

ASIA-LINK PROGRAMME

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) 2006

Latest update: 30.08.2006 (B13, E15)

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/europeaid/projects/asia-link/faq2006_en.htm

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- B. **Eligibility of Applicants and Partners; Associates**
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Ref.	Question	Answer
A. About the Asia-wide Programmes – What's new in the 2006 Call?		
A1.	How many Asia-wide Programmes are there?	<p>There are three Asia-wide programmes, each of which provides support for partnerships involving organisations in Europe and in Asian developing countries:</p> <p>Asia-Invest to support economic cooperation between Europe and Asia through business to business match-making opportunities, partnership-building and capacity strengthening activities;</p> <p>Asia-Link to promote sustainable partnerships between higher education institutions in Europe and Asia;</p> <p>Asia Pro Eco to promote partnerships to address urban environmental issues.</p>
A2.	What is unique about the Asia-wide Programmes?	<p>Asia-wide Programmes foster networking between organisations in Europe and those in developing countries in Asia. Much of this support goes to partnership projects which are conceived, designed and implemented by these organisations on the basis of equal partnerships. This type of partnership and the regional aspect it has, are of key importance to the programmes' approach and popularity.</p>
A3.	<p>Call for Proposals 2006</p> <p>What are the main differences with the previous Call for Proposals?</p>	<p>The application procedure is different in the 2006 Call for Proposals. A small number of content-based changes have been made, notably:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Wider European coverage. With the adoption by the Commission of two new regulations on the 'Untying of Aid' (28 December 2005), the Asia-Link programme now also includes Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, FYRoM and Turkey. ➤ Newly eligible country in Asia. Higher education institutions from Myanmar are eligible to apply to the Asia-Link Programme. Myanmar is also a LDC. ➤ Partnership requirements. The minimum size of the partnership remains four: two European institutions from different countries and two Asian institutions from different countries. ➤ ONE deadline only: 19 October 2006 <p>All documents relevant to the grant application procedure are available via the EuropeAid Co-operation Office web site: www.europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/cgi/frame12.pl (Left panel, select: ALA, Open, Grants, Asie, Submit Query -> Asia-Link) and on the Asia-Link web site: http://ec.europa.eu/comm/europeaid/projects/asia-link/apply_en.htm.</p>

A4. Eligible sectors Does Asia-Link support projects under specific sectors?	Asia-Link is a demand-driven programme, and supports projects across all sectors and areas of higher education, as long as the proposed activities clearly address the needs of the target groups and are shown to be relevant. Applicants are encouraged to consult the European Commission's Country Strategy Papers for each eligible country. → <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.1.3)
A5. Country Strategy Papers (CSP) Which CSP should be referred to when preparing a proposal under the Call 2006 – 2007?	The latest available Country Strategy Papers should be used. They are available per country under the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/sp/index.htm The European Commission is currently in the process of preparing new CSP for the period 2007 – 2013, however, these are not yet available for public consultation.
A6. Maximum provision for grants What is meant by the 'overall indicative amount available' under the Call for Proposals which is set at EUR 12.6 million for the Call for Proposals 2006? How is it allocated?	The EUR 12.6 million available under the Call for Proposals 2006 represents the amount of grant funding available for projects submitted. A specific amount of funds is not allocated per type of project but rather the number of approved projects is based on the quality of proposals received. The Commission reserves the right not to award all the funding.
A7. Commission grant size What is the Commission grant size available for approved projects?	The min. amount of EC grant is EUR 200 000, the max. amount of EC grant is EUR 750 000. The EC grant cannot exceed 75% of total eligible costs. This percentage is increased to 90 % of total eligible costs when all Asian partners are from Least Developed Countries ¹ . 100% can be provided when all Asian partners are from areas recognised as affected by the 2004 tsunami. This is a purely geographical criterion and does not mean that the proposals should target post-tsunami reconstruction activities. → <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> , Section 1.3
A8. Next deadlines What is the planned schedule for the next Calls for Proposals?	It is not clear at this stage whether a Call for Proposals will be issued in 2007.
A9. Information on selected projects What type of information is available on the selected projects?	After the applicants have countersigned the grant contracts, a summary sheet for each project is made available via the Asia-Link website under <u>Funded Projects</u> .

Ref	Question	Answer
B. Eligibility of Applicants and partners		
B1	Organisations funded by other European Commission programmes Are organisations participating in EU-Asia bilateral programmes eligible to apply for support under the Asia-Link Programme?	Yes, but obviously there must be no overlap in funding. → <u>Annex A</u> (Application Form, Section II, Point 5) → <u>Annex B</u> (Budget, Worksheet 2)
B2	Presence in several partnerships Can the same organisation participate in several applications under the same deadline?	Applicants may submit more than one proposal. However, the partners, the geographical coverage and content must be different for each proposals. Each proposal must be submitted in a separate envelope. → <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.1.3)
B3	Number of partners Is priority given to a project involving a greater number of partners rather than the minimum of 2 + 2?	As a minimum, a partnership must involve at least <u>four</u> (4) organisations all from different countries. This requirement can be met by a partnership of <u>two</u> (2) eligible European institution and <u>two</u> (2) eligible Asian institutions. There is no upper limit to the number of members in the partnership. Applications involving more than the minimum number of four partners will be particularly welcome. However, this does not mean that very large partnerships are seen as preferable to smaller ones: the optimum size of a partnership is one allowing the achievement of project objectives in the most cost-effective way. Each member of

¹ LDC as defined by the UN are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Laos, the Maldives, Myanmar and Nepal

