

DISCLAIMER

These questions and answers are provided for clarification purposes and are not intended to constitute a corrigendum to the call for proposals or the concept note template.

Please note that in the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the fund operator cannot give a prior opinion on eligibility, partnership composition and/or project description.

ELIGIBILITY AND PARTNERSHIP

1. Can a lead partner be a beneficiary partner in another project consortium?

Eligible consortia may submit a maximum of one concept note and consortium members may not participate in other project consortia under this call (cf the call for proposals). An eligible entity can be a member in only one consortium regardless of whether this entity participates as lead, beneficiary or expertise partner.

2. What will happen if an entity which is a beneficiary partner in one consortium at the same time submits a concept note as a member of another consortium?

A consortium member may not participate in other project consortia under this call (cf the call for proposals). Please check this issue with the proposed partners in the consortium before submitting the concept note. If an entity has participated in more than one concept note, all concept notes will be rejected.

3. What does it mean that target groups or other stakeholders in the countries of the expertise partners cannot benefit directly from the Fund? Where should we describe the target group/stakeholders in the country of the expertise partner in the concept note?

The EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment shall benefit the target groups in the 15 Beneficiary States as well as Ireland, Italy and Spain. Expertise partners may support projects implemented in these countries by sharing know-how, competence and expertise. When describing the target group (cf section 3.2. Project relevance) the project consortium should focus on target groups in countries eligible for the Fund. It is possible to implement some project activities in the expertise partner country (e.g. study visits) however target groups cannot be recruited from the expertise partner's country.

4. How should we interpret the information (page 11) that the project partners work together in a multinational partnership?

The consortium must consist of at least two entities that come from two different eligible countries, cf the call for proposals, 'Definitions': the partners (members of consortium) form the transnational project consortium. At the concept note stage it is not required to provide any official documents confirming the formation of a consortium. The partners are required to be listed in section 2 – Partners of the concept note.

5. Is there a template for partnership agreements to be given by the fund operator or shall we create such an agreement by ourselves?

No partnership agreement should be entered into at the concept note phase. The template will be made available on the Fund's webpage when the full proposal phase is opened.

6. Is the FO or FMO planning to help/assist applicants in finding a beneficiary partner and building a proper consortium?

Yes, the fund operator will create a simple partner search tool that will be made available for applicants.

7. How is the term 'international organisation' to be understood? Are there any special conditions to be fulfilled by such organisations in order to be eligible as expertise partners?

International organisations are entities established by formal political agreements between their members that have the status of international treaties; their existence is recognised by law in their member countries; they are not treated as resident institutional units of the countries in which they are located (definition by the OECD).

There are no specific requirements that an international organisation needs to fulfil in order to become an eligible expertise partner. However, its role and involvement in the project must be justified in the concept note.

8. Is it possible to include a sole proprietorship as a consortium member?

Sole proprietorships and natural persons are not eligible as project partners, cf the call for proposals.

9. Is it correct to understand that an expertise partner can be an entity established only in a non-eligible EU Member State, Donor State or an international organisation? Does it mean that the expertise or good practise acquired in one of the Beneficiary States cannot be transferred to another Beneficiary State within this project (e.g. good practise in Hungary adapted and transferred to e.g. Poland or Estonia)?

It is correct that an expertise partner can only be an international organisation or an eligible entity established in a Donor State or in a non-eligible EU Member State. Transfer of know-how and good practice does not require the presence of an expertise partner. In the example cited, the Hungarian organisation may be a beneficiary or lead partner in the project.

10. Would it be possible to transfer/exchange examples of good practice from Macedonia or Serbia to the Beneficiary States within a project under the Fund?

Good practice or ideas may originate in any country or territory. However, entities in Serbia and Macedonia are not eligible as partner countries under this Fund.

11. What is the definition of a non-eligible EU Member State?

The non-eligible EU Member States are those EU Member States which are not Beneficiary States of the EEA and Norway Grants. These are: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Sweden and United Kingdom.

12. Why is Denmark not a part of this call?

Denmark is not included in the Beneficiary States of the EEA and Norway Grants, nevertheless relevant entities from Denmark may participate as expertise partners since Denmark is an EU Member State.

13. Do you have any contact person in Kosovo in order to have more information? May organisations from Albania apply for this call as partners?

Entities from Kosovo and Albania are not eligible under this call.

14. We are an Italian entity member of a consortium led by a Greek entity, are activities implemented in Italy considered as eligible?

Yes, Italy, together with Ireland and Spain are considered beneficiary countries, cf. the call for proposals, therefore activities implemented in these three countries as well as in the 15 Beneficiary States are eligible.

