Module 1 – Understanding the Application Form

The purpose of this module is to give you a brief 'guided tour' of the application (Annex A - Grant Application Form) and a better understanding of how it is structured and the key procedural issues, however minor, that must be addressed in order for the final document to be compliant.

Completing the form is as much an administrative as well as a technical task. You will find a number of documents presented as standard templates; do not alter these, use them by following the specific instructions given in the application. Some rely on 'tick' boxes. To complete each accurately will require research within the applicant organisation to identify relevant data. Take these tasks seriously to ensure that the correct data is entered. Make no doubt, once the application has been submitted as final, and it subsequently becomes evident that some data is incorrect you will NOT be able to make any amendments and therefore run the risk of rejection before the evaluation is concluded.

The application form comprises 8 sections:

Section 1 – General Information

Section 2 – The Action

2.1 – Budget of the Action

2.2 – Description of the Action
2.2.1 – Description
2.2.2 – Methodology
2.2.3 – Duration and Indicative action plan
2.2.4 – Sustainability of the action plan
2.2.5 – Logical Framework

2.3 – Applicants' experience of similar actions (over the past 3 years).

Section 3 – The Applicant

3.1 – Identity

3.2 – Profile
3.2.1 – Category – Public/Private Identity (of the applicant)
3.2.2 – Sectors – Industrial classification (of the applicant)
3.2.3 – Target groups (of the applicant)

3.3 – Capacity to manage and implement actions
3.3.1 – Experience by sector
3.3.2 – Experience by geographical sector
3.3.3 – Resources

3.4 – List of management board

Section 4 – Partners

4.1 – Description of partners
4.2 – Partnership statement(s)

Section 5 – Associates of the applicants

Section 6 – Checklist

Section 7 – Declaration by the applicant

Section 8 – Assessment Grid.

Estimated Time to Develop a Full Application

The estimated times shown in the following table are not set in stone; they are a guideline only and there to reflect the level of effort needed to ensure you allocate your efforts to the most important aspects of the application. The table also provides a brief note on the most important points that you need to accommodate when completing the application.

Grant Application Form - Structure	Notes	Estimated Time (days)
Section 1:- General Information	Standard template – 1 page	½ day
Section 2:- The Action		15 days
2.1 – Budget of the Action	Annex B of guidelines to be completed in order to complete this section	
2.2 – Description of the Action:		
2.2.1 – Description	Maximum of 14 pages.	
2.2.2 – Methodology	Maximum of 4 pages.	
2.2.3 – Duration and indicative action plan	Maximum of 4 pages. This must include the Action Plan (Gantt Chart). If proposal is more than 12 months, Action Plan for Year 1 and must be supported with an Action Plan for following year(s).	
2.2.4 – Sustainability of the Action Plan	Maximum of 3 pages.	
2.2.5 – Logical Framework	Must use template from Annex C of the guidelines.	10 days
2.3 – Applicants' experience of similar actions (over the past 3 years).	Maximum of 1 page per action based upon the standard template.	½ day
Section 3 – The Applicant	Standard template to be used	5 days
3.1 – Identity	Only required if there have been any modifications since Concept Note submission.	
3.2 – Profile	Standard template to be used – 'tick box' activity	
3.2.1 – Category – Public/Private Identity (of the Applicant)	Standard template to be used – 'tick box' activity	
3.2.2 – Sectors – Industrial classification (of the Applicant).	Standard template to be used – 'tick box' activity (5 pages)	
3.2.3 – Target groups (of the Applicant)	Standard template to be used – 'tick box' activity (1 page)	
3.3 – Capacity to Manage & Implement Actions		
3.3.1 – Experience by Sector	Standard template to be used – 'tick box' activity (1/2 page)	
3.3.2 – Experience by geographical area	Standard template to be used – 'tick box' activity (1 – 2 pages)	
3.3.3 – Resources	Covers financial data (turnover, balance sheet etc.) over the last 3 financial years. Standard template to be used. Covers financial sources (source of revenue). Standard template to be used.	

Grant Application Form - Structure	Notes	Estimated Time (days)
	Number of staff (full-time equivalent). Standard template to be used.	
3.4 – List of Management Board.	Standard template to be used (1/2 page).	
Section 4 - Partners		1 day
4.1 – Description of the Partners.	Standard template to be used (1 page per partner)	
4.2 – Partnership Statement	Standard template to be used (1 page per partner)	
Section 5 – Associates of the Applicant	Standard template to be used (1 page per associate)	1 day
Section 6 - Checklist	Standard template to be used (2 pages)	1 day
Section 7 – Declaration by the Applicant	Standard template to be used (page)	
Section 8 – Assessment Grid	For the sole use of the Contracting Authority. This BLANK document MUST be incorporated into the full application document set.	Not Applicable

NOTES:

Annex A - Grant Application Form is a link to Grant Application Form

Annex B - Budget is a link to the Budget templates

Annex C - Logical Framework is a link to Logical Framework

Documents NOT to be submitted with Full Applications:

Annex D - Legal Entity Form and Annex E - Financial Identification Form : Annex D, Annex E and other documents will be required for Eligibility verification after the full applications evaluation and only from the applicants who have been provisionally selected or listed under the reserve list (please refer to Section 2.4 of the Guidelines - Guidelines for Applicants)

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Evaluation of Full Applications

In order to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the application in meeting the overall objectives of the Call for Proposals, a number of criteria have been developed against which each application will be assessed and a score allocated by the assessors. A maximum possible score has been allocated to each criterion. These scores reflect the impact each criterion is perceived to have on contributing to the overall effectiveness of the objectives of the SME Competitiveness Grant Scheme.

