

ENHANCER Türkiye Call for Proposals

Cooperatives Support Grant Scheme for Job Creation

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CLARIFICATION N°3 / Questions and Answers of Info Days

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Following the receipt of a high number of questions, ICMPD would like to announce that Q&A will be published on a regular basis until the deadline for asking clarifications (18th October 2024 – 17.00h Vienna Time)

Note 1: Most of the questions that have been received concerning this call for proposals can be answered by **carefully reading** the Guidelines for Grant Applicants (Guidelines).

Note 2: Please note that in the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority does not give a prior opinion on the eligibility of a lead applicant, a co-applicant, an action or specific activities (Please see section 2.1 of the Guidelines).

Eligibility of Applicants and Actions

Question 1: Does the social cooperative's project application comply with the eligibility criteria of the applicant?

Question 2: Can companies of cooperative members be co-applicants in the project application?

Question 3: Can the applicant be based in Gaziantep while the activities take place in Kilis (if the cooperative open up a new branch in Gaziantep)?

Question 4: We have multiple branches in 6 different provinces, can they all apply separately?

Question 5: Will having the municipality as one of the cooperative members cause any issues?

Question 6: Can large enterprises or cooperatives also benefit from this program?

Question 7: Is it a requirement to be a women cooperative to become a co-applicant in the project application?

Question 8: Are only women's cooperatives eligible to apply for grants?

Question 9: Is there a limit on the number of members required for the cooperative to be eligible to apply?

Answer1-9: According to section 2.1.1. Eligibility of Applicants (Lead Applicant and Co-Applicant(s)) of the Guidelines for Applicants, in order to be eligible for a grant: *"be legally registered as a cooperative or union(s) of cooperatives and have their headquarters in the targeted provinces: Adana, Ankara, Bursa, Gaziantep, Hatay, Istanbul, Izmir, Kayseri, Konya, Mersin and Şanlıurfa"* regardless of whether they are located in the centre or districts; and *"co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant itself"* meaning that *"co-applicants must be legally registered as a cooperative or union(s) of cooperatives yet they do not necessarily need to be registered in the same province as the lead applicant; however, they should be registered in one of the targeted provinces. Grant project activities must take place in these 11 eligible provinces"*.

Question 10: Can a newly established cooperative become a beneficiary under an old cooperative's application?

Question 11: Are cooperatives established after 15.08.2023 eligible to be co-applicants in the project application?

Answer 10 and 11: According to section 2.1.1. Eligibility of Applicants (Lead Applicant and Co-Applicant(s)) of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants, in order to be eligible for a grant, *"the lead applicant and co-applicant(s) must be established before 15.08.2023"*.

Question 12: Is training activity an eligible activity in the project application?

Answer 12: Please note that in the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority does not give a prior opinion on the eligibility of a lead applicant, a co-applicant, an action or specific activities (Please see section 2.1.3. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants).

Question 13: Can someone who previously received a grant from Enhancer receive another grant under Enhancer?

Question 14: Can a cooperative that was a co-applicant in the previous Enhancer Cooperative Support Grant call become an applicant in this call?

Answer 13 and 14: Please note that in the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, an action or specific activities. Please see the sections 2.1.1 Eligibility of Applicants and Important Note 5 of the Guidelines for Applicants.

Question 15: Can we collaborate with the municipality?

Question 16: Can a municipality with debt become an associate in the application?

Question 17: Can there be a partnership with a Public Education Center?

Answer 15, 16 and 17: Please note that according to section 2.1.2. Associates and Contractors of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants, *"other organisations or individuals may be involved in the action planned for the project. Such associates play a real role in the action but may not receive funding from the grant. Associates do not have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in Section 2.1.1"*.

Question 18: What kind of partnerships should be established between the lead applicant and co-applicant in the project?

Answer 18: Please note that co-applicant(s) are partners in a project (application). Please see section 2.1.1 Eligibility of Applicants for more information.

Question 19: Can SuTP be included in the project in general?

Answer 19: Please note that in the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, an action or specific activities. Please see the section 1.2. Objectives of the Programme and Priority Areas of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants.

Question 20: Are there any restrictions regarding the sector in which cooperatives operate to apply for grants?

