

V

(Anuncios)

PROCEDIMIENTOS ADMINISTRATIVOS

COMISIÓN

Convocatoria de propuestas para acciones de transferencia entre modos de transporte, de efecto catalizador, autopistas del mar, evitación de tráfico y de aprendizaje en común dentro del segundo Programa Marco Polo

[Reglamento (CE) nº 1692/2006 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, DO L 328 de 24.11.2006, p. 1]

(2008/C 31/10)

La Comisión Europea pone en marcha por la presente una convocatoria de propuestas para el procedimiento de selección de 2008 dentro del segundo Programa Marco Polo. El plazo de la convocatoria finaliza el **7 de abril de 2008**.

Se puede encontrar información sobre las condiciones de la convocatoria y consejos a los proponentes sobre cómo presentar los proyectos en el sitio web siguiente:

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/marcopolo/guide_proposers/index_en.htm

Se puede entrar en contacto con el servicio de asistencia del Programa Marco Polo por e-mail: tren-marcopolo@ec.europa.eu, y por fax: (32-2) 296 37 65.

MARCO POLO II / WORK PROGRAMME 2008

I. Political priorities **II. Call for proposals**

FOR MODAL SHIFT, CATALYST, MOTORWAYS OF THE SEA, TRAFFIC AVOIDANCE AND COMMON LEARNING ACTIONS

I. Political priorities

(a) The political priority targets are defined separately for each type of action.

(a.1) Political priority targets for Modal shift actions, Motorways of the sea actions and Traffic avoidance actions

- o Enhance intermodality;
- o Reduce road congestion especially in the traffic bottlenecks in several regions like the Alps, the Pyrenees and the Baltic Sea and improve the environmental performance of the freight transport system within the Community;
- o Support actions in the freight transport, logistics and other relevant markets, taking into account the needs of SME's;
- o Help to shift at least the expected aggregate increase in international road freight traffic, but preferably more, to short sea shipping, rail and inland waterways or to a combination of modes of transport in which road journeys are as short as possible.

(a.2) Political priority targets for Catalyst actions

- Intra-European maritime freight services, meeting at least one of the conditions below:
 - o Road-competitive quality of service;
 - o Central integrated control of the services and offer of a “door-to-door” concept;
 - o High-quality in terms of punctuality, client information and transshipment concepts;
 - o Overcoming natural geographic barriers, such as the Alps and the Pyrenees, or involving the Baltic or Adriatic Sea.

- Through-interoperable rail services, meeting at least one of the conditions below:
 - o Road-competitive quality of service;
 - o Central integrated control of the services and offer of a “door-to-door” concept;
 - o Guaranteed departures and arrival times;
 - o Compensation system for quality deficiencies;
 - o Applied international interoperability of equipment, safety or information systems.

- Inland waterway services integrated with rail or maritime shipping, meeting at least one of the conditions below:
 - o Road-competitive quality of service;
 - o Central integrated control of the services and offer of a “door-to-door” concept;
 - o Optimisation of transshipment with other modes in terms of cost efficiency, handling speed and information technology.

- Transport services that shift road freight traffic to a combination of short sea shipping, rail and inland waterways modes of transport in which road journeys are as short as possible, meeting at least one of the conditions below:
 - o Road-competitive quality of service;
 - o Central integrated control of the services and offer of a “door-to-door” concept;
 - o Optimisation of transshipment with other modes in terms of cost efficiency, handling speed and information technology.

(a.3) Political priority targets for Common learning actions

- Common learning actions related to intermodal transport including mutual training, addressing at least one of the following topics:
 - o Adapting procedures and methods in transport systems to meet today’s logistics requirements;
 - o Improving procedures and methods in sea and inland ports;
 - o Co-operation between railways and inland waterway and/or short sea shipping and/or road;

- o Integration of inland waterway transport in the logistics supply chain (“door-to-door” concept);
- o New co-operation and capacity management models in rail;
- o Improving pricing, procedures and methods in the terminal;
- o European training centres;
- o Reduction of transport damages and prevention of theft and/or sabotage;
- o Increasing the demand for non-road transport;
- o Improving the shippers’ understanding of intermodal freight transport;
- o Any actions aiming to improve the integration of the new Member States into the logistics chain.

