



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION
EuropeAid Co-operation Office
Latin America Directorate**

URB-AL

EUROPE - LATIN AMERICA

Guidelines for grant applicants under the 2001
call for proposals to coordinate joint projects

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Phase two

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I. THE URB-AL PROGRAMME

1.1. HISTORY

The URB-AL programme was established in 1995, in response to the need for a decentralised approach to cooperation, at the local level, in the light of the growing role of cities in both Latin America and the European Union and their crucial importance for attempts to improve their inhabitants' socio-economic conditions and quality of life.

The URB-AL programme has encouraged the exchange of experience and reciprocal transfer of knowledge and skills between local authorities in the European Union and Latin America, addressing a number of topics of interest to both parties.

The programme operates on a regional scale. It is organised through 8 cooperation networks which bring together local authorities on a thematic basis, in order to resolve concrete problems of local urban development.

Joint projects organised through these thematic networks have enabled participants to reach a deeper understanding of issues that concern them and devise concrete solutions to them.

After 4 years of operation, the URB-AL programme now works with more than 700 local authorities in Latin America and the European Union, representing approximately 1200 instances of participation. These include not only the major urban centres in both regions, but more importantly, a large number of small and medium-sized towns.

URB-AL fits the political priorities of EU-Latin America cooperation, as set out in three European Commission communications: "The European Union and Latin America: the present situation and prospects for closer partnership 1996-2000"¹; "On a new European Union-Latin America partnership on the eve of the 21st century"²; "the First³ and the Second Summit between Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union".

The legal basis is provided by Council Regulation (EEC) No 443/92 of 25 February 1992 on financial and technical assistance to, and economic cooperation with, the developing countries in Asia and Latin America⁴.

1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES FOR 2001-2006

The overall objective of the programme is to develop direct and lasting links between European and Latin American local authorities through the dissemination, acquisition and application of "best practices" in the urban policy field. Building up such links will help local authorities gain experience and successfully implement activities which will improve their capacities and the quality of the services they provide, by improving their communications with the outside world.

The specific objectives of the programme are:

- To help local communities play a more active role in the social, economic and cultural development of urban areas (capacity), including through public services;

1 (COM 95) 495 final.

2 (COM 1999) 105 final.

3 (COM 2000) 670 final.

4 OJ, No L 52 of 27.02.1992, pp. 1 to 6.

- To develop the structural capabilities of local authorities (internal management and organisation), including by training human resources;
- To promote partnerships between local authorities and representatives of civil society (links with local context);
- To increase the capacity for action of small and medium-sized towns (SMT) in an international context (international links);
- To promote European and Latin American local development practices of established value.

The setting up of thematic networks will serve to promote the exchange of experiences, the identification of common issues and priorities, and the mutual definition of practical mechanisms and tools by European and Latin American local authorities working in tandem, as well as the dissemination of "good practices" with a view to creating direct sustainable relationships, and the monitoring of joint projects selected by each network.

The goal of joint projects is to reinforce the exchange process created by the URB-AL thematic networks, through the implementation of concrete operations. In this way, they aim to develop sustainable and appropriate solutions to the problems faced by the various participants, which can then be implemented in the field.

Such projects are devised within the context of a thematic network, and the topics they address must therefore be related to the central theme of the network under which they fall. Participants enjoy considerable independence in choosing which joint projects to implement.

Each joint project will be coordinated by a local authority in one of the eligible countries of Latin America or the European Union.

There are two types of joint project: A and B (see point 2.1.3 below).

Note that all statements in this document apply equally to projects of both types, unless otherwise specified.

1.3. SIZE OF THE FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION
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The total indicative amount provided under this call for proposals is EUR 39 000 000 (thirty nine million euros) for the entire second phase of the URB-AL programme (5 years).

Size of grants

No community grant allocated to a joint project under the URB-AL programme may exceed the following ceilings:

- EUR 250 000 (two hundred and fifty thousand euros) for Type A joint projects.
 - ➔ *As a guideline, the minimum grant should be no less than EUR 100 000 (one hundred thousand euros) so that there is the necessary "critical mass" for a Type A joint project to function properly.*
- EUR 800 000 (eight hundred thousand euros) for Type B joint projects.
 - ➔ *As a guideline, the minimum grant should be no less than EUR 500 000 (five hundred thousand euros) so that there is the necessary "critical mass" for a Type B joint project to function properly.*

Moreover, a grant may not exceed 70% of the total eligible joint project costs (see also 2.1.4. below). The balance must be financed from the applicant's or partners' own resources, or from sources other than the European Community budget.

II. RULES CONCERNING THE PRESENT CALL FOR PROPOSALS and SUBSEQUENT CALLS FOR PRESENTATIONS

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of joint projects under phase two of the above-mentioned programme. They apply the Vade-mecum on Grant Management adopted by the Commission in 1998.

2.1. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

There are three sets of eligibility criteria. These concerns:

- the organisations which may request a grant (2.1.1.);
- the projects for which a grant may be awarded (2.1.2.);
- the types of cost which may be taken into account for the amount of the grant (2.1.3.).

2.1.1. Eligibility of applicants: who may apply?

Applicants (candidates for coordinating a joint project) must comply with the following conditions in order to be eligible for a grant.

