

# **IADSA Italian ó Albanian Debt for Development SWAP Agreement**

## **CALL FOR PROPOSALS REF. N° .IADSA/2016/01**

### **GUIDELINES**

### **CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

This Call for Proposals is the fifth Call in the framework of the Italian-Albanian Debt for Development SWAP Agreement (IADSA), an initiative of the current Italian-Albanian Development Cooperation Programme to support social development in Albania by providing financial resources for the implementation of projects proposed by eligible Albanian Public Institutions. Eligible Projects must be:

- based on the strategic priorities of the Government of the Republic of Albania, included in the National Strategy for Development and Integration and updated sectoral and crosscutting strategies and the National Action Plan for Implementation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA);
- in line with priority areas identified by the Italian Albanian Development Cooperation Programme; and
- related to the following objectives and areas of intervention: inclusive education, public health including preventive health care, provision of social care services to persons in need, social inclusion of those at risk of poverty and exclusion (e.g. persons with disabilities, children in need, disadvantaged women, youth and long-term unemployed, return migrants, minorities etc.), sustainable territorial development of underserved rural territories to generate employment and address unequal pattern of economic growth.

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## **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Albania and Italy are strictly tied by an historical relationship, not only for geographical reasons.

The Italian Development Cooperation starts its activities in 1991 and, over the last two decades, Italy has been until present one of the major bilateral donor active in the country, the biggest commercial partner and the first destination of Albanian emigration.

Over the years, the Italian Cooperation has assisted Albania in its transition towards democracy and the market economy. The Italian Official Development Assistance (ODA) disbursed in Albania amounts to about 700 million Euros with the purpose of facing the 1990<sup>s</sup> emergencies, supporting modernization of public infrastructures, fostering sustainable socio-economic growth, promoting democratization and institutional strengthening and, in recent years, accompanying the country's integration into EU.

Nowadays, the Italian Development Cooperation (IDC) strategy and objectives are framed into the strategy for development and integration of the Government of Albania which is at the core of the alignment and harmonization process of the international partners of Albania. The areas of intervention are agreed at bilateral level on a multiannual basis and are focused mainly on sustainable growth with particular regard to improved competitiveness and innovation including agriculture and rural development, private sector development for which Italy plays the leading role among the European donors, and social development by focusing on human resources development, social inclusion and territorial cohesion.

IDC strategy and objectives promote a participative approach, with particular attention to gender equality and environmental protection, and with the active participation of the Italian Regions and local authorities, through the decentralized cooperation, and full participation of the Italian and Albanian civil society through the NGOs.

The intense relationship of the whole "Sistema Italia" with the Albanian partners, has entailed to Italy the official role of *facilitator donor* in the framework of the European initiative "Fast Track Initiative on Division of Labour" (FTI-DoL), which has included the principles adopted by the Paris Declaration, the Accra Agenda for Action on Aid Effectiveness and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.

Further opportunity of inclusive partnership of the "Sistema Italia" in Albania is provided by the Italian Albanian Debt for Development Swap Programme (IADSA). The overall strategy behind the Italian-Albanian Debt for Development Swap Agreement (IADSA) follows the core principles agreed at bilateral level between the Parties in the framework of the Italian-Albanian Development Cooperation Protocol for 2010-2012 and the one signed in December 2014 for the period 2014-2016, which reflect the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness as well as the European Code of Conduct.

In compliance with the Agreement on the "Debt-for-Development-Swap" between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Government of the Italian Republic,

the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Albania and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy (MAECI) have established a Counterpart Fund (CPF) and the related Management Committee (hereinafter IADSA Management Committee) with its Technical Support Unit (hereinafter TSU).

