

Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro 2014-2020

Call for Proposals no. 1

Guidelines for Applicants

Deadline for reception of applications: 10 June 2016

Table of Contents

Legal Basis	4
1. GENERAL INFORMATION	6
1.1. Overview of the Programme.....	6
1.1.1. Objectives and priorities	7
1.1.2. Programme strategy	9
1.1.3. Programme area	9
1.2. Programme management structure	11
1.3. Financial Allocation and sizes of grants	12
1.4. Implementation period	13
1.5. Programme indicators.....	13
1.6. State Aid	14
1.7. Revenue generating projects	14
1.8. Contributions in kind.....	15
2. RULES FOR THE 1 st CALL FOR PROPOSALS	16
2.1. Cross border relevance	16
2.2. Horizontal principles	17
2.3. Eligibility criteria.....	17
2.3.1. Eligibility of Applicants (Lead Partner and Project Partners).....	18
2.3.2. Eligibility of Activities	22
2.3.3. Eligibility of Expenditures.....	28
3. HOW TO APPLY	32
3.1. The content of Application package	32
3.2. Where and how to send the applications.....	32
3.3. Deadline for receipt of applications.....	34
3.4. Further information	34
4. ASSESSMENT AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS	35
4.1. Assessment and selection.....	35
4.2. Contracting.....	45
4.3. Indicative timetable	47



4.4. Resolution of Complaints.....	48
4.5. Data protection.....	50
5. ANNEXES.....	51

Legal Basis

In the elaboration of these Guidelines for Applicants the following legal provisions have been observed:

CPR	REGULATION (EU) No 1303/2013 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006
ETC Regulation	REGULATION (EU) No 1299/2013 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 17 December 2013 on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European territorial cooperation goal
Delegated ETC Regulation	Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 481/2014 of 4 March 2014 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to specific rules on eligibility of expenditure for Cooperation programmes
ERDF Regulation	REGULATION (EU) No 1301/2013 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 17 December 2013 on the European Regional Development Fund and on specific provisions concerning the Investment for growth and jobs goal and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006
IPA II	REGULATION (EU) No 231/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) hereinafter referred to as IPA II Regulation
CPR EA	REGULATION (EU) No 236/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action
IPA II Implementing Regulation	Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 447/2014 of 2 May 2014 on the specific rules for implementing Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession assistance (IPA II)

Financial regulation	REGULATION (EU, EURATOM) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002
Delegated financial regulation	Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 of 29 October 2012 on the rules of application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union
Interreg IPA Cooperation Programme	Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia–Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro 2014-2020 approved by the European Commission Decision No C(2015)6026 of 24 November 2015
Programme rules on eligibility of expenditures	<p>This document sets programme rules on eligibility of expenditures and shall provide guidance for the beneficiaries requesting IPA II¹ co-funding as well as for programme management bodies including First Level Controllers as regards the funding conditions and certification of expenditures in the Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro 2014-2020.</p> <p>Programme rules are applicable for all Beneficiaries from all participating countries and for all Operations² financed by Programme. Programme rules are available on programme website: www.interreg-hr-ba-me2014-2020.eu.</p>
National rules	Applicable national rules to the Lead beneficiary and its Partners.

Suspension clause:

The applicants should take into consideration that the Financing Agreement between the European Commission and the:

- Government of the Bosnia and Herzegovina, and
- Government of Montenegro,

for allocation years under the Programme has not been signed at the date of publication of the Call. Therefore, Subsidy contracts with the beneficiaries selected for financing will only be signed upon signature of the Financing Agreement.

¹ The programme is co-financed from Croatian ERDF, and Bosnian and Herzegovinian and Montenegrin IPA II Funds, as defined in Cooperation Programme.

² Application = Operation = Project

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Guidelines for Applicants under Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro 2014-2020 aim to provide practical information to the Applicants for the successful submission of the Applications.

These Guidelines present general information on the Programme (including overview of the Programme: eligible cross-border area, objectives and priority axes, Programme management structure, financial allocation for the Call for proposals, Programme indicators, etc.) the application procedure, the project selection criteria, the decision procedure and other practical information.

The Application Package, consists of: Guidelines for Applicants, Application Manual, templates of the Lead Partner Statement, Project Partner Statement, Partnership pre-agreement, State Aid Self-assessment questionnaire, model of the Subsidy Contract and model of the Partnership Agreement, available on the Programme web site: www.interreg-hr-ba-me2014-2020.eu.

Application Manual provides the applicants with detailed instructions on how to fill in the Application Form through electronic monitoring system (eMS).

Please read carefully these Guidelines in order to avoid possible confusion with other Cross-border Cooperation Programmes (in comparison with 2014-2020 financial perspective programmes as well as in comparison with 2007-2013 financial perspective programmes).

1.1. Overview of the Programme

The Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia - Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro 2014-2020 has been prepared in line with the above listed legislation (legal base). The Programme is the result of a co-operative effort coordinated by the Managing Authority together with the Croatian, Bosnian and Herzegovinian and Montenegrin national, regional, local authorities and other relevant bodies that were involved in preparation of the Programme. The European Commission has approved the Programme on 24 November 2015. The programme has been designed under the territorial cooperation goal of the European Union. More detailed description of the Programme priorities, indicators, etc. is available in the Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia - Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro 2014-2020.

A complete set of documents (Cooperation Programme and corresponding annexes) can be found on the Programme web site: www.interreg-hr-ba-me2014-2020.eu.

1.1.1. Objectives and priorities

Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia - Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro 2014-2020 (the Programme) is perceived as the instrument for the implementation of EU cohesion policy as the main investment tool for delivering Europe 2020 goals: smart, sustainable and inclusive growth that is to be achieved by concentrating on more effective investments in education, research and innovation, move towards a low-carbon economy and on job creation and poverty reduction thus focusing on five ambitious goals in the areas of employment, innovation, education, poverty reduction and climate/energy.

The overall aim of this Programme is to strengthen the social, economic and territorial development of the Programme area through implementation of joint interventions in the areas of health and social care, environment protection and sustainable energy, development of sustainable tourism and strengthening of competitiveness and business environment.

The programme consists of following **4 priority axes**³:

- 1. Priority axis 1 – “Improving the quality of the services in public health and social care sector”-** aims to contribute to enhancing public health and social care by improving accessibility and effectiveness of public health and social care services and institutions.
- 2. Priority axis 2 – “Protecting the environment and nature, improving risk prevention and promoting sustainable energy and energy efficiency”-** directly responds to the environment and nature protection needs, risk prevention challenges in terms of improvement in the area of disaster response capability and aims at strengthening the usage of renewable energies thus improving energy efficiency.
- 3. Priority axis 3 – “Contributing to the development of tourism and preserving cultural and natural heritage”-** aims at further development and diversification of existing tourism potential of the programme area at the same time using and protecting the natural and cultural heritage in a sustainable way.
- 4. Priority axis 4 – “Enhancing competitiveness and developing business environment in the programme area”-** addresses the main challenges and needs as regards to enhancing competitiveness and development of business environment in the programme area through implementing cross-border business support actions aiming at strengthening cooperation between business support institutions, education and research organisations, clusters and entrepreneurs with aim to develop new products/services/patents/trademarks in the programme area.

³ More information regarding priority axes can be found starting with page 26 of the Cooperation Programme.



Priority axis (PA)	Specific objectives (SO)
<p>1. Improving the quality of the services in public health and social care sector</p>	<p>1.1. To improve the quality of the services in public health and social care sector across the borders</p>
<p>2. Protecting the environment and nature, improving risk prevention and promoting sustainable energy and energy efficiency</p>	<p>2.1. To promote and improve environment and nature protection and management systems for risk prevention 2.2. To promote utilization of renewable energy resources and energy efficiency.</p>
<p>3. Contributing to the development of tourism and preserving cultural and natural heritage</p>	<p>3.1. To strengthen and diversify the tourism offer through cross border approaches and to enable better management and sustainable use of cultural and natural heritage</p>
<p>4. Enhancing competitiveness and developing business environment in the programme area</p>	<p>4.1. To enhance institutional infrastructure and services in order to accelerate the competitiveness and development of business environment in the programme area</p>

Under the terms of this Call for Proposals an application **must refer only to one** of the above-mentioned **priority axes** and **one Programme specific objective**, even in case of a project where some activities might also fall under the other priority axis. The current Call for Proposals is open to four above listed priority axes.

NOTE:

Priority axis 5 – “Technical Assistance” is not subject of open Calls for Proposals, as it provides funding exclusively for the management of the Programme.

