced	- Waste water from 4 existing treatment plants meets EPA quality standards (heavy metals and sewerage content) by 2005	- EPA audits (using revised standards and improved audit methods), conducted quarterly and reported to Project Steering Committee	- EPA is successful in reducing solid waste disposal levels by factories from X to X tons per year
Etc			

Tool: Guidance Notes on conducting stakeholder analysis

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

What is Stakeholder Analysis?

Stakeholder analysis is the identification of a project's key stakeholders, an assessment of their interests, and the ways in which these interests affect project riskiness and viability. It is linked to institutional appraisal and social analysis, drawing on the information deriving from these approaches, but also contributing to the combining of such data in a single framework. Stakeholder analysis contributes to project design and helps to identify appropriate forms of stakeholder participation.

Definitions

Stakeholders are persons, groups or institutions with interests in a project or a programme. **Primary stakeholders** are those ultimately affected, either positively (beneficiaries) or negatively (for example people who are involuntarily resettled). This definition of stakeholders includes both winners and losers, and those involved or excluded from decision-making processes. **Key stakeholders** are those who can significantly influence, or are important to the success of the project.

In a participatory approach to program evaluation, an evaluation co-ordinator, often from outside the program or organisation, works in partnership with program stakeholders in all phases of the evaluation process. Program stakeholders are those individuals who have a stake in how the evaluation turns out. They are persons who will later make decisions and use the information generated by the evaluation.

Why do a stakeholder analysis?

In each instance evaluation planners will have to decide who the appropriate stakeholders are and to what extent some or all of them should be involved. Involving a larger rather than smaller number of people is not necessarily better. Also, it is important to remember that not all stakeholders will be interested or able to participate in this time-consuming exercise.

In a participatory approach the role of the stakeholders is to share their experiences of working with the programme. To participate in collecting additional information about programme implementation, to work with the evaluation team to analyse both the data collected and the experiences described; and to formulate conclusions about the programme strategy and outcomes.

Stakeholder analysis helps to assess a project and its environment and inform the negotiating position of project implementers. It can:

- draw out the interests of stakeholders in relation to the problems which the project is seeking to address (at the identification stage) or the purpose of the project, (once it has started);
- identify conflicts of interests between stakeholders at an early stage;
- help to identify relations between stakeholders which can be built upon and may enable coalitions;
- helps to assess the appropriate type of participation by different stakeholders, at successive stages of the project cycle.

