

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

EaP CSF RE-GRANTING 2016

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

Deadline for submission of proposals: February 21 2016, 24.00 CET

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1. BACKGROUND

In the framework of the Grant Contract ENPI/2014/347-121 *Support to the activities of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum* with the European Commission, the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Secretariat (hereafter EaP CSF Secretariat) as the body responsible for the implementation, is opening a Call for Proposals under the 2016 re-granting scheme in order to support projects of current and former EaP CSF members with a regional dimension that will contribute to achieving the mission and objectives of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.

2. OBJECTIVES AND THEMATIC PRIORITIES OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

2.1. Objectives

The overall objective of this Call for Proposals is to support work of five thematic Working Groups of the EaP CSF in line with specific objectives and thematic priorities within the regional dimension.

The specific objectives are:

- to contribute to advancing reforms of the EaP countries in one of the areas covered by the EaP CSF structures;
- to strengthen the regional perspective (namely by project activities with regional added value) and bridging the emerging gaps among the EaP countries while acknowledging the different paths and contractual relations with the EU;
- to contribute to the effective policy-making and advocacy of the objectives of the EaP CSF at the EU level;
- to connect with the interest and needs of the wider public in the EaP countries;
- to encourage activity of the civil society in relevant areas and policy domains where the civil society has not been active but which are considered important for societal development in the region.

Proposals that comply with more than one of the specific objectives are especially encouraged.



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2.2. Thematic Priorities

The identified thematic priorities for this Call for Proposals are: *(Please note the applicants are encouraged to submit proposals under the thematic priorities of the WGs they participate/d in, however, proposals submitted under other WGs' priorities will be also considered.)*

WG1 (Democracy, human rights, good governance and stability)

- **Democratic governance** – specific actions in the areas of electoral standards (for example IDPs access to voting, gender balanced representation in election); freedom of expression and media landscape (including monitoring and fight against Russian propaganda); gender equality; promotion of transparency of public bodies and free access to information as a tool to fight corruption; administrative reform with focus on implementation of the decentralization strategy in the local self-governance systems; evidence based advocacy for human rights and human rights education for special groups
- **Security and Stability** – contributions to security sector reforms based on good governance principles; regional security; policy contributions to the major policy-shaping security events (NATO summit); facilitation of involvement of people and organisations from unrecognised entities in the EaP countries into the work of EaP CSF
- **Justice and Home Affairs** – specific actions improving functioning of the judiciary (for example declaration of assets by the judges, women in judiciary) and monitoring of the implementation of judicial reforms; monitoring of the implementation of the reforms launched in relation to the visa liberalization process

WG2 (Economic integration and convergence with EU policies)

- **SMEs**
- **Harmonization of digital markets** and contribution to the implementation of the *Joint Declaration on the Digital Economy*
- **Agriculture**
- **Cross-border cooperation and trade**

WG3 (Environment, climate change and energy security)

- **Climate Change** – role of EaP CSF in implementing the main goals of the COP21 Agreement on Climate Change: reducing the temperature raising and greenhouse gases generation, and adaptation to climate change including by capacity building and advocacy
- **Sustainable Development** - contribution of EaP CSF into the implementation of the main principles of Agenda 2030: namely good health and well-being; clean water and



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sanitation; clean industry; sustainable cities and communities; responsible consumption; protection of natural resources; partnership

- **Energy Security** - cooperation with the Energy Union and EaP CSF involvement in energy security; solidarity and trust; fully integrated European energy market; energy efficiency contributing to moderation of demand; decarbonizing of the economy; and research, innovation and competitiveness

WG4 (Contacts between people)

- **Culture** - collaboration in the area of new cultural policy standards and promotion of the policy; best practices and reform experiences and tools applied by the civil society actors, public institutions, experts, EaP and EU policymakers and European and international institutions and organisations
- **Education** - monitoring the implementation of education policy reform (including Bologna process); internationalisation of all levels of education; monitoring and promotion of non-formal education and civic education
- **Youth** - increasing the participation of young people in the decision-making process and designing youth policies; monitoring and evaluating the strategy of policy implementation on local, national and regional level; developing capacity building and advocacy for promoting priorities of youth on national and regional level in the framework of EaP (including young people in the conflict areas)
- **Contacts among seniors** - realizing the potential of seniors and identifying their role in the dissemination of European values; standards of life of seniors in the EaP countries; monitoring the state of the pension system in the EaP countries

WG5 (Social & Labour Policies and Social Dialogue)

- Exchange of experience and the development of *social dialogue* in EaP countries
- **Social and labour policy**
- **Social standards**

2.3. Mainstreaming Gender Equality

Following the EU principles of gender equality, women leading and participating in the projects, as well as the coverage of the gender aspects in the themes addressed by the projects is highly encouraged.



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3. FINANCIAL ALLOCATIONS

The overall amount for this call for proposal is: **307.500 EUR**.