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		<p>the partnership must have a precise and clearly identified role in the implementation of the project. The partnership should be composed in such a way as to allow for the achievement of project objectives in the most efficient manner.</p> <p>→ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.1.2)</p>
B4	<p>Maximum number of partners from one country</p> <p>What is the maximum number of partners from one country?</p>	<p>The number of organisations in the partnership from different eligible countries should be greater than the number of organisations from the same eligible country. Each member of a partnership must have a precise and clearly identified role in the implementation of the project. Apart from the minimum number of partners required, there is no upper limit on the number of members in a partnership.</p> <p>A partnership should be composed in such a way as to allow for the achievement of project objectives in the most efficient manner.</p> <p>→ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.1.2)</p>
B5	<p>Associates</p> <p>What is an associate?</p>	<p>An associate is an organisation that does not constitute part of a formal partnership but which is associated with a project on the condition that it provides effective support.</p> <p>An associate must play a real role within the project. However, this must remain marginal, and the actual partners must remain responsible for the majority of work done within a project. The role and the added value of an associate must be clearly explained in the Application Form (Annex A, Section IV).</p> <p>An associate may not be taken into consideration for the fulfilment of the minimum requirement of a partnership. Institutions that would otherwise be eligible as partners are not excluded from being associates.</p> <p>As an associate is not a member of a partnership, it is not required to provide a partnership statement. It is not a requirement to include an associate within a grant application.</p> <p>→ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.1.2)</p> <p>→ <u>Annex A</u> (Application Form, Section IV)</p>
B6	<p>Country of origin of an associate</p> <p>Who is eligible to apply as an associate?</p> <p>Is there any restriction regarding the country of origin of an associate?</p>	<p>An associate may originate only from the eligible countries of Asia-Link (see question C1). However, as an exception to the above, associates from Hong Kong, Chinese Taipei, Macau, Brunei Darussalam, Singapore, Japan and South Korea may also participate in projects as associates.</p> <p>→ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.1.1 and 2.1.2)</p>
B7	<p>Associates and EC funding</p> <p>May associates benefit from EC funding?</p>	<p>No, associates may not receive funding from the EC grant with the exception of per diem and travel costs.</p> <p>→ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.1.2)</p>
B8	<p>Number of associates</p> <p>What is the maximum number of associates in a project?</p>	<p>The number of associates should not be more than the number of actual partners. It is also important that the associates do not handle the majority of the work done in the implementation of the project. The actual partners must remain responsible for the majority of work done in the project. This matter will be looked into in the technical evaluation of the proposal. The number of associates coming from the same country is not restricted.</p> <p>→ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.1.2)</p>
B9	<p>Responsibilities of associates</p> <p>May an associate be responsible for the project coordination/management?</p>	<p>No. The Applicant retains responsibility.</p> <p>→ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.1.1)</p>
B10	<p>Funding provided by an associate</p> <p>May an associate provide funding to a project?</p>	<p>Yes. Should an associate provide complementary funding to a project, it must be declared in the budget, on Worksheet 2 "Expected Sources of Funding" (either under "Contribution(s) from other European institutions or EU Member States", or under "Contributions from other organisations").</p> <p>→ <u>Annex B</u> (Budget, Worksheet 2)</p>

Ref	Question	Answer
B. Eligibility of Applicants and partners		
B11	<p>Nationality of project team members</p> <p>Can members of the project team be nationals of a country other than those eligible to apply eg. US, Swiss or Japanese?</p>	<p>With the adoption by the Commission of two new regulations on the 'Untying of Aid' (28 December 2005), an unprecedented level of untying for actions financed from the general budget with a thematic and geographical scope has been achieved. Team members can now be of any nationality provided that they are permanently employed by an eligible organisation.</p>
B12	<p>Participation of the Applicant in other higher education programmes</p> <p>If a European university has an Erasmus University Charter, can it be considered as eligible on the basis of this?</p>	<p>No, for two reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Asia-Link needs to follow eligibility requirements specific to external aid budget lines, rather than those used for Education programmes. 2. Eligibility criteria are equal for European as well as Asian universities. There is no equivalent system to the Erasmus University Charter applicable to Asian institutions.
B13	<p>NEW! 30.08.06</p> <p>Partnership: networks</p> <p>How may established networks of higher education institutions apply for financing?</p>	<p>An established network of higher education institutions must have its own legal status, it must have been registered for a minimum of three years and as an applicant it must be officially authorised to sign the contract on behalf of network members. It must have its headquarters in one of the eligible countries. A network may represent only one member in the partnership.</p> <p>The member institutions must be higher education institutions and fulfil the eligibility criteria as outlined in the Guidelines for individual higher education institutions (be non-profit making, provide courses at the undergraduate and or graduate level; be recognised, have headquarters in eligible countries etc.). A network may include individuals, provided that they are members of the network in their function as representatives of eligible institutions.</p> <p>In cases where a network includes member institutions from non-eligible countries under the Asia-Link Guidelines, the network may be considered eligible provided that the focus of the network is in eligible countries. However, the project proposal must relate only to clearly identified, eligible network members.</p> <p>The network members may consider forming a partnership consisting of individual higher education institutions.</p> <p>► Guidelines for Applicants - § 2.1.1.</p>

Ref.	Question	Answer
C. Eligibility of countries		
C1	<p>Eligible countries</p> <p>What countries are considered eligible under the Asia-Link Programme for the Call for Proposals 2006?</p>	<p>Organisations from the following countries are eligible as Applicant or partner:</p> <p>EU: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom</p> <p>European Economic Area: Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.</p> <p>Acceding countries: Bulgaria and Romania</p> <p>Official Candidate Countries as recognised by the EC: Croatia, FYRoM and Turkey.</p> <p>Asia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, North Korea, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam</p>
C2	<p>Northern Cyprus</p> <p>Are organisations from Northern Cyprus eligible to participate?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
C3	<p>Less developed countries</p> <p>What countries are considered as less developed and are they given priority?</p>	<p>For the purposes of the Asia-Link Programme, the less developed countries are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Laos, the Maldives, Myanmar, Mongolia and Nepal. Projects in which all the Asian partners are from these countries are eligible for a Commission contribution of up to a maximum of 90% of the total eligible costs.</p> <p>➔ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 1.3 and 2.1.2)</p>
C4	<p>Asian countries/territories</p> <p>Are organisations from Brunei Darussalam, Hong Kong, Japan, Macao, Chinese Taipei, Singapore or South Korea eligible?</p>	<p>Institutions from Brunei Darussalam, Hong Kong, Macao, Chinese Taipei, Singapore, Japan or South Korea may participate fully in projects as associates, provided they do not receive Commission funding (with the exception of travel costs and per diem).</p> <p>See questions B5-B10 for further information on associates.</p>

Ref.	Question	Answer
D. Eligibility of projects and activities		
D1	<p>Types of action</p> <p>Does a project have to apply under only one component of the programme (Human resource development, Curriculum development, Institutional and systems development) ?</p>	<p>Projects may cover one or more of these three Activity areas</p> <p>→ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.1.3)</p>
D2	<p>Types of action</p> <p>Is there a specific budget quota for projects operating under a particular component (Human resource development, Curriculum development, Institutional and systems development) ?</p>	No.
D3	<p>Curriculum Development 1</p> <p>If a proposal addresses Curriculum Development, should it develop an entire Degree/Masters programme, or could it just develop modules?</p>	Curriculum development can also concern the development of separate modules within a Degree/Masters programme.
D4	<p>Curriculum Development 2</p> <p>Can curriculum development activities be mainly addressed towards Asian students?</p>	Yes, but the Applicant has to prove that the project activities benefit the whole partnership.
D5	<p>Involvement of undergraduate students in the project activities</p> <p>Can undergraduate students benefit from mobility under Asia-Link?</p>	No, they cannot. Students participating in a workshop organised by a partner university must be post-graduate students in order to receive per diems and reimbursement of travel expenses. However, undergraduate students of the university organising the workshop can participate in it.

