OpenPEPPOL Guidance on the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)

2015 CEF Telecom Calls for Proposals for eInvoicing and eDelivery

This document was prepared by OpenPEPPOL AISBL to guide its members in the preparation of proposals for the 2015 CEF Telecom Calls for eInvoicing and eDelivery.

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1. Introduction

The Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) is a EU funding programme supporting the establishment of European network infrastructure in the fields of energy, telecommunications and transport. The total budget available for the period between 2014 and 2020 is 33 billion euros.

For Telecommunications, CEF links to the Europe 2020 Strategy and contributes to achieving the targets of the "Digital Agenda for Europe" initiative, with a 1.04 billion euro budget.

The CEF Telecom guidelines define telecommunication infrastructures as both broadband networks and digital service infrastructures (DSIs). The latter are composed of "core service platforms" – central hubs, which enable trans-European connectivity – and "generic services" which link national infrastructures to the core service platforms.

While many Member States have already introduced digital service infrastructures, there is currently a lack of interoperability among such systems at European level and in some cases at national level, reducing the opportunities to integrate systems, sharing data and identifying inefficiencies.

CEF is aimed at supporting "projects of common interest" - as defined in the Telecom Guidelines[1] - that address such challenges, contributing to the development of the Single Market, European competitiveness, social inclusion and economic growth. Projects will be focused on deploying trans-European infrastructures, based upon mature technical and organisational solutions, and aimed at supporting exchanges and collaboration with and within the public sector, across the EU.

CEF Telecom encourages the re-use of technical components implementing the Digital Service Infrastructures to increase interoperability and reduce technical risks. These components are considered as 'Building Blocks' of the Digital Single Market and can be used by any public and private entity to establish cross-border digital services.

2. 2015 CEF Telecom Work Programme

CEF Telecom is implemented via an annual Work Programme, identifying the priorities and the actions to be launched during the year. The CEF Telecom Work Programme 2015 has identified eleven priorities for developing DSIs including domains such as electronic delivery of documents (eDelivery), eInvoicing, eProcurement, eHealth, eIdentification and eAuthentication.

Under the CEF Telecom Work Programme 2014 the eInvoicing and eDelivery building block DSIs were launched, providing funding for the core service platforms of these DSIs until the end of 2017. Under the 2015 Work Programme, funding of generic services is supported though grants to put solutions for the exchange of eInvoices in place - for the eInvoicing DSI - and to establish access points - for the eDelivery DSI.

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[1] Regulation (EU) No 283/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 on guidelines for trans-European networks in the area of telecommunications infrastructure and repealing Decision No 1336/97/EC.

3. 2015 CEF Telecom Calls for Proposals for eInvoicing and eDelivery

The table below provides an overview of the key elements of the 2015 Telecom calls for generic services for eInvoicing and eDelivery DSIs.

	Electronic Invoicing	Electronic Delivery
Total Budget	EUR 7 million	EUR 1 million
Funding	Up to 75 % of eligible costs	Up to 75 % of eligible costs
Beneficiaries	At least 5 legal entities, from one or more EU/EEA countries, composed of a majority of public entities.	At least 5 legal entities from the public and private sector, from one or more EU/EEA countries.
Objective(s)	To increase the uptake of eInvoicing in Europe by supporting authorities - especially at the local and regional levels - in meeting the requirements of the EU Directive on eInvoicing in public procurement.	To increase the uptake of the eDelivery DSI by supporting the set up of access points to foster the cross-border exchange of electronic documents between public entities, businesses and citizens.
Action(s) supported	Implement / upgrade existing eInvoicing solutions giving preference to solutions: Based on CEN BII (or CEN MUG), taking into account results of the PEPPOL project Fostering interoperability between Member States Supporting public authorities to exchange eInvoices with economic operators at an affordable cost	Set up of access points involving: The installation in a production environment The successful passing of conformance tests When applicable, the confirmed connectivity to the SMP and SML The established connection with production-ready Information Systems that process the data
Timeline	Call opening 30.10.2015 Call closing 19.01.2016 Signature of grant agreements: May 2016	Call opening 30.10.2015 Call closing 19.01.2016 Signature of grant agreements: May 2016

3.1 2015 CEF Telecom Call for eInvoicing

The objective of the 2015 CEF Telecom eInvoicing call is to support the uptake of eInvoicing in Europe by supporting authorities, especially at the regional and local levels, in meeting the requirements of the **EU Directive on eInvoicing in public procurement**[2].

