

COMMISSION

Call for proposals for projects of common interest in the field of trans-European telecommunications networks

Call eTEN 2004/1

(2004/C 61/08)

1. Title XV of the Treaty establishing the European Community provides that the European Community contributes to the establishment and development of trans-European networks, including in the field of telecommunications.

A Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a series of guidelines for trans-European telecommunications networks was adopted on 17 June 1997 (Decision No 1336/97/EC, OJ L 183, 11.7.1997, p. 12), and revised on 12 July 2002 (Decision No 1376/2002/EC, OJ L 200, 30.7.2002, p. 1). The revision identifies in its Annex I projects of common interest.

On the basis of Annex I to the Decision of the European Parliament and the Council No 1376/2002/EC of 12 July 2002, the European Commission adopted on 9 March 2004 a new work programme, which specifies the content of such projects.

2. The European Commission is launching a call for proposals aiming at the implementation of projects of common interest related to services supported by trans-European telecommunications networks. The proposed services should address the common objectives for all the themes as defined in the eTEN Workprogramme 2004.

3. All the information on how to prepare and submit proposals is given in the eTEN Guide for proposers 2004. Details of the evaluation process are given in the eTEN Evaluation Guide 2004. This documentation, along with the eTEN Workprogramme 2004 and any other information relating to this call, can be downloaded from the web site indicated below or obtained from the European Commission using one of the following addresses:

European Commission
Directorate-General Information Society
eTEN Help Desk
Office BU31 2/74
B-1049 Brussels
E-mail: infoso-eten@cec.eu.int
Fax (32-2) 296 17 40
Web: <http://europa.eu.int/eten>

4. Consortia responding to the conditions defined for the present call are invited to submit their proposals concerning the projects addressing the actions as defined in the eTEN Workprogramme 2004 and listed below.

Action types

Proposals must fit into one of the three types of actions funded in this call for proposals. They are:

Action 1: Initial deployment

Action 2: Market validation

Action 3: Support and coordination

Themes

Proposed actions of types 1 and 2 must refer to one or more of the following themes for this call for proposals:

Theme 1: eGovernment

Theme 2: eHealth

Theme 3: eInclusion

Theme 4: eLearning

Theme 5: Trust and security

Theme 6: SME's

Proposed actions of type three are expected to address:

— programme and project awareness through workshops, support to the eTEN NCP's and other means,

— optimisation of current projects,

— analysis of needs and future development of the eTEN domain,

- stimulation and promotion of deployment including good practice test-beds and brokerage,
- analysis of the impact of EU policy on potential deployment of e-solutions and identification of measures to achieve this deployment.

The proposals selected will be financed according to the European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 1655/1999 of 19 July 1999 (OJ L 197, 29.7.1999, p. 1), amending Regulation (EC) No 2236/95 of 18 September 1995 (OJ L 228, 23.9.1995, p. 1), which lays down general rules for the granting of Community financial aid in the field of trans-European networks, and according to the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities.

- For proposals in Action 1 (Initial deployment) the Community contribution is a maximum of 10 % of the estimated total investment cost. It is currently proposed to increase this ceiling to 30 %. The decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on this is expected in the first half of 2004. Initial deployment projects will be funded at the level authorised at the time of contract signature. Further information can be found in the eTEN Work Programme 2004 and the eTEN website (<http://europa.eu.int/eten>).
- For proposals in Action 2 (Market validation) the Community contribution is 50 % of the eligible cost of that phase, up to a ceiling of 10 % of the total investment cost.
- For proposals in Action 3 (Support and coordination) the Community contribution is less than 100 % of the eligible cost.

In all cases Community funding must not have the effect of creating a profit for a beneficiary.

The application of these rules forms part of the evaluation process.

The proposed indicative Community budget allocation for this call is EUR 42 million.

5. The evaluation process of applications for grants by the Commission is set out in the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities. The evaluation is carried out by the Commission assisted by independent experts.

Each submission will be assessed on the basis of the evaluation criteria, which are divided in three categories: eligibility criteria, award criteria and selection criteria. Only proposals meeting the requirements of the eligibility criteria shall be evaluated further.

Proposals received that pass the evaluation will be ranked in terms of quality.

The different criteria used in the evaluation process are defined in eTEN Workprogramme 2004.

6. Proposals for this call should be submitted on paper using the forms in the guide for proposers. The Commission encourages proposers to submit part A in electronic format.

The tool to prepare part A electronically is available via the eTEN website (<http://europa.eu.int/eten>).

Proposals submitted by post must be received by the Commission at the following address, and labelled as follows:

'eTEN proposals'
Call 2004/1
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels.

For deliveries by hand or by representatives (including by private courier ⁽¹⁾), the delivery should be to the following address, and labelled as follows:

'eTEN proposals'
Call 2004/1
European Commission
Rue de Geneve, 1
B-1140 Brussels.

7. Proposals have to reach the Commission at the latest on 9 June 2004, at 16:00 hours (Brussels local time). Proposals arriving after this date and time will not be accepted for evaluation and will be returned unopened to the proposers.

The Commission plans to inform proposers of the outcome of the evaluation and selection process within four months after the deadline for submission of proposals mentioned above. At this time, proposers will be either invited to enter into negotiation, will be placed on a reserve list for entering into negotiations if budget remains available after the conclusion of contracts for the first category of selected proposals, or will be notified of rejection of their proposals.

⁽¹⁾ Courier services that ask for the recipient's telephone number should be given the following number: (32-2) 295 58 75 (Mr J.-C. Debouvère).

The Commission aims to finalise negotiations with the selected proposers within eight months after the deadline for submission of proposals mentioned above.

The implementation of the projects will start after finalisation of the negotiations.

8. In the case of successive submissions of a proposal, the Commission will examine the last paper version received before the closure date and time specified.
9. In all correspondence relating to this call please make sure to cite the call identifier eTEN 2004/1.
10. Proposers from acceding countries are invited to respond to this call for proposals. However, the relevant grant

decisions involving legal entities from the new Member States will only be taken after 1 May 2004 and subject to the actual accession of the country concerned.

In submitting a proposal, proposers accept the procedures and conditions as described in this call and in the documents to which it refers.

All proposals received by the European Commission will be treated in strict confidence.

The European Community pursues an equal opportunities policy and, in this context, women are particularly encouraged to be involved in proposals.