(b) Budget

The available budget for 2008 is approximately EUR 59¹ million, with which the Commission envisages to fund maximum of thirty-five (35) projects. The budget includes funding of administrative expenses of EUR 225.000, especially for meetings, information actions, publications and other administrative items that have to be accounted for. Any modification of the indicative budget for grants and calls for tenders above 20% will be considered as a substantial modification. Such substantial modification will require an amendment to this work programme.

¹ The total amount might increase slightly because of the specific agreement between the EU and Croatia (see also eligibility criterion G4 in chapter 5).

MARCO POLO II – CALL FOR PROPOSALS

II. Call for proposals

1. PURPOSE AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Shifting the balance between transport modes to achieve a more sustainable development strategy has been at the heart of the European policy and notably since the Gothenburg European Council in 2001.

In its recent review² of the White Paper on the European Transport Policy, the European Commission suggests a shift from the road to more environmental friendly modes where appropriate, especially on long distance, in urban areas and on congested corridors.

In order to continue the support action engaged on that scheme with the first Marco Polo Programme³ between 2003 and 2006, the European Union has decided to extend its support to the economic operators with the Marco Polo II Programme⁴ hereinafter called “the Programme”.

It aims at achieving a traffic shift or avoidance that is a substantial part of the expected yearly aggregate increase in international road freight traffic, measured in tonne-kilometres, to short sea shipping, rail and inland waterways or to a combination of modes of transport in which road journeys are as short as possible.

It will run between 2007 and 2013 with a global budget of 450 M€ and will be the subject of yearly calls for project proposals. In principle, each call will be published in the last quarter of every year and be closed in the first quarter of the following year.⁵ The available budget for 2008 is approximately EUR 59⁶ million, which is made available under the condition that the budgetary authority confirms the budgetary allocation for 2008.

² Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament No. (2006) 314 final “Keep Europe moving - Sustainable mobility for our continent. Mid-term review of the European Commission’s 2001 Transport White Paper” - 22.06.2006.

³ Regulation (EC) No. 1382/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 July 2003 on granting of Community financial assistance to improve the environmental performance of the freight transport system (“Marco Polo Programme”), OJ L 196, 02.08.2003, p 1.

⁴ Regulation (EC) No. 1692/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing the second “Marco Polo” programme for the granting of Community financial assistance to improve the environmental performance of the freight transport system (“Marco Polo II”), OJ L 328, 24.11.2006, p 1.

⁵ Undertakings may not wait until the call is published to prepare their proposals and to ask for advice from the Marco Polo Help Desk

⁶ The total amount might increase slightly because of the specific agreement between the EU and Croatia (see also eligibility criterion G4 in chapter 5).

It proposes to support actions to reduce congestion, to improve the environmental performance of the transport system and to enhance intermodal transport, thereby contributing to a more efficient and sustainable transport system which will provide EU added value without having a negative impact on economic, social or territorial cohesion.

Five distinct types of action will be supported:

- (1) **Modal shift actions**, which focus on shifting as much freight as economically meaningful under current market conditions from road to short sea shipping, rail and inland waterways. They may be proposing start-up of new services or significantly enhance existing services. They shall be robust, but not necessarily innovative: *just shift freight off the road!*
- (2) **Catalyst actions** change the way non-road freight transport is conducted in the Community. Under this type of action, structural market barriers in European freight transport are overcome through a highly innovative concept: *causing a real breakthrough*. This is essentially done in three steps by applicants: first the barrier must be clearly defined, then a highly innovative solution presented, and finally a modal shift service of great growth potential for freight transport is proposed for timely implementation. Dissemination of results must be ensured within the duration of the EC grant.
- (3) **Motorways of the sea actions** achieving a door-to-door service, which shift freight from long road distances to a combination of short sea shipping and other modes of transport. Actions of this kind are innovative at a European level in terms of logistics, equipment, products and services rendered, *imply high quality and frequent transport services, move frequently very large volumes of freight and include, preferably, the use of the most environmentally friendly transport modes, such as inland waterways and rail for hinterland freight transport and integrated door-to-door services*. Dissemination of results must be ensured within the duration of the EC grant.

