

European Commission

4. Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS).

Background

Launched by the EC in 1991, the TACIS Programme provides grant-financed technical assistance to 12 countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan), and mainly aims at enhancing the economic and political transition process in these countries.

The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) substitutes the TACIS programme from 2007 on. However, TACIS will continue to fund projects until the ENPI is well in place and the TACIS 2006 budget is depleted. Probably, there will be TACIS calls for proposals until 2009.

Types of Grant

Grants and tenders.

Grant Size

The focus lies on projects of sufficient scale (projects of at least €2 million in Russia and Ukraine and €1 million in the other partner countries) and supports the objectives of the PCAs.

Own Contribution

To be defined in the annual action plans

Funding Priorities

The focus lies on technical assistance in the following fields:

- Support for institutional, legal and administrative reform;
- Support to the private sector and assistance for economic development;
- Support in addressing the social consequences of transition;
- Development of infrastructure networks;
- Promotion of environmental protection and

management of natural resources;

- Development of the rural economy;
- Support for nuclear safety, where applicable.

The areas where TACIS funding is used are designed to complement each other, and each national or multi-country programme focuses on no more than three of the above mentioned fields (plus nuclear safety, where appropriate), so that each can be most effective.

The basic framework for the programming and identification of TACIS activities consists of:

- Strategy papers for Eastern European and Central Asian partner countries, as well as multi-country programmes are established for a period of five to seven years. They define the long-term objectives for co-operation and identify the strategic priorities and the specific fields of action. The documents are available at: http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/ceeca/rsp/progs.htm.
- Multi-annual indicative programmes, usually for three years, based on the strategy papers, are drawn up for each country, regional, or multi-country programme. They contain a description of sectoral and cross-cutting issues, specific objectives and expected results. The documents are available at: http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/ceeca/rsp/progs.htm.
- Annual or bi-annual action programmes, based on the multi-annual indicative programmes, are drawn up for each country, region, or multi-country programme eligible for Community cooperation. They set out, as precisely as possible, the aims being pursued, the fields of action and the budget provided for a given year. They contain a list of cooperation activities to be financed by the Community. The documents are available at: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/projects/tacis/publications_en.htm#national.

The TACIS regional programme addresses in particular areas, such as the environment, trade and transport, and Justice and Home Affairs-related issues where cooperation among the countries of the region is most important. The TACIS cross-border programme promotes co-operation and the development of links between neighbouring communities in different countries. Each of these regional programmes has its own strategy paper, indicative and action programme.

Grantmaking Criteria

Calls and tenders are open to all natural and legal persons in the EU, the accession states and the TACIS partner states.

TACIS mainly supports the following measures:

- transfer of expertise and know-how, including training,
- industrial cooperation and partnerships for institution building based on cooperation between public and private organisations from the European Union and partner States,
- on a case by case basis, the reasonable cost of supplies required in the implementation of the assistance. In particular cases, including nuclear safety, justice and home affairs and cross-border cooperation, a significant supply element may be included,
- investment and investment-related activities. Assistance may include technical assistance to catalyse and support investments. Assistance may also include investment financing as described in Annex III, notably in the areas of cross-border cooperation, promotion of small and medium sized enterprises, environmental infrastructure and networks.

Guidelines

The practical implementation of TACIS is regulated by two documents:

1. "Rules and Procedures"

This document explains the basic principles the implementation of an action, which is supported by a grant from the Community. It is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/tender/gestion/final_annexe_en.pdf.

2. "Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EC External Actions" (PRAG)

The PRAG is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/tender/practical_guide_2006/documents/new_prag_en_final.pdf

The purpose of the PRAG is to provide users with all the information necessary to undertake procurement or a grant procedure from the very first steps to the award of contracts. The annexes cover both the procurement phase and the execution of contracts. The Guide provides the procedures to be used in centralised systems (centralised and indirect centralised) and decentralised systems with ex-ante approval or with ex-post controls by the European Commission.

Project Duration

differs from case to case.

Deadline

differs from case to case.

Application Forms

The annexes of the Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EC External Actions" (PRAG) (see below) include standard forms used in calls for proposals: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/tender/practical_guide_2006/annexes_general_en.htm. For each call for proposal, they are provided together with the guidelines setting out the objectives of the call.

Application and Procedures

The programmes are managed by the European Commission in Brussels, the EC delegations and national co-ordination units: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/projects/tacis/contacts_en.htm.

Calls are published on the Europe Aid website: <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/cgi/frame12.pl>. This website has just been reviewed in order to make it more user-friendly. All EC external assistance follows the same set of rules which are summarised on this webpage in the section on EC management procedures.

Language

n/c

Tips

In order to succeed in accessing EC funds, a good understanding of the rules and procedures of the calls are crucial. Little administrative mistakes, such as submission after the deadline or missing documents lead to an immediate rejection. NGOs considering responding to a call should carefully read the guidelines. Project objectives should directly be linked to the objectives of the call. Applicants should also read the relevant policy papers and refer to them, when appropriate. EC officials use an EC handbook explaining how to draft and manage a proposal. This document can also be useful for NGOs especially part 2 on the logical framework approach. It is called "Aid Delivery methods – Volume 1 – Project Cycle Management Guidelines" and is available online at http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/reports/pcm_guidelines_2004_en.pdf.

NGOs with little experience in applying for EC funding should consider participating in other NGOs' projects funded by the EC. As a junior partner they can build their capacity and get acquainted to EC requirements without taking full responsibility of a project. Consult and liaise with the national contact point, the EC delegation and the Brussels-based officials.

More information is available at the European Commission's website established for TACIS: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/projects/tacis/index_en.htm.

NAME OF GRANT PROGRAMME

Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS).

NAME

European Community

NAME IN ENGLISH

European Community

ACRONYM

EC

DEPARTMENT

For information on the TACIS programme in place in your country contact the national contact points. A list is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/projects/tacis/contacts_en.htm.

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Moldova
Russia
Tajikistan
Turkmenistan
Ukraine
Uzbekistan