

Brussels,
ELARG D3/OR/caf – Ares (2013)

Subject: Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF) - Call for Project Proposals (Round 10)

Dear NIPAC,

We are pleased to launch the 10th call for project proposals under the WBIF. The deadline for receipt of proposals is **19 September** and as always, completed applications should be sent to ELARG-WBIF@ec.europa.eu.

In line with our on-going discussions at the WBIF Steering Committee and previous calls for proposals, we encourage well-prepared applications that meet the overall objectives and principles of WBIF to support the preparation and implementation of priority socio-economic investments. As outlined in the Practical Guidelines for WBIF Project Applications (available on www.wbif.eu), projects for which grants are requested under the WBIF should be clearly linked to a regional, national and/or sectoral strategy. We believe that the current preparations of the country strategy papers as part of the IPA II process are helpful in this respect as they highlight governments' priorities. In addition, it is important to demonstrate that the financing implications of the proposed investment have been considered.

As discussed at the recent WBIF Steering Committee meeting, this call will serve as a test for the inclusion of a "climate change window" into the WBIF whereby we will try to identify financing that can be attributed to climate change related aspects of the proposed investment. This window is being introduced in line with EU policies and procedures particularly those that will be required under the new Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF). We have sought to keep the requirements for information in the project grant application form (PGAF) as simple as possible and we believe that the project promoters and NIPAC Offices will be able to provide the information required. We have asked the IFI Coordination Office and the IPF1 team to organise a one-day seminar on 9 July for NIPAC offices to brief them on the requirements. The Practical Guidelines are being updated to reflect these changes and will be discussed thoroughly at this seminar.

We ask that submissions are made only on PGAFs downloaded from the WBIF website to ensure that this latest developments are accommodated and to ensure compatibility with the WBIF management information system.

We would like to stress that while NIPACs remain the main source of applications to the WBIF, regional organisations and IFIs are also eligible to apply for projects, but such applications must be accompanied by letters of support from the relevant NIPACs.

Further information on the WBIF is available on www.wbif.eu. We look forward to receiving your applications.

Yours sincerely,

G. Schumann-Hitzler

