



CALL FOR PROPOSALS - Local initiatives on ethical governance and transparency

The Congress has launched a call for proposals for “initiatives on ethical governance and transparency”, for mayors involved in the “Mayors, leaders for change” activities in Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. As a result of the information sessions organised in these four countries, a set of Frequently Asked Questions was prepared to provide further support to mayors and their teams in the finalisation of their project proposals.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a résumé/CV?

A résumé provides a summary of your education/background, work history, credentials, and other accomplishments and skills. A résumé is the most common document requested from applicants for describing and proving the experience of the team (member/s). There are different types of résumés (Euro pass, EU format, free style). It is up to you to decide on a preference, but it is recommended to use the same format for all team members.

2. What is the maximum grant amount for the project?

The maximum solicited amount is reflected in the call for proposals and depends on the number of population in the community. However, the local public authorities can contribute and the total budget of the project could increase depending on the amount of this co-funding.

3. Is the local contribution (in kind or financial) mandatory?

No it is not, but we encourage you to contribute to increase local ownership, public interest and involvement. It could be also be a good way to increase responsibility and visibility.

4. How many team members should we include in the project?

We do not have any limitations or conditions in this regard; it depends on the nature of the project. However, the minimum number could be at least three persons: project co-ordinator, accountant, and project assistant. All of them should be involved on a voluntary basis, except project experts, who could be paid respecting the norms laid down in the application guidelines.

5. What are the responsibilities of the project co-ordinator?

The project co-ordinator is responsible for planning, organising, monitoring and reporting. In other words he/she is co-ordinating the project activities and ensures smooth project implementation.

6. Who should be the project co-ordinator?

The mayor but also any other employee from the local government unit could be the project co-ordinator. In any case, the mayor should be the key driving force of the initiative.

The key conditions are to prove commitment, responsibility, and co-operation with all actors and to be familiar with the key aspects of project management. During the project implementation, project co-ordinators will receive tailored project management support from a national consultant contracted by the Council of Europe.

7. Is sub-granting allowed?

No, sub-granting is not allowed under this grants programme/from the Council of Europe/European Union resources.

8. What does “technical services” mean?

In our case we mean: any kind of equipment, IT, software, hardware, web page creation etc.

9. Is it possible to reallocate the resources from one budget line to other one?

Yes, up to 15% of the amount of the budget line can be re-allocated. However, it should be well explained and justified.

10. Is registration in PADOR¹ required?

It is not required.

11. Can 40% of technical services be used for the renovation of premises?

It can, but you need to show that it is an integral part of the project and that it contributes to achieving the project objectives.

12. What if 40% is not enough for technical means, for example for procuring and installing outdoor equipment?

Then you should consider co-funding.

13. How do we select consultants? Are there any requirements?

You can hire a consultant from one source if the cost is less than 5,000 EUR. Likewise, in the case of procurement, if the cost is less than 2,000 EUR, you can apply a one-source procedure. However, if the respective national legislation is stricter, you should follow national procurement rules. For your orientation, the daily rate for an international consultant is around 150-350 EUR per day, for a local consultant around 75-150 EUR/day. Moreover, you should foresee per-diems and transportation costs. However, if your project provides meals or lodging, then these costs should be deducted from the consultant's per-diem.

14. Is it possible to do a common tender for the purchase of goods or services needed by several grantees?

No, each procurement procedure should be conducted separately under the respective grant.

15. Should all transfers be made through banks?

Yes.

¹ Potential Applicant Data On-Line Registration of the European Commission

16. What is included in the application package?

The compulsory documents are the application form, CVs of the project team, and the budget. As mentioned in the call for proposal, the applicant can attach other supporting documents.

17. What is the language of the proposal?

The applications can be submitted in the respective national language, however, you should also provide a non-official translation in English so that international consultants can read and evaluate your proposal. It is not necessary to engage professional translators as the costs will not be eligible to be covered by the grant. You can use local capacities, such as teachers, non-governmental and civic society organisations (in further text CSO), volunteers, etc.

18. Will the receipt of the application be confirmed?

We will confirm the receipt of your application.

19. Can the supplier be a partner?

No, the supplier is not a partner as you have a service agreement with them. Partners for the project can be local CSOs, activist groups or individuals, as well as media, educational institutions, etc. who will be participating in the project activities.

20. Is it mandatory to have a partner?

It is not mandatory, but is welcomed.

What is 60% for if 40% can be spent on technical services?

60% of the grant should be used for “soft outputs”, mostly directed towards increasing transparency, raising the awareness of the population on municipal activities, information sharing, capacity building, organising meetings and discussions, publishing brochures, conducting surveys, etc.

21. What will be the exchange rate mentioned in the Estimated Budget table?

You should visit the Central Bank’s website for the exchange rate on the day that you submit your application.

What if the budget for an expert, for example, turns out to be too low? Is there any room for flexibility?

You must use your best knowledge and judgment before developing the budget. However, you are allowed a flexibility margin of 15% between sections of the budget.

22. What about VAT?

You should include the VAT and other taxes in your costs.

23. Should we present co-funding in the budget?

Yes, in row 17 “Contribution by the Grantee” of the Estimated Budget excel table and in the respective section of the application form.

24. Is monitoring foreseen?

Monitoring and audit are not foreseen. However, you will benefit from coaching by consultants who will help you keep track of activities and schedules. Also the narrative and financial report are expected at the end of the project and the project documents (originals) should be kept by the municipalities for at least 10 years.

25. When should the project finish?

The final date for completing the project is 31 August 2017. You will have an additional one month to submit the final reports.

