

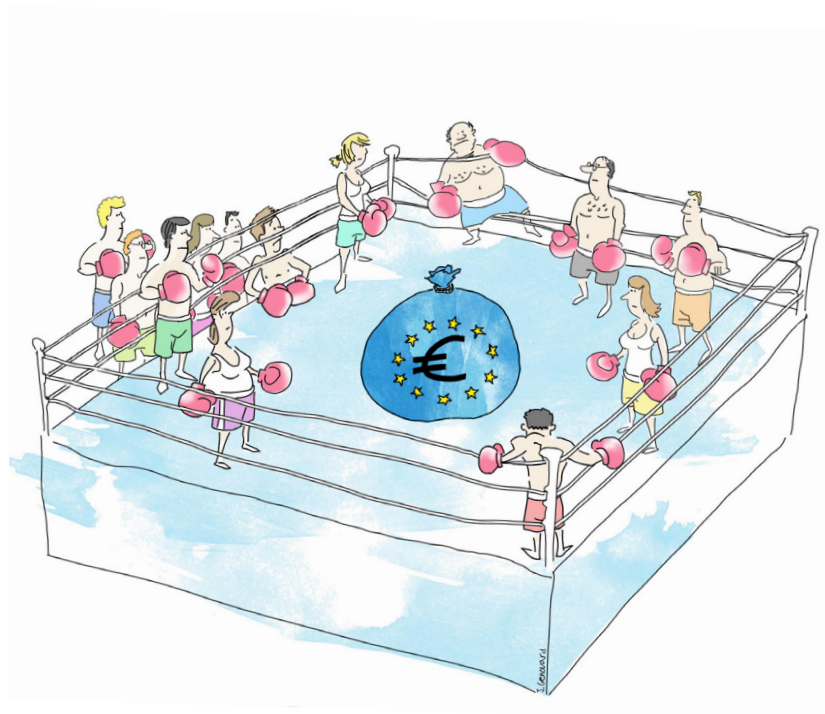


How to obtain EC Funding

10 key questions and answers

A Guide for NGOs Working in Developing Countries

Are you working for a Non Governmental Organisation (NGO) that implements development projects? Do you need funding for your NGO and wonder whether there is something offered by the European Commission that is available for you? If so, continue reading. This short Q & A guide presents in a simple and concise way, by highlighting the most important questions to consider, how you can find out if there are untapped opportunities and funds out there for your organisation.*



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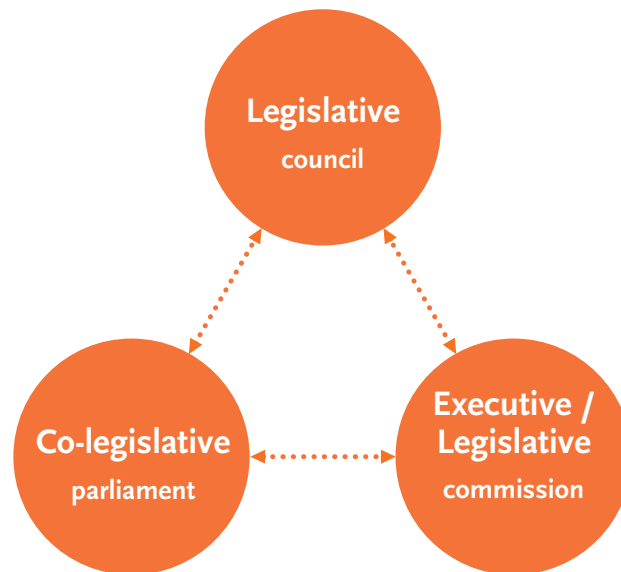
* The Q & A guide deliberately uses simple language, leaving aside some of the technical terms often used by the European Commission. It only focuses on information relevant for fundraising purposes, thus leaving aside information related to the policy-making role of the EU.



QUESTION 1: WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM EU FUNDING? *

What is the EU?

The European Union (EU)



The European Union (EU) is made of an Institutional Triangle composed of three institutions:

- The Council: legislative body
- The European Commission (EC): legislative and executive body
- The European Parliament (EP): co-legislative body

In the field of External Relations, there is a third body called the “European External Action Service” (EEAS), made up of representatives from the Council and the European Commission and representing the European Union). The EU has “embassies” in more than 100 countries; those embassies are called “European Union Delegations” and they belong to the EEAS.