## **2. THE IADSA PROGRAMME**

The IADSA Programme represents an innovative financing instrument for Albania and intends to support social development initiatives promoted by the Albanian public institutions for a total financial contribution of EUR 20 million over five years (2012-2016). The IADSA responds to the most advanced principles of development effectiveness by promoting social cohesion on a territorial basis and supporting balanced regional development, social equity and job creation to sustain Albania on its way to joining the European Union. This funding mechanism allows the use of financial resources otherwise destined to repay to Italy the debts previously contracted for the infrastructure development of the Country. The IADSA finances social development projects jointly screened and approved in the framework of the bilateral Development Assistance Programme.

In this framework, the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Albania and the Italian Embassy in Tirana have established the IADSA Management Committee, composed by the Italian Ambassador and the Minister of Finance of the Republic of Albania. The IADSA Management Committee is supported by a Technical Support Unit (TSU) and assisted by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation in Tirana, the Ministry of Finance and the Department of Development, Programming, Financing and Foreign Aid at the Prime Minister's Office of the Republic of Albania.

Projects are selected through Calls for Proposals, periodically launched, to which the Albanian Public Institutions are entitled to apply. Collaboration or partnerships with Albanian and/or Italian NGOs, and/or Italian Regions and Local Authorities and/or International Organizations (IIOO) are permitted for the partial or total implementation of the projects.

Eligible Projects must be based on the strategic priorities of the Albanian Government included in national strategies, updated sectoral and crosscutting strategies and National Action Plan for Implementation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) and related to the following priority areas: inclusive education, public health including preventive health care, provision of social care services to persons in need, social inclusion of those at risk of poverty and exclusion (among others persons with disabilities, children in need, disadvantaged women, youth and long-term unemployed, return migrants, minorities), sustainable territorial development of underserved rural territories to generate employment and address unequal pattern of economic growth.

## **2.1. IADSA Rationale**

From the establishment of democracy, Albania has experienced large political, institutional and socioeconomic changes, achieving the status of an upper middle-income country as a result of the reforms adopted, which need to be consolidated in accordance with the new challenges arising from the current level of development. As a matter of fact, Albania has a great development potential, deriving its comparative advantages from its geographical position, human resources and physical endowments.

The Albanian society needs significant improvement in social development also by integrating marginal and vulnerable groups, who mainly include low-income and other vulnerable households (e.g. youth and rural unemployed, households belonging to minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities etc.). The delivery of good quality social services is an important aspect of living standards and ensures social cohesion. At the same, social policies have to be oriented towards the respect of human rights, equality and nondiscrimination. Accordingly, integrated and coherent policies aim to achieve balanced regional development to reduce disparities between regions. The improvement of the quality and efficiency of the public administration to deliver the social services and its commitment to the implementation of the national strategies for development and integration is key to successfully meet the challenge of European integration.

The rationale of IADSA is to make available additional financial resources for upgrading social services as well as supporting social inclusion of those at risk of poverty and exclusion to enhance social equity and reduce regional disparities together with assistance aimed at sustaining processes of reform, human capital development, expansion of an advanced knowledge-based society, participatory planning and promotion of social trust and solidarity, consensus over common set of objectives.

## **2.2. The specific objectives of this 5<sup>th</sup> Call for Proposals**

The **specific objectives** of this 5<sup>th</sup> Call for Proposals may be summarized as follows (1):

- a. To contribute to the development of quality, innovative and inclusive education to ensure that no child is left behind and reduce gender gaps;
- b. To address inequality in public health care service provision including preventive health care by enhancing access to good quality, innovative and effective basic services to improve the health of the population;

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<sup>1</sup> The following objectives identified for this 5<sup>th</sup> Call for Proposals are the ones to which the Applicants have to refer in the preparation of their Project Proposals.

- c. To improve social care services to persons in need (e.g. persons with mental and physical disabilities, elders in difficulty, orphans) within their families and communities to gradually integrate residential services with mobile and community based services;
- d. To foster social inclusion of those at risk of poverty and exclusion (persons with disabilities, minorities, children in need, youth and long-term unemployed, disadvantaged women, return migrants) by enhancing their access to formal education and non-formal and informal learning, employment programmes, culture and ICT;
- e. To support sustainable territorial development of underserved rural territories in order to overcome lack of employment opportunities and safeguard natural and cultural heritage.

