European Commission CIP-ICT Policy Support Programme: Digital Libraries Information Day
Luxembourg, 4th February, 2010

Introduction

Organised by the European Community's (EC) information society team this event was designed to provide information about the fourth call for proposals for the ICT Policy Support Programme which was launched on the 21st January 2010. The closing date for submissions is **1st June, 5pm (Brussels time).**

The programme has a total of **30 Million Euros** available for funding, with the intention of funding projects under six 'objectives' or themes.

Aiming to improve the accessibility, use and preservation of Europe's rich and diverse cultural and scientific heritage, the Digital Libraries funding call intends to support activities that will continue to make cultural and scientific content available online. Furthermore, the call also wants to support experiments with open access to scientific information and explore new paradigms for accessing and using this information.

All proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria: **Relevance, impact and implementation**.

Background

ICT-PSP (2007-13) is part of the EC's Competitiveness and Innovation Framework programme. The programme follows on from the eContentPlus and eTEN programmes. The aims of the ICT-PSP programme is to stimulate innovation and competitiveness and accelerate the development of a **sustainable, competitive, innovative and inclusive information society**.

This report builds on previous EC ICT-PSP reports, including the 2009 report by Katie Fernie.

Funding Instruments

Funding Instruments refer to the method the proposal should adopt when addressing an objective/theme from the funding programme. The call uses a number of funding 'instruments': Best Practice Networks (BPN), Thematic Networks (TN) and Pilot Projects (PP).

- **Best Practice Networks**: BPNs are exclusive to the Digital Libraries call and will support the sharing of good practice in this area. Must consist of a minimum of seven independent legal entities. This is available for a transition period until 2011.

- **Thematic Network**: TNs provide a forum for stakeholders to enable experience sharing and consensus building. Must consist of a minimum of seven independent legal entities. Duration is expected to be 10 - 36 months.
- **Pilot (Type B)**: Will help stimulate the uptake of innovative ICT based services and products. Must consist of a minimum of four independent legal entities. Duration is expected to be 24 - 36 months.

Digital Libraries: *Cultural Content*

Approx. 17 million Euros has been allocated to this part of the digital libraries call. The cultural content part of the call have the following aims: Help coordinate Europeana; enhance European content; create content for Europeana.

Coordinating Europeana: (TN) 9 M Euros and a single network to be funded. The focus of this work is the enhancement of Europeana, maintaining service, improving user experience. The proposal should also include specific and realistic indicators to monitor progress. User satisfaction is key here, and the focus is the general public, not specialist groups.

Enhancing content in Europeana: (BPN) 3-5 M Euros and a number of BP networks to be funded. The aim of this objective is the aggregation of cultural heritage content and making it available through Europeana, aligning metadata and improving interoperability between providers and Europeana. The consortium must include content providers, but can also include national or domain aggregators. Sustainability and dissemination should be part of the proposals focus.

Digitising content for Europeana: (Pilot B) 2-3 M Euros and will support a number of pilot projects. This objective will fund targeted digitisation which will compliment existing collections and content already available through Europeana. Focus will be on masterpieces of Europe's cultural heritage. Content should be held from different EU countries. Importantly, the project must result in a 'critical mass' of complimentary content. Sustainability and dissemination of the project must be included and be clearly outlines in the proposal.

Europeana requirements for Cultural Content

- IPR - Content must be rights cleared for both input to, and output of, Europeana.
- Digitised object must be available on a website through a stable and direct link at object level. A thumbnail or preview should also be available.
- Metadata - Object level metadata should conform to Europeana Semantic Elements (ESE)
- Data should be exposed in XML for OAI-PMH harvesting.

Content Checker

Europeana has a Content Checker tool that allows for the uploading of datasets, and then validates these against an XML schema. There is also a content checker portal that allows the provider to check links and appearance etc., as if the content was live on Europeana.

Digital Libraries: *Scientific Content*

Approx. 9 million Euros has been allocated to this part of the digital libraries call. Under scientific content the programme has the following aims: Access to European rights information and registry of orphan works; open access to scientific information; Statistics on cultural heritage digitisation activities.

European Rights/Orphan Works registry: (BPN) 3-5 M Euros and a single network to be funded. The focus of this objective is to help clarify the status of orphan works and out of print material so they can be cleared for digitisation. The aim is to develop interoperable systems for the exchange of rights, the creation of an orphan works registry and a network of rights clearance centres. This will build on work by Europeana (for example, ARROW). It is essential that this work helps implement solutions in real-life contexts and helps create the conditions for as wide a take up as possible.

Opening up Scientific information: (pilot B) 2-3 M Euros and several pilot projects to be funded. The focus of these projects should be to experiment with open access to scientific information ('Scientific information' is here defined as the results of scientists' or scholars' research work: articles, datasets and mongraphs) and explore how this information could be accessed and used. Possible areas of investigation/experimentation include:

- Ways to carry out peer review;
- Querying and linking scientific information and underlying datasets;
- initiatives to ensure the quality and trustworthiness of repositories and/or frameworks for the audit of these repositories.

This work should help create a critical mass of information and therefore increase its impact and it should be clear that relevant stakeholders are engaged and that the experiments are adequately monitored.

Statistics on cultural heritage digitisation: (TN) 300 - 500,000 Euros and a single thematic network. Working across member states this network will develop and refine a methodology for collecting relevant statistical data, at a national level, on digitisation and online accessibility. The network will also work to harmonise and normalise the data. This work may then be used to help stimulate further funding for digitisation and digital preservation. The network should be configured to allow for wide dissemination of results, and bring together relevant stakeholders and working groups.

Submission process

1st June, 5pm (Brussels time) is the submission deadline.

Submission is online via the EC's EPSS system. The proposal coordinator registers with EPSS and obtains passwords for themselves and partners. The system allows you to 'construct' your proposal online, so that a draft proposal can be submitted and updates re-submitted, with only the most recent copy saved.

Improve your chances:

Relevance: Link your proposal to the work programme and its objectives.
Impact: What are your audiences, and how will your proposal impact on them. Is your proposal scaleable?
Implementation: Who is going to undertake the work and how? Good project management is essential, as is the quality of your work plan.

- Use the **partner database** to help locate partners and consortium to participate in a project.
- **Use the pre-proposal check service**. Submit applications to: econtentplus@ec.europa.eu. You can get feedback on proposals before you submit the final version, and get one-to-one support.
- Use the **ICT-PSP helpdesk**
- **Use these services with plenty of time before the deadline**. After this it is unlikely they will have sufficient time to respond and for you to update your proposal.
- Keep your proposal to a **reasonable length** (not clear what this might look like, but it shouldn't contain lots of unnecessary background or contextual information).
- **Make your proposal interesting**: Too many proposal concentrate on technology and lose marks on project planning and impact.
- **Describe your content in detail.** If you fail to do this markers wont be able to judge what your content is, how much of it there is and why its important.