



Restricted Call for Proposals 2019:  
Support to the implementation of the RCC Triple-P Tourism in SEE: Promotion, Policy, and  
Pilots Grants Work Programme

Guidelines for Applicants

**Ref.no. 3PCfP02**

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The goal of these Guidelines is to provide instructions to all potential applicants and interested subjects in the process of submitting proposals

Should any additional information and clarifications to these Guidelines be required, potential candidates may send a request with the reference to the Call for Proposals to the email address: [tourism.grants@rcc.int](mailto:tourism.grants@rcc.int) according to the timeline provided in these Guidelines.

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## INTRODUCTION

These Guidelines are intended to be used by those applying for grants under the 2<sup>nd</sup> Call for Proposals for the Work Programme for Grants of the Regional Cooperation Council, of Triple-P Tourism in SEE: Promotion, Policy, and Pilots (RCC GWP Triple-P) Project for the years 2018–2020. The guidelines provide the essential information necessary for the preparation and submitting of **Concept Notes (first stage) and Full Applications (second stage)** for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Call for Proposals in the **award year 2019**.

While the overarching aim of the RCC's Grant Work Programme Triple P 2018-2020 is to contribute to economic growth in South East Europe by supporting increase in employment and sustainability of SEE economies through regional tourism development, the 2019 Call for Proposals is focused on thematic pillars: Pilot Projects, deriving from the Triple-P Tourism in SEE: Promotion, Policy, and Pilots Project.

### Pillar - Pilot Projects

Objective: To support creation of preconditions and enabling environment for tourism product development and support mitigating sector challenges on micro-localities.

In order to achieve best possible results in promotion of the joint regional tourism products, it has been determined of substantial importance to improve the tourism infrastructure and activities on the local level throughout the region, namely on the localities along the routes that will be part of the joint regional products. Local governments, small businesses and NGOs have an important role in contributing to the growth of tourism sector, and therefore need to increase their capacity in order to provide the services that would fit the needs of the tourism industry. The types of services could include information points on localities, local infrastructure network and utilities, health, security, etc. This area of intervention will engage the local community (local governments, small business and civil sector) along the routes of the joint regional tourism products and support them in capacity building in tourism destination management. In cases where specific local community is unable to develop the sufficient capacity, support will be given to multiple local governments clustering into destination management organisations. While Pillar 1 and 2 are focused on development and promotion of regional tourism products and improvement of the policies pertaining to SEE's tourism, respectively, Pillar 3 will create preconditions and enabling environment for tourism product development and mitigating sector challenges on micro-localities. Namely, it will directly support small-scale projects in the local community(ies) on the tourism routes through the region, aiming to improve tourist infrastructure and services, ensure growth of tourist operations both within public and private sector, and ultimately create new jobs and income generation opportunities in target localities. Beneficiaries of the assistance under this activity will be local authorities, local and regional tourism development agencies, civil sector, NGOs, and tourism clusters in selected areas. The financial assistance to beneficiaries will be provided based on open and competitive selection processes and selection criteria. From the viewpoint of the action's internal coherence, this activity will, through particular approach through tourism, further reinforce implementation of local strategies from the viewpoint of economic development and competitiveness.

The proposed actions are to be implemented in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo<sup>\*</sup>, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia and Serbia.

The Call for Proposals is implemented by the RCC Secretariat, responsible for the overall coordination of the Programme as well as for all contract and payment issues, acting as the Contracting Authority.

This is a restricted Call for Proposals, two-tier process where in first instance applicants submit their Concept Notes accompanied with the Declaration and the registration related documentation for eligibility check reasons ([here](#)). The pre-selected applicants will be invited to submit a Full Application Form. The applicants submitting the Full Application Form will undergo a detailed eligibility check, based on the supporting documents submitted ([here](#)) and the following criteria.

The eligibility criteria apply to all of the following:

- Eligibility of the applicants ([here](#));
- Eligibility of actions ([here](#));
- Eligibility of costs ([here](#)).

