



EXECUTIVE AGENCY FOR HEALTH AND CONSUMERS

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION FOR THE FUNCTIONING OF EUROPEAN CONSUMER ORGANISATIONS

Call N°: EAHC/2010/CP/OG-ACTION5

Call for proposals 2010

Action 5 of Decision No 1926/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a programme of Community action in the field of consumer policy (2007-2013)

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1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THIS CALL.....	3
1.1. The Consumer Programme	3
1.2. The Commission’s annual work programme for 2010	3
1.3. The present call for proposals.....	3
2. SELECTION OF FRAMEWORK PARTNERS	4
2.1. Eligibility criteria.....	4
2.2. Exclusion criteria.....	5
2.3. Selection criteria.....	5
2.4. Award criteria.....	5
3. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS.....	6
4. ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS.....	6
4.1. Composition of application package	6
4.2. Submission and deadline	7
4.3. Assessment of applications.....	8
4.4. Indicative timetable	8

1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THIS CALL

1.1. The Consumer Programme

On 18 December 2006, the European Parliament and the Council adopted a Decision establishing a programme of Community action in the field of consumer policy (2007-2013)¹. The Consumer Programme is intended to complement, support and monitor the policies of the Member States and to contribute to protecting the health, safety and economic and legal interests of consumers, as well as to promote their rights to information, to education and to organise themselves in order to safeguard their interests.

Its objectives are:

- a) to ensure a right level of consumer protection, notably through improved evidence, better consultation and better representation of consumers' interests;
- b) to ensure the effective application of consumer protection rules, in particular through enforcement cooperation, information, education and redress.

1.2. The Commission's annual work programme for 2010

In conformity with Article 7 of Decision 1926/2006, on 21 December 2009 the European Commission adopted a Decision concerning the adoption of the annual work programme² in the area of consumer policy for 2010. The Work Programme contains further information about the objectives, priorities, indicative budget and types of actions referred to in this call notice and the eligibility rules for taking part. This document is available under <http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/consumers>.

1.3. The present call for proposals

The Call for Proposals 2010 aims at providing financial contributions (operating grants) to the functioning of European consumer organisations through the conclusion of framework partnership agreements for a duration of four years – covering the operating years 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 – thus establishing a long-term cooperation (partnerships) between the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers (EAHC) and the selected partners.

Framework partnership agreements formalise the partnership between EAHC and the selected partners by specifying the common objectives agreed, the type of action envisaged, the procedure for awarding specific grants and the general rights and obligations of each party under the specific agreement.

Partnerships do not per se constitute an obligation to award grants to the partners.

Grants are awarded through the conclusion of **specific grant agreements** based upon the framework partnership agreements.

¹ Decision 1926/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the council of 18 December 2006 establishing a programme of Community action in the field of consumer policy (2007-2013) (text with EEA relevance), OJ L 404 of 30.12.2006, p.39.

² Commission's Decision (C10262) of 21.12.2009 concerning the adoption of the annual work programme in the area of consumer policy for 2010, point 3.1.4 (a).

Bodies who wish to enter into a long-term cooperation with EAHC must fulfil the requirements specified in this Call.

They are required to fill in the application form and provide the requested documentation, including the annual work programme – and corresponding budget – for the year 2011. These two documents will form the basis for awarding the specific operating grant for 2011.

In 2011, 2012 and 2013 the partners who have concluded a framework partnership agreement within the frame of this Call will be invited by EAHC to submit a simplified grant application, together with a detailed work programme and corresponding budget for the years 2012, 2013 and 2014 respectively.

The proposed work programmes and corresponding budgets will be assessed by EAHC. Once approved, they will serve as basis for awarding the specific operating grants³.

This call for proposals is open to all legal entities established in the Member States. In accordance with Article 8 of the Consumer Programme, it is also open to participation of legal entities established in EFTA States which are contracting parties in the EEA agreement (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein). In addition, the call is open for third countries to which the European Neighbourhood Policy applies, countries that are applying for, are candidates for, or are acceding to, membership of the European Union, and the western Balkan countries included in the stabilisation and association process, in accordance with the condition laid down in the respective bilateral or multilateral agreements with those countries establishing the general principles for their participation in the EU programmes.

