



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

CALL 1 FOR APPLICATION WITH CONCEPT NOTES

Under the Territorial Strategy

Strategic objective “To enhance growth in all its aspects”

Specific objective 2 – “To enhance regional competitiveness, incl. in the area of tourism”, Measures 2.2 and 2.3

in the framework of (INTERREG VI-A) IPA Bulgaria Serbia Programme 2021-2027, CCI Number: 2021TC16IPCB007

No.	Question received	Answer provided
1	<p>Received on 12.07.2023 on the Info day in Montana: How can we get the presentations from the info day?</p>	<p>The presentations are published on the Programme's web site, available at: www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu.</p>
2	<p>Received on 25.07.2023 via E-mail: What you exactly consider under the term „Capitalization potential of the project idea“? In the GUIDE FOR APPLICATION WITH CONCEPT NOTES (Call 1 for Concept Notes) under the QUALITY CRITERIA FOR STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT OF CONCEPT NOTES one of the criteria is „Capitalization potential of the project idea“. Can you explain more</p>	<p>Capitalization in the context of Interreg programmes refers to the approach of reusing and building on results of previous similar projects and initiatives. For more detail information, you may want to consult the following documents: https://www.interact-eu.net/library#4264-presentation-interreg-conundrum-how-reuse-and-build-results-and-remain-relevant-new-ideas and https://www.interact-eu.net/library#4247-ikf-materials-how-build-results-previous-projects-23-may</p>



	<p>precisely what the Programme consider under this term. Different EU funded programs have developed their own definition as well as practices of „Capitalization“ , so it will be good to know how the BG-RS Programme consider this term.</p>	
<p>I. <u>JeMS and Registration</u></p>		
<p>3</p>	<p>Received on 17.07.2023 during the Info Day in Zajecar Does the Lead applicant have to give privileges to other partners for work in JEMS?</p>	<p>No, the Lead applicant may decide not to grant access rights to other partners. Please, go to section 3 ‘User Management’ of the Jems Manual (Annex 5) for more information.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot Can two persons from the same organization work on one application/concept note?</p>	<p>Section 3 ‘User Management’ of the Jems Manual provides detail information how to structure the work on the concept note. Please, make sure you have consulted the last paragraph ‘Risk of overwriting information’.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot Is concept note to be submitted only by the Lead applicant, or could it be submitted also by other partners?</p>	<p>Please, go to section 3 ‘User Management’ of the Jems Manual (Annex 5) for more information. In short, only users with EDIT or MANAGE privilege rights can submit the proposal.</p>
<p>II. <u>Eligibility of Applicants and Activities</u></p>		
<p>6</p>	<p>Received on 26.06.2023. via e-mail: Our NGO is registered in Pernik, but the place, where we settle our events and develop as a place for tourism is in the village of Sgurovo in the Kjustendil district. Should we apply in Bulgaria-Serbia or Bulgaria-North Macedonia INTERREG IPA Programme?</p>	<p>Criteria for applicants’ eligibility under the 1st Call with concept notes under the Territorial Strategy of the INTERREG VI-A IPA Bulgaria- Serbia Programme 2021-2027 are defined in the Guide for Application with Concept Notes (Call1) in p. 4.5. 1. “Eligible lead and project partners are legally established:”, page 14.</p> <p>Lead Partners and project partners must comply with the general eligibility criteria to “be legally established local/regional bodies and authorities (incl. regional structures of central public authorities and statutory bodies); Regional and sectoral development agencies, and business support structures; NGOs and other socio-economic partners; Academic, research, training and cultural institutions. All project partners, including lead partners, must be non-profit, registered and operate in the Programme area at least 3</p>



