

Pilot Projects for Common Global Challenges In the European Union and United States

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Application Deadline 2 October 2007

An amount of EUR 2.5 million is earmarked in the European Union's budget for 2007 in support of pilot project on "Transatlantic methods for handling global challenges" (budget line 19.05.03). Pilot project are to be used to fund innovative ventures between European and US policy makers that cannot be pursued under existing instruments of cooperation between the US and the EU. Their purpose is to foster common, more effective transatlantic approaches to key international policy challenges.

The **general objective** of the pilot projects is to promote mutual understanding and learning among EU and US policy researchers and policymakers on a number of challenges with a global dimension. The projects are to fund comparative analyses on current EU and US policies, conferences where findings are to be discussed and recommendations made, and publications to disseminate the results of the projects to the relevant policy community.

In order to pursue this objective, the European Commission's Directorate General for External Relations is launching this Call for Proposals with the aim of identifying proposals that are eligible for financial support under the abovementioned budget line. It is inviting proposals on the following topics: (a) bio-safety/biodiversity, (b) arctic marine environment policy, (c) safety of nanotechnologies, (d) enforcement of intellectual property rights (in particular counterfeiting in third countries), (e) reconstruction following natural disasters and (f) justice and home affairs. What these topics have in common is that they relate to global challenges which are currently attracting relatively little attention from the policy community and the public at large. On the other hand, they do fit in well with the broad agenda in the field of security, economic cooperation and the environment set by the EU-US summit of 30 April 2007.

1) ELIGIBLE POLICY AREAS

a) POLICY APPROACHES ON BIOSAFETY/BIODIVERSITY

Activities undertaken in response to this Call for Proposals should aim to identify the common challenges posed to the EU and US in relation to the safe transfer, handling and use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in food imports, including risks assessments, in order to prevent negative effects to human health and the environment. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety should provide a point of reference during technical reflections.

Another topic in this area could be the analysis of US and EU policies and instruments for the conservation of biodiversity in third countries. Through joint research and policy development, the transatlantic cooperation could address the existing biodiversity challenges and those resulting from growing populations and industrialisation. Areas of possible cooperation are indicated in the “Postdam Initiative – Biological Diversity 2010” welcomed by the G8 leaders at the Heiligendamm Summit in June 2007. They include inter alia the mapping and protection of vulnerable marine areas, biodiversity and climate change, innovative financial mechanisms, invasive alien species, illegal trade in wildlife, production and consumption patterns, the development of a global species information system, improving the science-policy interface and the analysis of the cost of non-action to achieve the 2010 biodiversity target.

b) POLICY APPROACHES ON ARCTIC MARINE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

In the light of the urgent need to better protect the Arctic in order to avert climate change at global level, activities undertaken in response to this Call for Proposals should aim to review ways of adapting to the impacts of changes on the marine environment and in particular on the arctic ice cover. The following issues could be covered: water circulation, water quality, the ecological status of the ecosystems, the sensitivity of the arctic marine ecosystems to environmental pressures, the economic activities in the arctic and their impact on the environment.

The project will include the drafting of a report which must reflect the best science available including the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA) report published in 2004, and a follow-up report published in 2006. The European Commission is also currently drafting the Marine Strategy which will constitute the environmental pillar of the future maritime policy. The project report should form the basis of a policy discussion on how to step up efforts to further protect the Arctic. This discussion should involve officials and stakeholders from both the EU and the US, which may be extended to other countries with a strong presence in the Arctic, such as Canada.

c) POLICY APPROACHES TO PROMOTING THE SAFETY OF NANOTECHNOLOGIES

Building upon the experience from the EU’s Sixth Research Framework Programme, closer international cooperation with economically advanced countries in nanoscience and nanotechnologies is needed in order to share knowledge and reap the benefits of critical mass. The international dialogue on common issues needs to be strengthened.

Nanotechnologies are the next technological wave after ICT and biotech, but probably with a much shorter time to maturity. Notwithstanding their great potential, nanotechnologies are identified in the Global Risk 2007 report of the World Economic Forum as one of the two “core” Global Risks.

The European Commission asked its Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) to judge the appropriateness of existing methodologies in terms of assessing the potential risks of nanomaterials. The Committee concluded that

“current risk assessment methodologies require some modification in order to deal with the hazards associated with nanotechnology and in particular that existing toxicological and eco-toxicological methods may not be sufficient to address all the issues arising with nanoparticles”¹. The need to fill data and knowledge gaps, to re-evaluate risk assessment methods, and to assess risk on a case-by-case basis at a time when those materials are rapidly emerging on the market poses serious policy challenges, in particular as regards regulation and implementation, international safety standards and citizens' expectations and concerns.

