



**REGIONAL PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
(FED/2011/260-647)**

**GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES
FOR THE
DIRECT ASSISTANCE GRANT SCHEME**

Call for Proposal: Number EDF11-19-01

Publication Date: April 29, 2019

Deadline: June 11, 2019 @ 4:30 p.m. (Barbados time)

1.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE DIRECT ASSISTANCE GRANT SCHEME

Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export) is the regional export development and trade and investment promotion organisation of the Forum of the Caribbean Group of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States (CARIFORUM). Caribbean Export is also a beneficiary of funding assistance from the 11th European Development Fund (EDF), under which the Agency is responsible for implementing the Regional Private Sector Development Programme (RPSDP).

The overall objective of the 11th EDF Regional Private Sector Development Programme is to increase employment creation, inclusiveness, particularly for youth, women and indigenous groups, and overall poverty reduction in CARIFORUM states through targeted interventions that provide new and innovative framework for growth and development. The programme is also aligned with the goals enunciated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agreed by all states in the international community in particular SDG goals 5, 7, 8 and 10. These goals relate to gender equality, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth and reduction of inequalities.

There is a critical role for the private sector in assisting the Caribbean region to achieve these goals, thereby promoting the ultimate objective of poverty reduction and sustained economic growth.

The objectives of the DAGS are as follows:

- Opening new markets; increasing exports to the Caribbean Region and/or other International Markets
- Reducing environmental impact
- Capitalising on the benefits of the CARIFORUM-European Union Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), CARICOM Single Market Economy (CSME), the Free Trade Agreement between CARICOM-Dominican Republic or any other bilateral or multilateral arrangements signed by the region within the region or with ACP or European Union (EU) partners.
- Promoting programmes which will impact on underdeveloped areas or disadvantage sectors within the region (e.g. rural area development and gender)
- Facilitating Protection of Intellectual Property Rights

2.0 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

2.1 Eligibility of Applicants: Who Can Apply

In order to be eligible for a grant, applicants **must**:

- i. Be a firm (i.e. individual or company) legally registered and operating in a CARIFORUM member state;
- ii. Be a firm trading and operational for at least two (2) years, supported by the last two years financial statements/accounts;
- iii. Be able to finance and sustain their projects fully at the beginning; that is 100% financing is available prior to project initiation;
- iv. Be exporting or can demonstrate their potential to export goods and services; and
- v. Applicants that have an open Grant contract under EDF11-18-01 are **NOT Eligible** to apply. i.e. applicants who have not submitted their FINAL reimbursement claims to Caribbean Export by June 11, 2019, are not eligible to apply.

Applicants **NOT ELIGIBLE** to apply:

- i. Start-ups, firms, entities or individuals not financially operational for two (2) years;
- ii. Educational institutions such as Universities, Schools, Vocational Centres etc;
- iii. Business Support Organisations (BSOs);
- iv. Non-governmental organisations, including but not limited to human rights, social clubs, associations and charities

2.2 Eligible Projects/Costs

These are some of the areas in which funding may be provided (This list is for guidance only and is not exhaustive):

- Equipment modernization
- Food safety standards/certification/regulations
- Research, Development and Innovation
- Advisory services
- Product and service development
- Marketing services and activities (trade show booth procurement fees and registration costs)
- Quality and environmental systems
- Promotional material (e.g. brochures, catalogues, CDs and videos)
- Training programmes
- Implementation of IT solutions (e.g. website, e-commerce and multimedia)
- Market research and testing
- Packaging, design
- Protection of Intellectual Property Rights (e.g. registration of trademarks, patents, etc.)
- Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy



2.3 Ineligible Projects/Costs

The following types of projects are **ineligible**:

- Individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses (i.e. airfare, hotel and per diems);
- Administrative costs/overheads
- Individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- Travel costs (airfare, hotel and per diems)
- Acquisition of motor vehicles
- Debts and provisions for losses or debts;
- Interest owed;
- Salaries, wages and other human resource expenses;
- Items already financed in another framework;
- Purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary for the direct implementation of the project, in which case ownership must be transferred to the final beneficiaries and/or local partners, at the latest by the end of the project;
- Currency exchange losses;
- Taxes, including VAT
- Credits to third parties.
- Interim financing costs
- Commitment fees, bank charges
- Payments not made through financial institutions e.g. direct cash payments
- Contributions in kind¹

2.4 Available Funding:

Any funds awarded under the Direct Assistance Programme, must fall within the following amounts:

Minimum amount: €10,000

Maximum amount: €30,000

No Direct Assistance Grant may exceed 70% (€30,000) of the total project cost. The project must be financed from the applicant's or their partners' own resources, or from other funding sources.

