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# FAQ

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## Proposal submission

### 1.1 How do I prepare a proposal? Where can I find more information on how to apply to a call for proposals?

The Guide for Proposers provides guidance on how to make a **project proposal**. In addition, the following documents should be studied carefully before preparing a proposal:

- The **work programme** describing the objectives the actions, the means to implement the programme and the evaluation criteria;
- The **call for proposals** detailing which actions are open under a given call and the deadline for receipt of proposals;
- The **model grant agreement** setting forth the terms and conditions governing funded projects;
- The **European Parliament and Council Decision** adopting the programme.

All the above documents can be downloaded from the programme web site **http://europa.eu.int/econtentplus**.
Please check periodically for latest information.

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### 1.2 Who can apply? From which countries?

Participation in the programme is open to legal entities established in the Member States (**Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark , Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands, United Kingdom**)

It is further open to participation of legal entities established in EFTA States which are contracting parties to the EEA Agreement (**Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein**), in accordance with the provisions of that Agreement.

Legal entities established in the candidate countries (**Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Turkey**) can take part in a proposal, but will only receive funding if a bilateral agreement with the relevant country has been concluded to this effect. Up to date information on which countries are part of the programme is available on the programme web site at **europa.eu.int/information_society/activities/econtentplus/programme/country_coverage**.

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### 1.3 Can organisations established in other countries participate?

Legal entities established in third countries and international organisations may take part in projects at their own expense.

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### 1.4 Which calls are there in 2005?

There will be one call for proposals in 2005, to be published shortly. The call announcement will be published in the Official Journal of the European Union at **http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/en/index.htm**, the full call text on the programme website in English at **http://europa.eu.int/eContentplus**.

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### 1.5 Can I get feedback on my proposal idea?

Yes, you can submit a pre-proposal. Guidance on how to submit a pre-proposal and the pre-proposal form are available at **http://europa.eu.int/eContentplus**. The deadline for submitting a pre-proposal will be 4 weeks before the call closing date. Pre-proposal replies do not preempt evaluation.

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### 1.6 How can I submit my proposal?

Proposals should be submitted on paper or using the planned electronic submission scheme that will be available soon through the Programme web site.

Submission of proposals by fax or e-mail is NOT allowed.

See the **Call text** and the **Guide for Proposers** on how to submit a proposal at **http://europa.eu.int/eContentplus**

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### 1.7 What happens if my proposal does not reach the Commission before the deadline?

It will be excluded from evaluation.

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## What is the scope of eContentplus?

### 2.1 What is covered by the term 'geographic information' in the eContentplus work programme?

The programme targets datasets that have as their primary function to describe the location of objects in space. Digital maps are the clearest example (maps of the surface of the earth, of the atmosphere or of the underground). Special features of these maps (e.g. location and ownership of buildings, addresses) are also covered. The aim of the first call is to aggregate these datasets across borders.

The call does not in the first place address datasets that have geographical components, but are not in themselves 'core' spatial information. This would for example be the case for traffic information,

meteorological data, health data or statistical data. Proposals addressing the aggregation of these datasets across borders would normally not be retained.

Aggregated 'core' geographical datasets can have an infrastructural function for the creation of services in different sectors. Digital maps can for example be used for traffic information services or fleet management services. To test the usefulness of the aggregated spatial datasets, practical applications from different areas <u>can be included</u> as part of a project. They can, however, never be the central part of a project.

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## 2.2 Are targeted projects for geographic information limited to geographic information held by the public sector?

The targeted projects in this area focus on the aggregation of geographic information held by public sector organizations across borders. This does not, however, exclude the participation of private data-holders in a consortium, for example if such participation is logical to ensure a better geographic coverage.

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## 2.3 Can privately held data be used in projects addressing the target areas educational and cultural and scientific/scholarly content?

Yes, if projects meet the scope and conditions for the respective target area and project type required in the work programme.

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## 2.4 What is the expected result of a targeted project? Is it enough to show that a database could be built in the future by demonstrating data harmonization in only a few study cases?

The purpose of this call is not to fund "feasibility projects". A targeted project should achieve full interoperability between all or a vast majority of the data brought into the project, which should represent a "critical mass" of data necessary to make a significant impact in the area concerned.

However, the data does not necessarily have to reside in a single database. The project could rely on a single access to distributed, but fully interoperable datasets in the participating countries.

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## 2.5 What does content enrichment mean under the eContentplus programme?

Content enrichment projects will mainly support the enrichment of existing digital content with semantically well-defined metadata in order to make it more accessible, usable and exploitable.

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## 2.6 Does eContentplus fund the development of new tools?

No. When necessary, adaptation of existing tools could be considered provided the effort required is small compared to the total effort of the project.

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### 2.7 Does eContentplus fund the creation of digital content?

No, the main objective of eContentplus is to make digital content more accessible, usable and exploitable.

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### 2.8 Does eContentplus fund digitisation?

The funding of digitisation and the preservation of digital material is primarily a responsibility of the Member States. At Community level, the eContentplus programme will not directly fund routine digitisation but will concentrate on the areas which optimise European added-value. It will provide support for the enabling infrastructure for aggregating and accessing digitised national materials across borders. Achieving interoperability between national digital collections and services and facilitating access and use of the material in a multilingual context will be core objectives. The European research programmes will co-fund research activities on digitisation and digital preservation with a European interest and scale.

