

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

2016/CFP/TRU/01

NATIONAL INTEGRATION OF SECTORAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (SQF) THROUGH CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, REVIEW AND ACCREDITATION AT NATIONAL LEVEL

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General context

The Call for proposals is published in line with the Frontex Regulation¹, in particular Article 5 on Training, which stipulates that Frontex shall establish and further develop common core curricula for the training of border guards and provide training at European level for instructors of national border guards of Member States².

The Call for proposals is a pilot project and serves the purpose of exploring options with a view to offer more support opportunities for Border Guard training and education related purposes in the future.

The Call for proposals is also in line with the Frontex work programme³, in particular activity A1. Sectoral Qualifications Framework (SQF) for Border Guarding, describing the Educational standards including SQF.

The SQF for Border Guarding was endorsed by the Frontex Management Board on 28 November 2012.

The main purpose of this Call for proposals is to facilitate European harmonisation in border guard training and education, comparability of qualifications and international quality assurance by supporting the national integration of the SQF through curriculum design and review in line with Frontex standards.

1.2 Specific context

In a time of reduced capacity across organisational structures, the European Union (EU) needs to have the capability to share training resources and concepts in a most effective way to build trust across border guard organisations. There is a need for business engagement in education and training, compliant with European standards, to enhance collaboration and harmonisation. The new challenges, opportunities and requirements brought about in higher and vocational education by the Bologna/Copenhagen declarations instigate the quality improvements in education and training by introducing transparency of diplomas and qualifications, enabling mutual recognition of qualifications, exchange programmes etc. Moreover, in 2010, the Bologna process launched the European higher education area, in which students from all across Europe can choose from a wide and transparent range of high-quality courses and benefit from smooth recognition procedures across Europe.

Having this in mind, as well as the fact that the legal basis for the border guard tasks is harmonised by the *Schengen Acquis*, there is a need to design and deliver harmonised and comparable training for border guards that will allow comparability and harmonisation of qualifications, applicable to all particular types of national education/training institutions or systems.

Just as the Bologna and Copenhagen processes are the European solutions for the harmonisation of education and training across the EU, the qualifications frameworks are the main tools of these processes, designed to achieve harmonisation and mobility of learning, comparability of qualifications and interoperability of

¹ Council Regulation (EC) 2007/2004 of 26 October 2004 establishing a European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (OJ L 349, 25.11.2004, p. 1)

² For the purpose of this Call for proposals the term Member State includes also Schengen Associated Countries.

³ Frontex Management Board Decision no 59/2015 of 24 December 2015 adopting the Programme of Work 2016 and the Budget 2016, including the Establishment Plan.

national education systems. The SQF for Border Guarding and its integration ensures that Frontex is promoting good practice in training and education of border guards through the adoption of EU standards.

The aim of the border guard training is to equip border guards with knowledge, skills and competences that allow them to do the job, to find solutions to the problems encountered while promoting responsibility, ethics and fundamental rights in the daily job. The SQF identifies the learning requirements for the border guard job at all levels and in all areas and provides a link between learning and practice, facilitating the development of learning interventions which are operationally relevant. The concept of professional learning (knowledge, skills and competences that are transferable to the workplace) is a core concept of the SQF for Border Guarding.

The SQF has been designed to support border guard organisations to design training that is addressing the job needs and promote learning solutions that can be accredited in the national systems and recognised across the EU. The SQF reflects the entire scope of learning in the border guard field throughout the EU. It is inclusive but not prescriptive because it covers the job competences for border guarding activities of each organisation but not the competences required for other organisational tasks. Therefore, it accommodates all types of organisations performing border guard tasks across the EU. The SQF offers a comprehensive and flexible platform for learning outcomes based curriculum development that applies to both vocational and academic border guard education and training systems. As an overarching frame of reference, the SQF plays the role of a 'translation tool' for the various national qualifications in border guarding, linking different training systems together and ensuring the coherence of needs assessments and training prioritisation.

National Integration of SQF - what does it mean and why to do it?

The SQF is not a 'curriculum' but a high-level reference framework to which all border guard curricula relate. The SQF, like the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), provides a benchmark for levels of learning. This means that everyone will be able to compare border guard training programmes and reference them to their National Qualifications Framework (NQF), indicating the level of the course, using the SQF.