As set out in the Marco Polo II Regulation concerning the Motorways of the Sea actions (Article 5), "within the European Union such actions shall use the trans-European networks defined in Decision No 1692/96 EC" (as last amended by Decision No. 884/2004/EC, OJ L 201, 7.6.2004, p. 1–55). Therefore, regarding projects within the EU, only those relating to the category A ports as defined in Article 12(2) of the said Decision (i.e. ports with a total annual traffic volume of not less than 1,5 million tonnes of freight or 200.000 passengers) will be eligible to Marco Polo funding under the Motorways of the Sea actions.
- (4) **Traffic avoidance actions** integrate transport into production logistics: *reducing freight transport demand by road with a direct impact on emissions*. Actions of this type shall be innovative and shall not adversely affect production output and production workforce. Dissemination of results must be ensured within the duration of the EC grant.
- (5) **Common learning actions** enhance knowledge in the freight logistics sector and foster advanced methods and procedures of co-operation in the freight market. Under this type of action, improvement of co-operation and sharing of know-how is encouraged: *training on how to cope efficiently and in a sustainable manner with*

increasingly complex transport and logistics solutions. Dissemination of results must be ensured within the duration of the EC grant.

The Commission, together with the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation – hereafter EACI which is in charge of the management of the Programme, hereby invites interested parties to submit proposals for Modal shift, Catalyst, Motorways of the sea, Traffic avoidance and Common learning actions.

The following chapters describe what is expected from potential applicants. Their proposals will first have to meet general and action-type specific eligibility and selection criteria as described in chapter 3, and will then be evaluated and ranked on their merits based on award criteria as described in chapter 4.

For the purpose of this call the definitions as mentioned in the Marco Polo II Regulation (mentioned in footnote 4) are repeated in Appendix 1. Please take them carefully into account.

2. FUNDING CONDITIONS

2.1. The Programme grant shall be conditioned as follows:

- (i) For Modal shift actions it will be limited to 35% of the total eligible costs necessary, and actually incurred, as described in Appendix 4. Ancillary infrastructure costs are not eligible. It will also not be more than 1 (one) € for each shift⁷ actually realised of 500 tonne-kilometres or 2000 cubic metre-kilometres (in case the volumetric equivalent is used) from road to any other land or water modes.
- (ii) For Catalyst actions, it will be limited to 35% of the total eligible costs necessary, and actually incurred, preparatory measures and ancillary infrastructure costs included, as described in Appendix 4.
- (iii) For Motorways of the sea actions, it will not be more than 1 (one) € for each shift⁸ actually realised of 500 tonne-kilometres or 2000 cubic metre-kilometres (in case the volumetric equivalent is used) from road to any other land or water modes and increased by not more than 35% of the eligible costs for preparatory measures and ancillary infrastructure. Altogether, it will be limited to 35% of the total eligible costs necessary, and actually incurred, as described in Appendix 4.
- (iv) For Traffic avoidance actions, it will not be more than 1 (one) € for every avoidance of 500 tonne-kilometres or its volumetric equivalent of 2000 cubic metre-kilometres or 25 vehicle-kilometres⁹ of road freight and increased by not more than 35% of the eligible costs for preparatory measures and ancillary

⁷ Net freight, i.e. without loading units, trucks, etc. - Hence, inclusion of empty loading units or trucks is not allowed.