1.1.2. Programme strategy

The Programme provides the opportunity for all participating countries to continue their cross-border cooperation. The Programme is dedicated to the interventions in the areas of common interest by supporting the capacities and competitiveness of the programme area, implementing joint institutional cooperation, sharing of experience and practices, implementing pilot actions and improving policies and governance with the objective to ensure territorial coherence of the cross border area.

Its main principle is to support cross border cooperation actions and pilot projects in programme priority areas such as strengthening social and health care services, protecting and preserving environment and nature, improving risk prevention and promoting the use of sustainable energy, strengthening and further developing tourism as well as sustainable use of cultural and natural heritage and increasing the competitiveness of the programme area.

The selected priority axes reflect the needs and challenges of the programme area. For each priority axis, one or two specific objectives were identified (as listed above). Five specific objectives indicate specific changes that the Programme anticipates to achieve. The designed Programme strategy seeks to reduce barriers to development by promoting sustainable and integrated territorial approaches. It aims to strengthen existing or to make use of yet untapped potentials in order to support territorial integration, which shall ultimately result in creation of growth and jobs.

1.1.3. Programme area

The programme area covers the following NUTS III regions⁴ in the cross border territory:

PROGRAMME AREA	
CROATIA	Brod-Posavina County, Vukovar-Srijem County, Karlovac County, Sisak-Moslavina County, Lika-Senj County, Zadar County, Šibenik-Knin County, Split-Dalmatia County, Dubrovnik-Neretva County, Bjelovar-Bilogora County, Požega-Slavonia County, Zagreb County
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 109 municipalities: Bijeljina, Teočak, Ugljevik, Lopare, Tuzla, Lukavac, Čelić, Srebrenik, Petrovo, Gračanica, Doboj Istok, Gradačac, Pelagićevo, Donji Žabar, Orašje, Domaljevac-Šamac, Šamac, Modriča, Vukosavlje, Odžak, Brod, Srebrenica, Bratunac, Milići, Han-Pijesak, Vlasenica, Kladanj, Šekovići, Kalesija, Osmaci, Zvornik, Banovići, Živinice, Sapna, Prnjavor, Srbac, Laktaši, Čelinac, Kotor Varoš, Kneževo, Dobretići, Šipovo, Jajce, Jezero, Mrkonjić Grad, Banja Luka, Gradiška, Kozarska Dubica, Prijedor, Oštra Luka, Sanski Most, Ključ, Ribnik, Glamoč, Bosansko Grahovo, Drvar, Istočni Drvar, Petrovac, Bosanski Petrovac, Bosanska Krupa, Krupa na Uni, Novi Grad, Kostajnica, Bužim,

⁴ NUTS level III regions (or equivalent regions in the non-MS) covered by the cross-border cooperation programme.



	Velika Kladuša, Cazin, Bihać, Doboј, Derventa, Prozor/Rama, Konjic, Nevesinje, Gacko, Bileća, Trebinje, Ravno, Ljubinje, Berkovići, Mostar, Jablanica, Kupres, Kupres (RS), Tomislavgrad, Posušje, Široki Brijeg, Čitluk, Stolac, Neum, Čapljina, Ljubuški, Grude, Livno, Istočni Mostar, Doboј Jug, Kakanj, Maglaj, Tešanj, Usora, Zavidovići, Zenica, Žepče, Bugojno, Busovača, Donji Vakuf, Gornji Vakuf-Uskoplje, Novi Travnik, Travnik, Vitez, Teslić
MONTENEGRO	Herceg Novi, Kotor, Tivat, Budva, Bar, Ulcinj, Cetinje, Danilovgrad, Nikšić, Podgorica.

Map 1. Geographical structure of the Programme area⁵



⁵ Map of the Programme area is Annex 3 to Cooperation Programme.

Specific territories targeted:

Taking into account that common potentials and challenges have been identified throughout the **whole Programme area**, no specific territories will be targeted under the specific Priority Axis. Therefore, the supported projects can be implemented throughout the whole Programme area.

However, the Programme may finance activities, performed **outside the programme area up to the limit of 20%** of the support from the Union **at Programme level**. For more information, please see section 2.3.

1.2. Programme management structure

In line with relevant EU Regulations, the programme management structure is the following:

Managing Authority (MA) – the **Agency for Regional Development of the Republic of Croatia, Directorate for Managing Cooperation Programmes and Regional Development** is designated to perform the functions of Managing Authority under the Interreg – IPA CBC Croatia - Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro 2014-2020 Programme. The Managing Authority is responsible for managing the cooperation programme in accordance with the principle of sound financial management in line with EU regulations. Furthermore, the Managing Authority will perform its functions in line with relevant regulations, more specifically in line with Annex 10 of Cooperation Programme. Inter alia, the MA is responsible for launching the Call for Proposals and contracting the Operations.

National Authority (NA) – National authorities of the participating countries, Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds of the Republic of Croatia, Directorate for European Integration of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Montenegro are responsible for setting up and ensuring efficient functioning of the respective national control systems, as well as all other relevant responsibilities, in line with Article 74 of the CPR and Annex 13 of the Cooperation Programme.

Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) – shall review the overall effectiveness, quality and coherence of the implementation of all actions towards meeting the objectives set out in the cross-border programme, the financing agreements and the relevant strategy papers. It may make recommendations for corrective actions whenever needed. Members of the JMC represent the participating countries on policy and administrative level and thus ensure a transparent approach in monitoring the programme implementation. In line with Article 39 (1) of IPA II Implementing Regulation, Operations under this Programme shall be selected by the JMC.

Joint Secretariat (JS) –the JS assist the MA and the JMC in carrying out their respective functions. The JS undertakes the day-to-day implementation of the programme in line with Annex 17 of Cooperation Programme. In that respect, JS will provide support to the applicants in project development phase and beneficiaries in project implementation phase.

1.3. Financial Allocation and sizes of grants

The **overall budget of the Programme** for period 2014-2020 is **67,241,552 EURO** out of which an EU funding (Programme amount in the percentage of 85%) is 57,155,316 EURO and 10,086,236 EURO represents national funding (15%).

The 1st Call for Proposals covers the Programme budget for the years **2015, 2016 and 2017**. The total available funds within 1st CfP for Priority axes 1, 2, 3 and 4 for these years is **25,016,349 EURO** out of which **21,263,897 EURO** represents the EU funding (Programme amount) and the remaining **3,752,452 EURO** represents the national funding.

The total amount (in EURO) **allocated for this Call for Proposals** for the four (4) priority axes is broken down as follows:

Priority Axis	Union Funding	National Funding ⁶	Total Funding
Priority Axis 1	3,543,983	625,409	4,169,392
Priority Axis 2	5,906,638	1,042,348	6,948,986
Priority Axis 3	7,087,966	1,250,817	8,338,783
Priority Axis 4	4,725,310	833,878	5,559,189
TOTAL	21,263,897	3,752,452	25,016,349

The EU will finance **max. 85% of the total eligible expenditures** and the beneficiaries from the participating countries shall provide **min. 15% co-financing**.

Based on the subsidy contract concluded between the Lead Beneficiary and the MA, the **Lead Beneficiary** (from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina or Montenegro) is entitled to receive an **advance payment, on behalf of the partnership, in an amount of maximum 10%** from the total cost of the Operation.

After completion of assessment process and respecting scores obtained, **4 ranking lists** will be created (one ranking list for each Priority axis: list of provisionally selected and reserve list of Applications).

⁶ The national funding for the Programme (15%) is ensured by the participating countries (includes the contributions from state budgets, local budgets and/or contribution of partners from all participating countries).

The Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) reserves the right to:

- re-allocate the remaining funds between Priority axes (for example if the allocation indicated for a specific Priority axis cannot be used due to insufficient quality or number of applications received);
- not to use all the available funds allocated under this CfP.

Any **grant requested** under this Call for Proposals (CfP) must fall between the following **minimum and maximum amounts** (per each Operation):

Priority Axis	Min (in EUR)	Max (in EUR)
Priority Axis 1	400.000,00	1.000.000,00
Priority Axis 2	500.000,00	2.000.000,00
Priority Axis 3	400.000,00	2.000.000,00
Priority Axis 4	400.000,00	1.500.000,00

Any grant requested under this CfP must **fall between** the following minimum and maximum percentages (%) of total eligible expenditures of the Operation:

Minimum percentage (%):	20% of the total eligible expenditures of the Operation
Maximum percentage (%):	85% of the total eligible expenditures of the Operation

1.4. Implementation period

The planned implementation period of an Operation/Project shall not be **shorter than 18 months** nor **exceed 30 months**.