### **2.3. Strategy**

The overall strategy behind the IADSA Programme follows the core principles agreed at bilateral level between the Parties in the framework of the Italian ó Albanian Development Cooperation Programme, which reflects the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness as well as the European Code of Conduct.

Following the partnership for development effectiveness core principles, the IADSA Programme welcomes partnerships and complementarity aiming at maximising the impact of every partner's input. Efforts to bring in new partnerships, and promote innovation and mutual accountability have proven their effectiveness in delivering results as well as complementary with other programmes and actions.

On the basis of the criteria of the OECD - Development Assistance Committee (DAC), the evaluation of the Project Proposals will be carried out according to the following core principles.

#### **Relevance**

According to the ***relevance*** criteria, it will be assessed how the expected outcome of the Project proposal will contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the IADSA Programme, the National and Local Strategies and Policies of the Republic of Albania and the priorities of the target groups and final beneficiaries.

**Effectiveness**

According to the *effectiveness* criteria, it will be assessed to what extent:  
i) the activities included in the Project proposal are appropriate, practical and consistent with objectives and expected results and ii) the identified outcomes are measurable through objectively verifiable indicators.

**Sustainability**

*Sustainability* is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after external funding has been withdrawn. The results of the Project need to be institutionally, environmentally, socially as well as financially sustainable.

**3. RULES OF THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

**3.1. Eligibility criteria**

**3.1.1. Eligibility of Applicants: who may apply**

- The Albanian Municipalities as defined by the Law 31.07.2014 No. 115 "On the territorial and administrative division of local government units in the Republic of Albania", directly responsible for the preparation and management of the Project with their partners (if any), not acting as an intermediary.

### **3.1.2. Partnerships and eligibility of partners**

Applicants may act individually or in consortium with any other Albanian Public Institution and/or partner organisations which must satisfy the following eligibility criteria:

- be legal persons

**and**

- be non profit making

**and**

- be an Albanian non-governmental organisation (NGO), as defined by the Albanian Law 07.05.2001 No. 8788 and established before September 1, 2014 as stated in the relevant Court Decision

**or**

- be an Italian non-profit civil society organisation comprised among those specified in Paragraph 2 of Article 26 of the Italian Law 11.08.2014 n. 125 and already included on the date of the launching of the present Call for Proposals in the specific list published by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), available at the following link:

[http://www.agenziacooperazione.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/ISCRIZIONE\\_AGGIORNATA.pdf](http://www.agenziacooperazione.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/ISCRIZIONE_AGGIORNATA.pdf)

**or**

- be an Italian Region or Local Authority as defined by Article 2 of the Italian Legislative Decree 18.08.2000 n. 267 and subsequent acts (i.e. "Consolidate Act of the Local Authorities") (2)

**or**

- be an international (inter-governmental) organisations as defined by Article 43 of the Implementing Rules to the EC Financial Regulation (3).

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2 Italian Local Authorities are the municipalities, provinces, metropolitan cities, mountain communities, island communities and unions of municipalities reorganized under the Italian Law 07.04.2014 n. 56



*Guidelines for the 5<sup>th</sup> Call for Proposals  
IADSA*

Applicants and partners participate in designing and implementing the Project, and the costs they incur during project implementation are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the Applicant.

The IADSA Programme will accept sub-contractors different from partner public institutions and/or organisations specified in the Proposals, subject to the procurement rules set out in Annex L. In case an eligible public institution either Albanian or Italian intends to use specific competences available at one of its specialized agencies or other entity associated to the same public institution, this cooperation must be specifically indicated and described in the pertinent paragraph 1.8 "Methodology" (see point 1.8.7) and, as relevant, in Section II or III of the Grant Application Form (Annex A).