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<sup>\*</sup> *This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.*

## **1. OBJECTIVE AND PRIORITIES OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

### **1.1. Objective of the Call for Proposals (CfP)**

The specific objective of the CfP is to achieve the objectives/results stipulated by the Triple P Tourism in SEE: Promotion, Policy, and Pilots project.

The overall objective of the 2nd Call for Proposals is to contribute to the achievement of the objectives/results stipulated by the Triple P Tourism in SEE: Promotion, Policy, and Pilots project.

This is the 2nd Call for Proposals (2nd Call), deriving out of Regional Cooperation Council's Grants Work Programme: Triple-P Tourism in SEE: Promotion, Policy and Pilots (further reading: [Work Programme for Grants 3P](#)).

The 2nd Call aims to support those actions across the Western Balkans region that will create added value for regional tourism products, increase attractiveness for tourism development and generate increase in business activity followed by private sector growth and increase in employment.

Specifically, objectives of the published 2nd CfP respond to the product development process under the identified priority themes (more information below under 1.2 Priorities of the Programme) and as such seek to identify and support actions that will further advance product development efforts, address tourism infrastructure needs at specific locations, seek to advance skills and ability at sites and locations to provide higher quality services to visitors, support information dissemination and promotion of priority joint regional routes, and development of regional cooperation efforts.

### **1.2. Priorities of the Programme**

These Guidelines for Applicants relate to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Call for Proposals under the third priority of the RCC Triple-P Tourism in SEE: Promotion, Policy, and Pilots Grants Work Programme, and Conclusions from the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the SEE Investment Committee's Tourism Expert Group, held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2018 and 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018 respectively.

The confirmed priority areas of intervention, as per above conclusions, are:

#### **Cultural tourism**

- a. The Crossroads of Civilizations as regional identity
- b. Illyricum trail – as part of the Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route focusing on archaeological sites from the Roman period
- c. Balkan Monumental Trail – Art and design of the World War II monuments

#### **Adventure tourism:**

- a. Via Dinarica regional adventure and its cultural corridor
- b. Other regional offers and regional thematic trails focusing on full adventure (combination of physical activities, natural environment, and cultural immersion)

## **2. FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR PROJECTS UNDER THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

Total funds available under this Call for Proposals (CfP) amount to EUR 750,000.

Projects eligible for this CfP are those whose budgets are between EUR 20,000 and EUR 54,000. The RCC reserves the right not to allocate all available funds.

Interested candidates will co-fund their projects with minimum 10% co-financing participation. Grants allocated within this call may finance administrative costs and staff costs to a maximum of 30% of the requested amount. The remaining 70% of the funds should be foreseen for costs directly related to the implementation of project activities.

Any grant requested under this Call for Proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum percentages of total eligible costs of the action:

- Minimum: 20% of the total estimated eligible costs of the action.
- Maximum: 90% of the total eligible costs of the action (see also Section 9).

Example: Total cost of the project is EUR 30,000. Minimum co-financing of the grant applicant is EUR 3,000 (10%). From the requested RCC grant (in this case in the amount of EUR 27,000), the applicant can allocate maximum 30% for administrative and staff costs (in this case this amounts to EUR 8,100). The remaining 70% (in this case in the amount of EUR 18,900) of the funds should be foreseen for operational activities of the project.

The balance – co-financing (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the Contracting Authority) must be financed from the applicant's own resources.

**NB:** In kind contributions cannot be considered as co-financing. Sub-contracting is not allowed.

### **3. ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS, PARTNERSHIPS**

#### **3.1. Eligibility of applicants**

Participation in this call is open to all entities on an equal basis, formally registered in eligible economies and in accordance with the valid legal regulations. Potential applicants may not participate in the call or will not receive grants unless they submit the signed Declaration with the project proposal.

**Applicants** may apply individually or with partners. Other organisations and/or institutions may be involved in the project as collaborators (see section 3.2.).

