

Transatlantic Civil Society Dialogues

EU-USA

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Application Deadline: 27 May, 2010

BACKGROUND

This Call for Proposals is designed to implement one of the three priorities of the European Union Industrialised Countries Instrument (ICI), namely people-to-people links. Its main goals are to enhance mutual understanding between cultures and to facilitate the exchange of knowledge. To this end, it promotes dialogues at the level of civil society.

1) OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL

The European Commission is seeking to strengthen dialogues between members of EU and US civil society by addressing a wide range of issues and encouraging the involvement of a broad set of stakeholders. These dialogues will complement the formal policy dialogue at government level.

The Directorate General for External Relations invites herewith proposals to stimulate dialogue and cooperation between non-governmental organisations and interest groups, including social partners, representing wide constituencies in the EU and the US. The suggested dialogues under this new call are on five specific topics of relevance to the EU-US civil societies:

- a) A transatlantic environmental dialogue,
- b) A macro-economic dialogue,
- c) The continuation of the Consumer Dialogue.
- d) A public health dialogue
- e) A development and humanitarian aid dialogue.

2) ELIGIBLE POLICY AREAS

- a) Transatlantic environmental dialogue

What are the challenges for the environmental communities and governments after the summit in Copenhagen? Will the dynamics now shift from national governments to local governments and communities, businesses, academia, civil society?

Activities undertaken in response to this Call for Proposals should aim to foster the exchange of information, improve awareness and networking of EU and US policymakers and proponents dedicated to fighting climate change along specific strategies, learning from and adapted to the Copenhagen process and outcome.

The proposed action should identify areas for closer cooperation on developing effective strategies in our fight against climate change, focusing notably on the nexus of low carbon energy transformation and climate change. In particular, it would look at the impact of low carbon strategies such as the green stimuli packages, on the jobs market. It would inter alia seek answers to the following questions:

- What jobs will be threatened by the transition to a low-carbon economy?
- What jobs might be created – will they be predominately low-paid unskilled jobs or jobs with good long term prospects and decent wages?
- Is there a risk of a skills mismatch causing some jobs to be relocated overseas?
- Will low carbon jobs be accessible to the unemployed and those currently excluded from the workforce?
- What role for public policy in ensuring a ‘just transition’ to a low carbon economy?
- What role for a decentralised approach towards a low carbon economy?
- What does history or the experience of other countries tells us?

b) Macro-economic dialogue

Activities undertaken in response to this Call for Proposal should aim to explore macro-economic and financial policy issues of common EU and US interest. Although macroeconomic policy is mostly oriented towards the management of the overall economic performance (growth, inflation etc.) within the geographic area for which respective policymakers are responsible, many macroeconomic issues (e.g., exchange rates, external imbalances) transcend the borders of these areas. The trend towards an ever closer economic and financial integration between the two sides of the Atlantic enhances the commonality of EU and US interests in many macro-economic policy issues. In addition, since the US and the EU together create over half of world GDP at current market exchange rates, the macroeconomic issues of common transatlantic interest often also have a global dimension.

Issues to be explored in such a dialogue should include

- (1) the preparation and adoption of exit strategies from the expansionary policy stance adopted during the recession;
 - (2) the role of EU and US macroeconomic policies in rebalancing global growth and adjusting current account imbalances;
 - (3) long-term fiscal consolidation policy in a high-debt post-crisis environment;
- and
- (4) transatlantic cooperation in the framework of global governance.

The dialogue should aim at improving the understanding of the respective policies and constraints, exploring possible areas where transatlantic macroeconomic cooperation and

dialogue could prove useful for both sides of the Atlantic and the global economy, and providing policy recommendations on macroeconomic and financial issues.

Applicants are encouraged to propose activities with some geographic variation (i.e., involving multiple cities/states/regions). If conferences are foreseen, the proceedings should be published.

c) Consumer dialogue

Activities undertaken in response to this Call for Proposals should aim to:

- provide for a formal mechanism for EU and US consumer representatives to provide input into EU and US political discussions and policies;
- organise meetings with policy officials and regulators to promote and advocate consumer interests with public authorities;
- identify common consumers issues and challenges, and promote consumer views in the context of transatlantic relations;
- promote debate and exchange of knowledge among consumer representatives;
- contribute to the exchange and dissemination of expertise and knowledge on consumer issues in the EU and the US;
- contribute to the discussions in relevant transatlantic dialogues and on relevant areas discussed in the Transatlantic Economic Council under the auspices of the Transatlantic Economic Framework agreed at the Washington EU-US Summit of 2007;
- produce joint policy recommendations.

d) Public health dialogue

Activities undertaken in response to this Call for Proposals should aim at either 1) research & action on underage drinking or 2) on mental health:

- 1) Research and action on underage drinking: exchange and exploration of issues of mutual concern:

In the US, the Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking launched in 2007 gave renewed impetus to work in this area. In the EU, protecting young people, children and the unborn child from the harm done by alcohol is one of the priority areas of the EU strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol related harm (adopted in 2006).