- Non-profit-making;
- Democratically-elected local authority, i.e. town, urban area, province or region;
- Based geographically in a European Union member state or in an eligible Latin American country ⁵;
- For Type A joint projects (see also point 2.1.3 below): the local authority applying to act as coordinator must belong to an active URB-AL programme thematic network at the time the application is submitted. Local authorities can join thematic networks through an exchange of letters with the coordinator of the network.
- For Type B joint projects (see also point 2.1.3 below): the applicant local authority must be:

A local authority that has coordinated and/or participated in a joint project from phase one of the URB-AL programme, or in a type A joint project from phase two, whose activities are completed;

Thus, the coordinator of a type B project does not necessarily have to have been the coordinator of the joint project to whose results it is linked. When evaluating the grant applications, the Commission will nevertheless take into account whether the composition of the type B project is coherent or not.

⁵ I.e., for the European Union: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom. For Latin America: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela.

Or a local authority which has coordinated a thematic network whose activities are completed or have been under way for at least two years.

→ *When the Type B project is specifically linked to the coordination of a thematic network, only local authorities which have acted, or continue to act, as coordinators of this network for at least two years may apply to coordinate the joint project in question.*

- Directly responsible for the preparation, management and execution of the project, not acting as an intermediary; Coordinators of joint projects have to prepare, organise and oversee the development of their project's activities.

→ *Coordination management may not be subcontracted or delegated to a third party.*

- Stable and sufficient sources of finance to ensure the continuity of the joint project throughout its duration and to play a part in financing the project; Joint project coordinators must therefore have access to the financial means necessary to provide all or part of the matching funds for the Community grant (at least 30% of the total eligible costs will have to be met by the joint project's participants, divided between them as they shall determine).
- Verifiably experienced and able to demonstrate their capacity to manage larger scale activity corresponding to the size of the joint project for which a grant is requested. Joint project coordinators should therefore have experience of international cooperation between local authorities and be able to demonstrate prior expert knowledge of the theme of the joint project in question.

Please note that, during the second phase of the URB-AL programme, a single local authority may act as coordinator for no more than 3 joint projects implemented under different thematic networks.

→ *it may not coordinate more than one project under any one network), and if the local authority is already acting as coordinator for an active thematic network, then the maximum number of projects it may coordinate is two (i.e., the joint projects it coordinates must belong to two different thematic networks, other than the network it coordinates)⁶.*

Potential applicants may not participate in Calls for Proposals and Calls for Presentations, nor may they be awarded grants if:

- they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended activities or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- they are the subject of proceedings for a declaration of bankruptcy, for winding-up, for administration by the courts, for an arrangement with creditors or for any similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- they have been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgement which has the force of *res judicata* (i.e. against which no appeal is possible);
- they are guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the Commission can justify;

⁶ A Type B joint project which is linked to the coordination of a thematic network which has been operational for at least 2 years will necessarily address the same theme as the network to which it is linked. In this case, if the same local authority wishes to coordinate another joint project, then this project must belong to another thematic network.

- they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions in accordance with the legal provisions of the country where they are established;
- they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country where they are established;
- they are guilty of serious misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the European Commission as a condition of participation in a call for proposals or contract;
- they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with obligations in connection with another contract with the European Commission or another contract financed with Community funds;
- they have attempted to obtain confidential information or influence the Group of Experts or the European Commission during the evaluation process of current or previous Calls for Proposals.

2.1.2. Partnership and Eligibility of Partners

Applicants (potential joint project coordinators) must act independently to collect membership declarations for the joint project they wish to coordinate. Each proposal to coordinate a joint project should therefore be presented by a single local authority, but should already at this stage be accompanied by membership declarations from the planned participants. Each participant should provide a letter confirming his intention to take part in the joint project.

Applicants' attention is drawn to the fact that while applications should be the work of a single local authority, the authority in question should have worked closely with all the planned participants in the joint project, and where appropriate have been assisted by the coordinating unit of the relevant thematic network.

There are two types of joint project membership:

- Full members, that is, local authorities;
- "Associate" members that is all other bodies, which are not local authorities, but which work in or along with the urban sector: associations, foundations, universities, companies, unions, NGOs and other organisations which operate at the local level.

→ Associate members, however, enjoy all the rights of membership, and are therefore fully entitled to benefit from the Community cofinancing awarded to the joint project in question. However, they may not act as joint project coordinators. In addition, no more than one out of every five participants in a joint project may be an associate member.

The number of joint project members may range from 5 (including at least 2 EU and 3 LA participants) to 15, from at least 4 different countries (of which at least 2 are EU countries and at least 2 LA countries).

A joint project with 15 members may therefore include no more than 3 associate members. In such a case, there would be 12 full members.

For Type A projects (see also point 2.1.3 below): Joint project members must belong to a thematic network that is part of the second phase of the URB-AL programme. Local authorities may join thematic networks through an exchange of letters with the coordinator of the network.

For Type B joint projects (see also point 2.1.3 below): The joint project members must meet the following requirements, as relevant:

- Have either participated in a joint project from phase one of the URB-AL programme or in a type A joint project from phase two, whose activities are completed (participants in a Type B joint project do not necessarily have to be the same entities as participated in the joint projects whose results it is linked with - however, the Commission will assess the coherence of the composition of the Type B project when evaluating grant applications);
- If the Type B project is linked to the coordination of a thematic network, be, or have been, a member of that network (in which case, they do not have to have taken part in a first phase URB-AL joint project or a second phase Type A project).

