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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Announced as part of the Action:
"Furthering Gender Equality through the EU Accession Process"

Frequently Asked Questions

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Q: Can an Umbrella Organization apply, even though it does not have gender equality (GE) defined in their statute?
A: Yes, as long as the proposed project activities correspond with the overall aims of the sub-granting Call for Proposals (CfP) and the EU funded Action it is a part of.

Q: Can a University apply if they are registered as a public institution?
A: No, since this Call for Proposals refers to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) only. However, a partnership with a CSO as a lead organization, can be considered as eligible, if maximum budgeting is sufficient for the foreseen activities and if the proposed activities are in line with the overall aims of the CfP, and if the proposal complies with the eligibility criteria of the CfP.

Q: Do smaller local CSOs have a priority in getting support?
A: All CSOs will get equal support, when it comes to guidance during the application process, as well as support during the implementation and reporting. Also, all CSOs will get equal opportunity to get the maximum amount per individually awarded grant, depending on their project and budget proposals.

Q: Can we apply in the name of our network?
A: Yes, you can apply in the name of a network, however, you need to choose one CSO to be the lead organization of the project.

Q: If a youth CSO partners with a women CSO, can the youth organization be a lead in the project?
A: Yes, as long as the project proposal, activities and goals are in line with the objective of the Call for Proposals, and the organization fulfills the eligibility criteria.

Q: Can a CSO that is active for less than 1 year, partner with another lead CSO?
A: Yes, as long as the lead CSO is active for longer than a year and fulfils all the eligibility criteria of the CfP.

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Q: Should we, as a local CSO, have a partner from another country eligible in the call?
A: If you want, you could partner with another CSO from your own country, or from any of the partnering countries in this project (Serbia, Montenegro, BiH, Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia). However, the activities of the project need to be implemented on the territory of the lead organization.

Q: Is partnership mandatory?
A: Having a partner is not mandatory. Each organisation can apply on its own.

Q: Are partnerships between a few, for example three local women CSOs, which act in multi-ethnic communities in two neighbouring municipalities, eligible to apply?
A: Yes, partnership with a CSO can be considered as eligible if maximum budgeting is sufficient for the foreseen activities and if the proposed activities are in line with the overall aims of the CfP and if the proposal complies with the eligibility criteria of the CfP.

Q: Can we submit 2 applications? (In one to be partner, in other to be lead.)
A: There is no legal obstacle to do so, however the final decision on the sub-granting may have to take this into consideration if both applications are short-listed. The donor authorities will be consulted in case we have such an outcome.

Q: In which form it is necessary to provide proof of capacity and previous experience in managing projects of similar size?
A: Apart from the 3 documents (application form with timeframe, budget, and logical framework) that you must send when applying, you could send any other documentation to support your application further (proof of previous experience with similar projects, narrative and financial reporting, funding, staff capacity, etc.). Proof of capacity can be shared as a separate document (outputs, letters of reference, contract details that verify and describe prior experiences, CVs, etc.) or as integrated content in the application form (list of past experiences and corresponding references).

Q: If the organization is planning a collaboration with institutions such as high schools and universities, do they have to have signed memorandums before they apply, or after the approval of the grant?
A: The organization should provide a letter of confirmation for the proposed collaboration with these institutions with the application form, and the signed memorandums could be provided if and when the grant is approved.

ACTIVITIES

Q: Does the project proposal have to be a new idea, or it can refer to the extension of another existing ongoing project as an additional set of activities, of course in accordance with the aim of this call for the proposal?
A: The project proposal does not have to be a new idea. It can be an extension of another existing project, and the activities can stem from the other project and synergize with or build up on the previous action, but they should gather around an independent application.

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Q: Are people with disabilities included in these projects? I recently made an analysis for employment on national level, and I am now starting analysis for the Balkan. Can this specifically be supported?
A: Yes, people with disabilities can be included in these projects. It depends on the specific topic and whether it is in line with the general goals of the Action and the CfP – furthering gender equality through the EU accession processes. So, if the analysis has a gender perspective and is somehow related to the country's approximation towards EU (for example, it deals with topics that are part of the contents addressed in the EU country reports and/or other relevant documents…), then it would be considered as eligible.

