



# DIVA PROJECT

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE SELECTION OF PILOT ACTIONS

WP 3.3. “STRENGTHEN COOPERATION BETWEEN TRADITIONAL  
ENTERPRISES AND CULTURAL AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES - PILOT  
ACTIONS”

INFORMEST - AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL  
ECONOMIC COOPERATION

English Version

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## **PART I – GENERAL PURPOSE AND PROVISIONS**

### ***1. Aim of the call for proposals***

The cross-border cooperation Programme V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014-20 (hereinafter “the Programme”) approved by the European Commission with decision C(2015)9285 of 15/12/15 and last amended by Decision C(2017)6247 of 14/09/17, defines the operational strategy to achieve the objectives of the “Europe 2020” Strategy. Objectives shall be achieved through the promotion of innovation, sustainability and the strengthening of cross-border governance for a greater competitiveness, cohesion and liveability of the Italian-Slovenian cooperation area.

The **general objective of the DIVA strategic project** (approved for funding by the Programme Monitoring Committee in the framework of Call No. 06-2018) is the creation of a cross-border cooperation ecosystem on cultural and creative innovation to promote growth and technological innovation in the traditional entrepreneurial system of the involved territories. The main goal is to improve and promote methodologies that can ease and encourage collaborations between SMEs and cultural and creative industries (CCIs).

The present **Call for Proposals** aims to promote **cross-fertilization between CCIs and traditional SMEs** leading to the realisation of new products and services. In the framework of the present call, at least 20 project proposals shall be selected for implementation by a single beneficiary (a traditional SME) and an implementing partner (a CCI operator). These project ideas could be developed and further implemented with the support of **DIVA regional hubs** (see chapter 20). The role of DIVA hubs is to create opportunities for cooperation in order to fully exploit the potential of the collaboration between creatives/artists, CCIs and traditional SMEs through targeted tools and methodologies (e.g. through workshops and laboratories). For this purpose, several DIVA hubs helpdesks are at the disposal of the potential applicants during the preparation phase of project proposals. In addition, a Project Manager from one of the hubs shall be assigned to each proposal selected for funding (i.e. to each pilot project), in order to monitor the regular progress of project activities towards the achievement of the related project objectives, to support the development of business ideas based on the cooperation between traditional SMEs and CCIs, favour the exchange of skills and competences between the two realms and facilitate the uptake of creative processes in traditional SMEs.

## **2. Applicable legislation**

The Call complies with the regulatory provisions mentioned below. Unless otherwise regulated by the following legislation, applicants shall refer to the ordinary laws provided for by applicable EU or national legislation.

### **2.1 European legislation**

- Regulation (EU) No. 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013, laying down specific provisions to support the European Territorial Cooperation goal set by the European Regional Development Fund.
- 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.
- Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the European Council, of 17 December 2013, published in the EU Official Journal L 347 of 20 December 2013, which sets down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), as well as general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund.
- Regulation (EU) No. 1407/2013 of the European Commission, of 18 December 2013, regulating the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to the de minimis aid, published in the Official Journal of the European Union L 352 of 24 December 2013.
- Implementing Regulation (EU) No. 480/2014 of the European Commission, of 3 March 2014, supplementing Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, which lays down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, and general dispositions on the European Regional Development Fund, the Social European Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund.

- Implementing Regulation (EU) No. 481/2014 of the European Commission, of 4 March 2014, supplementing Regulation (EU) No. 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, with regard to the specific rules on the eligibility of costs for cooperation programmes.
- The Cooperation Programme Interreg V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014-2020 (hereinafter referred to as “the Programme”), approved by the European Commission with decision C(2015)9285 of 15/12/15 and last amended by Decision C(2017)6247 of 14/09/17, which defines the operational strategy to achieve the “Europe 2020” Strategy goals by promoting innovation and sustainability, and by strengthening cross-border governance, achieving greater competitiveness, cohesion and visibility for the Italian-Slovenian area of cooperation.
- Cooperation Programme Interreg V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014-2020: Call for strategic projects no. 06/2018 including the Application Package.