Financial allocation per EaP CSF Working Groups¹:

WG1 – 120.000 EUR

WG2 – 67.500 EUR

WG3 – 40.000 EUR

WG4 – 50.000 EUR

WG5 – 30.000 EUR

Any grant requested under this Call for Proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

- ➔ minimum amount per project: **EUR 10.000**
- ➔ maximum amount per project: **EUR 25.000**
- ➔ **No co-funding** is requested

4. ELIGIBILITY

Only proposals complying with the criteria set in articles 4.1. and 4.2. (Pre-selection eligibility check) will be subject to the full selection process.

4.1. Regional dimension

- Any project funded through this Call for Proposals **must** cover at least **three EaP** countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine), represented by CSOs acting as lead applicant and/or partners.

4.2. Eligible applicants

In order to be eligible, the lead applicant and its partners must:

¹ The allocations are distributed on the basis of WGs' thematic priorities covered by the projects, not on the basis of affiliation of the lead applicants with a WG.



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Criteria	Lead Applicant	Partners
Be a legal person	✓	✓
Be non-profit-making	✓	✓
Be a civil society organisation (CSO)	✓	✓
Be established in an EaP or EU country ²	✓	✓
Have participated in any of the seven EaP CSF Annual Assemblies	✓	
Be able to receive the grant (funds) on its bank account, provide account statements and have a financial management system in place to ensure clear and adequate reporting procedures.	✓	✓

- Members of the National Platforms, who have never participated in the EaP CSF Annual Assemblies, and delegates (CSOs) attending any EaP CSF Annual Assembly in the capacity of observers are eligible as **partners only**.
- A CSO can submit only **one proposal** as the **lead applicant**. It is allowed for a lead applicant to act as a project partner in other proposal/s within this call.
- **Individual experts** in the capacity of natural person can be involved as a **third party**; their participation is welcomed but does not establish/substitute the compliance with the regional dimension criterion.

4.3. Eligible actions

An action is composed of the set of project activities

Duration and implementation period

Any project funded through this Call for Proposals:

² EaP CSOs operating in one or several EaP countries but registered in an EU member state can thus also apply both as lead applicant and as a project partner.



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- may not have a duration lower than 2 months, and
- must be implemented between 1 May 2016 and 30 November 2016.
- Preliminary (if not final) results should be available and ready to be presented at the EaP CSF Annual Assembly scheduled for the second half November 2016.

The applicants are encouraged to develop proposals that include (but are not limited to) one or more of the following activities: research and analysis, data collection and polling, policy development, capacity building and training, evaluation and monitoring, research-based advocacy and lobbying, know-how sharing, awareness raising and informing the general public, public campaigns, know-how sharing visits, workshops, seminars, roundtables, conferences.

The project activities as well as the final project outputs shall demonstrate clear added value within the regional dimension.

The project activities as well as the final project outputs shall be linked (presented, discussed, used as an expert input) to the work of the EaP CSF Working Groups (and sub-groups), National Platforms and 2016 Annual Assembly as much as possible.

4.4. Eligible costs

To be eligible, all costs must be:

- indicated in the estimated Budget proposal;
- incurred during the implementation period;
- necessary for the implementation of the project activities;
- identifiable and verifiable, in particular recorded in the accounting records and supported by documents;
- reasonable, cost-effective, and comply with the sound financial management and applicable tax and social legislation.

The following costs shall **not** be considered eligible: debts, provisions for losses and future liabilities, currency exchange losses, costs financed by other funds.

5. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Applicants will be excluded from participating in selection procedure if they:

- fail the pre-selection eligibility check;
- their legal representatives are proven to be guilty of grave professional misconduct;
- they or their legal representatives are subject to a conflict of interests.



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6. REPORTING, OBLIGATION OF INFORMATION AND VISIBILITY

Following the decision on grant award, the lead applicant will sign a contract with the EaP CSF Secretariat, which includes the following reporting requirements:

- Midterm and Final Report comprising of a narrative part tracking jointly agreed indicators;
- and a financial part with detailed list of expenditures, accompanied by supporting documents for subsequent audit purposes.

By signing the agreement, the lead applicant will agree to authorise both EaP CSF Secretariat and the European Commission to exercise their powers of control over project-related documents and proves of spending. The lead applicant bears the final responsibility for the results of the project.

The lead applicant and project partners must comply with the visibility guidelines and guarantee the visibility of the EU funding and the EaP CSF (as well as other participating donors) over the course of the project. The detailed visibility guide will be provided as an annex to the contract agreement.

7. HOW TO APPLY

7.1. Project proposal

The proposal shall be submitted in English.

In case the applying organisations are not able to submit proposals in English, proposals in Russian will be accepted on the condition that the project outputs are delivered also in English in order to ensure wider dissemination and advocacy.