¹ Contributions in kind made by the Beneficiary or the Beneficiary's partners refer to contributions that have a monetary value, but do not represent actual expenditure and are not eligible costs.

2.5 Duration of Grant Contract:

The period to execute the project may not exceed **six (6) months from the signing of the Grant Contract. No extensions will be granted to beneficiaries unless as outlined under Article 11 of Annex 2. All proposed project activities must be completed within the six (6) months period.**

3.0 HOW TO APPLY & DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS

3.1 Where to Access Application Form

Applications must be submitted using the official DAGS application form. The application form can be downloaded from Caribbean Export's website at www.carib-export.com. **THIS IS THE ONLY SOURCE FOR APPLICATION FORMS AND OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS.**

3.2 How to Submit an Application

- I. An applicant may submit one (1) application form for this Call.
- II. Applicants are required to submit **two (2) copies** of their applications in hard copy via registered mail, courier or hand delivery to Caribbean Export Headquarters:

Attn: Manager – Competitiveness and Export Promotion
Caribbean Export Development Agency
1st Floor Baobab Tower
Warrens
St. Michael, BB15154
BARBADOS

The outer envelope must bear **the title of the Call for Proposal Number - EDF11-19-01**

- III. Applications can ONLY be submitted via HARD COPY. All applications must be received by the specified **deadline date of June 11, 2019 @ 4:30 pm (Barbados time)**. This includes the required supporting documents that must accompany each copy of the application form:

- *Notarised copy of Registration of Certification or copy of Certificate of Incorporation*

- *Copy of the applicant's (or lead organization) latest financial account statements (income / profit & loss statements and balance sheets) audited or unaudited for the last two financial years.*
- *Financial support documentation such as a line of credit, loan, certificate of deposit, additional bank account statement, etc.*

IV. All applications must be submitted in ENGLISH.

V. All applicants MUST complete Caribbean Export's online SME Diagnostic Assessment found at <https://sme-diagnostics.ce7intelligence.com/go?to=DAGS>. The diagnostic assessment is a web-based enterprise level tool which allows for a scientific assessment of regional exporting firms (manufacturers and service providers). The assessment diagnoses and identifies the strengths and weaknesses of SMEs across 4 main pillars – Management, Production, Finance and Marketing. Applications will NOT be considered completed until the Assessment is FULLY completed.

If a potential applicant has previously completed the assessment tool, they need not complete a second assessment. They may download and submit the results of their existing assessment.

Applicants wishing to update their existing Assessment or for those who have lost their TAN access number, can submit a written request to dagsinfo@carib-export.com to provide the TAN or to unlock their existing assessment for further updates. This also includes applicants who have completed the Assessment and have no updates but are required to submit copies of the full Results Page.

The full Results Page (TOTAL SCORES - OUT) of the Diagnostic Assessment Tool must be printed and submitted with each copy of the application.

- VI. Applicants must ensure that they use the correct application form for the current Call for Proposal (CfP) provided on Caribbean Export's website. All other variations of the application will be declared null and void.
- VII. **Applicants must ensure that Section 6, entitled "Applicant Declaration", of the Application Form is signed by the applicant and submitted.** Application forms which have not been duly signed will not be considered.

Applicants must ensure that the Partner's Agreement is signed, if applicable.

VIII. All information submitted by the applicant will be treated in a confidential manner.

IX. Caribbean Export reserves the right to conduct due diligence on all applications received. This due diligence may be conducted by Caribbean Export and/or a partnering Business Support Organisation in the applicant's country of domicile to verify the

accuracy of their proposal and/or legitimacy of their business. Applications deemed to contain inaccurate/misleading information will be rejected and those applicants will be barred from re-applying to the programme for a period of five (5) years.

- X. Failure to submit the required supporting documentation will result in the application being rejected.
- XI. Applicants that have an open Grant contract under EDF11-18-01 are **NOT Eligible** to apply. i.e. applicants who have not submitted their FINAL reimbursement claims to Caribbean Export by June 11, 2019, are not eligible to apply.

3.3 Deadline for Receipt of Applications

The deadline for this Call is **June 11, 2019 @ 4:30 p.m. (Barbados Time)**.

Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted.

3.4 Further information About Applications

Further information on the Direct Assistance Scheme can be obtained by contacting Caribbean Export at dagsinfo@carib-export.com. All questions must be addressed to this email. Queries made over the telephone or addressed to the email of a particular staff member of Caribbean Export **will not be addressed**.

