



Q & A - LA seminar 2nd Step

Assessment and selection

- **What the evaluators check, what do they focus on in the step 2 assessments?**
 - Assessors evaluate the proposals, AFs along different criteria listed in the assessment check grid, which are also presented and explained in *III.3.2 Assessment process of the second step* section of the *Applicants' Manual*
- **The step 2 assessment will be based on the scores and findings of the step 1 assessment?**
 - The assessment of the full AF (step 2) is a separate process from the step 1 assessment without considering its scores. EoIs resulting lower evaluation scores might be improved and developed to AFs that result much higher scores in step 2 and vice versa.
- **How many projects are estimated to be selected in the 1st call for proposals for financing?**
 - The selection decision is taken by the DRP MC based on the quality of the projects (scoring), the available programme budget allocation and the budgets requested by the projects
 - The selection will be based on the overall ranking of the proposals without considering programme priorities and SOs.

Jems

- **Can more than one user work parallel on the AF in Jems?**
 - It is possible for different users to work at the same time on the same AF. When working in parallel, users have to make sure that they are not working simultaneously in the same section or sub-section as there is the risk to overwrite information or data loss. Consequently coordinating who is working when in the AF is crucial for a smooth use of Jems during the application phase. It is recommended to limit also the number of overall users working on the AF in general.
 - Any data loss due to working in parallel on the same AF is the full responsibility of the LA and the MA/JS cannot be held liable.
- **Is there possibility to modify, correct the AF in case submitted?**
 - No; once the AF is submitted, it cannot be modified by the LA.



Eligibility

- **Are there additional documents necessary to be submitted besides the AF?**

- As described in the Call announcement, the following annexes are to be uploaded to the AF before submission:
 - Declaration of co-financing (for all partners)
 - State aid declaration (for all partners)
 - Partnership Agreement
 - Declaration for International Organisations (only if applicable)
 - Associated strategic partner (ASP) declaration (only if applicable)
 - LP confirmation and signature

The listed annexes of the AF are to be signed, stamped by the legal representative of the respective entity and the scanned versions of each document are to be uploaded to the relevant section of the application.

- **In case the name of a PP changes between the step 1 and step 2 application how this is to be presented in the AF and if that counts for the eligibility criterion limiting the number of PPs that can be changed between EoI and AF?**

- In case the name of PP changed, including legal succession as well, in this period (and the organisation is not replaced), the new name of the PP shall be presented in AF, while the “abbreviated name of the organisation” shall be modified so to add the new PP acronym and keeping in bracket the original one e.g. *ABCD (former EFGH)*.
- In case the original PP affected by name change, or legal succession, this is not counted as PP change at the respective eligibility criterion. Additionally a brief note on such change is to be described in the field of the PP motivation section.

- **Are the AF annexes (declarations, PA, etc.) to be submitted / posted in original to the MA/JS?**

- Necessary annexes are only to be uploaded to the AF in Jems in scanned format; no original document is to be submitted for the application phase.

- **If in between two steps, the ASP is changed or withdrawn. Is it considered to be partner change, sticking to the limit of maximum 4 project partners that can be changed?**

- No. Only financial partners (those who sign Partnership Agreement) are the subject to the limit of 4. ASPs can be changed/added/withdrawn without a limit.

- **Is it necessary to submit a Partnership Agreement signed by all project partners?**



- It is compulsory to upload the scan of the completed PA signed by the LP and each PPs (but no ASPs), which is subject of the eligibility check
- **Are e-signatures acceptable for the annexes (declarations, partnership agreement, etc.) to be signed by PPs / ASP?**
 - Yes, it is accepted if necessary annexes of the AF uploaded with e-signatures. The e-signatures used should be the ones which are legally binding for each partner and recognised as such internally.
 - In case of the Partnership agreement, since each signatory page of the project partners has to be countersigned by the lead applicant the latter has two options: either compiles all the pages and the text of the partnership agreement in one single document pdf and submits to the MA/ JS or submits the text of the documents together with the signed pages by the partners (and countersigned by the lead applicant) in a zip. format.
- **What happens if some compulsory annexes of the AF are not uploaded / not signed by a PP?**
 - Following the eligibility check, in case some annex is missing / not signed by the relevant actor, the MA/JS requests the LA to complete those within 5 working days from receiving the related MA/JS notification email. In case not completed within that healing period, the respective PP is considered ineligible (or the entire proposal in case the partnership agreement is missing or signatory pages are missing).
- **How much the Partnership Agreement can be adapted, modified by the partnership?**
 - The fields, text parts marked with grey are to be filled in and adjusted to the partnership, while only in case of article 5. can the text of the template modified and adapted to the partnership
 - The grey field in Article 1 *“Financing Agreements (XXX), including date (XXX)”* shall be left as it is or deleted.
- **In case of private, non-profit type of PP shall they submit a financial guarantee with the AF?**
 - No financial guarantee is requested, the filled in and signed Declaration on co-financing covers that also for such type of PPs.
- **One criteria of the eligibility check is that *“The project intervention logic in the AF has not been modified compared to the one outlined in the EoI”*. How to fulfil this criterion, if our proposal received recommendation from the MA/JS to revise certain elements of the project intervention logic?**
 - As also explained in the Applicants’ Manual, the project intervention logic can be improved in line with the MA/JS recommendations