The proposal must be composed of:

- A narrative part (mandatory use of template in Annex I)
- A budget proposal in EUR (mandatory use of template in Annex II)
- Declaration of honour on financial eligibility of the lead partner (mandatory use of template in Annex III)

7.2. Deadline

Proposals must be submitted to the following email address: applications@eap-csf.eu by **February 21 2016, midnight (24.00 CET)**.



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Incomplete or late applications will be rejected.

7.3. Window for consultations

Window for consultations with the EaP CSF Secretariat (for example on eligibility, project activities and assistance with looking for a project partner/s) is open on **January 20-February 12 2016**. Please send your questions via email at: vera.rihackova@eap-csf.eu

8. EVALUATION AND SELECTION

8.1. The Evaluation and selection process

The evaluation and selection process goes in three steps:

Step 1: Eligibility check

Applications will be checked for compliance with eligibility criteria stated in articles 4.1. and 4.2. by the EaP CSF Secretariat.

In case the proposal does not pass the eligibility check, the lead applicant is informed via email. Final list of eligible proposals is issued to the **Selection Committee** and **WG Councils** (February 26 2016).

Step 2: Evaluation and rating of the proposals in line with the evaluation grid

The Selection Committee evaluates and rates the project proposals in line with the evaluation grid. The Selection Committee is composed of **two EaP CSF Steering Committee Co-Chairs** who can be replaced by any other Steering Committee member in case their organisations are applying for funding or any other reasons preventing them from performing this responsibility, **one external expert** (a representative of a donor organisation), and a **member of the EaP CSF Secretariat** without voting rights.

The **WG Councils** contribute to the evaluation and selection process via providing consultative ranking of project proposals for their respective WGs by March 12 2016 (WG Council members who submitted proposals should state potential conflict of interest and refrain from evaluation of their proposals).

Step 3: Selection Committee discussion and decision

The Selection Committee will take the final decision after meeting in person in Brussels where



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all relevant inputs are debated (March 16 – March 23 2016). The list of selected grantees is finalized as well as reserve list of proposals (two proposals per each WG) and published on March 28 2016.

In case the Selection Committee receives two equally good proposals that are similar in nature and content, the Selection Committee reserves the right to call on the lead applicants to discuss submitting a joint proposal.

The Selection Committee reserves the right to present lead applicants with recommendations for improving the proposals and to suggest budget modifications. The recommendations and modifications are discussed between the EaP CSF Secretariat and the lead applicant over the course of the deliberation period before concluding the contract (March 29 - April 30 2016).

In case the lead applicant declines the funding after the deliberations, a proposal from the reserve list is offered funding.

The Selection Committee has the right to exclude the proposals on the basis stated in the article 5 of this Guidelines.

8.2. The Evaluation Grid

Scoring:

The evaluation grid is divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good

Section	Maximum Score
1. OPERATIONAL CAPACITY	
1.1. Does the lead applicant and its partners have sufficient experience with project management (track record)?	
1.2. Does the lead applicants and its partners have sufficient expertise (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)?	
1.3. Does the lead applicant and its partners have sufficient implementation capacity assigned to the project (staff, financial management)?	
1.4. Is the geographical coverage provided by the lead applicant and its partners corresponding to the overall aim of the project (experts from other countries needed, etc.)?	
2. RELEVANCE OF THE ACTION	
2.1. How relevant is the proposal to the specific objectives and thematic priorities of the Call for Proposals?	2*



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2.2. Does the proposal demonstrate a clear added value within the regional dimension?	2*
2.3. Is the mainstreaming of gender equality well reflected in the content?	
2.4. Is there a direct link to the work of the EaP CSF WGs and NPs?	
3. DESIGN OF THE ACTION	
3.1. How coherent is the overall design of the project?	
3.2. Is the project feasible and consistent in relation to the project objectives and expected outcomes?	
3.3. Is the project likely to deliver mid and long-term impact in the envisaged area?	
3.4. Are the envisaged project risks likely to be mitigated?	
4. EFFECTIVENESS AND FEASIBILITY OF THE ACTION	
4.1. Are the activities proposed appropriate, realistic, and consistent with the objectives and expected outcomes?	
4.2. Is the time table clear and feasible?	
4.3. Are the proposed activities appropriately reflected in the budget (cost-effectiveness)?	

9. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Action	Date
Deadline for submission of proposals	February 21 2016, 24.00
Eligibility check of all proposals	February 22-25 2016
List of eligible projects issued	February 26 2016
Evaluation and selection process	February 29 – March 28 2016
Communication on the selection of 2016 beneficiaries	March 28 2016
Communication and deliberations with the beneficiaries, signature of the contract	March 29 - April 30 2016
Implementation period	May-November 2016



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10. ANNEXES

Annex I: Project proposal template

Annex II: Budget proposal template

Annex III: Declaration of honour on financial eligibility of the lead partner template



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