



BOLLETTINO UFFICIALE

della REGIONE ABRUZZO



Direzione, Redazione e Amministrazione: Ufficio BURA

Speciale n. 63 del 3 Settembre 2012

DELIBERAZIONE 03.08.2012, n. 501:

Programma di Cooperazione Transfrontaliera IPA-Adriatico CBC 2007-2013:
approvazione degli schemi di Bando per Progetti strategici a valere sulle Priorità 1, 2, 3.

Vendita e Informazioni

UFFICIO BURA
L'AQUILA
Via Salaria Antica est n° 27
- edificio B2 -
Località S. Antonio - Pile

Bura: Tel. 0862/364211- 364221- Fax. 0862/364219
Sito Internet: <http://bura.regione.abruzzo.it>
e-mail: bura@regione.abruzzo.it
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Il BURAT serie "ORDINARIO" si articola in due parti:

PARTE PRIMA

- a) Lo Statuto regionale e le leggi di modifica dello Statuto, anche a fini notiziali ai sensi dell'articolo 123 della Costituzione;
- b) le leggi ed i regolamenti regionali e i testi coordinati;
- c) il Piano regionale di sviluppo ed i relativi aggiornamenti, il Documento di Programmazione Economica e Finanziaria nonché tutti gli atti di programmazione degli organi di direzione politica disciplinati dalla normativa regionale in materia di programmazione;
- d) gli atti relativi ai referendum da pubblicarsi in base alle previsioni della normativa in materia;
- e) le sentenze e ordinanze della Corte costituzionale relative a leggi della Regione Abruzzo o a leggi statali o a conflitti di attribuzione coinvolgenti la Regione Abruzzo, nonché le ordinanze di organi giurisdizionali che sollevano questioni di legittimità di leggi della Regione Abruzzo e i ricorsi del Governo contro leggi della Regione Abruzzo;
- f) gli atti degli organi politici e di direzione amministrativa della Regione che determinano l'interpretazione delle norme giuridiche o dettano disposizioni per loro applicazione;
- g) le ordinanze degli organi regionali.

PARTE SECONDA

- a) Le deliberazioni adottate dal Consiglio regionale e non ricomprese fra quelle di cui al comma 2;
- b) gli atti di indirizzo politico del Consiglio regionale;
- c) i decreti del Presidente della Giunta regionale concernenti le nomine e gli altri di interesse generale;
- d) i decreti del Presidente del Consiglio regionale concernenti le nomine e gli altri di interesse generale;
- e) i provvedimenti degli organi di direzione amministrativa della Regione aventi carattere organizzativo generale;
- f) gli atti della Giunta regionale e dell'ufficio di Presidenza del Consiglio regionale di interesse generale;
- g) gli atti della Regione e degli enti locali la cui pubblicazione è prevista da leggi e regolamenti statali e regionali;
- h) i bandi e gli avvisi di concorso della Regione, degli enti locali e degli altri enti pubblici e i relativi provvedimenti di approvazione;
- i) i bandi e gli avvisi della Regione, degli enti locali e degli altri enti pubblici per l'attribuzione di borse di studio, contributi, sovvenzioni, benefici economici o finanziari e i relativi provvedimenti di approvazione;
- j) i provvedimenti di approvazione delle graduatorie relative ai procedimenti di cui alle lettere h) e i);
- k) gli atti di enti privati e di terzi che ne facciano richiesta conformemente alle previsioni normative dell'ordinamento.

1. Gli atti particolarmente complessi, i bilanci ed i conti consuntivi, sono pubblicati sui BURAT serie "SPECIALE".
2. Gli atti interni all'Amministrazione regionale sono pubblicati sui BURAT serie "SUPPLEMENTO".
3. I singoli fascicoli del BURAT recano un numero progressivo e l'indicazione della data di pubblicazione.

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Le **determinazioni direttoriali e dirigenziali** per le quali non sia espressamente richiesta la pubblicazione integrale sul BURAT, ancorché non aventi rilevanza esterna o che siano meramente esecutive di precedenti determinazioni, **sono pubblicate per estratto** contenente la parte dispositiva, l'indicazione del servizio competente, il numero d'ordine, la data e l'oggetto del provvedimento.

Sul Bollettino Ufficiale sono altresì pubblicati tutti i testi la cui pubblicazione è resa obbligatoria dall'ordinamento nazionale e comunitario, anche se richiesti da privati.

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Leggi, Regolamenti, Atti della Regione e dello Stato

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- GIUNTA REGIONALE

DELIBERAZIONE 03.08.2012, n. 501:

Programma di Cooperazione Transfrontaliera IPA-Adriatico CBC 2007-2013: approvazione degli schemi di Bando per Progetti strategici a valere sulle Priorità 1, 2, 3.

 PARTE I

 LEGGI, REGOLAMENTI, ATTI
 DELLA REGIONE E DELLO STATO

 ATTI

 DELIBERAZIONI
 DELLA GIUNTA REGIONALE

GIUNTA REGIONALE

Omissis

DELIBERAZIONE 03.08.2012, n. 501:

Programma di Cooperazione Transfrontaliera IPA-Adriatico CBC 2007-2013: approvazione degli schemi di Bando per Progetti strategici a valere sulle Priorità 1, 2, 3.

LA GIUNTA REGIONALE

Premesso che alla Regione Abruzzo è stato conferito l'incarico di Autorità di Gestione del Programma di Cooperazione Transfrontaliera IPA-Adriatico (di seguito denominato "Programma") nell'ambito della Componente Transfrontaliera dello Strumento Finanziario IPA 2007-2013, che interessa le 7 Regioni Adriatiche Italiane (RAI), Abruzzo, Emilia - Romagna, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Marche, Molise, Puglia, Veneto ed alcuni territori degli Stati di Albania, Bosnia - Erzegovina, Croazia, Grecia, Montenegro, Serbia e Slovenia;

Richiamati:

- il Regolamento (CE) 11 luglio 2006, n. 1083/2006 (1), recante disposizioni generali sul Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale, sul Fondo sociale europeo e sul Fondo di coesione e che abroga il regolamento (CE) n. 1260/1999;
- il Regolamento (CE) 17 luglio 2006, n. 1085/2006 che istituisce uno strumento di assistenza preadesione (IPA); Reg. (CE) 12 giugno 2007, n. 718/2007;
- il Regolamento (CE) 12 giugno 2007, n. 718/2007 che attua il regolamento (CE) n. 1085/2006 del Consiglio, che istituisce uno

strumento di assistenza preadesione (IPA);

- il Regolamento (CE, Euratom) n. 1605/2002, il Regolamento (CE, Euratom) n. 2342/2002 e la Decisione C(2006) 117 della Commissione, del 24 gennaio 2006 (abrogata e sostituita dalla Decisione della Commissione C (2007) 2034);

Dato atto dell'approvazione del Programma Operativo di Cooperazione Transfrontaliera IPA-Adriatico da parte della Commissione Europea, giusta comunicazione della relativa Decisione in data 25 marzo 2008 C(2008)1073 e successive modifiche del 30 giugno 2010 Decisione C (2010) 3780 e Decisione C (2011) 3396 del 18 maggio 2011;

Dato atto che nella riunione del 27 luglio 2012 il Comitato Congiunto di Controllo del Programma di Cooperazione Transfrontaliera IPA-Adriatico ha provveduto ad approvare il testo definitivo dei bandi per la presentazione delle proposte progettuali a valere sui fondi del Programma di Cooperazione Transfrontaliera IPA-Adriatico allegati alla presente deliberazione quali parti integranti e sostanziali (All. 1, 2 e 3);

Vista la sintesi del verbale della predetta riunione del Comitato Congiunto di Controllo del Programma di Cooperazione Trasfrontaliera IPA-Adriatico, allegata alla presente deliberazione quale parte integrante e sostanziale (All. 4);

Ritenuto, pertanto, necessario procedere all'approvazione degli schemi dei bandi per progetti strategici, allegati alla presente deliberazione quali parti integranti e sostanziali (All. 1, 2 e 3);

Ritenuto, altresì, necessario provvedere con urgenza alla pubblicazione dei bandi per progetti ordinari, al fine di permettere la presentazione delle proposte progettuali, sul *B.U.R.A.* e sui seguenti siti web: Official Journal of the European Union: sul sito informatico EuropeAid (<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/onlineservices/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome>); www.oics.it; www.regione.abruzzo.it;

Dato atto che il Direttore della Direzione Affari della Presidenza, Politiche Legislative e

Comunitarie ed il Dirigente del Servizio Attività Internazionali, mediante l'apposizione della propria firma in calce al presente provvedimento, hanno espresso parere favorevole in ordine alla regolarità tecnica e amministrativa e sotto il profilo di legittimità del medesimo;

A voti unanimi espressi nelle forme di legge;

DELIBERA

Per quanto espresso in premessa:

1. di approvare gli schemi dei bandi per progetti strategici per la presentazione di proposte progettuali finanziate nell'ambito del Programma di Cooperazione Transfrontaliera IPA-Adriatico, allegati alla presente deliberazione quali parti integranti e sostanziali (All. 1, 2 e 3) per un ammontare totale massimo ammissibile a finanziamento pari ad **€ 90.860.776,00** (novantamilionioctocentosessantamilasettecentosettantasei/00) così ripartito:
 - Priorità 1 – €12.500.000,00
 - Priorità 2 – €45.360.776,00
 - Priorità 3 – €33.000.000,00
2. di dare atto che i tematismi, gli allegati e i modelli di cui al paragrafo 19 del Bando sono in fase di approvazione lanciata in data 30/07/2012 tramite procedura scritta urgente ai sensi dell'art. 8 del Regolamento del Comitato Congiunto di Controllo del citato Programma;
3. di dare mandato al Dirigente del Servizio Attività Internazionali, in qualità di Autorità di Gestione del Programma di Cooperazione Transfrontaliera IPA-Adriatico, di assumere ogni successivo atto necessario alla compiuta

attuazione di quanto stabilito nel presente atto, ivi compresa la pubblicazione dei bandi e le eventuali modifiche alla documentazione apportate dalla Commissione Europea;

4. di trasmettere il presente atto all'Autorità/Coordinatore Nazionali di Albania, Bosnia - Erzegovina, Croazia, Grecia, Montenegro, Serbia e Slovenia ed al Comitato Nazionale Italiano affinché assumano gli atti di relativa competenza;
5. di dare atto che i presenti Bandi sono ricompresi e finanziati nell'ambito del Programma di Cooperazione Transfrontaliera IPA Adriatico 2007-2013 approvato con Decisione finale C(2012) 4937 del 13.07.2012 di modifica della decisione C(2008) 1073;
6. di disporre la pubblicazione integrale del presente atto sul *B.U.R.A.* e dei bandi per Progetti strategici per la presentazione di proposte progettuali finanziate nell'ambito del Programma di Cooperazione Transfrontaliera IPA-Adriatico, sul sito web del Programma: www.adriaticipacbc.org/, sul sito della Regione Abruzzo: www.regione.abruzzo.it,
7. di trasmettere il presente Atto all'Osservatorio Interregionale sulla Cooperazione allo sviluppo per la pubblicazione sul proprio sito: www.oics.it, sul sito dell' Official Journal of the European Union (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOIndex.do>) e sul sito informatico EuropeAid (http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/index_it.htm);

Seguono Allegati

ALLEGATO 1

IPA Adriatic Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2007 - 2013

Call for Strategic Project Proposals – Priority 1

ALLEGATO come parte integrante alla delib-
berazione n. **5.0.1** del **3 AGO 2012**

IL SEGRETARIO DELLA GIUNTA
(Dott. Walter Garfani)

Garfani

**IPA Adriatic Cross-border
Cooperation Programme
2007-2013**

**CALL FOR
STRATEGIC PROJECT PROPOSALS
PRIORITY 1**

Published on 03 September 2012



Let's grow up together

Adriatic IPA

Cross Border Cooperation 2007-2013



Version approved by JMC on 27/07/2012



The Programme is co-funded by the European Union, Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)

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§. 1. INTRODUCTION

The Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) is the financial instrument established by the European Union (EC Regulation n. 1085/2006) to assist Candidate Countries and Potential Candidate Countries (beneficiary Countries) in their progressive alignment with the standards and policies of the European Union, including where appropriate the "*acquis communautaire*", with a view to membership.

Component II of this Instrument finances initiatives of cross-border cooperation among Member States and beneficiary Countries, in order to promote good and neighbouring relations, foster stability, security and prosperity in the mutual interest of all the Countries concerned, and to encourage their harmonious, balanced and sustainable development.

The Adriatic Basin is a very important cooperation area for the European Union, for all coastal Member (Greece, Italy and Slovenia) and non-Member States (Albania, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia), hereafter "Participating Countries", because of the close historical, geographical, cultural, social and economic linkages.

As stated in the Operational Programme, the general objective of the IPA Adriatic Cross-border Cooperation (CBC) Programme (hereafter, "Programme") is to *strengthen the sustainable development capacity of the Adriatic Region through an agreed strategy of actions among the partners of the eligible territories.*

Under this general objective, specific themes are identified by the Joint Monitoring Committee as being particularly important for all territories of the Programme space. This targeted call for proposals is launched aiming to elaborate "Strategic projects" corresponding to the mentioned themes.

Characteristics of Strategic projects

Strategic projects shall aim at producing a wide impact and optimising the effects of the Programme on the Adriatic basin. They must demonstrate their strategic dimension by presenting high standards regarding these important features:

a) Compliance with European, national and regional policies: strategic relevance

Strategic projects must deal with the problems and/or opportunities that reflect the real needs of the Programme area, are of common interest and have a high relevance to the entire or a large part of the Adriatic Sea area with its hinterland (the so called "sea-basin approach"). They must be developed in compliance with EU, national and regional policies of the Participating Countries where special attention is given to the EU Directives relating to the Adriatic sea-basin. The strategic projects must show how they will contribute to implement the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas; where it is possible an opening towards Community policies regarding "Europe 2020", as a new strategy, is recommended. Strategic projects should also ensure equal opportunities between men and women and to avoid all kinds of discrimination.

b) Capitalization

It is essential that Strategic projects are built on the basis of a thorough knowledge of local/national/European existing situation in the particular thematic area, that they take into account public policies as well as the experiences and results from past and running projects from different EU, national or sub-national funded Programmes implemented in the geographical area concerned. Where possible, strategic projects should be connected with existing initiatives and Programmes and forge links to other similar running projects in the Adriatic area in order to generate significant added value and gain synergies. Therefore, Strategic projects are advised to take into account results achieved and problems solutions solved by projects implemented during the 2000-2006 programming period, especially in the cooperation area of the Programme (ERDF, CARDS and Neighbourhood Programmes) and in the same "Strategic theme". Strategic projects partners are invited to also consider innovative projects implemented in other on-going Programmes that involve the eligible cooperation Programme area (Transnational ETC Programmes, ENPI CBC Mediterranean Programme, Cross border ETC and IPA CBC Programmes).

c) Significant and long-lasting impact on the cooperation area

Strategic projects must have the widest geographical coverage possible involving partners from many Participating Countries and involve the most relevant partners able and committed to achieve the envisaged outputs and results.

Strategic projects should have a positive long-lasting impact in the cooperation area and with the possibility to extend their effects beyond project targeted area, beyond the actual contents of the project and beyond the lifetime of IPA funding and make a relevant contribution to the Programme specific objectives:

- a) to produce a leverage effect on financial resources to catalyse other private and/or public financing and human resources;
- b) to permit the consolidation and the stabilization of the partnership regarding the strategy development priorities of the territories;
- c) to create permanent cooperation opportunities;
- d) to bring about positive changes in stakeholders' behaviour.

e) Tangible and visible results

Results of Strategic projects have to produce concrete benefits, directly or indirectly to the whole or a large part of the Programme area through a wider dissemination (e.g. common methods, results of pilot projects made available to all partners, benchmarks, exchange of best practices, experiences of existing cooperation, etc.).

Strategic projects should aim for visible and tangible results and measurable outcomes. They shall not be limited only to produce information and analyses with a theoretical approach but they should be performed for the purpose of support or guidance towards concrete results of a project. Strategic project could also pave the way to future major investments.

Strategic projects must have tangible impact on actors and territories, fostering consolidation and stabilization of the partnership as to strategy development priorities in the territories and being transferable in other IPA regions.

f) Strong and coherent partnership

Strategic projects shall allow for the building of active high-quality partnerships around key actors who have competences in the Strategic themes, involving decision makers, thematic experts, specialised bodies and end-users. As a result, partnership should be diverse and complementary and should refer to a multi-level governance model as well as to a multi-dimensional governance system. Besides, strong cross-border cooperation must be ensured with harmonious, fair and balanced involvement of all partners.

There must be a strict relation between project objectives and the institutional, administrative and technical competences of partners. Partners must take a commitment among them for the achievement of expected results. Each project partner should have a clearly defined role in the project, described in the project work packages.

d) Sustainability of results

Strategic projects must ensure that the results achieved will be further sustained after the end of the project. Partners should be able to generate effects in the mid/long term, also by producing a lever effect on financial resources involving other private and/or public donors/investors. Moreover they should seek to reinforce local ownership of project benefits, introduce project practises and results in everyday practice and further strengthen the institutional framework of the project, by extending its footprint and involving a broad number of relevant stakeholders.

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§. 2. ELIGIBLE PROGRAMME STRATEGIC THEME<S>

This Call concerns Strategic projects referred to Priority 1 of the Programme: "*Economic, social and institutional cooperation*". It aims at strengthening research and innovation to facilitate development of the Adriatic area through economic, social and institutional cooperation. Economic, social and institutional cooperation is intended to develop research and innovation capacity, creation and application of knowledge with an impact on growing and generating competitiveness in the territorial and productive economic systems.

A Strategic Project developed under Priority 1 shall refer the following strategic theme: "Innovation as key for economic development in the Adriatic area."

§. 3. GRANTS AVAILABLE

The Priority 1 budget foreseen for this Call for proposals is up to 12.500.000,00 EUR (twelve millions and five hundred thousand EUR), 10.625.000,00 EUR (85%) of which ensured by Community IPA funds and 1.875.000,00 EUR (15%) of which ensured by the national co-financing.

The number of projects financed will depend on the JMC final decision for allocation of funds available for this Call.

The Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) has the right not to grant any project under each Strategic Theme, if no project proposal under that Strategic Theme is eligible for funding, as well as, the Joint Monitoring Committee reserves the right to reduce or increase the funds for this Call having regard the available Programme financial resources when the final decision will be taken.

§. 4. PROJECT CONTENT

The content of Strategic projects must be referred to the Strategic theme eligible for this Call, otherwise the whole project will be **rejected**.

Strategic theme is outlined in detail in the specification here enclosed in Annex I, as integral parts of this Call. A project proposal has to be consistent with the specific objectives of the Strategic Theme concerned as defined in the Terms of Reference.

The financial size of the project should truly reflect the activities foreseen in the work plan. The projects should be managed in compliance with the principles of sound financial management. **The estimated project budget must be indicated in EUR**, also by partners established in Participating Countries having a different currency.

Cooperation among the project partners has to be clearly described in the Strategic Project Proposal and implemented involving all of the following modalities:

- ◉ **Joint development.**
- ◉ **Joint implementation.**
- ◉ **Joint staffing.**
- ◉ **Joint financing.**

The meaning and the details of the list of matters, above mentioned, are given in Section 6.2.4 of the Applicants' Manual. Please, refer to that Section on description of the Strategic Project Proposal content.

Strategic projects should be performed in accordance with the partner's characteristics on the basis of the following criteria (*at least*):

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1. Representativeness:
 - Territorial coverage.
 - Capacity of developing activities that meet a general interest.
 - Capacity of target groups and stakeholders mobilization.
 - Capacity in achieving the outputs and results.
2. Cross border dimension.
3. Capacity of awareness raising, spreading and capitalization of achievements..
4. Capacity to promote sustainability, secure the continuation of project benefits after the completion of the project and maximize its impact.

The total project budget cannot be modified more than 20% of the budget previously defined, and specific objectives of project cannot be modified between the 1st and 2nd step of selection procedure.

Also, the name of the project proposal (title and acronym included) cannot be modified between the 1st and the 2nd step procedure, otherwise the project will be considered as a new proposal and will be not accepted in whole.

The "strategic partnership" should be identified already at the 1st step. Lead Applicants invited to the 2nd step procedure may, in duly justified circumstances, replace former Final Beneficiary under the condition that such replacing is taken within the same Participating Country originally involved or may add a new Final Beneficiary where an invitation from JMC has been received.

In any case an excluded project partner cannot be replaced with a new partner within the same step of the selection procedure, as well as, the Lead Applicant cannot be replaced with a new Lead outside from the case of legal succession and the matters pertaining thereto.

In order to be eligible, a Strategic Project must involve **at least 6 partners** representing **at least 6 Participating Countries** among Member States and IPA beneficiary Countries.

With the aim to optimize the project management, this Call recommends to involve not more than 18 partners for each Strategic project.

All **project partners** must have an active role in the project. Any of them cannot act as an agent or as a supplier of another project partner. In such cases the related expenditures will not be eligible. According to Article 96 of EC Regulation n. 718/2007, the project partners must appoint a lead partner among themselves prior to the submission of the Strategic project proposal. The Lead partner/Lead Beneficiary shall assume the following responsibilities:

- o it shall lay down the arrangements for its relations with the project partners in an agreement comprising, *inter alia*, provisions guaranteeing the sound financial management of the funds allocated to the project, including the arrangements for recovering amounts unduly paid;
- o it shall be responsible for ensuring the implementation of the entire project;
- o it shall be responsible for transferring the IPA contribution to the project partners;
- o it shall ensure that the expenditure presented by the project partners has been paid for the purpose of implementing the project and corresponds to the activities agreed among the project partnership;
- o it shall verify that the expenditure presented by the project partners has been validated by the controllers referred to in Article 108 of the EC Regulation n. 718/2007.

Final Strategic Projects should be well-structured with a work plan where objectives, action, activities, partners engaged and responsibilities, duration and results have to be clearly detailed and described. The work plan has to be structured in different **Work Packages (WPs)** as required by the Annex I herein.

The work plan is then based on two categories of work packages:

- **Horizontal Work Packages** related to the management of the project, to communication and dissemination activities and to capitalization of results (Work Packages 0, 1, 2 and 3);
- **Technical Work Packages** focused on the concrete implementation of the activities of the project.

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Work packages related to the management of the project, to communication and dissemination activities and to capitalization of results (Work Packages 1, 2 and 3) are **compulsory**, whilst the Technical Work Packages shall be developed by Applicants taking into consideration the compulsory and suggested activities listed in the Terms of Reference.

Each project proposal must clearly specify the concrete outputs and strategic results they aim to produce and the actions necessary to achieve them. More details are given in the Applicants' Manual.

In order to support the achievement of the objectives of the project, and in particular where the implementation of the project proposed by the project partners require financial support to be given to third parties, the project partners may propose awarding sub-grants.

Sub-granting is part of the type of actions that can be implemented in the framework of the Programme. However, sub-granting may not be the main purpose of the project and it must be duly justified.

In case where the project partners foresee to award sub-grants, it has to be specified in the project proposal (in the 1st step) which Final Beneficiaries intend to sub-grant a limited part of the Programme Contribution required, the list of type of activities to which sub-granting is addressed, the objectives and results to be obtained and the total amount of the grant.

In the preparation of final project proposal for 2nd step, where a sub-granting implementation modality will be foreseen the project partner shall strictly defined the conditions for sub-granting (specify the maximum amount per sub-grant and the criteria for determining the exact amount) in order to leave no room for discretion as well as the criteria for the selection of third parties (sub-beneficiaries) which must be carried out only by public calls.

The total amount that a Final Beneficiary can sub-grant to third parties is limited to € 100.000 with a maximum of € 10.000 per each third party.

