



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Skills  
VET, Apprenticeships and Adult Learning

## **EaSI – PROGRESS Axis**

**Awareness-raising activities on “Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults”<sup>1</sup>**

### **CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

**VP/2017/011**

**Any questions should be sent by email to:  
[empl-vp-2017-011@ec.europa.eu](mailto:empl-vp-2017-011@ec.europa.eu)**

**To ensure a rapid response to requests for information, applicants are invited  
to send their queries in English, where possible**

**This text is only available in English.**

**Applicants are invited to read the present document in conjunction with the Financial  
Guidelines for Applicants, the model grant agreement(s) and the model of final technical report  
published with this call (see annexes) as well as the financial rules applicable to the general  
budget of the Union and their rules of application:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/budget/biblio/documents/regulations/regulations\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/biblio/documents/regulations/regulations_en.cfm)**

---

<sup>1</sup> This call was initially listed in the annex to the 2017 annual work programme for grants and procurement for the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (“EaSI”) as “call for proposals to undertake awareness raising activities in Member States on the proposed Skills Guarantee” on the basis of the European Commission’s “Proposal for a Council Recommendation on establishing a Skills Guarantee” of 10 June 2016. It has been updated after the Council on 19 December 2016 adopted a Recommendation with the new title “Upskilling Pathways: new opportunities for adults”.

## Table of Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION – BACKGROUND .....	- 2 -
1.1.	Programme/Legal base .....	- 2 -
1.2.	Policy and economic background .....	- 2 -
1.3.	Main Purpose .....	- 4 -
2.	OBJECTIVES – TYPES OF ACTION - EXPECTED RESULTS .....	- 4 -
2.1.	Objectives .....	- 4 -
2.2.	Description of the activities to be funded / Type of actions .....	- 5 -
2.3.	Expected outputs / results .....	- 6 -
2.4.	Monitoring .....	- 7 -
3.	TIMETABLE .....	- 7 -
3.1.	Starting date and duration of the projects .....	- 7 -
4.	AVAILABLE BUDGET AND CO-FINANCING RATE .....	- 8 -
4.1.	Available Budget .....	- 8 -
4.2.	Co-financing rate .....	- 8 -
5.	ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS .....	- 8 -
6.	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA .....	- 9 -
6.1.	Eligibility of the applicants (lead and co-applicants) and affiliated entities .....	- 9 -
6.1.1.	Place of establishment .....	- 9 -
6.1.2.	Type of entities .....	- 9 -
6.1.3.	Consortia .....	- 9 -
6.1.4.	Affiliated entities .....	- 10 -
6.2.	Eligible activities .....	- 10 -
6.2.1.	Geographical Location .....	- 10 -
6.2.2.	Types of activities .....	- 10 -
6.2.3.	Core activities .....	- 10 -
6.3.	Ineligible activities .....	- 10 -
7.	EXCLUSION CRITERIA .....	- 11 -
8.	SELECTION CRITERIA .....	- 11 -
8.1.	Financial capacity .....	- 11 -
8.2.	Operational capacity .....	- 11 -
9.	AWARD CRITERIA .....	- 12 -
10.	LEGAL COMMITMENTS .....	- 13 -
10.1.	Sources of Funding .....	- 13 -
11.	FINANCIAL PROVISIONS .....	- 14 -
12.	PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS .....	- 14 -
13.	COMMUNICATION .....	- 15 -
14.	INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PRESENTATION OF THE APPLICATION AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS .....	- 16 -
14.1.	Instructions for the presentation of the application .....	- 16 -
14.2.	Required documents .....	- 16 -
	ANNEX I: FINANCIAL GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS .....	- 20 -

## **1. INTRODUCTION – BACKGROUND**

### **1.1. Programme/Legal base**

This call for proposals is published under REGULATION (EU) No 1296/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on a European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (“EaSI”)<sup>2</sup> and amending Decision No 283/2010/EU establishing a European Progress Microfinance Facility for employment and social inclusion, as well as the Commission implementing decision of 8 December 2016 concerning the adoption of the 2017 annual work programme for grants and procurement for the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (“EaSI”), serving as financing decision<sup>3</sup>.

The European Programme for Employment and Social Innovation “EaSI” 2014-2020<sup>4</sup> is a European-level financing instrument managed directly by the European Commission to contribute to the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy, by providing financial support for the Union's objectives in terms of promoting a high level of quality and sustainable employment, guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection, combating social exclusion and poverty and improving working conditions.

The EaSI Programme shall, in all its axes and actions, aim to:

- (a) pay particular attention to vulnerable groups, such as young people;
- (b) promote equality between women and men;
- (c) combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation;
- (d) promote a high-level of quality and sustainable employment, guarantee adequate and decent social protection, combat long-term unemployment and fight against poverty and social exclusion.