A geographical balance between EU/LA, with the aim of 1/3 – 2/3 respectively. Preference will be given to joint projects coordinated by Latin American local authorities, especially where the authorities are small or medium-sized.

The applicant will act as the lead organisation and, in case of selection, as the contracting party (the "Beneficiary").

Mutatis mutandis, members of joint projects must satisfy the same criteria of eligibility as the applicants, and so must, in part or entirely, be based geographically in the countries listed under point 2.1.1 above.

2.1.3. Eligibility of projects: projects for which an application may be made

a) Size of Projects

- Amount: there is no restriction concerning the total project cost. However, the Community grant requested must not exceed the maximum amounts indicated under point 1.3 (EUR 250 000 for Type A projects, EUR 800 000 for Type B projects, and 70% of total eligible costs).
- Duration: The duration of a joint project may not exceed two years (24 months).

b) Sectors and themes

Type A joint projects

- These projects correspond, mutatis mutandis, to the joint projects implemented under phase one of the URB-AL programme.
- They focus on exchange of experience among participants.
- Active participation by all joint project members is indispensable (principle of mutual interest).
- The number of members of a joint project cannot be modified after the application has been submitted.

Type B joint projects are linked to:

- The results of a joint project from phase one of the URB-AL programme whose activities have been completed;
- The results of a type A joint project from phase two of the URB-AL programme whose activities have been completed;

- Experience gained in coordinating a thematic network from phase one or two of the URB-AL programme, whose activities have been completed or have been ongoing for at least two years.

The project will apply the results of the exchange of experiences carried out under the project to which the Type B project is linked to a town or set of towns.

Type B joint projects seek to consolidate the URB-AL programme's activities by producing concrete results.

The themes for these joint projects always stem from the main theme of the network to which they are attached.

c) Geographical areas

In the case of Type A projects, the coordinating local authority must have the capacity to monitor activities in the countries where the project members are based. Activities may be carried out in countries listed under point 2.1.1 above.

In the case of Type B projects, the activities may be concentrated primarily in a single local authority area, provided that the other participants in the joint project are fully involved in implementing them and that such activities clearly have a common objective.

d) Type of activities

Type A joint projects

The content of Type A projects must be rooted in the transfer of experiences between local authorities.

The following activities are eligible:

- Exchanges of staff among project members for training purposes;
- Training seminars or seminars focused on exchanging experiences between experts and/or project member officials;
- Drawing up and implementing training programmes for local authority staff, taught by qualified staff from project members, or specially recruited experts;
- Diagnostic missions and feasibility studies, carried out by qualified project member staff or by specially recruited experts;
- Implementing measures to strengthen the visibility of local activities (e.g.: establishing special databases; providing documentation centres; developing promotional tools, such as guides, videos, publications and exhibitions; designing evaluation and quality control programmes for local authority services with the participation of local citizens; etc.).

Type B joint projects

The benefits to be gained from this type of project are collective and flow to all the project members, even if implementation is concentrated in one specific local authority.

Eligible activities include the following (this is a non-exhaustive list):

- Launch operations for collective services and equipment in the joint interest of all project members (e.g.: equipping a 'transmunicipal' training school; setting up a service

specialising in advice and assistance for marginalised families, offering services to all project members; etc.);

- Implementing a pilot project which can be replicated in other cities participating in the joint project;
- Restoring common cultural heritage, through joint activities (participation via technical assistance or exchange of experts between project members);
- Transferring and adapting local community open management systems (e.g., registry office, land registry, urban maintenance, local finance, etc.).

e) Methodology

The joint project coordinator acts as the representative of all the project members. The following is a brief summary of the resulting functions and responsibilities, which are described in greater detail in the contract:

- Signs the grant contract with the Commission.
- Manages the resources of the joint project;
- Draws up and distributes operating plans, in cooperation with the other members;
- Draws up and distributes technical and financial reports;
- Monitors the project;
- Guarantees the active participation of members and the implementation of planned activities;
- External promotion of the joint project's activities.

Local authorities applying to coordinate joint projects will receive support from network coordinators when it comes to drawing up, implementing and monitoring projects.

Since the aim is to produce proposals and/or activities to resolve common problems, such projects cannot succeed unless all the members contribute to their design. Networking should be an essential dimension of the project's activities.

In this regard, the coordinator will establish several means of communication between joint project members. Particular emphasis will be placed on the use and dissemination of new technologies throughout the URB-AL programme's operations.

Taking part in a joint project can also provide an apprenticeship in international cooperation.