A Strategic Project must have a **duration of at least 24 months** but in any case they must be **concluded by March 31st, 2016**, regardless of their duration, otherwise the proposal will be rejected

§. 5. PROJECT SIZE AND CO-FINANCING RATE

The total project budget for Strategic Projects must respect the following thresholds of value:

- o **Minimum total Project budget:** 5.000.000,00 EUR.
- o **Maximum total Project budget:** 12.500.000,00 EUR.

As **eligibility rule**, each Final Beneficiary budget cannot exceed 40% of the total project budget and must have a minimum total budget of 150.000 EUR..

Total project budget includes the Programme Contribution (IPA funds and national co-financing) and Final Beneficiary's own contribution, if the Beneficiary is acting in the project as undertaking.

The IPA co-financing rate covers up to 85% of the total Programme contribution while 15% of the total Programme contribution is guaranteed by the national co-financing by each Final Beneficiary, according to the system applied by each Participating Country.

The national co-financing contribution does not include own additional and voluntary contributions, which are not part of the Programme contribution.

State aid can be granted to Final Beneficiaries (not to the Lead Beneficiaries) only under the "*de minimis*" rule. In such case, the maximum aid intensity is equal to 85% of the grant that would have been assigned if the Beneficiary was not acting in the project as an undertaking. Final Beneficiaries must declare if they are or not acting in the project by making undertaking activities by using the "*de minimis*" Declaration form published in the Programme website.

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§. 6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR FINAL BENEFICIARIES

6.1. Eligibility criteria for project partner

As **eligibility rule**, each Final Beneficiary should be a:

- 1) **body or firm, whether public or private**, as follows:
 - A. **Public bodies**. Legal entities established under public law.
 - B. **Private organizations, governed by national private law**. They include:
 - a) non-enterprise organizations (for i.e., non-profit organizations, foundations, research centres and other similar institutions); and
 - b) small and medium sized enterprises¹.
 - C. **Bodies governed by public law**. This is a conceptual category of entities established under private law but governed by public law if they meet all the criteria required under Article 1.9 of Directive 2004/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004.
 Thereof, a '**body governed by public law**' means anybody:
 - a) established for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest², not having an industrial or commercial character;
 - b) having a legal personality; and
 - c) financed, for the most part, by the State, regional or local authorities, or other bodies governed by public law; or subject to management supervision by those bodies; or having an administrative, managerial or supervisory board, of which more than half members are appointed by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law.
- 2) **established in one of the Programme participating country** and
- 3) **with legal personality**.

Consultancy companies having both, in their business activities and within the project, as main scope the provision of project coordination, management, communication or knowledge management services (i.e.: activities to be implemented within the Work Package 0, 1, 2, 3, etc.) should not be involved as project partner.

An entity that applies as Lead partner or project partner which is part of an eligible legal person (as a Department, Faculty, Institute or a administrative functional unit with administrative, financial and/or contracting autonomy but without own legal personality) represents in the project proposal the institution in whole.

International organizations³ are not eligible to apply as Final Beneficiaries but only as associated institutions as described in Section 6.2.

¹ A private organisation has to be considered an enterprise if it complies with the considerations of the whereas n. 3 of the Commission Recommendation (2003/361/EC) of 06/05/2003 (notified under document number C(2003) 1422). For more details, see § 5.1.1 "Partner legal status" of the Applicants' Manual.

² The meaning of the term is referred to the definition used in Annex 1 "Definition of Terms" of White Book of European Commission on Services of General Interests - COM(2004) 374 def. For more details, see § 5.1.1 "Partner legal status" of the Applicants' Manual.

³ The term is based on the definition given under Article 43.2 of Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No. 2342/2002. For more details, see § 5.1.1 "Partner legal status" of the Applicants' Manual.

6.2. Associated institution

Any interested institution/legal entity can also be involved in the strategic project as observers with **associate** status without financially contributing to the project. As they are not Final Beneficiaries, associates do not have to respect the eligibility rules established by this Call.

6.3. Eligibility of Serbian partners

Serbia participates in the Programme with the whole territory under a *phasing out* condition: it means that Serbian Beneficiaries shall participate only in projects that involve institutional cooperation initiatives and their participation regards the following relevant areas:

- 1) **Science and Research, Innovation, Environment, Education, Culture, Tourism, Economic Regional Development, Governance and Public Administration.**

The expenditures of Serbian Final Beneficiaries are eligible at the latest until 31st December 2015. Serbian SMEs are not eligible as Final Beneficiaries.

6.4. Grounds for exclusion of project partner

A project partner will be excluded from project partnership if it falls into at least one of the following situations:

- a. is bankrupt or being wound up, is having its affairs administered by the courts, has entered into agreement with creditors, has suspended business activities, is the subject of proceedings concerning the matters, or is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b. has been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgment which, in accordance with legal provisions of the State, has the force of *res judicata*;
- c. has been guilty of grave professional misconduct that the Managing Authority can verify by any means;
- d. has not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the Country in which it is established or the Country of the Managing Authority or the Country where the activities are to be performed;
- e. has been the subject of a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal association or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- f. has been declared, referring to other procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Community's budget, to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with its contractual obligations;
- g. it is currently subject to an administrative penalty for being in serious breach of its obligations under any subsidy contract covered by the EU budget or for being guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the Managing Authority as a condition to receive the grant or fails to supply this information.

The cases referred to in point (e) applicable are the following:

1. cases of fraud as referred to in Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995⁴;

⁴ OJ C 316, 27.11.1995, p.48.

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2. cases of corruption as referred to in Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of Member States of the European Union, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 May 1997⁵;
3. cases of participation in a criminal organization, as defined in Article 2(1) of Joint Action 98/733/JHA of the Council⁶;
4. cases of money laundering as defined in Article 1 of Council Directive 91/308/EEC⁷.

The exclusion criteria are also related to the natural person who acts as a representative, including presidents, directors, managers or any person with powers of representation in relation to the project partner.

A project partner will be excluded also if during the project selection procedure:

- o a conflict of interests will be detected towards a member of Joint Monitoring Committee or an expert assessor involved in the assessment procedure;
- o any person related to the project partner's organization has attempted to obtain confidential information or influence any member of Joint Monitoring Committee or any expert assessor involved in the assessment procedure;
- o it is guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the Managing Authority or by the Joint Technical Secretariat in order to obtain an unfair admission to the Call.

Also, a project partner will be not admitted to when it has not provided the:

1. Expression of Interest (not for Lead Applicants);
2. "de minimis" Declaration (not for Lead Applicants);
3. Declaration of the Lead Applicant (only for Lead Applicants).

6.5. Lead Beneficiary eligibility criteria

Only public bodies and bodies governed by public law should assume the role of Lead Beneficiary in the Strategic projects admitted to this Call.

Lead Beneficiary cannot be eligible for grants if it falls under the "de minimis" regime as ruled in the Section 5 of this Call.

If a body is involved in more than one Strategic Project Proposal in the same Call for Strategic Projects Proposals, as a Lead Applicant, the following Strategic Projects Proposals submitted will be considered not admissible and therefore they will be rejected.

Where a Lead Applicant is not eligible or admissible to this Call, the whole Application will be rejected.

§. 7. PROGRAMME ELIGIBLE AREA AND LOCATION OF ACTIVITIES

The Programme eligible area consists of the NUTS 3 territories of the participating EU Member States (Greece, Italy, Slovenia) and the equivalent level territories of the participating Candidate Countries (Montenegro), Accessing Country (Croatia) and of the Potential Candidate Countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina) on the Adriatic Sea. Serbia participates in the Programme with the whole territory.

⁵ OJ C 195, 25.6.1997, p.1.

⁶ OJ L 351, 29.12.1998, p.1. Joint Action of 21 December 1998 making it a criminal offence to participate in a criminal organisation in the Member States of the European Union.

⁷ OJ L 166, 28.6.1991, p. 77. Directive of 10 June 1991, as amended by Directive 2001/97/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 December 2001 (OJ L 344, 28.12.2001, p.76).

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According to the Article 97 of IPA Implementing Regulation, the Programme admits derogation to the territorial eligibility rule for adjacent areas to eligible territories, up to the limit of 20% of the amount of the Community contribution to the Programme. However, this does not mean that a fixed share of 20% of the Programme budget is reserved for partners from these areas. The cross border added value of participation of partners from these areas will be assessed on project basis. In case this limit is reached, the JMC will not finance, totally or partly, expenditures incurred in territorial derogation areas.

The detailed list of the eligible territories (*with the territorial derogations*) is the following:

- **Greece:** Kerkyra and Thesprotia.
- **Italy:** Gorizia, Trieste, Udine, Padova, Rovigo, Venezia, Ferrara, Forlì-Cesena, Ravenna, Rimini, Ancona, Ascoli Piceno, Fermo, Macerata, Pesaro-Urbino, Chieti, Pescara, Teramo, Campobasso, Bari, Brindisi, Foggia, Barletta-Andria-Trani and Lecce. *Territorial derogation: L'Aquila, Pordenone, Isernia, and Taranto.*
- **Slovenia:** Obalno-kraška regija. *Territorial derogation: Goriška regija and Notranjsko-kraška regija.*
- **Croatia:** Dubrovnik-Neretva, Istra; Lika-Senj; Primorje-Gorski kotar; Šibenik-Knin; Split-Dalmatia, and Zadar. *Territorial derogation: Karlovac County.*
- **Albania:** Fier, Durrës, Lezhë, Shkodër, Tiranë, and Vlorë.
- **Bosnia and Herzegovina:** Bileća, Čapljina, Čitluk, Gacko, Grude, Jablanica, Konjic, Kupres, Livno, Ljubinje, Ljubuški, Mostar, Neum, Nevesinje, Posušje, Prozor/Rama, Ravno, Široki Brijeg, Stolac, Berkovići, Tomislavgrad, Trebinje, and Istočni Mostar. *Territorial derogation: Sarajevo Region, North-West Region and Central Region.*
- **Montenegro:** Bar, Budva, Cetinje, Danilovgrad, Herceg Novi, Kotor, Nikšić, Podgorica, Ulcinj and Tivat. *Territorial derogation: Pljevlja, Bijelo Polje, Berane, Rožaje, Plav, Andrijevica, Kolašin, Mojkovac, Šavnik, Žabljak, and Plužine.*
- **Serbia:** whole territory (under phasing out condition).

As general principle, the operation must be implemented in the Programme eligible area above described.

Project partners with their registered office located outside the Programme eligible area, can participate with a regional/local branch office located in the Programme eligible area.

The term "branch" office means any "fixed establishment", which, according to Reg. (EC) No 282/2011, is other than the registered office, "characterized by a sufficient degree of permanence and a suitable structure in terms of human and technical resources to enable it to receive and use the services supplied to it for its own needs".

Where the beneficiary is located outside the Programme eligible area but participate with a regional/local branch office located in the Programme eligible area, it must explain its role in the Programme area and where it operates in the eligible area with a branch office. Therefore, it has to provide the following proofs:

- at least one year of operation of the local organisational unit in the Programme area must be justified with administrative or accounting documentation; **and**
- the leader of the branch office must be an authorised representative of the final beneficiary, entitled to act for the implementation of the project activities.

§. 8. ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURE

As general rule, expenditures are eligible for Final Beneficiaries from Greece, Italy and Slovenia if incurred on or after the 1st January 2007, and for Beneficiaries from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia if incurred from the date of the signature of Financing Agreements⁸

⁸ According to the term regarding the "ENTRY INTO FORCE", these Agreements have entered into force on the date of signature. Where the Parties have signed on different dates, the Agreement was entered into force on the date of signature by the second of the two Parties.

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between each of these Countries and the European Commission. These dates are specified in the section 5.2. "Period of eligibility of expenditures" of Programme Management and Control Manual as a reference document of this Call.

Costs in the project budget sheets must be foreseen in Euro currency and are considered eligible for reimbursement by the Programme when they are incurred in compliance with the rules set out in Chapters 4 "Compliance with EU Policies and other rules" and 5 "Project expenditure and applicable rules" of the Programme Management and Control Manual.

Shared costs are not eligible for this Call.

Expenditures are considered to be **incurred in the place where the Final Beneficiary has its registered office or, if the Call rules for the branch office are respected, where it has located its branch office**. For meeting/event and expenditure in tangible assets, the location of the meeting/event and of the tangible asset will be taken into consideration.

At project level, in exceptional cases, expenditures incurred outside the Programme area as defined above, may be eligible provided that both following conditions are respected:

1. the project could only achieve its objectives with that expenditures (art. 97.1 second subparagraph of Reg. (EC) 718/2007 as amended by Reg. (EC) 80/2010) **and**
2. the expenditures have been previously authorized in compliance with art. 97.2 of Reg. (EC) 718/2007.

This can be the case of National and regional public authorities or bodies governed by public law which are located outside the eligible area, and have neither a branch office in it, but which can be necessary for the achievements of the project objectives due to their competences in the area, or their particular tasks/experience.

§. 9. RESPONSIBLE OF SELECTION PROCEDURES MANAGEMENT

According to the IPA Adriatic Cross-border Cooperation Operational Programme, the responsible for the procedures management of this Call is the Abruzzo Region of the Italian Republic, "*Direzione Affari della Presidenza, Politiche Legislative e Comunitarie Programmazione, Parchi, Territorio, Valutazioni ambientali, Energia - Servizio Attività Internazionali*" and its representative in charge as Managing Authority.

§. 10. SELECTION PROCEDURES

In compliance with the Section 4.7 of the IPA Adriatic CBC Programme and with Section 4.1.2.1 of its Implementation Manual, a two-step selection procedure is applied for the selection of Strategic Projects. Under the first step, a targeted open call allows all potential eligible Final Beneficiaries to apply to this Call by submitting a Strategic Project Proposal. Only the Projects that have been selected at the end of the first step procedure, will be invited to submit the Final Strategic Project Proposal under the second step selection procedure.

In compliance with article 110.5.f) of the IPA Implementing Regulation, the JMC is responsible for selecting operations, previously admitted to the quality assessment phase, while the Managing Authority is responsible for whole application formal checks.

The Managing Authority/JTS may ask to the Lead Applicant to provide **additional information, documents or to clarify the supporting documents** submitted in connection with the single step procedure, in particular in the case of obvious clerical errors. If necessary to better achieve the formal checks, the MA/JTS could require, also to the Programme National Authorities/Coordinator, to provide documents that might integrate the evidential documents provided by the Final Beneficiaries.

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The Managing Authority/JTS will notify the requirement to the Lead Applicant **only by fax**. The same documents and information will not be required to be provided more than once during the whole selection procedure. The MA will keep appropriate records of contacts with Lead Applicants during the whole selection procedure. Lead Applicant must provide the information, clarification or document within the expiration term as required.

The **formal admissibility checks** under both the two step procedures will be based on the criteria set in **Section 13** of this Call.

The **quality assessment** of project proposals for each step of the selection procedure will be based on the specific assessment criteria set in **Section 14**.

Proposals not fulfilling all the formal admissibility requirements will be rejected and will not be admitted to the quality assessment under the concerned step of the procedure (1st or 2nd Step). Lead Applicants will be informed about the reasons of rejection at the end of the formal assessment phase.

The maximum score for quality assessment under the **1^o Step of the selection procedure is 75 points**, resulting from the sum of the points assigned to each section of the evaluation grid. A project proposal will not be eligible to be invited to the 2^o Step procedure if it achieves a score lower than 70% of the maximum score.

At the end of the 1^o Step of the selection procedure, the JMC elaborates and approves a single ranking list of all the project proposals eligible to be invited to the 2^o Step procedure.

The first 5 projects of the ranking list with the highest scores will be invited to the 2^o Step of the selection procedure.

In case two or more projects have the same scores, priority will be given to projects that achieve the higher score under the Section C "Quality of the proposal partnership" of the evaluation grid. In case of further equality, the priority will be given to projects with the higher score under the other Sections of the evaluation grid, taking into account the following order of precedence: Section A "Consistency with the Programme strategy"; Section B "Cross border character of the intervention"; Section D "Quality of the intervention and value for money".

Lead Applicants invited to the 2^o Step procedure may be required by the JMC to improve the proposal as to add or replace project partner/s in order to better pursue the project's objectives.

The maximum score for quality assessment under the **2^o Step of the selection procedure is 100** resulting from the sum of the points assigned to each section of the evaluation grid.

A project proposal will not be eligible for funding if:

- a) it achieves a score lower than 80 points; or
- b) it does not achieve at least half of the points foreseen in each section of the evaluation grid.

In case where two or more projects have the same scores (in the 2nd step); priority will be given to projects that achieve the higher score under the Section D "Quality of the intervention" of the evaluation grid. In case of further equality, the priority will be given to projects with the higher score under the other Sections of the evaluation grid, taking into account the following order of precedence: Section C "Financial and management capacity; Section A "Consistency with the Programme strategy"; Section B "Cross border character of the intervention"; Section E "Budget of the project".

Once the quality assessment of the 2nd Step has been performed, Strategic projects, will be listed under each Strategic Theme in a final ranking list approved by the JMC. According to this list, one Strategic projects (where possible, per Theme), with the highest score, may be financed. After that, if there is still unallocated funds of this Call, the next project(s) from any Theme under the same Programme Priority with highest score among all the Strategic Theme of this Call may be financed.

Projects will be financed if all the conditions set out by law and by the JMC (if any) have been complied with.

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At the end of the whole procedure, the MA adopts an administrative act regarding the JMC decision and the closure of the step selection procedure by reporting the quality assessments and the motivation of rejection of projects.

The titles and acronyms of projects financed, the list of the involved Final Beneficiaries and the amount of Community funding allocated to the projects will be published in the Programme website according to the Article 62 of the Regulation (EC) n. 718/2008. Lead Applicants whose projects have been rejected and Lead Applicants whose projects have been financed will receive a notice from the MA with the results of the selection procedure to the fax number indicated in the Declaration of the Applicant or to the following fax number timely and duly indicated by the Lead Applicant.

§. 11. APPLICATION TERMS FOR THE FIRST STEP PROCEDURE

The project proposal must be in **English** in all its parts. National language may be used where it is allowed within the forms required by this Call. The supporting documents related to the Lead Applicant may be provided in national language.

The Application package for the first step procedure has to contain the following elements:

- a) Strategic project proposal filled in all its parts.
- b) Commitment documents of each Final Beneficiary.
- c) Supporting documents of the Lead Applicant (only in case it is a body governed by public law).

Lead Partner as Lead Applicant is the body allowed to submit the Application package:

A) Strategic project proposal. It must be filled in the appropriate form published in the Programme website and provided in a paper and electronic version. Only the paper version is the original. The electronic version has to be provided in CD-Rom or DVD or in any other appropriate technical support. As a rule of admissibility of the project proposal, the Lead Applicant has to sign in original each page of the paper version and bound together all the sheets in one single document.

B) Commitment documents:

1. **Declaration of the Lead Applicant.** The Lead Applicant must declare its legal status and that it doesn't fall in one of the situations for grants' exclusion as referred in above section 6.4, by using the appropriate form. Original copy must be provided.
2. **Expression of interest.** Each potential project partner must declare its legal status and that it doesn't fall in one of the situations for grants' exclusion as referred in above section 6.4, by using the appropriate form. Original copy must be provided.

C) Supporting documents. Lead Applicants which are bodies governed by public law must prove their legal status with the following documents:

- o certification of the legal personality status;
- o statute and
- o balance sheet for the most recent year that accounts are closed. Final Beneficiaries which, according to their national law, do not need to establish balance sheet should provide the closest equivalent, e.g. a statement of income and expenditures. Newly founded organisations, which do not yet have balance sheets and profit and loss account available, should attach their business plan.

The supporting documents provided have to be marked as "certified copy" by any authorized person, as a self-declaration. In this case, a photocopy of the identification document of the declaring person needs to be annexed to the certified copies.

In order to check out that the project partner meets all the criteria required under Article 1.9 of Directive 2004/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004, the MA may require to provide clarification which could be supported by the project partner with appropriate documents.

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A photocopy of the identification document of the signatory person needs to be included to the Strategic Project Proposals Application Pack.

Where Lead Applicants have already provided to the Managing Authority the required documents during any prior selection procedure for grants, they could be exempted to submit the same documents, provided that no modification occurred and that they point out when they have been provided.

The Application package for the first step procedure must be received by the Managing Authority at latest on **02/11/2012** (2nd of November 2012) **by 14:00 Rome time** (UTC/GMT+1 hour).

In order to ensure transparency of the selection procedure and equal treatment towards to all Lead Applicants, the Application package has to be sent by express courier, only once and all documents must be included within a duly sealed envelope, which must be addressed and marked as follows:

Regione Abruzzo – Servizio Attività Internazionali
Autorità di Gestione - IPA Adriatic CBC Programme
Via Salaria Antica Est, n. 27
I-67100, L'Aquila - ITALY

"Strategic Project Call for Proposals - Priority <1/2/3> - <acronym of the project proposal> - Do not open"

§. 12. APPLICATION TERMS FOR THE SECOND STEP PROCEDURE

Only Lead Applicants selected for the second step procedure will be invited by the MA to submit the final Application package.

The final project proposal must be in **English** in all its parts. National language may be used where it is allowed within the forms required by this Call. The supporting documents of Final Beneficiaries may be provided in national language.

The final Application package for second step procedure includes the following documents:

A) Final strategic project proposal. It must be filled in the appropriate form published in the Programme website and provided in a paper and electronic version. Only the paper version is the original. The electronic version has to be provided in CD-Rom or DVD or in any other appropriate technical support. As a rule of admissibility of the project proposal, the Lead Applicant has to sign in original each page of the paper version and bound together all the sheets in one single object.

B) Commitment documents:

1. Expression of interest. Only new potential project partner that joined the project proposal under the 2nd step of selection procedure must provide this document where it declares its legal status and that it doesn't fall in one of the situations for grants' exclusion as referred in above section 6.4, by using the appropriate form. Original copy must be provided.

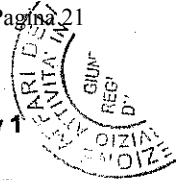
2. The "de minimis" Declaration. All project partners (Lead Applicant excluded) have to provide their own declaration by using the form provided by the Programme for this Call and signed by the legal or duly authorized representative. Original copy must be provided.

3. Final Beneficiary bank account identification notice. Each Final Beneficiary has to provide this notice by using the form provided by the Programme for this Call.

4. Letter of Association. Where project foresees this kind of bodies, a commitment document should be issued by associates by using the appropriate form. Original copy must be provided.

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**C) Information documents:**

1. Project budget breakdown has to be provided by using only the form provided by the Programme for this Call.

2. Project investment details has to be provided by using only the form provided by the Programme for this Call and if the Strategic project proposed foresees investments.

Both these two forms have to be provided both in paper copy and in electronic version. The electronic version, in Excel format, can be provided by any electronic means (CD-Rom, DVD, USB pen-drive, etc) and it must be identical to the printed one; in case of differences, the paper copy prevails.

D) Supporting documents. Each Final Beneficiary (Lead Applicant and public bodies excluded) has to provide copies of the following documents:

- o certification of the legal personality status;
- o statute and
- o balance sheet for the most recent year that accounts are closed. Final Beneficiaries which, according to their national law, do not need to establish balance sheet should provide the closest equivalent, e.g. a statement of income and expenditures. Newly founded organisations, which do not yet have balance sheets and profit and loss account available, should attach their business plan.

The supporting documents provided have to be marked as "certified copy" by any authorized person, as a self-declaration. In this case, a photocopy of the identification document of the declarant needs to be annexed to the certified copies. Where Final Beneficiaries have already provided to the Managing Authority the required supporting documents during any prior selection procedure for grants, they could be exempted to submit the same documents, provided that no modification occurred and that they point out when they have been provided.

In case of Final Beneficiaries located outside the Programme eligible area, but with a branch office in the eligible area, this kind of Beneficiaries have to provide legal documents (administrative or accounting documentation) proving the existence of the local organisational unit in the Programme area as required in § 7 of the Call.