1.5. Programme indicators

The indicators are vital to the efficient and effective implementation of the Programme. They serve to monitor and evaluate the extent to which the Programme has achieved its objectives and how efficiently. Output and result indicators will measure the achievement of the Programme specific objectives:

- **Output indicators** – measure the achievement of the quantitative targets of the Programme.
- **Result indicators** – measure the level of achievement of the intended positive change in the cooperation fields between the two/three participating countries.

Note: Each Operation must contribute to the achievement of Programme results indicators.

1.6. State Aid

State Aid is usually understood to be Aid given to an economic undertaking that is seen as distorting or threatening to distort competition in the internal market.

State Aid is present when all of the following criteria are met:

- Existence of state resources: the aid is granted from the state or state resources (including national, regional or local authorities, a private or public intermediate body appointed by the state, etc.);
- Selectivity: the aid facilitates only the development of certain entrepreneurships or of certain products;
- Economic advantage: the aid constitutes an economic advantage that the undertaking would not have received in the normal courses of business. An indirect advantage may also be granted (indirect State aid) if the funds received by entities which are direct beneficiaries of the programmes are channelled to only certain undertakings/groups of undertakings;
- Effect on competition and trade: the aid distorts, or has the potential to distort, competition and trade within the European Union.

Please note that the first two criteria always apply in the context of EU funded operations.

Important note: The Lead partner (LP) and Project partners (PP) will perform State Aid Self-Assessment compliance with all four State Aid criteria through State Aid Self-Assessment questionnaire (Annex to GfA) and sign *De-minimis Self-Declaration* within Statements (LP statement and PP statement).

State Aid compliance will be assessed by relevant Programme bodies during evaluation of this Call for Proposals.

1.7. Revenue generating projects

Revenue resulting from the Operation activities can occur both during implementation and after the closure of an Operation.

Revenue and net revenue during implementation

All revenues generated by Operation activities during the implementation of the Operation must be deducted from the eligible expenditures claimed in *Statement of Expenditure* within each Partner Progress Report.

Revenue and net revenue after closure of the Operation

If an Operation expects to have any revenues, after the Operation closure and within three (3) years after the closure of the Programme, the beneficiaries have to report the respective net revenues to the MA/JS since these revenues have to be deducted from the final payment request of the Programme submitted to the EU Commission.

The exemption remains in place for all Operations under EUR 1,000,000 which do not have to take account of revenue and net revenue after Operation closure. For those Operations, monitoring of revenue and net revenue should be performed only during the implementation of the Operation.

All revenues (payments to the Operation other than the grant) must be deducted from amounts (expenditures) claimed.

For further details on State aid and Revenues, please consult Programme rules on Eligibility of Expenditures.

1.8. Contributions in kind

Contributions in kind are not applicable for this Call for Proposals.

2. RULES FOR THE 1st CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The funding under the Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia - Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro 2014-2020 shall be made available to Applicants through an **open Call for Proposals**. The Managing Authority launches the 1st Call for Proposals through **one step application** procedure.⁷ These guidelines set out rules for the submission and selection of the Applications to be funded from this Call for Proposals.

2.1. Cross border relevance

The Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia - Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro 2014-2020 shall support operations, which deliver direct cross-border impact and benefits for the project partners/ target groups /project area /programme area. The project should clearly demonstrate the importance of the cross-border approach to the topic addressed.

Direct cross-border impact is understood in terms of respecting the following **cooperation criteria** as they are defined below: joint development, joint staffing, joint implementation and joint financing.

- **Joint development** means that the Application must be designed in close cooperation of the partners from all participating countries. The Application must clearly integrate the ideas, priorities and activities. The Lead Partner is the coordinator of this process but should include other partners from the beginning of the development process. All partners should contribute to the development of the project.
- **Joint implementation** means that activities must be carried out and coordinated among partners in all participating countries. The Lead Partner bears the responsibility for the overall project implementation; all partners take responsibilities for different parts of the implementation. Each project partner is responsible for the tasks foreseen for achievement of the objectives, and has to ensure that needed activities are carried out.
- **Joint staffing** means that the proposed project staff will be jointly involved in the implementation of the activities in all participating countries. Staff members coordinate their activities with others involved in the activities and exchange information regularly. However, unnecessary overlapping of similar functions within the project team should be avoided.
- **Joint financing** means that there will be only one subsidy contract per Operation. The project has a joint budget with funding allocated to partners according to the activities they are carrying out.

⁷ MA reserves the right not to take responsibility if the problems with e-MS encountered (due to submission of the large number of Applications few days before CFP is closed) and to prolong the deadline for submission of the applications.

At least three (3) of the described cross-border criteria **must be fulfilled** in a way that the Project Partners from the Programme Participating Countries have to cooperate obligatory in joint development and joint implementation. In addition, they shall cooperate in either the staffing or the financing of Operations.

2.2. Horizontal principles

The following Programme horizontal themes shall be observed by all Applicants in the development and implementation of their Applications (Operations):

a) Sustainable development – activities that relate to the biodiversity and environmental protection requirements, resource efficiency, climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster resilience and risk prevention and management, energy efficiency and renewable energy, green entrepreneurship, business focused on sustainable development, preventions of investments with considerable negative environmental and climate effects and overall sustainability.

b) Equal opportunities and non-discrimination – promotion of equal opportunities and prevention of any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation during the preparation, design and implementation of the Programme and, in particular, in relation to access to funding, taking account of the needs of the various target groups at risk of such discrimination, and in particular, the requirements of ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities.

c) Equality between men and women - promotion of equality between men and women and, where appropriate, the arrangements to ensure the integration of the gender perspective at Programme and operation level.

2.3. Eligibility criteria

The submission of applications is open to all Applicants that meet the eligibility criteria set below.

In order to be eligible for funding under the Programme, the applications should meet three following sets of eligibility criteria:

1. Eligibility of Applicants (Lead Partner and Project Partners);
2. Eligibility of Activities;
3. Eligibility of Expenditures.

2.3.1. Eligibility of Applicants (Lead Partner and Project Partners)

In order to be eligible for a grant, **the applicant/partner must** meet all of the following criteria:

1. be **non-profit-making** legal person/entity⁸ established by public or private law for the purposes of public interest or specific purpose of meeting needs of general interest,
2. be **established** in respecting Participating Country (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and/or Montenegro),
3. partnership consists of **at least two partners** from Participating Countries out of which one is from Member State, and
4. **Lead Applicant** has to be **registered at least 12 months** prior to the deadline for submission of applications.⁹

Application which does not comply with all above described requirements will not be eligible.

Indicative list of potential applicants under each specific Priority axis is given below:

Priority axis	Specific Objective	Indicative list of Applicants (Lead Partner and Project Partners)
1. Improving the quality of the services in public health and social care sector	1.1. To improve the quality of the services in public health and social care sector across the borders	Legal personalities that can contribute to improving facilities, services and skills in the area of public health and social care throughout the programme area such as: NGOs, organisations responsible for providing social and health services, public/non-profit organisations including institutes, universities, colleges, educational institutions (e.g. primary and secondary schools), public institutions for adult education/learning, local and regional government bodies, development agencies, health care institutions, public elderly homes, regional and local public authorities, employment services, chambers of commerce, chambers of trades and crafts and business support institutions.
2. Protecting the environment and nature, improving risk prevention and promoting	2.1. To promote and improve environment and nature protection and management systems for risk	Legal personalities that can contribute to improving in the area of natural resources, management systems for risk prevention, energy production and energy efficiency throughout the programme area such as: NGO's, public utility companies (e.g. water management companies, public electrical companies, etc.), public energy agencies,

⁸ Proven by statute and/or articles of association/decision on establishment, of the respective institution in accordance with relevant law.

⁹ This criterion does not apply to other project partners.



