

NOTICE OF CALL FOR PROPOSALS WITH A VIEW TO OBTAINING GRANTS FOR ACTIONS IN THE FIELD OF URBAN MOBILITY

Call for proposals TREN/SUB 02-2008

1. POLITICAL CONTEXT

The European Commission intends to award grants to actions in support of the development of sustainable mobility policy for urban agglomerations. These actions should promote the objectives of sustainable urban mobility, as set out in the Green Paper Paper 'Towards a new culture for urban mobility', adopted by the Commission on 25 September 2007 (COM (2007) 551). In this Green Paper, the Commission announced its intention to follow up with an Action Plan on urban mobility in 2008.

The actions to be selected must be in line with the approaches set out in the Green Paper on urban mobility: more fluid and less polluted towns and cities, more intelligent and more accessible, and safer and more secure urban transport. They should also contribute to the implementation of the Action Plan on urban mobility.

Over the past years, EU funded initiatives such as CIVITAS¹ and ELTIS² have helped to develop and spread a wealth of innovative solutions and approaches in urban mobility.

Information on this call for proposals is available on the DG TREN website at the following address: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/energy_transport/grants/proposals_en.htm

2. SOURCES OF FUNDING

The actions selected will be co-financed from the European Commission Budget line: 06 02 04 01 (Internal market and optimisation of transport networks).

3. ESTIMATED TOTAL AMOUNT FOR THIS CALL

The estimated total amount is €5.000.000.

4. PERCENTAGE OF COMMUNITY CO-FINANCING

The grants are intended as incentives for carrying out actions which could not be executed without Community financial support, and they reflect the principle of co-financing.

¹ www.civitas-initiative.eu

² www.eltis.org

The Commission therefore plans to grant only funds which are complementary and subsidiary to contributions made by the beneficiary, the national, regional or local authorities and other bodies. The Community contribution can cover between 10% and 50% of the total eligible costs of the action. The estimated indicative Community contribution for each action is €1.000.000. The part-financing rate will be chosen in the light of the available budget and on the basis of the award criteria, following the assessment by the Evaluation Committee. The maximum possible part-financing rate will be earmarked for the proposals which best meet the award criteria.

5. OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED RESULTS

5.1. Main objectives:

The actions should test and assess measures which can significantly contribute to improving sustainable urban mobility .

The actions should particularly help to implement and test measures improving fluidity of traffic, reducing congestion, reducing pollution in towns and cities, improving accessibility, and making urban transport safer and more secure.

The actions should have a high potential for EU-wide application. An assessment of the possibilities of EU-wide replication, of their impact, and the dissemination of information on the actions should be included.

The proposals to be selected should promote good practice, with a focus on one (or several) of the following five areas:

- (1) Safe walking and/or cycling in towns and cities, with the objective of encouraging these transport modes as alternatives to private-car use;
- (2) Goods transport and logistics in towns and cities, with particular attention to close co-operation between freight operators, industry, and public authorities;
- (3) Approximation of the systems of green areas in towns and cities, with a focus on access rules, interoperable technological tools for access control, and public information provision;
- (4) Interoperability of the information and payment systems of public and private modes of transport in towns and cities, possibly in co-operation with commercial payment system service providers;
- (5) Demand-responsive transport for passengers in towns and cities and the suburbs, with a focus on seamless traffic chains, integrating private and public travel in urban and peri-urban areas, include possible links to land-use and urban mobility planning.

Proposals could also include Community-wide information and awareness-raising actions covering all the priority areas listed above, as well as the areas set out in the Green Paper on urban mobility, i.e., more fluid and less polluted towns and cities and more intelligent, more accessible, and safer and more secure urban transport , implemented in cooperation with the parties concerned.

The actions must be visible, tangible and operational. They must be implemented in three to five towns and cities in different Member States of the European Union, ensuring geographical balance and a representative spread of social and economic contexts.