The integration of the SQF is a process, similar to the Bologna and Copenhagen processes, and no individual or Member State is expected to complete it in a strict timeline. It all depends on the particular stage or phase that each Member State is currently in, as regards the implementation of Bologna/Copenhagen principles to border guard training. Every Member State follows their own pace and every Member State is expected to have different needs in terms of the integration of the SQF.

In concrete terms, the integration of the SQF means using the SQF as a tool to assist training design and review.

It is expected that over time the Member States and Third Countries will define their border guard training in terms of the SQF standards and levels, acknowledging that the SQF is a useful tool that facilitates and enables quality assurance processes and the accreditation of border guard courses at the national level.

The integration of the SQF is not a purpose or an objective in itself. The SQF is a tool to support the design of creditable courses that are operationally relevant and compliant with the Bologna and Copenhagen principles. The reason why the SQF is requested by the Member States for national integration resides in all its benefits.

The EQF for Lifelong Learning was created to harmonise and compare learning across national systems. The SQF plays the same role in the border guard education and training field. These processes are the European solutions to harmonising learning across Europe. Education and training in the border guard field is no different to other education and training fields and the EU standards apply. It is to our advantage that the SQF for Border Guarding exists, as a European product, validated across the EU and ready to be used.

There are many benefits to the integration of the SQF for Border Guarding. However, Frontex, as an EU Agency, is equally responsible for adopting and promoting the EU approach to training just as it promotes the EU approach to border management. Therefore, Frontex is modelling the adoption of the SQF and Bologna/Copenhagen principles by reviewing and aligning all its training products (common core curricula, training tools, courses) in a similar way to the national integration process. The alignment of Frontex courses with the SQF follows the natural course of training review and quality assurance and is expected to be a gradual process as well. Collaboration with Frontex in the field of training is intrinsically linked to the process of adoption and integration of the SQF at national level, as the SQF is a common comparison tool, a common platform for training development and a common reference framework.

2. OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED RESULTS

2.1. Objectives

This Call for proposals aims to contribute to strategic development and improvement of the training design and quality assurance practice and culture within the Member States, with the following objectives:

- Support the Member States border guard organisations in aligning national curricula with the SQF for Border Guarding and design accreditable courses in line with the national accreditation standards based on the European best practices;
- Create and validate new qualifications linked to the SQF for Border Guarding and demonstrate the referencing of the SQF levels to the EQF levels through the accreditation of the qualifications in the national systems.

The specific objectives for education and training are:

- Enhancing the level of skills and competencies among border guards that enable them to carry out their tasks effectively and professionally;
- Facilitating quality and innovation in education and training of border guards by actively contributing to cooperation between different training institutions in order to achieve a common organisational culture and a professional identity;
- Promoting a European area of life-long education and training for border guards to support the modernisation process of professional education and training for border guards, through strategic cooperation, a better employment of EU instruments and dissemination of best practices;
- Enhancing the international dimension of education and training of border guards through cooperation between similar higher education and vocational institutions from participating Member States.

2.2. Expected results

As a result, the applicants must demonstrate that the project will:

- Develop harmonised, learner centred, accreditable and cost-effective learning interventions of high professional quality and ethical standards;
- Promote excellence in border guard education and training;
- Develop and deliver all training programmes according to the needs of the stakeholders and as a response to their need for specific training;
- Contribute to the development of the European Training Scheme for border guarding;
- Redefine programmes and projects in order to achieve best possible impact with available funds and to ensure the design of programmes in accordance with the needs of the stakeholders;
- Review and align training and education products with the Bologna/Copenhagen principles using the SQF for Border Guarding as a tool for learning outcomes based training, to design and support the subsequent national integration of the SQF for Border Guarding.

2.3. Dissemination and employment of results

Dissemination and employment of results represent the essential stages of the grant life cycle. They will provide the grant beneficiary with the possibility to share results and developed products within the grant, enhancing the impact and justifying the added value of the programme at European level. For that reason the applicants are asked to foresee the dissemination and employment activities in the development and implementation phases. The level and dimension of these activities has to be proportional with the objectives, the area of applicability and the mandate of Frontex. The results achieved in a specific project may be relevant for other areas that are not covered by the project, thus the applicant may develop strategies to facilitate access to the product.