- It is also accepted, if the text of an objective, output and result is improved, without changing the essence of the respective IL element. New outputs can also be added without negative outcome on the eligibility check.
- Target values of outputs and results cannot be reduced, but only in case it is recommended, or e.g. due to changes in the partnership (output RCO87 – number of partners cooperating). On the other hand, target values can be increased without problem, if reasonable.
- **Can a PP be involved as eligible from Ukraine, if it is located outside of the Danube Region area?**
 - Yes, PPs from the whole territory of Ukraine can be eligible, provided that the part of the operations implemented outside programme area (the UA regions not officially involved in the programme) directly contribute to the objectives of the programme.
- **Can we involve an ASP from outside of the Danube Region?**
 - Entities located outside of the Danube Region area, but within the EU can be considered eligible as ASPs, while an ASP shall be located within the Danube Region area, in case coming from a non-EU country
- **In case the PP contribution amount declared in the declaration of co-financing is not matching with the amount indicated in the PP budget in the AF will that result ineligibility of the respective PP?**
 - The eligibility check scope is if the declaration is filled in and signed by the PP. In case the data provided in the declaration is not consistent with the AF that would not result with ineligibility of the respective PP. Correction of the document / AF will be requested in case the project is selected for financing.

Application form

- **To what extent the original project submitted as Expression of Interest can/shall be modified in the step 2 phase?**
 - The acronym of the project shall not be modified
 - The essence of the project intervention logic (objectives, outputs, results) shall not be changed, but can be improved / corrected in line with the recommendations received in the invitation letter. Outputs, results (if not recommended so), cannot be deleted or reduced, but new ones can be added, if improving the proposal. This is one criteria of the eligibility check
 - Descriptions of the project already provided in different fields of the EoI can be further improved, e.g. further detailing project activities.
 - Project budget can be modified, if reasonable (adding budget for a new PP, balancing more PP budgets, etc.). PP budgets are to be detailed along cost



categories and periods. Additionally the total budget of each activity shall be indicated in the description box of the activity.

- The AF in comparison to the EoI has new fields with new questions to present additional aspects of the project proposal
- **Is there a limit how many ASP can be financed by one PP?**
 - No limit defined by DRP on the number of ASPs to be sponsored by a single PP, but PPs are recommended to keep this on a reasonable level and share such roles among the PPs
- **What counts as investment; in which case the "Investment" section of the AF is to be filled in? Does it refer also to equipment purchase?**
 - *Investments* in the DRP project context means small-scale infrastructure development with transnational impact (following a transnational physical or functional link over the national borders, or creating a transferable practical solution through a case study in one area, which is also transferred for testing in at least two other participating countries). Equipment purchase related to the small-scale infrastructure development and its functioning are considered to be part of the investment.
 - The equipment needed for the project implementation (e.g. laptops), but not part of an investment, are not to be described in this section, but to be detailed in the budget of the PP purchasing the equipment (in the cost category Equipment).
- **Capitalisation and synergy building aspects are to be described only in those related fields (C.2.6 & C.2.7) of the AF, or also in the work plan?**
 - While in the C.2.6 & C.2.7 sections it is to be presented what concretely is planned to be capitalised, in the work plan, the related activities of synergy building and capitalisation shall be described.
- **The solution type of outputs shall always be connected to pilot actions?**
 - Yes, a project product can be linked to the "solution" type of output indicator only in such case, if the applicability of that tool developed by the partnership has also been tested, demonstrated before through pilot action(s) within the project and the related pilot action outputs are also to be defined in the AF. Logically a "solution" cannot be delivered earlier than the related "pilot testing action".
- **How to describe the management activities in the AF and how to connect the info on management with the allocated budget?**
 - Project management activities are not to be detailed in the project work plan within any SO of the AF. The project management aspects (but not the specific activities) are to be described in the dedicated part of the AF (*C.7 Project Management*) in its different fields presenting the project coordination and management structures, processes, tools, including financial management; the ways of internal communication within the partnership; the quality assurance of project implementation and outputs.