<p>sustainable energy and energy efficiency</p>	<p>prevention, and 2.2. To promote utilization of renewable energy resources and energy efficiency.</p>	<p>public institutions (e.g. institutes and other research organisations, development agencies national/regional/local institutions responsible for environment and nature, etc.), educational and research institutions (for example, universities, faculties, open universities, adult education institutions, primary and secondary schools etc.), local and regional authorities, business support institutions, etc.</p>
<p>3. Contributing to the development of tourism and preserving cultural and natural heritage</p>	<p>3.1. To strengthen and diversify the tourism offer through cross border approaches and to enable better management and sustainable use of cultural and natural heritage.</p>	<p>Legal personalities that can contribute to improving in the area of tourism and management of cultural and natural heritage throughout the programme area such as: NGOs (for example citizens associations, development agencies, local action groups, chambers of commerce, chambers of crafts and trades, chambers of agriculture, clusters, expert associations etc.), public institutions (for example, institutes and other research organisations, development agencies national/regional/local institutions responsible for environment and nature, national/regional/local institutions responsible for culture including museums, libraries and theatres, etc.), educational institutions (for example universities, faculties, open universities, adult education institutions, primary and secondary schools etc.), local and regional authorities, tourist boards and organisations, business supporting organisations, organisations dealing with cultural and natural heritage, including museums, libraries, and theatres, etc.</p>
<p>4. Enhancing competitiveness and developing business environment in the programme area</p>	<p>4.1. To enhance institutional infrastructure and services in order to accelerate the competitiveness and development of business environment in the programme area</p>	<p>Legal personalities that can contribute to enhancing competitiveness and developing business environment and investment in the programme area such as: NGOs (for example, citizens associations, development agencies, local action groups, chambers of commerce, chambers of trades and crafts, chambers of agriculture, expert associations, clusters, producers associations, sector associations, and SME networks, etc.), public institutions (for example, institutes and other research organisations, development agencies, national/regional/local institutions responsible for economy, research and training institutes, etc.), educational institutions (for example, universities, faculties, open universities, colleges, adult education institutions, primary and secondary schools etc.), local and regional public</p>

		authorities, local and regional government bodies, business supporting organisations (for examples entrepreneurship centres and incubators, business zones and parks, etc.), cooperatives, etc.
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Please note that profit making companies and political parties/organizations are not eligible, neither as Lead Partner nor as Project Partner.

Applicants are not eligible to participate in 1st Call for proposals if:

- a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation, arising from a similar procedure provided for in the national legislation or EU regulations;
- b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata (i.e., against which no appeal is possible);
- c) they are guilty of serious professional misconduct proven by any means;
- d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of debts to the consolidated state budget;
- e) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organization or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities or national financial interests;
- f) they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations in connection with a procurement procedure or other grant award procedure financed by the Community or national budget.

Applicants are also excluded from participation in calls for proposals or the award of financial support if, at the time of the call for proposals, they:

- g) are subject to a conflict of interests; the conflict of interests represents any circumstances that may affect the assessment or implementation process, in an objective and impartial manner. Such circumstances may result from economic interests, political or national preferences or family connections;
- h) are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat as a condition of participation in the call for proposals or fail to supply this information;
- i) have attempted to obtain confidential information or influence the assessment bodies during the assessment process of current or previous calls for proposals.

In the cases referred to in points (a), (c), (d), (f), (h) and (i) above, the exclusion applies for a period of two years from the time when the infringement is established. In the cases referred to in points (b) and (e), the exclusion applies for a period of four years from the date of notification of the judgment.

Important note: The Lead partner (LP) and Project partners (PP) within signed Statements (LP statement and PP statement) will declare that they do not fall into any of the above categories.

In case of potential conflict of interest with the Joint Structures of the Programme (Managing Authority, National Authority, Certifying Authority, Audit Authority, Joint Monitoring Committee and Joint Secretariat), the applicant must immediately inform the Managing Authority.

In case any of the Programme bodies suspect of any of the criteria above, the clarification may be requested from the Applicant(s).

Please note that unprofessional conduct of the partners that were involved in the implementation of the Projects (Operations) financed from 2007 – 2013 cooperation programmes such as fraud or unjustified withdrawal may be taken into account during assessment process.

Lead Partner principle and partnership requirements

All organizations, participating under this Call for Proposals, are called **partners**. All partners must have legal, financial and operational capacity to participate in the Programme. For each Application a “**Lead Partner**” (LP) must be **appointed among the project partners** prior to the submission of the application. The Lead Partner will be responsible for the development and submission of the application and in case of positive decision for financing will sign the Subsidy contract with the Managing Authority. The Lead Partner takes over the role of the “engine” of the partnership, coordinating the work of the partners and being also the link between the project and the Programme (MA and JS).

Important: The maximum number of partners in Application is six (6) including the Lead Partner!

Under the 1st Call for Proposals an institution/partners’ organization may be:

- selected for funding in **not more than 2 (two)** Applications (Operations) as a Lead Partner (within **different Priority axes**);
- Applicant applying as a Lead Partner (LP) may be Project Partner (PP) in any other Application at the same time;
- Project Partner may take part and be selected for funding in more than one Application (Operation) under this Call for Proposals.

Information about **the role and tasks of the Lead Partner** is provided in more detail in the model of Subsidy contract. The **Lead Partner** assumes the following key **responsibilities**:

- It shall lay down the arrangements for its relations with the Project Partners participating in the operation in an agreement comprising, inter alia, provisions guaranteeing the sound financial management of the funds allocated to the operation, including the arrangements for recovering amounts unduly paid.
- It shall be responsible for ensuring the implementation of the entire Operation.
- It shall ensure that the expenditure presented by the Project Partners participating in the Operation has been paid for the purpose of implementing the Operation and corresponds to the activities agreed between project partners.
- It shall verify that the expenditure presented by the partners participating in the Operation have been validated by the controllers.
- It shall be responsible for transferring the EU contribution to the Project Partners participating in the Operation.

Beside these responsibilities, the Lead Partner is also responsible for:

- Collecting the information from the Project Partners, cross-checking the verified activities with the progress of the project and submitting the reports to the JS;
- Signing the Subsidy Contract with MA;
- Harmonizing the project changes with the JS and MA and other project partners.

All partners must sign a **Partnership pre-agreement** in preparation phase and **Partnership Agreement** in implementation phase that stipulates their rights and duties within an Operation.

2.3.2. Eligibility of Activities

All activities funded under specific objective of relevant Priority axis must demonstrate a **clear cross-border effect** to the Programme area. Indicative list of eligible actions under this Call for proposals is given below:

Priority axis	Specific Objective	Examples of eligible actions under this Call for proposals
1. Improving the quality of the services in public health and social	1.1. To improve the quality of the services in public health and social care sector across	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing support to public health and social care institutions in improving accessibility and effectiveness (e.g. small infrastructure and equipment), including related pilot projects. - Developing and implementing joint lifelong learning, education and training programmes addressing skills and capacity strengthening needs in the area of health and social care. - Developing and implementing joint activities on enhancing the



<p>care sector</p>	<p>the borders</p>	<p>quality of health care and social care services (e.g. joint health services delivery, promoting healthy lifestyles and active and healthy aging, disease prevention implementation plan, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementing ICT solutions in order to improve public health and social care services. - Developing schemes and using ICT tools for establishing networking structures for the purpose of common disaster response across the borders. - Joint strengthening of health care and social care for vulnerable groups with focus on children, elderly, disabled, people receiving social care and long-term unemployed older women. - Awareness rising activities aiming at promotion of different types of services available for vulnerable groups. - Networking of organisations (e.g. health care and social care institutions, family centres, education institutions, etc.) in order to create joint activities for enhancing accessibility to health and social services. - Implementing exchange of experience concerning the identification, transfer and dissemination of good practices and innovative approaches as well support to the sustainability and implementation of the Cross-border Healthcare Directive (2011/24) and European Reference Networks, especially in relation to the aims of territorial cohesion, including territorial aspects and harmonious development of Union territory.
<p>2. Protecting the environment and nature, improving risk prevention and promoting sustainable energy and energy efficiency</p>	<p>2.1. To promote and improve environment and nature protection and management systems for risk prevention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing and implementing joint management initiatives in the area of environment and nature protection (e.g. monitoring and exchange of data, biodiversity and geo-diversity maps, management plans for nature protected areas of cross-border interest, marine protected areas, maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal management for cross-border areas, etc.) - Implementing joint actions in the area of monitoring and managing environmental protection addressing locally specific cross-border priorities and/or contributing to implementation of higher-level regional initiatives such as Sava River Basin Management Plan and the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region. - Implementing joint initiatives for designation and preservation of cross-border habitats (including large carnivore habitats) and ecosystems with high biodiversity value, including protection and restoration of coastal wetland areas and karst fields relevant for the Adriatic Flyway. - Implementing awareness raising activities, information campaigns and education and training concerning