The only executive body is the European Commission, which is the body in charge of implementing development policies and disbursing the EU Development budget to its “beneficiaries.” In contrast to the UN or other multilateral bodies such as the World Bank, the European Commission does not implement projects by itself, but always operates through beneficiaries who receive EC funds to implement projects, or programmes.

Who can benefit from EC external relations funding?

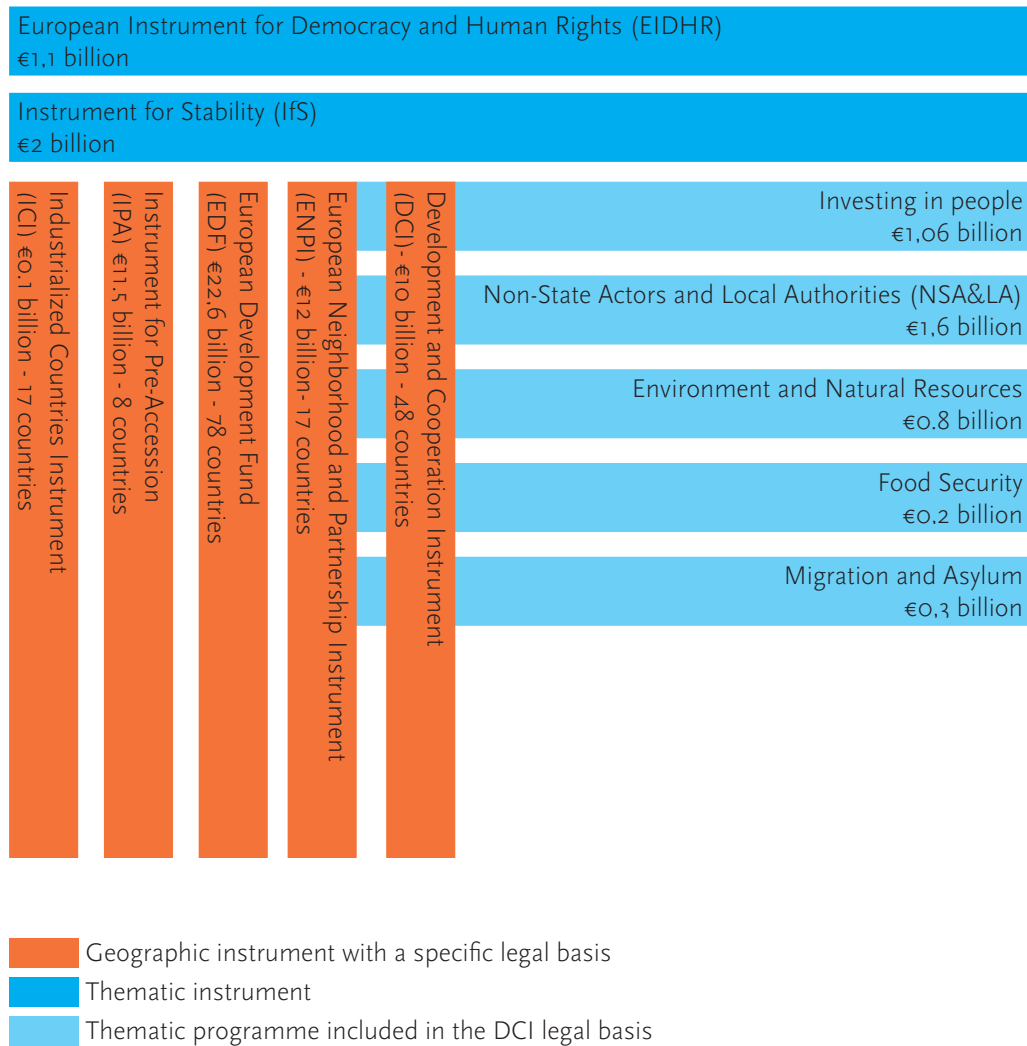
- Governments in developing countries
- Multilateral Organisations such as UNDP or the Council of Europe
- Civil Society Organisations such as Non-governmental Organisations, Labor Unions, Foundations, etc.
- Private companies.



QUESTION 2: HOW DOES THE EC SPEND ITS EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE BUDGET?

The External Aid budget amounts to approximately 9% of the EU budget, or about Euro 10.6 billion a year. The EC operates through Financial Instruments, which are large programmes of two sorts: Geographic and Thematic.