15. Our consortium consists of three project partners. Do we have to sign one multilateral partnership agreement that shall include all three parties or it is allowed that we, as the lead partner, sign two separate partnership agreements?

The project consortium will be required in principle to sign one partnership agreement if the project is awarded a grant, and only after the project contract is signed. In the concept note phase we do not require any agreement document between the members of the consortium.

16. If an international organisation (based or registered outside of Europe) is an expertise partner, does the requirement of "creation and implementation of the relationship between the lead partner and the beneficiary partner and/or any expertise partner shall comply with the applicable European Union law on public procurement" still apply?

Yes. The provision aims to clarify that the partners are not service providers but contribute to the implementation of the project sharing a common goal with the other consortium members.

- 17. We have similar entities in several countries, ready to create an international consortium and apply for funding. Each of these entities will do similar activities, having local partners to implement the project. Can we consider as main applicant one body that will include main applicants from each of these countries? They will be responsible for the same procedures, doing the same activities and be leaders for their own target groups BUT work together through one concept.**

The consortium must include entities from at least two eligible countries of which the lead partner must come from a beneficiary state (cf the call for proposals). The role and work activities of the lead partner and each beneficiary partner should be made clear in the concept note. No prior opinion on eligibility or design/composition of a consortium can be given in this Q&A, however the added value of the transnational consortium will be assessed.

- 18. The call for proposals states that each entity may be part of only one consortium regardless of the role assumed (lead/beneficiary/expertise partner). How will affiliated entities (entities belonging to a holding or one business group) be treated? For example, we as organisation are established in one of the Beneficiary States with full legal personality in accordance with said State's laws; however, we are affiliated with an entity having branches in other Beneficiary States via founder. What happens if any of the affiliated entities applies in the same call? Shall this be treated as reason for rejection of the applications?**

No prior opinion on eligibility or design/composition of a consortium can be given in this Q&A.

As a general indication, entities belonging to the same organisation (therefore considered affiliated) can ONLY participate in one concept note.

- 19. Required experience: As a lead partner, do we need to have transnational and/or EEA/Norway Grants experience? We have no experience in such types of projects.**

There is no such requirement under this call for proposals.

- 20. Does the project need to take place in both countries of project partners? (We are from Poland and our potential partner is from the Czech Republic). For example, we would like to test some innovative activities for NEETs like helping youth establish and develop their own enterprises/start-ups. So, can we test these activities only in our headquarters in Poland? (of course with the help of our Czech Republic Partner)?**

Activities, outputs, outcomes and the impact of the fund shall be transnational in nature and the added value of the transnational dimension should be clearly described in the concept notes. All project partners must be actively involved in, and effectively contributing to, the implementation of the project, i.e. the partnership must be substantiated and sustainable within the consortium.

- 21. Is it possible for a university in Norway to become an expertise partner in several projects under the Youth Employment call, taking into account that it will be different faculties from different campuses (means address, location). We will appreciate the explanation taking into account that there are not so many academic entities in Norway that are willing to share and own the relevant expertise in the field and the partners from beneficiary countries may have difficulties to get in right co-operation mode with them.**

Consortium members, including expertise partners, may not participate in other project consortia under this call (cf. the call for proposals). If the project consortia have similar project ideas they could merge into one larger project consortium. Expertise partners may also be invited from other EU Member States or an international organisation.

- 22. Representing a Greek NGO am I eligible to apply directly to your organisation or I have to apply to Bodossaki foundation?**

As a Greek NGO your entity is eligible to submit a proposal under this open call, by following the procedure set out in the call for proposals. The Bodossaki foundation is the fund operator

for the Grants' NGO programme in Greece, and has no responsibilities for the implementation of the Fund for Youth Employment.

23. Is there any form for the concept note?

Applicants are requested to register in the fund operator's system (EGREG) and fill in the concept note electronically. An offline template for the concept note is available on the fund's webpage: <http://eeagrants.org/fundforyouthemployment> A manual on EGREG and how to fill in the concept note is available from the fund operator's website: <https://www.egregsystem.info/fundforyouthemployment/>

24. As the Career Center of the University of Nova Gorica (Slovenia) we are financed up to 20% from the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport under the project "Upgrading Career centres in the period between 2015 – 2020," during the whole duration of the project. Our question is, can we apply to your call as a lead partner or a beneficiary partner?

The Fund for Youth Employment does not support existing projects.