		<p>environmental and nature protection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving emergency preparedness and risk prevention systems that addresses existing as well as expected cross-border hazards (fires, floods, draughts, hazardous pollution events, including trans boundary air and water pollution and other natural disasters) through, for example: mapping of water pollution hazards in the flood zones, adopting comprehensive multi-hazard framework to risk management and communication, harmonizing information about risks using internationally accepted definitions and guidelines, addressing priority gaps and needs for exchanging available data, developing and/or implementing plans that specify standard operating procedures on local level (who, what, when, how and with whom) based on higher level initiatives for disaster management. - Implementing cross-border measures and tools for reducing or mitigating environmental problems and risks, including small-scale infrastructure and equipment. - Implementing joint interventions in case of accidents and natural disasters and establishment of strong cooperation between the emergency centres, including small-scale infrastructure and equipment.
	<p>2.2. To promote utilization of renewable energy resources and energy efficiency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing and implementing joint pilot and demonstration projects on innovative technologies and solutions in the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy resources. - Joint investing in public infrastructure on sustainable energy and energy efficiency. - Joint incentives in order to improve planning and regulatory framework in the area of renewable energy resources and energy efficiency (e.g. analyses, comparisons, recommendation, local/regional action plans, etc.). - Implementing transfer of knowledge (awareness rising), dissemination of experience, exchange of good practice and capacity building on the utilization of renewable energy resources and energy efficiency. - Elaboration of joint studies and documentation on (the utilization of) renewable energy resources and energy efficiency.
<p>3. Contributing to the development of tourism and</p>	<p>3.1. To strengthen and diversify the tourism offer through cross border</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing, promoting and branding of joint tourism niches, services and products including the development and diversification of joint tourism activities and sustainable tourism offer, inter alia, by including other relevant sectors (e.g. agriculture, organic food supply, handicrafts and other local products, culture, sustainable transport, etc.) in order to develop projects in ecotourism, hunting, rural, mountain,



<p>preserving cultural and natural heritage</p>	<p>approaches and to enable better management and sustainable use of cultural and natural heritage.</p>	<p>excursion, cultural, adventure, religious, nautical, conference, health, wellness and spa tourism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing complementary services in tourist offer. - Promoting and introducing (international) certifications and standards, in order to improve the quality of tourism providers and their services. - Supporting development and improvement of destination management capacity building in tourism sector (e.g. by developing destination management skills and focusing on enhancing quality (e.g. standardisation) and integration of offers, tourist destination development, management, marketing and promotion). - Implementing cross-border networking of institutions and dissemination of good practices and innovative approaches in tourism sector, including support to establishment and development of clusters. - Developing the cross-border tourism offer including the development of innovative products and services and using ICT and other technologies (e.g. GPS routes, booking systems). - Developing and improving small-scale cross-border tourism infrastructure such as: walking paths, cycling routes, hiking, riding trails, signposting, visitor centres, etc. - Implementing joint incentives of integrating culture, nature and leisure activities into sustainable tourism offer in the programme area taking care of preservation of nature and cultural protected areas (e.g. marine and coastal environment, historical and cultural sites, etc). - Valuating, preserving, restoring and reviving (e.g. animation of site) cultural, historical and natural heritage assets (e.g. UNESCO and other historical and cultural sites and landscapes), including enabling or improving access to them, but at the same time preserving marine and coastal environment. - Enabling joint cultural cooperation initiatives including creation of joint cultural events such as cultural festivals, cultural exchanges, joint theatre performances or joint/traveling exhibitions. - Developing and implementing training programs in quality assurance systems and different types of standardisation (e.g. ISO certification, etc.) on cultural and natural heritage. - Implementing investments in certification including training, equipment supply but also small scale infrastructure on cultural and natural heritage. - Developing and promoting public cultural and heritage services.
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<p>4. Enhancing competitiveness and developing business environment in the programme area</p>	<p>4.1. To enhance institutional infrastructure and services in order to accelerate the competitiveness and development of business environment in the programme area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting business support institutions and establishment of and support to existing and new business related sectorial networks and organisations in order to enhance standardisation, product protection, marketing and development of cross-border markets. - Developing and supporting existing business clusters and/or networks of SMEs in applying ICT, innovation and new technologies in order to develop and promote common products for local cross-border and international markets. - Implementing actions aiming at networking, dissemination of good practices and innovative approaches and cooperation between business support institutions, clusters and SMEs at national, regional and local level in the programme area. - Supporting business support institutions in improving the capacity of entrepreneurs including micro entrepreneurs such as family farms/households regarding marketing, branding, market research, e-business, competitiveness and education and training in entrepreneurship skills. - Increasing cooperation between research institutions, clusters, businesses, public sector & development organisations to stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship to improve business innovativeness and technology based on smart specialization approach. - Supporting actions related to development of innovative products and services (e.g. patents, industrial design, trademark and innovation etc.). - Promoting and introducing (international) certifications and standards of existing and new products and services. - Implementing joint research and development activities involving the research and educational centres in the programme area in order to increase competitiveness. - Implementing cross-border development, adaptation and exchange of best practices in application of ICT, new technologies, processes, products or services to be directly used by the enterprises between the clusters or groups of business, R&D and education institutions. - Establishing and supporting development agencies, technological and competence centres, laboratories and local ICT infrastructure for common use by the enterprises in the programme area in order to upgrade the existing and develop new products, services, processes or prototypes.
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Activities outside Programme area

The Programme may finance activities, performed outside the Programme area up to the limit of 20% of the support from the Union at Programme level, ensuring that they are for the benefit of the programme area and the conditions of the Article 44(2) of Commission Implementing regulation (EU) No 447/2014 of 2 May 2014 are satisfied.

Such proposal (that all or part of an operation is implemented outside the programme area) may be accepted, provided that all the following conditions are satisfied:

- a) the operation is for the benefit of the programme area;
- b) the total amount allocated under the cross-border cooperation programme to operations located outside the programme area **does not exceed 20% of the support from the Union at Programme level**;
- c) the obligations of the managing and audit authorities in relation to management, control and audit concerning the operation are fulfilled by the cross-border cooperation programme authorities or they enter into agreements with authorities in the Member State or Participating countries in which the operation is implemented;
- d) **justification** is provided within the Application Form.

2.3.3. Eligibility of Expenditures

In order to be considered **eligible, expenditures** under Interreg IPA CBC Programme Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro 2014-2020 have to fulfil all of the following criteria:

- they incurred during the implementation period of the Operation, with the exception of preparatory costs and closure costs;
- they are indicated in the estimated overall budget of the Operation;
- they are necessary for the implementation of the Operation which is the subject of the grant;
- they are identifiable, verifiable and documented (e.g. contract, invoice, order form), in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiary is established and according to the usual cost accounting practices of the beneficiary;
- they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social security legislation;
- they are reasonable, justified, and comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency;
- they incurred in accordance with the relevant EU legislation, Programme rules (defined in this document and call for proposal specific documents, if applicable) and national legislation, and other relevant documents (e.g. Financing Agreement);
- they are not listed as an ineligible expenditure;
- they are not double funded (i.e. they are not financed from other sources under the Union Funds or other (national) Funds);
- one expenditure item cannot be covered under more than one expenditure category or under more than one budget line under a given expenditure category;
- amounts in the Statement of Expenditure do not exceed amounts in the approved operation budget (in line with the provisions of the Subsidy Contract/Addenda/minor reallocations);
- co-financing rate (as stipulated in the Subsidy Contract) is applied to each eligible cost under all expenditure categories.

The following expenditures **shall not be eligible** for funding under Interreg IPA CBC Programme Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro 2014-2020:

In line with Article 43(2) and (3) of IPA IR:

- interest on debt;
- value added tax (VAT) except where it is non-recoverable under national VAT legislation;
- the decommissioning and the construction of nuclear power stations;

- investment to achieve the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from activities falling under Annex I to Directive 2003/87/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council;
- the manufacturing, processing and marketing of tobacco and tobacco products;
- undertakings in difficulties as defined under Union State aid rules;
- investment in airport infrastructure unless related to environmental protection or accompanied by investment necessary to mitigate or reduce its negative environmental impact;
- the purchase of land not built on and land built on exceeding 10% of the total eligible expenditure for the operation concerned shall be eligible for funding under IPA II cross-border cooperation assistance. For derelict sites, for sites formerly in industrial use which comprise buildings, and for operations concerning environmental conservation, this limit shall be increased to 15%.
- operations shall not be selected for IPA II assistance where they have been physically completed or fully implemented before the application for funding under the cross-border cooperation programme is submitted by the beneficiary to the managing authority, irrespective of whether all related payments have been made by the beneficiary.

In line with Articles 65(11) and 69(1) of CPR:

- the expenditure item included in the Statement of expenditure which received support from another Fund or Union instrument, or support from the same Fund under another programme;
- contributions in kind.