		years prior to the application. In line with the territorial focus of the Call. District of Pernik is eligible area only under the (Interreg VI-A) IPA Bulgaria Serbia Programme.
7	<p>Received on 03.07.2023. via e-mail:</p> <p>The definition of “NGOs” include also religious organizations. Could you confirm that such organizations and precisely the church boards (църковните настоятелства) are eligible?</p>	The Bulgarian Law on Non-Profit Legal Entities (BLNPLE) is not applicable for bodies of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church - Bulgarian Patriarchate. Yet, the Church Boards are legal bodies which manage the work of the Bulgarian Patriarchate, but their legal personality is regulated in other acts different from the BLNPLE. Therefore, Church Boards in Bulgaria are not eligible partners under the conditions of Call 1.
8	<p>Received on 20.07.2023. via e-mail:</p> <p>Regarding Call 1 for Concept Notes-IPA Bulgaria Serbia Programme 2021-2027, according to the Guidelines, at least 60% of the proposed budget should be investment.</p> <p>Our question is: Is development of digital platform with mobile phones software application considered to be an investment?</p>	The definition of the investment component, as required by the current Call 1 is, ‘works and/or supply’. Sections ‘Call 1 in a nutshell’ (bullet “Financial aspects”), 4.1 (Contribution to the objectives of the Territorial Strategy), 4.6 (Scope of project activities) and 6 (Project ideas identification process) set out this definition.
9	<p>Received on 17.07.2023 during the Info Day in Zajecar</p> <p>Under which budget category we should foresee the costs for media publications advertising materials that are not directly related to organization of events? Are those costs planned according to the real cost option?</p>	Costs for media publications advertising materials, not planned strictly for organization of an event, are to be planned under budget category 4, as real costs.
10	<p>Received on 17.07.2023 during the Info Day in Zajecar</p> <p>In case of organization of a mass event (for example 200 people on a 2-day mass event) – the approximate sum for this event is 28000 euro, if the amount is foreseen on the basis of a unit cost option. Do we need to plan for and conduct a tender procedure for this cost? What documents, related to this expenditure are to be “checked” prior to reimbursement?</p>	Detail information about spending and reporting of costs, regardless of their types, shall be provided at a later stage to applicants who will be invited to submit full project proposal. At a concept note level, this information is of no relevance. Section 4.7. Scope of project costs indicates provisions related to procurement.



11	<p>Received on 17.07.2023 during the Info Day in Zajecar</p> <p>Is it possible that none of the partners are registered in JEMS, but still be listed in the application as a project partner or a lead partner?</p>	Yes, it is possible.
12	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot</p> <p>Our institution is still implementing a project under the current Programme Bulgaria – Serbia. Could we still apply? There is no such restriction in the Programme documents.</p>	There is no such restriction in the current Guidelines for applicants.
13	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot</p> <p>How many more Calls under the Programme 2021- 2027 will be there?</p>	There is an indicative annual work Programme for 2023, available at the web-site of the Programme, at: http://www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu/2020-news/indicative-annual-work-programme-2023 . The publication of further Calls under the Programme will depend on the outcome of these, and will be properly announced.
14	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot</p> <p>Could support to churches be considered as eligible?</p>	The eligible partners under the current Call are defined in the section 4.5.1 of the Guidelines for applicants.
15	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot</p> <p>Is the amount of up to 20% of the direct costs for BC1 valid both for real costs and flat rate?</p>	Irrespectively of the selected option, the maximum rate of the staff costs is up to 20 % of the eligible costs under BC 4, BC 5 and BC 6 of the project budget of the respective partner.
16	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot</p> <p>Do the 73 EUR foreseen as unit costs include also the travelling and accommodation?</p>	<p>According to the Guidelines for applicants, the unit costs option includes the following types of expenditures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expenses for rent of hall for meetings, trainings, conferences, etc. - Expenses for rent of equipment - translation equipment, audio equipment, etc. - The expenditure for rent of vehicle for participants in the events (car, van, minibus,