Activities undertaken in this field of cooperation should take the form of expert conferences, study visits and visiting lecturers. Focus would be on:

- research on the relationship of alcohol use to adolescent's development;
- on public health surveillance of underage drinking and risk factors;
- and on policy areas of mutual interest such as minimum age policies, regulation of alcoholic products and marketing, prevention of accidents and injuries as well as approaches to supporting parents.

2) Mental health:

Proposals falling under this cooperation area should aim to establish a structured dialogue between EU and US civil society organisations working on health and to deliver input into political discussions and policies. The focus should be on the following aspects:

- organising surveillance and developing/implementing indicators on mental health;
- mental health and the health workforce;
- mental health promotion/prevention in children and young people (e.g. schools, parenting, ICT and mental health, addictions) laying the basis for life-long (mental) health;
- mental health promotion/prevention at workplaces;
- demographic change and mentally healthy ageing;
- tackling health and social inequalities and their mental health dimension.

The issues of depression and suicide could be addressed throughout the themes.

e) Development and humanitarian aid dialogue

Activities undertaken in response to this Call for Proposals should aim to foster exchange of views and information, improve awareness of related EU and US policies and positions, and identify areas for potential closer transatlantic cooperation, focusing notably on (1) the Millennium Development Goals, (2) food security and agricultural development, (3) development aspects of climate change and (4) responding to humanitarian crises.

The activities should aim to:

- Contribute to the exchange and dissemination of expertise and knowledge on development and humanitarian policy issues in the EU and the US;
- Contribute to the discussions in the recently re-launched EU-US High Level Consultative Group on Development;
- Produce joint policy recommendations with due regard to aid effectiveness principles;
- Contribute to better awareness on the importance of making joint efforts between the EU and the US in favour of developing countries.

3) PROJECT OUTPUTS

Activities should aim to promote the exchange of information of importance to stakeholders in the areas mentioned above and in particular should aim to:

- create/ enhance transatlantic civil society networks;
- establish joint positions on issues of common concern in the EU and the US; and
- offer analyses and make recommendations to EU and US governments.

Activities should result in outcomes which can be measured, for example, by the number and quality of events organised, the number and quality of participants, the production

and targeted dissemination of recommendations and information products via the internet and other means, and any indicators of impact on policy formulation and outcomes.

4) ELIGIBLE TYPES OF ACTIVITY

Proposals must involve EU and US partner institutions and activities should take place in the EU and/or the US.

Activities will take the form of coherent sets of two or more events/actions which strengthen mutual co-operation and promote sustainable networking over the medium to long-term and may include:

- conferences, seminars and workshops;
- publications and other information products;
- other activities that facilitate productive dialogue across the Atlantic amongst non-governmental actors, such as the creation and development of networking links including list serves, blogs and other internet-based vehicles to exchange ideas and views on EU/US issues.

All applicants must provide for a web page devoted to the proposed project, linked directly from the institutional home page. Outreach events being organized with project funds must be publicised on this page, and the European Commission must be invited to or otherwise informed of all such outreach activities prior to their implementation.

5) PROFILE OF APPLICANTS

Subject to their meeting the eligibility criteria set out in Section 8, proposals are invited from applicants which should be non-governmental, not-for-profit organisations or interest groups (including social partners) representing wide constituencies in the EU and the US which strengthen in a lasting manner mutual cooperation and networking. However, applications from representatives of business may be submitted, provided that applicants demonstrate that the activities for which a grant is requested are unrelated to their normal commercial activities and the project is strictly non-profit making.

Applicants should have a broad geographic coverage in the EU and the US. Individuals/natural persons, governmental agencies, European agencies and executive agencies cannot apply.

Applications should involve both EU and US organisations, with the EU partner being the lead applicant. The project activities should take place in both the EU and the US.

6) GRANT FUNDING AVAILABLE

Organisations selected will receive funding in the form of a grant towards approved project costs for activities taking place no earlier than **1 September 2010 and no later**

than 31 August 2012. Individual grant amounts will not exceed **75 %** of allowable costs of the activities covered in the proposals.

An estimated 4 to 5 grants of up to €200,000 each will be awarded, depending on the nature and quality of proposals received and the availability of funding. 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 total budget for European Commission contributions to this Call is of €800,000.

Co-financing of a project under this programme cannot be combined with any other co-financing by another programme financed by the budget of the European Communities.

A Commission grant is given for non-commercial purposes only and projects must be strictly non-profit making.

7) APPLICATION PROCEDURE

All applicants must submit an Application package comprising the following elements:

1. An official grant request letter, dated and signed;
2. A detailed proposal (5 pages maximum) comprising (i) the goals and methodology of the activity/activities proposed and specifying (ii) the detailed timetable of the operation, (iii) the expected impacts consistent with the objectives of this programme, (iv) the nature and purpose of any resulting recommendations or information products, and (v) the means of dissemination of those products, ensuring effective targeting of interested groups, and (vi) the responsibilities and estimated effort required of all staff involved. A budget summary is not requested within these 5 pages.
3. A fully completed and signed Grant Application Form together with the required supporting documents indicated in the annex to the Grant Application Form.
4. The itemized budget of project costs and revenues, in euro¹ should be sufficiently detailed to allow identification and monitoring of the operations involved and drawn up in accordance with the model annexed 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 institution to the terms of that Agreement.

