

**Request for Proposals**  
**To Promote Participatory Civic Monitoring and Advocacy**  
**in the Fulfilment of Georgia's Obligations under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement (AA)**

**November 2018**

Europe Foundation (EPF) continues to provide grant support to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to undertake civic monitoring and advocacy efforts and to contribute to more accountable and transparent public policy making in Georgia. To this effect, EPF is pleased to announce a call for proposals aimed at promoting participatory civic monitoring and advocacy in Georgia under the Foundation's *European Integration* program. The call is designed to foster active and informed participation of Georgian community groups, CSOs, and media outlets in AA-related reforms planning and implementation by building capacity of civic groups, encouraging monitoring and evaluation of policy reforms, and facilitating public discussions and network building.

**About EPF**

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.

**Background**

Since the adoption and entry into force of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement (AA) and DCFTA, the Government of Georgia has embarked on an arduous road of bringing Georgia closer to the European Union by fulfilling the country's AA obligations. The reforms to be implemented are diverse and many, requiring non-stop, methodical, and coordinated efforts to be successful. They also require time for solicitation of stakeholder ideas and opinions, so as to ensure a participatory nature of all the reform processes and a clear focus on the needs and aspirations of those most directly affected.

While there seems to be a general agreement about the value of civic participation in policy making, many AA-related reforms take place without much information provided to the relevant stakeholders and many remain outside the watchful eyes of civil society organizations with specialized knowledge of the issue area. To support democratic and participatory reforms in fulfillment of Georgia's AA obligations, especially as they relate to trade and trade-related matters, SME development, economic cooperation, environmental protection and energy cooperation, EPF's European Integration program decided to announce a grants competition for coalitions of two or more CSOs (or CSOs and media outlets) that will monitor the reforms planning and implementation processes, as well as contribute to effective engagement of expert or local communities in policy making.

EPF's experience over the past ten years has demonstrated that projects of this nature have more impact, when they produce at least one evidence-based policy brief, which proposes a solution to a concrete issue of concern that can be addressed through a policy action. The Foundation would like to see broad advocacy efforts waged with engagement of relevant interest groups. It is for this reason that the Foundation is expecting that some of the deliverables from the successful project proposals will be well-structured and articulated policy briefs, effective advocacy campaigns, and solid media coverage.

## **Goal and Objectives**

The goal of the grant program is to contribute to effective civil society engagement in AA-related reforms planning and implementation.

The primary objectives of the call are as follows:

- Support initiatives that foster enhanced participation of CSOs, business community, and media in AA-related reforms
- Promote lasting partnerships among CSOs, community groups, and the media in the process of monitoring and advocacy;
- Build capacity of CSOs and/or local communities to demand improved adherence to European standards and practices as prescribed by AA and relevant action plans

## **Selection Criteria**

Grants will be awarded to projects demonstrating the following:

1. Relevance of the selected issue to Georgia's AA obligations, especially as they relate to trade and trade-related matters, SME development, economic cooperation, environmental protection, and energy cooperation.
2. Results-oriented, feasible, and needs-based action plan ensuring wide participation of expert or local communities in monitoring and advocacy processes, including a clear description of the methods to be applied in monitoring, advocacy, and citizen mobilization (as needed).
3. Efficient and well-thought-out strategy of interaction between CSOs, media outlets, and public authorities in the process of planning or monitoring the implementation of Georgia's AA obligations, directed toward achieving positive outcomes for the communities.
4. Partnership with at least one CSO, which is clearly evident in both the programmatic and financial proposals.
5. Partnership with media outlet or a clearly articulated media component to be implemented by the potential grantee.
6. Capacity of the project partners to undertake the project and produce high quality deliverables, including a policy paper.
7. Well-thought-out project monitoring and evaluation plan with reliable quantitative and/or qualitative baseline data and indicators for measuring and evaluating the project's impact
8. Sustainability of a project (please note that sustainability can refer to activities, structures, knowledge, and outcomes that result from project implementation)
9. Cost-effectiveness of the project