25. We are a private limited company founded in June 2012. Our main activities have been in consultation. Last year we started cooperation with "X" company from Spain, which focuses on business development and innovation for companies and institutions supported by EC funds (H2020). We are governed by Icelandic act no. 138/1994. There is also a Foundation, founded in March 2014. Its main activities have been on sharing know-how from Iceland to other European countries with support of EEA Grants and EC grants. The Foundation has already participated in several EEA Grant project as a Donor State partner. The Foundation is governed by Icelandic act no. 33/1999. Those are two separated entities with different registration, VAT numbers and board members but share Director General, office and for convenience their names are based on the same root name, they also share website. From the "Call for proposals" I understand that these two entities can be involved in two different consortia. Is that correct?

The information provided is not entirely clear, however, based only on the last two sentences of the question, the "two separated entities" would not be able to be involved in two different projects.

26. In Questions and Answers updated 27 June 2017, it is explained that it is possible to implement some activities in the expertise partner country (e.g. study visit), and a definition of international organization is given ("...they are not treated as resident institutional units of the countries in which they are located..."). If an international organization country office (separate legal entity) in a beneficiary country is an expertise partner in the project, would it be possible to organize activities for project target group or partners in a non-beneficiary country where the international organization has another country office (separate legal entity) according to definition of IO given?

The activities for the target group may be organised in a non-beneficiary country provided that the location is duly justified for the project purpose.

27. Does a legal entity have to be established in the Republic of Cyprus or could also an entity registered in the Northern Cyprus be eligible for this Call?

Entities legally registered in the Republic of Cyprus are eligible for funding under the Fund for Youth Employment.

CONCEPT NOTE SUBMISSION

1. If we decide to combine all three support areas in our concept note, should we choose and indicate which one is the 'main one' and if yes, where and how should we give such information in the concept note?

The applicants may combine all three support areas in their concept note. The applicants may also choose only one or combine any two of the given areas supported in this call for proposals. If one of the areas is considered by the applicant as the main one, this should be indicated in point 1.2 Project summary.

2. Where should we describe our expertise partner's relevant work achievements in the concept note as required on page 11 of the call for proposals?

The place in the concept note to describe relevant work achievements of the expertise partner and why they are considered necessary to reach the objectives of the project is under a. Role in the project of expertise partner and b. Experience of expertise partner with transnational or regional programmes and/or EEA/ Norway Grants.

3. Can we ask for a face to face meeting with the FO's experts in one of the Information Units?

At the concept note phase, the FO does not provide the applicants with individual consultations. Questions related to this call for proposals may be sent electronically by e-mail to eeagrants@ecorys.com and answers will be published on the webpage of the Fund, <http://eeagrants.org/fundforyouthemployment>. Applicants may also call one of the three Hub Information Units, where basic information on the call for proposals is provided.

4. Is it possible to obtain answers on our questions via skype? If yes, what is the procedure?

At the concept note phase, the FO does not provide the applicants with individual consultations via skype.

5. Who is responsible for all the answers: the Fund Operator or the Financial Mechanism Office?

All answers published on the Fund's website (<http://eeagrants.org/fundforyouthemployment>) are prepared jointly by the fund operator and the Financial Mechanism Office.

6. Are there compulsory work-packages? (for example: management, dissemination, etc.). Is there a minimum or maximum number of activities / work-packages?

Please consult the guidelines. A manual for filling in the Concept Note is available for entities registered in the EGREG system, see <https://www.egregsystem.info/fundforyouthemployment/>

7. Is it possible to outsource some part of the project coordination?

The coordination is expected to be carried out by the lead partner. Please see "Role and provisions for project consortia" in section 2 of the call guidelines. This does not prevent the sub-contracting of specific tasks, however all project partners will be responsible for fulfilling their obligations to the consortium and all contact with the fund operator shall be through the lead partner.

8. What are the required documents to complete a registration in EGREG? Do they need to be officially translated to English and legalized?

No legal documents are required to complete a registration in EGREG in the concept note phase.

9. Where can be found the draft of the Lead Partners declaration?

The template for the Lead Partner declaration will be made available in EGREG in July.

10. Our entity tried to register to EGREG. However, when submitting the registration form we received this error message: "Gone. The requested resource /fundforyouthemployment/index.php is no longer available on this server and there is no forwarding address. Please remove all references to this resource. Additionally, a 410 Gone error was encountered while trying to use an ErrorDocument to handle the request."

This problem is faced by some organisations registering from Lithuania. This technical problem is not caused by EGREG, but is a local problem either on the applicant's computer/LAN (malware or corruption in system files registry) or our site is blocked by some local Internet Service Providers.

We recommend consulting your technical staff to check your computers/systems. An applicant from Lithuania with this problem has followed our advice and could register in our system.