Joint project activities must have concrete results (bringing about changes in the behaviour of project members; etc.).

f) The following types of activities are ineligible

- Local activities from which only one local authority will benefit;
- sponsorship for individuals' participation in workshops, seminars, conferences or congresses;
- Individual scholarships for study and training courses.

g) Number of proposals per applicant

- Each applicant may submit as many proposals as they wish. They may also support proposals from other applicants in relation to other joint projects (cf. membership declarations, mentioned under point 2.1.2 above).
- In any case, as indicated above (see point 2.1.1), during the second phase of the URB-AL programme, a single local authority may act as coordinator for no more than 3 joint projects implemented under different thematic networks, and if the local authority is already acting as coordinator for an active thematic network, then the maximum number of projects it may coordinate is two (the 2nd phase includes the coordination of the 5 new subject networks, the projects A coming only from these 5 networks and all the projects B coming from the old or new networks).
- A single local authority **cannot** coordinate more than three projects under the URB-AL programme at the same time or no more than two joint projects where the local authority already coordinates a thematic network, regardless of whether the projects fall under the first or second phase of the URB-AL programme.
- If a single local authority is coordinating three projects at the same time in the URB-AL programme, **it must wait** until the activities of one of the projects have been completed (operation's duration of execution referred to in the contract) before it can submit another proposal.

2.1.4. Eligibility of costs: costs which may be taken into consideration for the grant

Only "eligible costs" can be taken into account for a grant. These costs are specified in detail below. The budget is therefore both an estimate of the costs and the maximum ceiling of the "eligible costs". Applicants should note that eligible costs must be actual costs, and cannot be calculated as a flat rate.

Proposals are always recommended for a grant subject to the condition that the checking process which precedes the signing of a grant contract does not reveal problems which necessitate changes to the budget. This check may result in requests for clarification and may lead the Commission to impose reductions.

It is therefore in the applicant's interest to provide a realistic and cost-effective budget.

Eligible direct costs

- To be considered eligible in the context of the project, costs must:
 - be necessary for carrying out the project, be provided for in the Contract annexed to the present Guidelines (Annex E) and comply with the principles of sound financial management, in particular value for money and cost-effectiveness;
 - have been incurred during the period of execution of the project and following the signature of the contract (as defined in Article 2 of the Special Conditions);
 - have actually been incurred, be recorded in the Beneficiary's or Beneficiary's partners' accounts, be identifiable and verifiable, and be backed by originals of supporting evidence.

- The following direct costs will be eligible:

- the cost of staff assigned to the project, corresponding to actual salaries plus social security charges and other remuneration-related costs; salaries and costs must not exceed those normally borne by the Beneficiary, and rates must not exceed those generally accepted on the market in question;
- travel and subsistence costs for staff taking part in the project, provided they correspond to market rates and do not exceed the scales generally accepted by the Commission (including economy-class air fares) ;
- purchase costs for equipment (new or used) and services (transport, rent, etc.), provided they correspond to market rates;
- costs of consumables and supplies;
- expenditure on subcontracting or expenditure incurred by the Beneficiary's partners;
- costs deriving directly from the requirements of the Contract (dissemination of information, specific evaluation of the project, audit, translation, reprography, insurance, targeted training for those involved in the project, etc.) including financial service costs (in particular the cost of transfers and financial guarantees);
- taxes, without prejudice to the terms of Article 14(4) of the contract.

Eligible indirect costs (overheads)

- The beneficiaries' general administrative costs are indirect eligible costs based on a flat rate of up to 7% of the direct eligible costs.
- Indirect costs will be eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another heading of the Contract budget.
- Indirect costs will not be eligible where the contract concerns the financing of a project conducted by a body which is already receiving a running cost grant from the European Commission.

Ineligible costs

- provisions for losses or debts;
- interest owed;
- purchases of land or buildings, except where absolutely necessary for the direct implementation of the project, in which case ownership must be transferred to the beneficiary's local partners (where applicable) or the final beneficiaries of the project once the latter has come to an end;
- currency exchange losses (without prejudice to the terms of Article 15(7) of the Contract);
- VAT which the Beneficiary is able to reclaim;
- costs of preparatory studies or other preparatory activities;

- inputs which are the subject of a contribution in kind (e.g. land, immovable property whether in its entirety or in part, durable capital goods, raw materials, unpaid work performed as a favour by a private individual or corporate body).

2.2. APPLICATIONS AND PROCEDURES

2.2.1. Procedures

Proposals for joint projects (Types A and B) are drawn up and implemented within the framework of the relevant thematic network (see point 2.1.1 above on how to join a thematic network). The theme of the joint project is directly linked to the theme of the network in which it originates.

- While the proposal is being drawn up, the applicant will consult with the thematic network coordinator. The network coordinator will give the applicant whatever advice they deem necessary to increase the chances of his proposal being selected.
- A joint project proposal is then submitted to the thematic network coordinator by the deadline which they have set, and they in turn pass the proposal on to the European Commission (see point 2.2.3) after having checked it. If it wishes, the applicant may also, at the same time, send a second identical copy of the proposal directly to the European Commission.
- The network coordinator must include an advisory opinion with every proposal they pass on to the Commission.

If the thematic network in which a Type B project originates has already completed its activities, then the proposal should be submitted directly to the Commission by the applicant.

2.2.2. Application form and supporting documents

Applications should be made using the form attached to these guidelines (annex A); it is also available on this web server:

(http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/urbal/callproposals/callpropo_fr.htm)

Carefully respect the application format and follow the page order.

Applicants must submit their applications in either French, English, Spanish or Portuguese.

Please complete the application form carefully and as clearly as possible in order to facilitate its evaluation. Be precise and provide sufficient details to ensure clarity, particularly concerning how the aims of the project will be achieved, the benefit that will flow from the project and the way in which the proposed project is relevant to the programme's objectives.