In order to be eligible for a grant, applicants must belong to one of the following categories:

- Be a local authority or non-governmental organisation,
- Be a not-for-profit making organisation, association or foundation,

Besides, the applicants must be legal persons:

- established in one of following: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\*, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia
- directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary.

Applicants will be excluded from participation in the call or from the allocation of grants if, at the time of submission of project proposals, they are in one of the below situations:

- they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
- they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the Contracting Authority can justify;

- they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the economy in which they are established or with those of the economy of the Contracting Authority or those of the economy where the contract is to be performed;
- they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity;
- they are subject to a conflict of interest;
- they are guilty of providing false information to an authorised contractual party, which are required as a precondition for participation in the call for submission of project proposals or if they fail to submit the required information;
- they tried to obtain confidential information, exert influence over the Evaluation Committee or authorised contractual party during project proposals evaluation process.

### **3.2. Other organisations and/or institutions involved in the project**

**Partners** can be organisations and/or institutions that take part in the project design and implementation, including budget allocation. The costs they incur will fall under the same rules as those incurred by the applicants themselves, meaning that partner organisations must meet the same eligibility conditions as the applicants.

If applying in partnership, the “Applicant” will be the leading organisation and if selected as the contractual party (“Beneficiary”) it will assume all legal and financial liabilities for project completion. The Partnership Statement (included in the Grant Application Form) must be completed correctly and submitted together with the application.

In cases of shared responsibilities between two or more organisations to undertake the action, the Applicant will be asked to submit original signed Partnership Statement along with the application, where partner will be asked to acknowledge to having carefully read the General Terms and Conditions, these Guidelines for Applicants and the Application to be submitted to the RCC.

- a) **Acknowledge:** to have read the application form and understood what their role in the action will be, what obligations arise for them from the grant contract; understanding to being entitled to receive a copy of narrative and financial reports; that any substantial changes in the action need to be prior agreed with the partner(s);
- b) **Declare:** the authorisation of the applicant to sign the agreement with RCC on their behalf and represent them in all dealings with RCC in the context of the action's implementation; to have read and approved the contents of the proposal submitted to RCC; that they do not fall in any of the categories (a) to (h) listed in Section 3.3

#### **Collaborators**

Other organisations and/or institutions may be involved in the project. Such organisations – collaborators have an actual role in the implementation of activities but cannot receive any part of the grant.

### **3.3. Exclusion criteria for applicants and affiliated entities (partners)**

Applicants and partners will be excluded from participation in the call or from the allocation of grants if, at the time of submission of project proposals, they are in one of the below situations:

- a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;

- c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the Contracting Authority can justify;
- d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the economy in which they are established or with those of the economy of the Contracting Authority or those of the economy where the contract is to be performed;
- e) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity;
- f) they are subject to a conflict of interest;
- g) they are guilty of providing false information to an authorised contractual party, which are required as a precondition for participation in the call for submission of project proposals or if they fail to submit the required information;
- h) they tried to obtain confidential information, exert influence over the Evaluation Committee or authorised contractual party during project proposals evaluation process.

### **3.4. Number of Concept Notes/Full Applications per applicant**

An applicant may not:

- Submit more than one application under this Call for Proposals.

An applicant may at the same time be a partner or a collaborator in another application. Collaborators may take part in more than one application.

## **4. ELIGIBILITY OF ACTIONS: DURATION, LOCATION(S) AND TYPE OF ACTIVITIES**

### **4.1. Duration and location of the action**

The duration of the projects can be between 4 and 9 months, and the projects must be implemented during the period between 10/2019 and 07/2020.

The projects must be implemented in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\*, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia and Serbia<sup>1</sup>.

Regional projects implemented on territories of 3 and more economies will be considered an asset.

