



**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
FOR
THE DIRECT ASSISTANCE GRANT SCHEME**

Q1: How does one apply for funds under the Direct Assistance Scheme?

A1: Applications are available from Caribbean Export's website at www.carib-export.com. There are two types of grant funding; Regular Procedures and Accelerated Procedures.

A) Regular Procedures

- minimum amount €5,000 and maximum amount, €30,000 - duration for projects is four (4) months
- Project cost must not exceed €42,857.00 in order to be reimbursed the maximum amount of €30,000.

B) Accelerated Procedures

- minimum amount €1,000 and maximum amount, €5,000 - duration for projects two (2) months
- Project cost must not exceed €7,142 in order to be reimbursed the maximum amount of €5,000.

Q2: What is the deadline for Regular and Accelerated Procedure Applications?

A2: Caribbean Export has extended the deadline for the Regular Procedures from April 9, 2010@ 4:30 p.m. to April 20, 2010 @4:30 p.m. Therefore, the new deadline for Regular Procedures applications is [April 20, 2010 @4:30 p.m.](#)

[The deadline for Accelerated Procedures is still May 28, 2010@ 4:30 p.m.](#)

Q3: How long is the evaluation process?

A3: The evaluation period for grants is as follows:

Regular procedures 4-6 weeks

Accelerated procedures: 3-4 weeks

The duration of the evaluation period is dependent on the number of applications submitted. Given the deadline date for the Regular Procedures, one can expect that applicants will be notified by the first week in May 2010.

Q4: Can goods (e.g. equipment, tools etc) and services (e.g. consultant, etc) are purchased from non ACP and EU member countries, such as USA and Canada?

A4: All goods and services must be purchased from African Caribbean and Pacific States and European Union Member countries.

Q5: Does the Direct Assistance Grant Scheme advance funds for projects?

A5: No funds are advanced to beneficiaries of a grant. Funds are only reimbursed to Beneficiaries of a grant on completion of their project activities and submission of the requisite support documentation such as Payment Request Letter, Final Narrative Report, Final Financial Report, Original Invoices, Proof of Payment, etc.

Q6: Explain the maximum resource to be utilized under the Accelerated Procedure is EUR 425,000?

A6: This is the total amount Caribbean Export can award for accelerated procedure grants.

Q7: When are applicants notified of Caribbean Export's decision?

A7: The Call for Proposals will close on April 20, 2010 and only thereafter will applications be evaluated. We anticipate that the evaluation process will be completed by the first week in May 2010. All applicants will be notified of Caribbean Exports decision to reject or approve their application.

Q8: Do applicants have to incur the cost of their projects directly?

A8: Yes, applicants have to incur the cost of their project activities and then seek reimbursement from Caribbean Export. Funds are only reimbursed to Beneficiaries of a grant on completion of their project activities and submission of the requisite support documentation such as Payment Request Letter, Final Narrative Report, Final Financial Report, Original Invoices, Proof of Payment, etc.

Q9: Does the grant cover activities that have already been undertaken?

A9: There is no retroactivity; activities undertaken or costs incurred before the applicant is awarded a grant are not eligible for reimbursement.

Q10: Are last two (2) years financial statements required to be submitted with an application?

A10: Eligibility requirements state that all applicants are required to provide 2 years financial statements to demonstrate their financial capacity to finance their proposed project activities. Therefore, any applicant that does not provide the required financial statements will be rejected.

Q11: Are Start-ups eligible to apply?

A11: Start-ups are not eligible to apply. Start-ups are defined as firms that have been in operation less than two (2) years.

Q12: Does the 4-month implementation period occur at any time during the year following funding, or must it come immediately upon receiving a grant?

A12: The implementation period takes effect on the signing of grant contract between Caribbean Export and the Beneficiary. The 4 month implementation period is the time the Beneficiary has to undertake the proposed project or action for a Regular Procedures Grant.

Q13 I started this professional service 3 years ago but was focusing on the developmental aspects and was only legally registered as a firm 6 months ago. How will my application be handled?

A13: The Direct Assistance Scheme requires your business to be legally registered, which it is, so you satisfy the legally registered criteria. Additionally, all applicants must submit 2 years financial statements. Therefore, your company must be operating for at least 2 years, which can be confirmed by the requisite financial statements.

Q14: Page 7, guidelines refers to an applicant being awarded up to a maximum of euro 150,000.00 over the duration of the scheme. Please explain.

A14: This means that if an applicant was awarded a grant(s) and they exceed the maximum assistance of EUR 150,000 then they would not be eligible to for another grant.

Q15: How are funds disbursed after an applicant has been awarded a grant?

A15: Funds are only reimbursed to a beneficiary for activities undertaken and completed during the implementation period of the signed grant contract. Additionally, costs can only be incurred or be eligible for reimburse when Caribbean Export has officially approved an application and signed a grant contract with the applicant (the beneficiary). The Scheme only allows one reimbursement payment.