Questions may be sent by e-mail to dagsinfo@carib-export.com no later than ten (10) working days before the deadline for the submission of applications.

Caribbean Export has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date. Replies will be given no later than six (6) working days before the deadline for the submission of applications.

All relevant questions, together with the answers, will be published on Caribbean Export's website at <http://www.carib-export.com/grants/fags/>. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

4.0 EVALUATION & SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

4.1 Duration of the Evaluation Process

The duration of the evaluation process is sixty-five (65) working days and commences the next working day from the date of deadline of the Call for Proposals.

4.2 Stages in the Evaluation Process

4.2.1 Receipt and Registration

All applications received for the Call for Proposals will be registered, checked and numbered. Applications having met the deadline are then subjected to an administrative check which will assess whether they have duly satisfied the Eligibility Criteria for the Call.

4.2.2 Evaluation of Application

The quality of the application will be evaluated by Members of the Review Committee under two (2) main areas of assessment. The first assessment will be based on the feasibility of the project using the Evaluation Grid below. The second assessment will be based on the company's ability to execute the project successfully, assisted by the results of the Diagnostic Assessment applied to each firm.

The Diagnostic Assessment, a web-based enterprise level tool, allows for a scientific assessment of regional exporting firms (manufacturers and service providers). The assessment diagnoses and identifies the strengths and weaknesses of SMEs across 4 main pillars – Management, Production, Finance and Marketing. The Diagnostic Assessment Tool can be accessed online at <https://sme-diagnostics.ceintelligence.com/go?to=DAGS>.

The full Results Page (TOTAL SCORES - OUT) of the Diagnostic Assessment Tool must be printed and submitted with each copy of the application.

The overall assessment of each application is based on the scores obtained under the Evaluation Grid (see below) and the Diagnostic Tool. The final score is the weighted average of the total scores from each of these two (2) main areas, using the ratio of 70:30 respectively.

Evaluation Process:

The Review Committee consists of Caribbean Export staff and The Office of the Deputy Regional Authorizing Officer (DRAO) - Barbados.

Applications' receiving an average score of 70 or greater out of 100 will be ranked according to their average score. **All ranked applications, though eligible, may not be awarded a grant due to the pre-assigned value of the financial envelope allocated for the Call for Proposals.**

PROPOSAL EVALUATION	Maximum Score
1. Relevance of the project	30
1.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives of the Regional Private Sector Development Programme and the Direct Assistance Grant Scheme?	7
1.2 How relevant to the particular needs and constraints of the intended	6



Beneficiary and/or Partner(s) is the proposal? Do the proposed activities support the overall growth strategy of the firm?	
1.3 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (if final beneficiaries or targets groups)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	10
1.4 Does the proposal contain specific value-added elements, in particular, promotion or alliance of public/private partnerships, innovation and best practices, or cross-cutting issues such as climate change, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities?	7
2. Effectiveness and feasibility of the project	30
2.1 Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	6
2.2 Is the action plan clear and feasible?	6
2.3 Does the proposal contain quantifiable indicators for the outcome of the project?	6
2.4 How coherent is the overall design of the project? (in particular, does it reflect the analysis of the problems involved, taking into account external factors)	6
2.5 Is the applicant/ partners' level of involvement and participation in the project satisfactory?	6
3. Sustainability of the project	20
3.1 Is the project likely to have a tangible impact on the Beneficiary and/or Partner(s)?	7
3.2 Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects (including scope for replication and dissemination of information)?	6
3.3 Are the expected results of the proposed project sustainable : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financially (<i>how will the activities be financed after the funding ends?</i>) - 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>) - 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>)? - Environmentally (if applicable) (will the project have a negative/positive environmental impact)? 	7
4. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the project	20
4.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget	10
4.2 Is the proposed expenditure necessary for the implementation of the project?	10
Maximum total score	100

Diagnostic Assessment Tool

To be completed online at <https://sme-diagnostics.ceintelligence.com/go?to=DAGS>. Applicants will receive their score immediately upon **FULL** completion of their Diagnostic Assessment, only.

If a potential applicant has previously completed the assessment tool, they need not complete a second assessment. They may download and submit the results of their existing assessment.

Applicants wishing to update their existing Assessment or for those who have lost their TAN access number, can submit a written request to dagsinfo@carib-export.com to provide the TAN or to unlock their existing assessment for further updates. This also includes applicants who have completed the Assessment and have no updates but are required to submit copies of the full Results Page.