Question 21: Are cooperatives operating in the tourism sector eligible to apply for grant?

Answer 20 and 21: Please note that in the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority does not give a prior opinion on the eligibility of a lead applicant, a co-applicant, an action or specific activities (Please see section 2.1.3 Eligible actions of Guidelines for Grant Applicants). According to the section 2.1.3. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants, following sectors are not eligible under this call for proposals:

- Electricity and gas production and distribution,
- Steel and coal industry,
- Manufacturing or trade of arms,
- Production of tobacco and tobacco products,
- Production of beverages with alcoholic content,
- Operation of a casino or any other entity involved in the gambling industry,
- Banking, insurance, financial services,
- Activities involving currency and financial speculations; securities investment,
- Real estate related investment

Budget and Eligibility of Costs

Question 22: Which areas does this grant cover?

Answer 22: Please see Section 1.2. Objectives of the Programme and Priority Areas and 2.1.3. Eligible Actions of Guideline for Grant Applicants.

Question 23: Can we purchase machinery instead of vehicles? If it is classified as machinery, it does not create an issue. If this machinery is unsuitable, will you reject the entire project?

Question 24: Is the purchase of a forklift eligible cost?

Question 25: Can the soil cultivation tool attached to the back of the tractor be included as equipment?

Question 26: Are the costs of trainers and preparation of training documents in training activities considered as eligible costs in the project budget?

Question 27: Is the drone included in the equipment?

Answer23-27: Please note that in the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority does not give a prior opinion on the eligibility of a lead applicant, a co-applicant, an action or specific activities, and budget (Please see section 2.1.4. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included in the Guidelines for Grant applicants).

Question 28: Is the size of our premises important in terms of square metres?

Answer 28: Please note that in the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority does not give a prior opinion on the eligibility of a lead applicant, a co-applicant, an action or specific activities, and budget. Please see section 2.3.8. Financial & Operational Capacity Check and Technical Evaluation, *“the applications that passed the administrative and eligibility check will be further evaluated on their quality, including the proposed budget and capacity of the applicants, which also covers financial and operational capacity”*.

Question 29: Should we establish a rental agreement for a space owned by the municipality?

Answer 29: According to the section 2.3.2. Supporting Documents to be submitted in the Guidelines for Grant applicants, *“title deed or the documentation (rental agreement or equivalent) proving the right of usufruct of the building/facility/premise of the cooperative/union(s) of cooperatives where project activities will be implemented - for the lead applicant and each co-applicant (if any) must be submitted as a supporting document”* in order to allow the Contracting Authority to verify the eligibility of the Applicants.

Question 30: Can we make rental payments?

Question 31: Are rental costs eligible?

Question 32: We produce geographically marked mantı and cultural foods. We can receive support related to equipment, but can we also receive support for the constructions, such as a rental agreement?

Answer 30, 31 and 32: Please note that in the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority does not give a prior opinion on the eligibility of a lead applicant, a co-applicant, an action or specific activities, and budget. Please see section 2.1.4. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included in the Guidelines for Grant applicants.

Question 33: What percentage of the project budget should be the Human Resources budget?

Question 34: Is it eligible to create employment of young people and/or women with 25% of the project budget?

Question 35: Is there a total limit to the number of people to be employed?

Answer 33, 34 and 35: Please note that to ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, an action or specific activities. According to the section 2.1.4. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included in the Guidelines for Applicants, *“the total cost of human resources should not be lower than the 25% of the total eligible direct costs”*.

Question 36: Can daily pay for SuTPs and Turkish citizens be covered by the project's Human Resources budget?

Question 37: Is it eligible to employ the Project Coordinator as a part-time employee during the project implementation?

Question 38: Is the salary of the project coordinator also included in the Human Resources budget? Can we include social benefits such as meals and transportation?

Question 39: What types of costs can be considered eligible costs in the human resources budget of the project budget?

Answer 36-39.: Please note that to ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, an action or specific activities. According to the section 2.1.4. *Eligibility of costs* in the Guideline for Grant Applicants; *“the cost of created additional employment (or formalise employment) of SuTPs and LHC members; cost of work permit card and its fee; their actual gross salaries including social security charges and other remuneration-related costs are direct eligible costs. Please note that the total cost of human resources should not be lower than the 25% of the total eligible direct costs”*.