A photocopy of the identification document of the signatory person needs to be included to the Final Strategic Project Proposals Application Pack.

Where Final Beneficiaries have already provided to the Managing Authority the required documents during any prior selection procedure for grants, they could be exempted to submit the same documents, provided that no modification occurred and that they point out when they have been provided.

The Application package must be received by the Managing Authority at latest on the sixtieth day from when the letter of invitation to apply to the second step procedure was sent by fax. The delivery must be carried out by 17:00 Rome time (UTC/GMT+1 hour) of the expiration date.

In order to ensure transparency of the selection procedure and equal treatment towards to all Lead Applicants, the Application package has to be sent by express courier, only once and all documents must be included within a duly sealed envelope, which must be addressed and marked as follows:

Regione Abruzzo – Servizio Attività Internazionali
Autorità di Gestione - IPA Adriatic CBC Programme
Via Salaria Antica Est, n. 27
I-67100, L'Aquila - ITALY

"Strategic Project Call for Proposals - Priority <1/2/3> - <acronym of the project proposal> - Do not open"

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§. 13. GROUNDS FOR REJECTION**13.1. Grounds for Application rejection**

Projects submitted under the 1° Step procedure will be checked against a set of formal eligibility and admissibility criteria. The whole Application will be rejected when at least one of the following conditions had been detected:

List of admissibility criteria under the 1 st step procedure	€ of the Call
A) The Application package has not been submitted in all its parts in due time according to the deadline set in the Call for proposals	€ 11
B) The Application package has not been sent to the required address, in a duly sealed envelope and with the appropriate marking	€ 11
C) Lead Applicant had used a project proposal Form different than the Strategic project proposal form provided by the Programme for this Call	€ 11
D) The project proposal (paper version) was not duly signed on each page by the Lead Applicant representative and all pages of this proposal was not bind in a single document	€ 11
E) The Declaration of the Lead Applicant has not been provided in the due form or it has not been duly signed in handwriting by the legal or authorized representative.	€ 11
F) The project proposal is not written in English language in all its parts and sections as required	€ 11
G) The project proposal clearly does not clearly indicate the eligible Strategic Theme to which it is referred	€ 2
H) The project closure is foreseen beyond 31 March 2016	€ 4
I) The minimum partnership (including the minimum participating countries represented) rule established for a project proposal has not been complied with	€ 4
J) The Lead Applicant is not eligible because: 1. its legal status doesn't comply with the requirements of this Call; 2. It will carry out undertakings activities in the project; 3. It falls under one of grounds for exclusion set by Section 6.4 of the Call. 4. It had already submitted, as Lead Applicant, another project proposal under the same Call for Strategic Projects Proposals	€ 6
K) The Lead Applicant didn't provide the supplementary information, documents or clarification within the expiration term as required	€ 10

Projects submitted under the 2° Step procedure will be checked against a set of formal eligibility and admissibility criteria. The whole Application will be rejected when at least one of the following conditions had been detected:

List of admissibility criteria under the 2 nd step procedure	€ of the Call
A) The Application package has not been submitted in all its parts in due time according to the deadline set in the invitation letter	€ 12
B) The Application package has not been sent to the required address, in a duly sealed envelope and with the appropriate marking	€ 12
C) Lead Applicant had used a Form different than the Final Strategic project proposal form provided by the Programme for this Call	€ 12
D) The Final Strategic project proposal (paper version) was not duly signed on each page by the Lead Applicant representative and all pages of this proposal was not bind in a single document	€ 12
E) The Final Strategic project proposal is not written in English language in all its parts and sections as required	€ 12
F) The minimum partnership (including the minimum participating countries represented) rule established for a project proposal has not been complied with	€ 4
G) The Programme grants foreseen for the Final Strategic project proposal or the contribution required for each project partner does not comply with the thresholds set out by this Call	€ 5
H) The Lead Applicant had been changed between the 1 st and the 2 nd step, as well as, other obligatory part/s of the Final Strategic Project proposal has/have been modified in	€ 4

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contrast with the rules set out by the Call.	
I) The Lead Applicant didn't provide the supplementary information, documents or clarification within the expiration term as required	§ 10
J) The Final Strategic project closure is foreseen beyond 31 March 2016	§ 4

13.2. Grounds for Final Beneficiary rejection

A Final Beneficiary (which means a partner of a Strategic Project) will be assessed (only one time) against a set of formal eligibility and admissibility criteria following the rules set hereto (this paragraph not regards the eligibility and admissibility assessment of the Lead Applicant).

- 1) It is not eligible to join the Strategic Project Proposal if:
 - a) It is not a legal person;
 - b) It is not a body with nationality from one of Programme Participating Country;
 - c) It is a firm but not a SME (micro enterprise included);
 - d) It is a Serbian enterprise (SME);
 - e) It falls in one of situations listed under Section 6.4 above;
- 2) It is not admitted to join the Strategic Project Proposal if:
 - a) It filled in wrongly the Expression of Interest: title or project acronym, body name;
 - b) It didn't sign the Expression of Interest in handwriting;
 - c) The Expression of Interest was signed by an unauthorized person;
 - d) The Expression of Interest has been modified from the form provided by the Programme;
 - e) It filled in wrongly the "de minimis" Declaration: title or project acronym, body name;
 - f) It didn't sign the "de minimis" Declaration in handwriting;
 - g) The "de minimis" Declaration was signed by an unauthorized person;
 - h) The "de minimis" Declaration has been modified from the form provided by the Programme.

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§. 14. QUALITY ASSESSMENT GRIDS

Projects submitted under the 1° Step procedure will be assessed against a set of quality assessment criteria⁹ as follows:

Sections/ criteria n.	Quality assessment criteria under the 1° step of the selection procedure	Max value
A	Strategic relevance (max 15)	15
a.1	Does the project contribute to achieving general and specific objectives of the concerned Strategic theme in the Programme area?	5
a.2	Is the project in compliance with the relevant EU policies and horizontal issues?	5
a.3	Are the project objectives coherent with the national and sub-national policies of the territories participating in the project?	5
B	Cross-border character of the intervention	10
b.1	How many Adriatic Countries are present in the project? (6 Countries: 0 points; 7 Countries: 3 points; 8 Countries: 5)	5
b.2	Does the project have a positive and long-lasting impact on the whole Programme area?	5
C	Quality of the proposed partnership	25
c.1	Does the Lead Beneficiary have experience in cross-border or other international project management and sufficient capacities to ensure the good functioning of the project and coordination of a cross-border partnership?	5
c.2	Is the partnership able to disclose results and impacts in the whole Programme area?	5
c.3	Does the partnership have competence in relation to the Strategic Theme concerned and the capacity to propose, set up and implement policies and strategies for the territories addressed?	5
c.4	Does the partnership have capacity of target groups and stakeholders mobilization and of awareness raising and spreading of achievements in the territories, participating in the project?	5
c.5	Is the partnership harmonious, well balanced and complementary in terms of representativeness, competences and active involvement in the project activities per Country regarding the Strategic Theme concerned?	5
D	Quality of intervention and value for money	25
d.1	Does the project contribute to the achievement of the Strategic theme objectives through achievable actions?	5
d.2	Are the activities clear, realistic and appropriate to achieve the objectives of the Strategic Theme?	5
d.3	Does the project foresee during its life-time concrete actions to ensure sustainability of its results after the Programme Contribution funding ends?	5
d.4	Does the project represent a capitalization of previous experiences in different Programmes?	5
d.5	Is the budget rationally distributed among partners according to the role assigned to each of them?	5
	Total score	75

⁹ The sub-questions to all the quality assessment criteria will be annexed to the Applicants' Manual

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Projects submitted under the 2° Step procedure will be assessed against a set of quality criteria as follows:

Sections/ criteria n.	Assessment criteria under the 2 nd step of the selection procedure	Max value
A	Consistency with the Programme Strategy	20
a.1	Does the project contribute to achieving general and specific objectives of the concerned Strategic theme in the Programme area?	6
a.2	Is the project in compliance with the relevant EU policies and the horizontal issues of the Programme and with the relevant EU rules (regulations, directives, etc.)?	4
a.3	Is the project coherent with the national policies of the Countries participating in the operation?	4
a.4	Is the project coherent with the sub-national public policies relevant for the involved territories?	6
B	Cross-border character of the intervention	17
b.1	How many Adriatic Countries are present in the project? (6 Countries: 0 points; 7 Countries: 3 points; 8 Countries: 5)	5
b.2	Are all compulsory activities fully implemented in all Countries, participating in the project?	6
b.3	To what extent does the proposal ensure that projects are jointly developed, jointly implemented, jointly financed and that it has joint staffing?	6
C	Quality of the proposed partnership	25
c.1	Does the Lead Beneficiary have experience in cross-border or other international project management and sufficient capacities to ensure the good functioning of the project and coordination of a cross-border partnership?	5
c.2	Is the partnership able to disclose results and impacts in the whole Programme area?	5
c.3	Does the partnership have competence in relation to the Strategic Theme concerned and the capacity to propose, set up and implement policies and strategies for the territories addressed?	5
c.4	Does the partnership have capacity of target groups and stakeholders mobilization and of awareness raising and spreading of achievements in the territories, participating in the project?	5
c.5	Is the partnership harmonious, well balanced and complementary in terms of representativeness, competences and active involvement in the project activities per Country regarding the Strategic Theme concerned?	5
D	Quality of intervention	25
d.1	Are the activities, the work plan and the timetable clear, realistic and appropriate to achieve the expected results and the objectives of the project?	9
d.2	Are tasks, activities and results clearly and appropriately distributed among the Beneficiaries according to their territorial and institutional competences?	6
d.3	Is the project added value clearly identifiable in relation to the specific problems the project is addressed to?	3
d.4	Does the project establish an organized and operational management system, able to ensure the adequate coordination of the partnership, the monitoring and evaluation of the activities progress, and the communication and publicity of the operation?	3
d.5	Do the project activities and results have the concrete and realistic possibility to have a follow up after the end of the Programme contribution?	4
E	Budget of the project	13
e.1	Does the project budget represent value for money?	7

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e.2	Are the estimated expenditures rationally quantified for the full and satisfactory implementation of the foreseen activities?	6
Total score		100

§. 15. CONTRACT SIGNATURE AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION RULES

Lead Applicants of projects selected for funding will be required to sign the IPA Subsidy Contract in three copies and to provide an original copy of the Partnership Agreement signed by all the involved Final Beneficiaries. Both the IPA Subsidy Contract and the Partnership Agreement are based on the forms published in the Programme website.

The Lead Applicant must send to the Managing Authority the contracting documents as required by this Authority with the funding allocation letter (FAL). These documents must be sent within and not later than 45 days from the receipt of the FAL. This is a mandatory term and its expiration, outside from objective causes that have prevented the parties to sign or to provide timely the documents above mentioned or from authorized cases¹⁰, will cause the loss of grants to whole project.

The Managing Authority will sign the IPA Subsidy Contract after receiving the three copies already signed by the Lead Beneficiary.

The IPA Subsidy Contract will determine the rights and responsibilities of the Lead Beneficiary and the Managing Authority, the reference to the activities to be carried out, terms of funding, requirements for reporting and financial controls, etc. A copy of the General Conditions and Forms of the IPA Subsidy Contract and of the Partnership Agreement are published in the Programme website: www.adriaticpacbc.org.

If in case of an approved project, a partner, due to particular situation, decides to drop out the partnership or it cannot be granted since it didn't provide the missed documents properly required, the project shall be subject to a new quality assessment. This fact does not prevent to finance already selected projects.

A Final Beneficiary cannot be granted if it miss to provide the following documents to the Managing Authority before the MA signature of IPA Subsidy Contract:

- It didn't provide the power of attorney of signatory person in compliance with Statute rule or national law quoted in its commitment documents;
- It didn't provide a photocopy of identification document of who sign (legal representative or delegated person) the commitment documents;
- It didn't provide the supporting documents as required in the Call;
- It didn't provide the Final Beneficiary Bank Account Identification Notice as required in the Call;
- It didn't provide the fulfilled form required to access to MIS (the Programme Management Information System).

In case of financing to Final Beneficiary with a grant exceeding € 500.000, in accordance with Article 173(4) of the rules implementing the Financial Regulation (Commission Regulation (EC, EURATOM) No 2342/2002), an audit report produced by an approved external auditor must be submitted by the related Beneficiary. That report must certify the accounts for the last two financial years available. No financial audit shall be required to any public body.

¹⁰ It is recommended to submit the relevant construction permits no later than 6 months after signing the IPA Subsidy Contract.

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The contracting and implementing rules are described in the Programme Management and Control Manual as here referred.

The Managing Authority will assign an advance payment to the Lead Beneficiary up to 20% of Community contribution allocated to the project in compliance with the contract provisions. The advance payment is granted to Lead Beneficiaries under the condition that the Managing Authority will recognize it where no financial risk has been detected towards any of the project partners. Where required, an appropriate financial guarantee may be required to the Final Beneficiary involved. Public bodies do not provide any financial guarantee.

In compliance with article 17.3 of General Conditions of the IPA Subsidy Contract, as referred in § 17, the Programme contribution to projects will be reduced if at the end of the 1st year of project implementation, the expenditure is below 30% of the total project budget foreseen and updated at the date of project's start.

In compliance with art. 3.2 of General Conditions of the IPA Subsidy Contract, as referred in § 17, the preparatory expenditures (WPO) must be reported within the 31/10 of the same year when the IPA Subsidy Contract had been signed by the contracting parties, otherwise it cannot be reported anymore and the relative grants will be lose.

According to Article 121 of EC Regulation n.718/2007, as amended by the EC Regulation n. 80/2010, for the award of service, supply and work contracts, all Beneficiaries (public and private) of the approved and funded projects must apply the procurement procedures for the "External aid rules" established in Chapter 3 of Part 2, Title IV of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 and Chapter 3 of Part 2, Title III of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002, as well as Commission Decision C (2007) 2034 of 24 May 2007 on the rules and procedures applicable to service, supply and work contracts financed by the general budget of the European Communities for the purposes of cooperation with third countries. Guidelines for using these procedures are available on the Programme website

http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/index.asp?page=interna&level=implementation_documents.

§. 16. FURTHER INFORMATION

This Call, its annexes and any clarifications and information regarding the Call and the further selection procedure will be available on the Programme website: www.adriaticpacbc.org.

For any request please contact the Joint Technical Secretariat at the following addresses:

**Joint Technical Secretariat – IPA Adriatic CBC Programme – c/o Regione Abruzzo Servizio
Attività Internazionali - Via Salaria Antica Est, n. 27 - 67100 L'Aquila – Italy
E-mail address: info@adriaticpacbc.org
Fax address: +39 0862 22520**

Additional information on project generation may be obtained from national info points, established in participating countries. The addresses are available on the Programme website.

In the Programme website the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) are available giving information on general issues or on Country related specific issues. JTS helps applicants to solve problems and answers to specific questions mainly by email, even though it provides also support by phone for technical issues, such as how to fill in some sections of the Forms included in the Application Package.

Final Beneficiaries may put questions in writing (email or fax) no later than 5 days before the closing date for delivering the Application Package, and the JTS shall provide the answers to the questions in writing no later than 2 days before the closing date. The JTS has no obligation to provide further

clarifications after this date. In any case, JTS will provide information how to fill in the Forms provided within the Call closing date.

No individual replies to queries with regard to the status of the selection procedure can be given in any way.

In the interest of equal treatment of Lead Applicants, the Managing Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the compliance of the proposals with the eligibility and selection criteria. Questions that may be relevant to other Lead Applicants, together with the answers, will be published on the Programme website.

In addition, during the course of the evaluation procedure important notices to Lead Applicants may be published on the Programme website at www.adriaticpacbc.org together with the other documents related to this call, as the need arises. The Lead Applicants are therefore strongly encouraged to regularly consult this webpage.

§. 17. MISCELLANEOUS AND RULES ON COMPLIANCE

1. The commitment and information documents as required must be provided by filling in the forms published on the Programme website without any modifications, addition or erasing of content not previously authorized by MA.
2. Where required, signature must be referred to the signatory person. Additionally, the signature must be handwritten, original, unique and made by using wet marking ink. It is not a valid signature any sign that is printed or stamped. Electronic and stamp signature are not acceptable in any case even if they are allowed by national law.
3. Any notification made by the Managing Authority/JTS will be carried out **only by fax** at the fax-number indicated in the Declaration of Lead Applicant. The MA will keep appropriate records of notification to the Lead Applicants during the whole selection procedure and of the Lead Applicants fax number. Any variation of the fax number indicated in the Declaration of Lead Applicant must be notified immediately to the Managing Authority/Joint Technical Secretariat. The Managing Authority is not responsible if the fax number was wrongly indicated or not updated by the Lead Applicant and the communication cannot be reached to the receiver indicated as contact person in the Project Application Form. The reception of the fax by the addressee fax machine is the legal evidence that the fax communication was duly delivered to the contact person of the Lead Applicant.
4. The stamp of duty office of the Managing Authority and the reference number given to Application package is the only way to prove that the application had been received before the expiration term.
5. Lead Applicants are aware of that the delivering of Application package is on their own responsibility and the fact that the delivery carried out over the expiration term will be not accepted since it is not valid the date of sending as proved by any means. A failed delivery by force majeure or unforeseen incidents is on the own responsibility of Lead Applicants.
6. Personal data will be treated in compliance with the Programme privacy statement published on Programme web-site:
http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/LEGAL_FRAMEWORK/privacy/Privacy_statement.pdf
7. Without prejudice to any right of Final Beneficiaries, a complaint against the results of selection procedure or against the exclusion of partner may be settled in amicable way before the Managing Authority. For this purpose, the complainant shall communicate in writing the complaint and its grounds to the MA within 30 day from the date of receipt of notice of exclusion. The Managing Authority will reply within 20 calendar days from the delivery date of the complaint.
8. Proceedings may be started at the Regional Administrative Court of L'Aquila - Italy.

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9. Without any express reserve or refuse by the Lead Beneficiary regarding technical or commercial secrets or preservation of rights or any of its project partners, the Managing Authority is entitled to allow the complainant to have access to any information reported in the Project proposal, in compliance with Abruzzo Regional Law No. 1/2000 ruling the access to file. An unofficial English translation of this Statute is published on Programme website: [http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/LEGAL_FRAMEWORK/Procedures granting access/Abruzzo%20Region Reg 1 2000 EN.pdf](http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/LEGAL_FRAMEWORK/Procedures_granting_access/Abruzzo%20Region_Reg_1_2000_EN.pdf)

§. 18. REFERENCE RULES

Before the submission of any project, pay attention to the following rules:

- o Council Regulation (EC) No. 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA Regulation) and following integrations and amendments;
- o Commission Regulation (EC) n. 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No. 1085/2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA Implementing Regulation) and following integrations and amendments;
- o IPA Adriatic CBC Operational Programme 2007-2013 last approved version amended with EC Decision C(2011) No. 3396 on 18.5.2011;
- o External aid rules for the award of service, supply and work contracts, established by the European Commission and indicated in the Chapter 3 of Part 2, Title IV of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No. 1605/2002 and Chapter 3 of Part 2, Title III of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No. 2342/2002, as well as Commission Decision C (2007) NO. 2034 of 24 May 2007.
- o Regulation (EC) No. 45/2001 as regarding the personal data processing;
- o Abruzzo Regional Law No 1/2000 as regarding the access to file of selection procedure;
- o Programme Management and Control Manual, published in the Programme website: http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/Programme_Management_and_Control_Manual.pdf
- o IPA Subsidy Contract and its General Conditions, both of them are published in the Programme website: http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/IMPLEMENTING_DOCUMENTS/Subsidy_Contract_Pack.zip
- o Partnership Agreement, published in the Programme website: http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/IMPLEMENTING_DOCUMENTS/IPA_Partnership_Agreement_Form.pdf
- o Financial guarantee, published in the Programme website: www.adriaticpacbc.org

§. 19. ANNEXES AND FORMS

Here are annexed the following documents:

Annex I: Priority I - Terms of reference for Strategic projects thematic issue: Innovation as key for economic development in the Adriatic area
Annex II: The Applicants' Manual

The forms to apply under each step of the selection procedure are the following:

Forms for 1° Step:

1. Strategic project proposal for 1° step
2. Declaration of the Lead Applicant
3. Expression of interest

Forms for 2° Step:

1. Final Strategic Project proposal for 2° step

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- 2. Expression of interest (only for a new partner that joined the proposal under the 2° step)
- 3. The "de minimis" Declaration
- 4. Final Beneficiary bank account information notice
- 5. Letter of Association
- 6. Project budget break-down
- 7. Project investment details

All forms are published in the Programme website: www.adriaticpacbc.org



Documento consegnato all'orientatore

compreso da n. 13 fogli

e n. 25 fasciole

L'Aquila, li 31/07/2012

IL DIRIGENTE
ES

ALLEGATO 2

IPA Adriatic Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2007 - 2013

Call for Strategic Project Proposals – Priority 2

ALLEGATO come parte integrante alla dell-
berazione n. 5.0.1 del 3 AGO 2012
IL SEGRETARIO DELLA GIUNTA
(Dott. Walter Garlani)
Walter Garlani

**IPA Adriatic Cross-border
Cooperation Programme
2007-2013**

**CALL FOR
STRATEGIC PROJECT PROPOSALS
PRIORITY 2**

Published on 03 September 2012



Let's grow up together

Adriatic IPA
Cross Border Cooperation 2007-2013



Version approved by JMC on 27/07/2012



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§. 1. INTRODUCTION

The Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) is the financial instrument established by the European Union (EC Regulation n. 1085/2006) to assist Candidate Countries and Potential Candidate Countries (beneficiary Countries) in their progressive alignment with the standards and policies of the European Union, including where appropriate the "*acquis communautaire*", with a view to membership.

Component II of this Instrument finances initiatives of cross-border cooperation among Member States and beneficiary Countries, in order to promote good and neighbouring relations, foster stability, security and prosperity in the mutual interest of all the Countries concerned, and to encourage their harmonious, balanced and sustainable development.

The Adriatic Basin is a very important cooperation area for the European Union, for all coastal Member (Greece, Italy and Slovenia) and non-Member States (Albania, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia), hereafter "Participating Countries", because of the close historical, geographical, cultural, social and economic linkages.

As stated in the Operational Programme, the general objective of the IPA Adriatic Cross-border Cooperation (CBC) Programme (hereafter, "Programme") is to *strengthen the sustainable development capacity of the Adriatic Region through an agreed strategy of actions among the partners of the eligible territories.*

Under this general objective, specific themes are identified by the Joint Monitoring Committee as being particularly important for all territories of the Programme space. This targeted call for proposals is launched aiming to elaborate "Strategic projects" corresponding to the mentioned themes.

Characteristics of Strategic projects

Strategic projects shall aim at producing a wide impact and optimising the effects of the Programme on the Adriatic basin. They must demonstrate their strategic dimension by presenting high standards regarding these important features:

a) **Compliance with European, national and regional policies: strategic relevance**

Strategic projects must deal with the problems and/or opportunities that reflect the real needs of the Programme area, are of common interest and have a high relevance to the entire or a large part of the Adriatic Sea area with its hinterland (the so called "sea-basin approach"). They must be developed in compliance with EU, national and regional policies of the Participating Countries where special attention is given to the EU Directives relating to the Adriatic sea-basin. The strategic projects must show how they will contribute to implement the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas; where it is possible an opening towards Community policies regarding "Europe 2020", as a new strategy, is recommended. Strategic projects should also ensure equal opportunities between men and women and to avoid all kinds of discrimination.

b) **Capitalization**

It is essential that Strategic projects are built on the basis of a thorough knowledge of local/national/European existing situation in the particular thematic area, that they take into account public policies as well as the experiences and results from past and running projects from different EU, national or sub-national funded Programmes implemented in the geographical area concerned. Where possible, strategic projects should be connected with existing initiatives and Programmes and forge links to other similar running projects in the Adriatic area in order to generate significant added value and gain synergies. Therefore, Strategic projects are advised to take into account results achieved and problems solutions solved by projects implemented during the 2000-2006 programming period, especially in the cooperation area of the Programme (ERDF, CARDS and Neighbourhood Programmes) and in the same "Strategic theme". Strategic projects partners are invited to also consider innovative projects implemented in other on-going Programmes that involve the eligible cooperation Programme area (Transnational ETC Programmes, ENPI CBC Mediterranean Programme, Cross border ETC and IPA CBC Programmes).

