SOUTH EAST EUROPE

Transnational Cooperation Programme

SEE Applicants' Guidelines
- Part 1 -
Expression of Interest

3rd Call for Proposal

April 2011

European Territorial Co-operation 2007 – 2013

Content

As a sign of respect to the environment and to reduce printing costs, the SEE Transnational Cooperation Programme encourages applicants and beneficiaries to print this documentation, where possible, double-sided.

Introduction

The submission of the Expression of Interest (EoI) is the ***"First Step"*** for applying for the funding of projects within the SEE Programme 2007 – 2013.

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

- SEE Programme Manual (SEE PM) Version 3.1 April 2011;
- Call for Proposals announcement April 2011;
- N. 5 Terms of Reference
- EoI form[1], Third Call for Proposals;
- Applicant's Guidelines (Part 1 – Expression of Interest,1st Step), April 2011.

The SEE PM provides useful information and guidance on how to develop a SEE transnational project proposal within the SEE Programme 2007 – 2013.

It is very important to carefully read the SEE Operational Programme (OP), the Terms of reference and all the documents in the application pack before filling in the EoI form. Projects which have a good level of planning to date, that meet the relevant Terms of reference 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 in and sent in electronically 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).

Further to this, one side document is requested to be filled in - signed and stamped - and submitted only electronically the "Declaration of pre-financing and co-financing Statement for Project Partners under the SEE Transnational Programme" in which all the Partners will have to declare that:

1) they are aware of the Programme rules on reimbursement and non existence of advance payment
2) they confirm the availability of own resources for co-financing and pre-financing the activities and wishing to take part in the consortium in case of invitation to the second step.

Both documents – Expression of Interest and Statements on Pre-financing and Co-financing – must be submitted in one single archived folder (preferably zip file) named as follows: **SEE_C_(*acronym of the project)***

Expressions of Interest must only be submitted using the official form provided as part of this application pack.

[1] tested and checked in Microsoft® Office Excel 2003. We can not ensure the proper functioning with different software and/ or versions.

Technical instructions

Lead Applicants (LA) are asked to fill in only the **light grey** 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 Lead Applicants have the same amount of space for describing their project and answering the questions. However, the use of different fonts could lead to minor deviation to the given limit. As a general rule, please make sure that warning messages for exceeding the given limit of characters are not displayed and the text inserted is fully visible both in the electronic and the printed version of the EoI, otherwise it won't be taken into account when assessing the project.

Scroll down menus in **orange** fields allow the Lead Applicant to select the appropriate response option. In order to increase the font size of the drop down menu lead Applicants are requested to increase the zoom.

All **light grey** fields must be filled in unless otherwise stated in the instruction field.

Please notice that in case of copy / paste action of cells in a single merged cell, Microsoft Excel may remove the formatting of the destination cell thus corrupting the file and preventing the filling in of the field. Drag function can also result in corruption of the template.

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 20 characters for its acronym. The Lead Applicant should note that effective acronyms should link to the project title/idea and also be easily remembered.

The Lead Applicant must use the scroll down menus to complete fields 1.3, with the relevant Terms of reference to which the project addresses. Selection can be made only among the 5 strategic themes addressed by the 3rd call for proposals.

Section 2: Number of participants in the project (including ASP)

Partners from at least eight (8) partner states (including ASPs, except observers) coming from the Programme area are required, but not exceeding maximum three (3) financing partners per country.

The table summarizes automatically the number of partners, including the LP, coming from the partner states of the programme area, both financing project partners and associated strategic partners (ASP) except observers, once they are inserted in section 7 of the EoI.

As a mean of guidance, 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, in line with the eligibility and quality criteria requested by the relevant ToR. For more detailed information on transnational partnerships please check section 3.2.of the SEE PM.

Section 3: 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. Lead Applicants should plan for maximum project duration of **30** months and be ready to start as soon as possible after the approval, at the same time taking into consideration 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.

Section 4: Project Applicant

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

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

Only Project Partners coming from the SEE Programme's ERDF countries are entitled to apply as Lead Applicant/ Lead Partner.

The legal status of the Lead 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, paragraph 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 PM.

Lead 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 States. In addition, Lead Applicants 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://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/introduction...

Finally, the Lead Applicant institutions' legal representative and contact person details are required.

Section 5: Project description

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

Section 5.1 - Short project description (maximum 1000 characters): Lead Applicants are requested to write a comprehensive but short summary of the project idea, highlighting the project background, objectives and main activities.

Section 5.2 - Main problem(s) or challenge(s) to be addressed (maximum 2000 characters): Lead Applicants should provide an integrated description of the needs of the territories involved linked to the topic addressed by the specific Terms of reference. This should include a concise explanation reflecting the way that the chosen territories represent the best framework for tackling the challenges and problems described in the respective Terms of reference. The section should offer a clear overview of the actual state of the art, taking into consideration internal and external drivers.