The projects have to provide a solution for the specific needs of the region and the target groups identified by the project. It should consist of a set of operational activities with clearly defined operational goals, target groups and planned outcomes in order to achieve specific results within a limited time period. The proposed projects should demonstrate relevance in addressing regional impact and aim to achieve principles of all-inclusiveness.

### **4.2. Type of eligible activities**

Indicative types of activities which may be financed under this call for proposals are given below.

As per decision of Tourism Expert Group, dated 27<sup>th</sup> June 2018 the priority areas of intervention are:

**Cultural tourism**, and in particular the **themes** of

- The Crossroads of Civilizations as regional identity

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<sup>1</sup> Beneficiary economies from the Western Balkans on a territory of the RCC Triple-P Tourism in SEE: Promotion, Policy, and Pilots

- Illyricum Trail – as part of the Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route focusing on archaeological sites from the Roman period
- Balkan Monumental Trail – Art and design of the World War II monuments

**Adventure tourism:**

- Via Dinarica regional adventure and its cultural corridor
- Other regional offers and regional thematic trails focusing on full adventure (combination of physical activities, natural environment, and cultural immersion)

Further to the confirmed priority areas of intervention stated above, the list below provides an indicative list of activities that address the needs as they are recognised in the current stage of product development and market readiness. The following list is not exhaustive and appropriate innovative activities that are not mentioned below may also be considered for support. By way of illustration projects could contain a range of the following indicative activities:

**Eligible activities (for both priority areas):**

- Improving visitors flow management, including interpretational, directional and promotional signage, as well as educational infrastructure and other small-scale tourism infrastructural works delivered through environmentally friendly interventions and supporting safe delivery of traveller experience.
- Creating product and/or thematic clubs of local stakeholders (accommodation, food, souvenirs, and other tourism services) as a semi-formal or formal network of collaborators linked to the identified sites and routes/trails with a focus on fostering entrepreneurship and innovation in product development and delivery as means for employment and business opportunities.
- Creating promotional actions that include but are not limited to use of innovative and digital/video tools to present sites and locations and provide either orientation or informational content on heritage, adventure, tourism and other services, as well as mobility aspect of the product.
- Establishing semi-formal or formal network for innovative hubs, start-ups, and travel incubators along the priority routes, and with the goal to support sustainable development of the locations, routes/trails and sector overall.
- Developing multi-economy thematic products involving identified sites and routes/trails, as well as supplementary programmes such as gastronomy, traditional craftsmanship, music, performing arts, social practices, rituals, and other elements of intangible heritage.
- Fostering regional cooperation to increase quality of service through training and certification of service providers that will include but not be limited to guides and in particular adventure guides.

**Eligible activities (for adventure priority areas):**

- Awareness rising and capacity building actions that will aim to advance and promote standardisation and certification of trails and services, as well as increase community, and in particular youth, awareness and involvement through multi-location events such as local public gatherings, festivals, markets and bazaars, thematic workshops, competition events and similar.
- Business events with strong networking and partnership platforms such as regional B2B and/or B2M gatherings, exhibitions, conferences and industry meetings.
- Identification of regional, multi-economy, adventure travel offer with recognised market potential and wide product and territorial coverage.

**Eligible activities (for culture priority areas):**

- Creating or improving experiential approach and storytelling, envisaging common actions with common visibility with particular focus on youth engagement, innovative approach, and digitisation.

**4.3. Ineligible activities**

The following types of actions are considered ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- purchase of land;
- actions aimed at infrastructure investments at tourism facilities that are already well established and have dedicated promotion and marketing resources;
- profit making activities;
- actions linked to political parties;
- actions which fall within the general activities of competent public institutions or public administration services, including local government;
- actions with provisions for financing the usual (routine) activities of the organisations from the region, especially covering their running costs;
- actions started before the signature of a contract;
- actions confined to charitable donations.