## **2.2 National Italian legislation**

- Law No. 241 of 7 August 1990 and subsequent amendments and additions, laying down the rules in the field of administrative procedure and the right of access to administrative papers.
- Legislative Decree No. 123 of 31 March 1998 and subsequent amendments and additions, concerning the “Provisions for the rationalisation of public aid interventions for businesses, in compliance with Article 4, paragraph 4(c) of Law No. 59 of 15 March 1997”.
- Article 52, paragraph 1 of Law No. 234 of 24 December 2012 and subsequent amendments and additions, which provides that public or private subjects managing State aid must register the corresponding information on the “National State Aid Register”, the database established at the Ministry of Economic Development pursuant to Article 14, paragraph 2 of Law No. 57 of 5 March 2001, in order to ensure compliance with cumulation prohibitions and for the purposes of transparency and advertisement obligations required by European and national legislation in the field of State aid.

## **2.3 National Slovenian legislation**

- State Aid Monitoring Act (ZSDrP).

- Decree on the transmission of data and reporting on granted state aid and de minimis aid.
- Decree on the methodology for assessing damage, conditions and procedure for allocating public funds referred to in point b) of the second paragraph of Article 20a of the Act on Intervention Measures to Contain the COVID-19 Epidemic and Mitigating its Consequences for Citizens and the Economy.
- Decree on the transmission of content and reporting of data on state aid in the field of agriculture and fisheries.
- Regulation on the standard classification of institutional sectors.

### **3. State Aid**

Public financial support of the present Call is State aid under the *de minimis* rule according to Commission Regulation (EU) No. 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013 and subsequent amendments and additions for ordinary sectors, Regulation (EU) No. 1408/2013 and subsequent amendments and additions for the agricultural sectors and Regulation (EU) No. 717/2014 for the fishing and aquaculture sector.

Aids granted under the present Call shall be duly registered in the National State Aid Register. The Financing Body shall handle compliance with obligations in terms of registering State aid according to applicable legislation.

### **4. Definitions**

- **Applicants:** the potential beneficiaries of the grant of the present Call; enterprises benefitting from the collaboration with the CCI involved in the project proposal.
- **Creative Cultural Industries (CCI):** private or public economic operators as the implementing partner in a proposal if they perform relevant and coherent activities within the project proposal and the objectives of the present Call.
- **Beneficiary:** the successful applicant awarded the grant contract under the present Call for Proposals.
- **Implementing partner:** the CCI involved in the project.

- **Financing Body:** INFORMEST - Agency for the Development and the International Economic Cooperation.
- **Grant contract/agreement:** agreement between INFORMEST (the Financing Body) and the beneficiary; by signing the agreement the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it under its own responsibility and in accordance with all the obligations and conditions set out in the agreement.

### **5. Financial allocation**

The financial allocation for this Call for Proposals is **EUR 900.000,00**. Maximum financing under the present Call is **EUR 45.000,00** for each selected project proposal and covers 100% of the project's eligible costs.

Funds are granted to proposals according to quality evaluation ranking scores and upon availability of financial resources.

## **PART II – ELIGIBILITY RULES**

### **6. Eligibility of applicants and implementing partners**

#### **6.1 Applicant**

All applicant economic operators are to meet the following requirements in order to be eligible for the grants:

1. Be a **micro, small or medium-sized enterprise (MSME)**, as defined by European Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC of 6 May 2003 as well as by the Annex I of the “GBER Regulation”:

<b>Enterprise</b>	<b>Number of employees</b>	<b>Turnover or Balance Sheet Total</b>
Micro	<10	≤2 M or ≤2 M
Small	<50	≤10 M or ≤10 M
Medium	<250	≤50 M or ≤43 M