3. TIMETABLE

	Stages	Date and time or indicative period
a)	Publication of the call	01 August 2016
b)	Deadline for submitting applications	30 September 2016
c)	Evaluation period	October 2016
d)	Information to applicants	Beginning of November 2016
e)	Signature of grant agreement	November - December 2016
f)	Starting date of the action ⁴	Day following the last signature of the grant agreement

4. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The total budget earmarked for the co-financing of projects is estimated at **EUR 100,000**.

The maximum grant per beneficiary will be **EUR 30,000**.

Frontex reserves the right to increase the total budget earmarked for the co-financing of projects or not to distribute all the funds available.

5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Applications must be sent no later than the deadline for submitting applications referred to in section 3.
- Applications must be submitted in writing (see section 15), using the application form (Annex I).
- Applications must be drafted in English language.

Failure to comply with those requirements will lead to the rejection of the application.

6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

6.1. Eligible applicants

In order to be eligible for the grant the applicant must:

- have legal personality under the applicable national law;
- be a public institution (public law entity) responsible for providing professional education and/or training to law enforcement officers with border guarding tasks;
- have the possibility to accredit programmes at national level by the relevant national accreditation body;
- be established in a Member State / Schengen Associated Country (United Kingdom and Ireland are eligible provided that they follow the procedure described in Frontex Regulation and respective MB decisions⁵);
- be established in a country where a NQF is in force or in the process of legal adoption.

⁴ For the purpose of this Call for proposals the term 'action' is equivalent to 'project'.

⁵ Management Board Decision No 54/2015 of 11 December 2015 on the practical arrangements for the participation in and financial contribution to Frontex operational activities by Ireland; Management Board Decision No 55/2015 of 11 December 2015 on the practical arrangements for the participation in and financial contribution to Frontex operational activities by the United Kingdom.

For the purpose of this Call for proposals only a declaration on honour is required to prove the applicant's eligibility. The declaration on honour forms part of the application.

6.2. Eligible activities

The eligible activities must refer to one of the following:

- **Development of a new curriculum** for border guard education / training in line with Bologna/Copenhagen principles using SQF for Border Guarding, on the basis of the templates and procedures developed by Frontex Training Unit (TRU);
- **Reviewing an existing curriculum** for border guard education/training in line with Bologna/Copenhagen principles and aligning them with SQF for Border Guarding, on the basis of the templates and procedures developed by Frontex TRU;

The applicant may apply for only one type of activity - either development of a new curriculum or review of an existing curriculum.

A mandatory requirement for the curriculum is to be accreditable in the national system (given the variable timeline necessary for national accreditation, monitoring the national accreditation will be part of the grant follow up and the results will be reported to Frontex).

In particular, the following **specific activities** are eligible under this Call for proposals:

- Meetings and/or workshops for curriculum development and review,
- Participation of at least two team members in a final review meeting held at Frontex premises (around mid-July 2017, attendance compulsory),
- Research and documentation,
- Translation of materials,
- Publication and dissemination of results,
- Preparation of documentation for accreditation submission

6.3. Implementation period

- The action may not start before November 2016, and in any case not before the grant agreement enters into force;
- The action has to be completed by 31 August 2017;
- The maximum duration of the action is 9 months.

When planning the project the applicants shall take into account the quality assurance steps and timeline. Applications for projects not complying with the conditions in 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 will be considered ineligible.

7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

7.1. Exclusions from participation

Applicants will be excluded from participating in the Call for proposals procedure if they are in any of the following situations:

- (a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- (b) they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of a Member State which has the force of *res judicata*;
- (c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify including by decisions of the European Investment Bank and international organisations;

- (d) they are not in compliance with their obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the Member State in which they are established or those of the Member State where the grant agreement is to be performed;
- (e) they (persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them) have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering or any other illegal activity, where such an illegal activity is detrimental to the Union's financial interests;
- (f) they are currently subject to an administrative penalty referred to in Article 109(1) of General Financial Regulation⁶.