⁸ Net freight, i.e. without loading units, trucks, etc. - Hence, inclusion of empty loading units or trucks is not allowed.

⁹ The measure of vehicle-kilometres is needed to account for actions reducing empty runs or increasing load factors. These might not avoid tonne-kilometres but lead to less vehicles on the road.

infrastructure. Altogether, it will be limited to 35% of the total eligible costs necessary, and actually incurred, as described in Appendix 4.

- (v) For Common learning actions it will be limited to 50% of the total eligible costs necessary and actually incurred as described in Appendix 4.
- 2.2. The action may start from 1st July 2007; however **only costs incurred after the submission date of an application [and after the date of entry into force of the MPII regulation] shall be eligible** for Community financial assistance.
- 2.3. The grant shall under **no** circumstances have the purpose or the effect of producing a **profit** for the beneficiary. It does not rule out the possibility to show a profit sometime in the period which would demonstrate inter alia the viability of the project.
- 2.4. Ancillary infrastructure (see definition in appendix 1) costs may also be eligible for Community financial assistance for Motorways of the sea, Catalyst and Traffic avoidance actions in the conditions laid out in Appendix 4. Total Public Aid for ancillary infrastructure including Marco Polo II grant cannot exceed 50% of its cost.
- 2.5. All requests for Community financial assistance shall be made in EURO.
- 2.6. Should an advance payment be requested, a bank guarantee might have to be provided.
- 2.7. A smaller grant than the amount requested by the applicant might be awarded. Grants will not be awarded for more than the amount requested.
- 2.8. The grant may be given in addition to other legitimate¹⁰ public funding and as long as the combined public grant (for the part of the project financed by the Programme) is below the maximum grant rate of eligible costs highlighted above in 2.1 (i) to (v). However, eligible costs for a Marco Polo II grant may not be funded or have been funded by another EC-scheme.

3. ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION CRITERIA

The following eligibility criteria define the scope of the call and apply to all five types of actions – Modal shift, Catalyst, Motorways of the sea, Traffic avoidance and Common learning.

3.1. General eligibility criteria

- E1. **Uniqueness:** the type of action for which a project is proposed must be clearly specified by the applicant.

¹⁰ Please refer to State Aid rules (as mentioned in article 7 of the Marco Polo II regulation).

- E2. **Transport Services:** the proposal must dominantly concern transport **services** or logistics concepts in the market place, i.e. infrastructure, research or study projects are not eligible.
- E3. **European Dimension - Undertakings:** an action requires at least two undertakings established on the territories of two different Member States, or on the territories of one Member State and a close third country, or may in the case of a transport link with a close third country, in exceptional cases, be submitted by one undertaking of a Member State.
- E4. **European Dimension - Cost:** the budget will not finance costs¹¹ arising outside the territories of the Community or fully participating close third countries¹². Nor can legal or natural persons established outside these countries be beneficiaries of Community financial assistance under this call.
- E5. **Type of Legal Entity:** all project participants must be legal persons. They must be privately or publicly owned commercial undertakings. Public law entities engaged in economic activities in accordance with their national laws are entitled to participate. Natural persons are not eligible. These requirements apply also to sub-contractors. Project partners must prove the status of being a commercial undertaking, for instance by providing a VAT number or being listed in the commercial register.
- E6. **Start-up of action:** the action must start the proposed service or activity between 1 July 2007 and 1 July 2009.

3.2. Specific Eligibility Criteria

All projects submitted for financing will have to comply **simultaneously** with the corresponding eligibility criteria per type of action mentioned below:

3.2.1. *Modal shift actions*¹³

- MOD1. **Route:** The envisaged road route, from which transport is shifted by the action, must be situated on the territory of at least two EU Member States or on the territory of at least one EU Member State and a close third country.
- MOD2. **Duration:** The action achieves its objectives within a period of a maximum of 36 months.
- MOD3. **Threshold:** The minimum indicative grant threshold per action is EUR 500,000 or a modal shift of 250 million tonne-kilometres.