2. Be established for at least **2 fiscal years**;



3. Not be in any of the situations foreseen by Art. 106 (1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union as modified by amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2015/1929 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 October 2015;
4. Possess the specific licenses, authorizations and qualifications to implement the project proposal's activities;
5. Not present the characteristics and conditions of a “company in difficulty” as defined in Art. 2-point 18 of Commission Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014 (so-called “GBER”) of 17 June 2014;
6. Not to have requested and/or obtained other public subsidies in relation to the project proposal;
7. Not obtained in the last three years additional as *de minimis* aid whose cumulation as a “single company”<sup>1</sup> exceeds the following ceilings:
  - i. € 200.000,00 (€ 100,000.00 for the transport and logistics sector) required by Regulation (EU) No. 1407/2013
  - ii. € 30.000,00 required by Regulation (EU) No. 717/2014 for companies in the fishing and aquaculture sector
  - iii. € 20.000,00 required in the ordinary way by Regulation (EU) No. 2019/316 for the agricultural sector
8. Possess the necessary **administrative, technical-operational and financial capacity** to implement the project, as provided for by article 125 of Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013. Financial capacity shall be verified by ascertaining the following conditions:
  - regularity of social security and insurance contributions;
  - compliance with the financial capacity sheet provided in Annex 10 (at least 3 out of 4 parameters have to be met).
9. Not having business interconnections with CCI implementing partner

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<sup>1</sup> As defined in Art. 2, paragraph 2 of Regulation (EU) No. 1407/2013 and subsequent amendments and additions.

**Italian applicants** are to meet the following additional criteria in order to be eligible for the grants:

1. Be businesses **regularly constituted and registered** as “active” for no less than 24 months in the Business Register held at the Chamber of Commerce (C.C.I.A.A.) within territorial jurisdiction, with a primary NACE code (ATECO) not included in Annex 5 and having at least one legal registered office or operational head office within the eligible territories mentioned below:
  - Friuli Venezia Giulia Region
  - Province of Venezia
  - Province of Belluno (outside the Programme area)
  - Province of Treviso (outside the Programme area)
2. Fall under the ordinary accounting scheme and have at least two financial statements approved and filed in the Business Register or have submitted at least two income tax returns in the case of sole proprietorships and partnerships not required to prepare financial statements.

According to Programme rules, up to 20% of this Call’s financial resources of the present Call can be assigned to applicants located outside the Programme area (Province of Belluno and Province of Treviso).

**Slovenian applicants** are to meet the following additional criteria in order to be eligible for the grants:

1. Be companies duly constituted and registered with the Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Public Legal Records and Related Services for no less than 24 months, with a primary NACE code not included in Annex 6 and have at least one legal registered office or operational head office within the eligible territories mentioned below:
  - Primorsko-notranjska,
  - Osrednjeslovenska,
  - Gorenjska,
  - Obalno-kraška
  - Goriška

2. Fall under the standard accounting scheme and to have at least two financial statements approved and filed with the Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Public Legal Records and Related Services or have submitted at least two tax returns in the case of sole proprietorships and partnerships.

The absence of one of the above requirements shall result in the rejection of the application.

## **6.2 Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs)**

Mandatory requirements for CCI implementing partners are set out below. CCIs must have all the specific licenses, authorizations and qualifications to implement the activities they propose to fulfil and shall not have any business interconnections with the applicant.

CCIs falling under **Italian law** must be:

- a) **economic operators** duly constituted in the form of limited liability companies or partnerships, including non-profit subjects or public entities that carry out an external activity in a professional and continuous manner, provided that they: hold a VAT number; are registered as active in the Business Register; have at least one production unit registered with a Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture.
- b) **self-employed operators** with a VAT number, who carry out in a professional and continuous manner artistic and/or technical activity directly connected with the production and implementation of cultural and creative activities, including self-employed workers registered in regulated professional registers (e.g. architects, designers, engineers etc.) and self-employed entertainment workers with a VAT number and a suitable social security and insurance position in line with current regulations.

Moreover, CCIs must carry out at least one of the economic activities (NACE) falling within those expressly provided for in Annex 5.

CCIs must have at least one registered office or operational head office within the eligible territories mentioned below:

- Friuli Venezia Giulia Region
- Province of Venezia

- Province of Belluno (outside the Programme area)
- Province of Treviso (outside the Programme area)

CCIs falling under **Slovenian law** must be:

- a) **economic operators** duly constituted in the form of limited liability companies or partnerships, including non-profit subjects and public entities that carry out external activity in a professional and continuous manner, provided that they: hold a VAT number; are registered as active in the Business Register; have at least one production unit registered with the Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Public Legal Records and Related Services.
- b) **self-employed workers** and professionals who exercise artistic and/or technical activities individually and who are enrolled in the special register of the Slovenian Ministry of Culture.

