



Contracting Authority:

Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education
Department for Financing and Contracting of IPA Programme

**Modernisation of school curricula in VET schools in line with the
changing needs of the labour market / economy**

MULTI-ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME “HUMAN
RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT”, INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-
ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA)

Guidelines
for grant applicants

IPA BGUE 04 06 – Human Resources Development

Reference: Europeaid/131231/M/ACT/HR

Deadline for submission of proposals: 20 May 2011

NOTICE

This is a restricted Call for Proposals. In the first instance, only Concept Notes must be submitted for evaluation. Thereafter, applicants whose Concept Notes have been pre-selected will be invited to submit a Full Application Form. Further to the evaluation of the Full Applications, an eligibility check will be performed for those which are provisionally selected. This check will be undertaken on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the Contracting Authority and the signed "Declaration by the Applicant" sent together with the application.

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1. MODERNISATION OF SCHOOL CURRICULA IN VET SCHOOLS IN LINE WITH THE CHANGING NEEDS OF THE LABOUR MARKET/ECONOMY

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) is the EU instrument for the period 2007 – 2013, which replaces programmes CARDS, Phare, ISPA, and SAPARD. The Republic of Croatia is the beneficiary of the IPA programme from 2007 until the moment of its accession to the EU. This Grant Scheme is financed under the Component IV of IPA, Operational Programme for Human Resources Development (HRDOP), Priority Axis 3: Enhancing human capital and employability.

Current provision of VET schools in Croatia does not always ensure acquirement of competences needed at labour market because educational programmes are not updated fast enough. Furthermore, capacities of VET schools to organise modern and relevant practical training needs to be strengthened so they can provide up-to date competences and access to latest technologies to VET students in order to raise their labour market relevance. However schools, through bottom-up approach, can develop in school curricula, in line with Primary and Secondary School Education Act (OG 87/2008), innovative extracurricular and other education activities, programs and projects to bridge current gap.

This grant scheme will represent a continuation of activities that were implemented through IPA IV HRD “Implementation of new curricula” project and grant scheme and of results/milestones of CARDS 2002 and CARDS 2003 VET projects. Intention of this grant scheme is to potentiate further development and raising of the capacities of VET schools for provision of modern and student oriented teaching; especially school based practical training in line with the VET Act and the changing needs of the labour market / economy. VET schools should focus on developing and implementing new and modern scientific, technical and innovative achievements of their provision that will raise labour market relevance of their students. This can include relevant capacity building activities, in close co-operation with the key stakeholders at the regional / local level. They should be particularly encouraged to engage with the social partners (employers, trade unions, local governments) to ensure that VET school curricula, through extracurricular activities and projects, address specific shortage of vocational skills. (i.e. in sectors where there is a shortage of skills at the national/regional level; in sectors with specific skill demands in relation to the introduction of new technologies and/or sectors that are undergoing specific economic changes (industry restructuring) and where specific needs of SMEs on local/regional level exist, etc.). Activities of this project should also include procurement of all relevant equipment needed for workshops or laboratories to carry out modern and up-to date school based practical training.

The implementation of this grant scheme must contribute to the achievement of the output indicator which is defined for Priority axis 3: Enhancing human capital and employability, Measure 3.1: Further development of the CROQF in the HRD OP (Section 3.2. of the HRD OP “Indicators”) - Number of VET schools implementing new features in VET. Also projects have to contribute to the fulfilment of at least one and/or more indicators listed in section 1.2 of these Guidelines for Applicants.

Additionally to this applicant is requested to provide other objectively verifiable indicators for these projects in the attached Logical Framework Matrix on the level of the overall objective, project purpose and results as appropriate.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

The **global objective** of this Call for Proposals is:

To reinforce the introduction of new modern and innovative contents /features into VET schools provision within initial VET system, in line with the VET Act and Primary and Secondary School Education Act, with a view of ensuring their labour market relevance / adaptability, raising their capacities for provision of modern school based practical training as well as meeting the needs of the knowledge-based economy.

The **specific objective (s)** of this Call for Proposals is/are:

- to provide support to VET schools in developing bottom-up approaches so they can provide up-to date competences and access to latest technologies to VET students in order to raise their labour market relevance;
- to encourage VET schools in developing and implementing new and modern scientific, technical and innovative achievements in their provision.

Priority issues

The priorities of the Grant programme will be as follows:

- To develop and implement new innovative features in provision of VET schools in close co-operation with the social partners at the regional / local level;
- To raise capacities (human, material, spatial, etc.) of VET schools for provision of modern practical school based training,
- To enhance the capacities of VET teachers for the introduction of modern, student-centred approaches to teaching.
- To improve other VET school curriculum-driven aspects of the VET schools functioning in full compliance with the quality assurance mechanisms established at the national / EU level.

with the focus on the following target groups

- VET students;
- Staff of the VET schools, including:
 - VET principals;
 - VET teachers and trainers.
 - trainers involved in practical training (including apprentice schemes) at enterprises
- Social partners at the regional / local level.