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E. Eligibility of costs		
E1	<p>Preparatory phases</p> <p>Does the Asia-Link Programme provide grants for the preparation of projects?</p>	<p>No. Grant applications are expected to take the form of "full scale" projects following the Logical Framework for the project. Asia-Link does not finance preparatory phases of projects. Any costs related to activities that have already taken place before the signature of a grant contract are ineligible.</p>
E2	<p>Total project costs</p> <p>Is there a restriction on the total project cost?</p>	<p>No. There is no restriction concerning project cost. However the Commission grant must respect the percentage and the minimum and maximum amounts indicated in the Guidelines for Applicants.</p> <p>→ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 1.3 and 2.1.4)</p>
E3	<p>Administrative costs & overheads</p> <p>Are administrative costs/overheads eligible?</p> <p>Are these costs allowed if the Applicant is currently implementing another EC funded project?</p>	<p>Yes. However, administrative/overhead costs cannot exceed a maximum of 7% of the total amount of direct eligible project costs. These administrative costs are presented as a provision in the budget sheet under item 8. It is not necessary to itemise individual costs for these expenses or provide justification in the form of invoices.</p> <p>As long as the administrative provisions do not exceed 7% of the total eligible costs within an individual project, there is no restriction across projects.</p> <p>→ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.1.4)</p> <p>→ <u>Annex B</u> (Budget, Worksheet 1)</p>
E5	<p>Contributions to the project</p> <p>Which items may be included by the Applicant as contributions with a monetary value?</p>	<p>The Guidelines for Applicants explain which costs are eligible (direct and indirect costs). Examples of eligible costs include project staff salaries, travel and subsistence costs for project staff, purchase costs for equipment and services, costs for consumables and supplies etc.</p> <p>Other in-kind contributions such as the following are not eligible: land, immovable property, durable capital goods, raw materials and unpaid charity work. Existing equipment including computers may not be included. Vehicles may not be included, although petrol may. The use of existing premises may not be included. Contributions from other sources (including sponsors) may be included. NB: this list is not exhaustive. A non-exhaustive list of ineligible costs may be consulted in the Guidelines for Applicants.</p> <p>The project accounts must be clearly justifiable, as they may be subject to an audit for a seven-year period following the end of the project implementation.</p> <p>→ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.1.4)</p> <p>→ <u>Annex B</u> (Budget, Worksheets 1 & 2)</p>
E6	<p>Co-financing of a project</p> <p>How is the co-financing calculated?</p>	<p>The Commission provides a grant as a means of co-financing the project. The Commission contribution is calculated as a percentage of the <u>total eligible costs</u> of the project (depending on the component). All costs presented in the project budget must be eligible. Worksheet 2 of the Budget ("Expected Sources of Funding") should be completed indicating the total amounts in question. Contributions from other organisations may be included as a source of co-financing.</p> <p>The partnership is expected to be able to declare how its part of the financing is calculated.</p> <p>→ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.1.4)</p> <p>→ <u>Annex B</u> (Budget, Worksheet 1 & 2)</p>
E7	<p>Costs of associates</p> <p>Are the costs incurred by associates considered as part of the total eligible costs for co-financing?</p>	<p>No. Associates, the participants in the projects external to the eligible partnership, must carry their own costs regarding any activities in which they participate, with the exception of travel costs and per diem.</p> <p>See questions B5-B10 for further information on associates.</p>
E8	<p>Balance of funding</p> <p>Can the balance of funding (other expected sources of funding) come from banks, financial institutions, government, donations etc?</p>	<p>Yes. The balance of funding may come from any source other than the European Union budget.</p>
E9	<p>Revenues</p> <p>What will happen to possible revenue of a</p>	<p>Should there be any sales income, conference fees or equivalent, it should be estimated and indicated in the budget sheet under "expected sources of funding" as "direct revenue from the project". It cannot be calculated as being part of the required</p>

Ref.	Question	Answer
	project?	<p>minimum of 25% of own financing for the project. Revenue should be clearly indicated and reinvested in the project.</p> <p>→ Annex B (Budget, Worksheet 2)</p>
E10	<p>Eligible travel expenses</p> <p>What are the eligible costs incurred by air, by car or by train? What supporting documents are required to justify expenses incurred?</p> <p>Which travel costs are eligible? How are they calculated? Which documents are required to support a claim?</p>	<p>By air: if the distance is greater than 400 km, air travel is acceptable in economy class. The cost must not exceed the most economical rate available (APEX, PEX). Boarding cards and payment invoices must be kept to justify the expenses incurred.</p> <p>By train: when a journey is made by train, the cost must not exceed the price of a first class train ticket for the journey. Train ticket must be kept as justification of the expenses incurred</p> <p>By car: when a journey is made by car, the cost must not exceed the price of a first class train ticket for the journey. An 'expenditure note' signed by the lead Applicant institution to be kept, indicating the start point, the point of arrival, the dates of travel, the number of kilometres covered, the average consumption of the vehicle, the fuel costs and the maintenance costs. The total cost may not exceed the price of a first class train ticket; justification of the first class train ticket price shall be kept. Rented car: invoice and proof of payment or paid invoice including evidence of the distance travelled in order to calculate petrol costs to be kept.</p> <p>→ Guidelines for Applicants (Section 2.1.4)</p> <p>→ Annex B (Budget, Worksheet 1)</p>
E11	<p>Expenditure in EU and in Asia</p> <p>Is it required that more expenditure is related to Asian than European partners?</p>	<p>Asia-Link is in the area of economic co-operation between the EU and Asia and thus should not be interpreted as being purely a development co-operation scheme. It is expected that the project will equally benefit equal partners from both regions.</p>
E12	<p>Budget headings</p> <p>Are all headings in the Budget (Annex B) applicable?</p>	<p>The budget template is a generic document. Typically, budget heading 4 is not applicable to Asia-Link and consequently should be left blank.</p> <p>→ Annex B (Budget, Worksheet 1)</p>
E13	<p>Purchase of equipment</p> <p>What proportion of the project budget can be used for the purchase of equipment?</p>	<p>Asia-Link is not primarily a development aid programme. The purchase of equipment and training material is possible, but the amount allocated to equipment should be reasonable and fully justified in line with the requirements of the proposal, consuming only a limited part of the budget (not more than 15%). If equipment and supplies are required, the budget justification must include a full explanation of the proposed purchase.</p> <p>The programme aims to foster economic co-operation between Europe and Asia and is based on partnerships between equals. It is not a development co-operation scheme and consequently the main aim is not to improve physical infrastructure, to create new physical facilities, to equip offices etc.</p> <p>→ Guidelines for Applicants (Section 2.1.3 and 2.1.4)</p>
E14	<p>Exchange rates</p> <p>How does the Commission take into account changes in conversion rates for eligible project costs?</p>	<p>In cases where real costs were borne in other currency than the EURO, the conversion shall be done at a rate made up by the average of the rates published in InforEuro for the months covered by the relevant report:</p> <p>http://ec.europa.eu/budget/inforeuro/</p> <p>Eventual currency exchanges losses are not considered eligible costs. However, in the event of an exceptional exchange-rate fluctuation, consultation on an eventual restructuring of the Action can be envisaged so as to lessen the impact of the fluctuation.</p>
E15	<p>NEW! 30.08.06</p> <p>Subsistence costs for PhD students</p> <p>Can a grant cover personnel costs for PhD students?</p>	<p>Instead of receiving fees, PhD students spending longer periods abroad as part of an Asia-Link project usually receive a monthly subsistence allowance.</p> <p>There is no official Commission guidance on the level of these monthly rates. Applicants should set their own rates, based on the living costs at the university in question. Most universities have a standard rate that reflects accommodation and living costs on campus/in the city. You should note the rate in the budget, and briefly explain the way you have decided on this rate in the "budget justification sheet" (see Guidelines, last paragraph of section 2.1.2., page 9).</p>