Financial Instruments (2007-2013)





It is important to understand the main differences between thematic and geographic instruments since they operate in different ways and benefit different bodies.



Geographic

- Budget (2007-2013): 55.6 billion Euro (77%)
- restricted geographic coverage: regional / national
- Mainly direct funding to beneficiary countries
- Country Strategy Papers / National Indicative Programmes



Thematic

- Budget (2007-2013): 16.7 billion Euro (23%)
- Global / thematic coverage
- Mainly funding to civil society organisations
- Thematic Strategy Papers / Annual Action Plan

As you can see, the main source of funding for Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) is represented by thematic instruments.



QUESTION 3: HOW DOES THEMATIC FUNDING WORK?

Each Thematic Instrument or programme covers a series of topics and each of them is explained in a series of related documents (see page 6 for the coverage of each instrument).

There are two methods for **awarding** EC grants:

Call for Proposals:

Can be published either by:

- Brussels
- EU Delegations in the field

Direct Awards:

Grants awarded directly to the beneficiary through direct negotiation.

This is an exceptional procedure only applied in emergency cases and with Multilateral Organisations.

Each Instrument/Programme is **channeled** through different methods:

Implementing Thematic Instruments

Local Call for Proposals	Brussels Call for Proposals	Direct Award
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- EIDHR Objective 2- INSA & LA- Instrument for Stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- EIDHR- Investing in People- Environment- Migration and Asylum- Food Security- Instrument for Stability - Peacebuilding Partnership- NSA & LA - European and Global projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Instrument for Stability- EIDHR - election observation, funding to Multilateral Organisations- Food Security - funding to Multilateral Organisations



QUESTION 4: WHAT ARE THE TOPICS COVERED BY EACH THEMATIC INSTRUMENT?

First of all, the content of each Instrument / Programme is introduced and developed extensively by a series of legal and programming documents produced by the EC, as we can see below:



In order to find out the extent to which the topic in which you are interested is covered by an Instrument it is necessary to read the Annual Action Programme of the Instrument/Programme. If the topic appears in that document as one of the priority fields then it means that there will be funding for it, otherwise not. Once you learn whether your topic is covered or not, you need to then figure out whether the EC is going to publish a call for proposals to identify projects in that area (information that you can find in the same document). The only exceptions to this principle are the topics covered by the call for proposals published by EU Delegations (EIDHR objective 3 and NSA&LA for the local budgets). The only way to know in advance which topics will be covered by the EU Delegations' call for proposals is to enquire directly with the EU Delegations in the country in which you are interested, after having checked in the Annual Action Programme whether that particular country can benefit from the local programme. To read more about the call for proposals, refer to Question 9 below.

On next pages is the overview of topics covered by each Thematic Instrument:



European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)

Budget (2007-2013): €1.1 billion Euro

Objective: Development and consolidation of democracy and all human rights

Specific Objectives:

1. Enhancing respect for Human Rights (HRs) and fundamental freedoms in countries and regions where they are most at risk;
2. Strengthening the role of civil society in promoting human rights and democratic reform;
3. Supporting actions on HRs and democracy issues in areas covered by EU Guidelines (related to death penalty, children, torture, women).
4. Supporting and strengthening the international justice framework;
5. Support to election observation missions.

DCI - Non State Actors and Local Authorities

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/dci/non_state_actors_en.htm

Budget (2007-2013): € 1.639 billion

Specific Objectives:

1. Promote an inclusive and empowered society in order to:
 - benefit populations out of reach of mainstream services and resources;
 - strengthen capacity of CSOs, to facilitate their participation in defining and implementing poverty reduction and sustainable development strategies;
 - facilitate interaction between State and non-State actors in different contexts;
2. Increase the level of awareness of the European citizen regarding development issues;
3. Facilitate a structured dialogue between civil society networks in EU countries and local authorities' associations.

DCI - Investing in People

http://ec.europa.eu/development/policies/ginterventionareas/humandev/humandevhealth7_en.cfm

Budget (2007-2013): € 1.060 billion

Main Objectives: human and social development, support EC's partner countries to achieve the MDGs

Main areas of intervention:

- Good health for all: 62% of the budget
- Education, knowledge and skills: 12%
- Gender equality: 5%
- Other aspects of human and social development: employment and social cohesion, children, youth and culture: 21%

DCI - Migration and asylum

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/dci/migration_en.htm

Budget: (2007-2010): € 0,384 billion

Main Objectives: capacity building in countries of origin, encouraging cooperation initiatives to develop and share experience working methods and best practices.