2. SELECTION OF FRAMEWORK PARTNERS

Each application will be assessed on the basis of evaluation criteria, which include the following categories: eligibility, exclusion, selection and award criteria.

In order to be selected as partners with whom to conclude framework partnership agreements, applicants must fulfil the criteria under the conditions specified in this section and provide the requested documents as evidence.

All specific requirements and supporting documents needed to evaluate each of the following criteria are defined in the Guide for Applicants in line with the rules laid down in the Work Programme 2010.

This documentation, along with the Commission Work Programme 2010 and any other information relating to this call, are available on the EAHC website under <http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/consumers>

2.1. Eligibility criteria

Applicants must be European consumer organisations which meet all the following eligibility criteria as set out in section 3.1.4(a) of the Commission Work Programme 2010 and Annex II section 5 of Decision 1926/2006:

- a) are non-governmental, non-profit-making, independent of industry, commercial and business or other conflicting interests, and have as their primary objectives and activities the

³ The signature of the framework partnership agreement does not entail any obligation on EAHC to award an operating grant for the years 2012, 2013 or 2014. Such decision will be based on the corresponding Annual Consumer Work Programme approved by the Commission every year.

promotion and protection of both health and safety as well as economic and legal interests of consumers in the European Union, and

- b) have been mandated to represent the interests of consumers at European Union level by national consumer organisations in at least half of the Member States that are representative, in accordance with national rules or practice, of consumers and are active at regional or national level;
- c) have provided to the EAHC satisfactory accounts of their membership, internal rules and sources of funding.

Only proposals meeting the requirements of the eligibility criteria and fully covering all the above mentioned areas shall be evaluated further.

2.2. Exclusion criteria

Applicant organisations must not be in any of the situations of exclusion listed in Articles 93(1), 94 and 96(2)(a) of the Financial Regulation.

2.3. Selection criteria

The applicant organisation must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain its activity throughout the financial year for which the grant is awarded.

Only applicant organisations with the necessary operational resources, skills and professional experience may be awarded a grant.

2.4. Award criteria

In order to evaluate the relative merit of proposals received, a set of award criteria has been defined in Annex I of the Commission Work Programme 2010 in order to make it possible to select work programmes that can guarantee compliance with the Commission's objectives and priorities and can guarantee the visibility of the European Union financing.

The work programme presented by the applicant must fulfil the award criteria which are defined as follows:

- a) be consistent with the objectives of European consumer policy;
- b) contribute towards the integration of consumer interests into other EU policies;
- c) contribute towards strengthening the representation of consumer organisations in the new Member States;
- d) describe the organisation's activities as regards representing consumer interests and expressing consumers' concerns to institutions, interest groups, the media and the general public;
- e) describe the organisation's activities as regards encouraging its members to take a more active stance on European issues with their various contact partners at both European and national level,
- f) guarantee the general visibility of both the organisation and its activities.
- g) The work programme must be clear, realistic and well detailed, in particular as regards the following aspects:

- clarity of the objectives and their suitability for achieving the desired results;
 - description of the activities planned;
 - timetables.
- h) The work programme must be cost-effective and thus demonstrate that the budget is commensurate with the resources to be used.
- i) The work programme must state what the evaluation mechanisms will be and what result indicators will be used to make it possible to verify that the objectives of the work programme have been achieved.

All award criteria set out under this point have the same weight

3. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

The Financial Regulation⁴ lays down the rules to be applied with a view of ensuring that the procedures for protecting Union funds are complied with. This Regulation and the associated Implementing Rules⁵ constitute the reference documents for all the financial measures needed to implement the Consumer Programme and this call in particular.

The indicative total amount available for the specific grant for 2011 is **EUR 1.35 million**.

Financial contribution shall not exceed 50% of expenditure for carrying out eligible activities.⁶

4. ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

In submitting a proposal, applicants accept the procedures and conditions as described in this call and in the documents to which it refers. Applications that do not comply with the requirements set out will be excluded from the selection procedure.