The actions should provide added value and incorporate, where possible, experiences gained from activities financed under Community programmes such as STEER³, CIVITAS⁴, LIFE⁵ and/or other EU programmes.

5.2. Expected result(s):

- Contributions to achieving the objectives set out in the White Paper ‘European Transport Policy for 2010: Time to decide’ and in the 2006 update ‘Keep Europe Moving’;
- Contributions to achieving the objectives set out in the Green Paper ‘Towards a new culture for urban mobility’;
- Contributions to improving the environmental performance of the different transport modes;
- Intensified dialogue with those involved to encourage sustainable mobility;
- Contributions to better interoperability of the different transport modes;
- Increased acceptance and deployment of best-practice solutions, tools, and technologies.

6. ELIGIBILITY OF COSTS

The Commission is ready to support operations of a maximum duration of 36 months. Only costs incurred after signature of the grant agreement by all parties are eligible.

Purchase costs of equipment (new or second-hand) are eligible costs, provided that it is written off in accordance with the tax and accounting rules applicable to the beneficiary and to its partners and generally accepted for items of the same type. Only the portion of the equipment's depreciation corresponding to the duration of the action and the actual rate of use for the operation may be taken into account by the Commission.

Costs of specific equipment which is directly and exclusively linked to the actions (such as e.g. road signs, IT equipments, etc) will be considered as fully eligible for reimbursement by the Commission at the EC contribution rate established for the relevant action. However, this only applies if the beneficiary keeps the equipment

³ <http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/>

⁴ www.civitas-initiative.eu

⁵ <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm>

purchased with the support of the EU grant in that specific action until the termination date of the EU grant. Purchase of land is excluded.

Certain tasks can be subcontracted if the beneficiaries do not intend to carry them out themselves. If so, rules provided by Article II.9 of the Grant Agreement apply. Contracts awarded to subcontractors should only cover the execution of a limited part of the action. The tasks concerned and the estimated costs must be set out clearly in the application.

7. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

7.1. Legal status of applicants:

Applications submitted in writing by legal persons who are domiciliated in a Member State of the European Union are eligible. Applicants must show that they exist as a legal person, by providing a certified true copy of their articles of association or equivalent.

7.2. Grounds for exclusion:

Applications will not be considered for a grant if the applicants are, at the time of the grant award procedure, in any of the following situations:

- a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
- c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;
- d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the authorizing officer or those of the country where the grant agreement is to be performed;
- e) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organization or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- f) they are currently subject to an administrative penalty referred to in Article 96(1) of the Financial Regulation⁶ for being guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the

⁶ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities, OJ L 248 of 16 September 2002, p. 1, amended by Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 1995/2006 of 13 December 2006, OJ L 390 of 30 December 2006, p. 1.

information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the contract procurement procedure or by the authorizing officer as a condition of participation in the grant award procedure, for failing to supply this information or for having been declared to be in serious breach of their obligations under contracts or grants covered by the budget;

- g) they are subject to a conflict of interest;
- h) they have been guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required or have failed to supply this information;
- i) they have been excluded from the contracts and grants financed by the Community budget, in accordance with Article 96(2) lit. a of the Financial Regulation.

The cases referred to in point 7.2. e) cover:

- a) cases of fraud as referred to in Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests established by the Council Act of 26 July 1995⁷;
- b) cases of corruption as referred to in Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of Member States of the European Union, established by the Council Act of 26 May 1997⁸;
- c) cases of participation in a criminal organization, as defined in Article 2(1) of Joint Action 98/733/JHA of the Council⁹;
- d) cases of money laundering as defined in Article 1 of Council Directive 91/308/EEC¹⁰.

Applicants must provide a declaration on the honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations listed in point 7.2.

⁷ OJ L 316, 27.11.1995, p. 48.

⁸ OJ C 195, 25.6.1997, p. 1.