The Applicant will act as the lead organisation and, if selected, as the "Executing Entity" even if the partner/s is/are other Albanian Public Institution/s. In such a case, the Applicant will be the sole contracting party and responsible institution towards the IADSA Management Committee.

Potential Applicants and their partners may not participate in the IADSA Calls for Proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations listed in Section 2.3.3 of the EU Practical Guide to contract procedures (available from the following Internet address):

<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/document.do?nodeNumber=2.3.3.1>

In Annex C "Partnership Statement", partners must declare that they do not fall into any of these situations.

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3 International organisations are international public-sector organisations set up by intergovernmental agreements as well as specialised agencies set up by them; the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, European Investment Bank (EIB) and European Investment Fund (EIF) are also recognized as international organizations.

### **3.1.3. Eligible Projects**

#### **Objectives**

All Projects must be aimed at achieving **at least one** of the specific objectives among those identified for this 5<sup>th</sup> Call for Proposals and listed under Paragraph 2.2. above.

#### **Location**

The Project must take place in **Albania**. Specific activities may be implemented in neighbouring countries of Albania, provided that their costs are fully covered by other funding sources <sup>(4)</sup>.

#### **Duration**

The duration of a Project **may not exceed 24 months**.

#### **Projects not eligible**

The following types of Project are ineligible:

- Projects concerned only or mainly with sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;
- Projects concerned only or mainly with scholarships for studies or training courses;
- Conferences as well as research activities can only be funded if 1) they are duly justified and they fall under objectives of the Project and 2) they form part of a wider range of activities to be implemented in the lifetime of the Project, designed to achieve concrete and tangible results;
- Technical Assistance and/or Trainings can only be funded if they are duly justified and coherent with the specific objectives of the Projects, and fundamental to achieve tangible results;
- Projects which consist entirely or in most part of preparatory works or studies;
- Projects supporting political parties;
- Core funding of the Applicants or (where relevant) its partners;
- Deficit funding and capital endowments;
- Subventions to private organizations (including nonprofit making ones);
- Purchase of land, building and offices;
- Retroactive financing for projects that are already in implementation or completed;
- Projects taking place outside of Albania.

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<sup>4</sup> These other funding sources must be clearly described in the Grant Applicant Form (Annex A) and identified as co-financing in the Budget Form (Annex D). The costs for such activities are not eligible for the IADSA grant.

### **Number of applications and grants per Applicant and its Partner(s)**

- An Applicant may submit a maximum of 1 (one) application under this Call for Proposals;
- Eligible Albanian Public Institutions may take part as partners in a maximum of 2 (two) applications;
- Any other Partner may take part in a maximum of 2 (two) applications under this Call for Proposals.

Submission of applications in higher number than those above indicated will determine the **rejection of all the applications submitted by the same Applicant and/or same Partner(s)**.

#### **3.1.4. Eligibility of costs: costs which may be taken into consideration for the grant**

Under this Call for Proposals, any grant awarded by the IADSA Management Committee will amount between 200,000 to 400,000 Euro equivalent (<sup>5</sup>).

Applicants shall indicate the entire budget in Albanian LEK by detailing all costs including those financed from the Applicant's or partners' own resources (e.g. wages, social security charges, rent and any other recurrent and capital costs) and specifying sources of finance.

Moreover, as guarantee of motivations of Applicants and Projects complementarities and in order to promote partnership creation/strengthening through co-funding mechanisms, the IADSA Management Committee encourages Applicants for cost-sharing and direct contribution of financial nature or in kind consisting in project inputs and/or activities. Cost-sharing and/or direct contribution will be considered in the evaluation grid.

Only eligible costs can be taken into account for a grant. These are listed below. **Note that the eligible costs must be based on real costs, not lump sums** (except for subsistence costs such as per diem).

In the process of verification of the costs, the TSU of the IADSA Management Committee may request clarifications.

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<sup>5</sup> Equivalent to Albanian LEK at the exchange rate issued by the Central Bank of Albania on the date of publication of the present Call for Proposals (September 20, 2016).