Activities undertaken in response to this Call for Proposals should aim to address these challenges by:

- making a comparative assessment of the effectiveness of available policy measures in the EU and the US to ensure the safety of nanoparticles and nanoparticle products;
- reviewing processes which foster the identification of best practices and the establishment of international requirements for and congruent approaches to safety in order to establish an international level playing field and promote regulatory convergence between the EU and the US;
- examining means of addressing the safety and ethical concerns expressed by citizens, and understanding the implications of calls in the US and the EU for the labelling of nanomaterial products from the point of view of safety, legislation, and international trade.

d) POLICY APPROACHES ON COUNTERFEITING

Although the joint action by the EU and US on counterfeiting in third countries is sending a clear message, EU statistics from November 2006 still show that counterfeiting and piracy and especially fakes that are dangerous to health such as counterfeited foodstuffs, drinks and medicines continue to pose a major threat. The increasing use of the Internet for the selling of fake medicines is increasing the challenges faced by customs services.

Activities undertaken in response to this Call for Proposals should aim at increasing public awareness of the dangers and of the need to address the infringements, share ideas on ways to improve the enforcement against such infringements, and efforts to cooperate with SMEs on intellectual property protection and enforcement in third countries.

e) POLICY APPROACHES ON RECONSTRUCTION IN AREAS RECOVERING FROM NATURAL DISASTERS

Activities undertaken in response to this Call for Proposals should aim to promote coherent EU-US policy and operational approaches towards reconstruction and stabilisation in regions recovering from natural disasters (e.g. the tsunami in Aceh, the earthquake in Kashmir). These approaches should preferably dovetail with established multi-lateral

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihp/docs/scenihp_o_003b.pdf

frameworks of co-operation, in particular the UN, the World Bank, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

Projects should make a comparative assessment of the cost effectiveness of emergency and longer-term measures, including mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction e.g. awareness, simulation exercises and institutional capacity-building, by both the EU and the US, and propose possible improvements. Activities should also target humanitarian aid and focus in particular on the linking between the relief activities implemented by humanitarian aid actors and the rehabilitation and reconstruction activities undertaken by the development community, including civil society representatives on both sides of the Atlantic.

f) POLICY APPROACHES ON JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

Exchanges with the United States on justice and home affairs have expanded significantly. In particular, the fight against terrorism remains high on the agenda. Several agreements have been signed with the US on that issue since 2001, police cooperation agreements between Europol and US law enforcement authorities, agreements on judicial criminal cooperation regarding extradition and mutual legal assistance, an agreement on the transfer of passenger data (PNR) as well as an agreement on the Container Security Initiative (CSI). The EU and the US have an ongoing dialogue on topical issues such as terrorist financing, radicalisation, travel document security, visa issues and the sharing of information. A consultation mechanism on border and transport security was created in 2004 which has proven highly valuable for early warning, up-front consultation and dissuasion of potential conflicts.

Projects should aim at analytical comparisons of EU and US efforts and results in justice and home affairs. A particularly interesting example could be expedited travel for *bona fide* travellers while keeping borders secure. Both the US and the EU are currently examining new ways of border management, such as the enhanced use of biometrics, systematic entry-exit controls or possible reforms of the visa regimes. This is likely to pose major challenges in terms of practical feasibility, resources and privacy concerns. Another highly relevant topic could be the current practice and future perspectives in law enforcement information sharing. Both the US and the EU have posted police liaison officers in their respective headquarters to facilitate transatlantic cooperation. Transnational organised crime is one of the global challenges for law enforcement and the Amsterdam Treaty as well as the respective UN Convention call for increased efforts in this field.

2) PROJECTS' OUTPUTS

Each project has to comprise the following parts:

- ✓ Comparative analysis of current US and EU policy towards the problem at hand;
- ✓ Conference involving the research and the policy communities on both sides of the Atlantic; the conference should be made available on the internet;
- ✓ Publication of the projects' findings and recommendations that are easily accessible for policy makers (both a web version and a printed version will be required).

An important part of the initiative will be a final wrap-up conference organised under the auspices of the European Commission in winter 2009 for all projects. All project leaders are expected to attend this final conference. The participation of all US and EU partners at this conference is essential because it will be the only opportunity for applicants and funding entities to meet and share ideas. It is also intended as a forum for discussion to help the EU and the US administrations make important decisions on how best to coordinate. There should be for each project at least one participant from each participating organisation. Beneficiaries will present the results/findings/recommendations from their project in specific workshops, with a view to pulling together results, recommendations and conclusions to be compiled in a publication and presented to the EU-US Summit of 2010.

3) TARGET AUDIENCE FOR PROJECTS

Conferences and publications are aimed at representatives of the academic community, the media, civil society and non-governmental organisations, the business community, legislators and policy executives at the relevant government level in both the EU and the US.

