SOUTH EAST EUROPE
Transnational Cooperation Programme

SEE Applicants' Guidelines
- Part 1 -
Expression of Interest

1st call for proposal

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Content

Introduction

The Expression of Interest (EoI) is the **first step** for applying for the funding of projects within the SEE Transnational Programme.

The application pack for the Expression of Interest is composed of the:

- Programme Manual
- Call for Proposals announcement
- Expression of Interest form
- Applicant's Guidelines (1st Part)

The Programme Manual provides useful information and guidance on how to develop an SEE Transnational project.

It is very important to carefully read the SEE Operational Programme and all of the documents in the application pack before filling in the Expression of Interest form. Projects which have a good level of planning to date, that meet the relevant Area of Intervention and follow the Call documents should be able to offer a level of detail and coherence in their EoI that positively evidences their preparedness.

The Expression of Interest form is an electronic document which needs to be filled out electronically and sent in at the latest, by the deadline set in the call for proposals. This should be done by uploading it on the Programme's website (www.southeast-europe.net). Expressions of Interest must only be submitted using the official form provided as part of this application pack.

Technical instructions

Applicants are asked to fill in only the **light yellow** fields of the Expression of Interest form. This must be completed in English which is the official language of the SEE Programme.

For technical reasons, the fields to describe the project are limited to a pre-defined number of characters. Fields are locked in order to ensure that all Applicants have the same amount of space for describing their project and answering the questions. Any text exceeding this space will not be visible and therefore cannot be taken into account when assessing the project. If the Applicant exceeds the space in the **light yellow** field a warning will appear.

Scroll down menus in **orange** fields allow the Applicant to select the appropriate response option. **Red** fields cannot be changed or edited as they are automatically completed. All **light yellow** fields must be filled in unless otherwise stated in the instruction field.

Expressions of Interest with incomplete Sections/fields will automatically be considered ineligible.

Instructions for filling in the EoI Sections

Section 1: Project identification

This Section refers to the general information related to the project. A maximum of 200 characters are allowed for writing the full project title and up to 50 characters for its acronym. The Applicant should note that effective acronyms should link to the project title/idea and also be easily remembered.

The Applicant must use the scroll down menus to complete fields 1.3 and 1.4, with the relevant Priority Axis and Area of Intervention.

Section 2: Number of participants in the projects

Applicants are requested to list the number of project participants/partners per country (only whole numbers are accepted). The total should include the Project Applicant.

Partners from a minimum of three partner states are required, of which at least one partner must be from a Member State.

All projects should foster a geographically integrated approach across administrative boundaries. In doing so projects should try to involve a proportionate, in terms of the Programme Area and the issue being addressed, number of partners able to offer benefits for the whole Area.

Section 3: Project Applicant

This Section provides the name, organisation type/status and contact details of the Project Applicant.

Note: Only potential Project's Lead Partners can apply as the Project Applicant.

Project Partners coming from the Programme's ERDF and IPA countries are entitled to apply as the Lead Partner. However, for reasons relating to the financial responsibility and general management of the project, it is strongly recommended that the role of Lead Partner is undertaken by an ERDF partner (for an explanation of the difference between a Financial and a functional Lead Partner please refer to the Glossary Section of the Programme Manual).

The legal status of the Applicant's institution should be selected from amongst a choice of three types of status: public, a body governed by public law as defined by the Art. 1, comma 9 of the Directive 2004/18/EC or a body governed by private law. For clarification on the definition of the three types of legal status, please refer to the Section 3.2.1 of the SEE Programme Manual. In addition, as part of 3.4, it is requested that the Applicant institution provides information on the anticipated source of cofinancing (state, regional, local, other public). Cofinancing can come from more than one source.

Applicants must provide full contact details of their Institution. The relevant country can be chosen from amongst the scroll down list of the Programme member countries. In addition, Applicants from EU Member States and EU Candidate Countries of the Programme Area should provide the name of the region in which their main office is located, this selected from amongst the scroll down list relating to the NUTS II division.

For information related to the NUTS II regions, please refer to the following web pages: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/ramon/nuts/codelist_en.cfm.

Finally, the Applicant institutions' contact person details are required.

Section 4: Project duration

The duration of the project is automatically calculated by choosing a starting and finishing date. It is assumed that the project will run from the beginning of the month of the starting date to the end of the month of the finishing date. Applicants should plan for a maximum project duration of 36 months and also to be ready to start as soon as possible after the approval. Projects planning should include consideration of the timeframe needed for the selection process and any potential start-up delays.

Please note that the starting date should **not take into** consideration the project's preparation phase.

Applicants are requested, if correct, to tick the Section 4 box to confirm that project implementation has not started prior to the submission of the EoI. **A key eligibility rule is that the project has not commenced prior to the project's approval. In the event that the box is not ticked the JTS will assume that project implementation has already started, <u>causing the rejection of the proposal</u>.**

Section 5: Project description

This is the core part of the EoI and Applicants are advised to take extra care in filling out this Section.