## **5. ELIGIBLE COSTS**

Eligible costs are actual costs incurred by the Beneficiary which meet all the following criteria:

- a) they are incurred during the implementation of the Action;
- b) they are indicated in the estimated overall budget for the Action;
- c) they are necessary for the implementation of the Action;
- d) they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the Beneficiary and determined according to the accounting standards and the usual cost accounting practices applicable to the Beneficiary;
- e) they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- f) they are reasonable, justified and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

Subject to the respect of the above eligibility criteria, the following direct costs shall be eligible:

- Administrative costs, as follows:
  - The cost of staff assigned to the Action, corresponding to actual gross salaries including social security charges and other remuneration-related costs; salaries and costs shall not exceed those normally borne by Beneficiary unless it is justified by showing that it is essential to carry out the Action;
  - Travel and subsistence costs for staff and other persons taking part in the Action, provided they do not exceed those normally borne by the Beneficiary according to its rules and regulations;
  - Costs of consumables;
- Costs directly related to the activities of the project:
- Costs deriving directly from the requirements of the contract (dissemination of information, evaluation specific to the Action, audits, translation, reproduction, insurance, etc.) including financial service costs (in particular the cost of transfers and financial guarantees where required according to the contract);
- Costs arising directly from requirements linked to the implementation of the project, including small procurement of goods, works or services as described in the action.

The following costs shall not be considered eligible:

- Debts and debt service charges (interest);
- Provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- Costs declared by the Beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme;
- Currency exchange losses;
- Credits to third parties;
- Salary costs of the personnel of national administrations;
- Individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;
- Individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- Occasional conferences (unless necessary for successful project implementation);
- Purchase of equipment (unless necessary for successful project implementation);
- Funding of projects which are already in progress or are finalised;
- Projects for exclusive benefit of individuals;
- Projects supporting political parties;
- Primary funding of applicants or their partners;
- Duties, taxes and charges, including VAT, paid and not recoverable by the Beneficiary.

## 6. SUBMISSION OF CONCEPT NOTES AND APPLICATIONS

Documentation for call for proposals can be obtained from the RCC's website: [www.rcc.int](http://www.rcc.int).

This is a restricted Call for Proposals. Only Concept Notes must be submitted for the evaluation, whereas applicants whose Concept Notes have been pre-selected will be invited to submit a Full Application.

### 6.1. Concept Notes submission

The Concept Notes must be submitted using a format and instructions provided in the Grant Application Form, annexed to these Guidelines.

The documentation must contain the following:

Applicant to submit:

1. Grant Application Form (Concept Note) in accordance with the instructions;
2. Completed and signed Declaration (scanned version);
3. A copy of a valid certificate of registration of the entity in eligible economy (for the project applicant);
4. A copy of organisation's statute / articles of incorporation; and
5. Copy of the final annual financial report for the previous year (balance sheet and income statement) certified by a responsible agency for financial operations and licensed and authorised accountant, unless the organisation is established in the current year (for Grant Applications above EUR 30,000).

Optionally, in case the action is meant to be implemented with partners as affiliated entities, the application also needs to be accompanied with following documentation:

6. Copy of a valid certificate of registration or Copy of organisation's statute / articles of incorporation of partners; and
7. Partnership Statement.

*Note: Applicants and Partners need to provide documentation that will undoubtedly enable determining the eligibility (clearly stating registration status of the applicant/partner) from the submitted evidence, and the evidence may be an official extract from the register, a certified act of establishment or another act that has full legal force in the national law.*

The Concept Note together with the documentation should be submitted electronically by the prescribed deadline to the e-mail address: [tourism.grants@rcc.int](mailto:tourism.grants@rcc.int) with the subject heading:

## Application – CFP 2 2019

(All relevant documents are to be scanned and attached to the e-mail).

The deadline for the submission of Concept Notes is **12/07/2019, 14:00 hours**, date and time considered as evidenced will be the date of e-mail received by the RCC.

Any Concept Notes submitted after the deadline, not prepared in accordance with these Guidelines or being incomplete will be rejected.