Hence, in designing, implementing and reporting on the activity, beneficiaries must address the issues noted above and will be required to provide detail, in the final activity report on the steps and achievements made towards addressing those aims.

### **1.2. Policy and economic background**

European labour markets are undergoing important changes that affect employment trends; among which, demographic change and economic migration on the supply side and the growing complexity of jobs on the demand side are becoming increasingly challenging and raise uncertainties about the nature and level of skills that will be required (especially digital

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:0238:0252:EN:PDF>

<sup>3</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=16760&langId=en>  
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=17070&langId=en>

<sup>4</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1081>

skills and transversal skills such as problem-solving). Even jobs which traditionally required low-level qualifications, or no qualifications at all, are becoming more demanding.

In 2015 there were 64 million people, more than a quarter of the Union population aged 25-64, who had left initial education and training with at most a lower secondary education qualification<sup>5</sup>. Although this share is expected to decline by nearly 14 million by 2025, this “low-skilled challenge” should be urgently addressed as risks of skills shortages and mismatches are to be foreseen. Furthermore, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Survey of Adult Skills (‘PIAAC’) indicates that, in 20 Member States, similar proportions of adults aged 16 to 65 performed at the lowest level of skills proficiency in literacy, numeracy and problem-solving in technology-rich environments.

These sources also show that low-qualified and/or low-skilled adults are less likely to find a job or to take part in learning, although these are key to their social inclusion and democratic participation, among other benefits. Therefore, it is crucial for their individual well-being as well as for the good of society that they be provided with adequate upskilling opportunities, especially through tailored outreach measures targeted at those furthest away from the labour market or education and training.

The Commission Communication “A new Skills Agenda for Europe. Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness”<sup>6</sup> of 10 June 2016 sets out an ambitious plan for European citizens to be equipped with the right skills, to use them better in their career paths and to make them more visible and comparable. It proposes ten actions to move this agenda forward<sup>7</sup>.

Among them is the Council Recommendation of 19 December 2016 on “Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults”<sup>8</sup> which recommends Member States to “*offer adults with a low level of skills, knowledge and competences, for example those who have left initial education or training without completing upper secondary education or equivalent, and who are not eligible for support under the Youth Guarantee, access to upskilling pathways which provide them with the opportunity, according to their individual needs, to:*

- *acquire a minimum level of literacy, numeracy and digital competence;*

*and/or*

- *acquire a wider set of skills, knowledge and competences, relevant for the labour market and active participation in society, building on Recommendation 2006/962/EC on key competences for lifelong learning, by making progress towards a qualification at EQF level 3 or 4 depending on national circumstances”.*

---

<sup>5</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Labour\\_market\\_and\\_Labour\\_force\\_survey\\_%28LFS%29\\_statistics](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Labour_market_and_Labour_force_survey_%28LFS%29_statistics)

<sup>6</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223>

<sup>7</sup> [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-16-2039\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-2039_en.htm)

<sup>8</sup> [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:JOC\\_2016\\_484\\_R\\_0001](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:JOC_2016_484_R_0001)

It recommends Member States to identify priority target groups for the delivery of upskilling pathways and outline appropriate measures for the implementation of this Recommendation at the latest by mid-2018 by building on relevant existing national arrangements<sup>9</sup>.

All Upskilling Pathways should comprise three steps:

- “*skills assessment* [i.e. skills identification or screening];
- *provision of a tailored, flexible and quality learning offer; and*
- *validation and recognition of skills acquired*<sup>10</sup>”.

Actions funded under this call should be developed in accordance with key principles outlined in the Recommendation: coordination and partnership between stakeholders and sectors, outreach, guidance and support measures to learners and proper follow-up and evaluation of the implementation of the Recommendation.

### **1.3. Main Purpose**

The main purpose of this call is to support the upskilling of adults with low levels of basic skills or low qualifications<sup>11</sup> by assisting public authorities in the implementation of the Council Recommendation on “Upskilling Pathways”.

## **2. OBJECTIVES – TYPES OF ACTION - EXPECTED RESULTS**

### **2.1. Objectives**

The main objective of the call is to support the successful implementation of the Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways, thereby facilitating the access of low skilled and / or low qualified adults to flexible pathways for enhancing their literacy, numeracy and digital skills and/or progressing towards a higher qualification and re-engaging them in learning - as part of a New Boost for Jobs, Growth and Investment, one of the ten priorities of President Juncker's Political Guidelines and as part of the New Skills Agenda for Europe, launched by the Commission on 10 June 2016.

To prepare the ground for arrangements to implement the Recommendation it is important that all relevant actors in each Member State are engaged. Such actors may include: national, regional or local entities involved in planning, organising or promoting adult learning,

---

<sup>9</sup> The Commission Staff Working Document “Tackling low skills: The Skills Guarantee” accompanying the Communication “A new skills agenda for Europe” can provide some useful examples of existing mechanisms implemented in some Member States which could be parts of future arrangements for Upskilling Pathways.