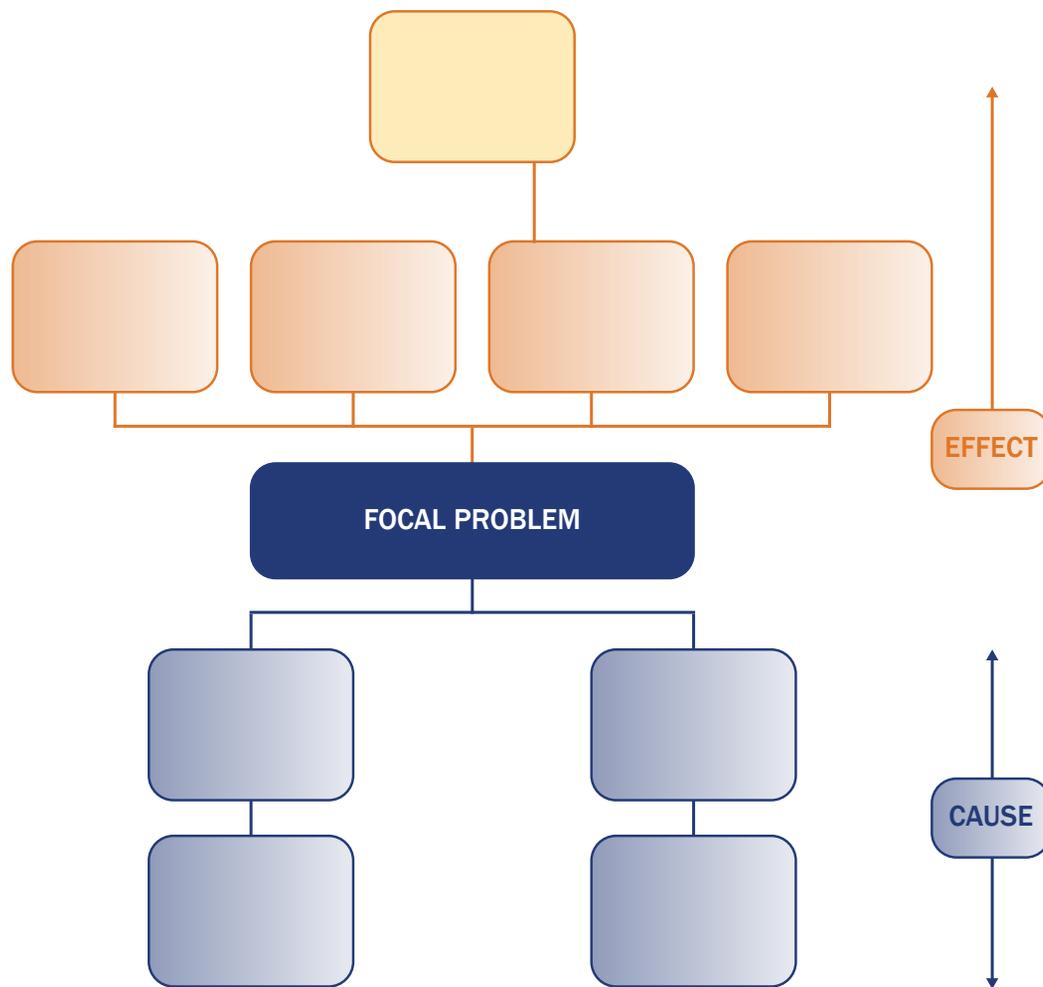
When should it be done?

Stakeholder analysis should always be done at the beginning of a project, even if it is a quick list of the stakeholders and their interests. Such a list can be used to draw out the main assumptions which are needed if the project is going to be viable, and some of the key risks.

Tools: Exercises and Templates

Tool: Template for use in problem analysis

TEMPLATE: DEVELOPING THE PROBLEM TREE



Tool: Template for use in stakeholder analysis

Stakeholders	Their interest	Information required	Power in decision making
List all stakeholders here	Make a summary of the stakeholders' interests in the project – both positive and negative	Note what information each stakeholder requires and at what stage in the project	What degree of authority or influence do the stakeholders have over any aspect of the project



Toolkit: Passing the evaluation

Tools: Guidance Notes and Checklists

Tool: Checklist for ensuring that a grant application meets the necessary administrative requirements

BEFORE SENDING YOUR PROPOSAL, PLEASE CHECK THAT EACH OF THE FOLLOWING COMPONENTS IS COMPLETE AND RESPECTS THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:
1. The correct grant application form, published for this call for proposals, has been used
2. The Declaration by the applicant has been filled in and has been signed
3. The proposal is typed and is in English (or appropriate language)
4. One original and 2 copies are included
5. An electronic version of the proposal (CD-Rom) is enclosed
6. Each partner has completed and signed a partnership statement and the statements are included.
7. The budget has been laid out in the format requested, is expressed in € and is enclosed
8. The logical framework has been completed and is enclosed
9. If applicable, Concept Note is filled in, and is not longer than the advised maximum number of pages and printed in Arial 10 font.
10. Provision for contingency reserve is not higher than 5% of the subtotal direct eligible costs of the Action (Budget heading 7)
11. Administrative costs are not higher than 7% of the total direct eligible costs of the Action (Budget heading 9)
12. Equipment and supplies do not exceed the advised % of total eligible costs
13. CVs of project coordinator and other project key staff are included, indicating their position or role in the project in EU format
PART 2 (ELIGIBILITY)
14. The duration of the action is equal to or lower than the maximum allowed number of months
15. The duration of the action is equal to or higher than the minimum allowed number of months
16. The requested contribution is equal to or higher than EURO xxx.000 (the minimum allowed)
17. The requested contribution is equal to or lower than EURO xxxx.000 (the maximum allowed)
18. The requested contribution is equal to or higher than the minimum percentage required for the total eligible costs

Tool: Guidance notes on how grant applications are assessed

This is a sample of a generic evaluation grid. The scoring in the right-hand column is only indicative. For the actual scoring for any Calls for Proposals, please see the relevant published Evaluation Grid contained within the Guidelines for Grant Applicants.