Moreover, CCIs must carry out at least one of the economic activities (NACE) falling within those expressly provided for in Annex 6.

CCIs must have at least one registered office or operational headquarter within the eligible territories mentioned below:

- Primorsko-notranjska;
- Osrednjeslovenska;
- Gorenjska;
- Obalno-kraška;
- Goriška.

The absence of one of the above requirements shall result in the CCI being considered as ineligible and consequently the proposal shall be rejected.

It is not possible to replace the CCI implementing partner indicated in the application, except in duly justified and exceptional circumstances (force majeure, partner bankruptcy, a supervening impossibility and loss of subjective eligibility requirements). Any request for the replacement of the CCI implementing partner must be expressly authorized by the Financing Body in order to ascertain the incoming implementing partner's effective capacity and to verify the adequate level of quality/reliability.

## 7. Eligibility of Project proposals

Project proposals shall focus on innovative and original products, processes, services and tools developed in the framework of a collaboration between one traditional SME (applicant) and one CCI (implementing partner). Proposals focusing exclusively on the design and implementation of individual activities and / or extemporaneous initiatives (such as single and unstructured artistic performances) are not admissible.

Proposals must be able to offer perspectives of sustainability over time and not represent forms of political propaganda or discrimination.

Multiple project proposals submitted by the same applicant or CCI implementing partner and / or by other subjects directly linked to them shall not be considered admissible, in accordance with Art. 2359 of the Italian Civil Code and the Slovenian Integrity and Prevention of Corruption Act (ZIntPK).

Each eligible project proposal shall meet the following specific requirements:

- a) submission by applicants in possession of the requirements referred to in chapter 6.1;
- b) submission by no later than 17 May 2021 and in accordance with the procedures indicated in chapter 10, duly signed and enclosing the required documentation;
- c) be of a **total duration** of 6 to 10 months with a scheduled conclusion expected by 30 April 2022 (latest date on which it is possible to incur an expense related to the project). The final report must be submitted by 15 May 2022;
- d) be aligned with the content and purposes set out in **work package WP3.3 of the DIVA Project** (see Annex 8) for the implementation of pilot actions aimed at creating innovative solutions/products/processes/services;
- e) Implementation by an applicant in accordance to chapter 6.1 in **collaboration** with an eligible implementing partner in accordance with chapter 6.2;
- f) **Include a detail description** on how the collaboration between the applicant and the implementing partner could solve a need of the traditional SME with a view to sustainability, integration and progressive and transversal innovation;
- g) have a total admissible cost not exceeding **EUR 45.000,00** (without prejudice to the maximum coverage of facilitations envisaged for the *de minimis* category the applicant belongs to);

- h) provide for the allocation of at least **80% of eligible funds** to activities provided by the CCI implementing partner. Proposals involving the purchase of equipment, functional to the project proposal's implementation, for a share exceeding 20% of the project proposal's total cost shall not be considered eligible under any circumstance;
- i) provision of **costs** incurred in line with legislation on the eligibility of expenses provided for by applicable national laws and Programme guidelines;
- j) achievement of **tangible project results** belonging to the following indicative categories: innovative products and/or services, innovative human resources management tools, staff training methodologies, corporate processes, etc.
- k) Implementation of **innovative projects** defined in terms of the originality of the solutions proposed/products developed, able to contribute to the DIVA project's overall objective and which are sustainable over time;
- l) ensure **visibility of the initiative** with particular reference to traditional and creative sectors which could potentially replicate it.

The absence of one of the above requirements shall result in the non-eligibility of the application.

Project proposals must provide for the drawing up of an agreement (template provided in Annex 4) between the applicant and the implementing partner.

### ***8. Eligibility of expenditure***

Expenditure is eligible for funding when it fulfils all general eligibility requirements. Expenditure must be:

- **relevant and related to the project** in accordance with current legislation;
- **effectively paid and borne** directly by the beneficiaries and supported by paid invoices or equivalent accounting documents or, in duly justified cases, by suitable documentation certifying the relevance of the expenditure. Only payments made by bank transfer or by POS are considered eligible (payments in cash and/or different forms from those expressly mentioned are not permitted and shall result in the ineligibility of such corresponding costs);

- **incurred during the period of eligibility** of expenditures and in any case after the approval date of projects by the Evaluation Committee;
- **traceable and verifiable** through proper accounting and documentary evidence;
- **accounted for**, in compliance with the law and accounting principles and Programme rules.

For the purpose of this Call, the **period of eligibility** of expenditure shall take effect from the ranking list's date of publication up to the end date of project proposals, as indicated in the approved application forms.

The financial support provided for in this Call shall be used by the applicant for the purchase of specific professional services supplied by the CCI implementing partner and for the purchase of specific equipment functional to the project proposal's implementation. In particular, eligible expenditures shall comply with **eligible expenses under budget line 4 "external services" and budget line 5 "equipment costs" as set out in the Manual on eligibility of expenditure** (Annex 11) referred to in the Call for Proposals 6 of the Interreg Italy-Slovenia Programme provided that they are in accordance with the purpose of this Call for Proposals.

With regard to the purchase of **equipment**, a **maximum of 20% of the overall budget** can be dedicated to office equipment, hardware and software, furniture, laboratory instruments, devices, machinery, vehicles and other equipment. The beneficiary shall confirm in the AF that it is essential for the achievement of project goals and, as such, it shall be used exclusively for the project and maintained in use and the applicant's property for at least 5 years. In this case only, total equipment cost will be eligible; differently, depreciation shall apply in line with the abovementioned Manual on the eligibility of expenditure. A **market search** involving at least 3 operators or price comparisons of products available on the internet shall be undertaken for equipment exceeding a cost of EUR 250.00.

In order to comply with Programme visual identity, a sticker with the project logo should be placed on every piece of equipment purchased under the project. Stickers affixed on equipment shall be clearly visible when placed. More information on the stickers is available in Annex 12.

With regard to the **activities carried out by the CCI** implementing partner, eligible expenditure shall be strictly connected to the implementation of project outputs and shall

amount to **at least 80% of the overall budget**. These activities shall comprise, by way of example (non-exhaustive list): the development of new products and services, publication/educational materials, design and implementation of websites, apps, including the creation of multimedia contents and interactive features for the presentation of products and/or services provided by the applicants, creation of audio-visual content (e.g., video-clips), written - plans, visions of cooperation, prototypes, speculative innovations etc.

### ***9. Non eligible expenditure***

Expenditure that is not included under Art. 8 is considered to be ineligible. In particular, the following expenditure is not permitted:

- consumer goods;
- used goods;
- stocks of goods;
- bank guarantees provided by banking or financial institutions;
- debit interests, charges for financial transactions, foreign exchange commissions and losses and other purely financial expenditure;
- ongoing or periodic services related to the normal operation of the company, such as tax, ordinary, economic and financial, legal, notarial, accounting or auditing services and the preparation of the project proposal;
- VAT, unless it is non-recoverable by the beneficiary.

## **PART III – SUBMISSION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE**

### ***10. Submission of applications***

Applications shall be submitted in English and in Italian or in English and in Slovenian language no later than 17 May 2021 at 12.00 PM. The English version will be taken as authentic in the evaluation phase.

The Financing Body has the right to postpone the Call's deadline for relevant and justified reasons.



For the submission of applications for funding, applicants must use the templates provided by the Financing Body and submit the following documentation:

1. **Application form (Annex 1a or 1b)** with each part completed and signed by the applicant's legal representative. Each applicant shall upload the application form in excel format onto the AFM platform, as well as the "Data and Signature" sheet duly dated and signed by the legal representative.
2. **Applicant declaration (Annex 2a or 2b)** signed by the applicant's legal representative.
3. **CCI Declaration (Annex 3a or 3b)** signed by the CCI implementing partner.
4. **Agreement signed between the applicant and the implementing partner (Annex 4).**
5. **Financial capacity sheet (Annex 10 - for profit SMEs only)** duly completed, dated and signed by the applicant's legal representative.
6. **Letters of support (Annex 13)** duly filled in, dated and signed by the legal representative of supporting organisation, in order to prove the respect of the visibility criteria 2.2 (see Annex 7): 5 letters maximum (not mandatory).
7. **Copy of signatories' identity documents (SME and CCI)** in the case of a handwritten signature.