Projects have to contribute to the fulfilment of at least one and/or more of the following indicators:

- number of VET schools implementing new features in VET school curricula through extracurricular and other education activities, programs and projects, within school curricula;
- number of VET schools equipped with modern facilities and/or equipment necessary for provision of modern and up-to date school based practical training;
- number of learning aids necessary for introduction of modern, student-centred approaches to teaching and delivery of modern and up-to date school based practical training introduced;
- number of VET teachers and trainers finished school based in-service training related to introduction of modern, student-centred approaches to teaching and delivery of modern and up-to date school based practical training.

1.3 FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

The overall indicative amount made available under this Call for Proposals is **EUR 2,600,000**, in case additional funds become available, the Contracting Authority can award them according to the rules for this Call for Proposals. The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

Size of grants

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

- minimum amount: EUR 40,000
- maximum amount: EUR 200,000

Any grant awarded under this Call for Proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum percentages of total eligible costs of the action

- Minimum percentage: 60% of the total estimated eligible costs of the action.
- Maximum percentage: 95% of the total eligible costs of the action (see also section 2.1.4).

The balance must be financed from the applicant's or partners' own resources, or from sources other than the European Union budget or the European Development Fund¹.

The signing of the contract under this Call for Proposals is subject to the adoption of the Commission Decision modifying the maximum indicative amount of the Community contribution from IPA under the Human Resources Development Operational Programme (Component IV), the ratification by the Croatian Parliament of the related Financing Agreement and its entry into force.

¹ Where a grant is financed by the European Development Fund, any mention of European Union financing must be understood as referring to European Development Fund financing.

2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of actions financed under this Call, in conformity with the provisions of the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EU external actions, which is applicable to the present call (available on the Internet at this address: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/index_en.htm).

2.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

- applicant(s) which may request a grant (2.1.1), and their partners (2.1.2);
- actions for which a grant may be awarded (2.1.3);
- types of cost which may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant (2.1.4).

2.1.1 *Eligibility of applicants: who may apply?*

(1) In order to be eligible for a grant, applicants **must**:

- a) be legally registered as an organisation or institution for at least three years **and**
- b) be secondary VET schools **and**
- c) be nationals² of a Member State of the European Union or Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey and Kosovo under UNSC Resolution 1244/99; countries that are beneficiaries of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument; Member States of the European Economic Area: Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway **and**
- d) be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with their partners, not acting as an intermediary **and**

(2) Applicants must not derive profit from the grant i.e. the grant can only cover costs of activities.

(3) Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations which are listed in Section 2.3.3 of the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EU external actions (available from the following Internet address: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/index_en.htm);

In part A, section III of the grant application form (“Declaration by the applicant”), applicants must declare that they do not fall into any of these situations.

Grant applicants and, if they are legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over them, are informed that, should they be in one of the situations mentioned in:

- Commission decision (2008/969/EC, Euratom) of 16 December 2008 on the Early Warning System (EWS) for the use of authorising officers of the Commission and the executive agencies (OJ, L344, 20.12.2008, p.125);
- Commission Regulation (2008/1302/EC, Euratom) of 17 December 2008 on the central Exclusion database – CED (OJ L 344, 20.12.2008, p.12),

² Such nationality being determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a “Memorandum of Understanding” has been concluded.

their personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the EWS and CED, and communicated to the persons and entities listed in the above-mentioned decision and regulation, in relation to the award or the execution of a procurement contract or a grant agreement or decision.

2.1.2 Partnerships and eligibility of partners

Applicants must act with partner organisations as specified hereafter.

At least one VET school must be a partner³.

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 on the grant beneficiary himself.

In addition to the categories referred to in section 2.1.1, the following are however also eligible:

- social partners at the local, regional or sectoral level (respective regional / sectoral branches of professional / sectoral associations, employers organizations, chambers and / or trade unions **or**;
- regional and local authorities **or**;
- non-governmental organisations that have proven track record of experience in the relevant area to the Action and contributes to the design and implementation of an action in line with the needs of the local economies / local communities **or**;
- individual enterprises, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), operating at the local/regional level **or**;
- higher education institutions
- cooperatives.

The following are not partners and do not have to sign the “partnership statement”:

- 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 referred to in section 2.1.1. The associates have to be mentioned in Part B section IV - “Associates of the Applicant participating in the Action” of the Grant Application Form.

- Contractors

The grant beneficiaries have the possibility to award contracts. Contractors are neither partners nor associates, and are subject to the procurement rules set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

The applicant will act as the lead organisation and, if selected, as the contracting party (the "Beneficiary").

2.1.3 Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made

Definition: An action (or project) is composed of a set of activities.

Duration

The initial planned duration of an action may not be lower than 8 months nor exceed 12 months.

³ Please note that „Applicant“ is not considered to be a „partner“.