In line with Article 2 of Regulation No 481/2014:

- fines, financial penalties and expenditure on legal disputes and litigation;
- costs of gifts, except those not exceeding EUR 50 per gift where related to promotion, communication, publicity or information;
- costs related to fluctuation of foreign exchange rate.

Other ineligible expenditures as defined by the Programme:

- consultant fees between partners for services and work carried out within the operation;
- contracting of employees of the beneficiary and partner organisations as external experts (e.g. as freelancers, translators, IT experts, etc.);
- unjustified ad-hoc salary bonuses that are not directly attributable to operation delivery;
- alcohol, except in duly justified cases, when related to the operation theme/subject¹⁰;
- purchases of equipment not indicated in the Subsidy Contract or specifically approved during operation implementation by the relevant programme body,
- equipment purchased from another project partner,
- cost for infrastructure and works outside the programme area,

¹⁰ Wine is considered as food, in line with EU and national legislation.

- shared costs,
- costs of audits and evaluations at project level.

In order to create qualitative budget, Applicants should be fully familiar with **Programme rules on eligibility of expenditures** available on Programme website: www.interreg-hr-ba-me2014-2020.eu. Specific provisions for each expenditure category are stated in the Programme rules on eligibility of expenditures.

Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 481/2014 establishes specific rules on eligibility of expenditures. It defines the list of costs that are eligible under the **5 categories of expenditures**:

1. **Staff costs,**
2. **Office and administrative expenditure,**
3. **Travel and accommodation costs,**
4. **External expertise and services costs,**
5. **Equipment expenditure.**

Following **additional expenditure categories** are considered as eligible under this Programme:

6. **Infrastructure and works expenditure,**
7. **Preparatory and closure costs.**

IMPORTANT:

Please note that a maximum ceiling of the sum of the expenditure category 1. Staff costs should not exceed 30 % of the total eligible cost at the Operation level. The verification of the limit will be subject of budget optimisation process before contract signature.

Value Added Tax – VAT

In line with Article 43(2) of IPA IR, value added tax shall not be supported by cross-border cooperation programme, except where it is **non-recoverable** according to the national VAT legislation.

In that respect, Value added tax (VAT) is eligible, if the following conditions are fulfilled:

- a) it is not recoverable by any means (under national VAT legislation);
- b) it is established that it is borne by the beneficiary;
- c) it is clearly identified in the invoice.

Croatia: Please note that on the current procedures applied in the Republic of Croatia, VAT is eligible if it cannot be refunded in line with the national legislation. VAT Statement issued by the relevant institution should be presented.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Please note that the Bosnian and Herzegovinian beneficiaries are obliged to follow relevant national procedure for exemption of VAT. The legal basis for VAT exemption is

“Instruction on procedure for exercising the right to customs and tax exemptions in accordance with the Framework Agreement between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the European Commission on arrangements for implementation of the Union’s financial assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina within the Instrument of Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II), (Official Gazette No. 91, from 11 November 2015)”.

Montenegro: Please note that Montenegrin beneficiaries are obliged to follow relevant national procedure for exemption of VAT. The legal basis for VAT exemption is the following: Rulebook on amendments on Rulebook for procedure of exemption from VAT (Official Gazette No. 68, from 8 December 2015), Regulation on recovery of costs to the civil servants and employees (from 24 May 2012).

Please plan the project budget accordingly.

Financial support to third parties

Applicants **cannot** propose financial support to third parties (sub-granting is not allowed).

3. HOW TO APPLY

3.1. The content of Application package

The **Application package** for the 1st Call for Proposals call can be downloaded from the programme website: www.interreg-hr-ba-me2014-2020.eu and consists of the following documents:

1. Guidelines for Applicants (GfA),
2. Application Manual: instructions how to fill in Application Form (including budget),
3. Template of the Lead Partner Statement,
4. Template of the Project Partner Statement,
5. State Aid self-assessment questionnaire,
6. Template for Partnership pre-agreement,
7. Model Partnership Agreement,
8. Model Subsidy Contract.

To apply projects on this Call for Proposals applicants must use **eMS**. Applications must be filled in accordance to **Application Manual: instructions how to fill in Application Form (including budget)** and submitted in accordance with the Guidelines for Applicants.

The **official language** of the programme is **English**. Therefore, application and all communication between applicants and the Programme bodies is carried out in **English**. Information in the eMS as well as official correspondence must be treated accordingly.

3.2. Where and how to send the applications

Applications will be sent through eMS.

The application **must be submitted by the Lead Partner (LP)** solely through the online eMS. The submitted application **must contain all the required data** and the required accompanying documents, which are considered as **annexes to the Application Form** and have to be uploaded **as scanned documents** (signed by the legal representative of the Lead or Project Partners organisation) in the online submission system – electronic Monitoring System (eMS).

Original versions of the documents uploaded in the eMS must be provided to the Managing Authority upon request and prior to the contracting.

Please note that only the application form and published annexes that have to be filled in and uploaded in eMS will be assessed:

1. **Application Form (including budget),**
2. **Annexes:**
 - a) Lead Partner Statement;
 - b) Project Partner Statement;
 - c) State Aid self-assessment questionnaire;
 - d) Signed Partnership pre-agreement
3. **Supporting documents for eligibility check**
 - a) **The registration acts** (in accordance with relevant national law) of the each partner;
 - b) **Statutes or** articles of association/decision on establishment of the each partner.¹¹

For the purpose of **eligibility check of all project partners** including Lead partner (LP) supporting documents should be annexed to Application Form (scanned as PDF and uploaded via eMS).

It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain **ALL** the relevant information concerning the Operation. **No additional annexes should be sent.**

Note:

Where supporting documents are not in English or in the language of the participating countries (Croatian, official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegrin), a translation into English must be attached and will prevail for the purpose of eligibility check.

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to the addresses **will be rejected**. **Hand-written** applications will not be accepted. Incomplete applications **may be rejected**.

¹¹ Where the applicant/partner is a public body created by a law, a direct reference or copy of the said law must be provided.

3.3. Deadline for receipt of applications

The deadline for the submission of applications is **10 June 2016 at 15:00h** as evidenced by the date and time of submission of application within eMS.

Submission of the **applications after the deadline will not be possible within eMS.**

3.4. Further information

Information days related to 1st Call for proposals will be held in **all participating countries**: Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro.

The exact dates and locations of Information days will be published in advance on the following web sites:

- Programme website: www.interreg-hr-ba-me2014-2020.eu
- Managing Authority's website: www.arr.hr
- National Authorities websites:
 - Ministry of Regional Development and EU funds: <https://razvoj.gov.hr/>
 - Directorate for European Integration of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina: www.dei.gov.ba
 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Montenegro: www.mvpei.gov.me; www.eu.me

Questions related to 1st Call for Proposals may be sent in writing via e-mail no later than **10 days before the deadline for the submission of applications**, indicating clearly the reference of the Call for Proposals. Clarifications to questions received after this date will not be provided.

Questions should be sent to the following address:

E-mail address: info@interreg-hr-ba-me2014-2020.eu

To ensure equal treatment of all applicants, questions and answers will be published and **updated regularly** on the programme website: www.interreg-hr-ba-me2014-2020.eu. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

4. ASSESSMENT AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

4.1. Assessment and selection

In accordance to Article 39 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 447/2014, the selection of operations under Interreg IPA CBC programme Croatia – Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro 2014-2020 is responsibility of the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) following a standardized assessment procedure.

For this Call for Proposals, the JMC will set up Joint Steering Committee (JSC) acting under its responsibility for the selection of operations. The selection of operations is based on the assessment of the received applications following a standardized procedure, which safeguards the principles of transparency and equal treatment.

The assessment process will be conducted in two steps:

- 1. Administrative compliance and eligibility check;**
- 2. Quality assessment**

The assessment and selection criteria are prepared in line with the Cooperation Programme by the Managing Authority (MA) together with the National Authorities (NAs) and the Joint Secretariat (JS) and approved by the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC).

Step 1: Administrative compliance and eligibility check

Administrative compliance and eligibility check will be performed by Joint Secretariat under the responsibility of Joint Steering Committee respecting administrative and eligibility checklist.