<sup>10</sup> The last step (validation of skills) builds in particular on the 2012 Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning, the 2015 European Guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning and the 2016 Inventory on the validation of non-formal and informal learning, which applicants to this call should also consult to see existing validation arrangements in their country.

<sup>11</sup> The Recommendation refers to “adults with a low level of skills, knowledge and competences, for example those who have left initial education or training without completing upper secondary education or equivalent, and who are not eligible for support under the Youth Guarantee”.

employer organisations, employers, trade unions, chambers of industry, trade, commerce and crafts, employment services, education and training providers, intermediary and sectoral organisations, civil society organisations, local and regional economic actors, libraries and community services.

A partnership approach should be ensured, which promotes effective coordination and long-term collaboration between the stakeholders involved in planning, implementing and monitoring Upskilling Pathways. In particular, applicants should build on the work already undertaken by the National Coordinator<sup>12</sup> for the implementation of the Renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning<sup>13</sup> as regards, for example, cooperation mechanisms, the establishment of sustainable networks, and capacity-building among stakeholders in adult education and training.

The projects selected under this call shall therefore be targeted at stakeholders who will support the implementation of Upskilling Pathways, with a view to enabling them to increase and improve the impact of their work on low-qualified and/or low-skilled adults.

The specific objectives of this call fall under two strands:

A) To help a given Member State to prepare the ground for the implementation of the Council Recommendation on “Upskilling Pathways” by:

- **(Specific objective 1)** taking stock of any existing provision upon which full Upskilling Pathways can be built, and identifying gaps to be addressed and ways to do so, in cooperation with relevant stakeholders;
- **(Specific objective 2)** supporting national authorities in the targeting of Upskilling Pathways at priority groups;

B) To help a given Member State foster sustainable arrangements for the implementation of the Council Recommendation on “Upskilling Pathways” by:

- **(Specific objective 3)** supporting relevant stakeholders both to disseminate information about, and stimulate the use of, the upskilling opportunities available, and to secure their involvement in concrete implementation activities in line with the general principles defined in the Recommendation.

Projects may relate to one or more of these strands or specific objectives.

## **2.2. Description of the activities to be funded / Type of actions**

The types of activities that may be funded under this call for proposals (all of them relating to low-qualified and/or low-skilled adults and implemented in cooperation with relevant stakeholders) include:

- **For specific objective 1:**
  - actions aimed at mapping and reviewing effective tools and practices for:

---

<sup>12</sup> [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/publication\\_results.pdf](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/publication_results.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C\\_.2011.372.01.0001.01.ENG](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2011.372.01.0001.01.ENG)

- individual and personalised skills assessments (i.e. skills identification or screening) that identify adults’ existing skills and learning needs;
  - the development and provision of tailored learning packages based on such needs;
  - the assessment of existing and newly acquired learning against frameworks (e.g. National Qualifications Frameworks) or standards, and the recognition of these outcomes towards a formal qualification or part thereof, drawing on existing validation arrangements and European guidelines;<sup>14</sup>
  - support measures, including outreach, guidance and financial and other incentives for adults engaging in upskilling;
  - and, if such practices already exist, investigate ways to increase coherence and coordination between these four.
- **For specific objective 2:**
    - the mapping of the population that may be eligible for support under the Council Recommendation on “Upskilling Pathways”;
    - the definition of priority groups of adults to be eligible for support under the national implementing measures, their specific features and needs based on the above mapping;
    - the identification of the specific measures needed to support the defined priority groups and the financial means to put those into place.
- **For specific objective 3:**
    - outreach, information sharing and communication activities (e.g. conferences, seminars, training activities) aimed at raising awareness, among relevant stakeholders involved in implementation, of:
      - the potential contribution of “Upskilling Pathways” as well as upskilling opportunities available in a given Member State; and
      - the various sources of funding available to support their development;
    - capacity-building activities to support, mobilise and engage stakeholders in:
      - stimulating access to, and take up of, upskilling opportunities;
      - designing and delivering measures to reach out to specific priority groups; and
      - providing priority groups with complete and coherent information about the full range of upskilling opportunities available.

In the case of transnational consortia, the application must make clear which country will be the focus of the project.

### **2.3. Expected outputs / results**

The call for proposals aims to mobilise and engage stakeholders in project countries in the delivery of the Council Recommendation on “Upskilling Pathways” and therefore, ultimately, to increase the supply of upskilling opportunities and their take up by low skilled adults.

Thus, the anticipated results in the project countries include further development of tailored support and learning for this specific target group, and increased coherence between any existing measures.

---

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/4054>

This action will complement the support targeted at low skilled adults through the European Social Fund and the Erasmus+ programme, by assisting EaSI participating countries to develop outreach, information sharing and communication strategies as part of coherent strategies for increasing the skills levels and qualifications for low-qualified and/or low-skilled adults, with a particular emphasis on those without an upper secondary education.

This action should complement related activities (ongoing or future) taking place at national, regional or local levels in a given Member State.

## 2.4. Monitoring

The Commission, with the support of an external contractor, will regularly monitor the EaSI Programme. Therefore, beneficiaries will have to transmit qualitative and quantitative monitoring data on the results of the activities. These will include the extent to which the principles of equality between women and men has been applied, as well as how anti-discrimination considerations, including accessibility issues, have been addressed through the activities. Related templates are attached or will be provided.

In setting up the action, beneficiaries must foresee the necessary funding for monitoring and reporting to the Commission.

As the monitoring of the EaSI Programme involves the collection and further processing of personal data, Regulation (EC) 45/2001, of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 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, is applicable.

## 3. TIMETABLE

	Stages	Date or period
a)	Publication of the call	04/2017
b)	Deadline for submitting proposals	30/06/2017
c)	Evaluation period (indicative)	07-09/2017
d)	Information to applicants (indicative)	10/2017 <sup>15</sup>
e)	Signature of the grant agreement (indicative)	11/2017 <sup>16</sup>
f)	Starting date of the action (indicative)	12/2017-02/2018

<sup>15</sup> And in any case no later than 6 months after the submission deadline.

<sup>16</sup> And in any case no later than 3 months after the date of information to applicants.



### **3.1. Starting date and duration of the projects**

The actual starting date of the action will either be the first day following the date when the last of the two parties signs the grant agreement, the first day of the month following the date when the last of the two parties signs or a date agreed upon between the parties.

Applicants should note that if their project is selected, they may receive the grant agreement after the start date of the action that they have indicatively set in the application form. It is therefore advisable to number the months in the work programme instead of indicating the name of the month.

Any expenditure incurred before the signature of the Grant Agreement will be at the applicant's risk. No expenditure can be incurred before the date of submission.

The project's duration should indicatively be between 18 months and 24 months.

## **4. AVAILABLE BUDGET AND CO-FINANCING RATE**

### **4.1. Available Budget**

The total budget earmarked for the EU co-financing of projects under this call is estimated at EUR 1 000 000.

The EU grant requested should indicatively be between EUR 250 000 and EUR 1 000 000.

The Commission expects to fund between one and four proposals.

The Commission reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

### **4.2. Co-financing rate**

Under this call for proposals, the EU grant may not exceed 80% of the total eligible costs of the action. The applicants must guarantee their co-financing of the remaining amount covered by the applicants' own resources or from other sources other than the European Union budget<sup>17</sup>.

## **5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- Applications must be sent no later than the deadline for submission referred to in section 3(b)
- Applications (application form including budget and description of the action including work plan) must be submitted using the electronic submission system available at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim>, and by sending three signed, printed application forms and their annexes by post or courier service (one original and two copies; see section 12)

---

<sup>17</sup> Letters of commitment are required from co-applicants and any affiliated entity providing financial contributions to the eligible costs of the action (see section 14, checklist point 5).

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

Applicants are encouraged to submit their project proposal in English, French or German in order to facilitate the treatment of the proposals and speed up the evaluation process. It should be noted, however, that proposals in all official languages of the EU will be accepted. In this case, applications should be accompanied by an executive summary in English, French or German (see section 14, checklist point 2).

## **6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

### **6.1. Eligibility of the applicants (lead and co-applicants) and affiliated entities<sup>18</sup>**

#### *6.1.1. Place of establishment*

Legal entities properly established and registered in the following countries are eligible as applicant (or lead applicant and co-applicant in case of consortium):

- EU Member States;
- Iceland and Norway in accordance with the EEA Agreement<sup>19</sup>;
- Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey<sup>20</sup>

#### *6.1.2. Type of entities*

To be eligible, applicants (sole applicant or lead applicant in case of consortium) must be public entities in charge of national or regional policies and actions for upskilling adults.

Any co-applicants must be public or private entities (profit-making or non-profit making) involved in the organisation, financing or provision of services such as skills assessment, validation, education and training and guidance targeted to adults.

---

<sup>18</sup> See section 2 of the Financial Guidelines for definitions.

<sup>19</sup> The participation of the Swiss Confederation to this call for proposals is not envisaged. [Swiss organisations can only participate in a consortium as associate organisations on a no-cost basis, if this serves the purpose of the proposed action](#)

<sup>20</sup> Other candidate and potential candidate countries would also participate in accordance with the general principles and the general terms and conditions laid down in the framework agreements concluded with them on their participation in Union programmes. However, it is not yet confirmed, therefore applicants and co-applicants from those countries should check with the secretariat of the call (empl-vp-2017-011@ec.europa.eu) their eligibility.

### *6.1.3. Consortia<sup>21</sup>*

In the case of consortia, to be eligible, applications must be submitted by a regional, national or transnational consortium composed of one lead applicant and one or more co-applicants (affiliated entities and associate organisations are also eligible) established in eligible participating EaSI countries (see section 6.1). Several applicants within the same region or country can join a transnational consortium.

In the case of a proposal submitted by one (sole) applicant, if that applicant is not considered to be eligible, the application will be rejected.

In the case of consortia, if the lead applicant is not considered to be eligible, the application will be rejected. If a co-applicant is considered not to be eligible, this organisation will be removed from the consortium and the proposal evaluated on that basis. In addition, the costs that are allocated to a non-eligible co-applicant will be removed from the budget.

### *6.1.4. Affiliated entities*

Legal entities having a legal or capital link with applicants, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation and which satisfy the eligibility criteria, may take part in the action as affiliated entities, and may declare eligible costs.

For that purpose, applicants shall identify such affiliated entities in the application form.

## **6.2. Eligible activities**

### *6.2.1. Geographical Location*

To be eligible, actions must be carried out in one or more eligible participating EaSI countries (see section 6.1).

### *6.2.2. Types of activities*

The grant will finance inter alia the activities indicated in section 2.2.

### *6.2.3. Core activities*

Project management and project coordination are considered to be core activities and may not be subcontracted.

---

<sup>21</sup> Letters of mandate, authorising the lead applicant to submit the proposal and to sign any Grant Agreement on their behalf must be submitted from each co-applicant. Letters of commitment must be submitted from each co-applicant, affiliated entity, certifying that they are willing to participate in the project with a brief description of their role and indicating any financial contribution where applicable (see section 14, checklist points 4 and 5. Letters of commitment are also required from any associate organisations (participation on a no-cost basis and no financial contribution).

### **6.3. Ineligible activities**

Financial support to third parties as defined in point 2 of the Financial Guidelines is not eligible under this call.

The following types of activities are not eligible for EU funding:

- Lobbying;
- Acquisition of immovable property and/or vehicles
- Building construction

## **7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA**

Applicants (Sole, lead and/or co-applicants) must sign a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in article 106(1) and 107.1(b) and (c) of the Financial Regulation concerning exclusion and rejection from the procedure respectively, using the relevant form attached to the application form available at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/external/displayWelcome.do>.

The same exclusion criteria apply to any affiliated entities.

## **8. SELECTION CRITERIA**

The applicant (sole or lead and co-applicant(s) in case of consortium) must have the financial and operational capacity to complete the activity for which funding is requested. Only organisations with the necessary financial and operational capacity may be considered for a grant.

### **8.1. Financial capacity**

Applicants (sole or lead and co-applicant(s) in case of consortium) must have access to solid and adequate funding to maintain their activities for the period of the action and to help finance it as necessary.

The verification of financial capacity will not apply to public bodies.

The applicant's (sole or lead and co-applicant in case of consortium) financial capacity will be assessed on the basis of the following supporting documents to be submitted with the application:

- Declaration on honour (including financial capacity to carry out the activity) (see section 14, checklist point 3);
- Annual balance sheets and profit and loss accounts and summary for the last financial year available (see section 14, checklist point 14 and 15);
- For grants of EUR 750 000 or more, an audit report produced by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the last financial year available (see section 14, checklist point 16).

## 8.2. Operational capacity

Sole applicants or lead and co-applicants shall possess operational resources (e.g. technical, management) and adequate professional skills and qualifications necessary for the proper implementation of the action. The applicants shall also have a strong experience and competences in awareness raising activities and the field of the education of adults, in particular those without an upper secondary qualification.

The operational capacity of the applicant (sole or lead and co-applicant(s) in case of consortium) to complete the proposed action must be confirmed by the submission in the proposal of the following:

- The CVs of the person responsible for managing the action (and the persons who will perform the main tasks, showing all their relevant professional experience (see section 14, checklist point 13));
- Declaration on honour signed by the legal representative (including operational capacity to carry out the activity) (see section 14, checklist point 3).

If the sole or lead applicant is considered not to have the required financial or operational capacity, the application as a whole will be rejected. If a co-applicant is considered not to have the required financial or operational capacity, this co-applicant will be removed from the consortium and the application will be evaluated without this co-applicant<sup>22</sup>. In addition, the costs that are allocated to the non-selected co-applicant will be removed from the budget. If the application is accepted, the work programme will have to be adapted as appropriate.

## 9. AWARD CRITERIA

The proposals which fulfil the eligibility and selection criteria will be assessed according to the following award criteria:

- **Relevance of the proposal to the objectives of the call** (Max. 25 points)  
Particular attention will be paid to
  - Relevance to the specific objectives of this call and to the Council Recommendation on “Upskilling Pathways”;
  - Relevance of the geographical scope in the light of the low-skilled challenge in countries involved;
  - Relevance of the targeted stakeholders involved in the implementation of Upskilling Pathways.
- **Quality of the methodology** (Max. 25 points)  
Particular attention will be paid to
  - Clarity, innovation and added value of the activities and workplan;
  - Clarity of the expected outputs and outcomes;
  - Appropriateness of the co-applicants (if any) involvement and cooperation, and of subcontracting (if any);
  - Risk analysis and management;

---

<sup>22</sup> This includes a re-evaluation of the eligibility of the modified consortium.

- Impact/outcome evaluation method.
- **Expected impact and sustainability** (Max. 35 points)  
Particular attention will be paid to:
  - Foreseen impact on targeted stakeholders, and any multiplier effect on low-qualified and /or low-skilled adults
  - Contribution to the implementation of the Council Recommendation on “Upskilling Pathways”
  - Sustainability and transferability of actions; and
  - Quality of the dissemination plan.
- **Cost efficiency** (Max 15 points) : based on the financial quality of the proposal  
Particular attention will be paid to:
  - A reasonable and realistic budget
  - The degree to which the amount of the requested grant is proportional to the scale and scope of the project

Applications will be ranked according to the total score awarded. Taking into account the available budget, the proposals with the highest total scores will be recommended for award, on condition that the total score reaches at least 70% of the maximum possible mark.

Taking into account the quality of the proposals and the purpose of the call, only one grant may be awarded per focus country (as defined in 2.2).

## 10. LEGAL COMMITMENTS

In the event of a grant being awarded by the Commission, a grant agreement, drawn up in euro and detailing the conditions and level of funding, will be sent to the beneficiary, or to the coordinator (lead applicant) in the case of multi-beneficiary grant agreements.

The two copies of the original agreement must be signed by the beneficiary, or the coordinator in the case of multi-beneficiary grant agreements, and returned to the Commission immediately. The Commission will sign it last.

The grant agreement may include corrections and deletion of ineligible costs or activities made by the Commission – therefore the applicant should carefully read the whole agreement, before signing and returning the copies to the Commission.

A model Grant Agreement is published on the Europa website under the relevant call: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en>.

Please note that the award of a grant does not establish an entitlement for subsequent years.

### 10.1. Sources of Funding

In addition to the obligations with regard to visibility of Union funding foreseen in the General conditions to the grant agreement, beneficiaries must acknowledge in writing that the project has been supported by the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (“EaSI”) 2014-2020. In practice, all products (publications, brochures, press releases, videos, CDs, posters and banners, and especially those associated with conferences, seminars and information campaigns) must state the following:

*This (publication, conference, video, xxx) has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation “EaSI” (2014-2020). For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>*

The European emblem must appear on every publication or other material produced. Please see:

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/services/visual\\_identity/pdf/use-emblem\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/services/visual_identity/pdf/use-emblem_en.pdf)

Every publication must include the following:

*The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Commission.*

## **11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS**

Details on financial provisions are laid out in the Financial Guidelines for Applicants and the model Grant Agreement, both published on the Europa website under the relevant call: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en>.

## **12. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**

The procedure to submit proposals electronically is explained in point 14 of the “Financial Guidelines for Applicants”. Before starting, please read carefully the SWIM user manual:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/calls/pdf/swim\\_manual\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/calls/pdf/swim_manual_en.pdf)

Once the application form is filled in, applicants must submit it both electronically and in hard copy, before the deadline set in section 3.b above.

The SWIM electronic application form is available until midnight on the day of the submission deadline. Since the applicants must first submit the form electronically, and then print, sign and send it by in three copies post service or hand delivery by the submission deadline, it is the **applicant's responsibility to ensure that the appropriate postal or courier services are locally available on the day of the deadline.**

The hard copy of the proposal must be duly signed and sent in three copies (one marked “original” and two marked “copy”), including all documents listed in section 14, by the deadline as indicated in section 3 b).

Please send your proposal by registered post, express courier service or by hand delivery only:

1) For post and courier, the proposal must be sent by the deadline (the postmark or the express courier receipt date serving as proof) to the following address:

**European Commission**  
**Call for proposals VP/2017/011– DG EMPL E.3**  
**PLB3 – 06/P045**  
**B-1049 Bruxelles - BELGIUM**

Proof of posting or express courier receipt should be kept as it could be requested by the European Commission in cases of doubt regarding the date of submission.

2) Hand-delivered proposals must be received by the European Commission before 4 p.m. on the date of the deadline for submission as indicated in section 3(b) at the following address:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>European Commission</b> <b>Service central de réception du courrier</b> <b>(NOT TO BE OPENED BY CENTRAL MAIL SERVICES)</b> <b>Call for proposals VP/2017/011 – DG EMPL.E3</b> <b>Avenue du Bourget, 1</b> <b>B-1140 Evere</b></p>
---

At that time the European Commission's Mail Service will provide a signed receipt which should be conserved as proof of delivery.

If an applicant submits more than one proposal, each proposal must be submitted separately.

Additional documents sent by post, by fax or by electronic mail after the deadlines mentioned above will not be considered for evaluation unless requested by the European Commission.

The applicant's attention is also drawn to the fact that incomplete or unsigned forms, hand-written forms and those sent by fax or e-mail will not be taken into consideration.

### **13. COMMUNICATION**

The information contained in the present call document together with the Financial Guidelines for Applicants provides all the information you require to submit an application. Please read it carefully before doing so, paying particular attention to the priorities of the present call.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>All enquiries must be made by e-mail only to:</b>  <b><a href="mailto:empl-vp-2017-011@ec.europa.eu">empl-vp-2017-011@ec.europa.eu</a></b>  For any technical problems please contact: <a href="mailto:empl-swim-support@ec.europa.eu">empl-swim-support@ec.europa.eu</a></p>
---

Questions may be sent by to the above address no later than 10 days before the deadline for the submission of proposals.

The Commission has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than five days before the deadline for submission of proposals. To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Commission will not give a prior opinion on the eligibility of applicants, or affiliated entity(ies), an action or specific activities.



No individual replies to questions will be sent but all questions together with the answers and other important notices will be published (FAQ in EN) at regular intervals on the Europa website under the relevant call:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en>.

The Commission may, on its own initiative, inform interested parties of any error, inaccuracy, omission or clerical error in the text of the call for proposals on the mentioned Europa website. It is therefore advisable to consult the above mentioned website regularly in order to be informed of any updates and of the questions and answers published.

No modification to the proposal is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. If there is a need to clarify certain aspects or to correct clerical mistakes, the Commission may contact the applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process. This is generally done by e-mail. It is entirely the responsibility of applicants to ensure that all contact information provided is accurate and functioning. In case of any change of contact details, please send an e-mail with the application VP reference and the new contact details to [empl-vp-2017-011@ec.europa.eu](mailto:empl-vp-2017-011@ec.europa.eu).

In the case of consortia, all communications regarding an application will be done with the lead applicant only, unless there are specific reasons to do otherwise.

Applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the selection process. Unsuccessful applicants will be informed of the reasons for rejection. No information regarding the award procedure will be disclosed until the notification letters have been sent to the beneficiaries.

## **14. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PRESENTATION OF THE APPLICATION AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

### **14.1. Instructions for the presentation of the application**

The application comprises an application form including the budget, a description of the action and work plan plus a series of other required documents (see section 14.2).

The description of the action and work plan must be written using the template available in SWIM and must be presented in one single document. The budget must be presented using the application form in SWIM and a separate budget explanation must also be provided in the work plan (section IV).

In the description of the action, the role of all applicants and any affiliated entities or associate organisations must be clearly explained.

In case of subcontracting any tasks comprising part of the action (see the Financial Guidelines), the description of the action must provide details on the tasks to be subcontracted and the reasons for doing so and these tasks must be clearly identified in the budget. Core tasks as defined in section 6.2(c) of the call cannot be subcontracted.

The **detailed work plan** (see section 14, checklist point 12) should **not repeat information that is already provided in the SWIM application form**<sup>23</sup>. See workplan instructions for more details on information to be provided there.

---

<sup>23</sup> The corresponding section in the SWIM form (E.6 Workplan) should therefore be kept rather succinct.

## 14.2. Required documents

The table below includes the documents that should be provided. Except for items 7, 10 and 11<sup>24</sup> which can be submitted only for successful applications, please note that all other documents are necessary either for the admissibility (see section 5) or for the analysis of the eligibility (see section 6) or selection criteria (see section 8). The table also indicates where originals are required. We recommend that applicants use the table as a **checklist** in order to verify compliance with all requirements.

While some information should be supplied using the templates available in the SWIM, other documents may need to be completed and/or attached electronically, usually either administrative documents or free format text descriptions. The SWIM application indicates in each section where SWIM templates should be used as well as which and where free format documents can be uploaded electronically.

**Copies of the signed originals** will be accepted for most of the documents to be submitted by the co-applicants. However, the lead applicant shall keep the original signed versions for its records, because **originals** may have to be submitted for certain documents at a later stage. **If the lead applicant fails to submit these original documents within the deadline given by the Commission, the proposal will be rejected for lack of administrative compliance.**

Regarding the compilation of the application file, it is recommended to:

- follow the order of documents as listed in the checklist;
- print the documents double-sided;
- use 2-hole folders (do not bind or glue; stapling is acceptable).

---

<sup>24</sup> Legal entity form; VAT Certificate ; Financial identification form.

## CHECKLIST for required documents

This table includes the documents that must be provided for the proposal and where originals are required. We strongly recommend using the table as a checklist in order to verify compliance with all requirements. **Notes:** **highlighted documents do not need to be provided by public entities.** Documents marked with \* are obligatorily to be attached online in SWIM as well.

No.	Document	Specification and content	The document must be provided by each				Originally signed?	Checkbox
			Lead applicant	Co-applicant	Affiliated entity	Associate organisation/ third party		
1	Signed SWIM application form submitted online + hard copies	The SWIM application form submitted online must be printed and dated and signed by the authorised legal representative and send by 3 hard copies as foreseen in Section 12. <i>Note: the online form must be electronically submitted before printing. After electronic submission, no further changes to the proposal are permitted.</i>	✓	--	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Executive summary	Applications should be accompanied by an executive summary in English, French or German, only if the proposal is written in another official EU language. (maximum 2 pages) – <b>free format</b>	✓					
3	Declaration on honour*	The <b>template</b> is available in SWIM and must be written on the official letterhead of the organisation, bearing the original signature of the authorised legal representative and include the application's reference number generated by SWIM (VP/2017/011/XXXX). <i>Copies of the original signed declaration of co-applicants are accepted at the submission of the application; originals to be submitted upon request.</i>	✓	✓	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Letter of commitment*	The <b>template</b> is available in SWIM and must explain the nature of the organisation's involvement and specify the amount of any funding provided. The letter must be written on the official letterhead of the organisation and bear the original signature of the legal representative. <i>Copies of the original signed declaration of co-applicants are accepted at the submission of the application; originals to be submitted upon request.</i>	--	✓	✓	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Letter of mandate*	The <b>template</b> is available in SWIM and must be written on the official letterhead of the organisation, dated and signed by the authorised legal representative.	--	✓	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Legal/capital link with lead or co-applicant*	Affiliated entities (if any) are required to provide proof of the legal and/or capital link with the lead or co-applicant.	--	--	✓	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Legal entity form	<b>Can be provided at a later stage only by successful applicants.</b> The <b>template</b> is available in SWIM and online ( <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm">http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm</a> ) and must be duly signed and dated by the legal representative.	✓	✓	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Proof of registration	A certificate of official registration or other official document attesting the establishment of the entity (for public bodies: the law, decree, decision etc. establishing the entity).	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Statutes	The articles of association/statutes or equivalent proving the eligibility of the organisation.	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	VAT certificate	<b>Can be provided at a later stage only by successful applicants.</b> A document showing the identification number for tax purposes or the VAT number, if applicable.	✓	✓	--	--	--	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Financial identification form	<b>Can be provided at a later stage only by successful applicants.</b> The <b>template</b> is available in SWIM and online ( <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/financial_id_en.cfm">http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/financial_id_en.cfm</a> ) and must be duly signed and dated by the <b>account holder</b> and bearing the bank stamp and signature of the bank	✓	--	--	--	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>

		representative (or a copy of recent bank statement attached).						
12	Description of the action and work plan*	The <b>template</b> is available in SWIM which must be duly completed and submitted electronically together with the online submission form and on paper as well. The paper version must be identical to the electronic version of the detailed work programme. The document should be submitted in English, French or German. The Commission may request applicants to submit additional justifications of proposed eligible costs during the evaluation procedure.	✓	--	--	--	--	☐
13	Curricula vitae of key staff	<b>Detailed CV of the person responsible for managing the action</b> (named in section A.3 of the online application form) and <b>the persons who will perform the main tasks</b> . The CVs should indicate clearly the current employer.	✓	✓	✓	--	--	☐
14	Balance sheet & profit and loss accounts	The most recent balance sheet and profit & loss accounts, including assets and liabilities, specifying the currency used.	✓	✓	--	--	--	☐
15	Summary balance sheet & profit and loss accounts*	The <b>template</b> is available in SWIM and must be signed by the authorised legal representative	✓	✓	--	--	✓	
16	Audit report	For grant requests of EUR 750,000: an external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the accounts for the last financial year available. The threshold applies to each co-applicant in line with their share of the action budget. The report should be submitted in English, French or German.	✓	✓	--	--	--	☐

**ANNEX I:**

**FINANCIAL GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS**

Annex I is available on the Europa website under the relevant call:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629>

**ANNEX II:**

**MODEL OF GRANT AGREEMENT**

Annex II is available on the Europa website under the relevant call:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629>

**ANNEX III:**

**MODEL OF EaSI FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT**

Annex III is available on the Europa website under the relevant call:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629>