Q: Is monitoring of media covering gender sensitive topics eligible for these projects?
A: Yes, monitoring of media covering gender sensitive topics is eligible under this CfP.

Q: Is a CSO dealing with local democracy, which touches on issues of gender equality, eligible to apply?
A: Yes, as long as the proposed activities are in line with the overall aims of the CfP and if the proposal complies with the eligibility criteria of the CfP.

Q: Can gender responsive budgeting (gender awareness) and gender markers be taken as a topic?
A: Yes, they are relevant and eligible topics.

Q: In regards to local (W)CSOs' participation in the decision making processes, does the action have to consider meetings with decision makers?
A: Meetings are not mandatory, though they can be vital to gathering evidence and advocating. Taking into consideration the different country contexts and specifics, meetings with decision makers can be excluded with proper rationale and other proposed methods to achieve the result as such.

Q: Are project proposals that contain activities such as workshops/events organized and implemented by the organization submitting the proposal, for other smaller CSO on local or national level, in order to strengthen their capacities through sharing acquired knowledge and experience, accepted?
A: Yes, projects that are in line with the objective of this Call for Proposals, which is to further the organisational, networking, research, monitoring and advocacy capacities of CSOs, depending on the areas where they need additional development, are acceptable.
The end goal is enhancing capacities of CSOs to engage more effectively with governments, EUD/EUO and other CSOs in the region, while making them more aware of the gender dimensions of the EU Accession process and of their importance and agency, as well as improving accountability of governments and EUD/EUO in implementing their commitments to gender equality and women's rights during these processes.

Q: Could you suggest an activity for the part where you indicate that it is encouraged to strengthen the collaboration between CSOs?
A: We wouldn't like to suggest specific activities to avoid any bias in guidance. However, collaboration between CSOs can be strengthened in many ways and through major roles and functions CSOs perform – for example, through joint advocacy or changing public opinion/policies with regard to a given issue, measuring progress towards made commitments, joining forces to do relevant research or evidence gathering linked to an advocacy function or simply networking – coordinating with other

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CSOs to fulfil previously mentioned functions and roles. Also, the CfP itself aims at strengthening the collaboration of CSOs through networking, trainings, and joint advocacy on relevant issues (activities that are foreseen for all sub-grantees during the project duration).

Q: Do the reports and all documentation (meeting minutes, etc.) need to be in English?
A: All the reports (monthly, interim, final – both narrative and financial) need to be in English. Also, all formal documents, such as timesheets, requests for reallocation, etc. need to be in English.

COSTS

Q: Is there any limit in the budget for salaries, administrative and operational expenses?
A: There are no limitations, except for the proposed standard distribution of costs: around 30% of the overall budget should be allocated for salaries, around 10% for office expenses, and around 60% for activities. The total amount of the budget should not exceed EUR 15,000.00.

Q: Does the budgeted amount for salaries of around 30% refer to the monthly amount or the overall HR expense for the duration of the project?
A: It refers to the overall HR expense for the project.

Q: In regards to HR and the recommended 30% of the budget expenses, is it allowed to include an accountant?
A: The expenses for an accountant cannot be included in the HR section, unless he or she is employed in the organisation. In case of an external accountant, accounting expenses can only be budgeted in the "Other costs/services" section.

Q: In regards to employing personnel to work on the project, would it be considered a priority to employ a woman or a man?
A: There is no such priority. The overall aim is to foster gender balance but the objectives and the potential impact of the foreseen activities are crucial.

Q: Do the people working on the project have to be paid employees?
A: This CfP aims at strengthening the CSO capacities and therefore there is a strong preference for a salary-based core HR and not externally contracted one, so that the organisations can develop and grow further.

