**The second Public Call for Proposals for Procurement of Equipment and Provision of Services for Entrepreneurs, Micro and Small Enterprises**

**(CFP 10- 2019)**

**INFO SESSIONS**

**SUMMARY REPORT**

October, 2019

**Background**

The second Public Call for Proposals for Procurement of Equipment and Provision of Services for Entrepreneurs, Micro and Small Enterprises (CFP 10-2019) represents an effort of the European Union Support to Municipal Development- EU PRO Programme to contribute to the increasing competitiveness of local economy in the region of Šumadija and Western Serbia and the Region of Southern and Eastern Serbia.

The Call was announced on 23 September 2019 and will be open until 10 November 2019. The entrepreneurs, micro and small enterprises registered in 99 cities and municipalities involved in the EU PRO Development Programme, engaged primarily in production and founded between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2018 are eligible to apply.

The Call for Proposals includes two LOTs. Both LOTs target entrepreneurs, micro and small enterprises (MSEs), registered for production between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2018. Additional consideration for MSEs applying for LOT2 is that they need to be fast growing and/or export oriented.

The indicative overall amount available under this Call for Proposals is 2.5 Million Euros, while the value of individual projects ranges from10,000 Euros to 30,000 Euros, or from 30,000 Euros to 70,000 Euros for fast-growing and export-oriented enterprises.

**Organization of info sessions**

In order to promote the Public Call and reach to a greater number of entrepreneurs and micro and small enterprises, the EU PRO Development Programme organized 14 info sessions in the period from 7 to 22 October 2019. Info sessions were held in the following 13 locations/Programme municipalities: Niš, Pirot, Leskovac, Vranje, Bujanovac, Kragujevac, Zlatibor, Šabac, Kraljevo, Srebrno jezero, Novi Pazar, Zaječar, Kruševac, while an on-line info session was held on 22 October, 2019.

**Overview of Info sessions statistics**

Details about the locations of the info sessions, number of attendees and received feedback are outlined in the table below:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Info sessions  (location, date, venue)** | **Registered attendees** | **Registered attendees that participated to info session** | **Total number of attendees** | **Feedback forms** |
| **Niš,** Monday, 07 October, Hotel New City | 67 | 34 | **60** | 0 |
| **Pirot,** Tuesday, 08 October, Hotel Ana Lux | 9 | 6 | **18** | 8 |
| **Leskovac,** Wednesday, 09 October, Training Centre | 28 | 15 | **31** | 14 |
| **Vranje,** Thursday, 10 October, Hotel Przar | 27 | 11 | **29** | 24 |
| **Bujanovac,** Thursday, 10 October, Economic faculty | 5 | 3 | **23** | 10 |
| **Kragujevac,** Monday, 14 October, Hotel Kragujevac | 72 | 44 | **84** | 43 |
| **Zlatibor,** Monday,14 October, Hotel Mona | 41 | 27 | **51** | 31 |
| **Šabac, utorak,** 15 October, Hotel Sloboda | 43 | 24 | **47** | 32 |
| **Kraljevo, utorak,** 15 October, Hotel Botika | 70 | 34 | **63** | 37 |
| **Srebrno jezero,** Wednesday 16 October, Hotel Danubia Park, | 21 | 9 | **26** | 14 |
| **Novi Pazar,** Wednesday, 16 October, Cultural Centre | 18 | 6 | **42** | 22 |
| **Zaječar,** Thursday, 17 October, Timok Youth Centre | 24 | 8 | **31** | 21 |
| **Kruševac,** Thursday, 17 October, Business Incubator | 67 | 38 | **110** | 7 |
| **Online info-sesija,** Tuesday, 22 October | 159 | 70 | **70** | 1 |
| **Total** | 651 | 329 | **685** | 264 |
|

A total of 685 participants, including representatives of businesses, local self-governments, regional development agencies, chambers of commerce and media attended 14 info sessions (651 attendees on 13 info sessions and 70 participants in online info session).

The interested participants had an opportunity to announce their participation by registering on the EU PRO website. Out of the total number of online registered attendees (651), 329 attendees (50.54%) attended info sessions or participated in online info session. The remaining 322 (49.46%) attendees that attended info sessions, were not registered through the EU PRO website. The evaluation questionnaire was completed by 264 attendees (40.55%).

