



EUROPEAN UNION
EUROPEAN REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT FUND

**Call for experts
for the set up of a roster of experts in State Aid discipline to be involved in the
CENTRAL EUROPE Programme.**

1. Background

The CENTRAL EUROPE Programme is established based on EU Regulations (EC) No. 1083/2006, (EC) No. 1080/2006 and (EC) No. 1828/2006¹. Its Operational Programme (OP) has been approved by the European Commission on 3 December 2007².

CENTRAL EUROPE is a European Union funding programme that aims to make Central European regions more competitive, innovative, attractive and accessible. The EU CENTRAL EUROPE Programme area includes Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia and five regions in the Ukraine.

CENTRAL EUROPE supports cooperation projects between regions that promote economic, environmental and social development by elaborating joint solutions, concrete outputs and results enabling further implementations such as further initiatives and investments.

The programme should, hence, play a considerable role in strengthening the development efforts of these countries and their regions, while contributing to an integrated development of the entire programme area by promoting trans-national cooperation projects with mutual benefit, tangible outputs and concrete results.

The programme focuses on four thematic priorities:

- 1) Facilitating innovation across Central Europe
- 2) Improving accessibility of and within Central Europe
- 3) Using our environment responsibly
- 4) Enhancing the competitiveness and attractiveness of cities and regions

Primary target groups are regional and local authorities, development agencies, universities and research institutes, chambers of commerce, innovation centers and other relevant actors in the field of innovation, economic development and environment, SMEs, as well as all population groups which are affected by the Priorities concerned.

The programme is managed by a structure comprising institutions at the European, national and regional levels. Main decision-making body is the "Monitoring Committee", which is composed of representatives of the Member States of the Programme. As Managing Authority, the Department for EU Strategy and Economic Development of the City of Vienna is responsible for the operational management of the programme. It is

¹ Documents can be downloaded at: www.eur-lex.europa.eu.

² Copy of the Operational Programme is available at <http://www.central2013.eu/working-with-central/document-center/programme-documents.html>

supported by a Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS), an international bureau that is also located in Vienna, and a network of Contact Points, that are located in the Member States.

2. Call for applications for experts in State Aid

The CENTRAL EUROPE Managing Authority through its Joint Technical Secretariat invites for applications with a view to build a roster of experts in State Aid discipline to support the JTS during the project proposals assessment. The roster will be used already for the evaluation of the project proposals received under the 1st Call for Proposals 2008.

Persons from EU27 member states who are interested in having their name entered into the roster of experts are invited to submit their application in accordance with the rules set out below.

2.1 Profile of the experts

Experts must have appropriate sound knowledge in State Aid discipline, proven experience in its application as well as knowledge of judgments provided by the European Court of Justice.

In particular, applicants must:

- have a university degree giving entitlement to undertake postgraduate studies;
- have at least 3 years professional experience (following the award of the university degree) in State Aid discipline;
- have a good knowledge of EU programmes and in particular of programmes funded within Structural Funds or of programmes that foresee projects with multinational partnerships;
- Have excellent analytical and judgment skills;
- Be fluent in speaking, reading and writing in English;
- Be computer literate.

2.2 Application and selection procedure

Applicants must submit their curriculum vitae in European format³; the CV will be named "CV Last Name" in the subject line of their email (e.g. CV Smith).

The experts included in the roster will be informed on the results of the selection.

The JTS will build a roster of experts including only those candidates who meet the criteria set out in 2.1. Inclusion in the roster does not guarantee further involvement in the analysis of the received applications.

Each time an evaluation activity relating to the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme has to be carried out, the JTS has the faculty to decide invite either all candidates entered into the roster or only some of them based on the number of project applications to be assessed. Invitation of experts will be based on non-discriminatory selection criteria.

The roster will be valid for no more than 2 years from the date of publication of the present call for experts.

Any interested person may submit an application at any time during the period of validity of the list, with the exception of the last three months before the launch of the last call for proposals.

³ The European CV can be downloaded from the website <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/htm/index.htm>

The JTS will notify the experts about their inclusion in the roster. Selected experts are requested to update their application on yearly basis.

2.3 Description of the assignment for the support in the evaluation of the CENTRAL EUROPE.

2.3.1 Global and specific objectives

The aim of the assignment is:

- the identification of submitted project applications that present a risk of State Aid compliance. The first CENTRAL EUROPE call for proposal 2008 will grant ERDF to undertakings based on the "*de minimis*" regime.
- Within the above, the provision of recommendations to the relevant Member States authorities.

2.3.2 Requested services

The services to be executed under the guidance and coordination of the JTS, are the following:

- Acquaintance of relevant programme documents at home (e.g.: Operational Programme, Programme Manual, Application Package etc.)
- Participation in an Inception meeting with the JTS to get information on developed procedures, tools and timetable for the delivery of the services.
- Prior to commencement and to ensure the independence of proposal evaluations, the selected experts - on conclusion of their contract - will have to sign a declaration certifying that they have no conflict of interests for the analysis concerned and that they without delay will inform the JTS if such conflict of interests should emerge during the course of the evaluation. There is a conflict of interests where the impartial and objective exercise of the functions of an evaluator is compromised for reasons involving family, emotional life or political affinity, economic interest or any other shared interest with the project applicants. Throughout the evaluation process, the evaluators must demonstrate the appropriate devotion to duty and observe the confidentiality of the information and documents brought to their attention during the process.
- The experts will carry out a written assessment of each project proposal on the basis of a State Aid evaluation Grid provided by the JTS.
- The experts will be expected to complete each section of the aforementioned evaluation grid with clear comments for each sub-section. The final recommendations must be presented in such a way as to provide sufficient information to justify the presence or not of risk of compliance with the State Aid discipline.
- The experts are required to uphold the integrity of the evaluation process. No information about analyzed proposals can be disclosed.
- Participation in a final meeting with the JTS if requested.

2.3.3 Expected results

For each project proposal one completed State Aid evaluation grid providing recommendation on the eventual risk of State Aid compliance.

An electronic version of the Evaluation Grid for selected proposals will be made available to the expert.

All experts are required to uphold the integrity of the evaluation process. No information about the examination, clarification, evaluation or comparison of proposals can be disclosed.

3. Use of tools

Selected experts are expected to use their own laptop/computers.

4. Equal Opportunities

Equal opportunities policy without distinction on the grounds of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation will be applied.

5. Location and duration

Most of the services listed at point 2.3.2 to be provided by the experts can be done at their own premises.

Meetings with the JTS will take place in Vienna (Austria) at the JTS premises.

Analysis of the received applications will take place and have to be finalized according to the calendar elaborated by the JTS CENTRAL EUROPE (assessment, revision and meetings).

6. Fee

Contracts will be standard task contracts at a project fee of EUR 200,- (VAT excluded). Travel and accommodation costs will be reimbursed according to the standard rules (e.g.: economic flight tickets).

7. Submission of applications

Interested individuals are invited to send the relevant documentation in English to the following e-mail address:

CENTRAL EUROPE JTS
Museumstrasse, 3/III/A
1070 Vienna, Austria
Fax: ++43 1 4000-99-76141
email: info@central2013.eu

In the subject of the correspondence please quote "CENTRAL EUROPE call for experts - State Aid".