¹¹ In practical terms this means that all bills required proving costs must bear a location on the territory of a fully participating country, in order to be eligible under a Marco Polo II contract. Similarly, also income generated by the action may only be used in the business plan, if it has occurred on the territory of a fully participating country.

¹² Under this call fully participating close third countries are those close third countries which have timely concluded specific agreements with the EU for the Marco Polo II Programme. The Marco Polo website will announce the conclusion of such agreements.

¹³ Catalyst actions, Modal shift actions and Common learning actions may comprise several coordinated projects.

3.2.2. Catalyst actions¹⁴

- CAT1. **Route:** The envisaged road route from which freight is shifted by the action is situated on the territory of at least two EU Member States or on the territory of at least one EU Member State and a close third country.
- CAT2. **Duration:** The action achieves its objectives within a period of a maximum of 60 months. This period may be extended as detailed in Appendix 4 in case financing of ancillary infrastructure is requested and awarded.
- CAT3. **Threshold:** The minimum indicative grant threshold per action is EUR 2,000,000.

3.2.3. Motorways of the sea actions

- MOS1. **Route:** The envisaged road route from which freight is shifted by the action must be situated on the territory of at least two EU Member States or on the territory of at least one EU Member State and a close third country.

As set out in the Marco Polo II Regulation concerning the Motorways of the Sea actions (Article 5), "within the European Union such actions shall use the trans-European networks defined in Decision No 1692/96 EC" (as last amended by Decision No. 884/2004/EC, OJ L 201, 7.6.2004, p. 1–55). Therefore, regarding projects within the EU, only those relating to the category A ports as defined in Article 12(2) of the said Decision (i.e. ports with a total annual traffic volume of not less than 1,5 million tonnes of freight or 200.000 passengers) will be eligible to Marco Polo funding under the Motorways of the Sea actions.¹⁵

- MOS2. **Duration:** The action achieves its objectives within a period of a maximum of 60 months. This period may be extended as detailed in Appendix 4 in case financing of ancillary infrastructure is requested and awarded.
- MOS3. **Threshold:** The minimum indicative grant threshold per action is EUR 2,500,000 or a modal shift of 1.25 billion tonne-kilometres.

3.2.4. Traffic avoidance actions

¹⁴ Catalyst actions, Modal shift actions and Common learning actions may comprise several coordinated projects.

¹⁵ Furthermore, the Commission reserves the right to restrict the eligibility of projects concerning Motorways of the Sea actions under Marco Polo II to those that correspond to projects of common interest adopted under the above mentioned framework of the Community legislation on the trans-European transport networks (TEN-T). However, in view of the state of advancement of the definition of projects of common interest in the TEN-T framework, such a restriction does not apply to this call and might only be applied when a sufficient number of projects of common interest will have been adopted. Until then, a difference has to be drawn between Motorways of the sea as progressively defined in the TEN-T framework and Marco Polo II Motorways of the sea. The latter being actions fulfilling the criteria set out in the MP Regulatory framework with the minimum TEN-T requirements described above.

- TAV1. **Routes:** The envisaged road routes on which freight is avoided by the action are situated on the territory of at least two EU Member States or on the territory of at least one EU Member State and a close third country.
- TAV2. **Duration:** The action achieves its objectives within a period of a maximum of 60 months. This period may be extended as detailed in Appendix 4 in case financing of ancillary infrastructure is requested and awarded.
- TAV3. **Threshold:** The minimum indicative grant threshold per action is EUR 1,000,000 or a freight traffic avoidance of 25 million vehicle-kilometres or 500 million tonne-kilometres. The action is expected to lead to an actual, measurable and sustainable Traffic avoidance of at least 10 percent of the freight volume measured in tonne-kilometres or vehicle-kilometres.