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[2]Directive 2014/55/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 on electronic invoicing in public procurement, OJ L 133 of 6.5.2014, p. 1

Activities and actions supported

The 2015 CEF eInvoicing call provides financial support to consortia proposing electronic invoicing solutions and organisational set-up which ensure that especially regional and local authorities can exchange e-invoices with economic operators at an affordable cost.

In order to foster interoperability between Member States, preference will be given to solutions that are **already on the market and which allow cross-border exchanges**. The preferred solution should be based on **existing technical specifications** developed within the framework of European standardisation organisations such as the CEN Workshop on Business Interoperability Interfaces for public procurement in Europe (BII) - CWA 16562[3] - and take into account the results of large-scale pilot projects like PEPPOL[4]. A PEPPOL Business Interoperability Specification (BIS) is a CEN BII specification (or 'Profile') with additional legal, organisational and technical requirements to support pan-European use.

The 2015 CEF eInvoicing call supports the implementation of the above mentioned specifications to **upgrade or integrate** them in existing eInvoicing solutions and services.

To increase interoperability and reduce technical risk, CEF encourages the **re-use** of mature digital service infrastructures (DSIs) for the deployment of the Digital Single Market. In particular, for the electronic delivery of documents, CEF supports the re-use of the eDelivery DSI, based on the set up of access points thorough the EU. The deployment of eDelivery Access Points as the eInvoicing exchange mechanism is funded separately by the 2015 CEF Telecom eDelivery call, described later in this document.

Scope
Priority will be given to eInvoicing solutions supporting exchanges between public administrations and businesses (Administration to Business) established in the EU and EEA. However, eInvoicing can also be used to enable Administration to Administration communication (A2A).

Secondary scope
Business to Business (B2B) and Citizen to Administration (C2A) or Citizens to Business (C2B) are not foreseen in the context of the eInvoicing building block.

Out of scope
Citizen to Citizen (C2C) eInvoicing exchanges are out scope.

Type of financial support

The indicative **total budget** available to fund projects of common interest is €7 million. There is no indicative maximum budget for each action proposed under this call.
The maximum EU co-financing rate to be granted under this call for proposals will not exceed 75% of eligible costs of the action actually incurred by the beneficiary, which meet all the criteria laid

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[3] http://www.cenbii.eu/deliverables/cen-bii-2/cwa-16562-post-award/

[4] See PEPPOL Business Interoperability Specifications (BIS) v2 at: http://www.peppol.eu/ressource-library/technical-specifications/post-award/mandatory

down in Article 126 of the Financial Regulation. Examples of activities and related costs that could be considered when preparing a proposal are included in section 5.1 of this document.

Eligibility Criteria

Only proposals submitted by one of the following two types of applicants are eligible:
- One or more Member States
- With the **agreement** of the Member State(s) concerned, public or private undertakings, international organisations, joint undertakings, or bodies established in the Member States. (Please see Member States contact points for the certification of applicants.)

Grants are to be offered to consortia consisting of **at least 5 entities**, from one or more Member State(s) composed of a **majority of public entities**.

Duration

The indicative duration of an action proposed under this call is 1 year.

For more information please see the eInvoicing introduction document.

3.1 2015 CEF Telecom Call for eDelivery

The objective of the eDelivery call is to promote the uptake and use of the eDelivery DSI amongst public and private entities established in the EU and the EEA countries by supporting the set up of access points.