Specific objectives:

- Raising awareness about migration and development issues
- Promoting well-managed labour migration
- Working against illegal immigration and facilitating readmission of illegal immigrants
- Protecting against exploitation, exclusion and trafficking in human beings
- Promoting asylum, international protection and the protection of stateless persons

DCI - Environment and natural resources

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/dci/environment_en.htm

Budget (2007-2013): € 0,804 billion

Main Objectives: address the environmental dimension of development

Priorities:

- Assisting developing countries to make better progress on integrating environmental sustainability
- Promoting implementation of Community initiatives
- Increasing the prominence of environmental issues in EU external policy
- Strengthening international governance on the environment
- Broadening the options for sustainable energy including developing a legislative and administrative framework which favours investments and businesses

DCI - Food security

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/dci/food_en.htm

Budget (2007-2010): € 925 million

Main Objectives: address the structural causes of food insecurity with a focus on agriculture

Priorities:

- Research, innovation and information distribution
- Linking information and decision making
- Supporting continental and regional approaches
- Responding to transition situations and fragile states
- Promoting innovative approaches
- Encouraging the advancement of the food security programme

Stability Instrument

Budget (2007 – 2013): € 2 billion

Objective: prevent and respond to the threat to stability and human development posed by violent conflict and natural disasters, as well as to improve post-conflict and post-disaster recovery.

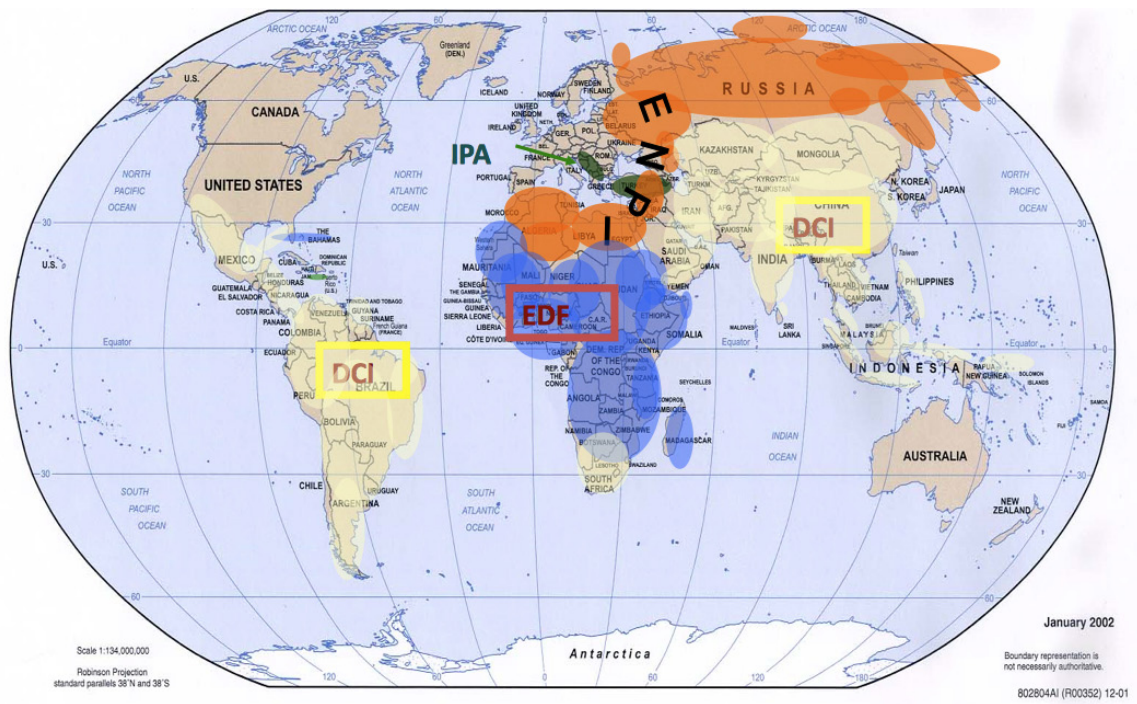
Main areas of intervention:

- Crisis response and preparedness (non Programmatic)
- Peacebuilding Partnership (CfPs): to strengthen the capacity of CSOs to prevent and respond to violent conflict and natural disasters
- Other: Mine Action, EU Small Arms, Non proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, International Co-operation Against Drugs



QUESTION 5: HOW DOES GEOGRAPHIC FUNDING WORK?