Sectors or themes

N/A

Location

Actions must take place in Croatia with exception of study trips, which can take place also in EU countries. However, the cost of such activities should not exceed 10% of the total eligible cost of the action.

Types of action

The actions should relate to the **priorities** of this Call for Proposal as stated in section 1.2 of the Guidelines. Although the intention is to clearly link the project proposal to one type of relevant action, different types of the below listed actions may be combined within a single project proposal. Relevant actions are as follows:

- Development and implementation of innovative extracurricular and other education activities, programmes and projects, in close co-operation with the social partners at the regional / local level in, in order to modernise provision of VET schools;
- Raising of VET school capacities (human, material, spatial, etc.) for provision of modern and up-to-date school based practical training;
- Actions involving development of methods and collaborative mechanisms between the VET schools and social partners at the regional / local level aiming to improve match between supply and demand on the local labour market;
- Actions aiming to improve capacity of VET institutions in the introduction of modern, student-centred approaches to teaching;
- Actions aiming at improving capacities of VET schools for development and implementation of new and modern, scientific, technological and innovative achievements and features in their work with the purpose of raising VET students labour market relevance;
- Actions aiming at improving relevant/actual *know-how* of teachers and trainers within their respective sector regarding modern technologies and recent industry developments through partnerships with local/regional SMEs;
- Actions focused on increasing employability upon graduation of the VET students through better quality of VET schools provision and adaptability to labour market demands.

Types of activity

The activities should relate to one action or (where applicable) a combination of more actions. The following list is not exhaustive and appropriate innovative activities that are not mentioned below but fall into the above mentioned types of action may also be considered for support. By way of illustration, an action could contain a range of the following activities:

1. Developing and delivering a VET school development plans / school curricula / joint action plans with the social partners at the sectoral / regional / local level related to introduction of the new features in VET school provision through extra curricula activities, other education activities, programmes and projects;
2. Developing and implementing new VET-related features of VET school provision, in close co-operation with social and/or other partners at the local / regional level, that will through extra curricula activities, innovative education programmes and/or projects address further raising of VET competences of VET students, needed for their labour market relevance (e.g. summer ICT workshops / camps for VET students, non-traditional form of student-centred methods through development of different local/regional relevant projects, internship / work-placement in relevant enterprise and other relevant mechanisms for ensuring better mobility and employability of VET students);
3. Developing new features of VET school provision that will through extra curricula activities, innovative education programmes and/or projects address identified urgent skills needs or recognising future skills shortages related to the high-technology and/or sector faced with specific economic changes at the regional level (including the industrial restructuring), current

- implementation of specific regional measures, specific needs of the SME sector at the regional / local level, etc.;
4. Carrying out specific studies / researches and introducing specific elements in to the VET school provision with a view of:
 - a. implementation of new and modern, scientific, technological and innovative achievements and features
 - b. improving gender equality / gender mainstreaming in specific VET sectors (e.g. the ICT sector which is dominated by the male population);
 5. Undertaking specific gaps and needs analysis activities aimed at improving the capacities of VET teachers for the development and implementation of the aforementioned elements of the new features of VET school provision;
 6. Delivering action plans for raising the capacities of VET school for provision of modern up-to date school based practical training and their implementation;
 7. Delivering and implementing action plans for development and implementation of new and modern, scientific, technological and innovative achievements in VET school with the purpose of raising VET students labour market relevance;
 8. Development of innovative school based in-service training for VET teachers for mastering:
 - (i) special VET didactics / modern pedagogical and VET student-centred teaching and learning methods provision of modern up-to date practical training
 - (ii) new technologies from the VET point of view (i.e. how they impact on the way jobs are performed) in co-operation with other VET schools, social partners and other key stakeholders (by means of e.g.: modular training, including e-learning; study-visits / peer-learning; job-shadowing /work-placement in companies / peer-teaching; participation in / organisation of conferences, round tables and other events; etc.);
 9. Development and implementation of partnership between VET school and local/regional SMEs with the purpose of bridging the gap of VET teachers related to modern technologies and recent industry developments and organisation of job-shadowing /work-placement in companies for VET teachers;
 10. Technical assistance (external expertise) to VET schools for the delivery of documents related to VET school innovation approach, methodical tools and various innovative and practice-based teaching/ learning materials: textbooks, worksheets, tool-kits for teachers, manual on efficient usage of new equipment, portfolios of best-practice examples, etc.);
 11. Introducing/extending the use of ICT in teaching and learning activities in line with requirements of the new features of VET school provision;
 12. Setting up/developing networks with other relevant VET schools, higher education and/or research institutions and/or individual enterprises from the specific VET sector(s) with the aim of developing innovative and high-tech features in the work of VET schools, including exchange and mainstreaming of good practices, organisation of seminars, conferences, etc.

