

CEI Know-how Exchange Programme (KEP) KEP AUSTRIA

Call for Proposals 2014

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Deadline for the submission of Expressions of Interest: 30.05.2014



1. CEI Know-how Exchange Programme (KEP)

The Central European Initiative (CEI) is the oldest and largest regional forum for intergovernmental cooperation in Central-, Eastern- and South-Eastern Europe. It was established in 1989 and is currently composed of 18 Member States: Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine. The CEI aims to promote a cohesive and united Europe and in particular to assist its non-EU Member States in order to strengthen their capacities by promoting their socio-economic structures.

The CEI Know-how Exchange Programme (KEP) was launched in 2004 as a CEI cooperation instrument to provide capacity building, technical assistance and know-how transfer from CEI EU countries to CEI non-EU countries.

2. KEP AUSTRIA

KEP AUSTRIA represents a specific component of the KEP Programme. The Austrian Government has supported it since 2008 with resources made available by the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), based on a Grant Agreement between the CEI and the Austrian Development Agency (ADA). KEP AUSTRIA is managed by and based in the CEI Executive Secretariat in Trieste (Italy), which provides administrative and conceptual support to the CEI structure. KEP AUSTRIA offers grants to projects where know-how providers from EU CEI Member States transfer specific experience, best practices and knowledge to know-how recipients from non-EU CEI Member States.

KEP AUSTRIA shall support non-EU CEI Member States in getting closer to EU standards by providing effective support to organisations at national, subnational and local level and to improve their functioning through adequate expertise and consulting service. In order to reach this goal KEP AUSTRIA will:

- Promote economic, social and educational as well as training standards;
- Support transfer of knowledge, best practices and specific expertise accumulated during the EU accession process to non-EU CEI Members;
- Promote cooperation among organisations in CEI Member States.

3. Priority areas

Priority Areas have been identified by taking into account the country and sector strategies of the EU, the CEI Plan of Action, specific programmes of International Organisations and International Financial Institutions operating in the region (such as EBRD, OECD, UNECE, the World Bank), complying with development assistance objectives pursued in most of CEI EU Member States.

When drafting their proposals, applicants shall pay also attention to:

- Social development and social inclusion and removal of barriers to vulnerable social groups as well as to people with disabilities;
- Environmental impact in order not to pose any threat to the environment;
- Gender issues in order to counter barriers to participation of women.

KEP AUSTRIA Priority Areas for 2014-2016:

1. European Integration and related capacity building

- European integration (preparing for EU accession including assistance in setting up documents; improving skills of public administration; assistance when filing laws in accordance with EU requirements);
- Strengthening the rule of law through the introduction of European standards;
- Strengthening capacities of central administration (including institution building, improvement of efficiency and performance of State administration, application of high standards and transparency in civil service and training for civil servants);
- Strengthening administrative and educational structures at regional and local levels (including assistance when preparing development strategies, implementation of transparency measures for local government finance systems and human resources development with regard to local civil servants). Support to schools and universities (modern learning, necessary educational strategies in order to improve general living conditions)

2. Social and Economic Development, Inclusion and Equality

- Improvement of local labour market conditions and development of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprise sectors (including support to start-up SMEs, promotion of spin-offs and innovative enterprises, development of micro-credit schemes and SME financing);
- Addressing social inclusion, social dialogue; tackling gender inequalities, social exclusion and vulnerabilities; support to vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, ethnic minorities and youth; support youth participation in the economy and job creation;
- Strengthening the social advancement of recipient countries (support civil society structures and build capacities to act towards social inclusion, fighting poverty, promoting good governance, accountability, transparency; human rights-based approach and promotion of corporate responsibility).

3. Agriculture, Environment and Climate Change

- Sustainable agriculture and rural development (food safety and food quality, regulatory standards, farm development plans, development of infrastructure for wholesale trade of agricultural products, training of specialists in farming-related areas; promotion of rural and environmentally sensitive tourism).
- Environment (protection of the environment, waste management, water management and water resource development).
- Energy (energy efficiency, renewable energy, clean energy and climate change).