Administrative and eligibility criteria - checklist

#	Criteria	Description	Yes	No	N/A
A	ADMINISTRATIVE CRITERIA				
A.1	The application has been submitted via eMS.	<i>The Application Form has been submitted via the electronic Monitoring System (eMS) of the Interreg IPA CBP Croatia –Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



A.2	All the sections of the Application Form have been duly filled in.	<i>All applicable sections of the application form are correctly filled in (no automatic errors or missing information).</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A.3	All obligatory annexes are submitted (uploaded as PDF) via eMS.	<i>The compulsory annexes have been filled in, duly signed and stamped and uploaded to the eMS:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Lead Partner Statement,</i> - <i>Project Partner Statement,</i> - <i>Partnership pre- agreement</i> - <i>State Aid self-assessment questionnaire</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A.4	Supporting documents are submitted (uploaded as PDF) via eMS.	<i>Supporting documents required for eligibility check of applicants/partners are uploaded (PDF) to the eMS:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The registration acts (in accordance with relevant national law) of the each partner;</i> - <i>Statutes or articles of association/decision on establishment of the each partner</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A.5	The Application Form is compiled in the required language.	<i>The Application Form has been correctly filled, only in English, as the official language of the Programme.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A.6	Information in the application package is consistent.	<i>Information presented in application package documents (Application Form and annexes) is consistent.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA				
B.1	The application fulfils minimum requirements for partnership.	<i>The application must have at least two (2) partners from participating Countries (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro) out of which one is from Member State.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B.2	The application is compliant with the requirements regarding	<i>Maximum number of partners in application is six (6), including the</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



	maximum number of partners.	<i>Lead Partner.</i>			
B.3	The Lead partner (LP) is eligible organisation.	<p><i>The Lead Partner is:</i></p> <p>1. <i>non-profit-making legal person/entity established by public or private law for the purposes of public interest or specific purpose of meeting needs of general interest;</i></p> <p>2. <i>established in respecting Participating Country (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and/or Montenegro);</i></p> <p>3. <i>registered at least 12 months prior to the deadline for submission of applications.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B.4	All project partners (PP) are eligible organisations.	<p><i>The partners are:</i></p> <p>1. <i>non-profit-making legal person/entity established by public or private law for the purposes of public interest or specific purpose of meeting needs of general interest;</i></p> <p>2. <i>established in respecting Participating Country (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and/or Montenegro).</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B.5	Time limits for project implementation period are respected.	<i>The planned implementation period of an Operation/Project shall not be shorter than 18 months, nor exceed 30 months.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B.6	Project is assigned to Programme priority and its specific objective.	<i>Thematically project fits into the selected programme priority and the specific objective.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B.7	Minimum and maximum (%) budget requirements are	<i>Project fall between minimum and maximum % of total eligible</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	respected.	<i>expenditures of the Operation:</i> - <i>Min: 20%</i> - <i>Max: 85%</i>			
B.8	Minimum and maximum amounts per each Operation within selected Priority axes are respected.	<i>Minimum and maximum amounts for grants (per Operation) within each Priority axes are respected:</i> <i>PA 1: 400,000-1,000,000€</i> <i>PA 2: 500,000-2,000,000€</i> <i>PA 3: 400,000-2,000,000€</i> <i>PA 4: 400,000-1,500,000€</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B.9	Co-financing is envisaged.	<i>Co-financing by project partners (min 15% of total eligible expenditures of the Operation) is envisaged. See declaration included in LP and PP Statement.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B.10	There is no evidence of double funding of activities.	<i>See declaration included in LP and PP Statement.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B.11	<i>De-minimis</i> compliance is taken into consideration.	<i>See declaration included in LP and PP Statement.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B.12	<i>State Aid</i> compliance is taken into account	<i>See State Aid self-assessment questionnaire.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Administrative compliance and eligibility check is based on questions which can be answered with “Yes,” “No” or “Not applicable” for particular application.

Clarifications regarding Application will be requested from the Lead applicant only when the information provided within application is **unclear or missing** and thus prevents JSC from conducting an objective assessment. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that sole basis and the application **will not be evaluated further**.

Only proposals that satisfy all the administrative and eligibility criteria will be subject to quality assessment.

Step 2: Quality assessment

Quality assessment will be performed by the assessment teams under the responsibility of the Joint Steering Committee (JSC). Assessment teams will be selected in line with the required expertise relevant for the Priority Axes. Each assessment team consists of two independent assessors therefore every application is assessed by at least two assessors. Number and composition of assessment teams which will be included in assessment process for this CfP depending on assessment strategy and number of received applications.

Quality assessment consists of three (3) sets of quality assessment criteria related to the quality of an application and will be applied to those applications that have passed the administrative and eligibility check (in accordance to Article 39 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 447/2014):

1. Relevance criteria,
2. Operational criteria,
3. Sustainability criteria.

The quality assessment grid is structured according to the concerned assessment criteria, which are appraised using the following scale:

The quality assessment scale

SCALE		1-2-3-4-5
excellent	5	<i>The application fulfils the given criterion to an excellent level and the provided information is sufficient, clear and coherent for assessing the criterion.</i>
very good	4	<i>The application fulfils the given criterion to a very good level, however, some aspects of the given criterion lack certain clarity or coherence.</i>
sufficient	3	<i>The application fulfils the given criterion to a sufficient level, however, some aspects of the given criterion have not been met fully or not explained in full clarity or detail.</i>
low	2	<i>The application has serious shortcomings in fulfilling the given criterion and/or the provided information is of low quality.</i>
insufficient	1	<i>The application does not fulfil the given criterion or information required is missing.</i>



SCALE		1-2-3
excellent	3	<i>The application fulfils the given criterion to an excellent level and the provided information is sufficient, clear and coherent for assessing the criterion.</i>
sufficient	2	<i>The application fulfils the given criterion to a sufficient level, however, some aspects of the given criterion have not been met fully or not explained in full clarity or detail.</i>
insufficient	1	<i>The application does not fulfil the given criterion or information required is missing.</i>

The quality of the applications, including the proposed budget and capacity of the partners, will be assessed using Quality assessment grid:

Quality assessment grid

#	Assessment questions	Guiding principles for assessment	Numerical assessment	Section in AF
C	RELEVANCE CRITERIA			
C.1	Relevance and strategy	<i>The project addresses common territorial challenges, joint assets and opportunities in the programme area - there is a real need for the project.</i>	1-2-3-4-5	Territorial challenge, Project approach
		<i>The project makes use of available knowledge and builds on existing results and practices.</i>	1-2-3	Project approach
		<i>The project clearly contributes to a wider strategy on one or more policy levels (EU/macroeconomic/ national / regional/local).</i>	1-2-3	Project context



C.2	Project's contribution to programme's objectives, expected results and outputs	<i>The project overall objective clearly links to a Programme priority objective.</i>	1-2-3-4-5	Project focus
		<i>The project results clearly link to a programme result indicator.</i>	1-2-3-4-5	Project focus
		<i>The main project outputs correspond to the programme indicators and are clearly linked to the project specific objectives.</i>	1-2-3-4-5	Project focus
		<i>Results and main outputs are specified (concretely defined and measurable) and realistic (it is possible to achieve them with given resources). Results and main outputs are in accordance with the selected target group's needs.</i>	1-2-3-4-5	Project focus
C.3	Cooperation character and partnership approach	<i>The importance of the cross-border approach to the topic addressed is clearly described; the project results and outputs cannot (or only to some extent) be achieved without cooperation.</i>	1-2-3-4-5	Partner
		<i>There is a clear benefit from cooperating for the Project Partners, the target groups and/or for the programme area.</i>	1-2-3-4-5	Partner



		<i>The project involves relevant Project Partners from all participating countries and they prove the necessary experience and competence in the field concerned.</i>	1-2-3-4-5	Partner
		<i>Cooperation criteria are fulfilled: joint development (mandatory), joint implementation (mandatory), joint financing and joint staffing.</i>	1-2-3	Partner
D	OPERATIONAL CRITERIA			
D.1	Management	<i>The Lead Partner demonstrates competency in managing EU funded projects or other international projects or can ensure adequate measures for management support.</i>	1-2-3-4-5	Workplan
D.2	Communication	<i>The communication approach/tactics chosen are appropriate to reach communication objectives. Communication activities and deliverables are appropriate to reach the relevant target groups and stakeholder.</i>	1-2-3-4-5	Workplan
D.3	Work packages	<i>Coherence of project activities with indicative types of actions and outputs, as per relevant Priority axes. Proposed activities are relevant and lead to the planned main outputs and results.</i>	1-2-3-4-5	Workplan