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## Project types - consortia - funding models - evaluation

### 3.1 What is a grant agreement?

It is the contract by means of which a selected project will be funded.

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### 3.2 What is an acceptable consortium for an eContentplus project?

To be eligible, a proposal must be submitted by at least one legal entity established in a country participating in eContentplus. A consortium should aim at a balanced resource and task distribution among partners with well defined roles and responsibilities.

See the **Guide for Proposers** and the **Work Programme** for additional details.

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### 3.3 Can we split the role of co-ordinator between technical co-ordinator and administrative / financial co-ordinator?

Only one organisation can be appointed as co-ordinator under the contract. The beneficiaries can however agree on a distribution of the work whereby another beneficiary co-ordinates the technical work. This has no effect on the Community contribution except for thematic networks (see below Q 3.4)

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### 3.4 In a thematic network, we propose to distribute the work of the network co-ordinator between 2 or more beneficiaries. Can they all be funded at 100% of direct costs for that work?

In the case of thematic networks, it should be noted that only one organisation can receive 100% funding of direct costs, no matter how the beneficiaries decide to distribute the various tasks.

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### 3.5 Is there any partner search facility?

Yes, on the **ContentVillage** website at **http://www.content-village.org/PartnerSpace.asp**. You may also contact the network of National Contact Points at **http://europa.eu.int/eContentplus**.

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### 3.6 Can public sector bodies apply for the 100 % funding of additional costs?

No. Costs eligible for funding and funding rates for each project type are specified in the **model grant agreement** and the **Guide for Proposers**.

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### 3.7 What is the maximum rate of Community Contribution?

The Community contribution for **Targeted Projects** will be **up to 50%** of **eligible direct and indirect costs**. Indirect costs are up to 30 % of personnel costs.

The Community contribution for **Content Enrichment Projects** will be **up to 80%** of **eligible direct costs**.

The Community financial contribution for **Thematic Networks** will be **up to 100%** of eligible **direct costs** for coordinating and implementing the network. The funding for other beneficiaries will be limited to 100 % of travel and subsistence expenses incurred for attending events organised by the network.

**See Guide for Proposers.**

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### 3.8 Do all applicants have to fill in the financial viability information forms (C-forms)?

No. Public sector bodies (for example universities) do not have to fill in the C-forms.

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### 3.9 Is subcontracting allowed?

In principle, proposers should be in a position to carry out the proposed work in its entirety. In some cases, it may make sense to subcontract certain tasks. These tasks should be identified in the proposal. However, the proposal **should not** give the name of the subcontractor. Once a proposal is funded, the beneficiary responsible for the tasks to be subcontracted will need to tender them out and to award the subcontract to

the bid offering best value for money.

The subcontracting beneficiary keeps the responsibility for the proper execution of the subcontracted tasks vis-à-vis the Commission.

The terms and conditions for subcontracting are defined in the **model grant agreement** and the **Guide for Proposers**.

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### 3.10 Is subcontracting subject to prior approval by the Commission?

Prior Commission approval will be required if the value of the subcontract exceeds 20 % of the beneficiary's budget or EUR 100,000 (whichever is the lower) or where the subcontractor is based in a third country.

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### 3.11 Under which circumstances is it possible to award subcontracts to entities established in third countries?

The consortium will have to demonstrate that no other subcontractor from a Member State or associated State can provide a service comparable to the one offered by the subcontractor from a third country. Apart from the fact that subcontracting to entities situated in third countries requires the prior written approval from the Commission, the same subcontracting rules apply as for entities situated in a Member State or an associated State.

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### 3.12 My organisation is a public body which is not permitted to sign a "financial joint responsibility" clause

The purpose of this clause is to protect the financial interest of the Community while giving the opportunity to consortia to have members that might be financially weak. At the same time, it will simplify and speed up the process of checking the financial viability of a consortium.

This should however not to prevent a consortium from including beneficiaries who can contribute to the project, but whose financial viability is open to doubt. In duly justified cases, alternative solutions could be proposed during negotiations to safeguard financial interests of the Community.

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### 3.13 How will I be informed of the evaluation result?

Proposal coordinators will receive an evaluation summary report (ESR) with the overall score and comments explaining the result. The Commission selects projects for funding on the basis of the ESR. **The eContentplus helpdesk will not provide information on evaluation results.**

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### 3.14 Can SMEs or start-ups participate in an eContentplus project?

Participation is open to all legal entities. All applicants must demonstrate their financial and operational capacity to carry out the proposed project. The organisation's accounts, profit and loss statement and the

CVs of key personnel are hence essential input for the application of the award and selection criteria. Start-ups can demonstrate their financial capacity by means of a business plan.

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# Information points and other EU programmes

### 4.1 Where can I get more information about the eContentplus programme in my country?

A list of appointed **National Contact Points** (NCPs) is available on the eContentplus website at **http://europa.eu.int/eContentplus**. NCPs can provide information about the programme, help you with procedural or administrative matters or assist you in finding partners.

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### 4.2 How can I contact the Commission?

You can send an e-mail to the Helpdesk at **econtentplus@cec.eu.int**

Please also check periodically the eContentplus web site (**http://europa.eu.int/eContentplus**) for the latest information.

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