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F. Application Form and Annexes		
F1	Accessing open Calls for Proposals Where are the application documents provided?	All documents relevant to the grant application procedure are available via the EuropeAid Co-operation Office website: On the left panel, choose: ALA, Open, Grants, Asia, Submit Query -> Asia-Invest. The publication reference is: EuropeAid/123738/C/ACT/Multi
F2	Other languages Where can I find the Guidelines for Applicants, Application Form, etc. in languages other than English?	The Notice of the Call for Proposals was issued on the EuropeAid website on 30 June 2006 in English only, with the Guidelines for Applicants and relevant Annexes also only available in English.
F3	Supporting documents What are supporting documents? Who has to submit them? Why?	Supporting documents are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the statutes/articles of association of the Applicant and each partner organisation (see question F4) - An external audit report when applicable (see question F7) - Copy of the Applicant's latest accounts - A completed legal entity sheet when applicable (see question F5) - A completed financial identification form <p>In accordance with the new selection procedure, supporting documents will only be required for proposals that have been provisionally selected (see Section G).</p> <p>These documents will allow confirmation of the eligibility of the Applicant and partners by confirming the information provided in the application form. If any incoherence is noted, the application will be rejected.</p> <p>Guidelines for Applicants (Section 2.4)</p>
F4	Statutes/Articles of Association What are they? And when should they be submitted?	Statutes/Articles of Association are legal documents that provide the legal proof of the establishment of the institutions/organisations involved in the partnership which is applying for a grant. In the context of the Asia-Link programme, the statutes/articles of association allow to verify that institutions/organisations involved in a project proposal as Applicant or as partners meet the eligibility criteria that define them as higher education institutions. In accordance with the new selection procedure, Statutes/Articles of Association will only be required for proposals that have been provisionally selected (see Section G). The Applicant will be notified of this provisional selection and will be asked to submit all supporting documents, including Statutes/Articles of Association (see question F3) within a specific timeframe. As the gathering of supporting documents can be a time-consuming process, Applicants are strongly advised to begin to gather them once they have been notified that their Concept Note passed the first selection stage (see Section G). The following exceptions are granted: An organisation/institution that has been recognised as an eligible <u>Applicant</u> under the following previous Asia-Link call does not need to submit a copy of its Statutes/Articles of Association: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Asia-Link Call 2005 (EuropeAid/120517/C/G/Multi) launched on 21/10/2004 with deadlines on 10/02/2005 and 19/05/2006. <p>If this organisation has subsequently signed a contract with the Commission, the full reference of the contract, the title of the project and its period of implementation should be provided. The delegation responsible for its management should be indicated (or Brussels if still managed by EuropeAid). If the proposal was not subsequently retained and no contract was signed, a copy of the letter of rejection received after the technical evaluation should be provided.</p> <p>Guidelines for Applicants (Section 2.1.1 and Section 2.4)</p>

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F5	<p>Legal Entity Sheet</p> <p>What is it?</p>	<p>The legal entity sheet forms Annex D of the Guidelines for Applicants. In accordance with the new selection procedure, a completed Legal Entity Sheet will only be required for proposals that have been provisionally selected (see Section G).</p> <p>Applicants that have already signed a contract with the European Commission (in the context of any European Commission funded programme) will not be requested to provide such a document provided that they have not had any change in their legal status in the mean time. The reference of their legal entity sheet number will have to be clearly indicated in the application form (Section II.1).</p>
F6	<p>English translation of documents</p> <p>Are Applicants and partners required to provide an English translation of the supporting documents?</p>	<p>Although it is no longer a requirement to provide an English translation of the supporting documents, it is strongly recommended to do so in order to facilitate the evaluation process. The relevant sections of the statutes and/or articles of association of the Applicant and each partner that relate to eligibility requirements should be highlighted and the <u>English</u> translation of these sections only should be provided.</p> <p>Please note that the Application Form, the Budget and the Logical Framework documents must be submitted in <u>English only</u>.</p> <p>→ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.2.1 and 2.4)</p>
F7	<p>External audit report</p> <p>Is it necessary to provide an audit report and when should it be provided?</p>	<p>In accordance with the new selection procedure, an external audit report will only be required from Applicants that are private higher education institutions, and for proposals that have been provisionally selected and where the grant requested exceeds EUR 300.000 (see Section G).</p> <p>In this case, an audit report, produced by an approved and independent auditor, certifying the accounts for the last financial year available and giving an assessment of the viability of the Applicant.</p> <p><u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.4)</p>
F8	<p>Co-financing levels</p> <p>Is there a preferred size for co-financing? Will a project be evaluated more highly if it asks for less than the maximum co-financing level?</p>	<p>No. As long as the minimum and maximum grant size and the maximum levels of co-financing are respected, there is no preferential size for the co-financing and a project will not be evaluated more highly if it requests less than the maximum co-financing level indicated.</p>
F9	<p>Methodology</p> <p>What is meant by "methods of implementation"?</p>	<p>The Methodology in the application should explain how a project is going to be organised and managed. The methodology should describe how a project is to be implemented, focusing on the methods, rather than the activities. This section should also contain a detailed description of the project's management structure (e.g. the nomination of an advisory committee, decision-making procedures, communications/information flow, schedule of meetings etc.).</p> <p>→ <u>Annex A</u> (Application Form, Section I, Point 1.8)</p>
F10	<p>Plan of action</p> <p>Is it permitted to modify the plan of action template?</p>	<p>No. The plan of action as outlined in the application form of a proposal must be presented according to the given template, as provided in the Guidelines for Applicants. The description of activities should be completed in a detailed manner giving a precise overview of the activities for the whole project duration.</p> <p>→ <u>Annex A</u> (Application Form, Section I, Point 1.7 and 1.9)</p>
F11	<p>Past management experience</p> <p>Is past experience in the management of a similar project relevant?</p>	<p>Yes. This information should be included in the Application Form.</p> <p>→ <u>Annex A</u> (Application Form, Section II, Point 4.1)</p>
F12	<p>Missing supporting documents</p> <p>Is there a 'grace period' for supplying missing supporting documents?</p>	<p>In accordance with the new selection procedure, supporting documents will only be required for proposals that have been provisionally selected (see Section G).</p> <p>Applicants provisionally selected will be informed in writing and will be requested to supply the supporting documents for a set deadline. If <u>ALL</u> requested documents are not received within the set deadline, the application will be rejected and the next application will be drawn from the reserve list.</p> <p>→ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.4)</p>
F13	<p>Supporting Documents</p> <p>Is it necessary to provide supporting documents in original or certified copies?</p>	<p>No, for this year, simple photocopies of supporting documents are accepted.</p>