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**c) Significant and long-lasting impact on the cooperation area**

Strategic projects must have the widest geographical coverage possible involving partners from many Participating Countries and involve the most relevant partners able and committed to achieve the envisaged outputs and results.

Strategic projects should have a positive long-lasting impact in the cooperation area and with the possibility to extend their effects beyond project targeted area, beyond the actual contents of the project and beyond the lifetime of IPA funding and make a relevant contribution to the Programme specific objectives:

- a) to produce a leverage effect on financial resources to catalyse other private and/or public financing and human resources;
- b) to permit the consolidation and the stabilization of the partnership regarding the strategy development priorities of the territories;
- c) to create permanent cooperation opportunities;
- d) to bring about positive changes in stakeholders' behaviour.

e) Tangible and visible results

Results of Strategic projects have to produce concrete benefits, directly or indirectly to the whole or a large part of the Programme area through a wider dissemination (e.g. common methods, results of pilot projects made available to all partners, benchmarks, exchange of best practices, experiences of existing cooperation, etc.).

Strategic projects should aim for visible and tangible results and measurable outcomes. They shall not be limited only to produce information and analyses with a theoretical approach but they should be performed for the purpose of support or guidance towards concrete results of a project. Strategic project could also pave the way to future major investments.

Strategic projects must have tangible impact on actors and territories, fostering consolidation and stabilization of the partnership as to strategy development priorities in the territories and being transferable in other IPA regions.

f) Strong and coherent partnership

Strategic projects shall allow for the building of active high-quality partnerships around key actors who have competences in the Strategic themes, involving decision makers, thematic experts, specialised bodies and end-users. As a result, partnership should be diverse and complementary and should refer to a multi-level governance model as well as to a multi-dimensional governance system. Besides, strong cross-border cooperation must be ensured with harmonious, fair and balanced involvement of all partners.

There must be a strict relation between project objectives and the institutional, administrative and technical competences of partners. Partners must take a commitment among them for the achievement of expected results. Each project partner should have a clearly defined role in the project, described in the project work packages.

d) Sustainability of results

Strategic projects must ensure that the results achieved will be further sustained after the end of the project. Partners should be able to generate effects in the mid/long term, also by producing a lever effect on financial resources involving other private and/or public donors/investors. Moreover they should seek to reinforce local ownership of project benefits, introduce project practises and results in everyday practice and further strengthen the institutional framework of the project, by extending its footprint and involving a broad number of relevant stakeholders.

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§. 2. ELIGIBLE PROGRAMME STRATEGIC THEME<S>

This Call concerns Strategic projects referred to Priority 2 of the Programme: "Natural and Cultural Resources and Risk Prevention". It aims at promoting, improving and protecting natural and cultural resources through joint management of technological and natural risks. The significant qualitative and quantitative potential of the areas' natural and cultural resources is considered very important and consequently the interventions shall aim to improve, promote and protect these resources through joint management of them.

A Strategic Project developed under Priority 2 shall refer to **ONLY ONE** of the following strategic themes:

- ✓ Improving marine, coastal and delta rivers environment by joint management in the Adriatic area.
- ✓ Protection from ballast water pollution in the Adriatic area.
- ✓ Integrated and sustainable management of drinking water resources in the Adriatic area.
- ✓ Protection and prevention of natural risks in the Adriatic area, with particular attention to fire risk.
- ✓ Tourism with emphasis on sustainable management and marketing of natural and cultural resources in the Adriatic area.

A Strategic Projects cannot refer to more than one of eligible Strategic Theme.

§. 3. GRANTS AVAILABLE

The Priority 2 budget foreseen for this Call for proposals is up to 45.360.776,00 EUR (forty-five millions and three hundred sixty thousand and seven hundred seventy-six EUR), 38.556.659,60 EUR (85%) of which ensured by Community IPA funds and 6.804.116,40 EUR (15%) of which ensured by the national co-financing.

The number of projects financed will depend on the JMC final decision for allocation of funds available for this Call with the aim, where possible, to finance at least one project proposal for each Strategic Theme.

The Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) has the right not to grant any project under each Strategic Theme, if no project proposal under that Strategic Theme is eligible for funding, as well as, the Joint Monitoring Committee reserves the right to reduce or increase the funds for this Call having regard the available Programme financial resources when the final decision will be taken.

§. 4. PROJECT CONTENT

The content of Strategic projects must be referred to one of the Strategic themes eligible for this Call, otherwise the whole project will be **rejected**.

Strategic themes are outlined in detail in the specification here enclosed in Annexes I, II, III, IV and V, as integral parts of this Call. A project proposal has to be consistent with the specific objectives of the Strategic Theme concerned as defined in the Terms of Reference.

The financial size of the project should truly reflect the activities foreseen in the work plan. The projects should be managed in compliance with the principles of sound financial management. **The estimated project budget must be indicated in EUR**, also by partners established in Participating Countries having a different currency.

Cooperation among the project partners has to be clearly described in the Strategic Project Proposal and implemented involving all of the following modalities:

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- o **Joint development.**
- o **Joint implementation.**
- o **Joint staffing.**
- o **Joint financing.**

The meaning and the details of the list of matters, above mentioned, are given in Section 6.2.4 of the Applicants' Manual. Please, refer to that Section on description of the Strategic Project Proposal content.

Strategic projects should be performed in accordance with the partner's characteristics on the basis of the following criteria (*at least*):

1. Representativeness:
 - *Territorial coverage.*
 - *Capacity of developing activities that meet a general interest.*
 - *Capacity of target groups and stakeholders mobilization.*
 - *Capacity in achieving the outputs and results.*
2. Cross border dimension.
3. Capacity of awareness raising, spreading and capitapitization of achievements..
4. Capacity to promote sustainability, secure the continuation of project benefits after the completion of the project and maximize its impact.

The total project budget cannot be modified more than 20% of the budget previously defined, and specific objectives of project cannot be modified between the 1st and 2nd step of selection procedure.

Also, the name of the project proposal (title and acronym included) cannot be modified between the 1st and the 2nd step procedure, otherwise the project will be considered as a new proposal and will be not accepted in whole.

The "strategic partnership" should be identified already at the 1st step. Lead Applicants invited to the 2nd step procedure may, in duly justified circumstances, replace former Final Beneficiary under the condition that such replacing is taken within the same Participating Country originally involved or may add a new Final Beneficiary where an invitation from JMC has been received.

In any case an excluded project partner cannot be replaced with a new partner within the same step of the selection procedure, as well as, the Lead Applicant cannot be replaced with a new Lead outside from the case of legal succession and the matters pertaining thereto.

In order to be eligible, a Strategic Project must involve **at least 6 partners** representing **at least 6 Participating Countries** among Member States and IPA beneficiary Countries.

With the aim to optimize the project management, this Call recommends to involve not more than 18 partners for each Strategic project.

All **project partners** must have an active role in the project. Any of them cannot act as an agent or as a supplier of another project partner. In such cases the related expenditures will not be eligible. According to Article 96 of EC Regulation n. 718/2007, the project partners must appoint a lead partner among themselves prior to the submission of the Strategic project proposal. The Lead partner/Lead Beneficiary shall assume the following responsibilities:

- o it shall lay down the arrangements for its relations with the project partners in an agreement comprising, *inter alia*, provisions guaranteeing the sound financial management of the funds allocated to the project, including the arrangements for recovering amounts unduly paid;
- o it shall be responsible for ensuring the implementation of the entire project;
- o it shall be responsible for transferring the IPA contribution to the project partners;
- o it shall ensure that the expenditure presented by the project partners has been paid for the purpose of implementing the project and corresponds to the activities agreed among the project partnership;
- o it shall verify that the expenditure presented by the project partners has been validated by the controllers referred to in Article 108 of the EC Regulation n. 718/2007.

contracting autonomy but without own legal personality) represents in the project proposal the institution in whole.

International organizations³ are not eligible to apply as Final Beneficiaries but only as associated institutions as described in Section 6.2.

6.2. Associated institution

Any interested institution/legal entity can also be involved in the strategic project as observers with **associate** status without financially contributing to the project. As they are not Final Beneficiaries, associates do not have to respect the eligibility rules established by this Call.

6.3. Eligibility of Serbian partners

Serbia participates in the Programme with the whole territory under a *phasing out* condition: it means that Serbian Beneficiaries shall participate only in projects that involve institutional cooperation initiatives and their participation regards the following relevant areas:

1) Culture, Tourism, Science and Research, Environment, Water resources, Natural risk, Governance and Public Administration.

The expenditures of Serbian Final Beneficiaries are eligible at the latest until 31st December 2015. Serbian SMEs are not eligible as Final Beneficiaries.

6.4. Grounds for exclusion of project partner

A project partner will be excluded from project partnership if it falls into at least one of the following situations:

- a. is bankrupt or being wound up, is having its affairs administered by the courts, has entered into agreement with creditors, has suspended business activities, is the subject of proceedings concerning the matters, or is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b. has been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgment which, in accordance with legal provisions of the State, has the force of *res judicata*;
- c. has been guilty of grave professional misconduct that the Managing Authority can verify by any means;
- d. has not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the Country in which it is established or the Country of the Managing Authority or the Country where the activities are to be performed;
- e. has been the subject of a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal association or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- f. has been declared, referring to other procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Community's budget, to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with its contractual obligations;
- g. it is currently subject to an administrative penalty for being in serious breach of its obligations under any subsidy contract covered by the EU budget or for being guilty of misrepresentation

³ The term is based on the definition given under Article 43.2 of Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No. 2342/2002. For more details, see § 5.1.1 "Partner legal status" of the Applicants' Manual.

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in supplying the information required by the Managing Authority as a condition to receive the grant or fails to supply this information.

The cases referred to in point (e) applicable are the following:

1. cases of fraud as referred to in Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995⁴;
2. cases of corruption as referred to in Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of Member States of the European Union, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 May 1997⁵;
3. cases of participation in a criminal organization, as defined in Article 2(1) of Joint Action 98/733/JHA of the Council⁶;
4. cases of money laundering as defined in Article 1 of Council Directive 91/308/EEC⁷.

The exclusion criteria are also related to the natural person who acts as a representative, including presidents, directors, managers or any person with powers of representation in relation to the project partner.

A project partner will be excluded also if during the project selection procedure:

- o a conflict of interests will be detected towards a member of Joint Monitoring Committee or an expert assessor involved in the assessment procedure;
- o any person related to the project partner's organization has attempted to obtain confidential information or influence any member of Joint Monitoring Committee or any expert assessor involved in the assessment procedure;
- o it is guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the Managing Authority or by the Joint Technical Secretariat in order to obtain an unfair admission to the Call.

Also, a project partner will be not admitted to when it has not provided the:

1. Expression of Interest (not for Lead Applicants);
2. "de minimis" Declaration (not for Lead Applicants);
3. Declaration of the Lead Applicant (only for Lead Applicants).

6.5. Lead Beneficiary eligibility criteria

Only public bodies and bodies governed by public law should assume the role of Lead Beneficiary in the Strategic projects admitted to this Call.

Lead Beneficiary cannot be eligible for grants if it falls under the "de minimis" regime as ruled in the Section 5 of this Call.

If a body is involved in more than one Strategic Project Proposal in the same Call for Strategic Projects Proposals, as a Lead Applicant, the following Strategic Projects Proposals submitted will be considered not admissible and therefore they will be rejected.

Where a Lead Applicant is not eligible or admissible to this Call, the whole Application will be rejected.

⁴ OJ C 316, 27.11.1995, p.48.

⁵ OJ C 195, 25.6.1997, p.1.

⁶ OJ L 351, 29.12.1998, p.1. Joint Action of 21 December 1998 making it a criminal offence to participate in a criminal organisation in the Member States of the European Union.

⁷ OJ L 166, 28.6.1991, p. 77. Directive of 10 June 1991, as amended by Directive 2001/97/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 December 2001 (OJ L 344, 28.12.2001, p.76).

Final Strategic Projects should be well-structured with a work plan where objectives, action, activities, partners engaged and responsibilities, duration and results have to be clearly detailed and described. The work plan has to be structured in different **Work Packages (WPs)** as required by the Annexes I, II, III, IV and V herein.

The work plan is then based on two categories of work packages:

- **Horizontal Work Packages** related to the management of the project, to communication and dissemination activities and to capitalization of results (Work Packages 0, 1, 2 and 3);
- **Technical Work Packages** focused on the concrete implementation of the activities of the project.

Work packages related to the management of the project, to communication and dissemination activities and to capitalization of results (Work Packages 1, 2 and 3) are **compulsory**, whilst the Technical Work Packages shall be developed by Applicants taking into consideration the compulsory and suggested activities listed in the Terms of Reference.

Each project proposal must clearly specify the concrete outputs and strategic results they aim to produce and the actions necessary to achieve them. More details are given in the Applicants' Manual.

In order to support the achievement of the objectives of the project, and in particular where the implementation of the project proposed by the project partners require financial support to be given to third parties, the project partners may propose awarding sub-grants.

Sub-granting is part of the type of actions that can be implemented in the framework of the Programme. However, sub-granting may not be the main purpose of the project and it must be duly justified.

In case where the project partners foresee to award sub-grants, it has to be specified in the project proposal (in the 1st step) which Final Beneficiaries intend to sub-grant a limited part of the Programme Contribution required, the list of type of activities to which sub-granting is addressed, the objectives and results to be obtained and the total amount of the grant.

In the preparation of final project proposal for 2nd step, where a sub-granting implementation modality will be foreseen the project partner shall strictly defined the conditions for sub-granting (specify the maximum amount per sub-grant and the criteria for determining the exact amount) in order to leave no room for discretion as well as the criteria for the selection of third parties (sub-beneficiaries) which must be carried out only by public calls.

The total amount that a Final Beneficiary can sub-grant to third parties is limited to € 100.000 with a maximum of € 10.000 per each third party.

A Strategic Project must have a **duration of at least 24 months** but in any case they must be **concluded by March 31st, 2016**, regardless of their duration, otherwise the proposal will be rejected

§. 5. PROJECT SIZE AND CO-FINANCING RATE

The total project budget for Strategic Projects must respect the following thresholds of value:

- **Minimum total Project budget:** 5.000.000,00 EUR.
- **Maximum total Project budget:** 12.500.000,00 EUR.

As **eligibility rule**, each Final Beneficiary budget cannot exceed 40% of the total project budget and must have a minimum total budget of 150.000 EUR..

Total project budget includes the Programme Contribution (IPA funds and national co-financing) and Final Beneficiary's own contribution, if the Beneficiary is acting in the project as undertaking.

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The IPA co-financing rate covers up to 85% of the total Programme contribution while 15% of the total Programme contribution is guaranteed by the national co-financing by each Final Beneficiary, according to the system applied by each Participating Country.

The national co-financing contribution does not include own additional and voluntary contributions, which are not part of the Programme contribution.

State aid can be granted to Final Beneficiaries (not to the Lead Beneficiaries) only under the "de minimis" rule. In such case, the maximum aid intensity is equal to 85% of the grant that would have been assigned if the Beneficiary was not acting in the project as an undertaking. Final Beneficiaries must declare if they are or not acting in the project by making undertaking activities by using the "de minimis" Declaration form published in the Programme website.

§. 6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR FINAL BENEFICIARIES

6.1. Eligibility criteria for project partner

As **eligibility rule**, each Final Beneficiary should be a:

- 1) **body or firm, whether public or private**, as follows:
 - A. **Public bodies.** Legal entities established under public law.
 - B. **Private organizations, governed by national private law.** They include:
 - a) non-enterprise organizations (for i.e., non-profit organizations, foundations, research centres and other similar institutions); and
 - b) small and medium sized enterprises¹.
 - C. **Bodies governed by public law.** This is a conceptual category of entities established under private law but governed by public law if they meet all the criteria required under Article 1.9 of Directive 2004/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004.
 Thereof, a '**body governed by public law**' means anybody:
 - a) established for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest², not having an industrial or commercial character;
 - b) having a legal personality; and
 - c) financed, for the most part, by the State, regional or local authorities, or other bodies governed by public law; or subject to management supervision by those bodies; or having an administrative, managerial or supervisory board, of which more than half members are appointed by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law.
- 2) **established in one of the Programme participating country** and
- 3) **with legal personality.**

Consultancy companies having both, in their business activities and within the project, as main scope the provision of project coordination, management, communication or knowledge management services (i.e.: activities to be implemented within the Work Package 0, 1, 2, 3, etc.) should not be involved as project partner.

An entity that applies as Lead partner or project partner which is part of an eligible legal person (as a Department, Faculty, Institute or a administrative functional unit with administrative, financial and/or

¹ A private organisation has to be considered an enterprise if it complies with the considerations of the whereas n. 3 of the Commission Recommendation (2003/361/EC) of 06/05/2003 (notified under document number C(2003) 1422). For more details, see § 5.1.1 "Partner legal status" of the Applicants' Manual.

² The meaning of the term is referred to the definition used in Annex 1 "Definition of Terms" of White Book of European Commission on Services of General Interests - COM(2004) 374 def. For more details, see § 5.1.1 "Partner legal status" of the Applicants' Manual.

§. 7. PROGRAMME ELIGIBLE AREA AND LOCATION OF ACTIVITIES

The Programme eligible area consists of the NUTS 3 territories of the participating EU Member States (Greece, Italy, Slovenia) and the equivalent level territories of the participating Candidate Countries (Montenegro), Acceding Country (Croatia) and of the Potential Candidate Countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina) on the Adriatic Sea. Serbia participates in the Programme with the whole territory.

According to the Article 97 of IPA Implementing Regulation, the Programme admits derogation to the territorial eligibility rule for adjacent areas to eligible territories, up to the limit of 20% of the amount of the Community contribution to the Programme. However, this does not mean that a fixed share of 20% of the Programme budget is reserved for partners from these areas. The cross border added value of participation of partners from these areas will be assessed on project basis. In case this limit is reached, the JMC will not finance, totally or partly, expenditures incurred in territorial derogation areas.

The detailed list of the eligible territories (*with the territorial derogations*) is the following:

- **Greece:** Kerkyra and Thesprotia.
- **Italy:** Gorizia, Trieste, Udine, Padova, Rovigo, Venezia, Ferrara, Forlì-Cesena, Ravenna, Rimini, Ancona, Ascoli Piceno, Fermo, Macerata, Pesaro-Urbino, Chieti, Pescara, Teramo, Campobasso, Bari, Brindisi, Foggia, Barletta-Andria-Trani and Lecce. *Territorial derogation: L'Aquila, Pordenone, Isernia, and Taranto.*
- **Slovenia:** Obalno-kraška regija. *Territorial derogation: Goriška regija and Notranjsko-kraška regija.*
- **Croatia:** Dubrovnik-Neretva, Istra; Lika-Senj; Primorje-Gorski kotar; Šibenik-Knin; Split-Dalmatia, and Zadar. *Territorial derogation: Karlovac County.*
- **Albania:** Fier, Durrës, Lezhë, Shkodër, Tiranë, and Vlorë.
- **Bosnia and Herzegovina:** Bileća, Čapljina, Čitluk, Gacko, Grude, Jablanica, Konjic, Kupres, Livno, Ljubinje, Ljubuški, Mostar, Neum, Nevesinje, Posušje, Prozor/Rama, Ravno, Široki Brijeg, Stolac, Berkovići, Tomislavgrad, Trebinje, and Istočni Mostar. *Territorial derogation: Sarajevo Region, North-West Region and Central Region.*
- **Montenegro:** Bar, Budva, Cetinje, Danilovgrad, Herceg Novi, Kotor, Nikšić, Podgorica, Ulcinj and Tivat. *Territorial derogation: Pljevlja, Bijelo Polje, Berane, Rožaje, Plav, Andrijevica, Kolašin, Mojkovac, Šavnik, Žabljak, and Plužine.*
- **Serbia:** whole territory (under phasing out condition).

As general principle, the operation must be implemented in the Programme eligible area above described.

Project partners with their registered office located outside the Programme eligible area, can participate with a regional/local branch office located in the Programme eligible area.

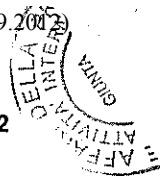
The term "branch" office means any "fixed establishment", which, according to Reg. (EC) No 282/2011, is other than the registered office, "characterized by a sufficient degree of permanence and a suitable structure in terms of human and technical resources to enable it to receive and use the services supplied to it for its own needs".

Where the beneficiary is located outside the Programme eligible area but participate with a regional/local branch office located in the Programme eligible area, it must explain its role in the Programme area and where it operates in the eligible area with a branch office. Therefore, it has to provide the following proofs:

- at least one year of operation of the local organisational unit in the Programme area must be justified with administrative or accounting documentation; **and**
- the leader of the branch office must be an authorised representative of the final beneficiary, entitled to act for the implementation of the project activities.

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§. 8. ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURE

As general rule, expenditures are eligible for Final Beneficiaries from Greece, Italy and Slovenia if incurred on or after the 1st January 2007, and for Beneficiaries from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia if incurred from the date of the signature of Financing Agreements⁸ between each of these Countries and the European Commission. These dates are specified in the section 5.2. "Period of eligibility of expenditures" of Programme Management and Control Manual as a reference document of this Call.

Costs in the project budget sheets must be foreseen in Euro currency and are considered eligible for reimbursement by the Programme when they are incurred in compliance with the rules set out in Chapters 4 "Compliance with EU Policies and other rules" and 5 "Project expenditure and applicable rules" of the Programme Management and Control Manual.

Shared costs are not eligible for this Call.

Expenditures are considered to be ***incurred in the place where the Final Beneficiary has its registered office or, if the Call rules for the branch office are respected, where it has located its branch office.*** For *meeting/event* and *expenditure in tangible assets*, the location of the meeting/event and of the tangible asset will be taken into consideration.

At project level, in exceptional cases, expenditures incurred outside the Programme area as defined above, may be eligible provided that both following conditions are respected:

1. the project could only achieve its objectives with that expenditures (art. 97.1 second subparagraph of Reg. (EC) 718/2007 as amended by Reg. (EC) 80/2010) **and**
2. the expenditures have been previously authorized in compliance with art. 97.2 of Reg. (EC) 718/2007.

This can be the case of National and regional public authorities or bodies governed by public law which are located outside the eligible area, and have neither a branch office in it, but which can be necessary for the achievements of the project objectives due to their competences in the area, or their particular tasks/experience.

§. 9. RESPONSIBLE OF SELECTION PROCEDURES MANAGEMENT

According to the IPA Adriatic Cross-border Cooperation Operational Programme, the responsible for the procedures management of this Call is the Abruzzo Region of the Italian Republic, "Direzione Affari della Presidenza, Politiche Legislative e Comunitarie Programmazione, Parchi, Territorio, Valutazioni ambientali, Energia - Servizio Attività Internazionali" and its representative in charge as Managing Authority.

§. 10. SELECTION PROCEDURES

In compliance with the Section 4.7 of the IPA Adriatic CBC Programme and with Section 4.1.2.1 of its Implementation Manual, a two-step selection procedure is applied for the selection of Strategic Projects. Under the first step, a targeted open call allows all potential eligible Final Beneficiaries to apply to this Call by submitting a Strategic Project Proposal. Only the Projects that have been selected at the end of the first step procedure, will be invited to submit the Final Strategic Project Proposal under the second step selection procedure.