In addition to the aforementioned “soft” activities, specialized didactic / ICT and/or other equipment may be purchased with a view of supporting the implementation of innovative extracurricular and other education activities, programmes and projects and/or provision of modern up-to date school based practical training (maximum 27% of the total direct eligible project costs, including costs related to the VET school facilities’ adaptations and refurbishment that are necessary for the installation of the equipment purchased within a grant contract).

Sub-granting is not allowed.

Note that the applicant must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU-financing (see the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU external actions laid down and published by the European Commission at (see http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index_en.htm).

The following types of action are ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- academic researches that are not related to VET schools;
- single conferences or congresses. Conferences can be financed from the grant only if they form part of a wider range of activities to be implemented during the lifetime of the action.

Number of applications and grants per applicant

An applicant may not submit more than one application under this Call for Proposals.

An applicant may not be awarded more than one grant under this Call for Proposals.

An applicant may at the same time be partner in another application.

Partners may take part in more than one application.

<h4><i>2.1.4 Eligibility of costs: costs which may be taken into consideration for the grant</i></h4>

Only "eligible costs" can be taken into account for a grant. The categories of costs considered as eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and a ceiling for "eligible costs". Note that the eligible costs must be based on real costs based on supporting documents (except for subsistence costs and indirect costs where flat-rate funding applies).

Recommendations to award a grant are always subject to the condition that the checking process which precedes the signing of the contract does not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget (for instance arithmetical errors, inaccuracies or unrealistic costs and other ineligible costs). The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the Contracting Authority to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. The amount of the grant and the percentage of the EU co-financing as a result of these corrections may not be increased.

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

Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under the Call for Proposals, costs must comply with the provisions of Article 14 of the General Conditions to the Standard Grant Contract (see Annex E of the Guidelines).

Note that taxes, including VAT will only be accepted as eligible costs when the Beneficiary (or, where applicable, its partners) can show it cannot reclaim them. Taxes shall in such case be included in the Budget of the Action under the heading "Taxes".

Contingency reserve

A contingency reserve not exceeding 5% of the estimated direct eligible costs (excluding taxes) may be included in the Budget of the Action. It can only be used with the **prior written authorisation** of the Contracting Authority.

Eligible indirect costs (overheads)

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding fixed at not more than 7% of the estimated total eligible direct costs (excluding taxes). Indirect costs are eligible provided that

they do not include costs assigned to another heading of the budget of the standard grant contract. The applicant may be asked to justify the requested percentage before contracting. However, once the flat-rate has been fixed in the special conditions of the standard grant contract, no supporting documents need to be provided.

If the applicant is in receipt of an operating grant financed from the EU, no indirect costs may be claimed within the proposed budget for the action.

Contributions in kind

Contributions in kind are not considered actual expenditure and are not eligible costs. The contributions in kind may not be treated as co-financing by the Beneficiary.

The cost of staff assigned to the Action is not a contribution in kind and may be considered as co-financing in the Budget of the Action when paid by the Beneficiary or his partners.

Civil servants or other public employees of central or local administrations which participate under this call for proposals as applicant or partners may not receive fees for their contribution to the action other than their salaries in the respective institution. The salaries of the civil servants or other public employees of the central and local administrations may be presented as co-financing contribution of the applicant or partners.

Notwithstanding the above, if the description of the action as proposed by the Beneficiary foresees the contributions in kind, such contributions have to be provided.

Ineligible costs

The following expenditure shall not be eligible:

- taxes, including value added taxes, unless they are not recoverable by any means and it is established that they are borne by the final beneficiary;
- customs and import duties, or any other charges;
- purchase, rent or leasing of land and existing buildings, unless the rent or leasing is exclusively related to the period of co-financing of the operation, and that it is preferable to other solutions in terms of the best value for money;
- fines, financial penalties and expenses of litigation;
- operating costs, unless the operating costs relate exclusively to the period of co-financing of the operation;
- second hand equipment;
- bank charges, with the exception of costs relating to ban guarantee or comparable surety to be lodged by the beneficiary of a grant;
- conversion costs, charges and exchange losses associated with any of the component specific euro accounts, as well as other purely financial expenses;
- contributions in kind;
- maintenance and rental costs, unless the rental costs relate exclusively to the period of co-financing of the operation;
- depreciation costs for the infrastructure, unless following conditions are met:
 - No national or Community grants have contributed to the purchase of the related investment;
 - Depreciation costs are calculated with the relevant applicable national accountancy rules;
 - Costs relate exclusively to the period of co-financing of the operation concerned;
- debts and debt service charges
- provision for losses or potential future liabilities;
- interest owed;
- costs declared by the beneficiary and covered by another action or work programme;
- credit to third parties

2.2 HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

Prior registration in PADOR for this Call for Proposals is not obligatory. Information in PADOR will not be drawn upon in the present Call.

PADOR is an on-line database in which organisations register themselves and update regularly their data, through the Europeaid website: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/onlineservices/pador/index_en.htm

Before starting the registration of your organisation in PADOR, please read the "Quick guide" available on the website. It explains the registration process.