Ref.	Question	Answer
F14	<p>Partnership Statement</p> <p>What is the Partnership Statement? Who must submit it and when?</p>	<p>The Partnership Statement is not considered a supporting document because it does not serve the purpose of verifying the information provided in the Application Form. The Partnership Statement is there to demonstrate that the partners are all committed to the project for its duration.</p> <p><u>Each partner, including the Applicant,</u> must sign a Partnership Statement using and respecting the template provided. The Applicant and Associate partners are not required to sign a partnership statement.</p> <p>All applications for a grant must be accompanied by the signed Partnership Statements. Therefore, there must be as many signed Partnership Statements as there are partners. A missing Partnership Statement can lead to the rejection of a project proposal.</p> <p>→ Annex A (Application Form, Section III, Point 2)</p>
F15	<p>Signatures on Partnership Statements</p> <p>Are faxed copies of partnership statements accepted?</p>	<p>Each partner institution, including the Applicant, must provide a signed Partnership Statement (a template is provided in the Application Form). Original signatures on Partnership Statements are encouraged, but faxed, scanned and photocopied copies will be accepted.</p> <p>→ Annex A (Application Form, Section III, Point 2)</p>
F16	<p>Validity of Partnership Statement</p> <p>Is a Partnership Statement signed for the submission of a proposal under one deadline valid under a future deadline?</p>	<p>No. A Partnership Statement is always related to a specific project proposal under a specified deadline. Consequently, documents that are related to a previous deadline may not be used.</p> <p>→ Annex A (Application Form, Section III, Point 2)</p>
F17	<p>Sworn Statement by the Applicant/Signature of the application</p> <p>Who should sign the Sworn Statement by the Applicant?</p>	<p>A person who is responsible in the applicant organisation for the project and who is authorised to enter into contractual engagements on behalf of the applicant organisation should sign the Sworn Statement by the Applicant. To be considered valid, the hard copy of the proposal must contain an original signed Sworn Statement by the Applicant. The Applicant must use and respect the template provided. Failure to submit a signed Sworn Statement can lead to the rejection of the proposal.</p> <p>→ Annex A (Application Form, Section IV)</p>
F18	<p>Partnership agreement</p> <p>What is a partnership agreement?</p>	<p>It is recommended for the applicant and partner organisations to sign a comprehensive <u>agreement</u> explaining in detail the tasks, responsibilities and duties of each party, and the related costs, in the event that any one fails to comply with its obligations which may impact on the partner(s). Such an agreement is an internal document between the Applicant and partners and would not be required within the application itself. It is different from the required Partnership Statement.</p>
F19	<p>Budget justification</p> <p>Is it necessary to provide a budget justification?</p>	<p>Yes. While a template is not provided, it is necessary to include with the Budget an explanation for the use of each budget item with respect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the necessity for the item (eg: flight, rental of computer etc) • the reason for the number of units proposed • the choice of unit rate applied <p>The budget justification should make reference to the specific activities foreseen in your proposal, and is an opportunity to explain in more detail than is possible in the budget itself.</p> <p>Example: <i>Budget item 1.3.1.1: 20 days per diem in India</i> 4 x 5-day missions to India by co-ordinator to participate in 2 Advisory Group meetings and 2 training sessions (see Activities 2.1 and 4 for detail). EC per diem rate applied.</p>
F20	<p>Budget reallocation</p> <p>When making a budget reallocation (within the 15% limit) does the overall total change?</p>	<p>No, just the individual budget lines change. The actual value of the grant awarded cannot be changed.</p>
F21	<p>Currency fluctuations</p> <p>Will the budget account for currency fluctuations?</p>	<p>Typically, no. Provision for currency fluctuations would only occur in highly exceptional circumstances.</p>
F22	<p>Exchange rates</p> <p>Does the Commission recognise official exchange rates?</p>	<p>Yes. When preparing the Budget (Annex B) of a proposal, it is recommended to use the most recent exchange rates for conversion to Euro where applicable. The official rate of exchange as recognised by the Commission is updated monthly:</p> <p>www.europa.eu.int/comm/budget/infoneuro/index.cfm?language=en</p>