Each geographic instrument covers a different geographical zone as represented in the map below:



List of countries covered by each instrument:

Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA): Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, FYROM, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey. Budget: 11.5 billion Euro (1,64 billion/country)

European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI): Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Russia, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine. Budget: 12 billion Euro (0,7 billion/country)

European Development Fund (EDF): African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. Budget: 22.6 billion Euro (0,28 billion/country)

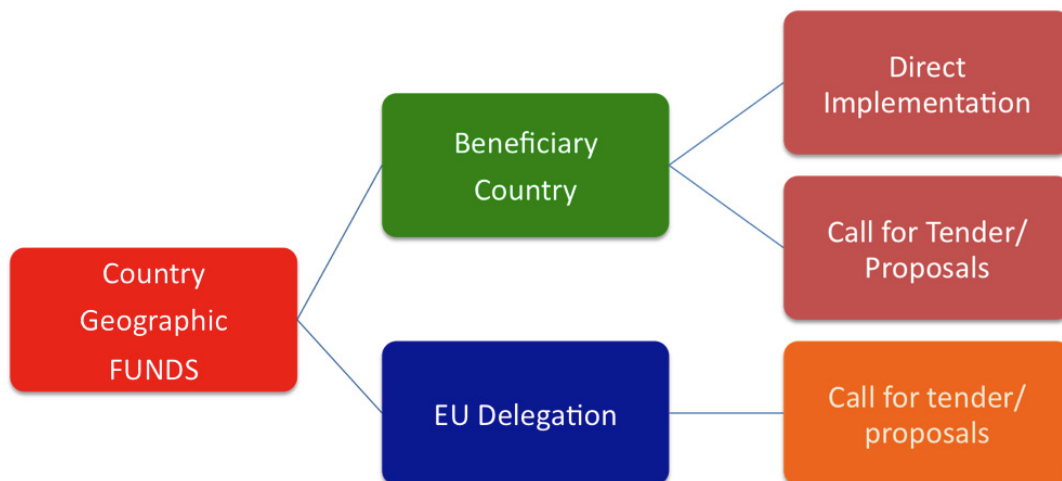
Development Co-operation Instrument (DCI): Developing countries not covered by the ENPI and EDF. Budget: 10 billion Euro (0,20 billion/country)



How does the EC identify the beneficiaries of the aid it gives through geographic instruments? This type of aid benefits mainly governments in partner countries. The EU allocates a budget to each country and then negotiates with the local government of the beneficiary country.



Once the EU and the beneficiary government have agreed on the content of the programme, i.e. how the EU funds will be spent, they can move to the implementation phase. How are geographic funds spent? There are different options:



If the beneficiary country does not have the capacity to spend or manage the EU funds on its own, the EU Delegation may administer those funds and distribute them through a call for tenders (mainly benefiting private companies) or through a call for proposals (benefiting CSOs). The government can also decide to spend part of its geographic funds through a call for proposals through which CSOs could receive grants financed with EU funds but managed by the government.

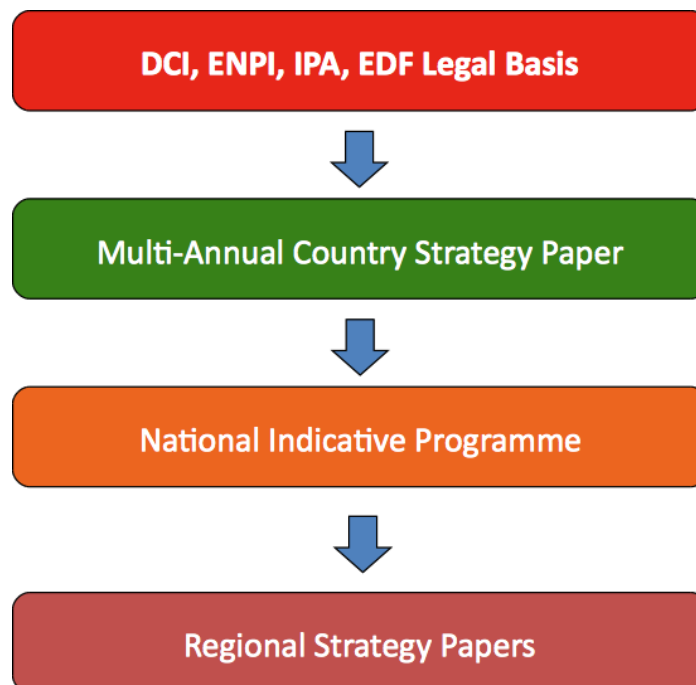


QUESTION 6: HOW DO I KNOW ABOUT THE TOPICS COVERED IN EACH COUNTRY?

This is an important question since only if your topic has been identified as a priority there will be a chance of obtaining funding for projects related to that topic.

The priorities covered with EU funding in each country are included in a series of EC documents:

Programming Financial Geographic Instruments



It is recommended that you read the Annual Indicative Programme of the country in which you are interested in order to figure out the extent to which the topic in which you are interested is covered or not by the EU funding in the country. Unfortunately, there is no simple way to know what the country will do in order to address a given topic and if it will or not publish a call for proposals for CSOs. The only way to find out that information is by enquiring either with the EU Delegation in the country or with the National Authorities responsible for managing EU funds.

All those documents are public and available in the websites of the European Commission and the EU Delegations:

http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/delegations/web_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/sp/index.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/development/geographical/methodologies/strategypapers10_en.cfm



QUESTION 7: WHERE DO I FIND OUT ABOUT OPEN CALLS FOR PROPOSALS?

Luckily, the European Commission publishes all call for proposals which are either covered under one of the thematic programmes, or through geographic funds but published and managed by the EU Delegations.

All those calls can be found under: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/index_en.htm



This is the gateway page to Europeaid project funding. At the left, click on the “Work with Us” link and move on to the next page.

How to participate?

Once inside the Europeaid gateway, the page you see below provides more information on Funding opportunities for NGOs that wish to work on development aid projects. Go to the “Funding” box. You can either click on “overview”, which takes you to the page below, or you can click on the “Calls for proposals & Procurement notices” link to go straight to the main Calls for Proposals search engine as seen in the last web page/screen capture below.





Now, under Grants, go to the bottom where you see “Those intending to apply for a grant should consult the calls for proposals.” Click on the “calls for proposals” link.

The screenshot shows the 'Funding' section of a website. It includes a navigation menu on the left, a main content area with sections for 'Grants' and 'Contracts', and a 'Related Links' sidebar on the right. A red circle highlights the text 'Calls for proposals' at the bottom of the Grants section, which is part of a sentence: 'Those intending to apply for a grant should consult the [calls for proposals](#).'

You have now arrived at the main “Calls for proposals & Procurement notices” search engine (below). Click on the “Advanced search” tab and start your search by type: “Grants”, by Programme, and by Region or Country.

The screenshot shows the 'Online Services' search engine interface. It features a search bar at the top, a navigation menu, and a list of search results. A red circle highlights the 'Subventions' type filter, and another red circle highlights the 'Région/Pays' dropdown menu. The search results table includes columns for 'Référence de l'appel', 'Titre', 'Type', 'Zone Géographique', 'Programme', and 'Budget'.