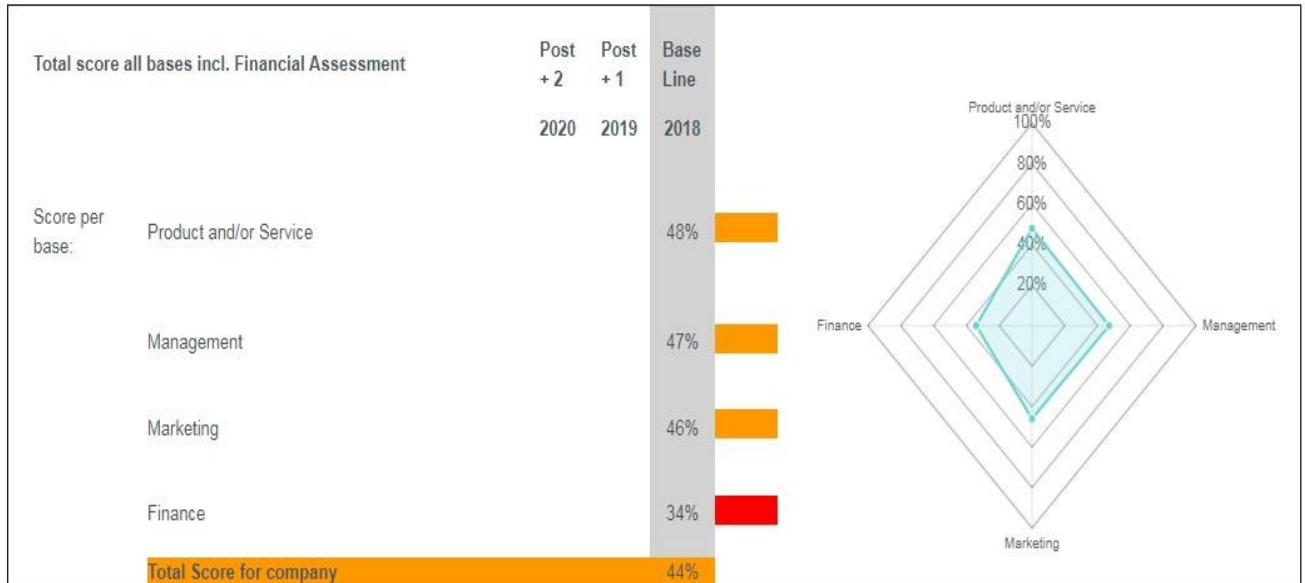
Company Evaluation - SME Diagnostic Assessment	
PILLAR	MAXIMUM SCORE
1. Product/Service - Demand - Innovation and R&D - Production/Service Delivery Capacity - Certification and Quality	100
2. Management - Structure - Strategy - Skills and Experience - Risk Management	100
3. Marketing - Brand Strength - Marketing Penetration - Customer Experience - Reach	100
4. Finance - Revenue Sources and Income Level - Access to Funding - Accountability - Profitability - Sensitivity - Efficiency - Liquidity	100



- Solvency	
TOTAL (AVERAGE OF ALL 4 PILLAR SCORES)	100

SAMPLE RESULTS PAGE (To be printed and submitted with application)

TOTAL SCORES - OUT: Training Test Company



Example: Evaluation Score Sheet

All applications will be judged on two criteria;

- The project – 70%
- The firm’s ability to execute the project as measured by SME Diagnostic Assessment Tool – 30%

Each criterion will be scored from 1 – 100 using the evaluation grid in Section 4.2.2 above, as well as the results of the diagnostic assessment (a sample result is seen above).

The full Results Page (TOTAL SCORES - OUT) of the Diagnostic Assessment Tool must be printed and submitted with each copy of the application.

The total score is calculated using the example below:

Evaluation Criteria	Weight (A)	Sample Score (B)	Weighted Score (B x A)
Project	70%	80	56
Diagnostic Tool Score	30%	75	22.5
TOTAL SCORE			78.5

4.3 Notification of Caribbean Export’s Decision

Applicants will be informed in writing of Caribbean Export’s decision to award a grant or reject their application. **Caribbean Export’ decision is final.**

4.4 Award of Grant Contract

Caribbean Export will officially inform applicants that they have been awarded a Grant Contract under the Direct Assistance Grant Scheme. Following official notification, successful candidates may be contacted directly by Caribbean Export to clarify items listed in their budget before the Grant Contracts are finalise for signature.

Grant contracts will be dispatched by courier to Beneficiaries outside of Barbados, while Beneficiaries residing in Barbados or the Dominican Republic will be contacted to collect their Contracts from Caribbean Export’s Offices.

IMPORTANT: Please note that project activities should not start before the grant contract is signed by both parties.