### 6.2. Full Applications submission

The applicants whose Concept Notes are pre-selected will be notified and invited to submit the Full Application.

The Full Application must contain the following:

1. Grant Application Form;
2. Budget breakdown.

In case the application is evaluated positively, prior to the signing of the contract, the applicant will be requested to provide the following administrative documents:

3. Completed Administrative Identification Form, PDF (LIF);
4. Completed Financial Identification Form, PDF (FIF); and
5. Partnership Statement(s).

Any additional information specific to the action will be requested upon approval of Grant Application Form.

Full Application **must be** prepared using the official templates of this Call for Proposal.

Prior to signing the Grant Contract with selected applicants RCC may request original copies of the documents.

Completed applications, with all mandatory documentation, must be submitted **via e-mail**.

The deadline for submission of Full Applications is **23/08/2019 at 14:00 hours**, date and time considered as evidenced will be the date of email received by the RCC.

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax) or delivered to other addresses **will not be taken into consideration**.

The RCC will keep records of any received project proposal and will issue pertinent receipts.

### 6.3. Indicative timetable\*

	DATE	TIME*
<b>Publication of 2<sup>nd</sup> Call for Proposals</b>	10/06/2019	
<b>Info sessions</b>	11/06/2019- 20/06/2019	
<b>Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the RCC</b>	21/06/2019	14:00
<b>Last date on which clarifications are issued by the RCC</b>	01/07/2019	

<b>Deadline for submission of concept notes</b>	12/07/2019	14:00
<b>Information to the applicants on the results of the concept note evaluation and invitations to the successful applicants to submit the full applications</b>	26/07/2019	
<b>Deadline for submission of full application forms</b>	23/08/2019	14:00
<b>Information to applicants on the evaluation of full application forms and notification on award and request for administrative documents</b>	06/09/2019	
<b>Complaints period</b>	06/09/2019 13/09/2019	
<b>Clarifications period</b>	16/09/2019 30/09/2019	
<b>Contract signature</b>	07/10/2019	

\***Provisional date.** This indicative timetable may be updated by the RCC during the procedure. In such cases, the updated timetable will be published on the RCC website.

### **6.3. Further Information**

Information Days related to 2<sup>nd</sup> Call for Proposals will be held in all Triple-P Tourism in SEE: Promotion, Policy, and Pilots beneficiary economies: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\*, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia and Serbia.

The exact dates and locations of Information Days will be published in advance on the following website: [www.rcc.int](http://www.rcc.int).

## **7. EVALUATING AND SELECTING PROJECT PROPOSALS**

The first step in the evaluation procedure is the administrative check, which examines that all of the required documents were submitted on time and have been completed according to the Guidelines.

The Concept Notes (CN) and Full Applications (FA) will be considered and evaluated by the Evaluation Committee.

Each member of the Evaluation Committee undertakes individual evaluation procedure and all members sign the summary evaluation table for each CN/FA. Evaluation is conducted using a scoring system, whereby the scoring criteria are divided into sections and subsections. Ranking the CN/FA is carried out in a manner that the first ranked CN/FA is the one with the highest score, followed by the CN/FA with the next lowest score up until the CN/FA with lowest scores.

Only CN/FA with a score of 30 or more points will be taken into further consideration, as the proposals below this threshold have not met the set standards, thus questioning the efficiency of their ability for implementation.

The decision on grant approval is based on the total number of projects that can be financed within the available funds. These limits are set in order to define minimum quality of CN/FA and ensure the best value for money. CN/FA with the highest scores will have priority in grant disbursement.