		<p>bus, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expenses for coffee breaks, refreshments, lunches and dinners for participants in the events; - Accommodation costs; - Expenses for purchase of consumables and materials for the participants in the events - paper, files, folders, cases, CDs etc. and printing of invitations, agenda, presentations.
17	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot In case there are different events to be organized, could different cost options (real costs or unit costs) be applied for their planning and realization?</p>	<p>One project partner selects one cost option applicable to all of their events.</p>
18	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot As of which date are the costs for project preparation eligible for Serbian beneficiaries?</p>	<p>By Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of 24 June 2021, art. 63, the time eligibility of Project preparation costs starts from January 1, 2021, unless otherwise specified in the respective Call documents. Please, note that this type of costs can be claimed only in the full project proposal. In the budget of the concept note are only indicated.</p>
19	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot Could an external PRAG expert be considered an eligible cost?</p>	<p>The scope of the project costs is described in the section 4.7 Scope of the project costs, under the present Guidelines for applicants. The eligibility of different budget subcategories will be described in the Guidelines for applicants of FPP and their relevance would be subject of assessment at the stage of full application proposals submission.</p>
20	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot Considering the indicators, could the quantification of the indicators be changed in the full project proposal?</p>	<p>Call 1 does not set rules and conditions for preparing full project proposals (FPP). The Guidelines for applicants for submission of FPP will be attached to the invitation for submission of FPP.</p>
21	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot What would happen with a project idea/proposal should</p>	<p>Call 1 does not set rules and conditions for preparing full project proposals (FPP). The Guidelines for applicants for submission of FPP will be attached to the invitation for submission of FPP.</p>



	one partner decide to leave in any of the identification stages, following the submission of the project idea?	
22	<p>Received on 01.08.2023. via e-mail:</p> <p>Can we as an NGO, according to the rules of the Interreg VI-A Program Bulgaria-Serbia 2021-2027, reconstruct the old school, of course with the agreement of the municipality?</p> <p>If it is allowed, what kind of document should we obtain (consent of the municipality or contract with the municipality or other)?</p>	<p>According to the Guide for Application with Concept Notes and the eligibility requirements for investment activities, works of building new or rehabilitating existing infrastructure should be carried out exclusively on state-owned or municipal property and only the owner of the respective property rights, or the legal body that has acquired the management rights of that particular property, is entitled to contract the implementation of those activities, i.e. it should be a project partner. (p. 16 of the Guide for Application with Concept Notes (Call1).</p> <p>The documents of the properties that works shall be carried will be subject to eligibility check when applying with the full project proposal. The respected legal documents according to national legislation issued in the name of the respective project partner clearly evidencing the municipal or state ownership of the tangible assets, which will be subject of works activities should be presented with the full project proposal.</p>
III. Applicant's Guide and Annexes		
23	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot</p> <p>Is electronic signature on Annexes valid?</p>	Electronic forms of signatures are valid.
24	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot</p> <p>Do the signatures have to be original, or could they be scanned, considering that they have to be coordinated among all the partners?</p>	The scanned signatures on the Annexes are acceptable at this stage.
25	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot</p> <p>Considering that the entire Call and the deadline fall under months of summer vacations, and that this is a new Programme, and there is only one month left until the deadline, could the deadline for submission of project</p>	The Managing Authority of the Programme does not foresee extension of the deadline. The announced Call 1 invites project partners to submit concept notes and not full project proposals. This makes the Call time-efficient and user-friendly, considering the lack of need to attach supporting documents that are normally (under a traditional call) required.