In a few cases, messages originated by the system have been received as SPAM. This is not caused by the EGREG system but by the service providers used by the registered entities. In case you do not receive an answer in 2 working days from the registration date and or an answer to an email you sent to the helpdesk within 48 hours, please contact us immediately at this phone number: +39.0522.278038

PROJECT IDEA

1. What is the maximum allowed project duration?

There is no maximum project duration foreseen in the call for proposals. Expenditures incurred by the project partners shall be eligible as of the date on which the Financial Mechanism Committee decides to award the project grant, while the final date for eligibility of expenditures for projects is 30 April 2024 at the latest.

2. Providing that we will be awarded a grant shall we be obliged to have indicator such as: employment of x% of participants of the project during implementation of the project/after project completion?

There are no obligatory indicators at the concept note phase. The applicant is required to choose indicators proper for the project type and scope.

3. Where in the concept note should we include information that the project is consistent with sustainable development, long-term economic growth, social cohesion and environmental protection?

Such an information can be included in section 3.1 Project objectives and expected results or in the project summary (section 1.2)

4. We have a project idea where the unemployed people are cooperating somehow with companies in order to give the job to those who are looking for it. Our goal is to charge companies for using that "product" and never to charge the unemployed. We want to start charging companies after the project is finished in order to maintain our project and to strengthen long-lasting effects of the product. The product will not have the purpose of producing a profit, because all the incomes and costs can balance, so our foundation will not generate any profit.

In the Call for Proposal it is written that the project must follow the no-profit principle:

The grant may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the context of the project. Any net revenue generated as a direct consequence of the project must be deducted from the amount of total eligible expenditure of the project.

Is my foundation allowed to charge the private entities for using the product (the effect of the project in the frame of that program) after the project is finished?

As indicated in the disclaimer, no prior opinion might be given at this stage related to eligibility, thus including costs eligibility. Revenues generated by the project will be monitored throughout the project lifetime. Should the applicants expect the projects to be revenue-generating, these are expected to be indicated in the full application form stage.

5. Can we apply the European Commission's paper on 20 principles for quality apprenticeships and work-based learning? To be more precise, we consider in our project using some of the principles. Will it be enough for our project to be innovative?

Under the support area 'Transfer of know-how and good practice' the fund seeks projects that focus on transferring know-how and good practice on youth employment initiatives across European countries, with the ultimate goal of creating more quality jobs and lower unemployment rates among youths within the target groups listed. The Commission's working paper is considered a good practice that could be implemented across the countries eligible for this call. Its innovativeness depends on the target groups, sectors, stakeholders and countries involved in the project.

- 6. Does the project need to be only about developing an idea (e.g. creating a programme for NEETs start up acceleration in the form of e-book) or should the project also put the idea into reality, for example conducting the developed programme or just testing it on the small group?**

The fund aims to advance new and innovative solutions that focus on the specific needs of the target groups listed in the call for proposals. These solutions also need to be sustainable and replicable for other organisations after the end of the project, cf the concept note template. The amount of testing and level of implementation needed to reach the outcomes will vary from project to project.

- 7. What is the minimum level of innovation scale for projects, for example, can we use good practice from the UK?**

The innovation and exploration support area implies the pioneering of solutions and the application of unconventional practices. Applicants must substantiate in the concept note that their ideas are new to their field, sector, target group or countries involved. With the support area 'Transfer of know-how and good practice' the innovation scale is lower.

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned specific example a good practice from the UK that for the first time is implemented in a beneficiary country or countries, may as such be regarded as innovative.

- 8. Do the applications have to be submitted for totally new project ideas or should it be for continuous projects? Can the project idea be a continuation of already finished project, can the idea originate from the already realised project or can the grant be awarded to the ongoing project (e.g. for the extension of activities)?**

Within the support area 'Exploration and innovation' the fund will support new project ideas. The applicants must substantiate in the concept note that their ideas are new to their field, sector, target group or countries involved. Operational support to continue existing projects will not be funded.

The support area 'Transfer of know-how and good practice' funds new projects based on a previously tested solution. Such solutions must be considered a good practice, i.e. been implemented and shown sustainable results.

- 9. Must the legal status of a property (e.g. a building), that will serve the project needs and will be renovated according to project requirements, be changed after the project ends or can it remain in the same ownership?**

Change of ownership is not required however it is advisable to consider further use of the building after the project ends as a means of securing project sustainability. Specific conditions on the further use of real estate may be set in the decision to award a grant to the project.