⁸ According to the term regarding the "ENTRY INTO FORCE", these Agreements have entered into force on the date of signature. Where the Parties have signed on different dates, the Agreement was entered into force on the date of signature by the second of the two Parties.

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In compliance with article 110.5.f) of the IPA Implementing Regulation, the JMC is responsible for selecting operations, previously admitted to the quality assessment phase, while the Managing Authority is responsible for whole application formal checks.

The Managing Authority/JTS may ask to the Lead Applicant to provide **additional information, documents or to clarify the supporting documents** submitted in connection with the single step procedure, in particular in the case of obvious clerical errors. If necessary to better achieve the formal checks, the MA/JTS could require, also to the Programme National Authorities/Coordinator, to provide documents that might integrate the evidential documents provided by the Final Beneficiaries.

The Managing Authority/JTS will notify the requirement to the Lead Applicant **only by fax**. The same documents and information will not be required to be provided more than once during the whole selection procedure. The MA will keep appropriate records of contacts with Lead Applicants during the whole selection procedure. Lead Applicant must provide the information, clarification or document within the expiration term as required.

The **formal admissibility checks** under both the two step procedures will be based on the criteria set in **Section 13** of this Call.

The **quality assessment** of project proposals for each step of the selection procedure will be based on the specific assessment criteria set in **Section 14**.

Proposals not fulfilling all the formal admissibility requirements will be rejected and will not be admitted to the quality assessment under the concerned step of the procedure (1st or 2nd Step). Lead Applicants will be informed about the reasons of rejection at the end of the formal assessment phase.

The maximum score for quality assessment under the **1° Step of the selection procedure is 75 points**, resulting from the sum of the points assigned to each section of the evaluation grid. A project proposal will not be eligible to be invited to the 2° Step procedure if it achieves a score lower than 70% of the maximum score.

At the end of the 1° Step of the selection procedure, the JMC elaborates and approves a single ranking list of all the project proposals eligible to be invited to the 2° Step procedure.

The first 5 projects for each Strategic theme of the ranking list with the highest scores will be invited to the 2° Step of the selection procedure.

In case two or more projects have the same scores, priority will be given to projects that achieve the higher score under the Section C "Quality of the proposal partnership" of the evaluation grid. In case of further equality, the priority will be given to projects with the higher score under the other Sections of the evaluation grid, taking into account the following order of precedence: Section A "Consistency with the Programme strategy"; Section B "Cross border character of the intervention"; Section D "Quality of the intervention and value for money".

Lead Applicants invited to the 2° Step procedure may be required by the JMC to improve the proposal as to add or replace project partner/s in order to better pursue the project's objectives.

The maximum score for quality assessment under the **2° Step of the selection procedure is 100** resulting from the sum of the points assigned to each section of the evaluation grid.

A project proposal will not be eligible for funding if:

- a) it achieves a score lower than 80 points; or
- b) it does not achieve at least half of the points foreseen in each section of the evaluation grid.

In case where two or more projects have the same scores (in the 2nd step), priority will be given to projects that achieve the higher score under the Section D "Quality of the intervention" of the evaluation grid. In case of further equality, the priority will be given to projects with the higher score under the other Sections of the evaluation grid, taking into account the following order of precedence: Section C "Financial and management capacity; Section A "Consistency with the Programme strategy"; Section B "Cross border character of the intervention"; Section E "Budget of the project".

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Once the quality assessment of the 2nd Step has been performed, Strategic projects, will be listed under each Strategic Theme in a final ranking list approved by the JMC. According to this list, one Strategic projects (where possible, per Theme), with the highest score, may be financed. After that, if there is still unallocated funds of this Call, the next project(s) from any Theme under the same Programme Priority with highest score among all the Strategic Theme of this Call may be financed.

Projects will be financed if all the conditions set out by law and by the JMC (if any) have been complied with.

At the end of the whole procedure, the MA adopts an administrative act regarding the JMC decision and the closure of the step selection procedure by reporting the quality assessments and the motivation of rejection of projects.

The titles and acronyms of projects financed, the list of the involved Final Beneficiaries and the amount of Community funding allocated to the projects will be published in the Programme website according to the Article 62 of the Regulation (EC) n. 718/2008. Lead Applicants whose projects have been rejected and Lead Applicants whose projects have been financed will receive a notice from the MA with the results of the selection procedure to the fax number indicated in the Declaration of the Applicant or to the following fax number timely and duly indicated by the Lead Applicant.

§. 11. APPLICATION TERMS FOR THE FIRST STEP PROCEDURE

The project proposal must be in **English** in all its parts. National language may be used where it is allowed within the forms required by this Call. The supporting documents related to the Lead Applicant may be provided in national language.

The Application package for the first step procedure has to contain the following elements:

- a) Strategic project proposal filled in all its parts.
- b) Commitment documents of each Final Beneficiary.
- c) Supporting documents of the Lead Applicant (only in case it is a body governed by public law).

Lead Partner as Lead Applicant is the body allowed to submit the Application package:

A) Strategic project proposal. It must be filled in the appropriate form published in the Programme website and provided in a paper and electronic version. Only the paper version is the original. The electronic version has to be provided in CD-Rom or DVD or in any other appropriate technical support. As a rule of admissibility of the project proposal, the Lead Applicant has to sign in original each page of the paper version and bound together all the sheets in one single document.

B) Commitment documents:

- 1. Declaration of the Lead Applicant.** The Lead Applicant must declare its legal status and that it doesn't fall in one of the situations for grants' exclusion as referred in above section 6.4, by using the appropriate form. Original copy must be provided.
- 2. Expression of interest.** Each potential project partner must declare its legal status and that it doesn't fall in one of the situations for grants' exclusion as referred in above section 6.4, by using the appropriate form. Original copy must be provided.

C) Supporting documents. Lead Applicants which are bodies governed by public law must prove their legal status with the following documents:

- o certification of the legal personality status;
- o statute and
- o balance sheet for the most recent year that accounts are closed. Final Beneficiaries which, according to their national law, do not need to establish balance sheet should provide the closest equivalent, e.g. a statement of income and expenditures. Newly founded organisations, which do

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not yet have balance sheets and profit and loss account available, should attach their business plan.

The supporting documents provided have to be marked as "certified copy" by any authorized person, as a self-declaration. In this case, a photocopy of the identification document of the declaring person needs to be annexed to the certified copies.

In order to check out that the project partner meets all the criteria required under Article 1.9 of Directive 2004/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004, the MA may require to provide clarification which could be supported by the project partner with appropriate documents.

A photocopy of the identification document of the signatory person needs to be included to the Strategic Project Proposals Application Pack.

Where Lead Applicants have already provided to the Managing Authority the required documents during any prior selection procedure for grants, they could be exempted to submit the same documents, provided that no modification occurred and that they point out when they have been provided.

The Application package for the first step procedure must be received by the Managing Authority at latest on **02/11/2012** (2nd November 2012) **by 14:00 Rome time** (UTC/GMT+1 hour).

In order to ensure transparency of the selection procedure and equal treatment towards to all Lead Applicants, the Application package has to be sent by express courier, only once and all documents must be included within a duly sealed envelope, which must be addressed and marked as follows:

**Regione Abruzzo – Servizio Attività Internazionali
Autorità di Gestione - IPA Adriatic CBC Programme
Via Salaria Antica Est, n. 27
I-67100, L'Aquila - ITALY**

"Strategic Project Call for Proposals - Priority <1/2/3> - <acronym of the project proposal> - Do not open"

§. 12. APPLICATION TERMS FOR THE SECOND STEP PROCEDURE

Only Lead Applicants selected for the second step procedure will be invited by the MA to submit the final Application package.

The final project proposal must be in **English** in all its parts. National language may be used where it is allowed within the forms required by this Call. The supporting documents of Final Beneficiaries may be provided in national language.

The final Application package for second step procedure includes the following documents:

A) Final strategic project proposal. It must be filled in the appropriate form published in the Programme website and provided in a paper and electronic version. Only the paper version is the original. The electronic version has to be provided in CD-Rom or DVD or in any other appropriate technical support. As a rule of admissibility of the project proposal, the Lead Applicant has to sign in original each page of the paper version and bound together all the sheets in one single object.

B) Commitment documents:

1. Expression of interest. Only new potential project partner that joined the project proposal under the 2nd step of selection procedure must provide this document where it declares its legal status and

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that it doesn't fall in one of the situations for grants' exclusion as referred in above section 6.4, by using the appropriate form. Original copy must be provided.

2. The "de minimis" Declaration. All project partners (Lead Applicant excluded) have to provide their own declaration by using the form provided by the Programme for this Call and signed by the legal or duly authorized representative. Original copy must be provided.

3. Final Beneficiary bank account identification notice. Each Final Beneficiary has to provide this notice by using the form provided by the Programme for this Call.

4. Letter of Association. Where project foresees this kind of bodies, a commitment document should be issued by associates by using the appropriate form. Original copy must be provided.

C) Information documents:

1. Project budget breakdown has to be provided by using only the form provided by the Programme for this Call.

2. Project investment details has to be provided by using only the form provided by the Programme for this Call and if the Strategic project proposed foresees investments.

Both these two forms have to be provided both in paper copy and in electronic version. The electronic version, in Excel format, can be provided by any electronic means (CD-Rom, DVD, USB pen-drive, etc) and it must be identical to the printed one; in case of differences, the paper copy prevails.

D) Supporting documents. Each Final Beneficiary (Lead Applicant and public bodies excluded) has to provide copies of the following documents:

- o certification of the legal personality status;
- o statute and
- o balance sheet for the most recent year that accounts are closed. Final Beneficiaries which, according to their national law, do not need to establish balance sheet should provide the closest equivalent, e.g. a statement of income and expenditures. Newly founded organisations, which do not yet have balance sheets and profit and loss account available, should attach their business plan.

The supporting documents provided have to be marked as "certified copy" by any authorized person, as a self-declaration. In this case, a photocopy of the identification document of the declarant needs to be annexed to the certified copies.. Where Final Beneficiaries have already provided to the Managing Authority the required supporting documents during any prior selection procedure for grants, they could be exempted to submit the same documents, provided that no modification occurred and that they point out when they have been provided.


In case of Final Beneficiaries located outside the Programme eligible area, but with a branch office in the eligible area, this kind of Beneficiaries have to provide legal documents (administrative or accounting documentation) proving the existence of the local organisational unit in the Programme area as required in § 7 of the Call.

A photocopy of the identification document of the signatory person needs to be included to the Final Strategic Project Proposals Application Pack.

Where Final Beneficiaries have already provided to the Managing Authority the required documents during any prior selection procedure for grants, they could be exempted to submit the same documents, provided that no modification occurred and that they point out when they have been provided.

The Application package must be received by the Managing Authority at latest on the sixtieth day from when the letter of invitation to apply to the second step procedure was sent by fax. The delivery must be carried out by 17:00 Rome time (UTC/GMT+1 hour) of the expiration date.

In order to ensure transparency of the selection procedure and equal treatment towards to all Lead Applicants, the Application package has to be sent by express courier, only once and all documents must be included within a duly sealed envelope, which must be addressed and marked as follows:


 IPA Adriatic Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2007 - 2013

Call for Strategic Project Proposals – Priority 2

Regione Abruzzo – Servizio Attività Internazionali
Autorità di Gestione - IPA Adriatic CBC Programme
 Via Salaria Antica Est, n. 27
 I-67100, L'Aquila - ITALY

"Strategic Project Call for Proposals - Priority <1/2/3> - <acronym of the project proposal> - Do not open"

§. 13. GROUNDS FOR REJECTION

13.1. Grounds for Application rejection

Projects submitted under the 1° Step procedure will be checked against a set of formal eligibility and admissibility criteria. The whole Application will be rejected when at least one of the following conditions had been detected:

List of admissibility criteria under the 1 st step procedure	§§ of the Call
A) The Application package has not been submitted in all its parts in due time according to the deadline set in the Call for proposals	§ 11
B) The Application package has not been sent to the required address, in a duly sealed envelope and with the appropriate marking	§ 11
C) Lead Applicant had used a project proposal Form different than the Strategic project proposal form provided by the Programme for this Call	§ 11
D) The project proposal (paper version) was not duly signed on each page by the Lead Applicant representative and all pages of this proposal was not bind in a single document	§ 11
E) The Declaration of the Lead Applicant has not been provided in the due form or it has not been duly signed in handwriting by the legal or authorized representative.	§ 11
F) The project proposal is not written in English language in all its parts and sections as required	§ 11
G) The project proposal clearly does not clearly indicate the eligible Strategic Theme to which it is referred	§ 2
H) The project closure is foreseen beyond 31 March 2016	§ 4
I) The minimum partnership (including the minimum participating countries represented) rule established for a project proposal has not been complied with	§ 4
J) The Lead Applicant is not eligible because: 1. its legal status doesn't comply with the requirements of this Call; 2. It will carry out undertakings activities in the project; 3. It falls under one of grounds for exclusion set by Section 6.4 of the Call. 4. It had already submitted, as Lead Applicant, another project proposal under the same Call for Strategic Projects Proposals	§ 6
K) The Lead Applicant didn't provide the supplementary information, documents or clarification within the expiration term as required	§ 10

Projects submitted under the 2° Step procedure will be checked against a set of formal eligibility and admissibility criteria. The whole Application will be rejected when at least one of the following conditions had been detected:

List of admissibility criteria under the 2 nd step procedure	§§ of the Call
A) The Application package has not been submitted in all its parts in due time according to the deadline set in the invitation letter	§ 12
B) The Application package has not been sent to the required address, in a duly sealed envelope and with the appropriate marking	§ 12
C) Lead Applicant had used a Form different than the Final Strategic project proposal form provided by the Programme for this Call	§ 12
D) The Final Strategic project proposal (paper version) was not duly signed on each page by the Lead Applicant representative and all pages of this proposal was not bind in a	§ 12

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single document	
E) The Final Strategic project proposal is not written in English language in all its parts and sections as required	§ 12
F) The minimum partnership (including the minimum participating countries represented) rule established for a project proposal has not been complied with	§ 4
G) The Programme grants foreseen for the Final Strategic project proposal or the contribution required for each project partner does not comply with the thresholds set out by this Call	§ 5
H) The Lead Applicant had been changed between the 1 st and the 2 nd step, as well as, other obligatory part/s of the Final Strategic Project proposal has/have been modified in contrast with the rules set out by the Call.	§ 4
I) The Lead Applicant didn't provide the supplementary information, documents or clarification within the expiration term as required	§ 10
J) The Final Strategic project closure is foreseen beyond 31 March 2016	§ 4

13.2. Grounds for Final Beneficiary rejection

A Final Beneficiary (which means a partner of a Strategic Project) will be assessed (only one time) against a set of formal eligibility and admissibility criteria following the rules set hereto (this paragraph not regards the eligibility and admissibility assessment of the Lead Applicant).

- 1) It is not eligible to join the Strategic Project Proposal if:
 - a) It is not a legal person;
 - b) It is not a body with nationality from one of Programme Participating Country;
 - c) It is a firm but not a SME (micro enterprise included);
 - d) It is a Serbian enterprise (SME);
 - e) It falls in one of situations listed under Section 6.4 above;
- 2) It is not admitted to join the Strategic Project Proposal if:
 - a) It filled in wrongly the Expression of Interest: title or project acronym, body name;
 - b) It didn't sign the Expression of Interest in handwriting;
 - c) The Expression of Interest was signed by an unauthorized person;
 - d) The Expression of Interest has been modified from the form provided by the Programme;
 - e) It filled in wrongly the "de minimis" Declaration: title or project acronym, body name;
 - f) It didn't sign the "de minimis" Declaration in handwriting;
 - g) The "de minimis" Declaration was signed by an unauthorized person;
 - h) The "de minimis" Declaration has been modified from the form provided by the Programme.

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§. 14. QUALITY ASSESSMENT GRIDS

Projects submitted under the 1° Step procedure will be assessed against a set of quality assessment criteria⁹ as follows:

Sections/ criteria n.	Quality assessment criteria under the 1° step of the selection procedure	Max value
A	Strategic relevance (max 15)	15
a.1	Does the project contribute to achieving general and specific objectives of the concerned Strategic theme in the Programme area?	5
a.2	Is the project in compliance with the relevant EU policies and horizontal issues?	5
a.3	Are the project objectives coherent with the national and sub-national policies of the territories participating in the project?	5
B	Cross-border character of the intervention	10
b.1	How many Adriatic Countries are present in the project? (6 Countries: 0 points; 7 Countries: 3 points; 8 Countries: 5)	5
b.2	Does the project have a positive and long-lasting impact on the whole Programme area?	5
C	Quality of the proposed partnership	25
c.1	Does the Lead Beneficiary have experience in cross-border or other international project management and sufficient capacities to ensure the good functioning of the project and coordination of a cross-border partnership?	5
c.2	Is the partnership able to disclose results and impacts in the whole Programme area?	5
c.3	Does the partnership have competence in relation to the Strategic Theme concerned and the capacity to propose, set up and implement policies and strategies for the territories addressed?	5
c.4	Does the partnership have capacity of target groups and stakeholders mobilization and of awareness raising and spreading of achievements in the territories, participating in the project?	5
c.5	Is the partnership harmonious, well balanced and complementary in terms of representativeness, competences and active involvement in the project activities per Country regarding the Strategic Theme concerned?	5
D	Quality of intervention and value for money	25
d.1	Does the project contribute to the achievement of the Strategic theme objectives through achievable actions?	5
d.2	Are the activities clear, realistic and appropriate to achieve the objectives of the Strategic Theme?	5
d.3	Does the project foresee during its life-time concrete actions to ensure sustainability of its results after the Programme Contribution funding ends?	5
d.4	Does the project represent a capitalization of previous experiences in different Programmes?	5
d.5	Is the budget rationally distributed among partners according to the role assigned to each of them?	5
	Total score	75

⁹ The sub-questions to all the quality assessment criteria will be annexed to the Applicants' Manual

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Projects submitted under the 2° Step procedure will be assessed against a set of quality criteria as follows:



Sections/ criteria n.	Assessment criteria under the 2 nd step of the selection procedure	Max value
A	Consistency with the Programme Strategy	20
a.1	Does the project contribute to achieving general and specific objectives of the concerned Strategic theme in the Programme area?	6
a.2	Is the project in compliance with the relevant EU policies and the horizontal issues of the Programme and with the relevant EU rules (regulations, directives, etc.)?	4
a.3	Is the project coherent with the national policies of the Countries participating in the operation?	4
a.4	Is the project coherent with the sub-national public policies relevant for the involved territories?	6
B	Cross-border character of the intervention	17
b.1	How many Adriatic Countries are present in the project? (6 Countries: 0 points; 7 Countries: 3 points; 8 Countries: 5)	5
b.2	Are all compulsory activities fully implemented in all Countries, participating in the project?	6
b.3	To what extent does the proposal ensure that projects are jointly developed, jointly implemented, jointly financed and that it has joint staffing?	6
C	Quality of the proposed partnership	25
c.1	Does the Lead Beneficiary have experience in cross-border or other international project management and sufficient capacities to ensure the good functioning of the project and coordination of a cross-border partnership?	5
c.2	Is the partnership able to disclose results and impacts in the whole Programme area?	5
c.3	Does the partnership have competence in relation to the Strategic Theme concerned and the capacity to propose, set up and implement policies and strategies for the territories addressed?	5
c.4	Does the partnership have capacity of target groups and stakeholders mobilization and of awareness raising and spreading of achievements in the territories, participating in the project?	5
c.5	Is the partnership harmonious, well balanced and complementary in terms of representativeness, competences and active involvement in the project activities per Country regarding the Strategic Theme concerned?	5
D	Quality of intervention	25
d.1	Are the activities, the work plan and the timetable clear, realistic and appropriate to achieve the expected results and the objectives of the project?	9
d.2	Are tasks, activities and results clearly and appropriately distributed among the Beneficiaries according to their territorial and institutional competences?	6
d.3	Is the project added value clearly identifiable in relation to the specific problems the project is addressed to?	3
d.4	Does the project establish an organized and operational management system, able to ensure the adequate coordination of the partnership, the monitoring and evaluation of the activities progress, and the communication and publicity of the operation?	3
d.5	Do the project activities and results have the concrete and realistic possibility to have a follow up after the end of the Programme contribution?	4
E	Budget of the project	13
e.1	Does the project budget represent value for money?	7

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e.2	Are the estimated expenditures rationally quantified for the full and satisfactory implementation of the foreseen activities?	6
Total score		100

§. 15. CONTRACT SIGNATURE AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION RULES

Lead Applicants of projects selected for funding will be required to sign the IPA Subsidy Contract in three copies and to provide an original copy of the Partnership Agreement signed by all the involved Final Beneficiaries. Both the IPA Subsidy Contract and the Partnership Agreement are based on the forms published in the Programme website.

The Lead Applicant must send to the Managing Authority the contracting documents as required by this Authority with the funding allocation letter (FAL). These documents must be sent within and not later than 45 days from the receipt of the FAL. This is a mandatory term and its expiration, outside from objective causes that have prevented the parties to sign or to provide timely the documents above mentioned or from authorized cases¹⁰, will cause the loss of grants to whole project.

The Managing Authority will sign the IPA Subsidy Contract after receiving the three copies already signed by the Lead Beneficiary.

The IPA Subsidy Contract will determine the rights and responsibilities of the Lead Beneficiary and the Managing Authority, the reference to the activities to be carried out, terms of funding, requirements for reporting and financial controls, etc. A copy of the General Conditions and Forms of the IPA Subsidy Contract and of the Partnership Agreement are published in the Programme website: www.adriaticpacbc.org.

If in case of an approved project, a partner, due to particular situation, decides to drop out the partnership or it cannot be granted since it didn't provide the missed documents properly required, the project shall be subject to a new quality assessment. This fact does not prevent to finance already selected projects.

A Final Beneficiary cannot be granted if it miss to provide the following documents to the Managing Authority before the MA signature of IPA Subsidy Contract:

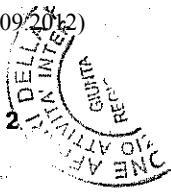
- a) It didn't provide the power of attorney of signatory person in compliance with Statute rule or national law quoted in its commitment documents;
- b) It didn't provide a photocopy of identification document of who sign (legal representative or delegated person) the commitment documents;
- c) It didn't provide the supporting documents as required in the Call;
- d) It didn't provide the Final Beneficiary Bank Account Identification Notice as required in the Call;
- e) It didn't provide the fulfilled form required to access to MIS (the Programme Management Information System).

In case of financing to Final Beneficiary with a grant exceeding € 500.000, in accordance with Article 173(4) of the rules implementing the Financial Regulation (Commission Regulation (EC, EURATOM) No 2342/2002), an audit report produced by an approved external auditor must be submitted by the related Beneficiary. That report must certify the accounts for the last two financial years available. No financial audit shall be required to any public body.

¹⁰ It is recommended to submit the relevant construction permits no later than 6 months after signing the IPA Subsidy Contract.

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The contracting and implementing rules are described in the Programme Management and Control Manual as here referred.

The Managing Authority will assign an advance payment to the Lead Beneficiary up to 20% of Community contribution allocated to the project in compliance with the contract provisions. The advance payment is granted to Lead Beneficiaries under the condition that the Managing Authority will recognize it where no financial risk has been detected towards any of the project partners. Where required, an appropriate financial guarantee may be required to the Final Beneficiary involved. Public bodies do not provide any financial guarantee.

In compliance with article 17.3 of General Conditions of the IPA Subsidy Contract, as referred in § 17, the Programme contribution to projects will be reduced if at the end of the 1st year of project implementation, the expenditure is below 30% of the total project budget foreseen and updated at the date of project's start.

