

2016 Small Grants Competition Empowering Grassroots Civil Society Organizations

June 2016

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Europe Foundation is pleased to announce a request for proposals (RFP) under EPF's *Engage and Monitor for Change* Program. The call is specifically designed to strengthen the organizational capacity of grassroots CSOs and to increase their effective and sustained engagement in the decision-making processes at a local level, so as to address the problems of their constituencies.

BACKGROUND

Europe Foundation's mission is to empower people to effect change for social justice and economic prosperity through hands-on programs, helping them to improve their communities and their own lives. To achieve its mission, EPF strives (1) to strengthen the capacity of individuals and institutions, empowering them to address pressing issues and (2) to mobilize relevant stakeholders in issue-based dialogue, through raising public awareness and creating various coalitions, platforms or working groups, so as to effect positive change.

EPF's work is guided by the following approaches: (1) creating opportunities for civic participation in public policy making, (2) engaging youth, (3) fostering culture of corporate and community philanthropy, including through formation of public-private-NGO partnerships, (4) promoting evidence-based advocacy and decision making, and (5) building confidence across religious, ethnic, and community divides. Some of EPF's flagship programs include *Engage and Monitor for Change*, *European Integration*, *Youth Integration*, *Social Enterprise*, and *Open Door Grantmaking*. Together, they feed into achieving the Foundation's mission and provide opportunities for Georgians to engage in social, economic, and political developments, in order to effect substantive and sustainable positive change at the local and national level.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The development of relatively new grassroots CSOs into significant civic actors is often delayed by their weak institutional capacity, including problems in management and governance that in turn hinder these CSOs to raise funds sufficient for their development and build sustainable connections with their constituencies. In addition, recently founded CSOs lack strategic approach to their development, lack practical experience of effective networking and lasting partnership with their peers as well as with more experienced civic actors. These decrease CSOs' participation in the local economic and political decision-making and lower communities' trust to CSOs and their activities.

COMPETITION GOAL

The goal of the call is to make recently established grassroots CSOs proactive participants in solution to communities' salient problems through the improved institutional capacity and effective interaction with communities, as well as establishing partnership and experience-sharing with other, more experienced CSOs.

COMPETITION OBJECTIVES

- Support activities directed at the enhancement of capacity of newly established grassroots CSOs in terms of organizational development, project management, public relations and partnering with the experienced colleagues
- Support, along with organizational development, the activities that are focused on resolving issues of local concern in cooperation with community members, experienced CSOs, and the media

SELECTION CRITERIA

Grants will be awarded to the projects demonstrating the following:

- Detailed and feasible plan of action designed to resolve at least one salient problem of local concern (justified by evidence-based assessment) and feeding into the organizational development plan noted below
- Wide engagement of the target communities in the identification and solution of the problem, mechanisms of lasting partnership with the local media, methods of effective dialogue with state bodies and continuous efforts to find inclusive solutions for challenges faced by the local communities
- Sound and feasible action plan about improving CSO governance, management and promoting organizational growth, which includes creation of organization's board, multi-year strategic plan of development, plans for fundraising, modern accounting, human resources, and public relations
- Creating capacity of the applicant organization's members in problem analysis, monitoring, advocacy and networking by training and/or educational activities
- Establishing a proven partnership with other, more established CSOs in the region or in Georgia, so as to exchange information and address specific institutional capacity issues.

The following general criteria will also be used to assess the projects:

1. Degree of compliance with the objectives and conditions of the competition
2. Degree of compliance with EPF's mandate and mission
3. Scope and importance of the project's impact
4. Effectiveness and feasibility of project methodology focused on attaining goals
5. Innovativeness and efficiency of strategies and approaches
6. Level of gender mainstreaming outlined in the project, equal participation of men and women in the project activities and equal accessibility the proeject's outputs and outcomes
7. Cost-effectiveness of the project
8. Effectiveness of the project monitoring and evaluation of its outcome
9. Sustainability of the project results

SELECTION PROCESS

To ensure an objective and non-discriminatory selection process, proposals will be reviewed by a board of independent experts. The final decision on grant awards will be made by Eurasia Partnership Foundation. EPF reserves the right not to support any project proposal, if it deems the quality unsatisfactory. During the review process, additional information may be requested.