- 10. During the project an e-platform for finding business partners and organized gatherings for youth business promotion will be developed. The question is, should we in the concept note choose only "transfer of know-how and good practice" support area or should we also include "analysis and research" support area, because of feasibility study?**

Funding under the Analysis and research support area is reserved for transnational research networks that share learning on how to evaluate and perform impact studies on youth employment initiatives. A feasibility study will not fall under this support area.

- 11. Question regarding support area "Transfer of know-how and good practice": Can we use in project know-how not only related to the good practice on youth employment initiatives but also know-how on development of start-ups or any kind of training material which is already successfully implemented and during the**

project would be adapted in order to give youth abilities to successfully participate in the job market?

Yes.

12. Duration of project. How it is decided? Are there any rules?

The duration of the project should be decided by project consortium and adjusted to activities planned. The final date for eligibility of expenditures for projects is 30th April 2024 at the latest (cf the call for proposals).

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

1. Are there any limits regarding the budget per project partner, including expertise partners?

There is no limit set per project partner. The budget should be justified, reflect the amount of tasks the partner is involved in and consist of costs proportionate and necessary for the project implementation.

2. Can any member of the consortium (lead partner/beneficiary partner/expertise partner) provide co-financing in a form of in-kind contribution as long as said partner has a status of a non-governmental organisation?

Yes. Any project partner registered as a non-governmental organisation may provide co-financing in the form of in-kind contribution, provided that this in-kind contribution consists of voluntary work.

3. Are any other forms of in-kind contribution (apart from voluntary work) allowed?

The in-kind contribution shall be accepted as eligible only in the form of voluntary work – no other forms of the in-kind contribution are allowed under this Fund.

4. What are the situations in which the FMC may approve the in-kind contribution of more than 50% (even up to 100%) of the required co-financing? Should we apply for this? And if yes, when? At the concept note or later – during application form?

Such situations are exceptional. They will depend on the project partner's status and its involvement in the project implementation. Exceptional cases are to be duly explained and justified in the full application form.

5. Where in the concept note should we indicate the form of co-financing?

The concept note does not require information concerning the form of co-financing. The form of co-financing (in-kind contribution vs financial resources) will have to be indicated at the full application form stage.

6. The minimum grant amount is EUR 1 million but what is the maximum?

There is no maximum grant amount per project. In line with the requirements foreseen in the call for proposals, costs included under the indicative project budget should be proportionate and necessary as well as complying with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

7. What happens with interest earned on the transferred grant?

There will be no obligation to declare and reimburse the interest generated by the transfers of funds to the lead partner's or other project partner's bank account.

8. Who is subject to exchange rate risk in the case of the partner not from Eurozone?

Exchange rate losses are not eligible cost under the Fund (cf the call for proposals). The risk of exchange loss lies solely on the partner covering the particular cost.

9. One of the condition that we have to fulfil in order for our incurred expenditures to be eligible is as follows: they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation. What applicable tax and social legislation, that's of which country, is considered binding?

Each partner is obliged to comply with tax and social legislation applicable in the country of legal registration of the partner's entity.

10. If a partner is not from Eurozone, what date should we take into account for conversion of costs incurred in other currency into Euro?

Information on this issue will be provided to shortlisted candidates in the second application stage.

11. Can we use the funding for renovation/reparation (such as replacing the joinery work) of an existing building? Are air conditioners and radiators considered equipment?

Costs related to renovation/reparation as well as air conditioners and radiators can be considered as eligible if they comply with the requirements foreseen by the "General criteria for eligibility of expenditure" included under Chapter 4 of the call for proposals, especially with requirements under letter (b), (c) and (d), and if they do not fall within the list of not eligible expenditure included under the heading "Ineligible costs" of the said Chapter 4.

In addition to the above, costs related to air conditioners and radiators can be considered eligible equipment costs if they also comply with the requirements foreseen by the "Eligible direct expenditure" included under Chapter 4 of the call for proposals, especially with requirements under the fourth bullet point.

12. Beneficiary partners: Do they have a budget for the project? Can they participate in the co-funding? Expertise partner: Do they have a budget for the project? Can they participate in the co-funding? Are there budget limits per budget line/typology? Are there budget limits per activities / work-packages?

All partners are expected to actively participate in the project by implementing activities. The budget allocated to each partner should be proportionate and necessary for the implementation of the partner's activities and used for the sole purpose of achieving the objective(s) of the project and its expected outcome(s), in a manner consistent with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The partners decide among themselves how to provide the required co-financing for the project.

There is no limit/threshold per budget line, but the budget should be proportionate and necessary as well as complying with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

13. Are there any financial guidelines on how to calculate the workhour rates from country to country? The Financial provisions in Chapter 4 gives a very general understanding how to do it. Do you have a unique table to follow?