7.2. Exclusion from award

Applicants will not be granted financial assistance if, in the course of the grant award procedure, they:

- (a) are subject to a conflict of interest;
- (b) are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the Commission or by Frontex as a condition of participation in the grant award procedure or fail to supply this information;
- (c) find themselves in one of the situations of exclusion, referred to in section 7.1.

Administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants who are guilty of misrepresentation.

8. SELECTION CRITERIA

8.1. Financial capacity

Applicants must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out and must contribute to it financially. For the purposes of this Call for proposals, only a declaration on honour is required to prove the applicants' financial capacity.

8.2. Operational capacity

Applicants must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed action, including the knowledge on Bologna/Copenhagen processes. In this respect, applicants have to submit a declaration on their honour, and the following information:

- a) Information about course(s) /qualification(s) developed or reviewed according to Bologna/Copenhagen principles and in line with SQF along with information about the subject, the name of a person from the Frontex SQF pool of experts who reviewed the course and the date of the review.
- b) Description of the project team in line with the following requirements:
 - The team must consist of team leader, SQF expert(s), curriculum designer(s) and subject matter expert(s);
 - The team leader must have a good knowledge of English, at least B2 (Common European Framework for Foreign Languages);
 - The team must have at least one international expert⁷ (SQF expert/curriculum designer/subject matter expert) who has a good knowledge of English, at least B2 (Common European Framework for Foreign Languages);
 - The team must have at least one member trained and certified by Frontex in Course design in line with the SQF;

⁶ Regulation (EU, EURATOM) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union.

⁷ For the purpose of this Call for proposals 'International expert' means an expert from a Member State different than the Member State of the applicant.

- The team must have at least one member previously involved in a successful development / review of at least one border guard course (as part of the SQF alignment process or Course Design assessment⁸).

The CV of the following experts shall be attached to the application: the team leader, the SQF expert(s) and international expert(s). Please do not attach more than five CVs.

The annexed CVs should only contain information that is relevant for the grant application and shall not exceed 3 pages. The CVs shall be drawn up by using the Europass format, see: <https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae/templates-instructions>

9. AWARD CRITERIA

Eligible applications will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

Relevance of curriculum (20 points):

- The proposed curriculum and the results will effectively contribute to achieving the objectives of enhancing the skills and competencies of border guards and they are specific to border guarding (exclusively); (5 points)
- The application clearly approaches the national and EU priorities established by the strategic and policy documents; (5 points)
- The project is compliant with Frontex mission and strategic objectives and contributes to the achievement of a common border guarding culture and interoperability at the borders; (5 points)
- Impact of the project (number of cadets/students/border guards to be trained on annual basis). (5 points)

Quality of development and implementation (25 points):

- The activities planned are high quality, realistic, feasible, and lead to the achievement of the objectives and results; (5 points)
- The proposed methodology is feasible and adequate for achieving the proposed results and respects the procedures for course design provided by Frontex; (5 points)
- The project guarantees resources for each activity, the budget is well defined, realistic and offers best value for money; (5 points)
- The activities are well defined, the deadlines are realistic and the stages are clear. This demonstrates a coherent and robust planning capacity and includes the necessary phases of development, implementation, evaluation, monitoring and dissemination; (5 points)
- The risks are clearly identified and there are reasonable measures in place to address the risks. (5 points)

Quality of the project team (33 points)

- A good distribution of knowledge on the topic and educational/training knowledge within the project team is ensured; it is required for the project team to include both subject matter experts and curriculum designers. The project management experience of the team leader is an advantage; (6 points)
- Experts have knowledge on relevant EU documents on the topic as well as on adult learning, Bologna/Copenhagen principles, SQF for Border Guarding; (5 points)
- More than one expert has been trained and certified by Frontex in Course design in line with the SQF; (2 points per each additional member, up to 4 points)
- More than one member of the team has previously been involved in a successful development / review of at least one border guard course (as part of the SQF alignment process) / has experience in developing learning outcomes based courses at national level; (2 points per each additional member, up to 4 points)

⁸ Course in course design in line with Bologna /Copenhagen principles using the Sectoral Qualifications Framework

- In addition to the knowledge of English required from the team leader and international expert, the other experts of the team have a good knowledge of English, at least B2 (Common European Framework for Foreign Languages); (5 points)
- Tasks in the project are clear and demonstrate active contribution of all parties proportional with their expertise and specific competencies; (5 points)
- More than one International expert is involved in the team; (2 points per each additional member, up to 4 points).