*Evaluation grid for the Concept Note*

Section	Maximum score	Average score
<b>1. Relevance of the Action</b>	<b>30</b>	
1.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the Call for Proposals?*	5x2	
1.2 How relevant to the particular needs and constraints of the target economy(ies) or region(s) is the proposal? (including synergy with other EU initiatives and avoidance of duplication)	5x2	
1.3. How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (end beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5	
1.4. Does the proposal contain specific added-value elements, such as environmental issues, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of indigenous peoples, or innovation and best practices?	5	
<b>2. Design of the Action</b>	<b>20</b>	
2.1. How coherent is the overall design of the Action?  In particular, does it reflect the analysis of the problems involved and take into account external factors and relevant stakeholders?	5x2	
2.2 Is the Action feasible and consistent in relation to the objectives and expected results?	5x2	
<b>Maximum total score</b>	<b>50</b>	

\*A score of 5 (very good) will only be allocated if the proposal specifically addresses more than the required minimum number of priorities as indicated in section 1 (Objectives of the programme) of these guidelines.

Only the Concept Notes which have been given a score of a minimum of 30 points will be considered for pre-selection.

*Evaluation grid for the Full Application*

Section	Maximum score	Average score
<b>1. Financial and operational capacity</b>	<b>15</b>	
1.1 Is the Applicant sufficiently <b>experienced in project management</b> ?	5	
1.2 Does the Applicant have sufficient <b>professional capacities</b> (specific knowledge in the relevant field)?	5	
1.3. Does the Applicant have sufficient <b>management capacities</b> (including staff, equipment and capacities for financial management)?	5	
<b>2. Relevance</b>	<b>25</b>	
2.1. How relevant is the project compared to the <b>goal</b> and one or more <b>priorities</b> defined in the public call?  Note: score 5 (very good) can be assigned only if the project is addressing at <b>least</b>	5	

<b>one of the priorities.</b>		
2.2 Are stakeholders clearly defined and strategically selected (agents, end beneficiaries, <b>target groups</b> )?	5	
2.3 Are the <b>needs of the target group</b> and end beneficiaries clearly defined and does the project address them in the right way?	5	
2.4 Does the project incorporate <b>added value</b> , such as innovative approach and best practice models?	5	
2.5 Does the project proposal advocate for <b>rights-based approach</b> and does it influence vulnerable groups? (Promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, environmental protection, international cooperation, youth, etc.).	5	
<b>3. Methodology</b>	<b>20</b>	
3.1 Does the <b>plan of activities</b> and proposed <b>activities</b> logically and practically correspond to the goals and expected results?	5	
3.2 How consistent is the overall project design? (especially, does it reflect the analysis of identified problems, possible external factors)	5	
3.3 Is the level of <b>involvement of collaborators in project implementation</b> satisfactory?	5	
3.4 Are <b>objectively measurable indicators</b> included in the project?	5	
<b>4. Sustainability</b>	<b>25</b>	
4.1 Will the proposed activities have <b>concrete influence</b> on target groups?	5	
4.2 Will the project have <b>multiple effects</b> ? ( <i>including possibility for application on other target groups or implementation at a different location and/or extending the effects of the activities as well as exchange of information on the experience gained through the implementation of the project</i> )	5	
4.3 Are the expected results of suggested activities <b>institutionally sustainable</b> ? ( <i>Will the structures that enable project activities exist after the completion of the project? Will there be a local ownership over the project results?</i> )	5	
4.4 Are the expected <b>results sustainable</b> ? (If applicable, name the <i>structural impact of implemented activities – improvements of legal frameworks, methods, code of conduct, etc.</i> )	5	
4.5 Is it likely that the expected long-term results/outcomes will influence local economic conditions and/or quality of life in target areas?	5	
<b>5. Budget and cost efficiency</b>	<b>15</b>	
5.1 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and expected results satisfactory?	5	
5.2 Are the suggested costs <b>necessary</b> for project implementation?	5	
5.3 Budget - is the budget clear and does it include a narrative part? (including explanations for technical equipment) - is the budget gender-sensitive? - have CVs and job descriptions been enclosed where applicable?	5	
<b>Maximum total score</b>	<b>100</b>	

### **Note on Section 1. Financial and operational capacity of the Applicant**

In case the total score in Section 1 is lower than 10 points, the project will be excluded from the further evaluation process, as the organisation does not have the minimum capacities to ensure quality implementation of the proposed project.