It is not foreseen to provide unified workhours rates for applicants. As stated in the call for proposal (Eligible direct expenditure, section 2), the cost of staff should comprise of actual salaries plus social security contributions and other statutory costs included in the remuneration provided that these costs are in line with the partner's usual policy on remuneration.

14. How will the reimbursement system be in this program? (Percentage in advance, then 4 times per year?)

The payment system and schedule will be indicated in the template project contract annexed to the full call for proposals that will be made available to the shortlisted applicants.

15. Can the co-financing of one of the project partners be contributed from ESF funded project?

Co-financing received from international, national, regional and/or local funds is permitted provided that the costs are not double-financed.

16. We consider different ideas to implement in our project, one of them is developing a programme for teaching, mentoring and providing employment for youth in Poland and the Czech Republic. The question is, what costs are eligible:

- a. **Promotion of project in Internet,**
- b. **Recruitment of NEETs (and salary of the recruiters),**
- c. **Educational materials for project participants (pens, notes, books, etc.),**
- d. **Grants for the participants (we would like to give every participant about 5,000 euros for their start-up ideas),**

e. Space rental for testing/implementation of the developed programme within our project.

The costs presented under points a, b, c, are eligible provided that they satisfy the general criteria for eligibility of expenditure and that they are duly justified by the project idea. The costs point e, may be part of the indirect project costs. Project expenditure to be eligible should be in accordance with the criteria set in the call for proposals. Please note that sub-granting is not eligible under this call for proposals.

- 17. Referring to the "Eligible direct expenditure" covered under Chapter 4 of the call for proposals, especially requirements under the fourth bullet point we would like to know how is "equipment" defined? Furthermore, it is not clear to us when can we expense the purchase of the equipment and when can we only expense equipment in terms of the value of its depreciation for the duration of the project?**

As a general principle, only the portion of the depreciation corresponding to the duration of the project and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the project may be eligible. In case the project partner determines that the equipment is an integral and necessary component for achieving the outcomes of the project, the entire purchase price may exceptionally be eligible if such equipment represents an investment item which was planned and approved. In that case the equipment should be solely used for the project purposes during the project life.

- 18. Is the purchase of a motorized vehicle an eligible project expenditure, provided it is necessary as an efficient and cost-effective means of project implementation?**

See question no 17

- 19. Are the eligible indirect costs for "general administrative costs" to be used solely by the lead partner or can they be shared between other beneficiary and expert partners?**

A flat rate of 15% of the total eligible staff costs of the project is eligible under indirect costs, representing the general administrative costs which can be regarded as chargeable to the project, regardless of by whom they were generated (the lead, beneficiary or expert partner).

- 20. As for the cost of staff assigned to the project (eligible costs): Can we as a lead partner employ staff from outside of our organization? For example, an expert from other organization (on the basis of contract agreement)?**

Yes. Such expenditure would fall under "costs entailed by other contracts awarded by a project partner for the purposes of carrying out the project".

- 21. Is the overall budget and/or the partners' budget considered as the final maximum budget if the proposal is awarded to phase 2? Or will it be possible to redefine it in the full proposal stage (e.g. adjusting partners' budget to the final activities to be implemented)?**

The elements outlined in the concept note may not be substantially modified by the applicant in the full project application (step 2). The consortium members included in the concept note must also be included in the full project application, however additional partners may be proposed. The project budget may not substantially vary from the initial estimate.

- 22. Considering the third paragraph on page 11 from the guidelines "Target groups or other stakeholders in the countries of the expertise partners cannot benefit directly from the Fund", would you please confirm if the experts from the expertise partner organisations from Donor States are eligible to receive remuneration and/or per diems provided by the Fund / project budget?**

Yes.

- 23. Are there any exceptions/waivers for public higher education institutions in scope of the minimum requirement of 15% of co-financing? Can co-financing in this case include voluntary work of this institution's researchers or admin staff?**

Only project partners registered as non-governmental organisations may provide co-financing in the form of in-kind contribution, provided that this in-kind contribution consists of voluntary work.

24. Can the rental fee for facilities dedicated to project implementation be taken as an eligible part to cover the co-financing input from beneficiary partner?

Only project partners registered as non-governmental organisations may provide co-financing in the form of in-kind contribution, provided that this in-kind contribution consists of voluntary work.

25. Our organization is implementing a pilot right now supported by the Catalan government, who has allowed us to declare eligible this expenditure (staff cost), according to the terms of reference of the grant received. On this basis, our question is, could we include this expenditure as eligible in the concept note budget proposal?