3.2.5. Common learning Actions¹⁶

- LEA1. **Duration:** The action achieves its objectives within a period of a maximum of 24 months.
- LEA2. **Threshold:** The minimum indicative grant threshold per action is EUR 250,000.

3.3. Grounds for exclusion

Applications will not be considered for an EC grant if the applicants are in one of the situations which are described in Appendix 6. Applicants must certify in the declaration form I.2, provided in Appendix 2, that they are not in one of these situations.

3.4. Selection criteria

S.1. Financial Capacity of Applicants

Undertakings must be legally constituted and registered. They, acting alone or in a consortium, must have the financial capacity to give confidence in the action to be supported.

Important note: Before awarding an EC grant contract, the financial data presented for the implementation of the proposed action will be audited by the Contracting Authority.

S.2. Technical Capacity of Applicants

Applicants must have the technical and operational capacity to complete the action to be supported and should justify it with appropriate supporting documents.

¹⁶ Catalyst actions, Modal shift actions and Common learning actions may comprise several coordinated projects.

When the action requires reliance on services provided by third parties, they submit proof of a transparent, objective and non-discriminatory procedure for selection of the relevant services. Publicly owned entities or private entities operating on the basis of special or exclusive rights, which are subject to the EC Procurement Directives, should conform to the provisions established by these directives.

A Joint Letter of Intent shall be signed by all undertakings participating in the project (except the subcontractors) stating their commitment and role in the project, and authorising the lead partner to represent them for submitting the proposal and interacting with the Contracting Authority. See Appendix 2, Form I.4.

4. AWARD CRITERIA

4.1. Generalities

Proposals will be evaluated according to the type of action proposed (see Appendix 5) in an internal evaluation, if necessary with the help of external experts. All evaluators will have to sign a declaration of confidentiality and absence of personal interest.

The selection of actions and the rate of Community financial assistance will be based on the eligible written proposals **only**. The proposals having reached the minimum threshold for each criterion and having the highest total score shall be considered for Community financial assistance, within the limit of the available budget.

The applicants must demonstrate the credibility and viability of their proposal in describing their capacity¹⁷ (financial, human, technical, commercial ...) to maintain the proposed activities throughout the project period, and beyond. This will require documenting the features described in the following chapters 4.2. to 4.8.

4.2. Quantity of freight shifted off the road or quantity of road traffic avoided

This criterion requires a clear definition and presentation of both the old “road”-route and the new “modally shifted”-route for Modal shift, Catalyst and Motorways of the sea actions.

In a Modal shift, Motorway of the sea or Catalyst action, first the entire route should be described (preferably door-to-door), i.e. including the initial freight collection and final distribution leg by truck, if any. In a second step it should be shown, which parts of the transport/logistics chain are to be shifted from road to short sea shipping, rail and inland waterways.

Common learning actions are not required to be concerned with a transport route. However, there are elements discussed in this chapter, such as environmental & social benefits, which could be also of relevance to this type of action.

¹⁷ This is proven by full co-ordinates of lead partner, contact person, all other partners in the consortium and, if any, all subcontractors involved in the action. Experience and track record of all partners and leading individuals (substantiated by proposal's annexes 4 and 5). See Appendix 2.

For Traffic avoidance actions a clear definition and presentation of the old and new transport service (route, number of trucks, number of tonne-kilometres and number of vehicle-kilometres) are obligatory.

In a Traffic avoidance action, first the “old” transport service should be described: number of trucks, tonnes transported, different journeys and corresponding distances driven. Then the concept used to avoid traffic should be introduced and the corresponding “new” service resulting in a net decrease of vehicle-kilometres or tonne-kilometres.

4.2.1. Modal shift

The effected Modal shift in a Modal shift, Motorway of the sea or Catalyst action is to be measured in tonne-kilometres.