You have to indicate on the paper version of the proposal the EuropeAid ID (EID). To get this identification, your organisation must register, save and "sign" (committing your responsibility) in PADOR obligatory data (on each screen the fields written in orange) and the related documents (see section 2.4).

Notwithstanding the above, if the applicant and/or its partner(s) find themselves in a situation where it is objectively impossible to register in PADOR, it shall submit a justification without delay together with supporting documents, where possible. This objective impossibility should go beyond the control of the applicant and/or its partner(s) and, in principle, be of a general nature (i.e. not attributable to the specific circumstances of the applicant and/or its partner(s) themselves). Moreover, in this case, the applicant shall complete the "PADOR off-line form"⁴ in annex of these Guidelines⁵ and send it by the submission deadline. Data will be introduced in PADOR on the basis of the information included in the application form by the European Commission. If, at a later stage, the organisation wishes to update itself its data, an access request will have to be sent to the PADOR helpdesk.

All questions related to the registration in PADOR should be addressed to the PADOR helpdesk at: Europeaid-pador@ec.europa.eu.

2.2.1 *Concept Note content*

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the instructions on the Concept Note included in the Grant Application Form annexed to these Guidelines (Annex A).

Applicants must apply in English.

In the Concept note, the applicants must only provide an estimate of the total costs of the action together with the amount of contribution and percentage requested from the Contracting Authority. Only the applicants invited to submit a full application in the second phase will be required to present a detailed budget. The elements assessed on the basis of the concept note may not be modified by the applicant in the full application form. The EU contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 20%. The applicant is free to adapt the percentage of co-financing required within the minimum and maximum amount and percentages of co-financing, as laid down in the present Guidelines under section 1.2.

Any error or major discrepancy related to the points listed in the instructions on the Concept Note may lead to the rejection of the Concept Note.

⁴ which corresponds to sections 3 and 4 of part B of the application form"

Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is unclear, thus preventing the Contracting Authority from conducting an objective assessment.

Hand-written Concept Notes will not be accepted.

Please note that only the Concept Note form will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that this document contain ALL relevant information concerning the action. No additional annexes should be sent.

2.2.2 *Where and how to send concept notes*

The Concept note together with the Checklist for the Concept Note (Part A section II of the grant application form) and the Declaration by the applicant for the Concept Note (Part A section III of the grant application form) must be submitted in one original and 3 copies in A4 size, each bound.

Concept Notes must be submitted as well in electronic format (CD-Rom). The electronic format must contain **exactly the same** application as the paper version enclosed.

Where an applicant sends several different concept notes (if allowed to do so by the Guidelines of the Call), each one must be sent separately.

The outer envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the call for proposals**, together with the full name and address of the applicant, and the words "Not to be opened before the opening session" and "*Ne otvarati prije sastanka odbora*".

Concept Notes must be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) at the address below:

Postal address

Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education
(Agencija za strukovno obrazovanje i obrazovanje odraslih)
Department for Financing and Contracting of IPA Programme
Radnička cesta 37b, HR-10000 Zagreb
Croatia

Address for hand delivery or by private courier service

Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education
(Agencija za strukovno obrazovanje i obrazovanje odraslih)
Department for Financing and Contracting of IPA Programme
Radnička cesta 37b, HR-10000 Zagreb
Croatia

Concept Notes sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

Applicants must verify that their Concept Note is complete using the Checklist for Concept Note (Part A section II of the grant application form). Incomplete concept notes may be rejected.

2.2.3 *Deadline for submission of the Concept Notes*

The deadline for the submission of Concept Note is 20 May 2011 as evidenced by the date of dispatch, the postmark or the date of the deposit slip. In the case of hand-deliveries, the deadline for receipt is 20 May 2011 at 15:00 CET (Central European Time) as evidenced by the signed and dated receipt. Any Concept Note submitted after the deadline will automatically be rejected.

However, for reasons of administrative efficiency, the Contracting Authority may reject any Concept Note received after the effective date of approval of the Concept note evaluation (see indicative calendar under section 2.5.2)

2.2.4 *Further information for Concept Note*

An information session on this Call for Proposals will be held on 15 April 2011 at 9:00 hours CET.

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of concept notes to the below address(es), indicating clearly the reference of the Call for Proposals:

E-mail address: defco@asoo.hr

The Contracting Authority has no obligation to provide further clarifications after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for the submission of concept notes.

In the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of an applicant, a partner, an action or specific activities.

Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with the answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure, may be published on the internet at the EuropeAid web site <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome> and <https://www.aso.hr/defco>, as the need arises. It is therefore highly recommended to regularly consult the abovementioned website in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

All questions related to PADOR registration should be addressed to the PADOR help desk: europeaid-on-line-registration-hd@ec.europa.eu

2.2.5 *Full Application form*

Applicants invited to submit a full application form following the pre-selection of the Concept Note must do so by using the Part B of the application form annexed to these Guidelines (Annex A). Applicants should keep strictly to the format of the application form and fill in the paragraphs and the pages in order.