The Fund for Youth Employment does not support existing projects.

25. Are there any special rules regarding eligible direct expenditure that apply to expertise partners or can expertise partner charge the cost of staff, travel expenses and other expenditure described in the call, in the same way as other partners?

Expertise partners should follow the same rules on eligible direct expenditure as other project partners.

26. For the implementation of the project is needed a building. Is leasing possible considering that during the program will be amortized part of the leasing?

Renting a space necessary for the project implementation may be an eligible cost, however costs related to leasing/purchase of real estate shall not normally be considered eligible.

27. Are the following costs eligible?

a) In case of implementation of comprehensive programmes or professional trainings dedicated to youth (being an eligible target group of this Fund), which require the engagement of young people for a given period of time (e.g. 10 to 12 months), will the cost of attributing to participants a kind of 'subsistence fee', 'training grant' or 'scholarship per diem' to support them in keeping on with their daily lives while attending the programme / training be considered eligible? If yes under what category of cost?

Provided that the subsistence fee is within the context of a clearly defined training/education scheme, which aims to create a measureable outcome in line with the objective of the Fund, and participants have entered into a formal agreement with the project partner, such fees may be considered eligible under the category "Costs entailed by other contracts awarded by a project partner for the purpose of carrying out the project".

b) Cost of subsidy to remuneration of young people representing the target group of this Fund (e.g. NEETs)?

See answer to point a).

c) Basic costs for start-up business (taxes for registration new company etc.) for the young people representing the target group of this Fund?

Such costs may be eligible provided they are proportionate and necessary for the implementation of the project.

d) Costs for establishing and costs for buying equipment for new social enterprise where to be occupied the persons of target group?

Such costs may be eligible provided they are proportionate and necessary for the implementation of the project.

e) If the project idea foresees "bringing" unemployed people from abroad (Spain) to Poland, teaching them Polish and helping them to find a job. Is it possible to finance the costs of their arrival in Poland? If yes under what category of costs?

Such costs may be eligible provided they are proportionate and necessary for the implementation of the project. The category of the eligible expenditure will depend on the actual activity.

- f) Prizes for young people who have the best social business idea or plan, such as money or in kind services (for instance, we could buy some services for their starting businesses, like paying an accountant for them for one month)? Are such costs eligible?**

Financial prizes are not eligible under the Fund. However, the provision of services to the target group may be eligible provided it is necessary and proportional and in line with the objective of the Fund.

- g) We plan to create a youth center where various activities would be held aiming to increase employment of young people from the target group. The municipality has a building where all these activities would be held. However, the currently unused building has to be adjusted to the planned activities. Here the question arises: To what level is the reconstruction of the building allowed under this Fund? For example, can we consider only internal reconstruction of the building as eligible or will the windows exchange also be considered as an eligible cost? Is the cost of reconstruction of the building considered eligible at all under this Fund?**

Please see answer to question 11 under "Budget development" in this FAQ. There are no limits for such costs, however all costs must be duly justified and be proportionate and necessary for the project's objectives.

- h) For the purpose of the project implementation, we need to obtain certain certificates and licenses (on year basis). Are they eligible costs?**

These costs may be eligible and/or such expenditures should be covered from the indirect costs.

- i) Are the investment costs eligible under this Fund?**

Please see answer to question 11 under "Budget development" in this FAQ.

- j) Costs related to trainings of young people for the target group, such as: travel costs and accommodation? Are they eligible?**

Such costs may be eligible provided they are proportionate and necessary for the implementation of the project.

- k) Our project does not foresee offering sub-grants. Rather, it will create a credit guarantee fund in the form of an amount of money (we estimate about 100.000 euro in each country) deposited in a bank which will be used to facilitate access to banking and credit services by the new entrepreneurs supported by the project. Are such costs considered eligible under this Fund?**

Financial instruments were not foreseen/eligible.

- 4. Are there any limits on the financing of fixed assets?**

There are no limits on the financing of fixed assets. However, to be considered as eligible they must satisfy the general criteria for eligibility of expenditure and fulfil the requirements set in the chapter 4 Financial Provisions, sub-heading: "Eligible direct expenditure" (of the Call for proposals) under the category of direct expenditures entitled "cost of equipment".

- 5. Do we have to confirm that we have own funds for own contribution (project co-financing)?**

Before granting the funding, the Fund Operator may check the organisation's financial viability. If a formal financial viability check by the Fund Operator is required for a participation in a project, the applicant will be invited to submit the official annual financial statements (Balance sheet and Profit and loss account certified by an auditor's report) for the last closed financial year.