Référence de l'appel	Titre	Type	Zone Géographique	Programme	Budget
EuropeAid/126814/L/ACT/PH	Dialogue on Governance: Strategic Projects Facility (SPF2) first call for proposals	Ouvert	Asie et Asie centrale	Asie et Asie centrale	4,807,600 (EUR)
EuropeAid/127762/C/ACT/Multi	Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development - Actions in partner countries (in-country)	Cloûré	Tous Pays	Acteurs non étatiques et autorités locales	9,750,000 (EUR)
EuropeAid/127815/L/ACT/PH	Call for Proposal - Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development - Actions in the Philippines	Ouvert	Philippines	Acteurs non étatiques et autorités locales	3,000,000 (EUR)
EuropeAid/127879/D/SER/SB	Technical Assistance to the Rural Advancement Micro-project Programme in the Solomon Islands	Ouvert	Iles Salomon	Afrique, Caraïbes et Pacifique	969,000 (EUR)
EuropeAid/127956/D/SUP/HW	SUPPLY OF FALLING WEIGHT DEFLECTOMETER EQUIPMENT	Ouvert	Malawi	Afrique, Caraïbes et Pacifique	
EuropeAid/128041/C/SER/Multi	Energy Efficiency in Construction Sector - Phase II (MED-ENE-11)	Prévu	Méditerranéen	Méditerranéen Programme Environnement	5,000,000 (EUR)
EuropeAid/127854/D/SER/KOS	Development of Quality Assurance, Accreditation and development of NQA & NQF	Prévu	Kosovo	Pays en phase de préadhésion / Nouveaux Etats membres	2,000,000 (EUR)
EuropeAid/127865/D/SER/KOS	Municipal Social and Economic Infrastructure	Prévu	Kosovo	Pays en phase de préadhésion / Nouveaux Etats membres	1,400,000 (EUR)
EuropeAid/127898/D/SER/AR	Proyecto de Fortalecimiento del Sistema de Protección de los Derechos Humanos - Contrato de Servicios de Capacitación e Intercambio de Experiencias	Prévu	Argentine	Amérique latine	792,495 (EUR)
EuropeAid/127923/D/SUP/AR	EQUIPOS PARA LABORATORIO	Prévu	Argentine	Amérique latine	
EuropeAid/127928/C/SER/KE	EC Flight Service for Somalia Kenya - Somalia	Prévu	Kenya	Afrique, Caraïbes et Pacifique	16,000,000 (EUR)
EuropeAid/127938/C/SER/AL	EU Information Center Management	Prévu	Albanie	Pays en phase de préadhésion / Nouveaux Etats membres	250,000 (EUR)
EuropeAid/127987/L/WKS/AL	"Works for Refurbishment of 17 Special Operative Groups (SOGs) in Albania"	Ouvert	Albanie	Pays en phase de préadhésion / Nouveaux Etats membres	250,000 (EUR)
EuropeAid/128030/L/ACT/EG	Local Cultural Activities in Egypt - 2009	Ouvert	Egypte	Voisinage	250,000 (EUR)
EuropeAid/128065/M/ACT/JO	Strengthening the Role of Jordanian Civil Society in Public Policy				

However, be careful with the research! Calls for proposals benefiting civil society but issued by the governments with geographic funds are not published in that website.

Search tool: it is recommended to search separately by thematic instrument (according to the topic in which you are interested) and by country, since the results will be different.



QUESTION 8: HOW DO I KNOW WHETHER I CAN APPLY OR NOT?

The Commission publishes very detailed guidelines with each call for proposals. You need to read those guidelines carefully and pay particular attention to the following criteria:

Substantive criteria: priorities of the call, list of countries covered, type of activities, maximum budget.

Eligibility criteria: type of organisations that can apply, legal status, etc.

Administrative criteria: registration, signature of the proposal

QUESTION 9: IF I CAN APPLY, HOW DO I WRITE A GOOD PROPOSAL?

The EC calls for proposals are extremely competitive. For some of the calls, as little as 5 or 6 proposals out of 100 will be selected. It is therefore not sufficient to write just a good proposal; the proposal has to be outstanding in order to have a viable chance of being selected.

inProgress will soon publish a document for free on the ten steps to write a good proposal. If you are interested please register to our newsletter.

inProgress also offers proposal drafting courses given by experts who have previously worked for the European Commission.

QUESTION 10: WHICH STEPS SHOULD I FOLLOW IN ORDER TO GET EC FUNDING?

1. Make a list with the topics you are searching funding for and the countries in which you want to work or already work in. As an example, imagine you are searching for funding for a project on children in armed conflict in Nepal.
2. Check the list of thematic instruments and identify those which could be potentially interesting. In this case the EIDHR and Investing in People could be of potential interest.
3. Read the Annual Action Plan of the relevant instruments. In our example, EIDHR and Investing in People.
4. Check whether your topic is mentioned in the Annual Action Plan and, if so, whether there is a call for proposals planned for this year.
5. Check on a regular basis the Devco website for the announcement of the call for proposals, and submit yours when it goes live.
6. In parallel, you should also read the Annual Indicative Programme for the country in which you are interested. Nepal in our example.
7. If you see that your topic is mentioned in the Indicative Programme, then check the website of the EU Delegation to see whether you find information about a call for proposals for CSOs.
8. If not, contact the EU Delegation or the government of the country inquiring about an upcoming call for proposals in your area of interest.

About the author:

This article reflects the knowledge and informed perspective of Sonia Herrero, Director of inProgress. Sonia worked for over a decade with both the NGO sector and the European Commission, where she worked as a grants officer in the External Relations Department (Europeaid) for six years. This professional experience has given her a wealth of in-depth knowledge and expertise on how the European Union system works.