Ref.	Question	Answer
F23	<p>Contingencies</p> <p>Can an allowance be included in the budget for unexpected expenditure beyond the project's control?</p>	<p>Yes, budget item 8 on the budget template foresees the possibility to allocate a max. of 5% of the total direct eligible costs to cover unexpected expenditure. However, please note that the use of the contingency during the course of project implementation requires the prior approval of the Commission.</p> <p>Annex B (Budget)</p>
F24	<p>Budget modifications</p> <p>Is it allowed to modify the budget template when preparing a project proposal?</p>	<p>The budget template consists of two MS Excel work sheets (1. Budget, Worksheet 2. Expected Sources of Funding).</p> <p>The project budget has to follow the template and use the main headings (1. Human Resources, 2. Travel, etc.) It is allowed to add and/or delete lines within a main heading. The calculation formula must respect the logic of the budget template. The budget must be presented for the <u>whole duration of the project and for the first year of activities</u>.</p> <p>→ Annex B (Budget)</p>
F25	<p>Objectively Verifiable Indicators</p> <p>What are the objectively verifiable indicators and their sources of verification?</p>	<p>Annex C (Logical Framework) to the project should contain information on indicators and their sources of verification. The indicators are supposed to illustrate whether the project achieves the envisaged results and effects. This information has to be project specific and both qualitative and quantitative. More information on Project Cycle Management theory is available on the European Commission web site:</p> <p>www.europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/qsm/project_en.htm</p> <p>→ Annex C (Logical Framework)</p>
F26	<p>Daily allowance rates (or per diems) 1</p> <p>Do the per diems agreed in the contract remain valid for the entire project?</p>	<p>Yes. These represent flat-rate reimbursements to subsistence costs and are the maximum level to which the EU will participate.</p> <p>For a list of current per diem rates, please consult the index on the EuropeAid Cooperation Office website:</p> <p>http://ec.europa.eu/comm/europeaid/perdiem/index_en.htm</p>
F27	<p>Daily allowance rates (or per diems) 2</p> <p>Annex G provides information on the applicable per diem rates. Is it possible to apply lower per diem rates?</p>	<p>Yes, the indicated per diem (annex G) are maximum amounts allowed. This does not prevent the Applicant from applying lower rates.</p>
F28	<p>Standard grant contract</p> <p>Is it necessary to complete the standard grant contract and attach it to the application (Annex F)?</p>	<p>No. Annex F (Standard Contract) is for information only and it should not be completed as a part of the application. Should the proposal be successful, the European Commission will prepare a complete grant contract of this nature.</p> <p>→ Annex F (Standard Grant Contract)</p>
F29	<p>CVs of project team</p> <p>Is it necessary to attach the CVs of the staff involved in the project?</p>	<p>No, the submission of CVs is no longer required.</p>
F30	<p>Constitution of project team</p> <p>Is it necessary that each of the key project staff come from the partnership organisations or can they be recruited externally?</p>	<p>The management of the project may <u>not</u> be sub-contracted. Therefore, the Project Coordinator should be employed by the applicant organisation, and the key project staff should be members of the partnership organisations. Any external recruits should be sub-contracted according to Commission rules as set out in Annex IV of the standard grant contract (Annex E), which sets out the rules on nationality and origin and determines the procedures to be followed when tendering, according to the value of the contract.</p>
F31	<p>Annual Accounts</p> <p>Is it required to submit a copy of the Applicant's annual accounts?</p>	<p>In accordance with the new selection procedure, a copy of the Applicant's latest accounts will only be required for proposals that have been provisionally selected (see Section G).</p> <p>The annual accounts constitute the consolidated profit loss account and balance sheet for the previous financial year of the <u>Applicant only</u>. They are not required in a specific format as it is expected that an organisation in any case publishes such reports following its own procedures. The annual accounts will be used to verify the information provided in the application form (Section II, Point 4.2).</p> <p>Proposals that have been provisionally selected and for which the Applicant is an International Organisation will not be required to provide a copy of their annual accounts.</p> <p>Proposals submitted by private higher education institutions that have been</p>

Ref.	Question	Answer
		<p>provisionally selected and for which the grant requested exceeds EUR 300.000 are required to provide an Audit Report produced by an approved and independent auditor. These proposals will not be required to provide a copy of their annual accounts.</p> <p>→ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.4)</p> <p>→ <u>Application Form</u> (Section II, Point 4.2)</p>
F32	<p>Copies of application</p> <p>Is it possible to have paper copies of the grant application documents?</p>	<p>No. Applicants are strongly encouraged to make use of the electronic files via the Internet. The necessary documents for the grant application procedure are available on the Asia-Invest web site. See <u>How to Apply</u>. They are also provided on the main <u>EuropeAid Co-operation Office</u> web site under Tenders and Grants.</p> <p>The Guidelines for Applicants provide that a project proposal must include <u>one (1) electronic version</u> of the proposal in the form of a diskette or CD-ROM, so paper copies of the relevant documents are not sufficient for the grant application procedure.</p>
F33	<p>Hard copies</p> <p>Which documents have to be provided in hard copy?</p>	<p>Applications including the Application Form (Annex A) and relevant annexes, (B, C, and H) must be submitted <u>in one (1) original and one (1) copy</u>.</p> <p>→ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.2.2)</p>
F34	<p>Electronic copies</p> <p>Which documents have to be provided in electronic form?</p>	<p>In addition to the one (1) set of original application materials and to the one (1) copy, it is mandatory to include <u>one (1) electronic version</u> of the proposal in the form of a CD-ROM or USB memory stick, for the Application Form and relevant Annexes (A, B, C,H).</p> <p>→ <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.2.2)</p>
F35	<p>Documents submitted under a Call for Proposals</p> <p>Will the Application Form be returned to an Applicant in the case where a proposal is rejected?</p>	<p>No. The European Commission retains all documents submitted under a Call for Proposals. It is not possible to return them to the Applicant. For this reason, an Applicant is advised to keep a copy of all documents submitted.</p>
F36	<p>Concept Note</p> <p>Is it necessary to present the Concept Note separately from the rest of the application form?</p>	<p>No, the Concept Note is part of Annex A, the Application Form, and has to be bound together with the other relevant annexes (B,C and H).</p>