Q: Is it allowed to have only 1 employee, since the budget is small, or do we have to have 2 or more employees working on the project?
A: The team working on the project should consist of at least a Project Coordinator and, for example, a Finance Coordinator, as paid employees in the organization. The Project Coordinator should be working full time on the project, whereas the Finance Coordinator could be involved with a smaller percentage of her/his time, depending on the needs of the proposed project and involvement in other projects. This is only an example and HR distribution depends on the type of proposed activities.

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Q: Is it acceptable to predict a certain percentage of work from the working hours of an existing employee in the organization?
A: Yes, we encourage CSOs to include already employed personnel, with corresponding percentages of their working time.

Q: If there is a need for an external consultant, does the expense for freelancers and consultants go in the HR section?
A: No, the expense for external consultants/experts/etc. should be included in the "Other costs/services" section in the Budget, where and if applicable in regard to planned activities. This CfP aims at strengthening the CSO capacities and therefore there is a strong preference for a salary-based core HR and not externally contracted one, so that the organisations can develop and grow further.

Q: Could you advise in which section of the budget should the expenses for accounting and auditing go?
A: Expenses for an accountant cannot be included in the HR section, unless he or she is employed in the organisation. In case of an external accountant, these expenses can only be budgeted in the "Other costs/services" section.
Expenses for auditing can only be budgeted in the "Other costs/services" section.

Q: Does the expense for auditing refer to project or organizational auditing?
A: The auditing expense is in relation to project auditing and should be included in the "Other costs/services" section of the budget.

Q: Is VAT an eligible cost and does it need to be added to the budget?
A: No, VAT is not an eligible cost, and it will not be accepted. Each contracted CSO will have to apply for a certificate to be exempt from VAT, in accordance with the regulations and procedures in each of the partner countries.

Q: Should travel expenses for workshops in other cities or for participants from other cites be budgeted in Travel expenses, or calculated as an expense within the activity for which they are planned to occur?
A: All travel expenses that are in relation to a specific activity need to be budgeted within that activity, and not as a separate travel expenses.

Q: If the Project Coordinator, or any other personnel, is engaged in multiple projects, does it have to be budgeted in the "Budget with Cost Share" table, or is it all right just to put down the percentage of involvement? The same question goes for rent and other office expenses, if they are partially covered by another project.
A: If the Project Coordinator or other staff member is engaged in other projects, it is necessary to emphasize the percentages of their involvement in this project, in the main Budget table. The same goes for rent and office expenses. The second table "Budget with Cost Share" is filled in if you want to show your contribution to the above costs from other sources of finance in the organization.

Q: What is the "Budget with Cost Share" table used for?
A: The "Budget with Cost Share" refers to the organization's contribution to the project (financial or with other resources), in cases where the organization has another project or other sources from

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which it can cover part of the expenses. Of course, it is not mandatory, but it will be considered as eligible if budgeted costs are clearly allocated and there is no overlapping of any costs across any projects.

Q: Is the sub-granting or forwarding of fund to another partner organizations allowed?
A: No, this is not allowed.

Q: Are project proposals eligible to co-finance other projects already being implemented within the organization that is submitting the proposal?
A: Co-financing is not an option for this sub-granting call, especially because it is an EU funded project and EU is quite rigid when it comes to co-financing. We also have a specific note under ineligible costs that refers to this issue:

> *"The costs ineligible under this Call are: (...) Costs declared by the beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme receiving a European Union (including through EDF) grant or already funded by other donors;"*

It can be an extension of another existing project, and the activities can stem from the other project and synergize with or build up on the previous action, but they should gather around an independent application.

DURATION

Q: Is there a priority for longer lasting projects?
A: No, there is no such priority. The duration of the project could be anywhere from 12 to 18 months long, and it is the type of activities and focus that matter most.

LOCATION

Q: Do we have to plan for activities to take place only on the territory where our organization is based, in case we choose partners from another country?
A: Activities should take place in the country where the lead organization is established and operates.

SIZE OF GRANTS

Q: How many organizations will be selected from each partner country?
A: There are a total of 30 grants to be awarded between the 6 partner countries. We will aim to distribute a similar number of grants per partner country, but also take into account the local context and CSO environment, the quality of received applications, and the level of impact they can make at the local community/country level.

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