EVALUATION GRID:

Section	Maximum Score
1. Financial and operational capacity¹	20
1.1 Do the applicant and, if applicable, partners have sufficient experience of project management?	5
1.2 Do the applicant and, if applicable partners have sufficient technical expertise? (notably knowledge of the issues to be addressed.)	5
1.3 Do the applicant and, if applicable, partners have sufficient management capacity? (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4 Does the applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5
2. Relevance²	25
2.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and one or more of the priorities of the call for proposals? Note: A score of 5 (very good) will only be allocated if the proposal specifically addresses at least one priority. Note: A score of 5 (very good) will only be allocated if the proposal contains specific added-value elements, such as promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities...	5
2.2 How relevant to the particular needs and constraints of the target country/countries or region(s) is the proposal? (Including synergy with other EC initiatives and avoidance of duplication.)	5
2.3 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately? Does the application address the needs of target groups on all countries involved in the project?	5
2.4 Does the proposal involve genuine trans-national cooperation (at least one of the following: joint development, joint staffing, joint implementation, joint financing)? Proposals with more than one form of cooperation and convincing trans-national partnership (joint development, joint financing, joint staffing and joint implementing) will receive higher score.	5
2.5 Are the activities proposed likely to have a clear trans-national benefit?	5

¹ If the total average score is less than 12 points for section 1, the application will be rejected.

² If the total average score is less than 20 points for section 2, the application will be rejected.

3. Methodology	25
3.1 Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	5
3.2 How coherent is the overall design of the action? (in particular, does it reflect the analysis of the problems involved, take into account external factors and anticipate an evaluation?)	5
3.3 Is the partners' and/or other stakeholders' level of involvement and participation in the action satisfactory?	5
3.4 Is the action plan clear and feasible?	5
3.5 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the action?	5
4. Sustainability	15
4.1 Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5
4.2 Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects? (including scope for replication and extension of the outcome of the action and dissemination of information.)	5
4.3 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable: - financially (how will the activities be financed after the funding ends?) - institutionally (will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the action? Will there be local "ownership" of the results of the action?) - at policy level (where applicable) (what will be the structural impact of the action e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc?)? - environmentally (will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?)	5
5. Budget and cost-effectiveness	15
5.1 is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	5
5.2 Is the proposed expenditure necessary for the implementation of the action?	5 x 2
Maximum total score	100

Tools: Exercises and Templates

Tool: Exercise to assess a draft grant application

EXERCISE: A 'Mock' Assessment

If you're leading the drafting of a grant application for a CSO, it is highly recommended that once you have a complete first draft you invite an external expert (ideally a volunteer consultant or a member of the organisation that is experienced in project development but who has had no input to the application drafting) to run a 'mock' assessment. This entails scoring the draft application form using the published Evaluation Grid and highlighting where the proposal falls short of achieving maximum scores.

If you're running a training programme in a 'workshop' style and have enough time and other resources, it can be very useful to run this exercise. However, beware that this exercise needs careful preparation and plenty of time to implement.

Provide your participants with a fully completed Grant Application Form (either a made-up one or a copy of a real Application - but remember for the latter you should have permission from the owner of the Application to use it as a training tool) and a set of relevant Application Guidelines and Evaluation Grid. Give participants plenty of time to scan through both the Guidelines and Application Form (20+ minutes). Then divide the participants into 5 groups and ask each group to 'evaluate' a particular section of the Application. One group should evaluate the Financial/Operational Capacity, one the Relevance, one the Methodology and so on. Give your participants 20 minutes to discuss and score their part of the Application and note down comments. Then in plenary each group should give their score and comments on the Application. This plenary discussion will take at least 30 minutes.