Please ensure that all knowledge and expertise on the specific topic and curricula development is clearly indicated in the profiles of the project team members.

Please do not attach any additional CVs apart from those mentioned in the Selection criteria. The description of the team should be presented in the relevant part of the application (section 3).

Impact and sustainability (22 points)

- The project will have a significant impact on the education and training for border guards and will help them perform their tasks and duties, being able to collaborate and cooperate with their colleagues at European level; (5 points)
- The quality of work of the project team is based on an effective approach to curriculum design according to common standards⁹ recommended by Frontex; (5 points)
- The project will generate effects outside the applicant and there are measures to evaluate the effective impact of the project; (4 points)
- The dissemination plan has been clearly defined and includes resources to ensure a high quality dissemination of the experiences and results gained during the project; (4 points)
- The applicant ensures that Frontex contribution (both financial and technical) is adequately applied in accordance with point 13.1 of the Call for proposals. (4 points)

During the evaluation phase the applications might obtain maximum 100 points. In order to be eligible for financing the application has to obtain minimum 60 points in total and the minimum required for each category as indicated below:

	Max number of points	Minimum required
Relevance of curriculum	20 points	10 points
Quality of development and implementation	25 points	10 points
Quality of project team	33 points	15 points
Impact and sustainability	22 points	10 points

10. QUALITY ASSURANCE

A quality assurance procedure will be implemented by Frontex in accordance with assessment criteria in Annex V, consisting in the following actions:

a) **For single level courses:**

- Draft curriculum is sent to Frontex for a **first review** after the definition of job competences and learning outcomes is completed. The deadline for submission is **28 February 2017**. The 'Course Development

⁹ Common standards are here defined as templates and guidelines for course design in line with SQF and the SQF for Border Guarding, set of criteria for assessing curriculum compliance with the SQF, Bologna and Copenhagen processes

Template (Single Level)' (Annex III) is used by the grant beneficiary for that purpose. Frontex TRU gives feedback within two weeks. The incorporation of feedback into the further work is mandatory.

- A **second interim review** is requested after the formulation of the learning and assessment strategies (including assessments) of the curriculum. The deadline for submission of the second draft is **14 April 2017**. Frontex TRU gives feedback within two weeks. The incorporation of feedback into the further work is mandatory.
- **Final draft** curriculum is submitted for review by **30 June 2017**. The final review takes place in a meeting at Frontex premises around **mid-July 2017**. The participation in the meeting of at least two members of the grant beneficiary's project team is mandatory.
- The grant beneficiary incorporates the feedback and submits to Frontex the final product for approval by **31 August 2017**. Upon receiving approval from Frontex (within one week), the grant beneficiary submits the relevant documentation for accreditation.

Please note that submission for accreditation is a condition for requesting the final payment (see also point 12.2, Calculation of the final grant amount).

- Upon receiving the accreditation the grant beneficiary will provide Frontex with translated copy (in English) of the accreditation decision.

b) **For multi-level courses**

- Draft curriculum is sent to Frontex for a first review after the definition of job competences and learning outcomes is completed. The deadline for submission is **28 February 2017**. The 'Course Development Template (Multi-Level)' (Annex IV) is used by the grant beneficiary for that purpose. Frontex TRU gives feedback within two weeks. The incorporation of feedback into the further work is mandatory.
- A second interim review is requested after the formulation of the learning and assessment strategies of the curriculum, including the modular structure (learning outcomes, learning and assessment strategies for each module and assessments) and all programme assessments. The second draft is to be submitted to Frontex by **14 April 2017**. Frontex TRU gives feedback in max 15 working days. The incorporation of feedback into the further work is mandatory.
- A third interim review may be included, if necessary. In such case, the third draft is to be submitted to Frontex by **31 May 2017**. Frontex TRU gives feedback in max 15 working days. The incorporation of feedback into the further work is mandatory.
- Final draft curriculum is submitted for review by **30 June 2017**. The final review takes place in a meeting at Frontex premises around **mid-July 2017**. The participation in the meeting of at least two members of the grant beneficiary's project team is mandatory.
- The grant beneficiary incorporates the feedback and submits to Frontex the final product for approval by **31 August 2017**. Upon receiving approval from Frontex (within one week), the grant beneficiary submits the relevant documentation for accreditation.