4) ELIGIBLE TYPE OF ACTIVITIES

- Seminars, conferences and workshops;
- Publications;
- Briefing sessions, speaking tours and study visits targeting decision-makers and opinion-formers, such as federal or national/state legislators and staff; civil servants; business people, civil society organisations, NGO representatives and journalists.

5) PROFILE OF APPLICANTS

Subject to their meeting the eligibility criteria set out in Section 8, proposals are invited from the following kinds of organisations:

- think tanks and other policy-oriented non-governmental organisations
- other kinds of NGOs and civil society organisations
- universities, research centres
- not-for-profit business associations
- trade unions and labour organisations

Applications involving both EU and US organisations are strongly encouraged, with the EU partner being the leading applicant. The activities of a project may take place both in the EU and in the US.

6) GRANT FUNDING AVAILABLE

The organisations selected will receive funding in the form of a grant towards approved project costs for activities taking place no earlier than **1 January 2008** and no later than **30 June 2009** (the maximum duration of the project should be between 12 and 18 months).

The total budget is €2,500,000. From this budget, between five and seven grants will be awarded, depending on the nature and quality of proposals received. Grants will not be awarded for more than the amount requested, and the European Commission reserves the right to award a grant of less than the amount requested by the applicant.

The maximum grant awarded to any applicant will be €500,000 and the minimum €50,000. Individual grant amounts will not exceed 90% of the allowable costs of the activities covered in the proposal. Community grants are based on the principle of co-financing. They complement the applicant's own financial contribution and/or national, regional or private assistance that has been obtained elsewhere.

7) APPLICATION PROCEDURE

All applicants must submit an application package comprising following elements:

1. An official grant request letter, dated and signed;
2. A detailed proposal (5 pages maximum), explaining (i) the purpose and the contents of the project proposed, and specifying (ii) the detailed timetable of the activities, (iii) the expected impacts consistent with the objectives, (iv) the nature and purpose of any resulting publications or other information products, (v) the means of dissemination of those products, ensuring effective targeting of interested groups, and (vi) the responsibilities and contributions of all staff involved, the itemized budget of project costs and revenues, in euro² in sufficiently detail to allow identification and monitoring of the activities involved; it should be drawn up in accordance with the model annexed to the Grant Application Form;
3. A fully completed and signed Grant Application Form together with the required supporting documents indicated in the annex to the Grant Application Form. NB: in the event of a grant being awarded, the same individual signing the Grant Application Form must also sign the Grant Agreement, and have the authority to legally commit the applicant organisation to the terms of that Agreement.

²Prices must be quoted in EUR (euro) using the Commission's official monthly accounting exchange rate at the time of submission of the proposal.

<http://ec.europa.eu/budget/inforeuro/index.cfm?fuseaction=countries&SearchField=&Period=2007-5&Delim=,&Language=en>

Those who do not have internet access or who have any questions may contact Ms Yasmina Sioud at the address below.

Please note:

- All applicants should read carefully the “Guidelines for applicants” which explain in detail how to prepare the application package, and provide information on grants from the European Commission.
- Applicants **must** submit **all** of the information indicated above or their application will be considered ineligible and their proposal will not be examined, as explained in the eligibility criteria established for this call for proposals (Point 8 below). In particular, applicants are reminded to pay attention to the issue of co-financing (see Section 1.4 of the “Guidelines for Applicants”)
- Applications must be **signed** and dated by the authorised representative.

The Grant Application Form, the “Guidelines for applicants”, and the model Grant Agreement may be downloaded from the web site of the Directorate-General for External Relations at http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/us/grants/index.htm. Those who cannot access the internet may request materials from Ms Yasmina Sioud (Telephone +32.2.292.13.93; Fax +32.2.299.02.08; e-mail: yasmina.sioud@ec.europa.eu).

Applications submitted by fax or e-mail will not be accepted. All application documents must be submitted in English.

Applicants should send one original of their application package, completed in accordance with the instructions in the “Guidelines for applicants”, plus two (2) copies, by registered mail, or by courier service to:

Ms Yasmina SIOUD
European Commission
DG RELEX C1, CHAR 14/009
(Ref. Call Pilot Project 2007)
Avenue du Bourget n°1
1140 Evere, Brussels
Belgium
e-mail: yasmina.sioud@ec.europa.eu

Applications should be submitted at the earliest date possible, but must be postmarked no later than 2 October 2007.