**Attendance on info sessions**

Details about the info session’s attendances are outlined in the table below:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location of the info session** | **Number of  participants** | **Business  represent.** | **LSG  represent.** | **RDA  represent.** | **Chambers of commerce** | **Media  represent.** | **BSO represent.** | **Other** | **Female** | **Male** |
| Niš | 60 | 54 |  |  |  | 4 | 2 |  | 19 | 41 |
| Pirot | 18 | 5 | 2 | 1 |  | 5 |  | 5 | 9 | 9 |
| Leskovac | 31 | 25 | 2 | 1 |  | 3 |  |  | 12 | 19 |
| Vranje | 29 | 20 |  | 5 | 1 |  | 3 |  | 9 | 20 |
| Bujanovac | 23 | 20 | 1 |  | 1 |  |  | 1 | 6 | 17 |
| Kragujevac | 84 | 77 | 1 | 2 |  | 2 |  | 2 | 32 | 52 |
| Zlatibor | 51 | 43 | 2 | 2 |  | 4 |  |  | 17 | 34 |
| Šabac | 47 | 41 |  | 3 | 3 |  |  |  | 18 | 29 |
| Kraljevo | 63 | 61 |  | 2 |  |  |  |  | 25 | 38 |
| Srebrno jezero | 26 | 22 | 1 | 2 |  | 1 |  |  | 4 | 22 |
| Novi Pazar | 42 | 31 | 4 | 4 |  | 3 |  |  | 11 | 31 |
| Zaječar | 31 | 16 | 6 | 4 | 1 |  | 4 |  | 14 | 17 |
| Kruševac | 110 | 105 | 1 | 4 |  |  |  |  | 20 | 90 |
| **TOTAL  13 info sessions** | **615** | **520** | **20** | **30** | **6** | **22** | **9** | **8** | **196** | **419** |
| **TOTAL  13 info sessions in %** | 100% | 85% | 3% | 5% | 1% | 4% | 1% | 1% | 32% | 68% |
| **On-line info session** | **70** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

With regards to the attendees of 13 info sessions, the largest number of participants were representatives from the business community-520 representatives (85%). In total 30 representatives from 12 Regional Development Agencies and 20 representatives of 12 LSGs attended info sessions (Kragujevac, Čačak, Zaječar, Žagubica, Boljevac, Novi Pazar, Kruševac, Bujanovac, Leskovac, Pirot, Bela Palanka, Arilje) were present on the info sessions.

The greatest interest for the info session was shown in Kruševac, where out of total 110 attendees, 105 were from the business community. The lowest interest was shown for info sessions in Pirot (in total 18 attendees, out of which 5 were from the business community) and in Bujanovac (in total 23 attendees, out of which 20 business representatives).

Gender statistics show that females made up 32 % of the participants while male accounted for 68%.

Breakdown of info session attendees per institution is given in the table below:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Info session** | **LSGs (representa.)** | **RDAs (represent.)** | **Media (representa.)** | **Chamber of commerce (represent.)** | **BSOs (represent.)** | **Other** |
| **Niš** |  |  | Pro Media-1 CreativeNTV-1  TV Zana Plus-1  EU info centar -1 |  | Cluster Dundjer, Niš-2 |  |
| **Pirot** | Pirot-1 | RDA Jug, Niš -1 | Regionalna TV Pirot-2 |  |  |  |
| Bela Palanka-1 | TVP Kanal-2 |
|  | Radio Pirot-1 |
| **Leskovac** | Leskovac-2 | RDA Centar za Razvoj, Leskovac-1 | TVLE- 1 |  |  |  |
| TVK1- 1 |
| TV4S-1 |
| **Vranje** |  | RDA for Pčinja district, Vranje -5 |  | Vranje -1 | BIC Yumco -3 |  |
| **Bujanovac** | Bujanovac-1 |  |  | Chamber of Commerce/Bujanovac office-1 |  | Coordination Body -1 |
| **Kragujevac** | Kragujevac-1 | RDA Šumadija i Pomoravlje, Kraguj.-2 | TV Kragujevac-1 Radio Zlatousti-1 |  |  |  |
| **Zlatibor** | Arilje-2 | RDA Zlatibor, Užice-2 | Radio Pozega-3 |  |  | Pre-school institution- 1 High school-1 |
| Web Almanah-1 |
| **Šabac** |  | RDA Pod., Podg., Rađevina, Loznica-1 |  | Valjevo -3 |  |  |
| **Kraljevo** |  | RDA Raški i Moravički districts, Kraljevo- 2 |  |  |  |  |
| **Srebrno jezero** | Čačak -1 | RDABranič.,Podunav., Požervac-1 | TV Viminacijum-1 |  |  |  |
| **Novi Pazar** | Novi Pazar-4 | RDA Sandžaka-SEDA, Novi Pazar -4 | RTV NP 3 |  |  |  |
| **Zaječar** | Žagubica -3 Zaječar-2 Boljevac-1 | RDA RARIS, Zaječar-4 |  | Zaječar-1 | BIC Bor-1 TOC Zaječar -3 |  |
| **Kruševac** | Kruševac-1 | RDA Rasina district, Kruševac- 4 |  |  |  |  |

**Overall assessment of info sessions**

Assessment of the topics discussed during the info sessions and their relevance for preparation of the project proposal have shown that 96.20 % of participants think that they are useful and very useful. A vast majority of participants (95.1%) stated that they received concrete answers to all questions asked.