Please note that submission for accreditation is a condition for requesting the final payment (see also point 12.2, Calculation of the final grant amount).

- Upon receiving the accreditation the grant beneficiary will provide Frontex with translated copy (in English) of the accreditation decision.

11. LEGAL COMMITMENTS

In the event of a grant awarded by Frontex, a grant agreement drawn up in euro and detailing the conditions and level of funding, will be sent to the grant beneficiary.

Two copies of the original agreement must be signed by both the grant beneficiary and Frontex by the end of 2016. The implementation of the action may begin only after the signature of the agreement by both parties and its entry into force.

12. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

12.1. General Principles

a) **Non-cumulative award**

An action may only receive one grant from the EU budget.

Under no circumstance shall the same costs be financed twice by the Union budget. To ensure this, applicants shall indicate the sources and amounts of Union funding received or applied for the same action or part of the action or for its operating costs during the same financial year as well as any other funding received or applied for the same action.

b) Non-retroactivity

No grant may be awarded retrospectively for actions already completed.

c) Co-financing

Co-financing means that the resources which are necessary to carry out the action may not be entirely provided by the EU grant.

Co-financing of the action may take the form of:

- the applicant's own resources,
- financial contribution from third parties.

d) Balanced budget

The estimated budget of the action, including the sources of funding, is to be attached to the application form. It must have revenue and expenditure in balance.

The budget must be drawn up in euros.

Applicants who foresee that costs will not be incurred in euros, are invited to use the exchange rate published on the Infor-euro website available at http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/inforeuro/inforeuro_en.cfm.

e) Subcontracting

As a rule, the action and in particular its core activities are to be implemented directly by the applicant and its staff.

Where the implementation of the action requires sub-contracting (e.g. the purchase of some services and/or goods, equipment, etc.), the following criteria must be satisfied:

- The grant beneficiary must award the contract to the bid offering best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interests and retain the documentation for the event of an audit;
- sub-contracting may only cover the implementation of a limited part of the action;
- it must be justified having regard to the nature of the action and what is necessary for its implementation; and
- it must be clearly stated in the application.

12.2. Funding forms

Grants are calculated on the basis of a detailed estimated budget indicating clearly the costs that are eligible for EU funding. The grant amount may neither exceed the eligible costs nor the amount requested. Amounts are indicated in euros.

➤ **Maximum amount requested**

The EU grant is limited to a maximum co-funding rate of **95% of eligible costs** taking into account the maximum grant amount referred to in section 4.

Consequently, part of the total eligible expenses entered in the estimated budget must be financed from sources other than the EU grant (see section 12.1(c)).

➤ **Eligible costs**

Eligible costs are costs actually incurred by the grant beneficiary which meet all the following criteria:

- ✓ they are incurred during the duration of the action,
- ✓ costs relating to final reports and accreditation fee may be incurred after the end date of the action, however, before the submission of a request for payment of the balance;
- ✓ the period of eligibility of costs will start as specified in the grant agreement. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the signature of the grant agreement and its entry into force;

- ✓ they are indicated in the estimated budget of the action;
- ✓ they are necessary for the implementation of the action which is the subject of the grant;
- ✓ they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the grant beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the Member State where the grant beneficiary is established and according to the usual cost accounting practices of the grant beneficiary;
- ✓ they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- ✓ they are reasonable, justified, and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

The grant beneficiary's internal accounting and auditing procedures must permit direct reconciliation of the costs and revenue declared in respect of the action/project with the corresponding accounting statements and supporting documents.