26. Is it possible to finish the project earlier than that date?

Yes it is possible, but your schedule must be realistic and feasible.

27. The Council of Europe official languages are French and English. Are applications allowed to be submitted in French?

No, English is the language used for this call. Therefore, an unofficial translation in English is a must.

28. Will the selected applicant receive the whole amount in one transfer?

The selected applicants will receive 80% of the total amount following the signature of the contract. The remaining will be transferred after the project is finished and financial and narrative reports are approved.

29. You mentioned that goods from 2,000 to 5,000 EUR could be purchased using a price quotation. Georgian law for example does not allow this and requires an open tender.

You can follow the local regulations if they are stricter than those set for this call. In your case, you can go for an open tender.

30. How should we prove that the requirements were followed when it comes to price quotation?

You have to present all the respective tenders documentation, i.e. at least three proposals from different companies.

31. In the award criteria, “the relevance of the experience and expertise of the applying municipality and staff” amounts to 5%. We think that puts some municipalities that have experience in project implementation in favourable position.

The above criterion is not related to the municipalities’ expertise in project implementation, but to the expertise of their proposed project team as well. Moreover, it also relates to the “experience” of a given local authority in activities implemented under the Council of Europe/European Union programme and not only in project implementation. Please pay attention to the description of your experience in the appropriate part of the application.

32. If the municipality has purchased equipment within other projects, could that be used for current project?

Yes indeed, it can be used and will be an added value.

33. What is the maximum threshold in % or points for the project to be supported?

There is not such a threshold. We foresee support to three projects per country; the three with the maximum number of points on the list.

34. Is it possible for all three projects in a country to be 18,000 EUR each? Or one should be 8,000 EUR, second 12,000 EUR etc.?

No, it is possible for all to be 18,000 EUR each. The grant size depends on the size of population in each given municipality, as it is described in call.

35. How should we prove the number of population?

It should be described in the appropriate section of your application, when describing the profile of municipality. Appropriate sources (links) such as the last census, state statistics office etc. should be provided.

36. Who can be invited as an expert/trainer? Do we need to identify a person already in the proposal?

It is not compulsory to identify the expert at this stage. You should choose the expert and/or trainer based on your needs and the expert's qualifications.

37. Should we attach the CVs of proposed trainers/experts?

It is not compulsory at this stage of the project, but you can attach it. Only CVs of key project personnel should be submitted with the proposal.

38. I am a civil servant working for the municipality. However, I also qualify as a trainer in specific issues. Can I be involved in project as trainer?

You can be involved as trainer, but you cannot be paid from the grant money. No civil servant can be paid from the grant.

39. We have experience in writing proposals in a different format. Can we use the format we are familiar with?

Unfortunately not. Projects must be submitted in the format laid out in Annex I: Application form and Annex II: Estimated Budget. Not following this rule may result in the rejection of your application.

40. Can two municipalities apply in partnership for this call?

You can, however the maximum grant amount will remain the same and a grant agreement will be signed only with one applicant municipality.

41. Can a municipal utility/enterprise apply (be the recipient) for the grant?

The recipient of a grant can only be the municipality. Neither a municipal utility nor a local NGO, etc. can be the applicant/recipient of the grant.

42. Can an NGO be a partner of the project?

Local organisations/NGOs may be partners or beneficiaries, but they cannot be applicants nor receive sub-grants.

43. Can we include the salaries of the staff involved in the project in the budget proposal?

No, the budget cannot be used to pay the salaries of municipal staff involved in the project management. However, the project can foresee the hiring of experts for specific activities.

44. Is it possible to contact a Council of Europe representative or a local expert to get expertise on and check the proposal budget?

All questions should be sent by mail to congress.cooperation@coe.int and the answers will be shared with all eligible municipalities. Phone calls and personal contacts are not encouraged, as all the applicants should benefit of the same information. Moreover, applications cannot be opened/seen by the Evaluation committee or Council of Europe staff before the deadline.

45. Can we create an educational and sports centre in our village?

The focus of the project activities should be linked to increasing public ethics standards, citizen participation and accountability. Therefore every activity should lead to reaching the project purpose, objectives.

46. Can the municipality invite colleagues from neighbouring municipalities to an event proposed in the project?

The project is granted only to a municipality – the winner of the grant. Nevertheless co-operation with other (neighbouring) municipality/ies can be an added value and is possible. For example, visits to/in other municipalities, or inviting neighbouring municipalities to your community to share good practices, etc. can be planned.

47. Is it possible to plan and organise an event before the start of the project?

No, only the activities implemented following the signature of the grant agreement are eligible.

48. What kind of indicators can we use for the proposed activities? Can the project conduct a survey before the project starts and after it?

The poll before the project cannot be financed. However it is a good instrument to demonstrate the existing situation and provide a baseline. The poll on the results of the project is also appropriate, because it can show changes on how the image, reputation and perception of the municipal administration evolved. Indicators can be also related to the number of meetings, number of participants, visits on the website, social networks, discussions in the forum created by municipalities, number of complaints (decreased), adoption of regulations, etc.

49. Can the project cover costs for sociological research, posting articles, publications?

These costs are eligible.

50. How to measure the results, impact of the project?

The results of the project can be of different types: outputs - what was produced, bought, renovated; outcomes - the changes in behaviour, mentality, what changed as a consequence of the activities carried out, relations in the sense of increasing public ethics standards, accountability and citizen participation.

51. Are there any intermediate reports during the project implementation?

The grantees will submit the final report (narrative and financial) at the end of the project. No intermediate reports are requested.

52. Do I need to carry out the closing event?

It is up to each applicant to plan it or not.