It is therefore in the Applicant's interest to provide a **realistic and cost-effective budget** with all justifications to ease the verification process.

Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under this Call for Proposals, costs must:

- ó be necessary for carrying out the proposed Project and comply with the principles of sound financial management, in particular value for money and cost-effectiveness;
- ó have actually been incurred by the Applicants or their partners during the implementing period for the Project. All expenditures must be liquidated before the final report is finalised;
- be recorded in the Applicant's or the Applicant's partners' accounts or tax documents, be identifiable and verifiable, and be backed up by originals of supporting documents.

Subject to the implementation procedures (Annex L) being respected, eligible direct costs borne by the Applicant and its partners may include:

- ó costs of staff assigned to the Project, corresponding to actual salaries plus social security charges and other remuneration-related costs. Salaries and costs must not exceed those normally borne by the Albanian public institutions and/or partner organisations, as the case may be, unless it is justified by showing that it is essential to carry out the Project;
- ó costs for staff assigned to the Project, technical expertise and consultancy under the budget headings 1. "Human Resources", 4. "Activities of the project" and 5. "Other costs, services", provided they amount within the maximum of 20% of the Project direct eligible costs funded by IADSA;
- ó travel and subsistence costs for staff and other persons taking part in the Project must be based on real costs, provided they amount within the maximum of 5% of the Project direct eligible costs funded by IADSA;
- ó purchase or rental costs for equipment and supplies (new or used) specifically for the purposes of the Project, and costs of services, provided they correspond to market rates;
- ó the cost of consumables;
- ó costs arising directly from the requirements of the contract (dissemination of information specific to the Project, translation, printing, insurance, etc.) including bank costs;
- ó taxes, including VAT, due by the Applicant only in relation to the Project's activities (or by the Applicant's partners).

Eligible indirect costs (overheads)

Administrative costs not exceeding 5% of the total amount of eligible costs of the Project may be claimed as indirect costs to cover the administrative overheads incurred only by the Applicant's Partners (if applicable) provided that they are not Albanian Public Institutions. Administrative costs cannot include the purchase of capital goods even if used by the Applicant's Partner/s for the implementation of the Project.

Overheads must be identifiable and verifiable, and related expenses be backed up by originals of supporting documents.

Contributions in kind

Any contribution in kind made by the Applicant or any other source, which must be listed in the Grant Application Form (Annex A Section I paragraph 3), does not represent actual expenditure and are not eligible costs. They will not be treated as co-financing by the Applicant or his partner if they are costs related to day-by-day functioning of respective structures.

Direct contribution of financial nature or in kind consisting in project inputs and/or activities, including the cost of staff assigned to the Project may be considered as co-financing in the budget for the Project when paid by the Applicant or its partners. As for the overhead costs, co-financing must be identifiable and verifiable by supporting documents.

Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- ó debts and provisions for losses or debts;
- ó interest owed;
- ó items already financed in another framework;
- ó credits to third parties;
- ó salaries, security charges and other remuneration-related costs for public employees (except per diem and travel costs incurred in relation to the implementation of the Project).

## **3.2. How to apply and the procedures to follow**

### **3.2.1. Grant Application Form, Budget and Action Plan**

Proposals must be submitted using the Grant Application Form, Budget and Action Plan annexed to these Guidelines (respectively in Annex A, D and E). Applicants should keep strictly to the format of the application and fill in the paragraphs by providing all the requested information.

In the Grant Application Form, the Applicant should be precise and provide enough details, particularly on how the aims of the Project will be achieved, the benefits that will flow from it and the way in which it is relevant to the IADSA objectives under this Call for Proposals. It should be completed carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly.

The Budget must be filled properly by using the given format. Costs cannot be estimated in lump sums but detailed and the unit costs and quantities specified for each budget item to allow the assessment of the Proposal cost-effectiveness. The Action Plan must be realistic and must also consider time needed to fulfil the implementation procedures as described in Annex L (e.g. staff selection, procurement etc.) and reporting requirements.