➤ **Eligible direct costs**

The eligible direct costs for the action are those costs which, **with due regard for the conditions of eligibility set out above**, are identifiable as specific costs directly linked to the performance of the action and which can therefore be booked to it directly, such as:

- the costs of personnel working under an employment contract with the grant beneficiary or equivalent appointing act and assigned to the action, comprising actual salaries plus social security contributions and other statutory costs included in the remuneration, provided that these costs are in line with the grant beneficiary's usual policy on remuneration. Those costs may include additional remuneration, including payments on the basis of supplementary contracts regardless of their nature, provided that it is paid in a consistent manner whenever the same kind of work or expertise is required and independently from the source of funding used;
- costs of the personnel of national administrations to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the project concerned were not undertaken;
- fees of external experts to the extent that they relate to the activities which the grant beneficiary would not be able to carry out with its own staff;
- subsistence allowances (for meetings, including final review meeting at Frontex, workshops etc.) provided that these costs are in line with the grant beneficiary's usual practices;
- costs of travel (for meetings, including final review meeting at Frontex, workshops etc.) and accommodation, provided that these costs are in line with the grant beneficiary's usual practices on travel;
- costs related to organisation of meetings etc. (e.g. rental of conference room, catering);
- costs of consumables and supplies, provided that they are identifiable and assigned to the action;
- costs arising directly from requirements linked to the implementation of the action (dissemination of information, translations, reproduction);
- costs related to accreditation up to 5000 EURO.

➤ **Eligible indirect costs (overheads)**

A flat-rate amount of 7% of the total eligible direct costs of the action, is eligible under indirect costs, representing the grant beneficiary's general administrative costs which can be regarded as chargeable to the action.

Indirect costs may not include costs entered under another budget heading.

Applicants's attention is drawn to the fact that in the case of organisations receiving an operating grant (for operating costs), indirect costs are not eligible under specific actions.

➤ **Ineligible costs**

The following costs constitute ineligible costs and therefore cannot be included in the estimated budget of the action:

- contribution in kind;

- return on capital;
- debt and debt service charges;
- provisions for losses or debts;
- interest owed;
- exchange losses;
- costs of bank transfers;
- costs declared by a grant beneficiary and covered by another action receiving a European Union grant. In particular, indirect costs shall not be eligible under a grant for an action awarded to a beneficiary who already receives an operating grant financed from the Union budget during the period in question;
- depreciation costs;
- deductible VAT;
- excessive or reckless expenditure.

➤ **Calculation of the final grant amount**

The final amount of the grant to be awarded to the grant beneficiary is established after completion of the action, upon

- approval of the request for payment containing the following documents:
 - A final report providing a summary about the project implementation;
 - Statement that the documentation has been submitted for accreditation;
 - Declaration of the grant beneficiary that it will provide Frontex with a copy of accreditation decision (translated in English)
 - The final financial statement of costs actually incurred with relevant supporting documents, as requested, proving the costs borne.
- verification of the implementation of the activities and/or of the production of the deliverables planned in the application.

In the event of non-execution or clearly inadequate execution of an activity planned in the application attached to the funding agreement, the final grant will be reduced accordingly.

12.3. Payment arrangements

A pre-financing payment corresponding to 50% of the grant amount will be transferred to the grant beneficiary within 30 days from the reception of a request for pre-financing.

Frontex will establish the amount of the final payment to be made to the grant beneficiary on the basis of the calculation of the final grant amount (see section 12.2 above). If the total of earlier payments is higher than the final grant amount, the grant beneficiary will be required to reimburse the amount paid in excess by Frontex through a recovery order.

13. PUBLICITY

13.1. By the grant beneficiaries

Grant beneficiaries must clearly acknowledge Frontex contribution in all publications or in conjunction with activities for which the grant is used.

In this respect, grant beneficiaries are required to give prominence to the name and emblem of Frontex on all their publications, posters, programmes and other products realised under the co-financed project.

To do this they must use:

- the text “This action has received funding from Frontex”;
- Frontex emblem;
- and the disclaimer “Frontex is not responsible for the views displayed in the publications and/or in the activities for which the grant is used”.

If this requirement is not fully complied with, the grant amount may be reduced in accordance with the provisions of the grant agreement.