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

1. Degree of compliance with the objectives and conditions of the call
2. Effectiveness of project methodology
3. Sound analysis of internal and external risks and efficient methods of risks mitigation
4. Demonstrated commitment from major stakeholders, including concrete information about formal or informal partners

5. Organization's capacity to implement a project as demonstrated by: (a) relevant qualifications of the involved personnel and/or experts, (b) past experience in civic monitoring and advocacy, and (c) capacity to manage a grant
6. Gender-based analysis to ensure equal access of men and women to project activities and products to influence decision-making processes.
7. Analysis of minority considerations that relate to direct or indirect effect of the project activities and expected results on different minority groups
8. Opportunities of co-funding from other sources.

### **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 Europe Foundation. EPF reserves the right not to support any project proposal, if it deems the quality of submitted proposals unsatisfactory. During the review process, additional information may be requested. The applicant will be asked to present requested information within three calendar days of 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 grant projects.

### **Grant Funds**

The maximum grant award for each proposal is **GEL 40,000**.

Grant funds may be used only for the activities directly related to implementation of a grant project. Grant funds cannot be used for covering organization's on-going expenses, construction expenses, purchase of real estate, or covering the applicant organization's debt.

Grant funds may be used for the following:

- Expenses related to collection of data and evidence
- Direct costs for project-related events (e.g. rental of facilities, translation, equipment, etc.)
- Communication (phone, fax, e-mail)
- Pro-rated portion of salaries for key participants (e.g. director, accountant) and reasonable honoraria for the invited experts (if any). A clear justification must be provided for project staff salary levels and percentage of hours dedicated to project activities
- Transportation of project participants
- Purchase of stationery and a limited amount of equipment (e.g. computer, software), and
- Other expenses directly related to project implementation.

The following program activities **cannot 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, unbiased, and objective)
- Lobbying for political purposes (EPF may advocate only for issues which bring about public and social good)
- Court cases and disputes of a grantee
- Religious activities

- Capital construction projects for commercial purposes
- Military projects of any kind
- Small credits and loans for start-up businesses
- Theoretical and market research
- Study and/or travel grants
- Purchase of medical equipment

## **Eligibility**

Non-profit civil society organizations legally registered as well as networks and coalitions of CSOs, community groups, and local media in Georgia are eligible to submit proposals for the call. Media outlets can take part in the call only in partnership with qualified CSOs.

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

Interested applicant can submit one proposal within a call.

## **Application Submission Procedures**

Interested applicants may submit full application by email to [nnemsitsveridze@epfound.ge](mailto:nnemsitsveridze@epfound.ge) no later than **December 10, 2018 by 15:00** (please indicate *European Integration Grant Competition* in the subject line of your email). The following documents should be submitted to EPF (proposal writing guidelines, application forms and other relevant templates are available at the Foundation's website at <http://www.epfound.ge/grants-informations/application-forms-2/>):

- Full proposal in Georgian, English, or Russian (stamped and signed by the applicant organization's Director)
- Logic model
- A detailed itemized budget (in Excel), as instructed in the proposal form
- EPF's Grant Management Questionnaire

Proposals submitted to the call must be the original and sole work of the applicant organization. Any plagiarism of any portion of the documents will result in the immediate disqualification from the call.

EPF will retain all materials and documents submitted through the call. The Foundation does not use information presented by the 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 funders.

## **Contact Information**

Europe Foundation is located at 3 Kavsadze Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 0179 Tbilisi, Georgia. Tel./Fax: (995 32) 225-3942, 225-3943

The contact person for this call is Lela Berdzuli, Program Associate ([lberdzuli@epfound.ge](mailto:lberdzuli@epfound.ge)).

## **Timeline**

Announcement: **November 26, 2018, 12:00**

Deadline for submission of applications: **December 10, 2018 by 15:00** (Tbilisi time).