In compliance with art. 3.2 of General Conditions of the IPA Subsidy Contract, as referred in § 17, the preparatory expenditures (WPO) must be reported within the 31/10 of the same year when the IPA Subsidy Contract had been signed by the contracting parties, otherwise it cannot be reported anymore and the relative grants will be lose.

According to Article 121 of EC Regulation n.718/2007, as amended by the EC Regulation n. 80/2010, for the award of service, supply and work contracts, all Beneficiaries (public and private) of the approved and funded projects must apply the procurement procedures for the "External aid rules" established in Chapter 3 of Part 2, Title IV of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 and Chapter 3 of Part 2, Title III of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002, as well as Commission Decision C (2007) 2034 of 24 May 2007 on the rules and procedures applicable to service, supply and work contracts financed by the general budget of the European Communities for the purposes of cooperation with third countries. Guidelines for using these procedures are available on the Programme website
http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/index.asp?page=interna&level=implementation_documents.

§. 16. FURTHER INFORMATION

This Call, its annexes and any clarifications and information regarding the Call and the further selection procedure will be available on the Programme website: www.adriaticpacbc.org.

For any request please contact the Joint Technical Secretariat at the following addresses:

**Joint Technical Secretariat – IPA Adriatic CBC Programme – c/o Regione Abruzzo Servizio
Attività Internazionali - Via Salaria Antica Est, n. 27 - 67100 L'Aquila – Italy
E-mail address: info@adriaticpacbc.org
Fax address: +39 0862 22520**

Additional information on project generation may be obtained from national info points, established in participating countries. The addresses are available on the Programme website.

In the Programme website the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) are available giving information on general issues or on Country related specific issues. JTS helps applicants to solve problems and answers to specific questions mainly by email, even though it provides also support by phone for technical issues, such as how to fill in some sections of the Forms included in the Application Package.

Final Beneficiaries may put questions in writing (email or fax) no later than 5 days before the closing date for delivering the Application Package, and the JTS shall provide the answers to the questions in writing no later than 2 days before the closing date. The JTS has no obligation to provide further

clarifications after this date. In any case, JTS will provide information how to fill in the Forms provided within the Call closing date.

No individual replies to queries with regard to the status of the selection procedure can be given in any way.

In the interest of equal treatment of Lead Applicants, the Managing Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the compliance of the proposals with the eligibility and selection criteria. Questions that may be relevant to other Lead Applicants, together with the answers, will be published on the Programme website.

In addition, during the course of the evaluation procedure important notices to Lead Applicants may be published on the Programme website at www.adriaticpacbc.org together with the other documents related to this call, as the need arises. The Lead Applicants are therefore strongly encouraged to regularly consult this webpage.

§. 17. MISCELLANEOUS AND RULES ON COMPLIANCE

1. The commitment and information documents as required must be provided by filling in the forms published on the Programme website without any modifications, addition or erasing of content not previously authorized by MA.
2. Where required, signature must be referred to the signatory person. Additionally, the signature must be handwritten, original, unique and made by using wet marking ink. It is not a valid signature any sign that is printed or stamped. Electronic and stamp signature are not acceptable in any case even if they are allowed by national law.
3. Any notification made by the Managing Authority/JTS will be carried out **only by fax** at the fax-number indicated in the Declaration of Lead Applicant. The MA will keep appropriate records of notification to the Lead Applicants during the whole selection procedure and of the Lead Applicants fax number. Any variation of the fax number indicated in the Declaration of Lead Applicant must be notified immediately to the Managing Authority/Joint Technical Secretariat. The Managing Authority is not responsible if the fax number was wrongly indicated or not updated by the Lead Applicant and the communication cannot be reached to the receiver indicated as contact person in the Project Application Form. The reception of the fax by the addressee fax machine is the legal evidence that the fax communication was duly delivered to the contact person of the Lead Applicant.
4. The stamp of duty office of the Managing Authority and the reference number given to Application package is the only way to prove that the application had been received before the expiration term.
5. Lead Applicants are aware of that the delivering of Application package is on their own responsibility and the fact that the delivery carried out over the expiration term will be not accepted since it is not valid the date of sending as proved by any means. A failed delivery by force majeure or unforeseen incidents is on the own responsibility of Lead Applicants.
6. Personal data will be treated in compliance with the Programme privacy statement published on Programme web-site:
http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/LEGAL_FRAMEWORK/privacy/Privacy_statement.pdf
7. Without prejudice to any right of Final Beneficiaries, a complaint against the results of selection procedure or against the exclusion of partner may be settled in amicable way before the Managing Authority. For this purpose, the complainant shall communicate in writing the complaint and its grounds to the MA within 30 day from the date of receipt of notice of exclusion. The Managing Authority will reply within 20 calendar days from the delivery date of the complaint.
8. Proceedings may be started at the Regional Administrative Court of L'Aquila - Italy.

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9. Without any express reserve or refuse by the Lead Beneficiary regarding technical or commercial secrets or preservation of rights or any of its project partners, the Managing Authority is entitled to allow the complainant to have access to any information reported in the Project proposal, in compliance with Abruzzo Regional Law No. 1/2000 ruling the access to file. An unofficial English translation of this Statute is published on Programme website: [http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/LEGAL_FRAMEWORK/Procedures granting access/Abruzzo%20Region_Reg_1_2000_EN.pdf](http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/LEGAL_FRAMEWORK/Procedures_granting_access/Abruzzo%20Region_Reg_1_2000_EN.pdf)

§. 18. REFERENCE RULES

Before the submission of any project, pay attention to the following rules:

- o Council Regulation (EC) No. 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA Regulation) and following integrations and amendments;
- o Commission Regulation (EC) n. 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No. 1085/2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA Implementing Regulation) and following integrations and amendments;
- o IPA Adriatic CBC Operational Programme 2007-2013 last approved version amended with EC Decision C(2011) No. 3396 on 18.5.2011;
- o External aid rules for the award of service, supply and work contracts, established by the European Commission and indicated in the Chapter 3 of Part 2, Title IV of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No. 1605/2002 and Chapter 3 of Part 2, Title III of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No. 2342/2002, as well as Commission Decision C (2007) NO. 2034 of 24 May 2007.
- o Regulation (EC) No. 45/2001 as regarding the personal data processing;
- o Abruzzo Regional Law No 1/2000 as regarding the access to file of selection procedure;
- o Programme Management and Control Manual, published in the Programme website: [http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/Programme Management and Control Manual.pdf](http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/Programme_Management_and_Control_Manual.pdf)
- o IPA Subsidy Contract and its General Conditions, both of them are published in the Programme website: [http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/IMPLEMENTING DOCUMENTS/Subsidy Contract Pack .zip](http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/IMPLEMENTING_DOCUMENTS/Subsidy_Contract_Pack.zip)
- o Partnership Agreement, published in the Programme website: [http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/IMPLEMENTING DOCUMENTS/IPA Partnership Agreement Form.pdf](http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/IMPLEMENTING_DOCUMENTS/IPA_Partnership_Agreement_Form.pdf)
- o Financial guarantee, published in the Programme website: www.adriaticpacbc.org

§. 19. ANNEXES AND FORMS

Here are annexed the following documents:

Annex I: Priority II - Terms of reference for Strategic projects thematic issue: Improving marine, coastal and delta rivers environment by joint management in the Adriatic area

Annex II: Priority II - Terms of reference for Strategic projects thematic issue: Protection from ballast water pollution in the Adriatic area

Annex III: Priority II - Terms of reference for Strategic projects thematic issue: Integrated and sustainable management of drinking water resources in the Adriatic area

Annex IV: Priority II - Terms of reference for Strategic projects thematic issue: Protection and prevention of natural risks in the Adriatic area, with particular attention to fire risk

Annex V: Priority II - Terms of reference for Strategic projects thematic issue: Tourism with emphasis on sustainable management and marketing of natural and cultural resources in the Adriatic area

Annex VI: The Applicants' Manual

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The forms to apply under each step of the selection procedure are the following:

Forms for 1° Step:

1. Strategic project proposal for 1° step
2. Declaration of the Lead Applicant
3. Expression of interest

Forms for 2° Step:

1. Final Strategic Project proposal for 2° step
2. Expression of interest (only for a new partner that joined the proposal under the 2° step)
3. The "de minimis" Declaration
4. Final Beneficiary bank account information notice
5. Letter of Association
6. Project budget break-down
7. Project investment details

All forms are published in the Programme website: www.adriaticpacbc.org



Documento conforme all'originale
composto da n.13..... fogli
e n.25..... fasciate
L'Aquila, li31/07/12.....
IL DIRIGENTE

ES

ALLEGATO 3

IPA Adriatic Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2007 - 2013

Call for Strategic Project Proposals – Priority 3

ALLEGATO come parte Integrante alla det-
berazione n. 5.0.1. del 3 AGO. 2012

IL SEGRETARIO DELLA GIUNTA
(Dott. Walter Garlani)

Walter Garlani

**IPA Adriatic Cross-border
Cooperation Programme
2007-2013**

**CALL FOR
STRATEGIC PROJECT PROPOSALS
PRIORITY 3**

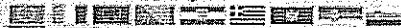
Published on 03 September 2012



Let's grow up together

Adriatic IPA

Cross Border Cooperation 2007-2013



Version approved by JMC on 27/07/2012



The Programme is co-funded by the European Union, Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)



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§. 1. INTRODUCTION

The Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) is the financial instrument established by the European Union (EC Regulation n. 1085/2006) to assist Candidate Countries and Potential Candidate Countries (beneficiary Countries) in their progressive alignment with the standards and policies of the European Union, including where appropriate the "*acquis communautaire*", with a view to membership.

Component II of this Instrument finances initiatives of cross-border cooperation among Member States and beneficiary Countries, in order to promote good and neighbouring relations, foster stability, security and prosperity in the mutual interest of all the Countries concerned, and to encourage their harmonious, balanced and sustainable development.

The Adriatic Basin is a very important cooperation area for the European Union, for all coastal Member (Greece, Italy and Slovenia) and non-Member States (Albania, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia), hereafter "Participating Countries", because of the close historical, geographical, cultural, social and economic linkages.

As stated in the Operational Programme, the general objective of the IPA Adriatic Cross-border Cooperation (CBC) Programme (hereafter, "Programme") is to *strengthen the sustainable development capacity of the Adriatic Region through an agreed strategy of actions among the partners of the eligible territories.*

Under this general objective, specific themes are identified by the Joint Monitoring Committee as being particularly important for all territories of the Programme space. This targeted call for proposals is launched aiming to elaborate "Strategic projects" corresponding to the mentioned themes.

Characteristics of Strategic projects

Strategic projects shall aim at producing a wide impact and optimising the effects of the Programme on the Adriatic basin. They must demonstrate their strategic dimension by presenting high standards regarding these important features:

a) Compliance with European, national and regional policies: strategic relevance

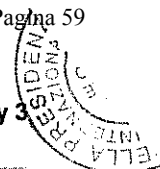
Strategic projects must deal with the problems and/or opportunities that reflect the real needs of the Programme area, are of common interest and have a high relevance to the entire or a large part of the Adriatic Sea area with its hinterland (the so called "sea-basin approach"). They must be developed in compliance with EU, national and regional policies of the Participating Countries where special attention is given to the EU Directives relating to the Adriatic sea-basin. The strategic projects must show how they will contribute to implement the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas; where it is possible an opening towards Community policies regarding "Europe 2020", as a new strategy, is recommended. Strategic projects should also ensure equal opportunities between men and women and to avoid all kinds of discrimination.

b) Capitalization

It is essential that Strategic projects are built on the basis of a thorough knowledge of local/national/European existing situation in the particular thematic area, that they take into account public policies as well as the experiences and results from past and running projects from different EU, national or sub-national funded Programmes implemented in the geographical area concerned. Where possible, strategic projects should be connected with existing initiatives and Programmes and forge links to other similar running projects in the Adriatic area in order to generate significant added value and gain synergies. Therefore, Strategic projects are advised to take into account results achieved and problems solutions solved by projects implemented during the 2000-2006 programming period, especially in the cooperation area of the Programme (ERDF, CARDS and Neighbourhood Programmes) and in the same "Strategic theme". Strategic projects partners are invited to also consider innovative projects implemented in other on-going Programmes that involve the eligible cooperation Programme area (Transnational ETC Programmes, ENPI CBC Mediterranean Programme, Cross border ETC and IPA CBC Programmes).

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**c) Significant and long-lasting impact on the cooperation area**

Strategic projects must have the widest geographical coverage possible involving partners from many Participating Countries and involve the most relevant partners able and committed to achieve the envisaged outputs and results.

Strategic projects should have a positive long-lasting impact in the cooperation area and with the possibility to extend their effects beyond project targeted area, beyond the actual contents of the project and beyond the lifetime of IPA funding and make a relevant contribution to the Programme specific objectives:

- a) to produce a leverage effect on financial resources to catalyse other private and/or public financing and human resources;
- b) to permit the consolidation and the stabilization of the partnership regarding the strategy development priorities of the territories;
- c) to create permanent cooperation opportunities;
- d) to bring about positive changes in stakeholders' behaviour.

e) Tangible and visible results

Results of Strategic projects have to produce concrete benefits, directly or indirectly to the whole or a large part of the Programme area through a wider dissemination (e.g. common methods, results of pilot projects made available to all partners, benchmarks, exchange of best practices, experiences of existing cooperation, etc.).

Strategic projects should aim for visible and tangible results and measurable outcomes. They shall not be limited only to produce information and analyses with a theoretical approach but they should be performed for the purpose of support or guidance towards concrete results of a project. Strategic project could also pave the way to future major investments.

Strategic projects must have tangible impact on actors and territories, fostering consolidation and stabilization of the partnership as to strategy development priorities in the territories and being transferable in other IPA regions.

f) Strong and coherent partnership

Strategic projects shall allow for the building of active high-quality partnerships around key actors who have competences in the Strategic themes, involving decision makers, thematic experts, specialised bodies and end-users. As a result, partnership should be diverse and complementary and should refer to a multi-level governance model as well as to a multi-dimensional governance system. Besides, strong cross-border cooperation must be ensured with harmonious, fair and balanced involvement of all partners.

There must be a strict relation between project objectives and the institutional, administrative and technical competences of partners. Partners must take a commitment among them for the achievement of expected results. Each project partner should have a clearly defined role in the project, described in the project work packages.

d) Sustainability of results

Strategic projects must ensure that the results achieved will be further sustained after the end of the project. Partners should be able to generate effects in the mid/long term, also by producing a lever effect on financial resources involving other private and/or public donors/investors. Moreover they should seek to reinforce local ownership of project benefits, introduce project practises and results in everyday practice and further strengthen the institutional framework of the project, by extending its footprint and involving a broad number of relevant stakeholders.

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§. 2. ELIGIBLE PROGRAMME STRATEGIC THEME<S>

This Call concerns Strategic projects referred to Priority 3 of the Programme: "Accessibility and Networks". It aims at strengthening and integrating existing infrastructure networks, promoting and developing transport, information and communication services. Fundamental role to the development and the revival of the Adriatic area is the development of the infrastructure and the promotion of transport, information and communication services.

A Strategic Project developed under Priority 3 shall refer to **ONLY ONE** of the following strategic themes:

- ✓ Improvement of integrated plans aimed at multi-modal solutions, especially links between coastal zones and hinterland in the Adriatic area, including improvement of port, airport systems and connected services.
- ✓ Promotion of common models on sustainable transport services to improve links in the Adriatic area including improvement of port, airport systems and connected services.

A Strategic Projects cannot refer to more than one of eligible Strategic Theme.

§. 3. GRANTS AVAILABLE

The Priority 3 budget foreseen for this Call for proposals is up to 33.000.000,00 EUR (thirty-three millions EUR), 28.050.000,00 EUR (85%) of which ensured by Community IPA funds and 4.950.000,00 EUR (15%) of which ensured by the national co-financing.

The number of projects financed will depend on the JMC final decision for allocation of funds available for this Call with the aim, where possible, to finance at least one project proposal for each Strategic Theme.

The Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) has the right not to grant any project under each Strategic Theme, if no project proposal under that Strategic Theme is eligible for funding, as well as, the Joint Monitoring Committee reserves the right to reduce or increase the funds for this Call having regard the available Programme financial resources when the final decision will be taken.

§. 4. PROJECT CONTENT

The content of Strategic projects must be referred to one of the Strategic themes eligible for this Call, otherwise the whole project will be **rejected**.

Strategic theme/s are outlined in detail in the specification here enclosed in Annex I and II, as integral parts of this Call. A project proposal has to be consistent with the specific objectives of the Strategic Theme concerned as defined in the Terms of Reference.

The financial size of the project should truly reflect the activities foreseen in the work plan. The projects should be managed in compliance with the principles of sound financial management. **The estimated project budget must be indicated in EUR**, also by partners established in Participating Countries having a different currency.

Cooperation among the project partners has to be clearly described in the Strategic Project Proposal and implemented involving all of the following modalities:

- ⊖ **Joint development**
- ⊖ **Joint implementation**
- ⊖ **Joint staffing**
- ⊖ **Joint financing**

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The meaning and the details of the list of matters, above mentioned, are given in Section 6.2.4 of the Applicants' Manual. Please, refer to that Section on description of the Strategic Project Proposal content.

Strategic projects should be performed in accordance with the partner's characteristics on the basis of the following criteria (*at least*):

1. Representativeness:
 - *Territorial coverage.*
 - *Capacity of developing activities that meet a general interest.*
 - *Capacity of target groups and stakeholders mobilization.*
 - *Capacity in achieving the outputs and results.*
2. Cross border dimension.
3. Capacity of awareness raising, spreading and capitapitization of achievements..
4. Capacity to promote sustainability, secure the continuation of project benefits after the completion of the project and maximize its impact.

The total project budget cannot be modified more than 20% of the budget previously defined, and specific objectives of project cannot be modified between the 1st and 2nd step of selection procedure.

Also, the name of the project proposal (title and acronym included) cannot be modified between the 1st and the 2nd step procedure, otherwise the project will be considered as a new proposal and will be not accepted in whole.

The "strategic partnership" should be identified already at the 1st step. Lead Applicants invited to the 2nd step procedure may, in duly justified circumstances, replace former Final Beneficiary under the condition that such replacing is taken within the same Participating Country originally involved or may add a new Final Beneficiary where an invitation from JMC has been received.

In any case an excluded project partner cannot be replaced with a new partner within the same step of the selection procedure, as well as, the Lead Applicant cannot be replaced with a new Lead outside from the case of legal succession and the matters pertaining thereto.

In order to be eligible, a Strategic Project must involve **at least 6 partners** representing **at least 6 Participating Countries** among Member States and IPA beneficiary Countries.

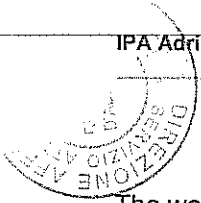
With the aim to optimize the project management, this Call recommends to involve not more than 18 partners for each Strategic project.

All **project partners** must have an active role in the project. Any of them cannot act as an agent or as a supplier of another project partner. In such cases the related expenditures will not be eligible.

According to Article 96 of EC Regulation n. 718/2007, the project partners must appoint a lead partner among themselves prior to the submission of the Strategic project proposal. The Lead partner/Lead Beneficiary shall assume the following responsibilities:

- ☉ it shall lay down the arrangements for its relations with the project partners in an agreement comprising, *inter alia*, provisions guaranteeing the sound financial management of the funds allocated to the project, including the arrangements for recovering amounts unduly paid;
- ☉ it shall be responsible for ensuring the implementation of the entire project;
- ☉ it shall be responsible for transferring the IPA contribution to the project partners;
- ☉ it shall ensure that the expenditure presented by the project partners has been paid for the purpose of implementing the project and corresponds to the activities agreed among the project partnership;
- ☉ it shall verify that the expenditure presented by the project partners has been validated by the controllers referred to in Article 108 of the EC Regulation n. 718/2007.

Final Strategic Projects should be well-structured with a work plan where objectives, action, activities, partners engaged and responsibilities, duration and results have to be clearly detailed and described. The work plan has to be structured in different **Work Packages (WPs)** as required by the Annexes I and II herein.



The work plan is then based on two categories of work packages:

- **Horizontal Work Packages** related to the management of the project, to communication and dissemination activities and to capitalization of results (Work Packages 0, 1, 2 and 3);
- **Technical Work Packages** focused on the concrete implementation of the activities of the project.

Work packages related to the management of the project, to communication and dissemination activities and to capitalization of results (Work Packages 1, 2 and 3) are **compulsory**, whilst the Technical Work Packages shall be developed by Applicants taking into consideration the compulsory and suggested activities listed in the Terms of Reference.

Each project proposal must clearly specify the concrete outputs and strategic results they aim to produce and the actions necessary to achieve them. More details are given in the Applicants' Manual.

In order to support the achievement of the objectives of the project, and in particular where the implementation of the project proposed by the project partners require financial support to be given to third parties, the project partners may propose awarding sub-grants.

Sub-granting is part of the type of actions that can be implemented in the framework of the Programme. However, sub-granting may not be the main purpose of the project and it must be duly justified.

In case where the project partners foresee to award sub-grants, it has to be specified in the project proposal (in the 1st step) which Final Beneficiaries intend to sub-grant a limited part of the Programme Contribution required, the list of type of activities to which sub-granting is addressed, the objectives and results to be obtained and the total amount of the grant.

In the preparation of final project proposal for 2nd step, where a sub-granting implementation modality will be foreseen the project partner shall strictly defined the conditions for sub-granting (specify the maximum amount per sub-grant and the criteria for determining the exact amount) in order to leave no room for discretion as well as the criteria for the selection of third parties (sub-beneficiaries) which must be carried out only by public calls.

The total amount that a Final Beneficiary can sub-grant to third parties is limited to € 100.000 with a maximum of € 10.000 per each third party.

A Strategic Project must have a **duration of at least 24 months** but in any case they must be **concluded by March 31st, 2016**, regardless of their duration, otherwise the proposal will be rejected

§. 5. PROJECT SIZE AND CO-FINANCING RATE

The total project budget for Strategic Projects must respect the following thresholds of value:

- **Minimum total Project budget:** 5.000.000,00 EUR.
- **Maximum total Project budget:** 12.500.000,00 EUR.

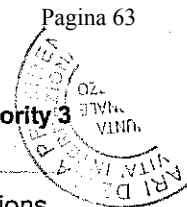
As **eligibility rule**, each Final Beneficiary budget cannot exceed 40% of the total project budget and must have a minimum total budget of 150.000 EUR..

Total project budget includes the Programme Contribution (IPA funds and national co-financing) and Final Beneficiary's own contribution, if the Beneficiary is acting in the project as undertaking.

The IPA co-financing rate covers up to 85% of the total Programme contribution while 15% of the total Programme contribution is guaranteed by the national co-financing by each Final Beneficiary, according to the system applied by each Participating Country.

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The national co-financing contribution does not include own additional and voluntary contributions, which are not part of the Programme contribution.

State aid can be granted to Final Beneficiaries (not to the Lead Beneficiaries) only under the "de minimis" rule. In such case, the maximum aid intensity is equal to 85% of the grant that would have been assigned if the Beneficiary was not acting in the project as an undertaking. Final Beneficiaries must declare if they are or not acting in the project by making undertaking activities by using the "de minimis" Declaration form published in the Programme website.