13.2. By Frontex

All information relating to grants awarded in the course of a financial year shall be published on the Frontex website no later than the 30 June of the year following the financial year in which the grants were awarded.

Frontex will publish the following information:

- name of the grant beneficiary,
- address of the grant beneficiary,
- subject of the grant,
- amount awarded.

Upon a reasoned and duly substantiated request by the grant beneficiary, the publication shall be waived if such disclosure risks threatening the rights and freedoms of individuals concerned as protected by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union or harm the commercial interests of the grant beneficiaries.

14. DATA PROTECTION

The reply to any Call for proposals involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CV). Such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. Unless indicated otherwise, any personal data requested are required to evaluate the application in accordance with the specifications of the Call for proposal and will be processed solely for that purpose by Frontex. Details concerning the processing of personal data are available on the privacy statement in Annex VII.

Personal data may be registered in the Early Warning System (EWS) only or both in the EWS and Central Exclusion Database (CED) by the Accounting Officer of the Commission, should the grant beneficiary be in one of the situations mentioned in:

- the Commission Decision 2014/792 of 13.11.2014 on the Early Warning System (for more information see the Privacy Statement on: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm),
- or
- the Commission Regulation 2008/1302 of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database (for more information see the Privacy Statement on http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm)

Applicants are expected to gain permission for processing personal data of any individual whose data is included in the application in line with the national law of the applicant.

15. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the formal requirements and by the deadline set out under section 5.

No modification to the application is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. However, if there is a need to clarify certain aspects or for the correction of clerical mistakes, Frontex may contact the applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process.

Applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the selection process.

Application forms are available at <http://frontex.europa.eu/about-frontex/grants/open-calls-for-proposals/>

Applications shall be submitted on the correct form, duly completed, dated, showing a balanced budget (revenue/expenditure), submitted in three copies (one original clearly identified as such, plus two copies), and signed by the person authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant.

Applications must be submitted in a single sealed envelope bearing:

- ✓ address for submission:

Attn: Training Unit - Grants
Frontex
Plac Europejski 6
00-844 Warsaw
Poland

- ✓ the reference number of this Call for proposals (2016/CFP/TRU/01);
- ✓ the words: "Not to be opened before the opening session".

Applications may be submitted:

- by post or by courier, posted no later than the deadline for submitting applications. The postmark or the date of the deposit slip shall be taken as proof of the date of dispatch;
- by hand delivery (in person or by an authorised representative) to Frontex Reception Desk at the address given above. Working hours are from 09:00 to 17:00, (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and Frontex holidays). If this delivery option is chosen, a receipt must be obtained as proof of submission, signed and dated by Frontex Reception Desk.

Applications sent by fax or e-mail will not be accepted.

Contacts

Questions regarding the Call for proposals, indicating the reference number of this Call for proposals (2016/CFP/TRU/01), can be sent to the functional email address grants.TRU@frontex.europa.eu

The last day for submission of questions on the Call for proposals will be 5 working days before the deadline for submitting applications i.e. 23 September 2016.

Frontex replies to the questions within 2 working days.

Frontex sends the reply directly to the email address from which the question was sent.

The questions and answers may be anonymously published on the Frontex website if they are relevant to other applicants. A file (pdf) document with all such questions and answers will be available on Frontex website together with all the documents related to the Call for proposals.

If, during the evaluation process there is a need to clarify certain aspects of the application or for the correction of clerical mistakes, Frontex may contact the applicant for this purpose using the contact details provided in the Application form. The answers shall be provided within 2 working days. Frontex will not be held responsible in the event that it cannot contact the applicant.

Annexes to the Call for proposals (available on Frontex website):

- Annex I: Documents for application
 - I.1 Application form
 - I.2 Budget form and sources of funding
 - I.3 Declaration on honour by the applicant,
 - I.4 Financial Identification Form
 - I.5 Legal Entity Form
- Annex II: Model grant agreement
- Annex III: Course development template (single-level)
- Annex IV: Course development template (multi-level)
- Annex V: Assessment Criteria for course design aligned with the SQF
- Annex VI: Final technical report template
- Annex VII: Final financial statement template
- Annex VIII: Privacy statement