Documents must be uploaded onto the **AFM platform** through the following link <https://afm.informest.it/>. Instructions on how to upload the documents can be found in the AFM guide (Annex 9).

Applications and annexes without signatures, or applications submitted by other means will not be considered valid.

Missing documents or parts of documents or annexes that do not allow for the applicant's identification or project proposal's content identification will result in the project proposal being rejected.

In the event of false declarations, the applicant shall be sanctioned according to applicable law, excluded from the rankings, and shall lose any benefits obtained.

The present Call and all the templates can be downloaded from the Financing Body website [www.informest.it](http://www.informest.it) and the DIVA project website [www.ita-slo.eu/en/diva](http://www.ita-slo.eu/en/diva).

### ***11. Selection of project proposals***

Funds shall be granted to beneficiaries after a two-step appraisal procedure:

- a. Proposal admissibility and eligibility check;
- b. Proposal quality assessment phase.

Each of the two steps can lead to the permanent rejection of the proposal.

The **admissibility and eligibility check** shall be carried out by the Financing Body in order to verify whether an application complies with the administrative and eligibility criteria established by the Call. Proposals failing any of these criteria shall be considered ineligible and not processed further.

**Quality assessment** shall be carried out by the Evaluation Committee and is based on a quality assessment grid (see annex 7). Approved by the Evaluation Committee, the evaluation grid identifies the specific criteria for the evaluation and selection of project proposals submitted by applicants in this Call for Proposals. Quality evaluation criteria are designed to measure and verify the applicant and project proposal's quality through a proper scoring mechanism. The Evaluation Committee shall perform the quality evaluation of those proposals passing admissibility and eligibility checks and shall award a score from 0 to 100, according to the criteria reported in the quality evaluation grid. All projects achieving a total score equal to or higher than the minimum threshold of 60/100 will be included in the rankings.

Eligible proposals shall be financed until this Call's available overall budget is exhausted. Eligible proposals submitted by applicants located outside the Programme area (according to chapter 6.1) shall be financed according to the position in the ranking list and upon reaching a maximum budget equal to 20% of the Call for Proposal's total financial allocation.

In the event that available funds only partially cover the last eligible project proposal in the ranking list, such proposal will not be financed unless additional resources are made available to supplement the Call's overall budget allocation.

### ***12. Communication of results and start of the procedure***

Once the Evaluation Committee approves the rankings, the Financing Body shall acknowledge the rankings by means of its own provision and shall publish the projects

eligible for contribution on the website [www.informest.it](http://www.informest.it) and <https://www.ita-slo.eu/en/diva> in the specific section dedicated to this Call. All applicants will also receive an official communication on the results of the evaluation procedure.

The Financing Body shall carry out checks, in relation to the projects admitted for funding, on the possession of the self-declared requirements and, in case of need, shall ask applicants to provide further administrative documentation to carry out pre-contractual controls.

## **PART IV – GRANT ALLOCATION, REPORTING AND OBLIGATIONS**

### ***13. Grant allocation and no double-funding***

Grant allocations shall be formalized through a **grant agreement** signed by the beneficiary and the Financing Body. The grant agreement shall clarify the conditions and specific obligations of the beneficiary, as set out in the Call for Proposal and in the Annexes. In particular, the agreement shall explicitly specify the actions and interventions to be carried out by the beneficiary for the implementation of the project proposal, the budget with the resources allocated per budget line and the financial reporting obligations.

The beneficiary of the selected project will receive a copy of the grant agreement. The same agreement must be countersigned in acceptance by the beneficiary's legal representative within 5 days from its receipt, under pain of nullity, unless differently agreed upon with the Financing Body.

