

1) Description of the Project

A. Description of the EU4Dialogue Programme

In the Eastern Partnership region, five of six countries are affected by conflicts: Armenia and Azerbaijan (over Nagorno-Karabakh), Georgia (Abkhazia and South Ossetia), the Republic of Moldova (Transnistria) and Ukraine (Crimea and Donbass). This action covers all the unresolved conflicts except the one affecting Ukraine. All these conflicts remain unresolved and, in some cases, continue to produce casualties.

Further efforts are therefore needed to move from the current *status quo* towards conflict resolution, and it is crucial that the populations across the conflict divides are engaged. Such engagement, in areas of common interest, can help create trust, change perceptions, improve conditions and help conflict transformation and diplomatic efforts towards conflict resolution.

The overall objective of this action is to contribute to the transformation of the unresolved conflicts in the EaP region. The three components will focus on:

- i) establishing an environment that can help defuse tension and foster better understanding across the conflict divides;
- ii) improving targeted sectors, including human security, for communities; and
- iii) improving exchanges across the divide through education and culture.

The overall duration of the programme is foreseen to last 48 months (2020-2024).

B. Description of the proposed project on improved exchange (regional, intra-regional and/or with the EU) through education and culture as means of conflict transformation

The European Commission wishes to work on this component of the overall programme through a consortium of Member States agencies **specialised in the external cooperation in the fields of education and culture** (for example Goethe Institute, DAAD, Alliance Francaise, Società Dante Alighieri, etc.¹). In case advisable, and due to the political sensitivity of the topic, the consortium can include or partner with appropriate NGOs to facilitate access to the conflict-affected communities. The experience that Member States agencies gained in implementing Erasmus+ and their own educational and cultural cooperation is seen as an asset for the implementation of the project in the EU Eastern neighbouring countries. The total amount of the EU contribution for this component is EUR 3.000.000, and co-financing – even limited – is expected from the participating Member State agency(ies) and/or from the beneficiary (to be provided along the planned 4 years of implementation). The agreement will be concluded either as a Delegation Agreement or in the form of a standard EU External Actions grant contract.

¹ This list is not exhaustive at all; it just aims at giving an idea of potential agencies. As explained, any MS relevant public or semi-public institution working in this area may consider applying.

2) Guidelines for your possible expression of interest

Should a Member State agency/ public or semi-public body be interested in managing this project, we would be grateful for its reply by 25/05/2020 (15:00 Brussels time) at the latest. Please send it to the following e-mail address: NEAR-C1@ec.europa.eu. Applicants can choose to express their interest either individually or as a group. Please note that this is not a competitive call for proposals.

Your reply should contain the following elements:

1. Key data about your organisation, including name, address, mandate, turnover, staff numbers per categories (and reference to a website presenting your organisation).
2. Statement of your organisation's interest, validated by an authorised representative.
3. Nature of the contribution of your organisation to the project (what are the expected results it would contribute to). Would your organisation implement the project using its own staff and recruit additional temporary staff specifically for the action (or both).
4. If contacts have been established with partners already, please mention who these partners would be, their statute and contribution to the project. Describe briefly the rationale of the partnership.
5. If proposed by the contracting authority (European Commission services DG NEAR), would your organisation be ready/have the experience to consider teaming up with other European partners?
6. Confirmation that your organisation is prepared to implement communication actions on this project to strengthen EU visibility and branding in close coordination with DG NEAR.
7. Would your organisation be ready to contribute financially to the implementation of the component, and if so, to what extent?
8. In case your organisation is being selected, would you be ready to lead a consortium? Or prefer to be a partner?

For the following questions, please provide a contribution of no more than 250 words per question

9. A brief summary of earlier activities of your organisation in the field of education and culture. In particular, activities linked to confidence building and conflict transformation – previous experience in the South Caucasus and Moldova should be highlighted.
10. What is the comparative advantage of your organisation for implementing the action (approach, expertise, experience of similar actions and/or of comparable country situations, expected remuneration, etc.)?
11. What is your experience in managing EU funds?
12. What would be the rationale and strategy of your organisation to achieving the expected results?
13. More specifically, how would your organisation support the EU's approach to conflict transformation and confidence building in the South Caucasus and Moldova?
14. If your organisation is ready to team up with other European partners, which would be this or these other implementing partner(s) and for which expected result(s). Please include as well information on why their involvement would be required.

Any requests for clarification need to be addressed to DG NEAR C1 (NEAR-C1@ec.europa.eu) at the latest by Tuesday, 25/05/2020 (15:00 Brussels time)