An **access point** is defined as an implementation of:

- The AS2 data exchange protocol - based on the "PEPPOL Transport Infrastructure AS2 Profile"[5]; or
- The ebMS3/AS4 data exchange protocol - based on the eSENS technical specifications; or
- Both the AS2 and ebMS3/AS4 data exchange protocols.

Activities and actions supported

2015 CEF eDelivery call provides financial support to consortia proposing actions for the set up of access points that must involve:

1. The installation in a production environment (server, network, storage, etc.) for real life transactions.
2. The successful passing of conformance tests from either a well-recognised conformance / interoperability testing organisation, or from the conformance testing service offered by the eDelivery Core Service Platform.
3. When applicable, the confirmed connectivity to the Service Metadata Publisher (SMP) and Service Metadata Locator (SML) (i.e. successfully tested).

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[5] See: http://www.peppol.eu/ressource-library/technical-specifications/infrastructure-resources

4. The established connection with production-ready Information Systems that process the data (i.e. successfully tested). However, changes to the production-ready Information Systems that connect to the access point will not be funded under this call.

An SMP may be installed together with the access point. However, this component is optional. Both PEPPOL's SMP Technical Specifications and OASIS' BDX-SMP Technical Specifications are covered. The installation of an SMP without an access point will not be funded.

The eDelivery DSI proposes a gateway that should provide the following outcomes:

1. Foster the cross-border exchange of electronic documents between public entities, businesses and citizens.
2. Enable interoperability between the European level and the level of the Member States regardless the standards in use within each of the Member States.
3. Support translation between national and European solutions in order to guarantee transactions.

Useful information is included in the "Introduction to the CEF eDelivery Building Block"[6]. An eDelivery self-assessment tool is also provided on the call webpage[7].

Scope
The primary scope of the eDelivery solutions is to support exchanges of any type of data and documents between public administrations (Administration to Administration) across borders. eDelivery can also be used in Administration to Business (A2B) and Businesses to Administration (B2A). A secondary scope includes the interconnection of Administrations with Citizens (A2C, C2A) when used behind a web-portal.

Out of scope
Exchange of data and documents between citizens (C2C) is out of scope.

Type of financial support
The indicative budget available to fund projects of common interest is €1 million.
The maximum EU co-financing rate to be granted under this call for proposals will not exceed 75% of eligible costs of the action actually incurred by the beneficiary.
Examples of activities (and related costs) that could be considered when preparing a proposal are included in section 5.1 of this document.

Eligibility Criteria
Only proposals submitted by one of the following two types of applicants are eligible:
- One or more Member States.
- With the **agreement** of the Member States concerned, public or private undertakings, international organisations, joint undertakings, or bodies established in the Member States. (Please see Member States contact points for the certification of applicants.)

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[6] https://ec.europa.eu/inea/sites/inea/files/building_block_dsi-introdocument_edelivery_v1_00.pdf
[7] https://ec.europa.eu/inea/sites/inea/files/building_block_dsi_selfassessmenttool_edelivery_v.1.00.xlsx

Grants are to be offered to consortia consisting of **at least 5 entities**, from one or more Member State(s).

Duration
The indicative duration of an action proposed under this call is 1 year.

For more information please see the "Introduction to the eDelivery building block"[8].

4. How to prepare a proposal

4.1 Preparing an application
Applicants wishing to apply for funding under CEF Telecom calls must submit an application for an **action**, which is defined as any set of activities which has been identified as financially and technically independent, has a set timeframe, and is necessary for the implementation of a project of common interest and which may be granted financial assistance following a call for proposals and evaluation process.

All proposals must clearly describe the:
- planned activities of the proposed action, related milestones and deliverables
- information on who will carry them out
- costs
- reason(s) why they should be supported financially by the EU

All information relevant for the evaluation of the proposal must be included within the application. Applicants must complete and submit the application forms electronically, using the TENtec eSubmission module

Application form
The application form is composed of four parts, including their respective annexes, as follows:

1. Part A identifies the main characteristics of the proposal (e.g. summary of the proposed Action and description of its activities, contact details and characteristics of the applicants, as well as information related to the funding requested etc.).