Funds received for the implementation of selected projects may not be cumulated with any other public aid granted for the same expenditure incurred in the implementation of the project proposal.

### ***14. Reporting procedures***

All real costs incurred by the beneficiary for the implementation of the project proposal must be demonstrated by producing the following documentation:

- a certified copy of the commercial contracts/letters with the contract value of each of the supplies acquired for the implementation of the activities foreseen in the selected project;
- formal evidence of the implementation of project outputs and/or delivery of goods purchased;
- a certified copy of the corresponding expenditure documents (e.g. invoices, professional documents, and other equivalent evidence in accordance with the tax rules applicable in Member States). Invoices produced by the implementing partners shall be accompanied by a detailed report in the English language on the activities carried out in collaboration with the applicant;
- English translation of invoices and payment documents;
- proof of payment related to the expenditure incurred;
- documented market search for the purchase of goods/equipment to ensure the best value for money or to select the lowest price (e.g. collection of 3 financial offers from different operators, price comparisons available on the internet, etc.);
- images of the purchased equipment with evidence of compliance with Programme visibility rules.

Direct costs related to the purchase of equipment shall be limited to the purchase of new equipment directly from the manufacturer or dealer. This documentation should be kept for five years from the end date of the project proposal and has to be produced in the event of an audit. The Financing Body has the right to carry out random audits to check the actual implementation of activities under the funded projects.

#### **14.1 Common rules for reporting expenditure**

All expenditure documents must include the following label "**Project DIVA - CUP H12D18000190007 - Call 3.3 - intervention code.....**", together with the project proposal's title.

Costs for the reporting and transmission of reimbursement requests to the Financing Body, as well as the implementation of each project activity, are to be borne exclusively by the applicant.

All payments are to be made exclusively by bank transfer or by POS from the applicant's bank account in order to ensure traceability.

Payments must be made from the bank account indicated by the applicant in the Grant agreement. All documents related to expenditure are to be in the applicant's name.

### ***15. Reimbursement of funds***

The public grant will be awarded to the applicant as a reimbursement after the validation of financial and technical progress reports, the actual execution of the project proposal, and the achievement of planned results. In the case of a partial implementation of planned activities, the Financing Body shall reimburse to the applicant the incurred costs relating to the activities effectively carried out. The Financing Body can fully revoke the grants if there is a significant disparity between what was implemented by the applicant and what was planned in the selected project proposal. The Financing Body will claim back the total grant if the beneficiary does not submit financial reports for at least 70% of eligible project costs. The Financing Body can totally or partially claim back the grant if project objectives, as described in the relevant application form, are not met or are partially met, and/or if project outputs as envisaged in the relevant application form are not delivered or are partially delivered.

Advance payments are not foreseen.

The public grant will be disbursed in a maximum of 2 tranches after verifying the implementation of corresponding activities. Applicants must submit a **financial and activity report** in the English language, detailing the activities carried out for each reimbursement request of the grant's corresponding tranche.

The sole mandatory report is the final one, which is to be presented to the Financing Body within 15 days from the end date of the activities. Final reimbursement shall take place upon delivery of the final report.

Disbursement of the grant is conditional on:

- a. the compliance of reported activities and expenditure with the project proposal and the grant agreement;
- b. verification of the employer's certificate of social security contributions (Italian DURC; Slovenian FURS).

Reimbursements shall be paid within 30 days after the approval of the claim for reimbursement by the Financing Body.

## **16. Beneficiary obligations**

Beneficiaries must comply with the obligations laid down by the present Call for Proposals and by the Grant Agreement signed with the Financing Body. Beneficiaries shall play an active role in the project using their competences, experiences, and good practices. The implementation of project proposals is the sole responsibility of the beneficiary supported by the CCI implementing partner. This responsibility includes authorization requests, licenses, permits and other procedures needed for the sound implementation of activities.

The beneficiary is liable for the project proposal's implementation and the proper use of the subsidy granted under the Cooperation Programme, as well as for the "durability of operations" principle and its obligations, referred to in Art. 71 of Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013.

