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(Announcements)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

COMMISSION

Call for expression of interest addressed to individuals for the establishment of a database of prospective independent experts to assist the Commission's services for tasks in connection with the ICT Policy Support Programme of CIP (Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme)

(2007/C 123/03)

1 Introduction

Interested persons are invited to apply in accordance with the provisions of this notice, to be included in the database.

1.1 Background

The ICT Policy Support Programme (ICT PSP) forms part of the EC Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme⁽¹⁾ (CIP). CIP is structured around three specific programmes:

- The Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme in support of enterprise, particularly SMEs, entrepreneurship, innovation, including eco-innovation and industrial competitiveness;
- The ICT PSP in support of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Policy
- The Intelligent Energy-Europe Programme in support of energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and energy diversification.

The foreseen budget for the ICT PSP is 20 % of the overall CIP budget of EUR 3 621,3 million.

The programme period is 2007-2013.

1.2 Invitation

The Commission hereby invites applications from individuals with a view to establish a database of independent external experts providing assistance in the evaluation of proposals, the review of projects and other tasks related to the implementation of ICT PSP.

1.3 ICT PSP

The ICT PSP aims at stimulating innovation and competitiveness through the wider uptake and best use of ICT by citizens, governments and businesses in particular SMEs. The approach is based on leveraging innovation in response to growing societal demands. The ICT PSP addresses technology and non technology innovation that has moved beyond final research demonstration phase. ICT PSP does not support research activities.

The ICT PSP provides for the following actions:

- (a) development of the Single European information space and strengthening of the internal market for ICT products and services and ICT-based products and services;
- (b) stimulation of innovation through the wider adoption of and investment in ICT;
- (c) development of an inclusive information society and more efficient and effective services in areas of public interest, and improvement of quality of life.

The Commission will implement the programme mainly by publishing calls for proposals for projects, including pilot projects, and thematic networks as well as other actions provided for by the CIP ICT PSP on a yearly basis⁽²⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Established by Decision No 1639/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council OJ L 310, 9.11.2006, p. 15.

⁽²⁾ Further details on the themes and actions are provided in the annual work programme for ICT PSP, which will be available via: http://ec.europa.eu/ict_psp

2 Tasks

Expert assistance includes the following tasks:

- a) Assistance in the evaluation of proposals submitted in response to calls for proposals within the context of the ICT PSP. The experts will assess proposals on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in the calls and explained in more detail in the information material accompanying these calls.
- b) Assistance in the monitoring and review of projects selected and funded by the Community. The experts will be required to examine deliverables produced by project participants and to participate in annual or ad-hoc reviews (organised by the Commission services). Experts will make recommendations to the Commission for acceptance of project deliverables, continuation or non continuation of projects, and modification of work schedules.
- c) Assistance for other purposes where specific expertise might be required with regard to the ICT PSP (e.g. evaluation of tenders submitted following calls for tenders) as well as, where necessary and as appropriate, with regard to the eTEN programme as one of the predecessor programmes of the ICT PSP.

3 Database of experts

The database of experts established and maintained on the basis of the present call will be valid for the period 2007 — 2009. Applications may be submitted at any time until 30 September 2009, when registration will be closed.

A subsequent database of experts will be established from 2010.

3.1 Formal requirements

The following conditions are mandatory and must be fulfilled by applicants in order to be included in the database:

- Have a university degree relevant to ICT PSP.
- Ability to evaluate proposals and review project reports and other documents written in English. Knowledge of other Community languages is an advantage.
- Applicants must have a minimum of 5 years work experience.
- Applicants must not be in one of the situations of exclusions referred to in Article 93 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities ⁽¹⁾ (e.g. have been guilty of grave professional misconduct ⁽²⁾).

⁽¹⁾ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 (OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p. 1) as amended by Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1995/2006 (OJ L 390, 30.12.2006, p. 1).

⁽²⁾ A complete list of the situations of exclusions is contained in the online registration form.

3.2 Competence areas

The operation of ICT PSP will demand a broad range of specialist competence over time. Prospective experts are expected to have skills and knowledge appropriate to the areas of activities in which they might be asked to assist.

Prospective experts are also expected to have a high level of professional experience in the public or private sector in one or more of the following areas of activities:

- Administration, management or evaluation of projects, programmes or policies in the fields relevant to the ICT PSP (e.g. management and business development of innovative ICT projects including technical, commercial and financial appraisal)
- Subjects relevant to the development and adoption of ICT in business, administrations and public-sector services (e.g. education, communication, expertise, risk, ethics, etc.),
- Use of the results of projects, technology transfer, innovation, and business cooperation, particularly with regard to SMEs.
- Transnational e-service projects.

Depending on thematic requirements resulting from future calls for proposals, the Commission might add new keywords concerning themes and experts' competence areas in the online registration form over time. Prospective experts as well as experts already included in the database are invited to regularly check the online registration form in view of registering or updating their keywords as appropriate.

3.3 Submission of application

Applications may only be submitted via the online electronic registration form available at the website:

http://ec.europa.eu/ict_psp

Early application is particularly encouraged, in order to allow the Commission to make use of the ICT PSP Expert Database for its first proposal evaluation sessions expected for autumn 2007.

There will be no transfer of information from the eTEN User Database or other databases to the ICT PSP Expert Database. All applicants must register in the ICT PSP Expert Database.

4 Selection for expert tasks

Experts included in the database will be selected for specific tasks as the ICT PSP advances.

The policy of the European Commission is one of equal opportunities for women and men. In this context, the Commission would particularly welcome applications from suitably qualified women.

4.1 *Agreement between the Commission and selected experts*

The detailed arrangements for carrying out the expert tasks will be set out in an agreement to be signed by the Commission, on behalf of the Community, and each selected expert.

4.2 *Assuring no conflict of interest*

To ensure the independence of proposal evaluations and project monitoring and, where appropriate, other tasks, selected independent experts will have to sign a declaration certifying that there is no conflict of interest at the time of selection and that they undertake to inform the Commission if any conflict should arise in the course of providing their opinion or carrying out their duties.

4.3 *General conduct*

Experts must throughout the execution of their duty demonstrate the appropriate devotion to the tasks assigned and observe complete confidentiality of the information and documents brought to their attention during the process.

4.4 *Remuneration*

Experts will be remunerated in accordance with the scales valid at the time of their selection. Travel and subsistence expenses will be reimbursed on the basis of the provisions in force at the time of their selection.

5 **Information privacy**

All information received in the context of the present call will be included in the Commission's database of prospective independent experts established for the ICT PSP. The personal data collected will be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data ⁽¹⁾.

Commission services may make use of the database of independent experts for related Community Programmes on condition that the applicants concerned have given their prior agreement.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 8, 12.1.2001, p. 1.