The indicative duration of the proposed Action to be included in this section should be 12 months. Consortium members must designate a *coordinating applicant* to lead and represent all of the applicants and act as the point of contact with the Commission and/or INEA during the application phase.

Part A3.1 includes "Activities and Milestones".

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[8] https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ckeditor_files/files/DSI_IntroDocument%20%28eInvoicing%29-v1_0.pdf

An activity is a part of the proposed Action that is distinct technically, financially or over time and may be composed of one or more tasks. Milestones indicate how the activity and its associated expected result(s) are progressing. Each milestone should relate to at least one activity, have an expected date, and preferably any corresponding intermediate steps, including deliverables as relevant.

2. Part B provides administrative information about the applicants, their designated affiliated entities and/or implementing bodies and their operational and financial capacity.

3. Part C provides information on the compliance of the proposed Action with EU law and other sources of EU funding.

4. Part D provides technical and financial information on the proposed Action submitted for funding.

All parts of the application form are provided on each of the individual call webpages.

Selection criteria

The operational and financial capacity of applicants and designated affiliated entities will be assessed based on specific requirements and supporting documents to be submitted with the application. The requirement to demonstrate financial and operation capacity does not apply to Member States, public bodies established in the EU/EEA countries (Norway and Iceland), third countries, international organisations, European Economic Interest Groupings (EEIG) which are 50% owned by public body(ies), and affiliated entities unless the applicant relies fully on them for implementing the action.

Award criteria

The proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the criteria 'Relevance', 'Quality and efficiency of the implementation' and 'Impact', further described below:

Relevance
- Alignment with the objectives and activities required for the deployment of the Digital Service Infrastructure described in Chapter 3 of the work programme.
- Alignment and synergies with relevant policies, strategies and activities at European and national level.

Quality and efficiency of the implementation
- Maturity of the proposed solution (e.g. in terms of contribution towards interoperability, connectivity, sustainable deployment, operation, upgrading of trans-European digital service infrastructures, use of common building blocks, coordination at European level) and/or integration with existing components of the DSI.
- Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources.
- Quality and relevant experience of the individual participants and, if more than one beneficiary, of the consortium as a whole (including complementarity, balance).

- Extent to which the proposal demonstrates support from national authorities, industry and NGOs (when relevant).
- Appropriate attention to security, privacy, inclusiveness and accessibility (when relevant).

Impact and sustainability
- Quality of the approach to facilitate wider deployment and take-up of the proposed actions.
- Capability to survive, develop and scale up without European Union funding after the end of the project with a view to achieving long-term sustainability, where appropriate through funding sources other than CEF.

5. How to implement CEF DSIs with PEPPOL

5.1 Relevance of PEPPOL to the Call objectives and terms of reference

OpenPEPPOL invites European stakeholders from the public and private sector to submit proposals in the CEF Telecom call for generic services for eInvoicing and eDelivery DSIs, utilising PEPPOL specifications, services and governance framework.

Use of **PEPPOL meets the requirements and priorities** for actions supported under this Call, through the following features:

- The PEPPOL BIS v2 for eInvoicing are based on CEN BII (CWA 16562) and will be compliant with the future European standard on eInvoicing, thus meeting the requirements of the eInvoicing Directive.
- PEPPOL Access Points (eDelivery network) implement the AS2 data exchange protocol and can leverage on the open source implementations available.
- PEPPOL BIS and PEPPOL eDelivery can be used for regional, national and cross-border exchange of invoices, supporting EU-wide interoperability.
- PEPPOL BIS and the PEPPOL eDelivery network are results of the European large-scale pilot (LSP) project PEPPOL, and the PEPPOL BIS are also used in the ongoing LSP eSENS.
- OpenPEPPOL provides well-recognised testing tools for ensuring conformance to the technical specifications.