The applicant will be asked to present the requested information within 3 (three) calendar days from the request.

EVALUATION OF PROJECT RESULTS

During the selection process, special attention will be paid to the proposed criteria and mechanisms for evaluation of project results. The projects shall list project evaluation criteria,

outcome and impact indicators, and baseline data for the proposed indicators. To determine the degree to which a grant project accomplished its goals and objectives, EPF may carry out an independent evaluation of the awarded grant projects.

GRANT FUNDS

The maximum grant award for each proposal is GEL 12,000 (twelve thousand Lari) with project activities lasting at least eight months or longer.

Grant funds may be used for the following:

1. Expenses related to the collection of data and evidence;
2. Direct costs for project-related events, e.g. rental of facilities, translation, equipment, etc;
3. Communication between partner organizations, e.g. phone, fax, e-mail;
4. Pro-rated portion of salaries for key participants, e.g. director, accountant, and modest honoraria for project experts;
5. Transportation of project participants;
6. Purchase of a limited amount of equipment (e.g. fax, computer, software) and stationery;
7. Other expenses directly related to project implementation.

Grant funds may be used only for activities directly related to the implementation of a grant project. Grant funds cannot be used for covering an organization's on-going expenses, construction expenses, the purchase of real estate, or an organization's debt. Clear justification must be provided for project staff salary levels and percentage of hours dedicated to project activities.

THE FOLLOWING PROGRAM ACTIVITIES WILL NOT BE SUPPORTED BY EPF:

- Humanitarian activities
- Support for a particular political party (however work that includes all parties on issues like electoral processes may be possible if it is inclusive, fair, unbiased, and objective)
- Lobbying for partisan purposes (EPF may advocate for issues, which bring about public and social good – like better endowment laws)
- Religious activities (EPF may support a religious organization for non-religious aims if they correspond to our mission)
- Capital construction projects for commercial purposes
- Military projects of any kind
- Small credits and loans for start-up businesses
- Theoretical research
- Individual and/or travel grants
- Purchase of medical equipment

ELIGIBILITY

Only newly created grassroots civil society organizations that are legally registered in Georgia and have a proven record of operations of **at least one year** are eligible to apply for this opportunity.

Civil servants, members of the current parliament, staff of public broadcasting, and/or leaders and members of political parties cannot participate in a grant project as a director or any grant remunerated participant.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Applicants must present the following documents to EPF:

- **One original and five (5) copies** of the proposal in Georgian, English, or Russian. If a proposal is approved for funding, the applicant may be required to translate it into English;

- A detailed itemized budget and logic model as described in the Guidelines for Applicants at <http://www.epfound.ge/english/for-grant-seekers/application-forms.html>

Proposals submitted for the competition must be the original and sole work of the applicant organization. Any plagiarism will result in immediate disqualification from the competition.

EPF will retain all materials and documents submitted through the competition for record. The Foundation does not use information presented by applicants for purposes other than review and does not provide this information to any outside persons or institutions, except when required by Georgian law or requested by EPF's donors.

Application forms, gender checklist, and logic model instructions can be obtained at the EPF office between the hours of 10:00 to 18:00 or downloaded from www.epfound.ge.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Europe Foundation is located at 3 Kavsadze Street, 2nd floor, Tbilisi, 0179, Georgia Tel./Fax: (995 32) 225 39 42; 225 39 43; 225 27 82.

The contact person for this competition is **Rusudan Jandieri**, Program Assistant rjandieri@epfound.ge

COMPETITION TIMELINE

Consultation Session at EPF office: **15:00 – 17:00, June 17, 2016 (Tbilisi Time)**

Deadline for submission of applications: **by 17:00, June 28, 2016 (Tbilisi Time)**

Award announcement: **July 20, 2016**