Any error related to the points listed in the Checklist (section IV of the Grant Application Form), failure to provide requested information or any major inconsistency in the Proposal (e.g. the amounts and/or activities mentioned in the budget are inconsistent with those mentioned in the Grant Application Form) may lead to the rejection of the Proposal.

Clarifications will only be requested by the TSU of the IADSA Management Committee when information provided are unclear.

### **3.2.2. How and where to send the Proposals**

Full Proposals (Grant Application Form in **ANNEX A**, Legal Entities Form in **ANNEX B**, Partnership Statement/s in **ANNEX C** (if applicable), Budget Form in **ANNEX D**, Action Plan in **ANNEX E**, the Partnership Agreement in **ANNEX F** (if applicable), Supporting documents for Applicants listed in **ANNEX G**, Supporting Document for Partners in **ANNEX H** (if applicable) must be submitted in one original and 2 copies. The complete grant application form, budget and action plan must also be supplied in electronic format (CD-Rom). The electronic format must contain **exactly the same** Proposal as the paper version enclosed. Each component of the Proposal (Grant Application Form, Budget and Action Plan), must be submitted in a separate and unique electronic file (for ex. the grant application form must not be split into several different files).

**Failure to submit even one of the documentation required in the specified format will cause immediate rejection of the Proposal.**

The Legal Entities Form in **ANNEX B**, the Partnership Statement/s in **ANNEX C** (if applicable) and the Partnership Agreement in **ANNEX F** (if applicable), **must be signed and stamp in wet-ink original**. The absence of original wet-ink signatures or stamps will cause immediate rejection of the Proposal.

Applicants must apply in **English**. Hand-written Proposals will **not** be accepted.

So as to facilitate the processing of Proposals, please present the original dossier and the 2 copies in A4 size, each bound (please, do not use plastic cover). After the award of the successful projects, the copies of the Project Proposals that have not been approved for funding will be kept at the TSU for a maximum period of three months after which they will be destroyed if not picked up by the Applicant.

Full Proposals must be received in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) at the address below:

Postal address (including hand delivery and private courier service):

IADSA Programme  
at the Ministry of Finance (4<sup>th</sup> floor)  
Boulevard Deshmoret e Kombit  
Tirana - Albania

To the attention of the Technical Support Unit

Proposals sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

The **outer envelope** must bear the **reference number of the call for Proposals** and the **name of the Applicant Municipality**, and the words "Not to be opened before the opening session". The envelop shall contain the Grant Application Form (Annex A), Legal Entities Form (Annex B), Partnership Statements/s if applicable (Annex C), Budget Form (Annex D), Action Plan (Annex E), the Partnership Agreement if applicable (Annex F), Supporting documents for Applicants (Annex G) and Supporting Document for Partners if any (Annex H).

**Applicants must verify that their Proposal is complete. Incomplete Proposals will be rejected.**

### **3.2.3. Deadline for receipt of Proposals**

The deadline for the receipt of full Proposals is **November 21, 2016 at 12:00** local time (midday). Any Proposal received after the deadline will automatically be rejected even if the postmark indicates a date preceding the deadline or if the delay is due to the private courier service.

### **3.2.4. Further information**

Questions may be sent in written by e-mail no later than 14 days before the deadline for the receipt of proposals to the addresses listed below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for Proposals:

E-mail address: [tsu@iadsa.info](mailto:tsu@iadsa.info)

Replies will be given only in written no later than 10 days before the deadline for the receipt of Proposals.

In the interest of equal treatment of Applicants, the TSU of the IADSA Management Committee cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of an Applicant, a partner or a project.

Questions that may be relevant to other Applicants, together with the answers, will be published on the internet at the IADSA website (<http://www.iadsa.info>) in the FAQ page, available in Albanian, Italian and English.