EU governments and public authorities should take advantage of the CEF funds available to set up consortia with private entities, implementing eInvoicing based on the PEPPOL Business Interoperability Specifications (BIS v2), and using the PEPPOL eDelivery network as the exchange mechanism, by setting up PEPPOL Access Points.

PEPPOL represents the biggest user community of the eDelivery DSI, with 125 Access Points already deployed in the EU, USA and Canada. PEPPOL-based solutions have been implemented in 18 countries.

PEPPOL Authorities

When setting up consortia, Member States should also consider the establishment of PEPPOL Authorities, ensuring the widest uptake (and market impact) of compliant eInvoicing and eDelivery services in their domains. PEPPOL Authorities (PAs) are government entities responsible for the governance, standardisation and implementation of eProcurement and/or eGovernment, at national or sectoral or regional level within Europe (EEA).

PEPPOL Authorities have already been successfully established in Denmark, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden[9], and are currently being set up in England by the Department of Health, and in Belgium by FEDICT. Among other interested countries are Austria, Ireland, Italy and Poland.

5.2 Implementation Scenarios

Possible combinations of different types of organization may be considered for creating consortia. Some examples are given below.

a. Contracting Authorities (CAs) that enable their ERP/accounting/financial system for standards based eInvoicing, establishing system support and routines for electronic receipt and processing of invoices
   - Grant Beneficiary is the owner of the system
   - Grant Beneficiary can pay a software vendor to upgrade their ERP/accounting/financial system, using PEPPOL BIS.
   - Grant Beneficiary can pay an eInvoicing Service Provider to connect the system.
      o The solution/service provider (SP) must use CEN eInvoicing standards and may connect to CEF eDelivery infrastructure. The cost of setting up an eDelivery Access Point is not covered by the eInvoicing grants, only by eDelivery grants.

b. ERP/accounting/financial system deployed at accountancy firm/financial management authority is enabled for standards based eInvoicing
   - Grant Beneficiary is the owner of the system
      o Primary focus on financial management authorities representing a high number of CAs – multiplier effect on establishing eInvoice receipt capability.
      o Secondary focus on accountancy firms representing Economic Operator (EO) side as the priority at the current stage is to establish CA eInvoicing receive capability.
   - Grant Beneficiary can pay a software vendor to upgrade their ERP/accounting/financial system, using PEPPOL BIS.
   - Grant Beneficiary can pay an eInvoicing Service Provider to connect the system.
      o The SP must use PEPPOL BIS and PEPPOL eDelivery infrastructure

c. An ERP/accounting/financial solution provided by a software vendor is enabled for eInvoicing:
   - Grant beneficiary: an ICT vendor
   - Grant beneficiary must support PEPPOL BIS.

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d.   An eInvoicing Service Provider's platform/service is upgraded to support eInvoicing:
   - Grant Beneficiary: an eInvoicing Service Provider.
   - Grant beneficiary must support PEPPOL BIS.
   - Grant Beneficiary should be connected to PEPPOL eDelivery. The cost of setting up an eDelivery Access Point is not covered by the eInvoicing grants, only by eDelivery grants.

5.3 CEF eInvoicing proposals to implement PEPPOL BIS v2

The 2015 CEF eInvoicing call supports the implementation of the PEPPOL BIS (v 2) specifications for eInvoicing to **upgrade or integrate** them in existing eInvoicing solutions and services.

Based on the requirements described in section 3 and the PEPPOL implementation scenarios outlined in of this document, some examples of PEPPOL-based activities and related tasks that could be considered are provided below, respectively for:

Capacity Building:
- Build PEPPOL competence within the member organisations involved on legal, business and technical aspects of the proposed action

Implementation Strategy:
- Carry out information analysis such as semantic mapping of the PEPPOL BIS in scope to internal format or database
- Identify or design validation mechanism, and archiving mechanism

Implementation:
- Create syntax transformation to internal format or database - based on the semantic data mapping
- Implement XML validation mechanism

Testing:
- Test validation/transformation/archiving capability (for each syntax)

Production and Maintenance:
- Establish routines and implement eInvoicing transactions

5.4 CEF eDelivery proposals to implement PEPPOL Access Points

The 2015 CEF eDelivery call supports the implementation of the PEPPOL Access Points implementing the mandatory specifications[10] to upgrade or integrate them in existing eInvoicing solutions and services. A PEPPOL Access Point can be considered as a 'gateway' between the PEPPOL community and local eProcurement communities or solutions. PEPPOL enables trading partners to exchange standards-based electronic documents over the PEPPOL network, which can be accessed through Access Points[11].