§. 6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR FINAL BENEFICIARIES

6.1. Eligibility criteria for project partner

As **eligibility rule**, each Final Beneficiary should be a:

- 1) **body or firm, whether public or private**, as follows:
 - A. Public bodies.** Legal entities established under public law.
 - B. Private organizations, governed by national private law.** They include:
 - a) non-enterprise organizations (for i.e., non-profit organizations, foundations, research centres and other similar institutions); and
 - b) small and medium sized enterprises¹.
 - C. Bodies governed by public law.** This is a conceptual category of entities established under private law but governed by public law if they meet all the criteria required under Article 1.9 of Directive 2004/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004.
Thereof, a '**body governed by public law**' means anybody:
 - a) established for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest², not having an industrial or commercial character;
 - b) having a legal personality; and
 - c) financed, for the most part, by the State, regional or local authorities, or other bodies governed by public law; or subject to management supervision by those bodies; or having an administrative, managerial or supervisory board, of which more than half members are appointed by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law.
- 2) **established in one of the Programme participating country** and
- 3) **with legal personality.**

Consultancy companies having both, in their business activities and within the project, as main scope the provision of project coordination, management, communication or knowledge management services (i.e.: activities to be implemented within the Work Package 0, 1, 2, 3, etc.) should not be involved as project partner.

An entity that applies as Lead partner or project partner which is part of an eligible legal person (as a Department, Faculty, Institute or a administrative functional unit with administrative, financial and/or contracting autonomy but without own legal personality) represents in the project proposal the institution in whole.

¹ A private organisation has to be considered an enterprise if it complies with the considerations of the whereas n. 3 of the Commission Recommendation (2003/361/EC) of 06/05/2003 (notified under document number C(2003) 1422). For more details, see § 5.1.1 "Partner legal status" of the Applicants' Manual.

² The meaning of the term is referred to the definition used in Annex 1 "Definition of Terms" of White Book of European Commission on Services of General Interests - COM(2004) 374 def. For more details, see § 5.1.1 "Partner legal status" of the Applicants' Manual.

International organizations³ are not eligible to apply as Final Beneficiaries but only as associated institutions as described in Section 6.2.

6.2. Associated institution

Any interested institution/legal entity can also be involved in the strategic project as observers with **associate** status without financially contributing to the project. As they are not Final Beneficiaries, associates do not have to respect the eligibility rules established by this Call.

6.3. Eligibility of Serbian partners

Serbia participates in the Programme with the whole territory under a *phasing out* condition: it means that Serbian Beneficiaries shall participate only in projects that involve institutional cooperation initiatives and their participation regards the following relevant areas:

1) Science and Research, Transport, Connectivity, Economic Regional Development, Governance and Public Administration.

The expenditures of Serbian Final Beneficiaries are eligible at the latest until 31st December 2015. Serbian SMEs are not eligible as Final Beneficiaries.

6.4. Grounds for exclusion of project partner

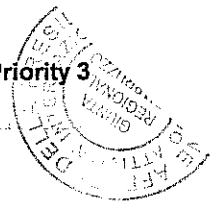
A project partner will be excluded from project partnership if it falls into at least one of the following situations:

- a. is bankrupt or being wound up, is having its affairs administered by the courts, has entered into agreement with creditors, has suspended business activities, is the subject of proceedings concerning the matters, or is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b. has been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgment which, in accordance with legal provisions of the State, has the force of *res judicata*;
- c. has been guilty of grave professional misconduct that the Managing Authority can verify by any means;
- d. has not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the Country in which it is established or the Country of the Managing Authority or the Country where the activities are to be performed;
- e. has been the subject of a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal association or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- f. has been declared, referring to other procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Community's budget, to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with its contractual obligations;
- g. it is currently subject to an administrative penalty for being in serious breach of its obligations under any subsidy contract covered by the EU budget or for being guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the Managing Authority as a condition to receive the grant or fails to supply this information.

³ The term is based on the definition given under Article 43.2 of Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No. 2342/2002. For more details, see § 5.1.1 "Partner legal status" of the Applicants' Manual.

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The cases referred to in point (e) applicable are the following:

1. cases of fraud as referred to in Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995⁴;
2. cases of corruption as referred to in Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of Member States of the European Union, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 May 1997⁵;
3. cases of participation in a criminal organization, as defined in Article 2(1) of Joint Action 98/733/JHA of the Council⁶;
4. cases of money laundering as defined in Article 1 of Council Directive 91/308/EEC⁷.

The exclusion criteria are also related to the natural person who acts as a representative, including presidents, directors, managers or any person with powers of representation in relation to the project partner.

A project partner will be excluded also if during the project selection procedure:

- o a conflict of interests will be detected towards a member of Joint Monitoring Committee or an expert assessor involved in the assessment procedure;
- o any person related to the project partner's organization has attempted to obtain confidential information or influence any member of Joint Monitoring Committee or any expert assessor involved in the assessment procedure;
- o it is guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the Managing Authority or by the Joint Technical Secretariat in order to obtain an unfair admission to the Call.

Also, a project partner will be not admitted to when it has not provided the:

1. Expression of Interest (not for Lead Applicants);
2. "de minimis" Declaration (not for Lead Applicants);
3. Declaration of the Lead Applicant (only for Lead Applicants).

6.5. Lead Beneficiary eligibility criteria

Only public bodies and bodies governed by public law should assume the role of Lead Beneficiary in the Strategic projects admitted to this Call.

Lead Beneficiary cannot be eligible for grants if it falls under the "de minimis" regime as ruled in the Section 5 of this Call.

If a body is involved in more than one Strategic Project Proposal in the same Call for Strategic Projects Proposals, as a Lead Applicant, the following Strategic Projects Proposals submitted will be considered not admissible and therefore they will be rejected.

Where a Lead Applicant is not eligible or admissible to this Call, the whole Application will be rejected.

⁴ OJ C 316, 27.11.1995, p.48.

⁵ OJ C 195, 25.6.1997, p.1.

⁶ OJ L 351, 29.12.1998, p.1. Joint Action of 21 December 1998 making it a criminal offence to participate in a criminal organisation in the Member States of the European Union.

⁷ OJ L 166, 28.6.1991, p. 77. Directive of 10 June 1991, as amended by Directive 2001/97/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 December 2001 (OJ L 344, 28.12.2001, p.76).

§. 7. PROGRAMME ELIGIBLE AREA AND LOCATION OF ACTIVITIES

The Programme eligible area consists of the NUTS 3 territories of the participating EU Member States (Greece, Italy, Slovenia) and the equivalent level territories of the participating Candidate Countries (Montenegro), Acceding Country (Croatia) and of the Potential Candidate Countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina) on the Adriatic Sea. Serbia participates in the Programme with the whole territory.

According to the Article 97 of IPA Implementing Regulation, the Programme admits derogation to the territorial eligibility rule for adjacent areas to eligible territories, up to the limit of 20% of the amount of the Community contribution to the Programme. However, this does not mean that a fixed share of 20% of the Programme budget is reserved for partners from these areas. The cross border added value of participation of partners from these areas will be assessed on project basis. In case this limit is reached, the JMC will not finance, totally or partly, expenditures incurred in territorial derogation areas.

The detailed list of the eligible territories (*with the territorial derogations*) is the following:

- **Greece:** Kerkyra and Thesprotia.
- **Italy:** Gorizia, Trieste, Udine, Padova, Rovigo, Venezia, Ferrara, Forlì-Cesena, Ravenna, Rimini, Ancona, Ascoli Piceno, Fermo, Macerata, Pesaro-Urbino, Chieti, Pescara, Teramo, Campobasso, Bari, Brindisi, Foggia, Barletta-Andria-Trani and Lecce. *Territorial derogation: L'Aquila, Pordenone, Isernia, and Taranto.*
- **Slovenia:** Obalno-kraška regija. *Territorial derogation: Goriška regija and Notranjsko-kraška regija.*
- **Croatia:** Dubrovnik-Neretva, Istra; Lika-Senj; Primorje-Gorski kotar; Šibenik-Knin; Split-Dalmatia, and Zadar. *Territorial derogation: Karlovac County.*
- **Albania:** Fier, Durrës, Lezhë, Shkodër, Tiranë, and Vlorë.
- **Bosnia and Herzegovina:** Bileća, Čapljina, Čitluk, Gacko, Grude, Jablanica, Konjic, Kupres, Livno, Ljubinje, Ljubuški, Mostar, Neum, Nevesinje, Posušje, Prozor/Rama, Ravno, Široki Brijeg, Stolac, Berkovići, Tomislavgrad, Trebinje, and Istočni Mostar. *Territorial derogation: Sarajevo Region, North-West Region and Central Region.*
- **Montenegro:** Bar, Budva, Cetinje, Danilovgrad, Herceg Novi, Kotor, Nikšić, Podgorica, Ulcinj and Tivat. *Territorial derogation: Pljevlja, Bijelo Polje, Berane, Rožaje, Plav, Andrijevica, Kolašin, Mojkovac, Šavnik, Žabljak, and Plužine.*
- **Serbia:** whole territory (under *phasing out* condition).

As general principle, the operation must be implemented in the Programme eligible area above described.

Project partners with their registered office located outside the Programme eligible area, can participate with a regional/local branch office located in the Programme eligible area.

The term "branch" office means any "fixed establishment", which, according to Reg. (EC) No 282/2011, is other than the registered office, "characterized by a sufficient degree of permanence and a suitable structure in terms of human and technical resources to enable it to receive and use the services supplied to it for its own needs".

Where the beneficiary is located outside the Programme eligible area but participate with a regional/local branch office located in the Programme eligible area, it must explain its role in the Programme area and where it operates in the eligible area with a branch office. Therefore, it has to provide the following proofs:

- at least one year of operation of the local organisational unit in the Programme area must be justified with administrative or accounting documentation; **and**
- the leader of the branch office must be an authorised representative of the final beneficiary, entitled to act for the implementation of the project activities.

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§. 8. ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURE

As general rule, expenditures are eligible for Final Beneficiaries from Greece, Italy and Slovenia if incurred on or after the 1st January 2007, and for Beneficiaries from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia if incurred from the date of the signature of Financing Agreements⁸ between each of these Countries and the European Commission. These dates are specified in the section 5.2. "Period of eligibility of expenditures" of Programme Management and Control Manual as a reference document of this Call.

Costs in the project budget sheets must be foreseen in Euro currency and are considered eligible for reimbursement by the Programme when they are incurred in compliance with the rules set out in Chapters 4 "Compliance with EU Policies and other rules" and 5 "Project expenditure and applicable rules" of the Programme Management and Control Manual.

Shared costs are not eligible for this Call.

Expenditures are considered to be **incurred in the place where the Final Beneficiary has its registered office or, if the Call rules for the branch office are respected, where it has located its branch office**. For meeting/event and expenditure in tangible assets, the location of the meeting/event and of the tangible asset will be taken into consideration.

At project level, in exceptional cases, expenditures incurred outside the Programme area as defined above, may be eligible provided that both following conditions are respected:

1. the project could only achieve its objectives with that expenditures (art. 97.1 second subparagraph of Reg. (EC) 718/2007 as amended by Reg. (EC) 80/2010) **and**
2. the expenditures have been previously authorized in compliance with art. 97.2 of Reg. (EC) 718/2007.

This can be the case of National and regional public authorities or bodies governed by public law which are located outside the eligible area, and have neither a branch office in it, but which can be necessary for the achievements of the project objectives due to their competences in the area, or their particular tasks/experience.

§. 9. RESPONSIBLE OF SELECTION PROCEDURES MANAGEMENT

According to the IPA Adriatic Cross-border Cooperation Operational Programme, the responsible for the procedures management of this Call is the Abruzzo Region of the Italian Republic, "*Direzione Affari della Presidenza, Politiche Legislative e Comunitarie Programmazione, Parchi, Territorio, Valutazioni ambientali, Energia - Servizio Attività Internazionali*" and its representative in charge as Managing Authority.

§. 10. SELECTION PROCEDURES

In compliance with the Section 4.7 of the IPA Adriatic CBC Programme and with Section 4.1.2.1 of its Implementation Manual, a two-step selection procedure is applied for the selection of Strategic Projects. Under the first step, a targeted open call allows all potential eligible Final Beneficiaries to apply to this Call by submitting a Strategic Project Proposal. Only the Projects that have been selected at the end of the first step procedure, will be invited to submit the Final Strategic Project Proposal under the second step selection procedure.

⁸ According to the term regarding the "ENTRY INTO FORCE", these Agreements have entered into force on the date of signature. Where the Parties have signed on different dates, the Agreement was entered into force on the date of signature by the second of the two Parties.

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In compliance with article 110.5.f) of the IPA Implementing Regulation, the JMC is responsible for selecting operations, previously admitted to the quality assessment phase, while the Managing Authority is responsible for whole application formal checks.

The Managing Authority/JTS may ask to the Lead Applicant to provide **additional information, documents or to clarify the supporting documents** submitted in connection with the single step procedure, in particular in the case of obvious clerical errors. If necessary to better achieve the formal checks, the MA/JTS could require, also to the Programme National Authorities/Coordinator, to provide documents that might integrate the evidential documents provided by the Final Beneficiaries.

The Managing Authority/JTS will notify the requirement to the Lead Applicant **only by fax**. The same documents and information will not be required to be provided more than once during the whole selection procedure. The MA will keep appropriate records of contacts with Lead Applicants during the whole selection procedure. Lead Applicant must provide the information, clarification or document within the expiration term as required.

The **formal admissibility checks** under both the two step procedures will be based on the criteria set in **Section 13** of this Call.

The **quality assessment** of project proposals for each step of the selection procedure will be based on the specific assessment criteria set in **Section 14**.

Proposals not fulfilling all the formal admissibility requirements will be rejected and will not be admitted to the quality assessment under the concerned step of the procedure (1st or 2nd Step). Lead Applicants will be informed about the reasons of rejection at the end of the formal assessment phase.

The maximum score for quality assessment under the **1° Step of the selection procedure is 75 points**, resulting from the sum of the points assigned to each section of the evaluation grid. A project proposal will not be eligible to be invited to the 2° Step procedure if it achieves a score lower than 70% of the maximum score.

At the end of the 1° Step of the selection procedure, the JMC elaborates and approves a single ranking list of all the project proposals eligible to be invited to the 2° Step procedure.

The first 5 projects for each Strategic theme of the ranking list with the highest scores will be invited to the 2° Step of the selection procedure.

In case two or more projects have the same scores, priority will be given to projects that achieve the higher score under the Section C "Quality of the proposal partnership" of the evaluation grid. In case of further equality, the priority will be given to projects with the higher score under the other Sections of the evaluation grid, taking into account the following order of precedence: Section A "Consistency with the Programme strategy"; Section B "Cross border character of the intervention"; Section D "Quality of the intervention and value for money".

Lead Applicants invited to the 2° Step procedure may be required by the JMC to improve the proposal as to add or replace project partner/s in order to better pursue the project's objectives.

The maximum score for quality assessment under the **2° Step of the selection procedure is 100** resulting from the sum of the points assigned to each section of the evaluation grid.

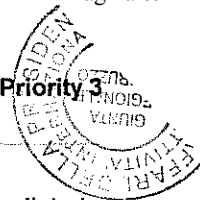
A project proposal will not be eligible for funding if:

- a) it achieves a score lower than 80 points; or
- b) it does not achieve at least half of the points foreseen in each section of the evaluation grid.

In case where two or more projects have the same scores (in the 2nd step), priority will be given to projects that achieve the higher score under the Section D "Quality of the intervention" of the evaluation grid. In case of further equality, the priority will be given to projects with the higher score under the other Sections of the evaluation grid, taking into account the following order of precedence: Section C "Financial and management capacity; Section A "Consistency with the Programme strategy"; Section B "Cross border character of the intervention"; Section E "Budget of the project".

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Once the quality assessment of the 2nd Step has been performed, Strategic projects, will be listed under each Strategic Theme in a final ranking list approved by the JMC. According to this list, one Strategic projects (where possible, per Theme), with the highest score, may be financed. After that, if there is still unallocated funds of this Call, the next project(s) from any Theme under the same Programme Priority with highest score among all the Strategic Theme of this Call may be financed.

Projects will be financed if all the conditions set out by law and by the JMC (if any) have been complied with.

At the end of the whole procedure, the MA adopts an administrative act regarding the JMC decision and the closure of the step selection procedure by reporting the quality assessments and the motivation of rejection of projects.

The titles and acronyms of projects financed, the list of the involved Final Beneficiaries and the amount of Community funding allocated to the projects will be published in the Programme website according to the Article 62 of the Regulation (EC) n. 718/2008. Lead Applicants whose projects have been rejected and Lead Applicants whose projects have been financed will receive a notice from the MA with the results of the selection procedure to the fax number indicated in the Declaration of the Applicant or to the following fax number timely and duly indicated by the Lead Applicant.

§. 11. APPLICATION TERMS FOR THE FIRST STEP PROCEDURE

The project proposal must be in **English** in all its parts. National language may be used where it is allowed within the forms required by this Call. The supporting documents related to the Lead Applicant may be provided in national language.

The Application package for the first step procedure has to contain the following elements:

- a) Strategic project proposal filled in all its parts.
- b) Commitment documents of each Final Beneficiary.
- c) Supporting documents of the Lead Applicant (only in case it is a body governed by public law).

Lead Partner as Lead Applicant is the body allowed to submit the Application package:

A) Strategic project proposal. It must be filled in the appropriate form published in the Programme website and provided in a paper and electronic version. Only the paper version is the original. The electronic version has to be provided in CD-Rom or DVD or in any other appropriate technical support. As a rule of admissibility of the project proposal, the Lead Applicant has to sign in original each page of the paper version and bound together all the sheets in one single document.

B) Commitment documents:

- 1. Declaration of the Lead Applicant.** The Lead Applicant must declare its legal status and that it doesn't fall in one of the situations for grants' exclusion as referred in above section 6.4, by using the appropriate form. Original copy must be provided.
- 2. Expression of interest.** Each potential project partner must declare its legal status and that it doesn't fall in one of the situations for grants' exclusion as referred in above section 6.4, by using the appropriate form. Original copy must be provided.

C) Supporting documents. Lead Applicants which are bodies governed by public law must prove their legal status with the following documents:

- o certification of the legal personality status;
- o statute and
- o balance sheet for the most recent year that accounts are closed. Final Beneficiaries which, according to their national law, do not need to establish balance sheet should provide the closest equivalent, e.g. a statement of income and expenditures. Newly founded organisations, which do

not yet have balance sheets and profit and loss account available, should attach their business plan.

The supporting documents provided have to be marked as "certified copy" by any authorized person, as a self-declaration. In this case, a photocopy of the identification document of the declaring person needs to be annexed to the certified copies.

In order to check out that the project partner meets all the criteria required under Article 1.9 of Directive 2004/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004, the MA may require to provide clarification which could be supported by the project partner with appropriate documents.

A photocopy of the identification document of the signatory person needs to be included to the Strategic Project Proposals Application Pack.

Where Lead Applicants have already provided to the Managing Authority the required documents during any prior selection procedure for grants, they could be exempted to submit the same documents, provided that no modification occurred and that they point out when they have been provided.

The Application package for the first step procedure must be received by the Managing Authority at latest on **02/11/2012** (2nd November 2012) **by 14:00 Rome time** (UTC/GMT+1 hour).

In order to ensure transparency of the selection procedure and equal treatment towards to all Lead Applicants, the Application package has to be sent by express courier, only once and all documents must be included within a duly sealed envelope, which must be addressed and marked as follows:

Regione Abruzzo – Servizio Attività Internazionali
Autorità di Gestione - IPA Adriatic CBC Programme
Via Salaria Antica Est, n. 27
I-67100, L'Aquila - ITALY

"Strategic Project Call for Proposals - Priority <1/2/3> - <acronym of the project proposal> - Do not open"

§. 12. APPLICATION TERMS FOR THE SECOND STEP PROCEDURE

Only Lead Applicants selected for the second step procedure will be invited by the MA to submit the final Application package.

The final project proposal must be in **English** in all its parts. National language may be used where it is allowed within the forms required by this Call. The supporting documents of Final Beneficiaries may be provided in national language.

The final Application package for second step procedure includes the following documents:

A) Final strategic project proposal. It must be filled in the appropriate form published in the Programme website and provided in a paper and electronic version. Only the paper version is the original. The electronic version has to be provided in CD-Rom or DVD or in any other appropriate technical support. As a rule of admissibility of the project proposal, the Lead Applicant has to sign in original each page of the paper version and bound together all the sheets in one single object.

B) Commitment documents:

1. Expression of interest. Only new potential project partner that joined the project proposal under the 2nd step of selection procedure must provide this document where it declares its legal status and

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that it doesn't fall in one of the situations for grants' exclusion as referred in above section 6.4, by using the appropriate form. Original copy must be provided.

2. The "de minimis" Declaration. All project partners (Lead Applicant excluded) have to provide their own declaration by using the form provided by the Programme for this Call and signed by the legal or duly authorized representative. Original copy must be provided.

3. Final Beneficiary bank account identification notice. Each Final Beneficiary has to provide this notice by using the form provided by the Programme for this Call.

4. Letter of Association. Where project foresees this kind of bodies, a commitment document should be issued by associates by using the appropriate form. Original copy must be provided.

C) Information documents:

1. Project budget breakdown has to be provided by using only the form provided by the Programme for this Call.

2. Project investment details has to be provided by using only the form provided by the Programme for this Call and if the Strategic project proposed foresees investments.

Both these two forms have to be provided both in paper copy and in electronic version. The electronic version, in Excel format, can be provided by any electronic means (CD-Rom, DVD, USB pen-drive, etc) and it must be identical to the printed one; in case of differences, the paper copy prevails.

D) Supporting documents. Each Final Beneficiary (Lead Applicant and public bodies excluded) has to provide copies of the following documents:

- o certification of the legal personality status;
- o statute and
- o balance sheet for the most recent year that accounts are closed. Final Beneficiaries which, according to their national law, do not need to establish balance sheet should provide the closest equivalent, e.g. a statement of income and expenditures. Newly founded organisations, which do not yet have balance sheets and profit and loss account available, should attach their business plan.

The supporting documents provided have to be marked as "certified copy" by any authorized person, as a self-declaration. In this case, a photocopy of the identification document of the declarant needs to be annexed to the certified copies. Where Final Beneficiaries have already provided to the Managing Authority the required supporting documents during any prior selection procedure for grants, they could be exempted to submit the same documents, provided that no modification occurred and that they point out when they have been provided.

In case of Final Beneficiaries located outside the Programme eligible area, but with a branch office in the eligible area, this kind of Beneficiaries have to provide legal documents (administrative or accounting documentation) proving the existence of the local organisational unit in the Programme area as required in § 7 of the Call.

A photocopy of the identification document of the signatory person needs to be included to the Final Strategic Project Proposals Application Pack.

Where Final Beneficiaries have already provided to the Managing Authority the required documents during any prior selection procedure for grants, they could be exempted to submit the same documents, provided that no modification occurred and that they point out when they have been provided.

The Application package must be received by the Managing Authority at latest on the sixtieth day from when the letter of invitation to apply to the second step procedure was sent by fax. The delivery must be carried out by 17:00 Rome time (UTC/GMT+1 hour) of the expiration date.