Ref	Question	Answer
G. Evaluation of proposals		
G1	<p>New evaluation procedure</p> <p>What are the main features of the new evaluation and selection procedure?</p>	<p>The new selection procedure significantly simplifies the process of submitting a proposal. The main features of the new procedure are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administrative Check: the administrative check will be carried on the basis of the Checklist provided in the Application Form (Section V). The Applicant should ensure that each component on the Checklist is satisfied, that the Sworn Statement is duly signed by the Applicant and that the Partnership Statements are duly signed by the Applicant and the partners. - Evaluation of the Concept Note and Pre-selection: The Concept Note will be evaluated on the basis on the Concept Note Evaluation Grid provided in the Guidelines for Applicants (Section 2.3 - Step 2). To proceed to the next step of the selection procedure, two criteria will have to be met: (1) the Concept Note must have scored 30 out of 50 (2) the Concept Note must be amongst the highest scoring ones amounting to twice the available amount of funding. <p>IMPORTANT: ALL Applicants must submit the Concept Note AND the Full Application Form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation of the Application Form and Provisional Selection: provided that the Concept Note was pre-selected, the whole Application Form will be evaluated. This evaluation will be carried out on the basis of the Evaluation Grid provided in the Application Form (Section 2.3 - Step 3). To be provisionally selected for funding, a proposal will have to meet the following criteria: (1) be amongst the highest scoring ones (indicatively, the threshold is 75 out of 100 or above) and within the funding available (2) have scored at least 12 out of 20 under "Financial and Operational Capacity" (3) have scored at least 16 out of 25 under "Relevance". - Eligibility conformity check: The eligibility conformity check will only be carried out for projects that have been provisionally selected. These projects will be contacted and will be asked to provide all the necessary supporting documents within a deadline (see F3). <p>IMPORTANT: If the Applicant fails to provide all requested documents within the specified deadline or if appears the information provided in the Application Form and the Sworn Statement from the Applicant do not conform with the supporting documents, the Application Form will be rejected and a proposal will be taken from the Reserve List.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reserve list: a reserve list will be constituted and will be drawn upon if a proposal fails to pass the eligibility conformity check.
G2	<p>Evaluation and selection results</p> <p>What kind of feedback on the evaluation results will be given to rejected Applicants?</p>	<p>All Applicants will be contacted after the Administrative Check. They will be given a reference number and will be informed whether or not their Concept Note was recommended for evaluation following the Administrative Check (ref to G1).</p> <p>Following the evaluation of the Concept Notes, the Applicants whose Concept Note was evaluated will be contacted and will be informed of the score they were attributed and whether or not their Application Form will be evaluated.</p> <p>Following the evaluation of the Application Forms, the Applicants whose Application Form was evaluated will be informed whether or not their Applications was provisionally selected for funding. Applicants whose application was retained will be asked to submit all necessary supporting documents within a certain deadline.</p> <p>→ Guidelines for Applicants (Section 2.3 and 2.4)</p>
G2	<p>Evaluation committee</p> <p>Who evaluates the project proposals?</p>	<p>The evaluation process will be co-managed by the EuropeAid Office in Brussels and the EC Delegation in the respective countries. The assessors sign a declaration of impartiality and confidentiality. The final score awarded to a project is the average score of the two assessments. On the basis of the assessments, the evaluation committee recommends projects for financing. The evaluation committee is composed of Commission staff representing different services of the European Commission.</p>
G3	<p>Resubmission of a proposal</p> <p>Can rejected proposals be resubmitted, provided the deficiencies that led to their rejection are remedied?</p>	<p>Yes. Having rectified the reasons for the initial rejection, an Applicant is free to resubmit a proposal for another deadline. There is no guarantee that the revamped proposal will be successful second time round. A resubmitted proposal must be submitted as a "new" and separate application, complete with all required supporting documents, originals etc. A resubmitted proposal should be indicated as such.</p>

Ref	Question	Answer
G. Evaluation of proposals		
G4	Feedback on rejected proposals Does the Commission provide feedback on reasons for a rejected project proposal?	Yes. The weak points of a project will be communicated in a letter notifying the Applicant of an unsuccessful proposal.
G5	Least developed countries Are applications involving least developed countries given priority?	Yes. One of the key priorities outlined in the European Commission's Communication "Towards a New Asia Strategy" (COM 2001:469) is the contribution to sustainable development and poverty alleviation in the least prosperous countries in Asia. During the selection process, priority is given to proposals that involve Asian partners from the least developed countries and to projects that demonstrate that they are targeting least developed countries ² . These projects may be awarded a grant up to a maximum of 90% of the total project costs. → <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 1.3 and 2.1.2)
G6	Returning proposals Is it possible to have a proposal returned to the Applicant?	No. The Commission is obliged to retain all successful and unsuccessful applications and supporting documents for the purposes of auditing (for up to 7 years).
G7	Focus on Institutional and Systems Development This year's call will focus on Institution and System Developments. What does it mean exactly?	Under Asia-Link, there are no quotas destined to different components. The emphasis given to ISD means that Applicants are encouraged to present proposals in this area. A focus on ISD will be considered as an additional quality factor in the evaluation of proposals.
G8	Project team CVs of key staff involved in the project are no longer requested (see question F29). How can the quality of the project team be described in a proposal?	The section on "Capacity to manage and implement actions" of the Application Form can be used to give details about the evaluation team. → <u>Application Form</u> (Section II, Point 4)
G9	Regional distribution of projects Does the regional distribution play a role in the selection of projects to be funded?	The evaluation is primarily based on the quality of proposals. Only when the same score is given to different proposals, the regional distribution might be a decisive factor.

² LDC as defined by the UN are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Laos, the Maldives and Nepal

Ref	Question	Answer
H. Preparation of the grant contract and implementation of projects		
H1	Starting date of a contract If an application is successful and a contract is concluded, can the contract be backdated?	No retroactivity is allowed. The contracting party will be offered the option to start the action either (a) the day after the last party has signed; (2) the first day of the month following the first payment (c) a defined date other than the former two options.
H2	Project duration What is the maximum duration of a project under Asia-Link?	The minimum project duration is 12 months and the maximum project duration is 36 months, including the ex-post assessment. → <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.1.3)
H3	Project specific bank accounts With reference to Article 15.8 of the General Conditions of the Contract. Does this mean we have to open a separate specific bank account?	The opening of a separate specific bank account for the project is no longer a requirement. However, the Beneficiary is required to always be in a position to identify the funds paid by the Commission and to calculate any interest accrued.
H4	Ex-post assessment What is ex-post assessment?	The ex-post assessment is the follow-up activity mandatory to all projects and is conducted no later than 6 months after the end of activities. It culminates in the provision of a final report that is submitted to the Commission before the final payment will be made. All proposals must allow 6 months within the detailed description of activities and plan of action for an ex-post assessment.
H5	Project management Can project co-ordination or management be carried out by an associate, or be sub-contracted?	No, the responsibility <u>must</u> be retained by the Applicant. → <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.1.1) → <u>Annex F</u> (Standard Grant Contract, Annex II and IV)
H6	Change in the partnership What happens if a partner drops out after the signature of the contract?	If a partner drops out, evidence must be submitted to the European Commission that the minimum requirements of partnerships are still satisfied. If this is not the case, the funding is likely to be terminated. The dropping out of a partner represents a substantial change and requires an amendment to the contract. → <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.1.2)
H7	Subcontracting Is subcontracting allowed in the project? Is it necessary for the Applicant to indicate subcontracting activities in the project proposal? Are there special rules for how things can be subcontracted? Is there a limit for the amount or part of work that can be subcontracted?	Yes. Subcontracting is allowed but has to be minimal. When employing the services of external experts for a project, the Applicant must do so according to the Commission's rules on subcontracting. Any planned subcontracting activities foreseen in the project must be specified in the proposal's Methodology. Subcontractors are neither partners nor associates. Only a limited portion of a project may be subcontracted (maximum 10%). The main bulk of the operation must be undertaken by the beneficiary and partners themselves. The role of the project co-ordinator cannot be delegated to an associate nor be subcontracted. Any subcontracting carried out as part of the project must be subject to the Commission's the contract award procedures set out under <u>Annex IV</u> of the Guidelines for Applicants. For information on the eligibility of sub-contractors, refer to Section 2.1.2. Beneficiaries must ensure to keep in their records ALL documents related to the subcontracting procedure for up-to seven years after the final payment was made. → <u>Guidelines for Applicants</u> (Section 2.1.2) → <u>Annex A</u> (Application Form, Section I, Point 1.7) → <u>Annex E</u> (Standard Grant Contract, Annex II and IV)