8) SELECTION OF PROPOSALS

Full details of the selection process are included in the “Guidelines for applicants”. Applications will be assessed and selected according to the following criteria:

8.1) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

All applicants must:

- demonstrate status as a legal person, to be documented by Articles of Incorporation or other proof of legal status;
- provide a signed Applicants' Declaration (Part 5 of the Grant Application Form) verifying that the applicant is not in one of the situations described³;
- propose activities which must take place in their entirety between **1 January 2008 and 30 June 2009**; and
- submit properly completed applications and all required supporting documentation. Incomplete applications will not be considered. An application will be regarded as incomplete if it does not include a grant request letter, a detailed proposal, a completed Grant Application Form including the Applicant's Declaration, and all requested supporting documentation.

8.2) EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Applicants may not participate in this call for proposals or be awarded grants if:

- a) They are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) They have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of *res judicata*;
- c) They have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;
- d) They have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the project is to take place;
- e) They have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- f) They are currently subject to an administrative penalty referred to in Article 96(1) of the Financial Regulation⁴: candidates which are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the

³ The Commission may request additional evidence confirming the Declaration.

⁴ OJ L 390/2006 of 30.12.2006

procurement procedure or fail to supply this information; and contractors who have been declared to be in serious breach of their obligations under contracts covered by the budget.

8.3) SELECTION CRITERIA FOR APPLICANTS

The Commission will assess applicants' technical and economic capacity to undertake the proposed project. This assessment will be based on:

- proven previous experience in similar activities based on the list of the principal related projects undertaken in the past two years and/or the quality of the proposal;
- the details of the educational and professional qualifications of the person(s) undertaking the project, as demonstrated by their curriculum vitae;
- financial and economic capacity enabling the applicant to perform the tasks involved in this project, as demonstrated by annual accounts (balance sheet and profit and loss account) for the last two years and other financial information provided in the Grant Application Form; and
- evidence of co-financing capacity, with own resources confirmed by the signature of the legally authorised officer signing the Application Form, and third party resources confirmed in writing by the officer(s) identified in Part 4 of the Grant Application.

8.4) CRITERIA FOR THE AWARD OF A GRANT

Proposals submitted in accordance with the submission guidelines and meeting the eligibility and selection criteria above will be evaluated according to the following quality criteria:

- relevance of the proposal: relevance of the activities in the light of the overall challenge at hand; design of the comparative analysis; design of the conference and dissemination of results; clear work-plan and time-table;
- expected impact of the proposed activities on the policy process;
- visibility of the project (dissemination of information, publicity, publications, follow-up, capacity to raise awareness about the project at different political levels);
- transatlantic dimension of the proposal (importance for the EU-US relations on the subject, active involvement and cooperation of organisations on both sides of the Atlantic in the execution of the project..);
- cost-effectiveness of the project's various components.

Each award criterion will be assessed and assigned scores as follows:

- Relevance (maximum score 5, minimum 1)
- Impact (maximum score 5, minimum 1)

- Visibility (maximum score 5, minimum 1)
- Transatlantic dimension (maximum score 10, minimum 1)
- Cost-effectiveness (maximum score 5, minimum 1)

The TOTAL SCORE (sum of the five criteria for a maximum score of 30, minimum score of 5) of each proposal will be ranked against that of competing proposals.

9) QUESTIONS AND NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

- Individual applicants should submit any questions regarding the award procedure in writing only to Yasmina Sioud (yasmina.sioud@ec.europa.eu)
- All applicants will be informed whether or not their proposal has been accepted. The Commission intends to make its decisions by **15 November 2007** (indicative date only). The list of selected projects will be published on the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/grants/index_en.htm.

10) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Grant recipients may request a pre-financing payment equal to 60% of the total grant once the grant agreement has been signed by both parties.

Successful applicants will be required to submit a descriptive report and a financial report in both hard-copy and electronic format, at the end of the project. These reports will be due no later than three months after completion of the project and by **1 October 2009** at the latest.

After approval of the descriptive and financial reports, a final payment will be made, based on actual eligible project expenditure.

11) ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Nothing herein stated shall be deemed a financial commitment by the European Union or any of its constituent Institutions. Grants will be awarded on the basis of available funding and only after approval by the European Commission.
- The terms and general conditions of a prospective grant are specified in the Grant Agreement. Submission of an application implies acceptance of these terms and general conditions. Requests to modify the terms and general conditions of the Grant Agreement will not be considered.
- Grants will not be awarded for more than the amount requested, and the European Commission reserves the right to award a grant of less than the amount requested by the applicant if the costs are considered to be too high or unjustified.

- In any call made in the context of grants or procurements implemented in direct centralised management, potential beneficiaries, candidates and tenderers shall, in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council be informed that, for the purposes of safeguarding the financial interests of the Communities, their personal data may be transferred to internal audit services, to the European Court of Auditors, to the Financial Irregularities Panel or to the European Anti-Fraud Office (hereinafter 'OLAF').