In order to ensure transparency of the selection procedure and equal treatment towards to all Lead Applicants, the Application package has to be sent by express courier, only once and all documents must be included within a duly sealed envelope, which must be addressed and marked as follows:

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Regione Abruzzo – Servizio Attività Internazionali
Autorità di Gestione - IPA Adriatic CBC Programme
Via Salaria Antica Est, n. 27
I-67100, L'Aquila - ITALY

"Strategic Project Call for Proposals - Priority <1/2/3> - <acronym of the project proposal> - Do not open"

§. 13. GROUNDS FOR REJECTION

13.1. Grounds for Application rejection

Projects submitted under the 1° Step procedure will be checked against a set of formal eligibility and admissibility criteria. The whole Application will be rejected when at least one of the following conditions had been detected:

List of admissibility criteria under the 1 st step procedure	§§ of the Call
A) The Application package has not been submitted in all its parts in due time according to the deadline set in the Call for proposals	§ 11
B) The Application package has not been sent to the required address, in a duly sealed envelope and with the appropriate marking	§ 11
C) Lead Applicant had used a project proposal Form different than the Strategic project proposal form provided by the Programme for this Call	§ 11
D) The project proposal (paper version) was not duly signed on each page by the Lead Applicant representative and all pages of this proposal was not bind in a single document	§ 11
E) The Declaration of the Lead Applicant has not been provided in the due form or it has not been duly signed in handwriting by the legal or authorized representative.	§ 11
F) The project proposal is not written in English language in all its parts and sections as required	§ 11
G) The project proposal clearly does not clearly indicate the eligible Strategic Theme to which it is referred	§ 2
H) The project closure is foreseen beyond 31 March 2016	§ 4
I) The minimum partnership (including the minimum participating countries represented) rule established for a project proposal has not been complied with	§ 4
J) The Lead Applicant is not eligible because: 1. its legal status doesn't comply with the requirements of this Call; 2. It will carry out undertakings activities in the project; 3. It falls under one of grounds for exclusion set by Section 6.4 of the Call. 4. It had already submitted, as Lead Applicant, another project proposal under the same Call for Strategic Projects Proposals	§ 6
K) The Lead Applicant didn't provide the supplementary information, documents or clarification within the expiration term as required	§ 10

Projects submitted under the 2° Step procedure will be checked against a set of formal eligibility and admissibility criteria. The whole Application will be rejected when at least one of the following conditions had been detected:

List of admissibility criteria under the 2 nd step procedure	§§ of the Call
A) The Application package has not been submitted in all its parts in due time according to the deadline set in the invitation letter	§ 12
B) The Application package has not been sent to the required address, in a duly sealed envelope and with the appropriate marking	§ 12
C) Lead Applicant had used a Form different than the Final Strategic project proposal form provided by the Programme for this Call	§ 12
D) The Final Strategic project proposal (paper version) was not duly signed on each page by the Lead Applicant representative and all pages of this proposal was not bind in a	§ 12

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single document	
E) The Final Strategic project proposal is not written in English language in all its parts and sections as required	§ 12
F) The minimum partnership (including the minimum participating countries represented) rule established for a project proposal has not been complied with	§ 4
G) The Programme grants foreseen for the Final Strategic project proposal or the contribution required for each project partner does not comply with the thresholds set out by this Call	§ 5
H) The Lead Applicant had been changed between the 1 st and the 2 nd step, as well as, other obligatory part/s of the Final Strategic Project proposal has/have been modified in contrast with the rules set out by the Call.	§ 4
I) The Lead Applicant didn't provide the supplementary information, documents or clarification within the expiration term as required	§ 10
J) The Final Strategic project closure is foreseen beyond 31 March 2016	§ 4

13.2. Grounds for Final Beneficiary rejection

A Final Beneficiary (which means a partner of a Strategic Project) will be assessed (only one time) against a set of formal eligibility and admissibility criteria following the rules set hereto (this paragraph not regards the eligibility and admissibility assessment of the Lead Applicant).

- 1) It is not eligible to join the Strategic Project Proposal if:
 - a) It is not a legal person;
 - b) It is not a body with nationality from one of Programme Participating Country;
 - c) It is a firm but not a SME (micro enterprise included);
 - d) It is a Serbian enterprise (SME);
 - e) It falls in one of situations listed under Section 6.4 above;
- 2) It is not admitted to join the Strategic Project Proposal if:
 - a) It filled in wrongly the Expression of Interest: title or project acronym, body name;
 - b) It didn't sign the Expression of Interest in handwriting;
 - c) The Expression of Interest was signed by an unauthorized person;
 - d) The Expression of Interest has been modified from the form provided by the Programme;
 - e) It filled in wrongly the "de minimis" Declaration: title or project acronym, body name;
 - f) It didn't sign the "de minimis" Declaration in handwriting;
 - g) The "de minimis" Declaration was signed by an unauthorized person;
 - h) The "de minimis" Declaration has been modified from the form provided by the Programme.

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§ 14. QUALITY ASSESSMENT GRIDS

Projects submitted under the 1° Step procedure will be assessed against a set of quality assessment criteria⁹ as follows:

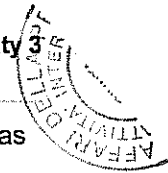
Sections/ criteria n.	Quality assessment criteria under the 1° step of the selection procedure	Max value
A	Strategic relevance (max 15)	15
a.1	Does the project contribute to achieving general and specific objectives of the concerned Strategic theme in the Programme area?	5
a.2	Is the project in compliance with the relevant EU policies and horizontal issues?	5
a.3	Are the project objectives coherent with the national and sub-national policies of the territories participating in the project?	5
B	Cross-border character of the intervention	10
b.1	How many Adriatic Countries are present in the project? (6 Countries: 0 points; 7 Countries: 3 points; 8 Countries: 5)	5
b.2	Does the project have a positive and long-lasting impact on the whole Programme area?	5
C	Quality of the proposed partnership	25
c.1	Does the Lead Beneficiary have experience in cross-border or other international project management and sufficient capacities to ensure the good functioning of the project and coordination of a cross-border partnership?	5
c.2	Is the partnership able to disclose results and impacts in the whole Programme area?	5
c.3	Does the partnership have competence in relation to the Strategic Theme concerned and the capacity to propose, set up and implement policies and strategies for the territories addressed?	5
c.4	Does the partnership have capacity of target groups and stakeholders mobilization and of awareness raising and spreading of achievements in the territories, participating in the project?	5
c.5	Is the partnership harmonious, well balanced and complementary in terms of representativeness, competences and active involvement in the project activities per Country regarding the Strategic Theme concerned?	5
D	Quality of intervention and value for money	25
d.1	Does the project contribute to the achievement of the Strategic theme objectives through achievable actions?	5
d.2	Are the activities clear, realistic and appropriate to achieve the objectives of the Strategic Theme?	5
d.3	Does the project foresee during its life-time concrete actions to ensure sustainability of its results after the Programme Contribution funding ends?	5
d.4	Does the project represent a capitalization of previous experiences in different Programmes?	5
d.5	Is the budget rationally distributed among partners according to the role assigned to each of them?	5
	Total score	75

⁹ The sub-questions to all the quality assessment criteria will be annexed to the Applicants' Manual

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Projects submitted under the 2° Step procedure will be assessed against a set of quality criteria as follows:



Sections/ criteria n.	Assessment criteria under the 2 nd step of the selection procedure	Max value
A	Consistency with the Programme Strategy	20
a.1	Does the project contribute to achieving general and specific objectives of the concerned Strategic theme in the Programme area?	6
a.2	Is the project in compliance with the relevant EU policies and the horizontal issues of the Programme and with the relevant EU rules (regulations, directives, etc.)?	4
a.3	Is the project coherent with the national policies of the Countries participating in the operation?	4
a.4	Is the project coherent with the sub-national public policies relevant for the involved territories?	6
B	Cross-border character of the intervention	17
b.1	How many Adriatic Countries are present in the project? (6 Countries: 0 points; 7 Countries: 3 points; 8 Countries: 5)	5
b.2	Are all compulsory activities fully implemented in all Countries, participating in the project?	6
b.3	To what extent does the proposal ensure that projects are jointly developed, jointly implemented, jointly financed and that it has joint staffing?	6
C	Quality of the proposed partnership	25
c.1	Does the Lead Beneficiary have experience in cross-border or other international project management and sufficient capacities to ensure the good functioning of the project and coordination of a cross-border partnership?	5
c.2	Is the partnership able to disclose results and impacts in the whole Programme area?	5
c.3	Does the partnership have competence in relation to the Strategic Theme concerned and the capacity to propose, set up and implement policies and strategies for the territories addressed?	5
c.4	Does the partnership have capacity of target groups and stakeholders mobilization and of awareness raising and spreading of achievements in the territories, participating in the project?	5
c.5	Is the partnership harmonious, well balanced and complementary in terms of representativeness, competences and active involvement in the project activities per Country regarding the Strategic Theme concerned?	5
D	Quality of intervention	25
d.1	Are the activities, the work plan and the timetable clear, realistic and appropriate to achieve the expected results and the objectives of the project?	9
d.2	Are tasks, activities and results clearly and appropriately distributed among the Beneficiaries according to their territorial and institutional competences?	6
d.3	Is the project added value clearly identifiable in relation to the specific problems the project is addressed to?	3
d.4	Does the project establish an organized and operational management system, able to ensure the adequate coordination of the partnership, the monitoring and evaluation of the activities progress, and the communication and publicity of the operation?	3
d.5	Do the project activities and results have the concrete and realistic possibility to have a follow up after the end of the Programme contribution?	4
E	Budget of the project	13
e.1	Does the project budget represent value for money?	7

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106.2	Are the estimated expenditures rationally quantified for the full and satisfactory implementation of the foreseen activities?	6
Total score		100

§. 15. CONTRACT SIGNATURE AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION RULES

Lead Applicants of projects selected for funding will be required to sign the IPA Subsidy Contract in three copies and to provide an original copy of the Partnership Agreement signed by all the involved Final Beneficiaries. Both the IPA Subsidy Contract and the Partnership Agreement are based on the forms published in the Programme website.

The Lead Applicant must send to the Managing Authority the contracting documents as required by this Authority with the funding allocation letter (FAL). These documents must be sent within and not later than 45 days from the receipt of the FAL. This is a mandatory term and its expiration, outside from objective causes that have prevented the parties to sign or to provide timely the documents above mentioned or from authorized cases¹⁰, will cause the loss of grants to whole project.

The Managing Authority will sign the IPA Subsidy Contract after receiving the three copies already signed by the Lead Beneficiary.

The IPA Subsidy Contract will determine the rights and responsibilities of the Lead Beneficiary and the Managing Authority, the reference to the activities to be carried out, terms of funding, requirements for reporting and financial controls, etc. A copy of the General Conditions and Forms of the IPA Subsidy Contract and of the Partnership Agreement are published in the Programme website: www.adriaticpacbc.org.

If in case of an approved project, a partner, due to particular situation, decides to drop out the partnership or it cannot be granted since it didn't provide the missed documents properly required, the project shall be subject to a new quality assessment. This fact does not prevent to finance already selected projects.

A Final Beneficiary cannot be granted if it miss to provide the following documents to the Managing Authority before the MA signature of IPA Subsidy Contract:

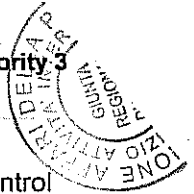
- a) It didn't provide the power of attorney of signatory person in compliance with Statute rule or national law quoted in its commitment documents;
- b) It didn't provide a photocopy of identification document of who sign (legal representative or delegated person) the commitment documents;
- c) It didn't provide the supporting documents as required in the Call;
- d) It didn't provide the Final Beneficiary Bank Account Identification Notice as required in the Call;
- e) It didn't provide the fulfilled form required to access to MIS (the Programme Management Information System).

In case of financing to Final Beneficiary with a grant exceeding € 500.000, in accordance with Article 173(4) of the rules implementing the Financial Regulation (Commission Regulation (EC, EURATOM) No 2342/2002), an audit report produced by an approved external auditor must be submitted by the related Beneficiary. That report must certify the accounts for the last two financial years available. No financial audit shall be required to any public body.

¹⁰ It is recommended to submit the relevant construction permits no later than 6 months after signing the IPA Subsidy Contract.

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The contracting and implementing rules are described in the Programme Management and Control Manual as here referred.

The Managing Authority will assign an advance payment to the Lead Beneficiary up to 20% of Community contribution allocated to the project in compliance with the contract provisions. The advance payment is granted to Lead Beneficiaries under the condition that the Managing Authority will recognize it where no financial risk has been detected towards any of the project partners. Where required, an appropriate financial guarantee may be required to the Final Beneficiary involved. Public bodies do not provide any financial guarantee.

In compliance with article 17.3 of General Conditions of the IPA Subsidy Contract, as referred in § 17, the Programme contribution to projects will be reduced if at the end of the 1st year of project implementation, the expenditure is below 30% of the total project budget foreseen and updated at the date of project's start.

In compliance with art. 3.2 of General Conditions of the IPA Subsidy Contract, as referred in § 17, the preparatory expenditures (WPO) must be reported within the 31/10 of the same year when the IPA Subsidy Contract had been signed by the contracting parties, otherwise it cannot be reported anymore and the relative grants will be lose.

According to Article 121 of EC Regulation n.718/2007, as amended by the EC Regulation n. 80/2010, for the award of service, supply and work contracts, all Beneficiaries (public and private) of the approved and funded projects must apply the procurement procedures for the "External aid rules" established in Chapter 3 of Part 2, Title IV of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 and Chapter 3 of Part 2, Title III of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002, as well as Commission Decision C (2007) 2034 of 24 May 2007 on the rules and procedures applicable to service, supply and work contracts financed by the general budget of the European Communities for the purposes of cooperation with third countries. Guidelines for using these procedures are available on the Programme website
http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/index.asp?page=interna&level=implementation_documents.

§. 16. FURTHER INFORMATION

This Call, its annexes and any clarifications and information regarding the Call and the further selection procedure will be available on the Programme website: www.adriaticpacbc.org.

For any request please contact the Joint Technical Secretariat at the following addresses:

**Joint Technical Secretariat – IPA Adriatic CBC Programme – c/o Regione Abruzzo Servizio
 Attività Internazionali - Via Salaria Antica Est, n. 27 - 67100 L'Aquila – Italy
 E-mail address: info@adriaticpacbc.org
 Fax address: +39 0862 22520**

Additional information on project generation may be obtained from national info points, established in participating countries. The addresses are available on the Programme website.

In the Programme website the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) are available giving information on general issues or on Country related specific issues. JTS helps applicants to solve problems and answers to specific questions mainly by email, even though it provides also support by phone for technical issues, such as how to fill in some sections of the Forms included in the Application Package.

Final Beneficiaries may put questions in writing (email or fax) no later than 5 days before the closing date for delivering the Application Package, and the JTS shall provide the answers to the questions in writing no later than 2 days before the closing date. The JTS has no obligation to provide further

clarifications after this date. In any case, JTS will provide information how to fill in the Forms provided within the Call closing date.

No individual replies to queries with regard to the status of the selection procedure can be given in any way.

In the interest of equal treatment of Lead Applicants, the Managing Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the compliance of the proposals with the eligibility and selection criteria. Questions that may be relevant to other Lead Applicants, together with the answers, will be published on the Programme website.

In addition, during the course of the evaluation procedure important notices to Lead Applicants may be published on the Programme website at www.adriaticpacbc.org together with the other documents related to this call, as the need arises. The Lead Applicants are therefore strongly encouraged to regularly consult this webpage.

§. 17. MISCELLANEOUS AND RULES ON COMPLIANCE

1. The commitment and information documents as required must be provided by filling in the forms published on the Programme website without any modifications, addition or erasing of content not previously authorized by MA.
2. Where required, signature must be referred to the signatory person. Additionally, the signature must be handwritten, original, unique and made by using wet marking ink. It is not a valid signature any sign that is printed or stamped. Electronic and stamp signature are not acceptable in any case even if they are allowed by national law.
3. Any notification made by the Managing Authority/JTS will be carried out **only by fax** at the fax-number indicated in the Declaration of Lead Applicant. The MA will keep appropriate records of notification to the Lead Applicants during the whole selection procedure and of the Lead Applicants fax number. Any variation of the fax number indicated in the Declaration of Lead Applicant must be notified immediately to the Managing Authority/Joint Technical Secretariat. The Managing Authority is not responsible if the fax number was wrongly indicated or not updated by the Lead Applicant and the communication cannot be reached the receiver indicated as contact person in the Project Application Form. The reception of the fax by the addressee fax machine is the legal evidence that the fax communication was duly delivered to the contact person of the Lead Applicant.
4. The stamp of duty office of the Managing Authority and the reference number given to Application package is the only way to prove that the application had been received before the expiration term.
5. Lead Applicants are aware of that the delivering of Application package is on their own responsibility and the fact that the delivery carried out over the expiration term will be not accepted since it is not valid the date of sending as proved by any means. A failed delivery by force majeure or unforeseen incidents is on the own responsibility of Lead Applicants.
6. Personal data will be treated in compliance with the Programme privacy statement published on Programme web-site:
http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/LEGAL_FRAMEWORK/privacy/Privacy_statement.pdf
7. Without prejudice to any right of Final Beneficiaries, a complaint against the results of selection procedure or against the exclusion of partner may be settled in amicable way before the Managing Authority. For this purpose, the complainant shall communicate in writing the complaint and its grounds to the MA within 30 day from the date of receipt of notice of exclusion. The Managing Authority will reply within 20 calendar days from the delivery date of the complaint.
8. Proceedings may be started at the Regional Administrative Court of L'Aquila - Italy.

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9. Without any express reserve or refuse by the Lead Beneficiary regarding technical or commercial secrets or preservation of rights or any of its project partners, the Managing Authority is entitled to allow the complainant to have access to any information reported in the Project proposal, in compliance with Abruzzo Regional Law No. 1/2000 ruling the access to file. An unofficial English translation of this Statute is published on Programme website: [http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/LEGAL_FRAMEWORK/Procedures granting access/Abruzzo%20Region Reg 1 2000 EN.pdf](http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/LEGAL_FRAMEWORK/Procedures_granting_access/Abruzzo%20Region_Reg_1_2000_EN.pdf)

§. 18. REFERENCE RULES

Before the submission of any project, pay attention to the following rules:

- o Council Regulation (EC) No. 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA Regulation) and following integrations and amendments;
- o Commission Regulation (EC) n. 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No. 1085/2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA Implementing Regulation) and following integrations and amendments;
- o IPA Adriatic CBC Operational Programme 2007-2013 last approved version amended with EC Decision C(2011) No. 3396 on 18.5.2011;
- o External aid rules for the award of service, supply and work contracts, established by the European Commission and indicated in the Chapter 3 of Part 2, Title IV of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No. 1605/2002 and Chapter 3 of Part 2, Title III of Regulation (EC, Euratom) No. 2342/2002, as well as Commission Decision C (2007) NO. 2034 of 24 May 2007.
- o Regulation (EC) No. 45/2001 as regarding the personal data processing;
- o Abruzzo Regional Law No 1/2000 as regarding the access to file of selection procedure;
- o Programme Management and Control Manual, published in the Programme website: [http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/Programme Management and Control Manual.pdf](http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/Programme_Management_and_Control_Manual.pdf)
- o IPA Subsidy Contract and its General Conditions, both of them are published in the Programme website: [http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/IMPLEMENTING DOCUMENTS/Subsidy Contract Pack .zip](http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/IMPLEMENTING_DOCUMENTS/Subsidy_Contract_Pack.zip)
- o Partnership Agreement, published in the Programme website: [http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/IMPLEMENTING DOCUMENTS/IPA Partnership Agreement Form.pdf](http://www.adriaticpacbc.org/download/IMPLEMENTING_DOCUMENTS/IPA_Partnership_Agreement_Form.pdf)
- o Financial guarantee, published in the Programme website: www.adriaticpacbc.org

§. 19. ANNEXES AND FORMS

Here are annexed the following documents:

Annex I: Priority III - Terms of reference for Strategic projects thematic issue: Improvement of integrated plans aimed at multi-modal solutions, especially links between coastal zones and hinterland in the Adriatic area, including improvement of port, airport systems and connected services>

Annex II: Priority III - Terms of reference for Strategic projects thematic issue: Promotion of common models on sustainable transport services to improve links in the Adriatic area including improvement of port, airport systems and connected services>

Annex III: The Applicants' Manual

The forms to apply under each step of the selection procedure are the following:

Forms for 1° Step:

1. Strategic project proposal for 1° step
2. Declaration of the Lead Applicant

IPA Adriatic Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2007 - 2013

Call for Strategic Project Proposals – Priority 3

Expression of interest

Forms for 2° Step:

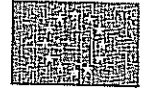
1. Final Strategic Project proposal for 2° step
2. Expression of interest (only for a new partner that joined the proposal under the 2° step)
3. The "de minimis" Declaration
4. Final Beneficiary bank account information notice
5. Letter of Association
6. Project budget break-down
7. Project investment details

All forms are published in the Programme website: www.adriaticpacbc.org

Documento conforme all'originale
composto da n. 13 fogli
P. n. 25 fasciate
L'Aquila, il 31/07/2012
IL DIRIGENTE

ES

ALLEGATO 4



IPA Adriatic CBC Programme Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC)
13th meeting – Trieste, 27 July 2012

JMC's DECISIONS

ITEM 5.1. Detailed information on Programme implementation also at level of ordinary projects financed under the 1st Call

The JMC approves the JTS' proposal on technical assistance Action Plan for reducing the de-commitment risk annexed to the present document.

ITEM 4.4. Reorganization JTS structure

The JMC agrees on adopting option A proposed by the MA, that will provide information on the tasks assigned to each expert of the JTS.

The proposal is annexed to the present document.

ITEM 4.1. TA resources: use of the remaining resources

1) The Audit Authority explains the reasons for the request to increase the budget allocation for an amount of 15.800 Euros (total amount 79.000 Euros) to be spent for the meetings to be held with the Group of Auditors.

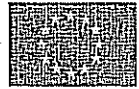
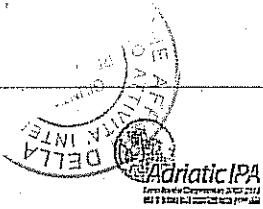
Upon Greece's proposal the JMC decides, as showed in the table annexed to the present document, not to approve the allocation of additional 79.000 Euros, but to use the remaining resources, namely 300.000 Euros, coming up from the difference between the total amount allocated of 800.000 Euros and 500.000 Euros committed for the tender of TA already signed.

2) as for the financial table concerning the Programme Technical Assistance Financial Plan the JMC approves the adoption of the following budget changes:

a) to use the amount of 50.000 Euros allocated per Country (Italy excluded) not only for Communication activities but also for potential and not envisaged activities that might be necessary during the Programme implementation;

b) to accept the request submitted by Serbian delegation to allocate the amount of 50.000 Euros (~~for communication activities~~) and 73.592 Euros (for Serbian FLCO activities for the period starting from October 2012 until the end of 2015).

c) to allocate 20.000 Euros for the reorganization of the JTS structure as proposed by the MA.



ITEM 6.1. Call for Strategic Project Proposals

The JMC approves the draft of the Call for Strategic Project Proposals in the version 2.2.

ITEM 6.2. Application Package and ITEM 6.3. T.o.R. Micro Themes

The JMC decides to approve under written procedure the Applicants' manual and the Terms of Reference on the themes. (1)

ITEM 6.4. T.o.R. External Experts

The JMC decides to approve the draft on T.o.R. of the External Experts in the version 0.6

Read and signed:

Managing Authority: [Signature]

Italian delegation: [Signature]

Croatian delegation: [Signature]

Greek delegation: [Signature]

Albanian delegation: [Signature]

Montenegrin delegation: [Signature]

Bosnian delegation: [Signature]

Serbian delegation: [Signature]

Slovenian delegation: [Signature]



Documento conforme all'originale
composto da n.2..... fogli
di n.2..... fascicoli
L'Aquila, il 31/07/2012
IL DIRIGENTE ES

(1) As regards the TOR on the Themes for Strategic Project Proposals the JMC approves that the at least two compulsory objectives must be reached by the Project - the new methodology includes compulsory and specific objectives related to compulsory outputs and some suggested activities.

PALAZZO I. SILONE



**DIREZIONE AFFARI DELLA PRESIDENZA
POLITICHE LEGISLATIVE E COMUNITARIE, RAPPORTI ESTERNI
Servizio Affari della Giunta**

UFFICIO BURA

**DIREZIONE - REDAZIONE E AMMINISTRAZIONE:
Via Salaria Antica Est - Località S. Antonio - Pile
67100 L'Aquila**

**centralino: 0862 3631
Tel. 0862 36 4211/4221
Fax 0862 36 4219**

**Sito Internet: <http://bura.regione.abruzzo.it>
e-mail: bura@regione.abruzzo.it**