The elements assessed on the basis of the concept note cannot be modified by the applicant in the full application form. The EU contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 20%, while the applicant is free to adapt the percentage of co-financing required within the minimum and maximum amount and percentages of co-financing, as laid down in these Guidelines under section 1.2.

Applicants must submit their applications in the same language as their concept note.

Please complete the full application form carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly.

Any error related to the points listed in the Checklist (Part B, Section V of the Grant Application form) or any major inconsistency in the full application form (e.g. the amounts mentioned in the budget are inconsistent with those mentioned in the full application form) may lead to the rejection of the application.

Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is unclear, thus preventing the Contracting Authority from conducting an objective assessment.

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Please note that only the full application form and the published annexes which have to be filled in (budget, logical framework) will be transmitted to the evaluators and assessors. It is therefore of utmost importance

that these documents contain ALL relevant information concerning the action. **No supplementary annexes should be sent.**

2.2.6 *Where and how to send the Full Application form*

Applications must be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) at the address below:

Postal address

Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education
(Agencija za strukovno obrazovanje i obrazovanje odraslih)
Department for Financing and Contracting of IPA Programme
Radnička cesta 37b, HR-10000 Zagreb
Croatia

Address for hand delivery or by private courier service

Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education
(Agencija za strukovno obrazovanje i obrazovanje odraslih)
Department for Financing and Contracting of IPA Programme
Radnička cesta 37b, HR-10000 Zagreb
Croatia

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

Applications must be submitted in one original and 3 copies in A4 size, each bound. The full application form, budget and logical framework must also be supplied in electronic format (CD-Rom) in a separate and unique file (e.g. the full application form must not be split into several different files). The electronic format must contain **exactly the same** application as the paper version.

The Checklist (Section V of part B of the grant application form) and the Declaration by the applicant (Section VI of part B of the grant application form) must be stapled separately and enclosed in the envelope. Where an applicant sends several different applications (if allowed to do so by the Guidelines of the Call), each one must be sent separately.

The outer envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the Call for Proposals**, the full name and address of the applicant, and the words "Not to be opened before the opening session" and "Ne otvarati prije sastanka Odbora".

Applicants must verify that their application is complete using the checklist (section V of part B of the grant application form). Incomplete applications may be rejected.

2.2.7 *Deadline for submission of the Full Application form*

The deadline for the submission of applications will be indicated in the letter sent to the applicants whose application has been preselected.

However, for reasons of administrative efficiency, the Contracting Authority may reject any application received after the effective date of approval of evaluation report for full applications (see indicative calendar under section 2.5.2)

2.2.8 *Further information for the Full Application form*

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of applications to the addresses listed below, indicating clearly the reference of the Call for Proposals:

E-mail address: defco@asoo.hr

Contracting Authority has no obligation to provide further clarifications after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for the submission of applications.

In the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of an applicant, a partner or an action.

Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with the answers, will be published on the internet at website <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome> and <https://www.aso.hr/defco>. It is therefore highly recommended to regularly consult the abovementioned website in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

2.3 EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

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

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in paragraph 2.1.3, the application shall be rejected on this sole basis.

(1) STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION

The following will be assessed:

- The submission deadline has been respected. If the deadline has not been respected the application will automatically be rejected.
- The Concept Note satisfies all the criteria specified in points 1-5 of the Checklist (section II of part A of the grant application form). If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that sole basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The evaluation of the Concept Notes that have passed the first administrative check will cover the relevance and design of the action.

The Concept Note will be given an overall score out of 50 points in accordance with the breakdown provided in the Evaluation Grid below. The evaluation shall also verify the compliance with instructions provided in the guidance for Concept Note.

The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheadings. Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following assessment categories: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

		Scores	
1. Relevance of the action		Sub-score	30
1.1	How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the Call for Proposals?*	5x2**	
1.2	How relevant to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies) or region(s) is the proposal? (including synergy with other EU initiatives and avoidance of duplication)***	5x2*	
1.3	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?	5	
1.4	Does the proposal contain specific added-value elements, such as environmental issues, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of indigenous peoples, or innovation and best practices?	5	
2. Design of the action		Sub-score	20
2.1	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 relevant stakeholders?	5x2**	
2.2	Is the action feasible and consistent in relation to the objectives and expected results?	5x2**	
TOTAL SCORE			50

* Note: A score of 5 (very good) will only be allocated if the proposal specifically addresses more than one priority as indicated in section 1.2 (Objectives of the programme) of these guidelines.

** the scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance

*** Note: Maximum score of 5 points can be awarded only to projects where an applicant is located within the counties listed below.⁶

Once all Concept Notes have been assessed, a list will be established with the proposed actions ranked according to their total score.