- The proportion (%) of the total partner budget to be allocated for project management activities is to be presented for the LP and each PP in the respective the project partners / motivation sections in the AF.
- **Is it possible to sub-contract project coordination and management in case the Lead Applicant / PP has limited staff capacities, or experience in international project management?**
 - It is possible to sub-contract project management tasks, which shall be described in the C.7 Project Management part of the AF and reflected also in the PP budget.
- **In order to ensure durability and sustainability of project outputs, would it be possible / eligible to generate income, revenues from an output after the project implementation, within the sustainability period?**
 - After project end it is possible to generate income, revenue from project outputs. Further details will be provided with the implementation rules.

Financial & budget issues

- **Is it possible to modify the project / PP budget defined in EoI?**
 - Project budget can be modified, if reasonable and especially, if it is recommended so, e.g. adding budget for a new PP, balancing more the budgets among PPs, etc.
 - It is also possible to add *Preparation costs* to the project budget, even if that was not part of the EoI, and if not received from state budget or any other EU funds.
- **Is the project budget to be defined only in the *Project partners / budget* section of the AF in Jems?**
 - Besides dividing the PP budget along cost categories and period structure in the *Project partners / budget* section of the AF
 - the total budget allocations of each activity within the project work plan shall be indicated (by a single amount in the respective activity description field);
 - The proportion (%) of the total partner budget to be allocated for project management activities is to be presented for the LP and each PP in the respective field of the *project partners / motivation* sections in the AF
- **What is considered to be a balanced budget among project partners**
 - Basis of the balanced PP budgets is the balanced PP roles and contributions to the project activities, which does not mean mathematically equal amounts. Differences on a reasonable scale can be resulted by the LP and certain PPs having additional coordinative tasks; differences of salary and costs levels in different DR countries, but without too much dominances of few PPs over the



project budget. Dominance of certain PPs from a country can distort a balanced partnership budget.

- **How to allocate project management costs, e.g. FLC costs in the PP budget if there is no specific budget category for management allocations (what was in previous period the WP management)?**
 - The PP budget is structured along cost categories and periods, which shall integrate also the costs planned for management.
 - The activity level budget allocations indicated in the work plan shall include the proportional allocations of management costs.
- **How the activity budget allocations will be monitored during project implementation?**
 - The activity budget allocations are checked in the application assessment phase and will not be monitored later on in case a project is selected for implementation.
- **How to define the periodic budget allocations and will there be flexibility between periodic budget allocations during project implementation?**
 - PP allocations of a period shall relate to the costs to be paid and reported within that period. This means that e.g. the costs of a sub-contracted service is to be planned for those period(s) in which the related invoices are paid and reported, but not in such a period when the service is provided, but not invoiced, paid and reported.
 - During implementation there is no possibility to modify the periodic PP allocations, but it will be possible to deviate with real spending from the planned one; although considerable deviation might have the consequence of PP budget reduction in case the DRP is affected by decommitment.
- **In case a PP chooses flat rate based travel and accommodation costs, is it possible to modify it later?**
 - In case the flat rate calculation option is chosen by a PP in AF (which is recommended by the MA/JS for each PP), it is not supposed to be modified and will be fixed at the time of the final MC decision on the project selection.
- **In case a PP use real costs based travel and accommodation costs what is the basis of calculating daily allowances for PPs coming from non-EU countries**
 - This is to be calculated based on national and institutional rules of the PP organisation
- **Are publishing fee type of costs (e.g. in scientific papers) eligible?**
 - yes
- **In case of equipment purchase can PP plan in the budget with total costs of the equipment, or with proportional depreciation?**



- In general the total costs of equipment can be planned, however this depends on the national regulations of the PP countries, so each PP is recommended to check this question with the control body in their country.
- **Since common costs of PPs are not eligible does it mean that the costs of a major project event, conference cannot be shared between PPs?**
 - Costs of a joint project event can be shared among PPs so that the different PPs have separate contracts for the different elements (venue / catering / transportation, etc.) of the event organisation, resulting also separate invoices for the different PPs.
 - Common costs would mean that one PP subcontracts the whole event, pays the total costs and then invoicing it further towards the other PPs to share the costs, which is not allowed by the programme.
- **Where can applicants find information on the national control and co-financing systems of the DRP countries?**
 - Detailed description for each DRP partner state is provided in the document accessible of the programme website on this [link](#).

Communication

- **Is it still compulsory to organise a major project kick-off event within the first 4 months of project implementation like it was in the previous programme period?**
 - According to the rules 1 major project event shall be organised during project implementation, so the referred rule is not valid any more.