Toolkit: Managing an EU grant contract

Tools: Guidance Notes and Checklists

Tool: Guidance regarding modifications to grant contracts

Basic Guiding Principles for Grant Contract Modifications

Grant Beneficiaries should try to implement the project as originally planned. Nevertheless situations may arise where there is a need to make some changes in the activities or budget, or replace project staff or consultants. In such situations, Grant Beneficiaries may apply for an amendment to the contract.

The procedures for amendment of the grant contract are divided into two groups depending on the type of change that should be made. **Minor changes** in the contract may be implemented without receiving a prior agreement of the Contracting Authority, but should be later notified. **Major modifications** in the contract require a formal **Addendum** to the contract to be signed before their implementation. In case of major modifications of the Contract, an Addendum should be prepared and approved by the Contracting Authority before making the change.

The following general principles normally apply:

- For the acceptance of a Grant Beneficiary's request for grant contract modifications, the Grant Beneficiary must substantiate its request to the Contracting Authority. The Contracting Authority examines the reasons given, and rejects requests which have little or no substantiation.
- The modifications must not have the purpose or the effect of making such changes to the contract as would alter the objectives of the project or be contrary to the equal treatment of applicants.
- Grant contracts can only be modified within the lifetime of the contract, modifications cannot be made retroactively.
- The maximum amount of the grant may not be increased.
- Any modification extending the performance period of the contract must be such that implementation and final payments can be completed before the expiry of the overall 'Financing Decision' governing the grant scheme.
- Requests for contract modifications to grant contracts must allow an adequate time-limit (minimum 30 days) for the addendum to be signed before the modifications are intended to enter into force. Thus, on the last month of the project implementation, addendums might not be processed.

Tool: Guidance regarding major modifications to grant contracts

Major modifications that require a formal Addendum to the contract include the following:

- extension or early closing of the Contract;
- significant changes in activities that effect the basic purpose of the project as long as the proposed changes do not question the grant award decision and are not contrary to the equal treatment of applicants;
- transfers amongst budget headings that involve a variation of more than 15% of the amount originally entered under each relevant heading for eligible costs;
- addition or cancellation of a new budget item in the Budget;
- change of project Partners (addition or replacement);
- changes in your organisation's name or legal status;
- adding new item or deducting an existing item from the budget.

Preparing an Addendum

The procedure for application and signature of the Addendum is as follows:

Prepare a request for addendum, following the standard template issued by the Contracting Authority or using the template in PRAG, in three copies (one copy will be retained by the beneficiary and two copies will be sent to the Contracting Authority).

The request for Addendum should contain a detailed description of the requested modification and the reason for modifications. Without a detailed and robust explanation of the request, the Contracting Authority may reject the Addendum



Any addendum modifying the budget must include a replacement budget showing how the full budget breakdown of the initial contract has been modified by this addendum (and any previous addenda) as shown in the following table in addition to the table prepared in the addendum request.

Budget Headings	Original Budget	Budget of Addendum 1	Budget of Addendum 2	Budget of Last Addendum
Human resources				
1.1				
1.2				
Travel				
Equipment and Supplies				
Local office/Action costs				
Other costs, services				
Others				
Subtotal direct eligible costs of the Action				
Total direct eligible costs of the Action				
Total eligible costs				