First, only the Concept Notes which have been given a score of a minimum of 30 points will be considered for pre-selection.

Secondly, the list of Concept Notes will be reduced in accordance to the ranking to those whose sum of requested contributions amounts to EUR 5,200,000 the available budget for this Call for Proposals, taking into account the indicative financial envelopes foreseen by lot.

Following the Concept Note evaluation, the Contracting Authority will send a letter to all applicants, indicating whether their application was submitted prior to the deadline, informing them of the reference number they have been allocated and whether the Concept Note were evaluated and the results of that evaluation. The preselected applicants will subsequently be invited to submit full applications.

⁶ Bjelovarsko-bilogorska, Brodsko-posavska, Karlovačka, Koprivničko-križevačka, Ličko-senjska, Osječko-baranjska, Požeško-slavonska, Sisačko-moslavačka, Šibensko-kninska, Virovitičko-podravska and Vukovarsko-srijemska.

(2) STEP 2: EVALUATION OF THE FULL APPLICATION

First, the following will be assessed:

- The submission deadline has been respected. If the deadline has not been respected the application will automatically be rejected.
- The full application form satisfies all the criteria specified in points 1-8 of the Checklist (Section V. of part B of the grant application form). If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

An evaluation of the quality of the applications, including the proposed budget, and of the capacity of the applicant and its partners, will be subsequently carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in the Evaluation Grid included below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and award criteria.

The selection criteria are intended to help evaluate the applicants' financial and operational capacity to ensure that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out and, where appropriate, to participate in its funding;
- have the management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed action. This also applies to any partners of the applicant.

The award criteria allow the quality of the applications submitted to be evaluated in relation to the set objectives and priorities, and grants to be awarded to actions which maximise the overall effectiveness of the Call for Proposals. They enable the selection of applications which the Contracting Authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities. They cover such aspects as the relevance of the action, its consistency with the objectives of the Call for Proposals, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

Scoring:

The evaluation criteria are divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following guidelines: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Evaluation Grid

Section	Maximum Score
1. Financial and operational capacity	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. Relevance of the action	30
<i>Score transferred from the Concept Note evaluation</i>	
3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the action	20
3.1 Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	5

3.2 Is the action plan clear and feasible?	5
3.3 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the action? Is evaluation foreseen?	5
3.4 Is the partners' level of involvement and participation in the action satisfactory?*	5
4. Sustainability of the action	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 (<i>how will the activities be financed after the funding ends?</i>) - institutionally (<i>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?</i>) - at policy level (where applicable) (<i>what will be the structural impact of the action — e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc?</i>) - environmentally (if applicable) (<i>will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?</i>)	5
5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action	15
5.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	5x2*
5.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	5
Maximum total score	100

*the scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance

Note on Section 1. Financial and operational capacity

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

Provisional selection

Following the evaluation, a table listing the applications ranked according to their score and within the available financial envelope will be established as well as a reserve list following the same criteria.

(3) STEP 3: VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF THE APPLICANT AND PARTNERS

The eligibility verification, based on the supporting documents requested by the Contracting Authority (see section 2.4) will only be performed for the applications that have been provisionally selected according to their score and within the available financial envelope.

- The Declaration by the applicant (Section VI of part B the grant application form) will be cross-checked with the supporting documents provided by the applicant. Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the Declaration by the applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the application on that sole basis.
- The eligibility of the applicant, the partners, and the action will be verified according to the criteria set out in sections 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3.

Following the above analysis and if necessary, any rejected application will be replaced by the next best placed application in the reserve list that falls within the available financial envelope, which will then be examined for the eligibility of its applicant and the partners.

2.4 SUBMISSION OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR PROVISIONALLY SELECTED APPLICATIONS

Applicants who have been provisionally selected or listed under the reserve list will be informed in writing by the Contracting Authority. They will be requested to supply the following documents in order to allow the Contracting Authority to verify the eligibility of the applicants and their partners:⁷

1. The statutes or articles of association of the applicant organisation⁸ and of each partner organisation. Where the Contracting Authority has recognized the applicant's eligibility for another call for proposals under the same budget line within 2 years before the deadline for receipt of applications, the applicant may submit, instead of its statutes, copy of the document proving the eligibility of the applicant in a former Call (e.g.: copy of the special conditions of a grant contract received during the reference period), unless a change in its legal status has occurred in the meantime.⁹
2. Copy of the applicant's latest accounts (the profit and loss account and the balance sheet for the previous financial year for which the accounts have been closed)¹⁰.
3. A financial identification form conforming to the model attached at Annex E of these Guidelines, certified by the bank to which the payments will be made. This bank must be located in the country where the applicant is registered. If the applicant has already signed a contract with the European Commission or where the European Commission has been in charge of the payments of a contract, a copy of the previous financial identification form may be provided instead, unless a change in its bank account occurred in the meantime.