Q16: Does an applicant have to use the travel and subsistence costs published by European Commission?

A16: Yes, all applicants are required to use the per diem rates for travel and subsistence as published by the European Commission (EC). Refer to the EC website for per diem rates: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/per_diems/index_en.htm

- Q17: What exchange rates should be used to calculate or budget?
A17: The Exchange Rates published by the European Commission should be used to prepare your budget and facilitate the conversion from your jurisdictions currency to Euros. The website address is:
<http://ec.europa.eu/budget/inforeuro/index.cfm?fuseaction=countries&Language=en>
- Q18: Page 9 of the guidelines, "contributions in kind". Please explain.
A18: Contributions in kind (Payment made in the form of goods and services, rather than cash) made by the beneficiary do not represent actual expenditure and are not eligible costs.
- Q19: Are taxes (e.g. VAT, GCT, etc) paid by the Direct Assistance Scheme?
A19: The Direct Assistance Scheme will only reimburse costs exclusive of taxes.
- Q20: Worksheet 2 –expected source of funding of Annex III (A) is missing!
A20: There is no worksheet 2 for Annex III (A) only the main worksheet which highlights the budget for the proposed project. The only budget documentation to be completed is Annex III(A) – Budget for Regular Procedures and Annex III(B) budget for Accelerated Procedures. Applications will not be rejected or penalised for not having this included in your budget.
- Q21: Are non-registered firms, individuals, entities, organizations eligible to apply for assistance under the Direct Assistance Grant?
A21: All legally registered individual, entities, organisations, firms are eligible to apply that have been in operation for two years.
- Q22: The business is fairly new therefore financial statements are only available for one year.
A22: All applicants must submit their last two (2) years financial statements and must be in operation for two years. Start-ups are not eligible as they would not meet the financial eligibility criteria mentioned herein.
- Q23: If we have a two phase project can we submit two proposals under the accelerated procedures?
A23: The answer is no, if one project (i.e. phase 1) is dependent on the other project (i.e. phase 2) to be completed. However, if they are separate or independent projects you may submit two separate proposals under the Accelerated Procedures.

Q24: Has the call for proposals deadline been extended?

A24: Caribbean Export has **extended** the deadline for the Regular Procedures from April 9, 2010@ 4:30 p.m. to April 20, 2010 @4:30 p.m. Therefore, the new deadline for Regular Procedures applications is **April 20, 2010 @4:30 p.m.** **The deadline for Accelerated Procedures is still May 28, 2010@ 4:30 p.m.**

Q25: What happens to the proposals that are not successful?

A25: If you have applied for a Regular or Accelerated Procedures grant and the application is rejected, please note that new applicants may reapply once there is a current call for proposals.

Q26: What is the Financial Identification Form?

A26: The Financial Identification Form document is just confirmation of the applicant's bank account information and will be used to make payments to beneficiaries of a grant. Applicant's must sign the Financial Identification Form and get their financial institution to stamp the said document, which must be submitted with the application form

Q27: What is the Legal Entities Form?

A27: The Legal Entities Form for Private Companies confirms the applicants address and information corresponding to the Certificate of Registration. This document must also be completed and submitted with your application.

Q28: Can a group of companies or a parent company submit financial statements for a subsidiary?

A28: No, the subsidiary must submit their financial statements.

Q29: Can a firm apply to both regular and accelerated procedures?

A29: Yes.

Q30: Can a firm company receive both types of grants (i.e. Regular and Accelerated) at the same time?

A30: Yes, but please note the applications for the Regular and Accelerated Procedures must be different activities / projects.

Q31: Are the grants processed and approved on a first-come, first-serve basis? Or are all the applications held to be processed after deadline?

A31: Both grant facilities will be evaluated by Evaluation Committee after the April 20, 2010 deadline. However, accelerated applications will be processed on a first come first serve basis until funds are exhausted on or before the final deadline of May 28, 2010.

The Evaluation Process for the Regular and Accelerated applications will be concluded the first week of May 2010. All applicants will be officially notified by Caribbean Export on the outcome of their application.

Q32: How critical is it the project does not exceed 4 months?

A32: The Regular procedures maximum duration is 4 months and can not be extended as our programme ends in October 2010. Therefore any proposed activity must be concluded within the specified time frame. This is also applicable to Accelerated procedure grants which are limited to 2 months. No grants will be awarded to firms whose projects exceed the time limits for Regular and Accelerated grants.

Q33: Are Annex I (A) Application Form and Annex III (A) Budget the only documents to be submitted?

A33: No, please refer to the respective checklists for both the Regular Procedures (Section I) and Accelerated Procedures (Section G) for additional supporting documents to be submitted with the application form and budget.

Q34: Is funding only available for projects with a lifespan of 2 or 4 months?

A34: Yes. This specifically applies to the Regular Procedures where the maximum duration for a project is 4 months. Whereas the maximum duration for an Accelerated Procedures grant is 2 months.