### **Note on Section 2. Relevance**

In case the total score in Section 2 is lower than 18 points, the project will be excluded from further consideration as the score implies that, although the applicant meets financial and operational capacities, the project's concept is not relevant or in line with the defined priorities of the call for proposals; the project does not address the needs of the region.

### **Note on Section 4. Sustainability**

In case the total score in Section 4 is lower than 20 points, the project will be excluded from further consideration as the score implies that the activities will not benefit the objectives of the project in a long run.

## **8. NOTIFICATION ON THE DECISION**

The applicants will be notified on the Concept Note evaluation outcomes according to the timetable provided in this Guidelines. Pre-selected applicants will be notified and informed to submit the Full Application tentatively according to the timetable provided in the Guidelines.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified and granted a right to appeal with the complaint, according to the timetable provided in these Guidelines.

The results will be announced on the RCC website.

A decision to reject a Full Application or deny funds will be made if:

- The applicant does not meet the conditions of the call for proposals;
- Project activities are unacceptable (e.g. proposed activities go beyond the scope of the call for proposals, the project's stipulated duration exceeds the maximum allowed time period, the requested amount of funds exceeds the maximum allowed amount or is lower than the minimum, etc.);
- The project proposal was not sufficiently relevant; financial and operational capacities of the applicant are not sufficient, or the projects selected for funding have been superior in these areas;
- The quality of the project proposal was technically and financially lower in comparison to the projects selected for funding.

### **Cancellation of a call for proposal**

The RCC Secretariat may decide to cancel a call at any stage and in particular if:

1. The call for proposals was unsuccessful, i.e. no worthwhile application has been received or there is no response at all;
2. Economic or technical data of the programme have been fundamentally altered;
3. Exceptional circumstances or force majeure case render the normal conduct of the planned action impossible;
4. Irregularities in the procedure, in particular those preventing equal treatment.

In the event of cancellation, all applicants must be notified of cancellation by the RCC and will not be entitled to any compensation.

## 9. CONDITIONS RELATED TO PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AFTER GRANT APPROVAL

After a decision has been made on grant approval, the applicants whose project has been approved will be offered a contract for project implementation. Before signing the contract and if needed, the RCC is entitled to request certain modifications from the organisation to the project, in order to align it with the rules and procedures of project implementation.

Contracts with the Applicants of the selected Applications will be prepared on the standard template. Model of Grant Contract is available as part of Application Package.

Additional supporting documents:

For all Full Applications, whose activities involve **infrastructure**, the following additional documents will be required prior to Grant Contract signature (contracting phase):

- Positive Decision on Environmental Impact Assessment OR a Statement from the relevant public authority that the EIA is not needed for the specific activities;
- Proof of ownership or long-term lease (10 years) of the land /assets (if applicable);
- Preliminary design OR detailed design including indicative bill of quantities in EUR;
- All necessary legal authorisations (e.g. location and construction permits, etc.).

Please note that in case all necessary documents (permits, etc.) are not provided to the Contracting Authority (CA) prior to the contracting, Contracting Authority reserves the right to withdraw from contracting.

### LIST OF APPENDICES

- [Grant Application Form](#)
- [Declaration by the Applicant](#)
- [Budget Breakdown](#)
- [Legal Entity Identification Form](#)
- [Financial Identification Form](#)
- [Grant Contract](#)
- [General Terms and Conditions for Grants](#)
- [Checklist for Assessing Action Budget and Simplified Cost Options for Grant Contracts](#)
- [Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU External Actions](#)
- [Regional Cooperation Council Visual Guidelines for External Parties](#)
- [Partnership Statement](#)
- [Preliminary list of locations for Western Balkans Crossroads of Civilisations](#)
- [Preliminary list of locations for Illyricum Trail of the Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route](#)
- [Preliminary list of locations for the Balkan Monumental Trail](#)