4. Eligible activities and Applicants

Projects should not promote general cooperation. Applicants should propose activities addressing specific problems and needs. This prerequisite also goes for national, European or International Financial Institutions in preparing projects constituting the basis for further investments.

Applicants should suggest a clear set of activities to the benefit of the recipient, which in the future could serve as a best practice for similar organisations. For more information, please consult the KEP Rules and Procedures.

Know-how provider and Know-how recipient

KEP AUSTRIA is open to all public and private companies and organizations, PPPs, international organizations and NGOs operating in the public interest, e.g. national, regional and local authorities, education/research institutions, and environmental organisations.

The minimum eligible partnership is composed of one subject from an EU CEI Member State (know-how provider) and one from an eligible non-EU CEI Member State (know-how recipient). The partnership is structured around these two subjects, one acting as “Applicant” and the other as “Main Partner”. Additional partners may also be included in the partnership. Small and well-focused partnerships are to be preferred to larger ones.

Within the scope of the KEP AUSTRIA Call for Proposals 2014:

- Know-how providers shall be from an EU CEI Member State: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia;
- Know-how recipients shall be from one of the following non-EU CEI Member States: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro and Serbia.

Project applicant

The role of Applicant can be performed both by know-how providers and know-how recipients. The Applicant is responsible for project implementation and for management of the KEP grant.

5. Grant, Submission of Expression of Interest

A grant awarded under this Call shall not exceed 50% of the total amount of a project. The KEP grant cannot exceed EUR 50.000,- (Euro fifty thousand) for each individual project.

Expressions of Interest shall be filled between April 10, 2014 and May 30, 2014 according to para A.7 of the KEP Rules and Regulations.

6. Application, evaluation and selection procedure

KEP AUSTRIA Call 2014 introduces a two-step application procedure, as described in the KEP Rules and Procedures (chapter B. Application, evaluation and selection procedure).

Expressions of Interest will be evaluated according to three criteria: a) Fulfilment of administrative requirements (type of project; eligibility of partners; budget; b) Compatibility with the KEP Priority Areas; c) Project setup and cost efficiency. Each criterion will be marked with a score from 0-10: Expressions of Interest crossing a threshold of 26/30 will be short-listed and will via email receive the Application Form by mid-June.

Short-listed Applicants will be invited to submit a full application. Application Forms will be evaluated according to the grid annexed to the KEP Rules and Procedures. Each question will be evaluated with a score from 0-10, with a threshold set at 125/140.

The CEI Executive Secretariat will elaborate a list of fundable projects and submit it to the Committee of CEI National Coordinators (CNC). The CNC will take the final decision on the approval or rejection of a proposal, according to the procedure described in paragraph B.3 of the KEP Rules and Procedures.

7. How to apply

The Applicant, in cooperation with the Main Partner, must submit the Expression of Interest by using the attached form.

Applicants shall thoroughly read the KEP Rules and Procedures and this Call. The Applicant is committed to implementing the project and bears the responsibility for the management of the KEP grant.

Expressions of Interest shall be submitted electronically indicating as subject: "KEP AUSTRIA Call 2014 – Country of the Applicant – Country of the Main Partner - Project short name". Expressions of Interest shall be submitted to the CEI Executive Secretariat (E-mail: kep@cei.int) and in copy to the CEI National Coordinator of the Applicant's country. Contact details of the CEI National Coordinators are available at <http://www.cei.int/contacts/National%2BCo-ordinators>.

The deadline for submitting the Expression of Interest is Friday 30.05.2014 (midnight CET). Expressions of Interest submitted after the deadline shall be considered as non-eligible.

For more information, please contact:

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8. Indicative timetable

Activity	Date
Publication of Call 2014	10.04.2014
Deadline for submission of Expressions of Interest	30.05.2014
Communication to short-listed Applicants and invitation to submit the Application Form	End of June
Deadline for submission of Application Forms by short-listed Applicants	End of July
Evaluation of Application Forms, selection and CNC approval	August
Communication to successful Applicants and start of project implementation	End of September