- 6. Could you clarify what do you mean that co-financing can be covered by voluntary work? I.e. what counts as voluntary work?**

The required co-financing may be provided by one or more partners, as decided among themselves. Any project partner registered as a non-governmental organisation may provide co-financing in the form of in-kind contribution, provided that this in-kind contribution consists of voluntary work. Voluntary work is by definition work done for the benefit of others without monetary payment.

- 7. Regarding Concept Note SECTION 4 Indicative project budget - is it okay that during second stage and development of actual project the distribution between partners will change because at this stage it is impossible to exactly know the sums. Also can the total sum change during the second stage?**

It is possible to adjust the indicative budget presented in the concept note while preparing the full proposal.

- 8. Contribution. Could the calculation of co-financing look like this:**

50% voluntary work

50% cash (and how it should look like, can it be indirect cost - for premises, electricity so on, 15% from staff costs?)

The grant cannot constitute more than 85% of the total eligible expenditure of the project. A minimum of 15% co-financing on all eligible costs of the project must be ensured. In the case of partners that are NGOs, 50% of the required co-financing for the project may be in the form of in-kind contribution taking the form of voluntary work. The remaining co-financing should also be drawn from all eligible costs of the project.

- 9. We are having difficulties interpreting one of the budget headings (information found on page 14 of the Call for Proposals text), which refers the following: "Costs entailed by other contracts awarded by a project partner for the purposes of carrying out the project" Does this mean that subcontracting is an eligible expense?**

Subcontracting may be an eligible cost provided that it is duly justified by the project description.

- 10. Will there be advanced payment?**

Yes, an advance payment may be requested. Its amount, if any, will depend on the availability of a financial (advance payment) guarantee.

- 11. Is it allowed during project to buy publicity services?**

Yes, publicity services may be eligible cost provided that they are duly justified by the project description and serve the project purposes.

EVALUATION PROCEDURE

- 12. Does the number of support areas affect the assessment/evaluation in any way?**

The number of chosen support areas does not affect the assessment. The selection criteria are described in the call for proposals.

- 13. What does the assessment procedure look like?**

The fund operator assesses whether the applicant and the concept note meet the administrative and eligibility criteria outlined in the call for proposals. The Financial Mechanism Office is responsible for evaluation of the concept notes against the selection criteria. The final assessment and decision on awarding a grant is the responsibility of the Financial Mechanism Committee.

- 14. How are points awarded for the last selection criterion, "Composition of the consortium (number of countries/beneficiary partners involved, involvement of expertise partners)"? All other things being equal, are two-country consortia awarded fewer points than consortia that involve organizations from three or more eligible countries? Are there any additional points or is it preferable for the consortium if one of the members (the expertise partner) comes from one of the Donor States?**

Scoring will be based on an assessment of the partnership composition according to the proposed project design. The concept note may be awarded with maximum 5 points for consortium composition, in which the validity of the consortium and the roles of particular partners shall be taken into account. Consistent with the overall objective of the EEA and Norway Grants to strengthen relations between the Donor States and the Beneficiary States, the participation of relevant partners from the Donor States will be viewed as advantageous.

15. This call follows a two-step evaluation procedure. The criteria for the first step are known, but what about the evaluation criteria (areas that will be assigned points of evaluation) for the second, full application?

After completing the first step of the evaluation procedure (concept note phase) shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit a full project application. All required application modalities will be provided to the shortlisted applicants at this stage, including the administrative, eligibility, exclusion and award criteria for the selection of project proposals.

GENERAL ISSUES

1. How often will the Q&As be published?

Q&As will be published on the fund's webpage regularly dependent on the number and nature of questions received by the fund operator. In addition, all entities registered in EGREG will receive an info message immediately after the web publication (until 20 July 2017).

2. In the "Call for proposals" (page 17) it is mentioned that limited funding shall be made available to shortlisted applicants for the purposes of full proposal preparation. Can you please communicate the amount to be made available for each applicant (consortium) for this type of expense?

Each shortlisted consortium may apply for €4000 to cover expenses related to the second application round. More information will be made available in the final call for proposals available after the first selection phase.

3. Do we need a bank guarantee and is it possible to have mutual bank guarantee per partnership?

There is no requirement for any financial documentation in the concept note phase. For shortlisted projects applying for the second phase, a financial guarantee may be required in cases where advance payments are foreseen.

4. Are there any national priorities for this call? In call for proposals concept note phase publications we haven't found any national priorities, but there are general national priorities in this grant (provided in website)

The Fund for Youth Employment has no national priorities. However, the project should be related to challenges in the countries participating in the project.