		<i>All partners play a defined and active role in the project partnership with clear responsibility (e.g. sharing of tasks is clear, logical, in line with partners' role in the projects and cross-border cooperation character).</i>	1-2-3-4-5	Workplan
		<i>Time plan is realistic (activities, deliverables and outputs are in a logical time sequence)</i>	1-2-3	Workplan
		<i>All activities will be implemented for the benefit of the programme area.</i>	1-2-3-4-5	Workplan
D.4	Budget	<i>The overall budget is clear and realistic and reflects real partners' involvement (it is balanced).</i> <i>To what extent does the project budget demonstrate value for money?</i>	1-2-3-4-5	Budget
		<i>Financial allocation per expenditure category is in line with the work plan of activities.</i> <i>To what extent is the budget coherent and proportionate?</i>	1-2-3-4-5	Budget
E	SUSTAINABILITY CRITERIA			

E.1.	Sustainability, Durability And Transferability	<i>How will the project outputs be further used and how the sustainability will be ensured once the project has been finalised? If applicable, how the project envisages durability of relevant project outputs?</i>	1-2-3-4-5	Project description
		<i>Project main outputs are applicable and replicable by other organisations/ regions/countries outside of the current partnership (transferability) – if not, it is justified.</i>	1-2-3-4-5	Project description
E.2	Horizontal principles	<i>The project makes a positive contribution to sustainable development.</i> <i>The project makes a positive contribution to equal opportunities and non-discrimination; OR</i> <i>The project makes a positive contribution to equality between men and women; OR</i>	1-2-3	Project description

Maximum scores in quality assessment:

	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	MAXIMUM SCORE
C	RELEVANCE CRITERIA	49
D	OPERATIONAL CRITERIA	38
E	SUSTAINABILITY CRITERIA	13
TOTAL		100

Important:

In order to be selected for financing an application must fulfil all the administrative and eligibility criteria and receive at least 70 points at the quality assessment.

Provisional selection of Operations

After the quality assessment, **four (4) ranking lists** will be established, one per each Priority axis, listing the applications ranked in descending order with minimum of 70 points and within the available financial envelope as well as a reserve lists following the same criteria. These lists will be presented by the Joint Steering Committee to the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) for final decision. Any rejected application will be replaced by the next best placed application in the reserve list per Priority axis that falls within the available financial envelope.

Important note:

If the allocation indicated for a specific Priority axis cannot be used due to insufficient quality or number of applications received, the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) reserves the right to re-allocate the remaining funds between Priority axes. JMC also reserves the right not to award all the available Programme funds in this CfP.

JMC decision on the approval/placement on the reserve lists/rejection of application together with assessment results will be communicated to each Lead Applicant through official letter signed by the MA. Upon receipt of the notification on JMC decision, Lead Applicant may request clarification from the MA or issue a formal complaint towards the decision of the JMC, following the complaint procedure described in these Guidelines for Applicants (Section 4.4.).

4.2. Contracting

Contracts with the Lead Applicants of the selected Operations will be prepared on the standard template. Model of Subsidy contract is available as part of Application Package.

Additional supporting documents:

For all the projects which activities involves the **infrastructure** the following documents will be required in addition, prior to Subsidy contract signature (contracting phase):

- Positive Decision on Environmental Impact Assessment OR a Statement from the relevant public authority that the EIA is not needed for the specific activities;
- Proof of ownership or long term lease (10 years) of the land /assets (*if applicable*);

- Preliminary works design OR detailed works design including indicative bill of quantities in EUR;
- All necessary legal authorizations (e.g. location and construction permits, etc.).

The additional supporting documents requested must be uploaded **via eMS** in the form of **scanned originals (PDF format)** showing legible stamps, signatures and dates of the said originals.

Please note that in case all necessary documents (permits, etc.) are not provided to the Managing Authority (MA) prior to the contracting, Managing Authority reserves the right to withdraw from contracting.

Before signing the contract, negotiations with provisionally selected Lead applicants will be performed in order to finalise contract related to **budget optimisation** (minor budget adjustments, if necessary), as well as adjustments related to content (minor adjustments of application form) and timing (implementation period adjustments).

After signing the Subsidy contract, the Lead Beneficiary is responsible for overall implementation of the EU financed Operation.

4.3. Indicative timetable

INDICATIVE TIMETABLE FOR 1st CALL FOR PROPOSALS		
Joint Secretariat for Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro 2014-2020		
	DATE AND TIME¹²	
Information sessions: - Croatia, - Bosnia and Herzegovina, - Montenegro	To be confirmed and published on Programme web site: www.interreg-hr-ba-me2014-2020.eu	
Deadline for requesting any clarifications related to 1 st Call for Proposals	10 days prior submission deadline	
Deadline for publication of Q&A on Programme web site	Regularly until closure of the Call for Proposals	
Deadline for submission of Full Application via eMS	10 June 2016	15:00
Information to Lead applicants on the results of assessment process/ JMC decision	December 2016	
Contracting phase	January 2017	

¹² Table contains provisional date and time. All times are in the time zone of the country where the Managing Authority is located.

4.4. Resolution of Complaints

In the framework of the Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia – Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro 2014-2020, the complaints procedure was set up in line with Article 74(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 (CPR). Therefore, complaints may be made in case a failure affecting the JMC funding decision is suspected during the project proposals selection process.

Failure means that the project proposal assessment or part of project proposal assessment did not comply with the selection criteria and/or with the procedures laid down in the Cooperation Programme and/or in the call-specific documents (Application Package). If a project proposal is not selected for funding as a consequence of such failures or mistakes, the Lead Applicant has the right to submit a formal complaint.

Complaints against the project proposal selection process have to be submitted by the Lead Applicant on behalf of all project partners via e-mail to the Managing Authority **within 14 calendar days after the notification on the JMC decision** regarding the respective call. In the complaint letter, the Lead Applicant shall clearly specify what failures or mistakes have happened during the assessment of the project proposal and support its claim with clear references to the relevant programme documents (Cooperation Programme, Application Package or other call-specific documents) and project proposal in question.

Prior to filing a formal complaint, the Lead Applicant is strongly recommended to request additional clarification or technical or legal information from the Managing Authority within the timeframe available for submitting a complaint (14 calendar days). Request for clarification/information interrupts the deadline for submitting a complaint until the day of the reply by the Managing Authority to the Lead Applicant.

In case the Lead Applicant is not satisfied with the received additional information from the Managing Authority, it may decide to submit a formal complaint to the Managing Authority. Managing Authority will send confirmation of receipt of any written complaint.

If a complaint includes an incomplete description of a case that does not allow Managing Authority or any involved body to perform a thorough assessment of a complaint, further information may be requested at any time of the procedure. If the information requested is not provided within the period of time as specified by the requesting authority/body (at least 3 working days) the case shall be closed without further investigation.

The complaint should clearly state:

- the name and address of the Lead partner,
- the reference number of the project proposal in question,
- clearly described reasons for the complaint,
- the signature of the legal representative of the Lead partner, and
- any other supporting documents the Lead partner may consider relevant.

Complaint must be submitted in writing to the following address:

Agencija za regionalni razvoj Republike Hrvatske

Ured za Upravljanje programima suradnje i regionalni razvoj

Upravljačko tijelo Interreg IPA Programa Prekogranične suradnje Hrvatska-Bosna i Hercegovina- Crna Gora 2014. – 2020.

Vlaška 108, 10 000 Zagreb

Clearly indicate following note: “Žalba na odluku Zajedničkog odbora za praćenje”

The official complaints will be examined according to internal procedures established at Programme management level. The MA shall inform in writing the Lead Partner of the results of those examinations.

4.5. Data protection

All personal data (such as names, addresses, CVs, etc.) will be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the European Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data.

The applicant's replies to the questions in the AF are necessary to evaluate and further process the application in accordance with the specifications of the Call for Proposals. Personal data will be processed solely for that purpose by the JMC, JSC, MA and JS. Personal data may be transferred to third parties involved in the assessment process or in the grant management procedure, without prejudice of transfer to the bodies in charge of monitoring and inspection tasks in accordance with EU law.

In particular, for the purposes of safeguarding the financial interests of the Union, personal data may be transferred to internal audit services, to the European Court of Auditors, or to the European Anti-Fraud Office.

The results of the 1st Call for Proposals are information of public nature and will be published on the programme web site: www.interreg-hr-ba-me2014-2020.eu after signing the Subsidy Contracts with the selected Lead Partners.

5. ANNEXES

1. Application Manual: instructions how to fill in Application Form (including budget)
2. Template of the Lead Partner Statement
3. Template of the Project Partner Statement
4. State-Aid self-assessment questionnaire
5. Template for Partnership pre-agreement
6. Model Partnership Agreement
7. Model Subsidy Contract