As an **alternative for light goods** the volume equivalent “freight tonnes” measured in m³ may be used by the applicant. This means, that **4 cubic metre–kilometres (m³km) shall be equivalent to 1 tonne-kilometre (tkm)**, and all calculations and key-figures throughout the proposal are to be presented in analogy to the tonne-kilometres case. The choice of basic unit m³km or tkm must be clearly specified by the applicant.

4.2.2. Traffic avoidance

The effected traffic avoidance is measured in vehicle-kilometres (or tonne-kilometres or its volumetric equivalent) (see Appendix 3). This is measured in comparing the new quantity of road transport versus the old one.

4.3. Environmental and Social Benefits

Environmental and social benefits may have quantitative and qualitative elements and they must be thoroughly described and justified.

The qualitative environmental and social benefits from the proposed action could be for instance, that the new “modally-shifted” route avoids sensitive and metropolitan areas and/or natural resorts or that the “new” concept in a Traffic avoidance action leads to less road congestion in densely populated areas. Other benefits may result from the use of clean fuels or abatement techniques on ships.

The quantitative environmental and social benefits calculation is based on a comparison of the relevant external costs for the old “road”-route with the new “modally shifted”-route respectively “old” transport service with the “new” concept of traffic avoidance. Only benefits achieved on the territory of countries fully participating in the Marco Polo Programme may be used for this calculation.

Details on how to calculate and present environmental and social benefits are given in Appendix 3. Note, that these calculations are an essential element for a proposal submitted to this call.

4.4. Credibility of the action

The market research or feasibility study results and a business plan coherent with the action described, are vital elements to judge the credibility of the proposal as well as the likely utilisation of the service in terms of potential customers (supported by letters of intent, or even better, letters of commitment), etc.

The business plan of every action has to contain a credible and justified financing plan, clearly differentiating eligible and not eligible costs as well as revenues (see Appendix 4).

4.5. Viability of the action

All actions should be sustainable beyond the project duration. This should be clearly demonstrated in a solid business plan.

4.6. Innovative approach

All actions (except Modal shift actions) have to be innovative (cf. Appendix 1)

4.7. Dissemination plan

For all actions (except for Modal shift actions) the results and methods shall be disseminated based on a concrete and detailed dissemination plan.

4.8. European added value – Improvement of co-operation, sharing of know-how

This criterion is only applicable to Common learning actions and covers the European dimension of the action, the target groups to be trained or reached, the cooperation among the stakeholders and the sharing of know-how.

4.9. Avoidance of unacceptable distortion of competition

An action should not lead to unacceptable competition distortions on the relevant legs of the route and/or market, in particular between alternative modes of transport to the road or within the same mode of transport as the one proposed.

A detailed justification must be given why the proposed transport service does not lead to an unacceptable distortion of competition and must mandatorily include at least the following elements for actions which aim at a modal shift:

- list of existing, if any, similar transport services other than road in the same market catchment areas;
- a description of the differentiation of the type of cargo transported, the potential clients etc. in relation to those services.

4.10. Avoidance of unacceptable impact on production output or workforce

Furthermore, traffic avoidance actions shall not adversely affect production output or production workforce. If there is a suspicion that the action may do so, the applicants will have to produce evidence that, overall, there will not be any significant negative social consequence as a result of the action.

5. HOW TO PREPARE A PROPOSAL

Applications must be submitted according to the structure given separately for each type of action in Appendix 2. A mixing of action types in a single proposal is not allowed (see chapter 3 “General Eligibility Criterion” E1).

6. HOW TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

The proposal will be submitted as follows:

For each application, the applicant must supply **one signed original, five copies and an electronic copy on CD-ROM which contains the parts I and II preferably in Word format, together with the "Marco Polo calculator" Excel File.**

It is the responsibility of applicants to ensure that original and copies are identical and complete and that applications are sent to the address indicated in the call for proposals. The Commission or the Executive Agency cannot be held responsible for wrongly addressed applications. If necessary, applicants must be able to present proof of postage.

The proposal submitted will need to be signed and stamped by the lead partner, at the end of the main proposal text (before the annexes).

Photocopies of supporting documents can be forwarded at this stage of the procedure. Originals may be needed later for any financial statements during the contract negotiation phase in view of signing a possible grant agreement with the Contracting Authority.

Applications may be submitted:

- (a) either **by registered letter or courier service¹⁸** postmarked **no later than the closing date for submission** (see chapter 8 “Timetable”)¹⁹, with the following address on the outer envelope:
- (b) **or by hand delivery to the central mail service of the European Commission** (personal delivery or delivery by any authorised representative of the applicant)²⁰ at the following address mentioned on the outer envelope:

European Commission

Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation - EACI²¹

Ref.: Marco Polo II Programme – Call 2008

Courier Central

Avenue du Bourget 1

B-1049 Brussels

by 16h00 (Brussels time) **on the closing date for submission** (see following chapter 8 “Timetable”) at the latest. In this case, proof of submission will be by means of a dated (and time!) and signed receipt issued by the receiving official in the above mentioned department.

¹⁸ Note, that courier services are treated in the same way as national post offices. Applicants are advised to ensure that the submission date is clearly stamped/written on the envelope and on the registration slip. The registration slip should be maintained by the proposer as proof of submission.

¹⁹ This means that if the proposal is sent by registered mail (having a clearly readable date stamp on the envelope and the registration slip!) on the closing date for submission, the deadline would still be met. However, applicants are advised **not** to wait until the very last day of the open call.

²⁰ **Attention:** This means the proposal has to arrive at the indicated Commission address at the latest by 16:00 on the closing date for submission; - and the applicant has to be able to prove it (date and time!).

²¹ **The Evaluation of the proposals and the contract management will be handled by the Agency as from 1st of March 2008.**

Applications received by the central mail service of the European Commission after the closing date and time will not be taken into consideration.

Applications may not be delivered to the Directorate-General for Energy and Transport nor to the EACI (whether personal delivery or delivery by any authorised representative of the applicant, including private delivery services).

Proposals must be submitted inside two sealed envelopes. The inner envelope must bear the words (*written in English and/or French and the applicant's language*):

**Call for Proposals
TREN/G2/SUB/01-2008**

Marco Polo II Programme

NOT TO BE OPENED BEFORE THE OPENING SESSION

DM 28, 0/91 Courier/archives

If self-adhesive envelopes are used, they must be sealed with adhesive tape and the sender must sign across that tape.

Additionally, for any means of submission, applicants should send at the same time the completed Project Overview Form (part I of the full proposal) by email to the secretariat given in chapter 7 to announce the submission.

7. SECRETARIAT FOR INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

Applications should **not** be delivered to this address (see previous chapter). This address is reserved for information and assistance provided by the Marco Polo Help Desk. The Marco Polo Help Desk is available for any questions related to the Marco Polo II Programme. The Help Desk will attend enquiries in any of the EU official languages.

European Commission - **Marco Polo Help Desk**
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Directorate G – Unit G2
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8. TIMETABLE

Closing date for submission of applications	7 April 2008
Date of opening of applications	April 2008
Estimated date for Report on Evaluation by Evaluation Committee	June 2008
Estimated date of notification of applicants & start of contract negotiations	July 2008
Estimated date for signature of EC contracts	September 2008

APPENDICES

1. DEFINITIONS
2. HOW TO PREPARE THE PROPOSAL
3. CALCULATION OF MODAL SHIFT, TRAFFIC AVOIDANCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL/SOCIAL BENEFITS
4. HOW TO CALCULATE THE GRANT; ELIGIBLE COSTS, INCLUDING FINANCING OF ANCILLARY INFRASTRUCTURE
5. DEFINITION OF THE AWARD CRITERIA FOR THE DIFFERENT ACTIONS
6. GROUNDS FOR EXCLUSION AND RELATED ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL PENALTIES