⁹ OJ L 351, 29.12.1998, p.1. Joint action of 21 December 1998 on making it a criminal offence to participate in a criminal organization in the Member States of the European Union.

¹⁰ OJ L 309, 25.11.2005, p.15-36. Directive 2005/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2005 on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering and terrorist financing (Text with EEA relevance).

7.3. Administrative and financial penalties:

Without prejudice to the application of penalties laid down in the Grant agreement, applicants and beneficiaries who are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the contract procurement procedure or by the authorizing officer as a condition of participation in the grant award procedure, who have failed to supply this information or who have been declared to be in serious breach of their obligations under contracts or grants covered by the Community budget may be subject to administrative or financial penalties, in accordance with Article 96(1) of the Financial Regulation.

7.4. Eligible actions:

The granting of Community aid to projects of common interest is conditional to compliance with relevant Community law, inter alia concerning environmental protection, competition and public procurement.

No Community financial aid shall be awarded for parts of projects receiving funds from other sources of Community financing.

8. SELECTION CRITERIA

The applicants must have access to solid and adequate funding sources, so as to be able to maintain activities for the period of the action funded and to help finance the action. The applicants must have the professional skills and qualifications required to complete the proposed action.

8.1. Financial capacity of applicants:

Applicants must show that they have the financial capacity to carry out the action for which the grant is sought and must provide their balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed. The last of these provisions does not apply to public bodies.

Applicants must provide evidence for availability of the financing resources needed, apart from the co-financing of the EU required, in particular as far as own resources of the applicants and his partners, public funding and bank loans are concerned.

Applicants must fill in the form relative to legal entities, available from the website mentioned in point 1.

8.2. Technical capacity of applicants:

Technical and professional capacity – means of proof required

- (1) Applicants must have the technical capacity and the operational capability to carry out the action to be supported. They must provide evidence of their knowledge and a minimum experience of 3 years in the field of urban mobility. They must provide detailed curricula vitae of the team members and proof of the

managerial capabilities of the project director and manager, including educational background, degrees and diplomas, professional experience, and publications.

- (2) Applicants must demonstrate that competent authorities or organizations in the Member States covered by the action are committed to the action to be implemented. They must provide evidence of the contacts and organizations that they intend to consult and whose resources they intend to draw upon in the course of the execution of the action.

9. CRITERIA FOR THE AWARD OF THE GRANT

The actions to be supported must be designed to further the objectives referred to in point 5 above. The Commission will base the choice of proposals and the rate of Community co-financing on the following criteria:

9.1. Quality of the actions (80%):

The Commission will assess the proposals by evaluating:

- Their impact, namely the extent to which the proposed actions can contribute to achieving the goals of the Green Paper on urban mobility (20%);
- Their European dimension in terms of transfer and generalisation of knowledge and good practice, dissemination or wide application of the results;
- Their visibility, in terms of how the results of the actions will be communicated at the EU level, e.g. through publications, organisation of events, Internet sites, CD-ROMs (15%).
- Their cost-effectiveness, by assessing the cost-effectiveness ratio of the action and by evaluating the expected results in the light of the grant requested (15%).
- Their innovative character in terms of approaches presented and practices developed (15%)

9.2. Presentation of the application (20%):

The organisation of the action must be described in detail, in particular as regards the following aspects:

- Work plan : the work plan should include a clear and full description of the means to achieve the goals of the action, with a detailed financing plan, person-months attributed to specific tasks, and a meaningful and realistic timetable (10%)
- Methodology: the proposers have to present an evaluation method for the action with result indicators to meet the proposed objectives (5%)
- Evaluation: evaluation of the results in comparison with the objectives (5%).

Only proposals with a total score of 70% or higher and of at least 60% for each individual criterion will be taken into consideration for Community funding.

The evaluation of eligible proposals which fulfill the selection criteria is carried out by an Evaluation Committee, composed of DG TREN officials. This Committee draws up a list of projects for which a support is proposed, and the rate of Community contribution recommended, on the grounds of the award criteria.