Section 5.3 - Main objectives of the project (maximum 1000 characters): the objectives of the project should be listed and explained in this field in relation to the above mentioned problem/challenge and developed in relation to the Terms of reference selected.

Lead Applicants should not limit to reiterating the objectives defined in the Terms of reference but further development and deeper insight would give added value to the project idea.

Section 5.4 - Contribution of the project objectives to the objectives of the relevant Terms of Reference (maximum 2000 characters): The main purpose of the section is to demonstrate there is a clear understanding regarding the objectives defined in the

Terms of reference. Lead Applicants are expected to provide a clear description highlighting:

- the consistency and specific contribution of the objectives defined at project level to the achievement of the aims of the Terms of reference in the short and long term, going beyond project end (e.g. the section should provide answers to questions such as: will the achievement of the objectives represent a starting point for further development? What will be the next steps?). The section must also include an explanation highlighting the way the objectives of the project take into account the enlarged territory of the SEE Programme area and how will the territories not involved in the project indirectly benefit from it.

Section 5.5 - Methodological approach (maximum 2000 characters): Lead Applicants should describe the sequence and combination of the activities proposed for achieving the objectives and reach the planned outputs and results, emphasising their practical aspect. Also the role and participation in the project of various stakeholders and target groups identified under point 5.7 should be outlined. Lead Applicants are suggested to fill in this section after the completion of the following section 5.6.

Section 5.6 - Work plan:

In order to ease the management of the project, Lead Applicants are asked to divide the project into components – **Work Packages** (WPs). A WP is a cluster of actions within the project, which are interlinked thematically (e.g. activities contributing to the achievement of the same sub-objective).

In this section, Lead Applicants should define up to five thematic WPs – additionally to the predefined ones (Preparation activities, Transnational project and financial management and Communication activities) – by which the potential partners plan to realise the objectives of the project. As a minimum requirement, WP3 has to be filled in. Max characters for each activity's description field are 1000. **Please make sure that the text is completely visible in the printed version of the filled in EoI.**

Only in the event of approval of the EoI and invitation to submit a full Application Form, description of the WP0 "preparatory activities" and WP1 "Transnational Project and Financial Management" would be requested.

Communication Activities (WP2): a brief summary of the main elements of the project's communication strategy (covering both internal and external communication measures) has to be provided. One of the project's main objectives regarding communication should be to disseminate project results to a wider public (as identified at point 5.7). However, the description cannot be limited to this. It must be demonstrated that communication is an integrated, strategic element of the project, present throughout the entire project cycle, and does not only start in the final phase of the project with the dissemination of results. Moreover, applicants need to plan an evaluation of their overall communication activities on annual basis. An explanation of how the project intends to establish an efficient communication among the project partners has to be included. ***Lead Applicants should be aware that the communication/ dissemination activities shall not be duplicated in any other Work Package.***

The Lead Applicant is kindly asked to focus on the logic groupings of activities that the definition of "work package" requires and NOT to complete a higher number of WP than effectively needed. A large number of Work Packages does not lead to a better score. Moreover, complete but concise information, avoiding the repetition of concepts that are not providing additional information, aiming to an easy understanding of the concepts, will be positively considered.

Please, indicate **titles** for the WPs. The title should preferably reflect the focus of the WP (e.g. Environmental Analysis). Please make sure that the WP title matches with the overall aim of the project and that there is a clear linkage and consistency among all the WPs.

A **responsible partner** for the WP has to be selected within the partnership and indicated in the related field. Reasons behind responsibility selection should be understood (i.e. specific experience in thematic field).

Each WP should contain a **short description**, summarising the planned activities, carried out by an appropriate mix of partners.

For each WP, the **starting and end month** (correct format: e.g. *given the maximum period of a project – 30 months - the start end date of a working package should be expressed in terms of months: for example, "1", meaning the 1st month of project implementation, "6" meaning the 6th month of implementation, and so on*) of implementation should be indicated. The Lead Applicant should consider the estimated duration of the application and selection procedures as well as potential difficulties and delays which can have an impact on the time schedule.

The description of the **partners' specific tasks** should offer a deeper understanding of the extent of their involvement.

The main planned **outputs and results** (concrete products, services, and deliverables) within each WP are to be indicated and quantified. A maximum number of 10 outputs and results can be listed per each WP.

Lead 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.*

The **cost** of each WP (included the estimation of costs for WP0, WP1 and WP2) shall be provided to allow a cross checking of the total cost of the WP with the budget tables in Section *"6. Budget"* and Section *"7. Partnership"*. In case of inconsistency with the total amounts in the three sections, a warning message will appear.