¹ Prices must be quoted in EUR (euro) using the Commission's official monthly accounting exchange rate at the time of submission of the proposal. Rates are available at the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/inforeuro/index.cfm?fuseaction=currency_historique¤cy=201&Language=en. Those who do not have internet access or who have any questions may contact Mrs. Yasmina Sioud at the above address.

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 question 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_en.htm or from the web site of the Delegation at http://www.eurunion.org/eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=3464.

Those who cannot access the internet may request materials from Mrs. 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, and all application documents must be submitted in English.

Applicants should send **one original plus three (3)** copies of their application package completed in accordance with the instructions in the “Guidelines for applicants” by registered mail (or by courier service) to:

Mrs Yasmina Sioud
European Commission
DG RELEX C1, CHAR 14/009
(Ref. Call Transatlantic Dialogues 2010)
Avenue du Bourget n°1
1140 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 27 May 2010. Applicants are equally asked to send an e-mail communication to the above e-mail address once an application has been posted.

Any application received with a later postmark will be automatically rejected even if the delay is due to the private courier service.

NB: The applicant is responsible for the clear identification of the date to which the application had been postmarked.

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 clearly labelled Articles of Incorporation or other proof of legal status (a certified copy by a notary or attorney at law);
- provide a signed Applicants’ Declaration (Part 5 of the Grant Application Form) verifying that the applicant is not in one of the situations described²;
- propose activities which occur in their entirety between **1 September 2010 and 31 August 2012**; and
- submit properly completed applications and all required supporting documentation as requested above. 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 Applicant’s Declaration, and all requested documentation.

Partners must fulfil the same eligibility criteria as the lead applicant (see Guidelines for Applicants point 1.1).

8.2) EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Applicants (as well as partners) 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*;

² The Commission may request additional evidence confirming the Declaration.

- 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 Regulation³: candidates which are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the 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 the organisation of activities such as those described in point 4 above, based on the list of the principal related projects undertaken in the past 3 years;
- in-depth knowledge of public policy issues relevant to the topic of the proposal and of EU policies and of the relationship between the EU and the US;
- the details of the educational and professional qualifications of the person(s) undertaking the project, as demonstrated by curriculum vitae;
- financial and economic capacity enabling the applicant to perform the tasks involved in this project, as demonstrated by annual accounts balance sheets and profit and loss accounts) for the last two years and other financial information provided in the Grant Application Form; and
- evidence that the applicant is able to meet co-financing requirements⁴; own resources confirmed by the signature of the legally authorised officer signing the Application Form, and third party resources, if applicable, are to be confirmed in writing by the officer(s) identified in Part 4 of the Grant Application Form (the co-financing letter).

³ OJ L 390/2006 of 30.12.2006

⁴ The Commission contribution will cover up to 75% of total eligible project costs; therefore applicants must be able to provide at least 25% towards these total project costs.

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:

- Quality of the activity proposed, in terms of objectives, methodology and content (maximum score 10, minimum 0);
- Expected impact of the proposed event(s)/activity, in terms of value-added input to the EU-US relationship and in terms of formulating recommendations and offering analyses to both the EU and US governments (maximum score 10, minimum 0);
- Cost-effectiveness in the implementation of the activity proposed and capacity to mobilise resources to supplement the Commission's grant (maximum score 10, minimum 0)

The TOTAL SCORE (sum of three criteria for maximum score of 30, minimum score of 0) of each proposal will be ranked against all competing proposals. A minimum of 18 points will be requested as a threshold for the overall quality of the proposal.

9) QUESTIONS AND NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

Individual applicants should submit any questions regarding the competition in writing only to Yasmina Sioud (yasmina.sioud@ec.europa.eu). A "Frequently Asked Questions" or FAQ will be posted on the Commission's website summarising responses to technical questions asked by individual applicants.

All Applicants will be informed whether or not their proposal has been accepted. The Commission intends to make its decisions by **1 July 2010** (indicative date only).

10) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Grant recipients will receive a pre-financing payment equal to 40% of the total grant once the grant agreement has been signed by both parties.

Successful applicants will be required to submit, no later than **31 October 2011**, narrative and financial interim reports in hard-copy and electronic format covering the first 12 months of project activity in the Work programme, and detailing the activities and the budget for the remaining 12 months.

On approval of these documents a second pre-financing payment of up to 35% of the total grant can be made, on the basis of the eligible costs actually incurred.

Successful applicants will be required to submit a final narrative and financial report in hard-copy and electronic format at the end of the project. These reports will be due no later than **1 November 2012**.

After approval of the final narrative and financial report, 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 component 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 model Grant Agreement. Submission of an application implies acceptance of the 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.
- Projects which are awarded a grant under this call for proposals may not benefit from any other European Community funding for the same activity.
- Where the Commission decides to carry out an interim or ex-post evaluation, the beneficiary is required to provide all necessary information.
- 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').