10. GENERAL CONDITIONS FOR AWARDING GRANTS

The general conditions for awarding grants, particularly the definition of the eligible costs and the methods of payment, are set out in the draft grant agreement available at the Internet address mentioned in point 1. Applicants must compulsorily take notice of this document and must take into account the conditions for awarding grants when drawing up their proposal.

For all applications for pre-financing of over €100.000, a financial guarantee equivalent to the amount pre-financed will be required. In addition, the Commission reserves the right to require a financial guarantee for pre-financing amounts of under €100.000.

The budget for the action attached to the application must have revenue and expenditure in balance and show clearly the costs which are eligible for financing from the Community budget. Therefore, applicants must provide a detailed breakdown of all expenditure related to their proposal.

The Commission will only recognize the cost of entities having signed the grant agreement, whether as beneficiary or as co-beneficiary. It will no longer accept the co-financed participation of third parties to the grant agreement, when they are neither beneficiaries, nor co-beneficiaries, unless they are subcontractors, the costs of which are taken into account when considering the beneficiaries or co-beneficiaries.

For actions where the cost to be financed by the Commission exceeds €500.000, the proposal must be accompanied by an external audit report produced by an approved auditor and give an assessment of the financial viability of the applicant. This report must certify the accounts for the last year available. If this report is not submitted, the proposal will be rejected.

The Commission services would welcome applications in English and in any case a summary and an overview table in English.

11. SUBMISSIONS OF APPLICATIONS FOR A GRANT

Applications must be made only using the **model application form available at the Internet address mentioned in point 1**. For each application, **one signed original and five copies as well as an electronic version** must be supplied by the organisation coordinating the action. Partners must fill in the sections B (information about each applicant) and C (declaration by each applicant) of the application form.

The form relative to legal entities, available from the website mentioned in point 1, must also be filled in.

Any unsigned applications will be rejected when the applications are opened.

12. CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS FOR A GRANT

12.1. Grant applications can be sent in two ways:

(a) either sent by registered mail or by private courier

The proposal must be sent by registered mail or by private courier, dispatched not later than 31 March 2009 (the postmark or the receipt issued by the courier service serving as proof of the dispatch) to the following address:

By registered mail

European Commission Directorate-
General Energy and Transport DM 28 -
0/110 - Archives B-1049 Brussels
Belgium

With the mention “call for proposal Unit A.4”

By private courier

European Commission
Directorate-General Energy and Transport - DM 28 - 0/110
Avenue du Bourget 1
B-1140 Brussels (Evere)
Belgium

With the mention “call for proposal Unit A.4”

(b) or delivered by hand

Proposals delivered by hand must be submitted at the **Central Mail of the European Commission** by 11 March 2009, at **4:00 pm** (Brussels time), at the following address:

European Commission
Directorate-General Energy and Transport – DM 28 0/110
Avenue du Bourget 1
B-1140 Brussels (Evere)
Belgium

With the mention “call for proposal Unit A.4”

In this case, a receipt must be obtained as proof of submission, signed and dated by the official in the Commission's central mail department who took delivery. The department is open from 08.00 to 17.00 Monday to Thursday, and from 8.00 to 16.00 on Fridays. It is closed on Saturdays, Sundays and Commission holidays.

12.2. Practical arrangements:

Applications must be placed inside two sealed envelopes, one inside the other. The inner envelope should be marked as follows:

Call for proposals TREN/SUB 02-2008

Not to be opened by the postal service

DM 28 0/110 – Archives

If self-adhesive envelopes are used, they must be sealed with adhesive tape and the sender must sign across that tape.

13. INDICATIVE SCHEDULE

Reception of proposals: refer to point 12.1 above.

Evaluation: 15 May 2009.

Award decision: 15 June 2009.

Signature of the contract: July 2009

14. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

A specific document is enclosed to the present Call.