Further information on how to prepare and submit a proposal is given in the Guide for Applicants.

This documentation can be obtained, along with the Commission Work Programme 2010 and any other information relating to this call, from the EAHC website: <http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/consumers>

4.1. Composition of application package

A proposal is made up of the application form and its supporting documents as described in the Guide for Applicants.

Proposals must be prepared and submitted to EAHC on paper in one (1) original and two (2) copies.

To be considered complete, a proposal must contain:

⁴ [COUNCIL REGULATION \(EC, Euratom\) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities, OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, amended by Council Regulation \(EC, Euratom\) No 1995/2006 of 13 December 2006, OJ L 390, 30.12.2006 and amended by Council Regulation \(EC\) No 1525/2007 of 17 December 2007, OJ 343, 27.12.2007](#)

⁵ [COMMISSION REGULATION \(EC, EURATOM\) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation \(EC, Euratom\) No 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities, OJ L 357, 31.12.2002 and amended by Commission Regulation \(EC, Euratom\) No 1261/2005 of 20 July 2005, OJ L 201 2.8.2005 and Commission Regulation \(EC, Euratom\) No 1248/2006 of 7 August 2006 OJ L 227 19.8.2006 and Commission Regulation \(EC, Euratom\) No 478/2007 of 23 April 2007, OJ L 111 28.4.2007](#)

⁶ Article 4, section 1(c) of Decision 1926/2006

- The application form (MS Word document)
- The budget forms (MS Excel document)
- Annexes and supporting documents as defined in the application form

All the above mentioned documents should be sent in **one single batch**.

4.2. Submission and deadline

Proposals must be submitted to EAHC on paper (one original signed printed version + 2 paper copies), clearly indicating on the envelope the following call reference:

Call for proposals EAHC/2010/CP/OG-ACTION5

Applicants may choose to submit proposals:

- (a) either by registered mail or by a courier service **not later than 27/09/2010**, to the following address:

EAHC Executive Agency for Health and Consumers
Consumer and Food Safety Unit

Bâtiment Jean Monnet
Rue Alcide de Gasperi
L-2920 Luxembourg

In case of delivery by registered mail or by courier, the evidence of the date of dispatch shall be constituted by the postmark/the date of the deposit slip or by the receipt of dispatch issued by the courier service.

- (b) or delivered by hand to the following address:

EAHC Executive Agency for Health and Consumers
Consumer and Food Safety Unit

Bâtiment Jean Monnet
Rue Alcide de Gasperi
L-2920 Luxembourg

not later than 16.00 CET on 27/09/2010. In this case, an acknowledgement of receipt will be obtained from the Commission service receiving the proposal.

In parallel, the applicant shall send the electronic version of the full application dossier by e-mail to the following address: xxxxxxxxxxxx@xx.xxxxxx.xx **the same deadline applying**. The subject of the email shall clearly mention the call reference and the email shall contain:

- Proof of dispatching of the paper version
- The application form (MS Word document)
- The budget forms (MS Excel document)
- Annexes and supporting documents as defined in the application form

Proposals submitted by fax, or e-mail will **not** be accepted.

In the case of difference(s) between the paper and the electronic versions of the applications, the paper version will be binding.

4.3. Assessment of applications

Applications will be evaluated by an evaluation committee set up according to Article 116 of the Financial Regulation and Article 178 of the Implementing Rules.

Applications will be assessed according to the criteria defined under point 2 of this call for proposals.

EAHC may request clarification at any time on the contents of the application documents submitted.

In all correspondence relating to this call (e.g. when requesting information, or submitting a proposal), reference must be clearly made to this specific call using the call reference number. Once EAHC has allocated a registration number to a proposal, indicated in the acknowledgement of receipt, the applicant must use this number in all subsequent correspondence.

All the applications received by EAHC will be treated confidentially and all personal data contained in the applications or related to the call will be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council 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. For more information, please refer to the website of EAHC: http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/about/data_protection.html.

4.4. Indicative timetable

Applicants will be informed on the results of their application after the evaluation has taken place. The framework partnership agreement as well as the specific grant agreement for 2011 will be concluded before the end of 2010.