Tool: Guidance notes regarding 'Eligible' costs

Budget Heading	Eligible Expenditures
1. Human Resources	<p>The amounts budgeted under this budget heading may be used for payment of salaries and fees for staff contracted by the Grant Beneficiary and for partners' staff.</p> <p><u>Sub-contracted services (payment to companies under the service contracts tendered following the EC procedures) cannot be claimed under this budget heading.</u></p> <p>The cost of staff assigned must include actual salaries plus social security charges and other remuneration-related costs. For detailed information of human resources expenditures see the reference document in the contract Annexes.</p> <p>Salaries and costs must not exceed those normally borne by the Grant Beneficiary or its partners.</p> <p>Per diems are allowed only for staff assigned to the project as long as they are envisaged in the project budget. Per diems cover all meal, hotel expenses and short distance travel (e.g. within the city).</p> <p>Per diems should be in-line with the budget and should not be higher than the EU maximum daily rates (EC website http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/perdiem/liste1_en.htm). Per diems are based either on actual costs or fixed rates, but in both cases maximum daily rates apply.</p> <p>Per diems are calculated on an overnight basis.</p>
2. Travel	<p>From the local transportation sub-heading, intercity transport expenditures within the project location may be covered.</p> <p>From the international travel sub-heading, transport expenditure of experts who travel abroad for the needs of the project may be covered.</p>
3. Equipment and Supplies	<p>The purchase cost of equipment and supplies are eligible provided they are included in the budget and correspond to market rates. The Beneficiary is obliged to obtain value for money, and to use the tendering procedures described in Annex IV of the Contract. For tendering procedures please see relevant procurement manuals and tender dossiers.</p>
4. Local Office/Project Costs	<p>The cost cannot be used for covering costs related to main offices of the Grant Beneficiary (and partners). Costs are eligible only if a new office/ training facilities are opened for the needs of the implementation of project activities.</p>
5. Other Costs, Services	<p>Amounts budgeted under headings 5 and 6 may be used to cover costs for the items specified in the budget and fully sub-contracted services: publications, translation, events, etc.</p>
6. Provision for Contingency Reserve	<p>The Contingency reserve can only be used for unexpected expenditures incurred during the implementation of the grant contract with the prior approval of the Contracting Authority.</p>

Budget Heading	Eligible Expenditures
<p>7. Administrative Costs</p>	<p>A percentage of the final approved total direct eligible costs may be claimed as indirect costs to cover the administrative overheads incurred by the Grant Beneficiary. The costs are eligible provided that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They do not exceed 7% of the direct costs; 2. They do not include costs assigned to another heading of the budget; 3. Their eligibility should conform to items 14, 16 and 17 of the general conditions; 4. The 7% (or amount requested) of the direct cost will be re-calculated at the end of the project based on actual costs.



Tool: Guidance notes regarding Procurement

Procurement is the timely acquisition of goods, works and services while addressing the following: the objectives of the project; fairness, integrity and transparency through competition; economy and effectiveness; best value for money.

Strict rules need to be followed in each procurement procedure in order to acquire the best value for money. The following principles should be taken into account for a good procurement:

No discrimination

There should be no discrimination against products, services, suppliers, contractors or service-providers on the grounds of nationality. There may be however disqualifications based on technical grounds, or against quality and/or safety factors, but these can, and should, be objectively assessed.

Fair competition

There should always be a competition for the award of contracts, unless there is a strong and objective reason for not holding a competition.

There must be no distortion of competition in discussions with actual or potential participants in contract award procedures. This means that all tenderers must be provided the same information and the same opportunities to come up with winning bids.

Any firm or expert that have participated in the preparation of a project or in drafting the tender file must be excluded from participating in tenders based on this preparatory work, as this would constitute unfair competition.

Clear specifications

Tenderers cannot compete effectively unless they know precisely the requirements of the purchaser. Therefore, specifications of requirements (“Technical Specifications” in case of supplies or works tenders, “Terms of Reference” in case of service tenders) should be by reference to recognised technical specifications and, where required, quality assurance standards, with appropriate levels of certification.

Effective publicity (announcement)

Any tendering process is unlikely to be successful if the best potential tenderers do not get to hear of requirements. Effective publicity will ensure the dissemination of this information. This is particularly important for publicly funded procurement, where, typically the purchasers are not experts in the field. This is where use of the Internet is increasingly important, but it is vital that tenderers know where to go for their information.

It is also necessary to publish details of the decisions on contracts awarded. Furthermore, to improve the skills and efficiency of tenderers, those who request it should be debriefed on why they were, or were not, selected to bid, and why they were successful or unsuccessful in winning the contract.