Ref	Question	Answer
H8	Project co-ordinator Is the main project co-ordinator to be employed by the Applicant?	Yes. If a project is selected for funding, the Applicant will become the contracting party (the "beneficiary") to the European Commission. The project co-ordinator must be a staff member of the applicant organisation. This role cannot be delegated to any other partnership member, an external partner, nor subcontracted.
H10	Management by the Commission Who will be responsible for the preparation of the grant contract? Who will be responsible for the management of the project in the Commission? What if a project involves two countries in Asia; which Delegation will be responsible?	Following the process of devolution of management responsibility from the Commission headquarters in Brussels, to the EC Delegations in Asia, individual project management is the responsibility of the Delegations. http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/delegations/intro/web.htm Beneficiaries will be informed of their project contact which will be based in the respective EC Delegation in Asia. This person will be responsible for liaising with the beneficiary, preparing the contract, receiving reports and monitoring its implementation. If a project involves more than one Asian country, the contract preparation and project management will be undertaken by the Delegation in the country where the majority of the activities will take place (if it an equal amount of activities, this decision will be taken at the discretion of headquarters after consulting the relevant Delegations).
H11	Reporting What reports are to be submitted by beneficiaries (successful Applicants)? What language must the reports be in?	The grant contract specifies the reporting requirements to the Commission and provides templates for reporting. In addition, successful Applicants receive Guidelines for Beneficiaries, which gives further information on the reporting requirements. All formal reports must be submitted in English.
H12	Responsible party for reporting Who is responsible for the technical and financial reporting and the monitoring of a project: the Applicant or the partner(s)?	The Applicant becomes the beneficiary when it signs a grant contract with the European Commission. As far as the Commission is concerned, the beneficiary is the only organisation responsible for the contract so is ultimately responsible for monitoring the project and providing the reports to the contact persons in the relevant EC Delegation (see question H10).
H13	Verification of the expenditures When is a report on the verification of the action's expenditure necessary during implementation of the project?	A report on the verification of the action's expenditure must be provided with the request for final payment (payment of the balance), in the case of a grant of more than EUR 100.000. The costs for the report can be included in the project budget. → Annex F (Standard Grant Contract, Annex II)
H14	Auditors Who can conduct the verification?	The verification of expenditures must be conducted by an approved auditor who is a member of an internationally recognised supervisory body for statutory auditing, (as nominated in the contract).
H15	Organisation of a verification of expenditures How should the auditing of the project funds be organised?	Sufficient funds should be included in the Budget for the verification of expenditures in order to respect the requirements as per the terms of article 15.6 of the General Conditions applicable to the Community grant contracts for external aid. The report must cover the Applicant and all partners. As a minimum requirement, partner organisations should send all original invoices or certified copies of the invoices to the Applicant so as to allow the auditor to check them. The auditor may also carry out visits to the partner organisations on a sample basis and throughout the project duration, in order to conduct on-the-spot auditing of third party accounts. The expenditure verification report will conform to the model provided in Annex VII of the grant contract → Annex F (Standard Grant Contract, Annexes II & VII) → Annex B (Budget, Item 5.3)
H16	Starting date for the implementation of the project Considering the deadline and the subsequent steps in the evaluation of proposals, what could be a realistic starting date for a project?	The timing of the evaluation of proposals will depend on the number of proposals received and is therefore difficult to determine at this stage. However, a realistic date for starting your project could be the second semester of 2007 (academic year 2007-2008).

Ref	Question	Answer
I. Support by the EuropeAid Co-operation Office		
I1	Assistance to Applicants Is any assistance provided by the European Commission for the screening of project ideas and the development of project proposals?	Individual assistance and counselling on project ideas or proposals is <u>not</u> available, in order to ensure transparency and equal opportunities to all. Only applications officially submitted within the framework of the Calls for Proposals can be evaluated. Specific enquiries related to the Asia-Invest Programme may be sent to: europaaid-asia-link@ec.europa.eu or by fax +32-2-298 4863 Frequently asked questions (' FAQs ') and materials from Information Sessions are published on the Asia-Invest website for the benefit of all potential Applicants.
I2	Visits to the European Commission Is it necessary for the Applicant or partners to visit the European Commission at any time to further a project?	No. Unless it is beneficial to the project for the Applicant or partners to visit Brussels, they are not required to visit the European Commission. All information may be provided over the telephone, via the post, fax or email.
I3	Partner Search facility Does Asia-Link provide contact details for higher education institutions in EU Member States and Asia?	A free-of-charge Partner Search facility is available via the Asia-Link web site in order to provide organisations with the possibility of identifying potential partners with whom to develop and submit a proposal. Interested parties are invited to complete the on-line registration form. The Partner Search facility may only be consulted by registered eligible users (ie. Higher education institutions). ➔ Asia-Link Partner Search http://ec.europa.eu/comm/europaaid/projects/asia-link/partners.htm You can also consult a list of funded projects on the Asia-Link website, with (in most cases) links to the project's own website, and with project factsheets providing contact details of the coordinator.
I4	Organisations listed on the Partner Search facility Are Applicants restricted to preparing projects in partnership with organisations registered on the Asia-Link Partner Search facility?	No. The Asia-Link Partner Search is a <u>tool to assist</u> organisations to find partners if necessary. It is also aimed at encouraging contact between key operators in both regions. However, there are not requirements to use this facility when preparing a proposal for submission.
I6	Timeframe for questions prior to a deadline Until when may questions related to a project proposal be asked prior to a deadline?	During the time between the publication and the deadline for receipt of proposals, Applicants may present questions to the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, in writing up to 21 days before the submission of proposals. Replies must be provided to all such questions at least 11 days before the deadline for submission.

Answers to the most frequently asked questions are provided on the web site for wider reference. As additional questions are received, the answers are added to the current listing. In addition to the Call for Proposals and Guidelines for Applicants, they serve as an additional reference point when preparing an application for a grant.

NB The FAQs are provided for information only and are not legally binding. Only the Guidelines for Applicants are legally binding.