	concepts be extended?	
26	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot</p> <p>Following the information received on selection of a particular project idea for funding, how much time will be given to the potential candidates to develop the full project application</p>	<p>According to the Indicative timeline presented in the Guidelines for applicants, the launch of the targeted Call is expected in the December 2023. It is expected that the Call will be launched for a period of 3 months.</p>
27	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot</p> <p>In case the project idea is invited for further step, would there be similar requirements to previous Calls in terms of submission of documentation, such as construction permits, etc?</p>	<p>Call 1 does not set rules and conditions for preparing full project proposals (FPP). The Guidelines for applicants for submission of FPP will be attached to the invitation for submission of FPP. It is, however, expected that the relevant construction documentation should be presented with the full application, upon invitation.</p>
28	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot</p> <p>Will there be changes about the amount of eligible costs for daily allowance for travelling abroad vis-à-vis the current Programming period?</p>	<p>Call 1 does not set rules and conditions for preparing full project proposals (FPP). The Guidelines for applicants for submission of FPP will be attached to the invitation for submission of FPP. It is however, expected that each potential applicant follows the internal and national regulations related to the planning of the expenditures for daily allowance.</p>
29	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot</p> <p>When should relevant construction permit be submitted – together with the full project proposal application, or prior to the Subsidy Contract signature</p>	<p>Call 1 does not set rules and conditions for preparing full project proposals (FPP). The Guidelines for applicants for submission of FPP will be attached to the invitation for submission of FPP. It is, however, expected that the relevant construction documentation should be presented with the full application, upon invitation.</p>
30	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot</p> <p>Which kind of market research would be needed for BC5?</p>	<p>All questions of FPP relevance will be answered once the invitation for submission of FPP is launched. For the purposes of Call 1 this question is of no relevance. Call 1 does not set rules and conditions for preparing full project proposals (FPP). The Guidelines for applicants for submission of FPP will be attached to the invitation for submission of FPP.</p>
31	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot</p> <p>In the PMDP, do we insert the time needed for collection</p>	<p>At this stage, it is very important for applicants to identify all key preparatory steps (incl. related paperwork and documents) that would ensure smooth and predictable start of</p>



	of documentation, or for the implementation of those works?	the project upon contracting, and to describe them properly and in details in the PMDP. Last column of the table in the PMDP indicates ‘implementation time’ for all described in the table steps that, however, lead only to achieving project maturity when submitting full project proposal.
32	Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot According to which rules would the procurement procedures be realized for Serbian beneficiaries?	The procurement rules for Serbian beneficiaries will be done in accordance with Annex II of the Financing Agreement between the European Commission and the Republic of Serbia. It is expected that PRAG will be the leading act to follow.
IV. Budget Forecast		
33	Received on 13.07.2023 on the Info day in Kyustendil: As I understood from the presented information, about 8 million EUR have been allocated for the present Call. Does this mean that in case the budgets of all project ideas that are invited to submit a full project proposal are close to the €1 million ceiling, around 8 projects will be funded in total?	The total amount of the funded projects cannot exceed the total budget of the call, which is 8,529,412 EUR. If the budgets of all projects approved for financing are close to the maximum ceiling of 1 million EUR, then actually will be funded maximum 8-9 projects.
34	Received on 13.07.2023 on the Info day in Kyustendil: The maximum eligible amount for the project preparation cost is up to 12,000 EUR, regardless of the number of partners in the project. Will be this amount subject to documentary verification in the process of verification of the expenditures?	No. The cost for the project preparation will be reimbursed on a lump sum basis and it is not subject to verification under the programme.
35	Received on 13.07.2023 on the Info day in Kyustendil: If we submit a project idea with a budget of 1 million EUR, but we want to include additional own co-financing for e.g. 200,000 EUR, where should this information be stated?	Information on the additional voluntary own contribution is not required at the concept notes application stage. At the current application stage with project concepts, it will be considered whether the budget forecast is within 500,000 to 1,000,000 EUR, as well as the compliance with the mandatory percentage of the investment component. In case you are invited to submit a full project proposal, you will have to submit a detailed budget breakdown, where you will necessarily have to reflect the own contribution of the respective partner, where applicable. In case you want to state voluntary beneficiary own contribution at the stage of application with concepts, you are advised to do it in the offline template of the Application form.