## **3.3. Evaluation and selection of Proposals**

All submitted Proposals will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

### **3.3.1. STEP 1: Administrative check**

The opening session and administrative check will be carried out immediately after the deadline (see para 3.2.3.). At the opening session all the Proposals submitted within the deadline will be recorded and only the envelopes on which it is clearly marked the name of the Applicant Municipality (see para 3.2.2.) will be opened. If the deadline has not been respected and/or the outer envelope does not indicate the name of the Applicant Municipality, the Proposal will be rejected (see para 3.2.3.).



The following will be assessed in the opening session and administrative check:

- If any of the requested documents and/or information in Annexes A, B, C, D, E and F is missing or is incorrect, the Proposal will be rejected on that **sole** basis and the Proposal will not be evaluated further.
- Any missing or incomplete supporting document provided by the Applicant and its partner/s, if any (respectively listed in Annex G and in Annex H) may lead to the automatic rejection of the Proposal on that sole basis.
- The absence of original wet-ink signatures of the legal representatives and stamps in the Legal Entities Form in ANNEX B, Partnership Statement/s in ANNEX C (if applicable) and in the Partnership Agreement in ANNEX F (if applicable) and will cause the immediate rejection of the Proposal on that sole basis.

### **3.3.2. STEP 2: Eligibility verification**

The eligibility verification (see para 3.1.) will be performed as follows:

- The Grant Application Form, the Budget and the Action Plan will be cross-checked in order to verify full adherence of the Proposal to the eligibility criteria.
- Declaration by the Applicant and its partner/s, if any (Sections II and III of the Grant Application Form) will be cross-checked with the supporting documents provided by the Applicant and its partner/s, if any (respectively listed in Annex G and in Annex H). Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the Declaration by the Applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the automatic rejection of the Proposal on that sole basis.
- The eligibility of the Applicant, the partners, the project, timeframe and costs will be verified according to the criteria set out in sections 3.1.1., 3.1.2., 3.1.3 and 3.1.4.. If the Proposal does not fulfil the eligibility criteria, the Proposal will not be evaluated further.

Clarifications to the Applicants may be requested in case of minor inconsistencies in the submitted Proposals with regard to the above mentioned administrative compliance and eligibility requirements. Applicants will be given 7 calendar days to provide clarification after notification. Requests for clarification will be notified only via email at the email address of the contact person indicated in the Grant Application Form (Section II "The Applicant"). Failure to provide clarifications within the given deadline will lead to the rejection of the Proposals on this sole basis.

### **3.3.3. STEP 3: Evaluation of the Proposal**

An evaluation of the quality of the Project Proposals that have passed the administrative check and eligibility verification will be carried out according to the criteria set out in the Evaluation Grid included below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection criteria (listed in section 1. of the Evaluation Grid) and award criteria (listed in sections 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the Evaluation Grid).

**The selection criteria** are intended to assess the Applicants' and its partner/s (if any) managerial and operational capacity to ensure that they:

- have the statutory mandate, management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed project within the specified timeframe. This also applies to any partner of the Applicant.

**The award criteria** enable the selection of Proposals against the Call for Proposals objectives and strategy. They also cover such aspects as quality, expected impact, feasibility within proposed timeframe, sustainability and cost-effectiveness. These criteria may allow the IADSA Management Committee to award grant to projects which maximise the overall effectiveness of this Call for Proposals.

**Scoring:** The evaluation grid is divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

### Evaluation Grid

<b>Section 1. Managerial and operational capacity</b>	<b>Score</b>
1.1 Do the Applicant and partners, if applicable, have sufficient <b>project management capacity</b> ? (including staff and ability to implement activities effectively and handle the budget for the project)??	5
1.2 Do the Applicant and partners, if applicable, have related competences and sufficient <b>technical expertise</b> ? (notably statutory mandate, knowledge of the issues to be addressed etc.)	5
<b>Total score:</b>	<b>10</b>

**Please note** that if a total score lower than adequate (7 points) is obtained for Section 1, the full application will be eliminated by the Evaluation Committee.