The beneficiary shall implement all communication and information actions, aimed at giving visibility to the support granted by the EU, the Member State and the Cross Border Cooperation Programme Italy-Slovenia (Art. No 115, paragraph 3 of Regulation EU No. 1303/2013 and the specific provisions of Annex XII). Further provisions referring to the obligations of beneficiaries will be specified in the Grant agreement.

## **17. Monitoring**

In accordance with Art. 125, paragraph 4 of Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013, the Financing Body may carry out administrative checks to ascertain whether:

- funded services and products were effectively undertaken;
- the declared expenditure was indeed paid by the beneficiaries;
- the declared expenditure is compliant with applicable law.

In addition to the checking of documents attached to the financial and technical report, the Financing Body reserves the right to conduct audits and spot checks at the beneficiaries' premises in order to verify:

- the project implementation status;
- compliance with the obligations under applicable law and the present Call;

- the veracity of declarations and information provided by beneficiaries (e.g. the originals of administrative documents; conditions.)

Beneficiaries are required to cooperate in facilitating the Financing Body's monitoring activities. Moreover, beneficiaries are required to provide all the necessary information and supporting documents related to eligible costs. The grant will be withdrawn if the beneficiary is not available for the audits, inspections and spot checks, or does not provide the requested documents during the inspections/audit/checks.

### ***18. Withdrawal and revocation***

Grants may be revoked by the Financing Body with the consequent obligation of returning the funding amount received, in addition to interest and the penalties envisaged by law.

The contribution may be withdrawn in the following cases:

- initial absence of subjective eligibility requirements;
- loss of subjective eligibility requirements;
- failure to comply with the beneficiary obligations;
- submission of false declarations concerning requirements or facts essential for the concession;
- incorrect accounting, administrative and management statements and information produced;
- in the event that the documentation produced or the checks and inspections carried out reveal non-compliance with the obligations laid down in the Call, the grant agreement and reference legislation;
- in the event that the beneficiary is not available for spot checks or does not produce the documents required for verification.

Formal communication is to be sent to the Financing Body should the beneficiary intend to waive the granted contribution.

## **PART V – FINAL PROVISIONS**

### ***19. Processing of personal data***

In accordance with Article 13 of Regulation (EU) No. 2016/679, requested data shall be used exclusively for the purposes of the Call and shall be processed with or without IT tools, in full compliance with the aforementioned legislation and confidentiality obligations. Utmost confidentiality of the information provided by applicants shall be guaranteed. Business projects shall remain the property of applicants.

### ***20. Information and Contacts***

Specific information on the present Call for Proposals can be addressed to:

Informest

Contact person: Francesca Silvera

E-mail: [project-diva@informest.it](mailto:project-diva@informest.it)

DIVA Hub contacts:

HUB VENETO:

email: [info@creativehubveneto.eu](mailto:info@creativehubveneto.eu)

ECIPA, Laura Castellan, email: [diva@ecipa.eu](mailto:diva@ecipa.eu)

HUB FVG:

Area Science Park, Sara Baronio, email: [sara.baronio@areasciencepark.it](mailto:sara.baronio@areasciencepark.it)

Friuli Innovazione, Saverio D'Eredità, email: [saverio.deredita@friulinnovazione.it](mailto:saverio.deredita@friulinnovazione.it)

HUB SLOVENIA:

email: [info@diva-borderless.eu](mailto:info@diva-borderless.eu)

## **ANNEXES**

1. Application form - Annex 1a for Italian applicants; Annex 1b for Slovenian applicants
2. Applicant's declaration - Annex 2a for Italian SMEs; Annex 2b for Slovenian SMEs



3. Implementing partner's declaration - Annex 3a for Italian CCI; Annex 3b for Slovenian CCI
4. Agreement between the applicant and implementing partner
5. List of prevailing ATECO Code activities for Italian CCIs
6. List of prevailing NACE Code activities for Slovenian CCIs
7. Selection criteria
8. Description of the DIVA project and WP3 methodology
9. AFM guide
10. Financial capacity sheet
11. Programme Manual on the eligibility of expenditure (in Italian and in Slovenian)
12. Programme Visual Identity Style Guide and its annexes I and II
13. Letters of support