Question 40: Is the consultancy budget an eligible cost in the project budget?

Answer 40: Please note that to ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, an action or specific activities. According to section 2.1.4 eligibility of costs in the Guidelines for Grant applicants, *“costs of entailed by contracts awarded by the Beneficiary(ies) for the purposes of the implementation of the Action (such as training/consultancy costs, visibility costs, recruitment and job placement consultancy costs, subcontracting costs, etc.) are eligible”*. Please see section for further details.

Question 41: Is co-financing required from co-applicant of the project?

Question 42: Is it possible for the grant beneficiary's human resources costs and payments to be counted as co-financing in total project budget?

Question 43: Are cooperatives required to provide a cash contribution of five percent?

Answer 41, 42 and 43: *The balance (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the contracting authority) must be financed from sources other than ICMPD and the European Union. The conditions of co-financing shall be written in detail both in budget form and the application form. Please see section 1.3. Financial allocation provided by the contracting authority in the Guideline for the Applicants.*

Question 44: Are transportation costs an eligible cost in the project budget?

Question 45: Travel expenses are not included, but can participation in fairs and booth rentals be added?

Question 46: If we explain that travel was undertaken for these justifications, is that acceptable?

Answer 44, 45 and 46: According to the 2.1.4. Eligibility of costs in the Guidelines for Grant applicants, *“travel and subsistence cost for staff and other persons taking part in the Action”* are ineligible.

Question 47: As a municipality, we cannot apply as co-applicants; however, can our municipal staff engage in procurement related to education services etc?

Answer 47: Please note that to ensure equal treatment of applicants, the contracting authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, an action or specific activities. According to the 2.1.4. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included in the Guidelines for Grant applicants, *“public officials (except Civil servants who are employed under the Law No 657 of the Republic of Türkiye) and academic staff can be employed in the project upon receipt of official permit*

from their institutions within the framework of the applicable law(s) to which they and their institutions are subject to”.

Question 48: Can I use items used in planting as consumables? For example, can the seedlings for sahlep be included as well?

Answer 48: Please note that to ensure equal treatment of applicants, the contracting authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, an action or specific activities. According to the 2.1.4. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included in the Guidelines for Grant applicants, “*costs of consumables*” are eligible.

Question 49: Is there a limit for the costs of construction/ renovation work in the project budget?

Question 50: Are renovations to be made in buildings/offices/places with mild and moderate earthquake damage in the Hatay region considered eligible costs?

Question 51: Is it eligible cost to purchase the equipment required to construct a prefabricated building on a field-like land with a renovation budget in the project budget?

Question 52: Is it eligible cost to build a building without pouring concrete as a temporary accommodation in the forest within the renovation budget in the project budget? Is a rental agreement sufficient as a supporting document for the area where the building is planned?

Question 53: Is demolishing a wall considered an appropriate cost?

Answer 49-53: Please note that to ensure equal treatment of applicants, the contracting authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, an action or specific activities. According to the 2.1.4. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included in the Guidelines for Grant applicants, “*construction and refurbishment costs except for the small renovations for installation of the necessary equipment/machinery*” are ineligible.

Question 54: Are we required to make payments in Euros?

Answer 54: There is no obligation of making payments in Euros. The payments and the related documents such as bills can be in Turkish Lira.

Question 55: When making expenditures, which exchange rate do you consider?

Answer 55: InforEuro exchange rates can be accessed through the link below:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/procedures-guidelines-tenders/information-contractors-and-beneficiaries/exchange-rate-inforeuro_en

Question 56: Is purchasing machinery/equipment for forestry work an eligible cost in the project budget? For example, is purchasing an excavator an eligible cost?

Answer 56: Please note that to ensure equal treatment of applicants, the contracting authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, an action or specific activities. Please refer to the 2.1.4. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included in the Guidelines for Grant applicants.

Question 57: Will there be an insurance incentive in employment?

Answer 57: Please see 2.1.4. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included in the Guidelines for Grant applicants.

Question 58: Are only items purchased within the project scope exempt from taxes? The produced goods are subject to VAT, but the machinery I acquired is VAT-free?

Answer 58: Please refer to Annex G: Information on The Tax Regime Applicable to Grant Contracts Signed Under Cooperatives Support Grant Scheme for Job Creation. VAT exemption certificate will be provided to successful applicants after the grant contract is signed by both parties. The grant beneficiaries will be able to purchase goods/services without VAT during the project implementation period with the provided certificate. Therefore, it is advised you to plan your budget without VAT. The produced goods will be subject to VAT.

Question 59: Can part-time employment be eligible?

Answer 59: There is no obstacle for part-time employment of the project staff.

Question 60: Are we required to set fixed salaries? Can we increase salaries?

Question 61: Are there minimum or maximum wage criteria for personnel employment?

Question 62: The minimum wage will be redefined. How will the budgeting for employees be carried out?

Answer 60, 61 and 62: Please refer to the article 3 and 4 of the Important Note 3 on page 17 of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants, which emphasizes the market rates and cost-efficiency. Applicants are advised to prepare their budgets by considering current and future market conditions.

Question 63: Is there a distinction between domestic and foreign construction machinery?

Answer 63: There is no such distinction between the domestic and foreign machineries. Please refer to the article 3 and 4 of the Important Note 3 on page 17 of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants, which emphasizes the market rates and cost-efficiency.

General Issues

Question 64: Does receiving funding from another organization create an obstacle?

Answer 64: According to the 2.1.3. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made in the Guidelines for Grant Applicants, actions already financed or in a process of being financed from state budget or other EU programmes, or other public funds are ineligible.

Question 65: Do supporting documents, such as the Board decision, need to be submitted in English during the application?

Answer 65: According to the section 2.3.1 Application forms in the Guidelines for Grant Applicants, applicants must apply in English. Official supporting documents provided from public institutions may be provided in original language/Turkish.

Question 66: What is the reason for not requesting 2024 financial data among the application documents?

Answer 66: Since 2024 financial year has not been completed, data for 2024 will not be evaluated during the evaluation phase.

Question 67: Do financial data have a positive or negative impact on evaluation criteria of the applications?

Question 68: What are the scoring criteria used in the evaluation of the project applications?

Question 69: What criteria do you use for scoring?

Question 70: What should the desired turnover amount be?

Question 71: How many points will be given to which sections in project applications?

Question 72: Does the number of temporarily protected individuals affect scoring? Is there a scoring criterion for this?

Question 73: When creating employment, how many employees should be women?

Answer 67-73: Please see the Scoring Table under section 2.3.8 of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants.

Question 74: What should be the women employment rate in the project?

Question 75: Must it be exclusively Syrians?

Question 76: Is it mandatory for the SuTP members to be employed in the project to be members of the cooperative?

Question 77: Is it an obligation for the grant beneficiary for employing SuTPs to register them in the SGK system in the project?

Question 78: Is there a requirement regarding the number of SuTPs and Turkish citizens to be employed in the project?

Answer 74-78: The overall objective of this call for proposals is to increase the job creation efforts of relevant local stakeholders in Adana, Ankara, Bursa, Gaziantep, Hatay, Izmir, Istanbul, Kayseri, Konya, Mersin and Şanlıurfa through grants. The specific objective of this call for proposals is to contribute to well-established, promising cooperatives / union(s) of cooperatives in targeted provinces to grow and thereby generate sustainable employment for SuTPs and LHC members. Under this grant scheme, the target of 60% Syrians under temporary protection and 40% of local host communities are the overall target of this grant program. Please see the Scoring Table under section 2.3.8 of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants.

Question 79: We applied for your previous program, but since there were no employees with social security, a 'no debt' certificate was requested, which the social security institution did not provide, leading to our rejection. What should we do in this situation?

Answer 79: Please note that in such cases an explanatory self-declaration (signed and stamped) must be submitted by the lead and co-applicant(s) stating the situation in detail.

Question 80: The bank provides the letter of guarantee as a loan. Unfortunately, this cannot be done with a board decision in cooperatives; a general assembly decision is required. This situation will delay the contract process for obtaining the guaranteed letter. What should we do in this case?

Answer 80: Please note that when the application of a cooperative is evaluated as successful, they will be informed and until the signature of the contract, there will be clearance period. In this clearance period, if it is going to be requested by the contracting authority, the cooperative should summon general assembly and receive bank guarantee form.

Question 81: If all employees are determined as Turkish citizens in the project application, would the project application be accepted?

Answer 81: Please refer to 1.2. Objectives of the Programme and Priority Areas in the Guidelines for Grant Applicants. Please see the Scoring Table under section 2.3.8 of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants.

Question 82: Do all projects go to the committee?

Answer 82: Information on how the projects will be evaluated and scored can be found in the Guidelines for Grant Applicants under sections '2.3.6. Evaluation and selection of applications', '2.3.7. Opening & Administrative Checks and Eligibility Check' and '2.3.8 Financial & Operational Capacity Check and Technical Evaluation'

Question 83: We have a goal regarding the increase of partners with certain cooperatives, but is this situation applicable only to Syrians?

Answer 83: According to section 2.1.4. Eligibility of costs in the Guidelines for Grant applicants, *"the proposed costs should aim to foster creating additional employment or membership (or formalise employment) of SuTPs and LHC members in parallel with sustainable business growth"*.

Question 84: Do you expect the employment to continue following the end of the project?

Answer 84: The applications that are administratively compliant and eligible will be further evaluated technically on their quality, including the sustainability, proposed budget and capacity of the applicants. Please refer to Scoring in the Guidelines for Grant Applicants.

Question 85: If there are insufficient applications, could the amounts increase significantly? Can applicants from other provinces also be considered? What will happen if there are remaining funds? How many projects can be accepted from a single province?

Answer 85: Please refer to "Recommended for award" on page 27 in the Guidelines for Grant Applicants.

Question 86: The cooperative is established but currently inactive and has no cash in its budget. How is this evaluated?

Answer 86: According to the 2.3.8. Financial & Operational Capacity Check and Technical Evaluation, *"the applications that pass the administrative and eligibility check will be further evaluated on their quality, including the proposed budget and capacity of the applicants, which also covers financial and operational capacity"*.

Question 87: Must Syrians be registered?

Answer 87: According to section 2.1.4. Eligibility of costs in the Guidelines for Grant applicants, *"the proposed costs should aim to foster creating additional employment or membership (or formalise employment) of SuTPs and LHC members in parallel with sustainable business growth. One of the priorities of this grant call is increasing the amount of decent and registered employment opportunities both for SuTPs and LHC members"*.

Question 88: How should the applicant determine the implementation period of the project?

Answer: According to the section 2.1.3. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants, *"the initial planned duration of an action may not be less than 6 months nor exceed 8 months, and this action is composed of a set of activities for a specific period in order to achieve planned goals"*.

Question 88: What is the ratio of SuTPs to be employed?

Answer 88: The overall objective of this call for proposals is to increase the job creation efforts of relevant local stakeholders in selected provinces through grants. The specific objective of this call for proposals is to contribute to well-established, promising cooperatives / union(s) of cooperatives in targeted provinces to grow and thereby generate sustainable employment for SuTPs and LHC members. Under this grant scheme, the target of 60% Syrians under temporary protection and 40% of local host communities are the overall target of this grant program. Please see the Scoring Table under section 2.3.8 of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants.

Question 89: Is there an age limit for people to be employed in the project?

Answer 89: Recruitment should be made in accordance with the relevant Turkish legislation.

Question 90: Do Syrian employees need to be Turkish citizens?

Answer 90: The status of the Syrians should be 'Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTP)' not Turkish citizen.

Question 91: Do you have rules regarding tender regulations?

Answer 91: Please refer to ANNEX IV Procurement by Grant Beneficiaries.

Question 92: Can the costs of consulting services be covered by the project if cooperatives cannot prepare projects?

Answer 92: According to the 2.1.4. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included in the Guidelines for Grant applicants, the costs need to be incurred during the implementation of the Action, and this does not cover the consultancy costs to prepare the applications.

Question 93: Will women's cooperatives be advantageous?

Answer 93: Please refer to Scoring (2. Relevance) number 2.4 and 2.5 in the Guidelines for Applicants.