Adequate timescales

Another vital principle is that bidders are given sufficient time to respond to advertisements expressing an interest in the purchaser’s requirement, to respond to invitations to participate in the bidding and to prepare and submit their offers. Under EU PRAG, for example, local open tenders

(those advertised in Turkey) require at least 30 calendar days between the date of publication of the advertisement and the submission deadline for tenders.

Use of relevant objective criteria

It is vital that the criteria used for the elimination of unsuitable candidates, the selection of participants in contract award procedures and the award of contracts on the basis of the offer(s) economically most advantageous to the purchaser are both objective and relevant to the requirement. These requirements are defined in the “Terms of Reference” (in the case of service contracts) or the “Technical Specifications” (for supply or works contracts).

Tool: Template for a Procurement Plan for goods/services over 10,000 euros

Project Name	Name of the tender 1 Dates for Tender 1	Name of the tender 2 Dates for Tender 2	Name of the tender 3 Dates for Tender 3
Preparation of tender dossier			
Expected date for sending the tender dossier to the Contracting Authority or Grant Monitors for checking			
Publication of forecast (if applicable)			
Publication of procurement notice			
Submission deadline			
Opening session			
Evaluation			
Expected date for sending the Evaluation Report to the Contracting Authority or Grant Monitors for checking			
Contract signature			
Expected delivery date			
Provisional acceptance date			

Tool: Template for a Project's Communication Strategy

General Communication Strategy

Objectives

1. Overall communication objectives
2. Target groups
 - Within the district or country or countries where the action is implemented
 - Within the EU (as applicable)
3. Specific objectives for each target group, related to the action's objectives and the phases of the project cycle.

Examples of communication objectives:

- *to ensure that the beneficiary population is aware of the roles of the partner and of the EU in the activity*
- *to raise awareness among the host country population or in Europe of the roles of the partner and of the EU in delivering aid in a particular context*
- *to raise awareness of how the EU and the partner work together to support education, health, environment, etc.*

Communication Activities

1. Main activities that will take place during the period covered by the communication and visibility plan.

Include details of:

- *the nature of the activities*
- *those responsible for delivering the activities*

2. Communication tools chosen.

Include details of the advantages of particular tools such as the media, advertising and events in the local context

Success Indicators

Include some indicators that can be measured to see whether the communication and promotional activities are having any impact or not

Resources

Ensure that the appropriate project resources are available (human and financial) to support the communication activities

Toolkit: Compliance monitoring and Reporting on EU funds

Tools: Guidance Notes and Checklists

Tool: Checklist for record-keeping during and after implementation of a grant-funded project

Supporting Documents:

Main supporting documents that you should retain and present in formal reports and or in case of an audit are:

Type of Expenditure	Supporting Documents
All expenditure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proof of <u>purchase</u> invoices and receipts ▪ Proof of <u>payment</u> such as bank statements, debit notices, proof of settlement by the contractor ▪ Proof of <u>delivery of services</u> such as approved reports, proof of attending seminars, conferences and training courses (including relevant documentation and material obtained, list of attendees, certificates), etc ▪ The <u>accounting records</u> of the Grant Beneficiary (computerised or manual) such as general ledger, sub ledgers and payroll accounts, fixed assets registers and other relevant accounting information.
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Term of reference/job profile ▪ Timesheets ▪ Copies of the outputs ▪ Activities reports
Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tickets (paper tickets and boarding passes) ▪ In case of a rented form of transport, an invoice from the supplier and summary list of distance covered ▪ For cars, a summary list of the distance covered, the average fuel consumption of the vehicles used and fuel costs.
Trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A detailed description of the training – training modules, training hours per subject, methods, etc. ▪ Training schedule ▪ List of participants /Attendance sheets ▪ List of trainers / lecturers ▪ Feed-back questionnaires ▪ Training evaluation report
Surveys/ Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Detailed description of the methodology ▪ Reports
Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Copies of publications ▪ Distribution lists
Seminars, Working Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programme ▪ List of presentations / conference reports ▪ Handouts ▪ List of participants ▪ List of speakers ▪ Minutes (if applicable) ▪ Press clippings ▪ Feed-back questionnaires (if applicable)
Supplies/ Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invitation to tender (all documentation) ▪ All offers received ▪ Tender Opening Report ▪ Administrative Compliance Grid ▪ Technical Evaluation Grid ▪ Evaluation Report ▪ Shipping bills