<u>Short project description</u>: Applicants are requested to write a comprehensive but short summary of the project idea.

<u>Main problems or challenges to be addressed</u>: Applicants should explain why there is a need for their project. This should include describing the background of the project idea, the problems and challenges that the proposal would like to address.

<u>Main objectives of the project</u>: the main objective and the specific objectives of the project should be listed and explained in this field; the link to the selected Area of Intervention should be explicit. Responses should relate to the problems described in the previous field, since the objectives should in effect provide solutions to the problems. Objectives should be concrete, quantifiable and realistic. Target groups should be indicated here as well.

<u>Overview of the main activities</u>: The main activities envisaged should be described in this field, together with the location and the role that each partner plays in their implementation. The information included in this field provides the basis for the understanding of the joint implementation of the project.

Main expected outputs and results: a realistic description of the outputs and the results that the project intends to produce should be included, together with their indicators.

Applicants should be aware of the different meaning of outputs and results.

- Outputs are tangible deliverables and visible outcomes or products of the project. They directly result from the activities carried out in the project. Output indicators are typically measured in concrete units such as the number of seminars; conferences; participants; publications; good practices identified; policies addressed.
- Results are direct and immediate effects resulting from the project and from the production of the outputs. Compared to outputs, results often imply a qualitative value. These should also be measured in concrete units such as the number of staff with increased capacity; the number of good practices successfully transferred; the number of policies improved.

Transnational approach: an explanation on why transnational cooperation is necessary to achieve the project's aim, and why acting at only a national, regional and local level cannot sufficiently address the issue, should be given. The level of cooperation between institutions and organisations in different countries should be stressed.

Relevance of the project to the Programme's strategy: Applicants should explain the relevance of the proposal's objectives and activities to the Programme's strategy, focusing on the selected Priority Axis and Area of Intervention. The Programme's strategy can be found in the Chapter 4 of the SEE Operational Programme.

Synergies with other EU funded projects, programmes, policies and initiatives: this field should contain the description of planned synergies with other EU-funded projects, programmes, policies and initiatives (such as Intelligent Energy, ESPON, FP6 and FP7, etc.) and its added value or its innovative character. If applicable, the opportunity to build upon the results of past projects, programmes and initiatives (so-called *capitalisation of results)* should be outlined.

Section 6: Budget

In this Section, Applicants are requested to provide an estimate of the total budget of the project. The amount of the requested ERDF contribution and, if applicable, the financial contribution requested in each IPA country should also be provided.

The estimated budget should be calculated on the basis of the activities needed to meet the project's objectives, the resources required to carry out these activities within the time allowed, and the number and role of partners involved.

The calculation of the budget should be carried out carefully. The proposed budget given on the EoI will, if the project proposal is invited to the 2nd Step, need to be maintained on the subsequent Application Form. In duly justified and approved cases, if further improvement of the project proposal is carried out between the first and the second step, related amendments in the requested budget can be taken into consideration.

Section 7: Partnership

As part of the eligibility of partners, all public, public equivalent and/or private Project Partners, as well as the activities carried out, must **not** have an industrial or commercial character. Applicants are therefore requested, if applicable, to tick the box at the beginning of the Section, that states that none of the listed partners and activities have a commercial or industrial character.

Please be aware that if the above referenced Section 7 box is not ticked, the JTS will assume that some of the partners and/or some activities have a commercial and/or an industrial character, causing the rejection of the proposal.

For clarifications on the eligibility of partners, please refer to Section 3.2.1 of the Programme Manual.

Project Partners should be listed in the three tables (7.1/7.2/7.3) with an indication of their name in English and their contact details (official address, phone number and email address). The field for the country input should be selected from within the scroll down menu, as well as the field for the type of institution and the legal status input. In the last cell, an indication of the foreseen cofinancing source/sources (state, regional, local, other public) should be given. Rows can be added if need be.

Please be aware that the ENPI funds are not available for the first call. However, the participation of partners from Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova could be financed by applying for the so called *10% ERDF* flexibility rule.[1]

Since, however, the so called 20% ERDF flexibility rule won't be applicable for the first call, partners from EU Member States outside the Programme Area are not eligible.

In the tick box part of Section 7.3, Applicants should tick the boxes detailing the type of cooperation between the partners. One of the eligibility rules being that the beneficiaries should cooperate in at least two of the following ways: joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing or joint financing. **It follows therefore that at least two of the four boxes must be ticked. Where this is not the case, the JTS will assess that the degree of cooperation between the partners is insufficient for the Programme, and the proposal will be rejected.**

Relevance of the Partnership: Applicants should explain the reasons behind the choice of the partners and how the composition of the partnership ensures a greater level of effectiveness in achieving the objectives of the project. Reference to partners' experience and competence should be provided.

Section 8: Self-assessment of the project idea

In this last Section, applicants should briefly explain the necessity and importance of their project.

[1] For information concerning the application for the 10% flexibility rule, please refer to section 3.4.8 of the SEE Programme Manual