In view of this, it is imperative that you understand, clearly, the priorities for developing specific outputs and identifying quantitative measures that stand the best chance of being awarded the maximum scores.

An evaluation of the quality of the applications, including the proposed budget and the capacity of the applicant and its partners, will be carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in the Evaluation Grid shown below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: 'selection' criteria and 'award' criteria.

Selection criteria are intended to help evaluate the applicants' financial and operational capacity to ensure that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out and, where appropriate, to participate in its funding;
- have the management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed action. This also applies to any partners of the applicant.

Award criteria allow the quality of the applications submitted to be evaluated in relation to the set objectives and priorities, and grants to be awarded to actions which maximise the overall effectiveness of the Call for Proposals. They enable the selection of applications that the Contracting Authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities. They cover such aspects as the relevance of the action, its consistency with the objectives of the Call for Proposals, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

Scoring:
Evaluation criteria are divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection will be awarded a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following guidelines: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Evaluation Grid – SCGS Guidelines, Section 2.3 – Step 2

Section	Maximum Score
1. Financial and operational capacity	**20**
1.1 Do the applicant and, if applicable, partners have sufficient experience of project management?	5
1.2 Do the applicant and, if applicable partners have sufficient technical expertise? (notably knowledge of the issues to be addressed.)	5
1.3 Do the applicant and, if applicable, partners have sufficient management capacity? (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4 Does the applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5
2. Relevance of the action	**30**
Score transferred from the Concept Note evaluation	
3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the action	**20**
3.1 Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	5
3.2 Is the action plan clear and feasible?	5

3.3 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the action? Is evaluation foreseen?	5
3.4 Is the partners' level of involvement and participation in the action satisfactory?	5
4. Sustainability of the action	**15**
4.1 Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5
4.2 Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects? (Including scope for replication and extension of the outcome of the action and dissemination of information.)	5
4.3 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable: - financially *(how will the activities be financed after the funding ends?)* - institutionally *(will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the action? Will there be local "ownership" of the results of the action?)* - at policy level (where applicable) *(what will be the structural impact of the action — e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc.?)* - environmentally (if applicable) *(will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?)*	5
5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action	**15**
5.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	5x2*
5.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	5
Maximum total score	**100**

*the scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance.

Note on Section 1. Financial and operational capacity

If the score is less than 12 points for section 1, the application will be rejected.

Provisional selection

Following the evaluation, a table listing the applications ranked according to their score, and within the available financial envelope, will be established as well as a reserve list following the same criteria.

Grant Aid Tutorial Questions

The objective of this set of questionnaires is to facilitate a deeper understanding of both the administrative and technical requirements for preparation and submission of a grant application.

Apart from questions relating to the 'Case Study' tasks, all answers are to be found in different sections of the following three documents:

SCGS Guidelines - Guidelines for Applicants

SCGS Grant Application Form - Annex A - Grant Application Form

Corrigendum No 1 - Corrigendum

In each of the above documents you will find specific references to other EU documents for further clarification. In cases where you are unsure as to how, or if, these affect your response you are encouraged review the reference to clarify your understanding.

Consultant: **Return Date:**

e-mail:

Module 1 – Understanding the Application Form

Utilising the grant aid application documents please respond to the following:

1. What is the website from where you can download the SME Competitiveness Grant Scheme (SCGS)?
2. What two pages shall be submitted with Full Application?
3. At what page of the Grant Application Form shall you start filling in the Full Application?
4. Where do you present the Title of the Action?
5. What is the European Aid reference for the SCGS scheme?
6. Where can you find any instructions on how to use and amend the standard application form during the development and completion of your application?
7. Are you permitted to use double-sided print-outs when completing you full application form?
8. What currency are you permitted to use in establishing the cost of your proposal?
9. Where would you expect to indicate activities that relate to the visibility of EU funding?
10. What specific requirements are to be met if the proposed action is the prolongation of a previous action or part of a larger programme?
11. What is the maximum permissible duration of the grant aid programme?
12. What are the key requirements to demonstrate sustainability of the proposal?
13. What should you do if any information regarding the identity of the Beneficiary as stated on the Concept Note has been modified in any way?
14. What currency is to be used when submitting the organisations financial data i.e. Profit & Loss and Balance Sheet?

15. What documents are required for the Partners of the Applicant?

16. What is the definition of an Associate?

17. What documents are required for Associates of the Applicant?

18. What is the definition of a Contractor?

19. What is the title of the document that must be included in the full application but is not completed by the Beneficiary?

20. The application evaluation grid comprises five main headings what are they?

21. Of the five main headings of the evaluation grid which carries the maximum possible score?

22. Which section of the evaluation grid has to record a minimum score in order not to be rejected? What is that minimum?