Organisation of the info sessions, clarity of information, interactive approach and presentation of the call, the selection criteria and submission of applications, were underlined as good. The format of the Info sessions allowed for productive dialogue between the attendees and the project team.

**Summary of Evaluation Questionnaire results**

Out of the 685 attendees on Info sessions, 264 provided feedback. Attendees were encouraged to provide written comments in the provided evaluation forms, which consisted of seven questions. Responses to questions were given mainly by marking one of offered answers, while a small number responded to questions where it was necessary to write an opinion.

**Question I:** *“ How did you get information about the Public Call?”*

Out of 264 attendees, 104 attendees (39.40 % ) confirmed that information about the Public and 46 attendees (17.42%) received information from friends. Media was the source of information for 18 attendees (6.82%), while 30 representatives (11.36%) received information from RDAs.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| How did you get information about the Public Call? | * Email – 104 answers * RDA-30 answers * Media-18 answers * From friends -46 answers * Other -61 answers (indicate information received by letter) * No answer -5 |

**Question II**:“ *If you have visited the EU PRO program website, what is your opinion on the information available about the Call for Proposals?“*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | A vast majority of participants (92.06 %) stated that they have positive and very positive opinion on the available website information.  More information and contact details of SMEs previousely awarded with grants, publishing answers on frequently asked questions and information on the sanctions due to non-compliance with the grant contracts were some of the suggestions for improvement information of the Public Call. |

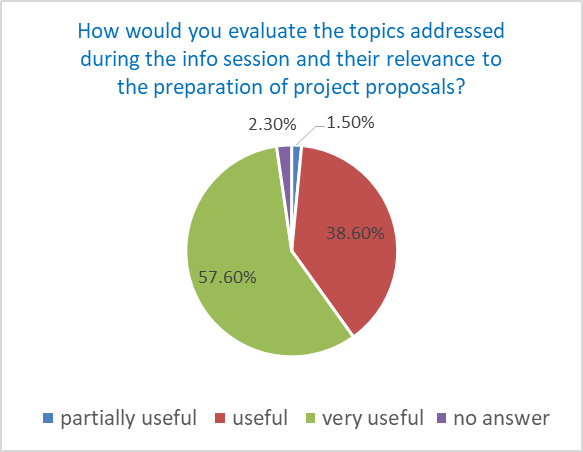
**Question III:** “ *How much did this info session help you better understand the terms of the Call?“*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Not at all | Very little | I do not know | Enough | Completely | No answer | Total |
| Total | 0 | 0 | 0 | 120 | 142 | 2 | 264 |
| **Total (%)** | **0%** | **0%** | **0%** | **45.45%** | **53.80%** | **0.75%** | **100%** |

The majority of participants (99.25 %) confirmed that the info session helped them to better understand criteria of the Public Call.

Direct consultation with program representatives, an example of corectly filled-in application form, better promotion - more info sessions and more presentations of good practice, were stated as options which wouldl help them to understand better the terms of the Call.

**Question IV**: *“How would you evaluate the topics addressed during the informative session and their relevance to preparation of the project proposal?“*

57.60% of attendees evaluated info sessions as very useful, 38.60% as useful. Attendees stated that examples of good practice, selection criteria and application form – financial aspects and budget are the segments that should be more represented.  


**Question VI**:“Have you received concrete answers on the asked questions?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Yes | No | No answer | Total |
| Total | 251 | 1 | 12 | 264 |
| **Total (%)** | **95.1%** | **0.4%** | **4.5%** | **100%** |

Out of 264 attendees, 251 (95.1%) confirmed that they received concrete answers on the asked questions.