36	<p>Received on 21.07.2023 via email:</p> <p>The costs for participation in events under “External expertise and services costs (BC 4) are limited to 18 and 73 euro per participant, depending of the event. My question is, are that costs includes VAT or VAT need to be calculate in addition on that amount?</p>	<p>Yes, these costs are calculated <u>with</u> VAT.</p>
37	<p>Received on 21.07.2023 via email:</p> <p>The staff costs (BC 1) for project’s management can be reimburse as a flat rate or on basis of real costs. Can we choose the option for flat rate of the stuff costs, in case that the management team of the partner include experts of the partner and external experts?</p>	<p>Please, note that the remuneration of external experts cannot be budgeted under BC 1. It is eligible cost under BC 4.</p>
38	<p>Received on 21.07.2023 via email:</p> <p>Is it eligible to plan in the project’s budget costs for staff related with implementation of project’s activities (for example Marketing expert)? If YES, in which BC we need to plan the costs for that expert – in BC 1 – Stuff costs?</p>	<p>The description of budget category BC 1 Staff costs in section 4.7 of the GfA says that this is the category where costs of staff involved in the implementation of the project can also be considered.</p>
39	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot</p> <p>Will changes to the budget forecast of the concept note be allowed at the full project proposal stage?</p>	<p>Applicants should bear in mind that while changes to the budget forecast of the concept note at the stage of submission of full project proposals might be possible, they should carefully consider the eligibility of project costs in terms of type of costs and budgetary ranges and ceilings. Call 1 does not set rules and conditions for preparing full project proposals (FPP). The Guidelines for applicants for submission of FPP will be attached to the invitation for submission of FPP.</p>
40	<p>Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Pirot</p> <p>It appears that the column for additional own co-financing is not functioning in the Annex. When will it become functional?</p>	<p>Information on the additional voluntary own contribution is not required at the concept notes application stage. At the current application stage with project concepts, it will be considered whether the budget forecast is within 500,000 to 1,000,000 EUR, as well as the compliance with the mandatory percentage of the investment component. In case you are invited to submit a full project proposal, you will have to submit a detailed</p>



		budget breakdown, where you will necessarily have to reflect the own contribution of the respective partner, where applicable. In case you want to state voluntary beneficiary own contribution at the stage of application with concepts, you are advised to do it in the offline template of the Application form.
41	<p>Received on 26.07.2023 via E-mail</p> <p>Is there any limit for small promotional gifts, both in budget and numbers? As example. We would like to have promotional event on our new biking trail with 200 bikers and we would like to give promotional gift to all of them consisting of backpack, hat and bike shirt or cycling jersey. Some EU funded programmes has a limit up to 50EUR, what is regulation for this BG-RS Programme? Where and how those costs have to budgeted? Since we will distribute promotional gifts on event, are promotional gifts are part of unit costs for events (even they are not “Services costs for organisation of events”)?</p>	All questions of FPP relevance will be answered once the invitation for submission of FPP is launched. What is important to consider is that project partners decide themselves how to budget their project idea in respect of the announced Call rules, their justification and the project idea itself.
42	<p>Received on 26.07.2023 via E-mail</p> <p>Unit costs for events. Services costs for organisation of events shall be reimbursed either on the basis of a unit cost or on the basis of real costs. The unit costs are defined according to the duration of the event and number of participants. The unit costs for event organisations is the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18,00 EURO per participant in one day events; • 73,00 EURO per participant in multi-day events; <p>If we choose the unit cost, does it mean that only number of participants on the event is counting. So, it doesn't matter how many of them will be transported from point A to point B and how much it will cost, how many of them and where will be sleeping (accommodated) and how</p>	This interpretation is not correct. Section 4.7 of the GfA defines the types of expenditures that the unit cost approach covers. This means that there should be corresponding documents against each of the made expenditures.



	much it will cost, how big or (in)expensive hall for event will be etc.	
<u>V. Assessment Process</u>		
43	Received on 12.07.2023 on the Info day in Montana: Can we get to know the composition of the Strategic Council somewhere?	The composition of the Strategic board is published on the Programme's web site: http://www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu/bq/node/28382 .
44	Received on 13.07.2023 on the Info day in Kyustendil: If all Project development maturity plans received the maximum of 20 points, will the preliminary readiness of the relevant documents/technical documentation be taken into account in the assessment?	No. The GfA of Call 1 does not envisage such treatment of applicants. The score of the Maturity criteria will have a decisive power only when prioritizing equally scored projects. For more information, please see Section 6 'Project identification process' of the GfA.
45	Received on 19.07.2023 during the Info Day in Piro Would there be assessment procedure for the full project application proposals, also?	There will be screening, rather than assessment process, against some criteria for programme compliance. The main assumption is that identified project ideas (excluding the reserve ones), as outcome of Call 1, become successful full project proposals and eventually get funded.