Where the requested supporting documents are not uploaded in PADOR they must be supplied in the form of originals, photocopies or scanned versions (i.e. showing legible stamps, signatures and dates) of the said originals. However, the Legal entity sheet and the financial identification form must always be submitted in original.

Where such documents are not in one of the official languages of the European Union or in Croatian a translation into English of the relevant parts of these documents, proving the applicant's eligibility, must be attached and will prevail for the purpose of analysing the application.

Where these documents are in an official language of the European Union other than English, it is **strongly** recommended, in order to facilitate the evaluation, to provide a translation of the relevant parts of the documents, proving the applicant's eligibility, into English.

If the abovementioned supporting documents are not provided before the deadline indicated in the request for supporting documents sent to the applicant by the Contracting Authority, the application may be rejected.

Based on the verification of the supporting documents by the Evaluation Committee it will make a final recommendation to the Contracting Authority which will decide on the award of grants.

⁷ No supporting document will be requested for applications for a grant not exceeding EUR 25 000.

⁸ Where the applicant and/or (a) partner(s) is a public body created by a law, a copy of the said law must be provided

⁹ To be inserted only where the eligibility conditions have not changed from one call for proposals to the other.

¹⁰ This obligation does not apply to natural persons who have received a scholarship, nor to public bodies nor to international organisations. It does not apply either when the accounts are in practice the same documents as the external audit report already provided pursuant to section 2.4.2.

2.5 NOTIFICATION OF THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION

2.5.1 Content of the decision

Applicants will be informed in writing of the Contracting Authority's decision concerning their application and, in case of rejections, the reasons for the negative decision.

Applicants believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may file a complaint. See further section 2.4.15 of the Practical Guide.

2.5.2 Indicative time table

	DATE	TIME*
Information meeting (if any)	15 April 2011	09:00
Deadline for request for any clarifications from the Contracting Authority	29 April 2011	15:00
Last date on which clarifications are issued by the Contracting Authority	9 May 2011	-
Deadline for submission of Concept Notes	20 May 2011	15:00
Information to applicants on the opening & administrative checks and concept note evaluation (step 1)	25 August 2011*	-
Invitations for submission of Full Application Form	25 August 2011*	-
Deadline for submission of Full Application Form	28 October 2011*	-
Information to applicants on the evaluation of the Full Application Form (step 2)	9 February 2012*	-
Notification of award (after the eligibility check) (step 3)	30 April 2012*	-
Contract signature	7 May 2012*	-

***Provisional date.** All times are in the time zone of the country of the Contracting Authority

This indicative timetable may be updated by the Contracting Authority during the procedure. In such case, the updated timetable shall be published on internet at the EuropeAid web site <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome> and <https://www.aso.hr/defco> .

2.6 CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION FOLLOWING THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION TO AWARD A GRANT

Following the decision to award a grant, the Beneficiary will be offered a contract based on the Contracting Authority's standard grant contract (see Annex F of these Guidelines). By signing the Application form (Annex A of these Guidelines), the applicant declares accepting, in case where it is awarded a grant, the Contractual conditions as laid down in the standard grant contract.

Implementation contracts

Where implementation of the action requires the Beneficiary to award procurement contracts, it must award the contract to the tenderer offering the best value for money, that is to say, the best price-quality ratio, in compliance with the principles of transparency and equal treatment for potential contractors, care being taken to avoid any conflict of interests. To this end, the Beneficiary must follow the procedures set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

3. LIST OF ANNEXES

DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED

ANNEX A: GRANT APPLICATION FORM (WORD FORMAT)

ANNEX B: BUDGET (EXCEL FORMAT)

ANNEX C: LOGICAL FRAMEWORK (EXCEL FORMAT)¹¹

ANNEX D: FINANCIAL IDENTIFICATION FORM

DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION

ANNEX E: STANDARD GRANT CONTRACT

- ANNEX II: GENERAL CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO EUROPEAN UNION-FINANCED GRANT CONTRACTS FOR EXTERNAL ACTIONS
- ANNEX IV: CONTRACT AWARD PROCEDURES
- ANNEX V: STANDARD REQUEST FOR PAYMENT
- ANNEX VI: MODEL NARRATIVE AND FINANCIAL REPORT
- ANNEX VII: MODEL REPORT OF FACTUAL FINDINGS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR AN EXPENDITURE VERIFICATION OF AN EU FINANCED GRANT CONTRACT FOR EXTERNAL ACTIONS
- ANNEX VIII: MODEL FINANCIAL GUARANTEE
- ANNEX IX: STANDARD TEMPLATE FOR TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP OF ASSETS

ANNEX F: DAILY ALLOWANCE RATES (PER DIEM), available at the following address:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/index_en.htm

PROJECT CYCLE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/publications/manuals-tools/t101_en.htm

¹¹ Optional where the total amount of the grants to be awarded under the Call for Proposals is EUR 100 000 or less.