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Supporting documents:

Applications must be accompanied by the following supporting documents:

- a) The statutes of the applicant organisation, proving that it is indeed a local authority in the sense defined at point 2.1.1;

→ It is incumbent on each "full member", and not on the European Commission, to **demonstrate** that it is a local authority by means of legal documents attesting to this and/or providing the necessary information in the application form⁷.

b) Membership declarations, as mentioned in point 2.1.2.

→ Membership declarations may be **faxes** or **copies** of originals. **However**, they must be duly **signed** and **stamped** by the competent authority (otherwise they cannot be accepted). The **originals** will be requested only if the proposal is selected. The Commission then makes its selection decision subject to the **suspensive condition** that the originals of membership declarations be submitted **within 30 days**. If this suspensive condition is not met the decision will be **automatically** considered to be revoked.

c) List of the members of the project:

→ The applicant must provide in the application form a **detailed list of project partners**, specifying the coordinating body and indicating the type of partner ("full member" or "associate member" – see point 2.1.2 "Partnership and eligibility of partners").

→ **For the B project**, applicants must indicate clearly in the list of project partners, **for each partner**, the Type A joint project(s) of the URB-AL programme in which they participated, whose activities (operative duration) have been completed at the date of the call for proposals (i.e. 30 April 2005; 31 October 2005; etc.).

d) Curriculum vitae of the staff and the experts:

→ **It is recommended** that the curriculum vitae of permanent staff of the municipality for project coordination be attached: use the standard model available at the following address on the URB-AL programme site:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/urbal/index_en.htm

Where **staffs are recruited** (experts, project manager ...) specifically for implementing the project activities it is **mandatory** to provide their curriculum vitae.

2.2.3. Where and how to send the applications

Applications (joint projects of Types A and B) must be received⁸ in a sealed packet by registered mail, by express messenger or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) to the address indicated below. The envelope should bear the number of the call for proposals as stated in the Official Journal of the European Communities, the number of the relevant thematic network, and the words "not to be opened before the proposal examining session".

Postal address:

European Commission
EuropeAid Cooperation Office (Building J-54 – Unit E32 – Office 4/13)
Rue de Genève, 1
B-1049 Brussels, Belgium

Address for hand delivery

European Commission
EuropeAid Cooperation Office (Building J-54 – Unit E32 – Office 4/13)
Rue de Genève, 1
B-1049 Brussels, Belgium

⁷ **The following will not be considered local authorities** for the purposes of the URB-AL programme:

Central government bodies, e.g. a ministry;

Local public bodies or public companies with their own legal personality, which are attached to a local authority (e.g. certain public service companies), unless they prove their capacity legally to represent and commit the local authority to which they are linked for international cooperation related to the theme of the network from which the proposal originates.

⁸ Except if the network of origin finalised its activities, the requests have to be transmitted to the coordinator of the subject network which communicate them consecutively to the European Commission after having carried out their checking.

Delivery by private courier service

European Commission

EuropeAid Cooperation Office (Building J-54 – Unit E32 – Office 4/13)

Rue de Genève, 1

B-1049 Brussels, Belgium

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

Each proposal must be placed in a separate envelope bearing, in addition to the information given on the main packet, the full name and address of the applicant (joint project coordinator). Applicants must submit one original (application form and annexes) together with 7 copies. The request form, the budget and the logical framework will also be provided under electronic format.

Applicants and thematic network coordinators should verify that their application is complete by comparing it to the checklist included with the application form.

The same conditions apply, *mutatis mutandis*, where the thematic network in which a Type B project originates has already completed its activities and the proposal must be submitted directly to the Commission by the applicant.

Any application which does not comply with these conditions will be rejected.

Practical instructions

- *Each proposal (originals and copies) has to be packed up in only one package.*
- *In the package, the original proposal has to be clearly identifiable and has to comprise the diskette or the CD-ROM requested from item 2.2.7.*
- *Copies do not have to be packed separately but to be put in the same package as the original.*
- *Proposals (original like the copies) have to be assembled (and not have loose sheets).*
- *The original proposal and copies have to be accompanied by the advisory report emitted by the coordinator of the corresponding network.*
- *The coordinating local authority's statutes and the acknowledgement of receipt of the proposal have to be attached in the original proposal, in only one copy.*
- *The coordinator has to check that the "declaration by the applicant" is actually signed in the original proposal (preferably with a colour who is not the black).*

2.2.4. Deadline for applications

Each of the URB-AL programme's thematic networks has **three calls for proposals** for the submission of grant applications for the Community financing of joint projects (one per year for the three years' duration of the network's activities), **with two submission deadlines per year: 30 April and 31 October**. It is important to underline that this means the receipt of the proposal in the European Commission at 16h00 local time in Brussels. If these dates fall on a public holiday, the deadline will be at 16h00 on the first working day following the public holiday. (Again this means the receipt of the proposal in the European Commission at 16h00 local time in Brussels).

If the proposal arrives after this deadline, the preliminary check of the proposal will be postponed automatically until the following call (but only if the thematic network to which the proposal corresponds is still in existence).

Two submission deadlines per year are provided, for the submission of proposals, in order to allow sufficient time for the drawing-up of proposals for joint projects which emerge from the launch seminar or from one of the two annual meetings of each network, regardless of when the seminar or meeting is held.

The first date for the yearly submission of proposals to the European Commission is the first date following the launch seminar or annual meeting.

Example: the **provisional 2005** dates for the URB-AL programme's active networks are set as follows:

Network No.	Annual seminar or meeting	First submission deadline	Second submission deadline
9	Mars 2005	30 April 2005	31 October 2005
10	February 2005	30 April 2005	31 October 2005
12	April 2005	30 April 2005	31 October 2005
13	September 2005	31 October 2005	30 April 2006
14	September 2005	31 October 2005	30 April 2006

If a proposal is not selected, the applicant may re-submit it – with improvements prompted by the European Commission's comments - **under the call for proposals following** the event to which it is linked (and not for the second deadline **for the same call for proposals**).

Example: Proposal for joint project X stemming from the Network No 14 2nd seminar is submitted in Brussels on 31 October 2004. If the proposal is rejected, the applicant may re-submit it (with improvements), but not for 30 April 2005. The applicant must wait until the first annual meeting in 2005 and submit it for the next submission deadline. (However, if the first annual meeting in 2005 is held before 30 April 2005, the proposal could be submitted on 30 April 2005.)

In case of the activities of the co-ordination network office (responsible for Type A proposals) are finished before the deadline of the two last dates following the second and last annual meeting, the applicants should send the application directly to the European Commission, making sure that all requirements are fulfilled.

Unlike proposals for Type A joint projects which are sent to the European Commission via the thematic network coordinator, **Type B proposals are as a rule sent directly to the European Commission.**

Remember that for Type B projects, proposals may be submitted for any of the yearly deadlines 30 April or 31 October. This means the receipt of the proposal in the European Commission at 16h00 local time in Brussels or if these dates fall on a public holiday, the deadline will be at 16h00 on the first working day following the public holiday, (meaning the receipt of the proposal in the European Commission at 16h00 local time in Brussels), in compliance, naturally, with the eligibility criteria.

If the proposal arrives after the deadline, the preliminary check of the proposal will be postponed automatically until the following call (the final call for B type projects is 30 April 2006).

➔ **ATTENTION**, once forwarded the requests to the European Commission, no modification will be permitted.

2.2.5. Other information

All requests for information are best addressed to the coordinator of the relevant thematic network.

Failing that, questions may be sent by fax only to the addresses listed below, indicating clearly the reference of the Call for Proposals as stated in the Official Journal of the European Communities and the number of the relevant thematic network:

Fax: [+32 2] 299 10 80

Questions which may be of interest to other applicants will be published on the Internet:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/urbal/index_en.htm

2.2.6. Acknowledgement of receipt

The applicant must attach to the application form an acknowledgement of receipt **as per the model** available on the Internet page of the URB-AL programme (Annex D), duly completed.

See: http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/urbal/index_en.htm

The applicant **should fill in the following information only**:

- Name and address of the organisation;
- Call for proposals: *reference of the call for proposals, available in the Official Journal*;
- Title of proposal: *to be filled in*.

The European Commission will fill in, the other information on the acknowledgement of receipt.

Please note that the acknowledgement of receipt is an **integral part** of the proposal.

2.2.7. Electronic files

The applicant should send to the European Commission a copy of all the documents of the application in a diskette 3.5" or in a CD-ROM. (Word and Excel)

2.3. EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the European Commission, with the assistance of a group of external experts. All projects will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Administrative compliance

Checks will be made to see if the application is complete and matches the checklist.

- Eligibility of applicants, partners and projects

Verification that the applicant, partners and project are eligible, according to the criteria set out in points 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3.

- Evaluation of the quality of proposals and financial evaluation

Quality evaluation of the proposals, including the forecast budget, will use the criteria in the evaluation grid which follow.

Important notes:

- Scoring:

The evaluation criteria are divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection must be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following guidelines: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor ; 3 = adequate ; 4 = good; 5 = very good. Applications with the highest scores will have priority in the allocation of grants.

- Note on Section 1. Relevance

If the total score for section 1 is lower than "good" (28 points), the proposal will not be evaluated further.

Evaluation grid

Section	Maximum score	Application form section
1. Relevance	35	
1.1 How relevant to the particular needs and constraints of the target country (ies) or region(s) is the proposal? (Including avoidance of duplication and synergy with other EC initiatives.)	5	I.1.6(a)
1.2 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are the target groups ?	5	I.1.6(c)
1.3 How relevant is the proposal to the needs of the proposed target groups ?	2x5	I.1.6(d)
1.4 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and to one or more of the priorities of the programme? Note: A score of 5 (very good) will only be allocated if the proposal specifically addresses at least one priority .	5	I.1.6(e)(f)
1.5 How coherent, appropriate and practical are the activities proposed?	5	I.1.7
1.6 To what extent does the proposal contain specific elements of added value , such as innovative approaches, models for good practice, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities?	5	general
2. Methodology	25	
2.1 How coherent is the overall project design ? (Including preparedness for evaluation .)	2x5	I.1.8
2.2 How satisfactory is the level of involvement and activity of the partners ? Note: If there are no partners, the score will be 1.	5	I.1.8(e)
2.3 How clear and feasible is the plan of action ?	5	I.1.9
2.4 To what extent does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for project outcomes?	5	Logical framework
3. Sustainability	15	
3.1 To what extent is the project likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5	I.2.1
3.2 To what extent does the proposal contain potential multiplier effects ? (Including possibilities for replication and extension of project outcomes, dissemination of information.)	5	I.2.2 & I.2.3
3.3 To what extent are the results of the proposed project sustainable : - financially (how will the activities be financed after the EC funding ends?) - institutionally (will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the present project? <i>Will there be local "ownership" of project outcomes?</i>) - at the policy level (where applicable) (what will be the structural impact of the project - e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc?)	5	I.2.4
4. Budget and cost-effectiveness	10	
4.1 Is the budget clear and detailed ?	5	I.3
4.2 To what extent is the proposed expenditure necessary for the implementation of the project?	5	I.3
5. Management Capacity and Expertise	15	
5.1 How satisfactory is the previous project management experience of the applicant? Note: if the applicant has no previous experience, the score will be 1.	5	II.4.1
5.2 How satisfactory is the technical expertise of the applicant? (I.e. knowledge of the issues to be addressed.)	5	II.4.1
5.3 How satisfactory is the current management capacity of the applicant (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the project budget)?	5	II.4.2
Maximum total score:	100	

2.4. INFORMATION ABOUT THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S DECISION ON THE AWARD OF GRANTS

Applicants will be personally informed in writing of the Commission's decision concerning their application. A decision to reject an application or not award a grant will be based on the following grounds:

- Application received after the deadline (see point 2.2.4);
- the application is incomplete or otherwise non-compliant with the stated administrative conditions;
- the applicant or one or more partners are ineligible;
- the project is ineligible (e.g. the activity proposed is not covered by the programme, the proposal exceeds the maximum duration allowed, the requested contribution is higher than the maximum allowed, etc);
- the relevance and technical quality of the proposal is considered lower than that of the selected proposals;
- the financial part of the proposal is considered insufficient.

Decisions taken by the Commission to reject an application or not award a grant are final.

2.5. IMPLEMENTATION OF OPERATIONS FOR WHICH THE COMMISSION HAS DECIDED TO AWARD A GRANT

Following the decision to award a grant, a contract will be proposed to the Beneficiary according to the European Commission's standard contract annexed to the present Guidelines (Annex E). This contract will, in particular, provide the following rights and obligations:

a) Final amount of the grant

The maximum amount of the grant will be stipulated in the contract. As explained in point 2.1.3, this amount is based on the budget, which is itself only an estimate. Therefore this amount only becomes final following completion of the project and presentation of the final accounts (cf. articles 17(1) and 17(2) of the General Conditions of the Contract).

b) Failure to meet the objectives

If the Beneficiary fails to implement the project as undertaken and agreed in the contract, the European Commission reserves the right to interrupt payments, and/or to terminate the contract (see article 11 of the General Conditions). The Commission's contribution may be reduced, and/or the Commission may demand full or partial repayment of the sums already paid, if the beneficiary does not fulfil the terms of the contract.

c) Amendments to the contract

Any modification of the contract must be set out in a written amendment to the original contract (Article 9(1) of the General Conditions). However, some modifications (addresses, bank account, etc.) may simply be notified to the Commission (cf. article 9(2) of the General Conditions).

d) Variations within the budget

The amounts assigned to individual items of the budget may be altered relative to the original estimates, provided:

- (1) the variation does not affect the basic purpose of the project; and
- (2) the financial impact is limited to a transfer within a single budget heading or to a transfer between budget headings involving a variation of less than 15% of the original amount of the budget heading.

In such instances, the beneficiary can make alterations to the budget; the Commission must be informed accordingly.

This method may not be used to amend the heading for overhead costs, for which the prior approval of the Commission is still necessary (see Article 9(2) of the General Conditions).

In all other cases, a written request must be made in advance to the European Commission and a contract amendment will be required.

e) Reports

Reports must be drafted in the language provided for in the contract. Technical and financial reports are to be supplied together with payment requests. A plan of action and budget for the next period of implementation must accompany reports submitted for intermediate payments.

f) Additional information

In accordance with Article 2.1 of the General Conditions, the Commission may request additional information.

g) Payments

An advance payment will be made to the beneficiary. If the total duration of the project does not exceed 12 months, the advance payment is 80% of the grant amount.

If the total duration of the project exceeds 12 months or the grant exceeds 100,000 euros, the advance payment is 80% of a forecast budget for the first 12 months of the operation (see article 15(1) of the General Conditions). In this case, subsequent intermediate payments can be made upon submission by the beneficiary, and approval by the Commission, of the intermediate report and a plan of action and budget for the following period (see article 15(1) of the General Conditions).

The final balance will be paid upon submission by the beneficiary and approval by the European Commission of the final report (see article 15(1) of the General Conditions).

h) Records and accounts of the Operation

The Beneficiary must keep a precise and regular record, as well as dedicated and transparent accounts, of the implementation of the operation (see article 16(1) of the General Conditions). The Beneficiary must keep all records for five years after the end date of the project.

i) Audit

A final audit will be carried out on completion of the project. Furthermore, if the project's duration exceeds 18 months, an annual audit will be carried out for every 12-month period of implementation after the start of the project.

The contract will permit the Commission and the European Court of Auditors to carry out record-based and on-the-spot inspections of the operation (see article 16(2) of the General Conditions).

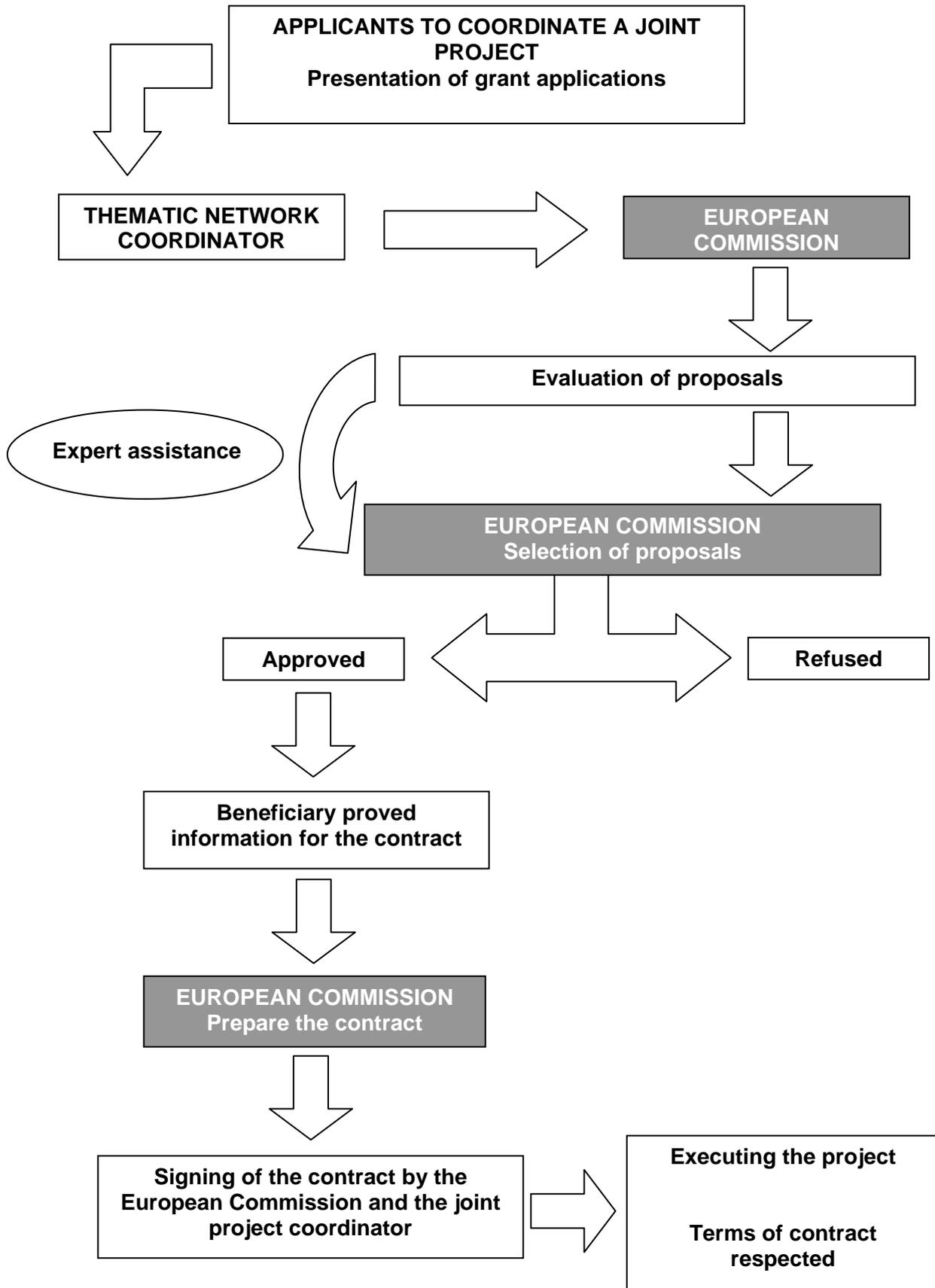
j) Publicity

Appropriate visibility and credit must be given for the grant made by the European Community, for example, in reports and publications stemming from the project or during public events associated with the project, etc. (see Article 6 of the General Conditions).

Applicants should note that the Beneficiary must be able to provide the Commission with all the documents required for the drawing up of the contract as and when required. Failure to submit this information in line with the format and deadline indicated in the grant award announcement may lead the applicant to forfeit their right to the grant.

Successful projects may not commence operations until the contract enters into force. No costs incurred outside the implementation period laid down in the contract can be covered by Community financing. Likewise, no activities may be financed on the Community contribution which were not included in the budget and the contract.

SUMMARY OF THE PROCEDURE



LIST OF ANNEXES

ANNEX A	GRANT APPLICATION FORM (WORD FORMAT)
ANNEX B	BUDGET (EXCEL FORMAT)
ANNEX C	LOGICAL FRAMEWORK (EXCEL FORMAT)
ANNEX D:	DAILY ALLOWANCE RATES (PER DIEMS)
ANNEX E	STANDARD CONTRACT (WORD FORMAT)