Section 5.7 - Involvement of key stakeholders and target groups (maximum 2000 characters): an explanation on how and by whom the envisaged outputs and results are needed, who are the potential users and in which way as well as how the decision making process will be influenced by the project's outcomes. An explanation regarding the methodology for uptake of project deliverables by the key stakeholders should be provided.

Section 5.8 - Transnational approach (maximum 2000 characters): how the project concept represents a truly transnational approach to addressing the ToRs? The genuine transnational character and the transnational added value, explaining how the project goes beyond mere addition of local activities, shall be outlined in this section.

Section 5.9 - Capitalisation of results (maximum 1000 characters): the results of the projects implemented in the previous programming period and in the 1st and 2nd CfP on the related topic should be exploited and used as starting point for transnational cooperation in the Structural Funds period 2007 – 2013, to avoid the dispersion of existing knowledge and the duplication of projects. **Lead Applicants should provide concise information regarding the integration of the results of previous relevant projects in their project idea, avoiding simple listing of project names which does not demonstrate added value.** If the project proposal is not connected to already implemented projects for any reason, please explain its innovative character.

Section 5.10 - Synergies with other relevant projects, programmes and policies and with relevant EU/national related networks (maximum 1000 characters): this field should describe how the project connects to already approved international/transnational/EU documents, treaties, conventions and strategies as well as contain the description of planned synergies with other EU/national/regional relevant funded projects, programmes, policies and initiatives, with particular reference to those recalled in the *Background* section of any ToR and the synergies with relevant thematic networks at EU level. Lead Applicants should bear in mind that a simple listing of projects/ policies/ strategies etc. is not sufficient for demonstrating the added value, but potential interactions and complementarities should be highlighted in this respect.

Section 5.11 - Plans for sustainability and transferability of project results (maximum 2000 characters): the Lead Applicant shall explain the links of the project to the future, including visibility plans, link to planned investments, foreseen leverage effects, etc.

Please make a distinction between the following 3 dimensions of sustainability:

- Financial sustainability (financing follow up activities, sources of financing for follow up activities, etc.);
- Institutional level (which structures would allow, and how, the results of the action to continue be in place after the end of the action? Address issues about the local "ownership" of action outcomes);
- Policy level where applicable (What structural impact will the action have - e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc.).

Please define how the sustainability of results will be ensured and monitored (by which means and initiatives and by whom).

Section 6: Budget

This Section, will automatically display the requested total budget, the requested ERDF contribution, the requested IPA and ENPI contribution at project level.

A control function will alert the Lead Applicant in case the total budget, as a result of the cost of each WP of table 5.6, is different from the sum of the partners' budget of table 7.1. In this case, the Lead Applicant is requested to make sure that the error is solved, before submitting the expression of interest.

Section 7: Partnership

For clarifications on the sort of partners, please refer to Section 3.2.5 of the SEE PM.

Section 7.1 – List of financing Project Partners should be listed in the table 7.1 with an indication of their name in English and their contact details (official address, phone number and email address). The field for the sort of financing project partner (PP, IPA PP, ENPI PP) should be selected from the scroll down menu, as well as the field for the country input (depending from the sort of partner), the type of institution and the legal status. In the last cell, an indication of the foreseen total budget of the Partner shall be given. Please note that if there is the intention to "sponsor" any ASP this should be considered in the ERDF Partner budget. **For the Lead Applicant (LA) only the budget should be indicated in the first row** (its data having already been inserted in section 3).

Section 7.2 – List of ASPs (Associated Strategic Partners) & Observers should be listed in the table 7.2 with an indication of their name in English and their contact details (official address, phone number and email address). Also for them, the field for the country input should be selected after selecting the sort of ASP and Observers from the scroll down menu, as well as the field for the type of institution, legal status input, and sponsoring partner, if different from the status of observer. In the last cell, an indication of the foreseen total budget of the ASP shall be given.

In the tick box part of Section 7, Lead Applicants should tick the boxes detailing the type of cooperation between the partners and give a short explanation of the options chosen.

Section 7.3 - Relevance of the Partnership (maximum 3000 characters): Lead Applicants should explain the reasons behind the choice of the partners and how the composition of the partnership – both as a result of their geographical location and the mix of regions they compose and as a mix of partners' experience, institutional / technical competence and capacity - ensures a greater level of effectiveness in achieving the objectives of the project.

Section 7.4 – Added value of the involvement of the observers and ASPs (maximum 1000 characters): In this section, Lead Applicants should explain the added value of the observers and ASPs, highlighting their concrete and direct contribution to the project activities and outcomes.