**Question VII: “What was good?“**

Summary of most frequently responses given by the participants:

*-precise answers to questions*

*-everything was good*

*-accurate explanations*

*-presentation*

*- info session well organized*

*- the presenters provided correct answers for questions and suggestions*

*- additional explanations that were relevant*

*- interactivity, communication during presentation*

*- clear communication*

*- presenter's suggestions, examples and pointing on errors*

*- application form and other documentation were perfectly presented*

*- transparent and detailed explanations regarding the work and programs of the organization*

*- received answers about all questions*

*- plenty of useful information, filling in the application form, - evaluation criteria*

*- anyone can ask a question and give an opinion*

*- detailed and clear explanation of all criteria of the Call*

*- presenters are precise*

*- description of the financial part of application form*

*- presentation quality*

*- presentation modality*

*- quality of presentation*

*- explanations on filling in application form*

*- Presenters are great*

*- all information regarding EU PRO*

*- presentation, since we have received all the information we need*

*a good explanation about completing the application*

*- opportunity for micro enterprises to develop*

*- clear lecture, clear examples, for each question gave the required answers*

*- organization of the info session*

*-all, presenters cooperate with us*

*- I received clarification for any question regarding the project*

*- clear and precise presentation of the project and application instructions*

*- a relaxed situation while asking questions and there was no wrong question*

*- excellent presentation of the program*

*-implementation of the program*

*-the ability to ask questions*

*- precise and clear explainations*

*-the overall presentation was very good*

*- lecture and concrete explanations*

*- presenter is very professional*

*- the program is presented very well and completely*

*- detailed clarification by representatives of the organization, and a visible will to provide assistance to fill in the application form*

*- detailed explanations of lecturers*

*- complete presentation, very professional*

*- generally everything, the way of presentation is effective, the presenters did a great job*

*- explanation how to complete the application*

*- explanations for filling in the application form*

*- all was well, all presented and explained*

*- all was well, it would be desirable to present experience of people who have already used this program at such sessions*

*- clear presentation of the application form*

*- good practice examples, presentation method*

*- it was great, you were clear, precise*

*- explanations through examples*

*- presentation of the presenter*

*- representation of programs and communications*

*- specific information*

*- we have received specific explanations for all questions and concerns*

*- explained thoroughly*

*- all topics covered*

*- interaction, information obtained*

*- new experience*

*- very well explained application form*

*- I'm satisfied with the session*

*- excellent conception of info session*

*- precise clarification, there was no waste of time*

*- which the presenters gave plenty of examples*

*- information is clearly presented, explained in detail, in an understandable way*

*- excellent information transmitted*

*- how to report properly*

*- Milica explains very well and answers all the questions asked. She is clear and understandable*

*- the best part of the format presentation-the part financial indicators, an excellent and clear lecturer*

*- Goran's answers are clear*

*- presenter Goran - best answers*

*- gradual and accurate explanation of the procedure*

*- hard work and kindness, as well as the kindness of the presenters*

*- presenting the right information*

*- detailed representation, business plan*

*- presentation based on examples from previous Calls*

**Question VIII:“** **What was bad and how can we improve these events in the future?“**

Summary of most frequently responses given by the participants:

*- more breaks and discussions during the session*

*- large group with many questions*

*- extend seminar time due to many questions*

*- short session time*

*- the time frame of the session is broken but justified by the quality and the provision of useful information*

*- it may take a little longer*

*- planned presentation time is broken*

*- ability to ask questions after the presentation, not during session in progress*

*- small number of representatives of the companies from the Pirot district. The event should be announced in the future and in cooperation with LER offices and Development Agency, as many businessmen as possible should be invited*

*- subject of the Call should be better explained*

*- too long presentation*

*- explain the CSR segment (more info, details)*

*- it was not good that a specific company was not taken as example to explain the data regarding the balance sheet, budget plan, etc.).*

*- companies that were opened before 2014 are not included, it is not good*

*- waiting from 10.30 am to 11am. We all came on time*

*- programs for companies older than 15 years should also be available*

*- creation of a program to help start-up business is missing*

*- take more breaks because of concentration*

*- extend seminar time due to many questions*

*- to shorthly present simple segments and, to go immediately to the application form*

*- complete all items through someone's example*

*- timeline of the session is broken, but justified by the quality and the provision of useful information*

*- it would be good if there was an example of a properly completed application form as a guideline. the data protection in the notifications has not been clarified*

*- more breaks and discussions during the session*

*- a large group with many questions*

*- info sessions need to be more frequent*

*- not enough space*

*- extend seminar time due to many questions*

*- short session time*

**Conclusions:**

1. The Public Call is relevant as proven by the number of participants and received comments.
2. Engaging RDA’s is proven to be effective as they do have built relationships with the business community.
3. Promotion of Public Call through direct informing of potential SME applicants has proven to be a very effective way in reaching many SMEs eligible to participate on the Call that do not follow other channels of communication.
4. To set deadline for registration of participation to the info sessions, to enable easier tracking of number of participants for better organization of the events.
5. Evaluation lists to be included in the promotional materials (handouts materials) and to be pointed out at the beginning of info sessions