Glossary of Key Terms

Glossary of Key Terms

ASSOCIATE A grant applicant may seek another organisation(s) to assist with a particular activity or activities in their project, but under non-contractual obligations, which means they 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, unlike Partners

BENEFICIARY/GRANT BENEFICIARY The Country receiving EU external assistance is referred to as the 'Beneficiary Country'. An institution which is managing a grant scheme as part of the means for achieving programmatic objectives is referred to as the 'Beneficiary', and an individual recipient of an EU grant is called a 'Grant Beneficiary'.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS A public invitation by a Contracting Authority, addressed to clearly identified categories of applicant, to propose operations within the framework of a specific EU programme, within a given timeframe and following specific criteria for eligible actions and costs.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES a series of integrated measures accepted by the European Commission aiming to strengthen the co-operation among the Member States regarding Community policies over a given period of time.

CONTRACTING AUTHORITY accredited institutions within the EU or Candidate Countries who are empowered to contract organisations who have been awarded EU-funded grants. In the Western Balkans and Turkey these are often the EU Delegations or specialised Public Institutions in the Candidate Countries, such as the Turkish Government's Central Contracts and Finance Unit.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA the criteria published in a Call for Proposals to guide the eligibility of applicants and their partners, the types of actions and related costs being proposed, and the location and duration of the proposed actions.

EU EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE This is a blanket term to refer to all the financial assistance provided by the EU outside of the Union itself. It is mostly managed by the EC's Directorate General for Development and Cooperation, but also through other DGs, such as the DG for Enlargement.

GRANT an EU-funded contribution either to a project managed or implemented by an external organisation or directly to that organisation because its activities contribute to EU policy aims

INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION (IPA) The EU provides focused pre-accession financial aid to the candidate countries and to the potential candidates. This financial assistance is made available both to individual and multiple beneficiaries. It is intended to help these countries to introduce the necessary political, economic and institutional reforms to bring them into line with EU standards.

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK (LOGFRAME) an analytical and practical tool used in project preparation to organise the overall purpose and objectives of a project, the activities and inputs that will contribute towards achieving the objectives, and to drafting indicators which stakeholders can use to track progress towards the objectives.

PARTNER An organisation recognised formally by a grant applicant which participates in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the grant beneficiary. Partners must therefore satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable on the grant beneficiary himself. In addition to any other criteria effecting partners

PARTNERSHIP STATEMENT an EU standard template as part of the grant application form, recording information about a partner organisation's legal status, location, capacity, experience, and history of relationship with the applicant

PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR CONTRACT PROCEDURES FOR EC EXTERNAL ACTIONS (PRAG) a set of guidelines to govern how the EU's external financial assistance is spent and accounted for. The guidelines are updated from time to time - the most recent edition is dated November 2010.

PROBLEM TREE/SOLUTION TREE analytical tools used to identify the causes and effects of given problems, and thereafter the proposed solutions to addressing the problems. The tools are recommended to be used by the EC for project development in conjunction with other methodologies such as the Logical Framework

PROJECT CYCLE MANAGEMENT (PCM) a set of tools and approaches to the management of projects as adopted by the EC in 1992

PROJECT FICHE a template used by the EU in the design of large scale projects, as compared to a Grant Application Form, which is used in the presentation of the design of small grants projects. Within any National Programme, there will be a number of approved Project Fiches, some of which may include proposed Calls for Proposals for grant-funded projects.

THEMATIC PROGRAMMES programmes of external assistance which the EC manages universally along thematic guidelines and objectives. A good example is the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.

STAKEHOLDER any organisation or individual who has an interest in the implementation and outcomes of a project. The stakeholder may be effected positively or negatively by the project.

SUB-CONTRACTOR a third party organisation, neither partner nor associate, contracted to provide a specific service or supplies, subject to the procurement rules set out in the Annexes to the standard grant contract

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