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[10] http://www.peppol.eu/ressource-library/technical-specifications/infrastructure-resources
[11] http://www.peppol.eu/peppol_elements/-transport-infrastructure/peppol-access-points

It is important to note that there isn't a single PEPPOL Access Point per Member State. PEPPOL is based on a distributed (four-corner) model, allowing direct communication between Access Points without the need to set up bilateral channels.

The PEPPOL Transport Infrastructure Agreements (TIAs) represent the **legal interoperability** framework of the OpenPEPPOL eDelivery network allowing Access Point (AP) providers to interoperate and exchange documents in a secure and reliable way. Accredited PEPPOL Access Point providers must sign the PEPPOL TIA for Access Point provider with one of the existing PEPPOL Authorities and become OpenPEPPOL members[12].

Based on the requirements described in section 3 and the PEPPOL implementation scenarios outlined in this document, some examples of PEPPOL-based activities and related tasks that could be considered are provided below, respectively for:

Capacity Building:
- Build competence related to the technical specifications of the PEPPOL Transport Infrastructure, legal framework (PEPPOL Transport Infrastructure Agreements), service levels and planning
- Support management and security issue management

Implementation Strategy:
- Evaluate alternatives: gap analysis of existing components; assess which components and functionalities must be added and how to implemented them (such as application framework, OS, hosting, load balancing, protocol support, addressing look-up, transformation, logging, tracing signing, search and archiving)
- Establish solution architecture

Implementation:
- Development/integration of new components
- Integration of new and existing logging and traceability solutions
- Maintenance tool support for PKI
- Test

Deployment and Governance:
- OpenPEPPOL community enrolment
- Legal interoperability / compliance with the PEPPOL Transport Infrastructure Agreement (TIA) for Access Point provider
- Routines for monitoring, reporting and support (ensuring compliance with PEPPOL TIA)

Note: It is important to clarify that key objective of the 2015 CEF Telecom eInvoicing and eDelivery Call is the implementation of technical specifications in existing IT systems, therefore proposals focusing exclusively on Capacity Building activities are not likely to be funded.

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[12] http://www.peppol.eu/adoption/how-to-get-started/how-to-get-started-for-service-providers

6. OpenPEPPOL Support

OpenPEPPOL AISBL will provide guidance to national authorities on how to establish a PEPPOL Authority and help them to provide support for consortia that would like to prepare PEPPOL-based proposals for the 2015 CEF Telecom call for proposals for generic services for eInvoicing and eDelivery DSIs.

For more information about OpenPEPPOL and how the association can provide support for public or private entities that would like to prepare PEPPOL-based proposals in the current CEF Telecom call for proposals for generic services for eInvoicing and eDelivery DSIs, please contact us at info@peppol.eu

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PEPPOL Success Stories

[Electronic invoicing in Norway](#)

[Hewlett Packard and the Austrian government connected via PEPPOL](#)

[NHS England](#)

7. Useful links

[2015 CEF Telecom Work Programme](#)

[CEF Telecom calls for proposals 2015](#)

[CEF Building Blocks](#)

[Connecting Europe Facility](#)

[PEPPOL](#)

[PEPPOL Technical Specifications](#)

About OpenPEPPOL

OpenPEPPOL AISBL is an international non-profit association established under Belgian law. The association became operational in September 2012, following the successful completion of the PEPPOL project. The PEPPOL project was a large-scale pilot project under the ICT Policy Support Programme (ICTPSP) part of the EU Competitiveness and Innovation framework Programme (CIP).