<b>Section 2. Relevance of the project</b>	<b>Score</b>
2.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities specified in this Call for Proposals (relevance to national strategies of the Government of Albania, updated sectoral and crosscutting strategies and National Action Plan for Implementation of the SAA as well as the Italian - Albanian Development Assistance Programme)?	5x2
2.2 How relevant to the particular needs and constraints of the target areas is the proposal? (including synergy with other Italian Development Cooperation initiatives and avoidance of duplication)	5x2
2.3 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5
2.4 Does the proposal contain specific added-value elements, such as innovation and best practices and/or co-financing by the Applicant or Partners (if any), and/or effective measures for addressing gender equality, regional balanced development and/or establishing new partnerships among local public entities such as regional partnerships and/or complementarities with other projects/programmes and/or scope for replication by generating multiplier effects?	5
<b>Total score:</b>	<b>30</b>

<b>Section 3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the project</b>	<b>Score</b>
3.1 Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results (how coherent is the overall design of the project)?	5
3.2 Is the action plan clear and feasible?	5
3.3 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcomes of the project?	5
3.4 Is the target beneficiaries' level of involvement and participation in the project satisfactory?	5
<b>Total score:</b>	<b>20</b>

<b>Section 4. Sustainability of the project</b>	<b>Score</b>
4.1 Is the project likely to have a tangible <b>impact</b> on its target groups?	5x2
4.2 Are the expected results of the proposed project <b>sustainable</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- financially (<i>how will the activities be financed after the funding ends?</i>)</li> <li>- institutionally (<i>will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the project? Will there be local ownership of the results of the project?</i>)</li> <li>- at policy level (where applicable) (<i>what will be the structural impact of the project e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc?</i>)?</li> <li>- environmentally (where applicable) (<i>will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?</i>)</li> <li>- socially (<i>will the project have a positive social impact on women, children and youth, disadvantaged groups and minorities</i>)</li> </ul>	5 x 2
<b>Total score:</b>	<b>20</b>

<b>Section 5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the project</b>	<b>Score</b>
5.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	5x2
5.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	5x2
<b>Total score:</b>	<b>20</b>

<b>Section 6. Total score</b>	<b>Score</b>
6.1 Managerial and operational capacity	10
6.2 Relevance of the project	30
6.3 Effectiveness and feasibility of the project	20
6.4 Sustainability of the project	20
6.5 Budget and cost-effectiveness of the project	20
<b>Maximum total score:</b>	<b>100</b>

**Provisional selection** - Following the evaluation, a table listing the Proposals ranked according to their total score and within the available financial envelope will be established by the TSU and submitted to the IADSA Management Committee.

### **3.4 Notification of the IADSA Management Committee's decision**

#### **3.4.1. Content of the decision**

At the full completion of the evaluation (STEP 3) upon the approval by the IADSA Management Committee, the Applicants of the selected Project Proposals will be informed in writing by the TSU on the decision of the IADSA Management Committee concerning their Proposal.

Only the Proposals which have been given a minimum score of 60 points out of 100 will be considered by the IADSA Management Committee for award.

The IADSA Management Committee's decision to reject a Proposal or not to award a grant is final.

The results of the evaluation and selection of the Project Proposals will be published on the IADSA Web Site (<http://www.iadsa.info>) upon approval by the IADSA Management Committee.

#### **4. LIST OF ANNEXES**

ANNEX A: GRANT APPLICATION FORM (WORD FORMAT)

ANNEX B: LEGAL ENTITIES FORM (WORD FORMAT)

ANNEX C: PARTNERSHIP STATEMENT

ANNEX D: BUDGET (EXCEL FORMAT)

ANNEX E: ACTION PLAN (EXCEL FORMAT)

ANNEX F: PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

ANNEX G: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR APPLICANT

ANNEX H: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR PARTNERS

ANNEX I: PROJECT AND FINANCING CONTRACT

ANNEX L: GUIDELINES FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION