

## Call 6:

# ACTIVE CITIZENS FUND IN SLOVENIA

## Call for proposals for medium projects and Guidelines for applicants

Deadline for submission of full project proposals: January 23, 2023 at noon

Note: This is an extract of the full document »**Javni razpis za srednje projekte in Smernice za prijavitelje**«. The Slovene version is the official document, in case of differences between the two texts; the Slovene version is the valid one.

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## CALL AT A GLANCE

**How much?**

€421.300

**How much per project?**

€5.000 - €50.000

**For whom?**

NGOs in Slovenia. And their partners.

**For what?**

Main purpose of the call is to support NGOs in their projects that contribute to strengthening civil society watchdog/advocacy role and/or increasing support for civic education and human rights.

**For how long?**

Project duration: 6 – 12 months

**Application deadline**

January 23, 2023 at noon

**Where to apply?**

[Prijava.srednji@acfslovenia.si](mailto:Prijava.srednji@acfslovenia.si)

**Whom to contact to get support?**

[podpora@acfslovenia.si](mailto:podpora@acfslovenia.si)

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Brigita Horvat: +386 2 234 21 27

<https://acfslovenia.si/faq/>

## EEA AND NORWEGIAN FINANCIAL MECHANISMS 2014 – 2021

### ABOUT THE ACTIVE CITIZENS FUND

Support to civil society is a key priority for the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms (FMs) 2014 – 2021<sup>1</sup>, funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Their aim is to contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area and to strengthen bilateral relations between the Donor States and the Beneficiary States. They cooperate with 15 beneficiary countries, EU member states, one of which is also Slovenia.

Overall focus of Active Citizens Fund (ACF) 2014-2021 as a part of Civil society programme of FMs is set to long-term sustainable development and capacity building of non-governmental sector. **Main objective of ACF on the EU level is ‘Civil society and active citizenship strengthened and vulnerable groups empowered’.** Programme aims at strengthening the role of non-governmental organisations in promotion of democracy, public inclusion in decision-making processes on national and local level and human rights protection. An important priority of the programme is also strengthening of bilateral cooperation between civil society organisations from Slovenia and organisations from donor countries - Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

Active Citizens Fund priority areas of support are:

- Democracy, active citizenship, good governance and transparency,
- Human rights and equal treatment through combating any discrimination on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or gender identity,
- Social justice and inclusion of vulnerable groups,
- Gender equality and gender-based violence,
- Environment and climate change.

Programme is based on common values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and the respect for human rights including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.

### OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF ACTIVE CITIZENS FUND IN SLOVENIA

Expected outcomes of the ACF in Slovenia are:

- strengthened civil society watchdog/advocacy role,
- increased support for civic education and human rights,
- enhanced capacity and sustainability of CSOs and sector,
- strengthened bilateral cooperation between civil society organisations from Slovenia and organisations from donor countries,
- strengthened regional civil society cooperation.

To realise these goals and address challenges identified in common effort with NGOs in Slovenia, programme is set to:

- financially support areas or activities which are under-financed or not financed at all in Slovenia, and organisations working in under-served areas as well as under-served target groups;

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<sup>1</sup> More on EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms: [www.eeagrants.org](http://www.eeagrants.org).

- strengthen financial stability of non-governmental organisations, especially those working in the fields of democracy and human rights;
- promote development of innovative methods to strengthen advocacy, fundraising, transparency and accountability of NGOs;
- promote inclusion of youth.

## MANAGEMENT OF ACTIVE CITIZENS FUND IN SLOVENIA

Active Citizens Fund is managed by Financial Mechanism Office – FMO based in Brussels, representing European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and reporting to Ministries of Foreign affairs of donor countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

Upon a public invitation to bid CNVOS – Centre for Information Service, Co-operation and Development of NGOs, in consortium with Institute PIP – Legal and Information Centre Maribor, and DRPD Novo mesto – Society for the Advancement of Voluntary Work Novo mesto were selected to operate Active Citizens Fund in Slovenia.

## PROVISIONS OF THE CALL FOR MEDIUM PROJECTS

### INDICATIVE BUDGET FOR MEDIUM PROJECTS CALL

Total indicative budget of the call is 421.300,00 euros.

Expected outcome	Indicative budget for medium projects in euros
Strengthened civil society watchdog/advocacy role	248.600,00
Increased support for civic education and human rights	172.700,00
<b>SKUPAJ</b>	<b>421.300,00</b>

Each project must contribute to at least one of these expected outcomes. In case a project contributes to more than one outcome, a primary outcome, that is the one to which the project contributes the most, must be clearly indicated in the application form.

### ELIGIBILITY RULES

#### ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants are non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in compliance with the conditions set in the Article 2 of the Non-governmental Organisations Act (Official Gazette of Republic of Slovenia no. 21/18) and if they meet requirements set in the Manual for fund operators of the Active Citizens Fund<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Chapter 7.1 of the Manual as eligible applicants states non-profit, voluntary organisation established as a legal entity, having a non-commercial purpose, independent of local, regional and central government, public entities, political parties and commercial organisations. Applicants thus have to fulfil the following criteria:

- Are non-profit, being organisations that have not been created nor operate to generate personal profit. Although they may have paid staff and may engage in revenue-generating activities, they do not distribute profits to their members nor to their board. Where revenue-generating activities are undertaken, these should not represent the purpose of the NGO, but should be a means to support its mission and values
- Have members who do not have any direct commercial interest in the outcome of the work of the organisation or of its commercial activities and should not pursue the commercial or professional interests of their members. This requirement therefore excludes trade- and professional associations, where the aims and purposes of the association is to further the specific interests of its members only
- Are voluntary in nature, formed voluntarily by groups or individuals and usually involving an element of voluntary participation in the organisation
- Act in the public arena and for the public good on concerns and issues related to the well-being of people, groups or society as a whole
- Have some degree of formal or institutional existence, unlike informal or ad hoc groups, involving formal statutes or other governing document(s) defining their mission, objectives and scope
- Have transparent structures and elected chair/board, and are accountable to their members and donors
- Are independent of local, regional and national government and other public authorities
- Are independent of political parties and commercial organisations

Political parties, religious institutions, social partners or profit-distributing cooperatives are not considered NGOs. Foundations and the national Red Cross societies are considered eligible NGOs if they fulfil the above principles. Faith-based organisations are eligible if they meet the principles identified above and if the funded activities do not directly or indirectly promote a religious doctrine, mission or proselytism related to the beliefs of a particular faith (beyond basic religious/cultural awareness raising).

Eligible applicant is therefore an organisation:

- a) that is a private-law legal entity established in Republic of Slovenia;
- b) was established exclusively by domestic or foreign natural or legal persons under private law;
- c) is non-profit (organisation that based on the law or its constitutional document uses its profits or surplus of revenue over expenditure exclusively for realisation of its purpose or goals; does not divide its property among its founders, members or other persons, and in the event of its termination, after settlement of its obligations, its property is transferred to another non-governmental organisation with the same or similar purpose, or non-profit legal entity of public law);
- d) is non-profit making (organisation that based on the law is not established with the intention of for-profit operation or with the intention of making profit or with the intention of development, facilitation or promotion of for-profit operation of their founders or members);
- e) is independent of other subjects (organisation whose management body, administrative body and supervision body do not consist of more than a quarter representatives of the state, local self-governing community, other public-law entities, barriers of public authority, international intergovernmental organisations, political parties, trade unions, chambers and corporate entities, or natural persons who independently engage in a gainful activity on the market, or representatives of other entities that are not non-profit);
- f) is not organised as political party, a church or other religious community, trade union or chamber.

**All eligible applicants, partners and project proposals shall follow the principles of common values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and the respect for human rights including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.** The applicants and partners will confirm this in the applicant and partner statements accordingly. Selection committee will have the power to suggest a rejection of a project, if it will establish that the applicants, partners and project do not follow the mentioned principles.

Each individual organisation can **apply only one project proposal** to this call. If the applicant submits more than one application with different projects, only the first one submitted will be considered. If it applies with more applications with the same project, only the last one will be taken into consideration. There are, however, no limitations as to the number of project proposals in which an organisation is in a partner role.

## ELIGIBLE PARTNERS

A project may be implemented in partnership with one or more project partners. If a project is implemented in such a partnership, the applicant shall sign a partnership agreement with each of the project partners. A model agreement is a part of the call documentation. In the application process, partners will have to sign a partner statement as part of the application.

A project partner can be a public- or private-law entity, commercial or non-commercial, or non-governmental organisation established in any of the ACF donor countries – Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, any of the ACF beneficiary countries (beside Slovenia, also Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Poland, Portugal), or any inter-governmental organisation or a body thereof that is actively involved in, and effectively contributing to, the implementation of a project.

Eligible project partners are also informal groups under following conditions:

- informal group is not established for the purpose of personal gain;
- work for public good;
- are voluntary and non-discriminatory;
- are independent of local, regional and national authorities and other public institutions, political parties, religious communities, chambers and corporate entities.

Informal group shall be represented by a chosen individual as a signatory of partnership agreement. Informal group cannot be a direct beneficiary of project funding; their costs shall be carried by the project applicant organization.

Partnership is not obligatory and does not bring additional scoring of the project **automatically**. It is important that partnerships are based on quality and concrete challenges that are common to all organisations involved in the project. Partnership shall strive to address such challenges based on a long-term, mutual relationship reflected in common ownership of the project. All partners shall be included in preparation as well as actual and financial implementation of the project. In project proposal evaluation and selection process, capacity of the whole partnership will be considered. It is expected that partnerships will continue to exist also after the conclusion of the project.

All partners are requested to sign a Partnership statement in the process of project submission. The form of Partnership statement is a part of the call documentation.

Organisations that have not recovered amounts due, following a final court decision in connection with the NGO Programme 2009-2014 in Slovenia, shall not be considered eligible applicants and/or partners.

#### *Support in finding partners*

For easier search for partners from Donor states and beneficiary countries you can use a portal of Norwegian Helsinki committee: <https://ngonorway.org/>. Applicants searching for Icelandic partners are advised to turn to the Icelandic Human Rights Centre ([margret@humanrights.is](mailto:margret@humanrights.is)). Especially welcome are the upgrades of already existing partnerships.

**Recommendation:** All applicant organisations interested in partnership with potential partners from the donor countries are recommended to prepare a short brief of the project idea consisting of its objectives, main activities, and proposed task and obligations of the partner, including indicative budget distribution. A model for project brief can be found in call documentation.



## FOCUS OF THE CALL

Main purpose of the call is to support NGOs in their projects that contribute to strengthening civil society watchdog/advocacy role and/or increasing support for civic education and human rights.

## PRIORITY AREAS AND SPECIFICS OF THE CALL

Project proposals must address one of the priority areas:

- Democracy, active citizenship, good governance and transparency,
- Human rights and equal treatment through combating any discrimination on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or gender identity,
- Social justice and inclusion of vulnerable groups,
- Gender equality and gender-based violence,
- Environment and climate change.

In addition, applicants must also take into account:

- **Protection of the environment and climate change** will **only** be supported as part of measures to promote civic participation, advocacy, social innovation and active citizenship. *[clarification: projects with the sole purpose of cleaning some area or taking care of endangered species are not eligible; but if the cleaning action is organised as part of the campaign to improve municipality's waste management, such project and activity are eligible]*
- In the field of **social justice and inclusion of vulnerable groups, provision of welfare and basic services** will **only** be supported as part of wider actions addressing awareness-raising, advocacy, empowerment and reform initiatives. *[for example, day centre for Roma children as such is not eligible, but activities in the scope of the day centre that are targeted at organising some activities together with the Roma children to raise awareness about a concrete problem they have (e.g. poor access to dental health), are eligible]*
- Youth inclusion shall be an important part of the projects (e.g. in civic education and civic mobilisation) and young people shall be highlighted as a target group. For the activities targeted at youth, entering partnership with youth organisations shall be considered.

## EXPECTED PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

In the tables below, expected outcomes and respective indicators on the level of the ACF in Slovenia are presented. Each description includes an example of a potential project as an illustration.

**Presented information should serve as a guide in development of project ideas as only projects contributing to at least one or more of these outcomes shall be considered for financial support of ACF.** However, it is not necessary for projects to follow only these outcomes. Project can be set wider and follow also other objectives and outcomes. In any case, projects should be coherent.

### Programme outcome 1: Strengthened civil society watchdog/advocacy role

In the scope of this outcome, we want to support NGOs to become more active, stronger and louder when advocating for the change of national or local legislation and policies or monitoring what public institutions are doing. In the scope of this outcome, you may think about what do you want to change, who will you include in your activities, with which organisations/institutions you need to cooperate in

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order to achieve your objective, how to mobilise your fellow citizens to be part of your activities, which data do you need in order to persuade the decision-makers in supporting your cause (e.g. how will you find out what your target group actually needs, how the problem is solved in other municipalities/countries). You may also think about monitoring public institutions, e.g. how they take decisions, spend public funds, what are their results, you can monitor how local natural source is managed, how some infrastructure is managed, etc.

Number	Expected programme results	Indicator
Outcome 1	Strengthened civil society watchdog/advocacy role	Number of national policies and laws influenced by the CSOs
		Number of CSOs using evidence/research to support their advocacy and policy work
		Number of media appearances where CSOs provide expertise on specific issues
Output 1.1	Citizens participation in civic activities promoted	Number of CSOs mobilizing citizens in civic activities, including in public policy decision-making
Output 1.2	Policy input submitted by CSOs	Number of evidence-based policy submissions by CSOs
		Number of CSOs involved in monitoring of public and private decision-making
Output 1.3	Innovative (new or improved) methods for advocacy and campaigning applied	Number of innovative methods applied
		Number of awareness raising campaigns carried out with innovative methods

### Programme outcome 2: Increased support for civic education and human rights

In the scope of this outcome we aim to support projects focusing on the wider audience, explaining, for example, what is hate speech, what is wrong with it, why all people should be treated equally, etc. You could also promote equality of refugees, migrants, Roma, LGBTI communities and other victims of discrimination or work with schools to provide longer programs for pupils to raise their awareness. You can implement different events outdoors for raising awareness on these issues.

Number	Expected programme results	Indicator
Outcome 2	Increased support for civic education and human rights	Share of target group disapproving of public statements that express negative views or hatred against minorities
		Share of target group showing concern for human rights (disaggregated by gender, age)
Output 2.1	Civic and human rights education provided	Number of public and educational institutions partnering with CSOs on civic and human rights education
		Number of educational tools for civic and human rights education developed and/or disseminated by CSOs
Output 2.2	Implementation of international human rights standards promoted	Number of strategic litigation cases supported
		Number of CSOs registering and reporting HR violations
		Number of cases of human rights violations and discrimination filed/lodged
		Number of awareness raising campaigns carried out

## FINANCIAL PROVISIONS OF THE CALL

### GENERAL RULES

Total budget available: 421.300,00 EUR.

The grant requested must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

Minimum: 5.000,00 EUR

Maximum: 50.000,00 EUR.

### *Project grant rate*

The applicants may ask for **100 %** of an eligible expenditure of a project.

#### *Project duration*

Project duration is limited to between 6 and 12 months. In the case of objective reasons that affected timely implementation of the project, the project promoter can ask for a non-cost extension for a period of up to 3 months. The final date of eligibility of costs is no later than 30 April 2024. Application for prolongation is considered and decided upon by the fund operator.

#### *Value added tax*

Value added tax (VAT) is eligible cost only in case the applicant is not entitled for recoverable VAT. Applicants shall be aware of this rule when preparing their financial plan for the projects, and consider only those VAT costs that are non-recoverable by the state.

Applicants whose project proposals will be selected for the grant will be asked to provide a statement on non-recoverable VAT.

#### *Changes to the financial structure during project implementation period*

General principle regarding possible transfers between cost categories is: transfers of budget between cost categories of up to 10 % of total project budget are possible without consent of the grant officer on the side of the fund operator; for transfers of budget between cost categories higher than 10 % of total budget project promoter will have to get fund operator's grant officer's consent and an annex to the contract will be signed.

#### *Procurement rules*

National and European Union law on public procurement shall be complied with at any level in the implementation of the projects.

Notwithstanding provisions of national law that exempt NGOs from public procurement, any procurement procedures related to amounts above the European Union thresholds for procurement shall be undertaken in accordance with the applicable laws on procurement without regard for such an exemption.

In cases where contracts concluded as part of the implementation of the projects fall below the national or European Union thresholds set for public procurement or outside the scope of the applicable public procurement laws, the awarding of such contracts (including the procedures prior to the awarding) and the terms and conditions of such contracts shall comply with best economic practices, including accountability, allow a full and fair competition between potential providers, for example by way of effective price comparison, and ensure the optimal use of resources from the ACF in Slovenia. To this end, and in the absence of stricter national laws, in cases of procurement related to an amount of EUR 5,000 or higher but below the relevant European Union thresholds, the project applicant shall invite at least three suppliers/service providers to submit offers.

The highest ethical standards shall be observed during the procurement and execution of contracts. The project applicant shall ensure the application of adequate and effective means to prevent illegal or corrupt practices. No offer, gifts, payments or benefit of any kind, which would or could, either directly or indirectly, be construed as an illegal or corrupt practice, e.g. as an inducement or reward for the award or execution of procurement contracts, shall be accepted.

## ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE

Eligible expenditures of projects are those actually incurred by the project applicant or the project partner, which meet the following criteria:

- they are incurred between the first and final dates of eligibility of a project as specified in the project contract;
- they are connected with the subject of the project contract and they are indicated in the detailed budget of the project;
- they are proportionate and necessary for the implementation of the project;
- they are used for the sole purpose of achieving the objective of the project and its expected outcome(s), in a manner consistent with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular through being recorded in the accounting records of the project promoter and determined according to the applicable accounting standards and generally accepted accounting principles; and
- they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation.

Expenditures are considered to have been incurred when the cost has been invoiced, paid and the subject matter delivered (in case of goods) or performed (in case of services and works). Exceptionally, costs in respect of which an invoice has been issued in the final month of eligibility are also deemed to be incurred within the dates of eligibility if the costs are paid within 30 days of the final date of eligibility. Indirect costs and depreciation of equipment are considered to have been incurred when they are recorded on the accounts of the project promoter.

The internal accounting and auditing procedures must permit direct reconciliation of the expenditures and revenues declared with the corresponding accounting statements and supporting documents.

Project promoters and partners are obliged to keep a separate account evidence for the project.

### *Definition of eligible expenditure categories*

#### *Direct expenditure*

- the cost of staff assigned to the project (employment contracts, civil law contracts, private entrepreneurs, who are part of the project team), comprising actual salaries plus social security charges;
- travel and subsistence allowances for staff taking part in the project;
- cost of new or second hand equipment, provided that it is depreciated in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applicable to the project applicant and generally accepted for items of the same kind. Only the portion of the depreciation corresponding to the duration of the project and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the project will be taken into account. The equipment should serve the project related purpose for at least 5 years upon completion of the project, except if fund operator and project promoter agree differently in the project contract;
- costs of consumables and supplies, provided that they are identifiable and assigned to the project;

- costs entailed by other contracts awarded by a project applicant for the purposes of carrying out the project, provided that the awarding complies with the applicable rules on public procurement; and
- costs arising directly from requirements imposed by the project contract for each project (e.g. dissemination of information, specific evaluation of the action, audits, translations, reproduction), including the costs of any financial services (especially the cost of financial guarantees).

Costs related to reconstruction, renovation, or refurbishment of a real estate shall not exceed 50% of the eligible direct cost of the project.

#### Indirect costs

Indirect costs incurred in carrying out the project may be eligible for flat-rate funding, but the total must not exceed **15 % of the estimated total eligible personnel costs**. Indirect costs do not have to be proven or evidenced in the separate account evidence of the project. The rate of indirect costs applies to the whole partnership; however, the rate can differ between partner organisations.

Project promoters have to be able to demonstrate that indirect costs of the project are proportionate to total administrative costs of their organisation.

In case beneficiaries are international organisations or bodies or agencies thereof, indirect costs can be identified in accordance with existing rules of such organisation.

#### INELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE

The following costs shall not be considered eligible:

- Costs related to preparation of project application;
- Costs of construction work;
- Costs for purchase of equipment, which is not necessary for implementation of the project
- Fees for regular work of civil servants or other public officials engaged in project implementation;
- Costs of debt, interest on debt, debt service charges and late payment charges;
- charges for financial transactions and other purely financial costs, except costs related to accounts required the contract with Fund Operator;
- costs related to purchase of land or real estate;
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- exchange losses;
- recoverable VAT;
- costs that are covered by other sources;
- fines, penalties and costs of litigation, except they are an integral and necessary component for achievement of project objectives;
- **excessive or reckless expenditure.**

#### CALL DOCUMENTATION AND APPLICATION PROCEDURE

All of the call documentation can be found at: <https://acfslovenia.si/>.

Call documentation consist of:

- Call for proposals for medium projects with Guidelines for applicants(pdf)

- Information on the applicant and project (excel)
- Application form (word)
- Financial plan (excel)
- Applicant's statement
- Partner's statement
- Template for presentation of project idea to partners (in Slovene and English language)
- Contract sample
- Partnership agreement sample

## APPLICATION PROCESS

### *Deadline and submission process for project proposals*

Complete application of the project proposal consists of:

- A completed application form (word),
- Complete form for project financial plan (excel),
- Information on the applicant and project (excel)
- A scan of signed (and stamped) Applicant statement,
- A scan of signed (and stamped) Partner statement, if applicable
- Scan of a current statute or the founding act of the applicant.

Application shall be submitted **only in electronical form** to the following e-mail address: [prijava.srednji@acfslovenia.si](mailto:prijava.srednji@acfslovenia.si) (this e-mail is intended exclusively for submission of applications for this call. In case you have questions regarding the call, Fund, etc., please contact us at: [podpora@acfslovenia.si](mailto:podpora@acfslovenia.si)).

**Please note: Applications submitted in any other form or way (for example via fax, regular mail, etc.) or to any other e-mail, shall be rejected without possibility of re-submission. Only requested documentation should be submitted. Any other appendixes etc. will not be taken into consideration and evaluators will not see them.**

Applications delivered to the respective e-mails past that deadline will be rejected. Date and time of the arrival of the e-mail with a complete application and all necessary attachments will be considered based on the records of the Fund Operator's server, regardless of the date and time of when it was sent and regardless of the date and time of sending recorded by the sending server. Fund Operator assumes no responsibility for any delays in the delivery of application e-mail (for example, due to large attachments and server occupancy or network disruption, etc.). Therefore, applicants are recommended to not delay the submission of their applications until the last day.

Applicants will receive an automatic response on the delivery of their e-mail to the sending e-mail address. In case such response does not arrive to applicant's e-mail inbox or spam within two (2) hours after sending the application e-mail, please contact us at 01 542 14 22, so we can check the status of your application on our side.

### Language of the application form

The application form and all the required annexes should only be submitted in Slovenian with a project summary in English, irrespective of whether the project is submitted by a national entity only or in cooperation with a partner from a Donor or beneficiary State.

#### *Project proposal assessment procedure and criteria*

After the delivery of project proposals, Fund Operator will check their eligibility based on the administrative compliance criteria. Fund Operator can request for additional information or clarifications referring to administrative compliance criteria.

#### Administrative eligibility

Criteria	Meeting the criteria		Notes
Application is submitted as instructed.	YES	NO	rejection
Application is submitted within the deadline.	YES	NO	rejection
Primary program outcome and priority area of the application are clearly indicated.	YES	NO	request for supplementation
Application is completed in Slovene language.	YES	NO	rejection
Short brief on the project is prepared in English language.	YES	NO	request for supplementation
Financial plan form is attached and adequately completed in Euros.	YES	NO	rejection
Applicant's statement, signed and stamped is submitted.	YES	NO	request for supplementation
Partner statement of each partner, signed and stamped, is submitted.	YES	NO	NOT APPLICABLE request for supplementation
The organisation's statute is attached.	YES	NO	request for supplementation

In case the application will miss certain parts (documents or information) that can be supplemented according to the above criteria, applicants will be invited to provide respective missing parts within five (5) working days. An invitation to provide the missing parts of the application will be sent to the e-mail address of the applicant listed in the application form (e-mail address of the contact person).

After the administrative eligibility assessment process is completed, ineligible applicants will be notified of the rejection of their project proposals from further evaluation. Applicants of ineligible project proposals will have eight (8) working days to appeal against the eligibility decision. Appeals will be considered by the Complaints Committee. The decision of the Committee is final. Appeal can be submitted at: [pritozbe@acfslovenia.si](mailto:pritozbe@acfslovenia.si).

#### Application quality assessment

All eligible and administratively compliant project proposals will be evaluated by two independent evaluators in accordance with criteria set below.

If the difference between the scores given by the two experts will be higher than 30 % of the highest score, a third expert will score the project independently. In such cases the average score of the two



closest scores shall be used for ranking the project. The latter shall not be used in cases where scoring of the third evaluator does not, in any way, contribute to granting the project proposal.

After the conclusion of expert evaluation of all project proposals, based on received scoring, the ranking list of applications will be prepared by the Fund Operator. Proposed ranking list will be examined by the Selection Committee, who will make recommendations to the Fund Operator on project proposals shall be funded. Final decision is made by the Fund Operator.

Project proposal adequacy criteria (max. total points: 100)

<b>Relevance and importance of the project (20 points)</b>		
<b>*eliminating criterion: If below 10, the project is automatically rejected</b>		
Criteria	Description of criteria	Score
Project's relevance for the objectives, expected outcomes and outputs of the ACF programme	<i>To what extent will the project contribute to objectives and expected outcomes of the ACF programme?</i> <i>To what extent will the proposed project contribute to outputs of ACF programme?</i>	/ 10
Relevance of the project for addressed problem solution	<i>To what extent are the target groups and their needs defined?</i> <i>To what extent will the project contribute to addressing the target group's needs?</i>	/ 10
		<b>/ 20</b>

<b>Implementation methodology (30 points)</b>		
<b>*eliminating criterion: If below 15, the project is automatically rejected</b>		
Criteria	Description of criteria	Score
Logical interconnectedness of individual parts of project proposal	<i>To what extent are the objectives, activities, outputs and expected outcomes logically interconnected?</i>	/ 5
Action plan feasibility	<i>To what extent are planned activities adequate and feasible and lead to realisation of project outputs?</i> <i>Is project feasible within planned timeframe?</i> <i>To what extent is timeline and interdependency of individual (set of) activities considered?</i>	/ 15
Adequacy and objective verifiability of indicators	<i>To what extent are output and outcome indicators adequate and measurable?</i> <i>Are planned target values of indicators adequate?</i>	/ 10
		<b>/ 30</b>

<b>Financial efficiency (20 points)</b>		
<b>*eliminating criterion: If below 10, the project is automatically rejected</b>		
Criteria	Description of criteria	Score
Cost – action plan compliance	<i>To what extent are proposed costs compliant with action plan? Are costs presented sufficiently</i>	/ 5

	<i>enough for detection of respective activities and outputs?</i>	
Adequacy of cost justification	<i>To what extent does cost justification make evident what the cost entails and at what price? To what extent are cost estimations based on realistic assumptions?</i>	/ 5
Financial efficiency of the project	<i>To what extent is financial plan cost efficient and depicts a reasonable value (outputs, outcomes) for money? To what extent are indicated costs needed for project implementation? To what extent is the value of the project adequate in regard to set objectives (are project objectives achievable with indicated project budget)?</i>	/ 10
		<b>/ 20</b>

<b>Project team's project management experiences (10 points)</b>		
Criteria	Description of criteria	Score
Organisational, expert and financial capacities of applicant and partner(s) for project implementation	<i>To what extent are activities and experiences of applicant (and partner) organisation relevant for the proposed project? To what extent is applicant (and partner) organisation adequately technically equipped/skilled for implementation of the proposed project? To what extent does applicant (and partner) organisation demonstrate financial capacity for implementation of proposed project?</i>	/ 5
Risk management	<i>To what extent are measures for financial and human resources risk reduction or elimination adequate? To what extent are identified other possible project implementation risks and respective risk reduction measures adequate?</i>	/ 5
		<b>/ 10</b>

<b>Innovation of the proposed approaches (5 points)</b>		
Criteria	Description of criteria	Score
Level of upgrade of existing services or development of new ones	<i>To what extent is the project innovative and represents added value to addressed problem or target group?</i>	/ 5
		<b>/ 5</b>

<b>Impact and sustainability of the project (10 points)</b>		
Criteria	Description of criteria	Score

Long-term impact of the project on the target group	<i>To what extent does the project bring about more sustainable solutions for the target group and addressed problem?</i>	/ 5
Sustainability of project outcomes and usability of project outputs after the conclusion of the project	<i>To what extent is made evident which activities and in what way are going to be continued after the project conclusion? Is it demonstrated how the outputs and outcomes of the project will continue in financial or organisational sense after the conclusion of the project?</i>	/ 5
		<b>/10</b>

<b>Quality of the donor country organisation partnership (5 points)</b>		
Criteria	Description of criteria	Score
Quality of the donor state partnership and contribution to strengthening of bilateral relations	<i>To what extent is the donor state partner relevant for the project according to its working field, experiences and the role in the project? To what extent will the project contribute to building a sustainable partnership?</i> <b>Scoring scale for partnership quality:</b> 0 – no partnership, 1 – signed statement, 2 – weak role or contribution to the project, 3 – clear role and contribution to the project, 4 – clear role, but it could be strengthened in the sense of sustainability, 5 – excellent collaboration with potential for a long-term cooperation.	/ 5
		<b>/ 5</b>

Project proposals scoring a minimum of 70 points in quality assessment will be recommended for funding. Only the highest scoring project proposals within individual programme outcome will be awarded with ACF grant.

Acceptance of an application does not imply an obligation to award it up to the amount claimed by the applicant. The amount claimed may be decreased by the selection committee based on the evaluators' findings on the appropriateness of the financial plan. Based on the findings of the evaluators on the appropriateness of the activities for achieving the project objectives, the selection committee may reject financing of activities that do not contribute to the objectives.

#### *Notification on selection*

Applicants will be notified on the selection of their project proposals via e-mail indicated in application form, by the end of March 2023. Applicants whose project proposals will not be selected for funding, will have 10 working days to appeal the decision. Appeals can be submitted at: [pritozbe@acfslovenia.si](mailto:pritozbe@acfslovenia.si). Appeals will be considered by Complaints Committee and its decision will be final.

## PROVISIONS ON PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

After final decision on selection of project for co-financing by ACF, the applicant will receive a Grant agreement based on standard agreement sample as presented in the call documentation. Before the signature of the agreement negotiations between applicants and Fund Operator to determine final definition of project activities and costs are possible.

### CONTRACT PROVISIONS

After notification on co-financing decision, applicants will set the project start date and project duration. In case a delay in project implementation occurs due to objective reasons, beneficiary can request for a prolongation of the project for a maximum of 3 months, even if the project duration was planned for 12 months. The last eligible day is April 31, 2024. Request will be considered by the Fund Operator. Prolongation of the project does not impact financial plan of the project.

Grant agreement will consist mainly of following rights and obligations:

- Final grant amount – maximum grant amount will be determined with the agreement based on the financial plan of the project representing planned amount of costs. However, this amount will become final only after the conclusion of the project and after submission of the final financial statement of project account.
- Failure to meet project objectives – In case beneficiary will not realise project in accordance with Grant agreement obligations and provisions, Fund Operator reserves the right to stop payments or terminate the agreement. ACF contribution can be reduced and Fund Operator can demand total or partial refund of already paid contribution in case beneficiary does not comply with the contractual provisions.
- Changes to the project – In the event of significant changes to the project, an annex to the agreement has to be prepared and signed, while with smaller-scale changes prior approval of grant manager is sufficient.
- Changes to the financial plan – Original amounts of the categories in the financial plan may change under the following conditions:
  - when the change does not impact the original purpose of the project; and
  - transfers of budget between cost categories of up to 10% of total project budget are possible without consent of the grant officer on the side of the fund operator; for transfers of budget between cost categories higher than 10 % of total budget project promoter will have to get fund operator's grant officer's consent and an annex to the contract will be signed.

### REPORTING AND PAYMENTS

Beneficiaries will report on project implementation progress in interim and final report. The deadline for the submission of the interim report will be around the middle of the project (3 – 6 months).

Reporting deadlines will be agreed upon with each beneficiary and will be mandatory. Deadline for submission of final report is within two months after the conclusion of implementation period. Reports

have to approved by the Fund Operator before payments are made. Fund Operator can request for additional information on implementation progress at any time.

To support beneficiaries in the implementation of the projects, 1 on-the-spot visit will be organized. The purpose of the visit will focus on the project progress and achievement of the results. In case the Covid-19 measures will prevent the execution of the live events, this visit will be replaced by on-line version.

## INFORMING THE PUBLIC

Project promoters are obliged to inform the public on receiving a grant from ACF. In all written publications, communications and products, at publication of project products, public events, such as conferences, seminars, fairs or exhibitions, related to project activities, project promoters are obliged to make explicit and visible the support of the donor countries.

Guidelines for informing and communicating will be published before the beginning of project implementation period on the ACF Slovenia web site: <https://acfslovenia.si/> and sent to all project promoters. Project promoter will also have a wide pallet of communication support activities at their disposal.

## INFORMATION CONCERNING THE PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA SUBMITTED BY PROJECT APPLICANTS TO THE ACTIVE CITIZENS FUND IN SLOVENIA

With personal data submitted (included) in application to public calls of the ACF in Slovenia and reporting documentation by the applicants, CNVOS as Fund Operator and Institute PIP and DRPD as partners and fund co-operators will be acquainted. Hence, fund operator and co-operators enter the role of common personal data controllers. Submitted personal data will be used for the purposes of implementation of public calls (application assessment, informing of applicants) and in applications rewarded with grants also for preparation of grant agreements, for monitoring, control of co-financing and for related informing of beneficiaries or for other related business communication (request for additional information, informing on financial means) as well as for the purpose of proving of eligibility for funding.

Co-financing of a project selected means establishing a contractual relation between CNVOS and the applicant in which CNVOS assumes the liability of co-financing party and has therefore, together with its partners, the right to monitor and control the implementation of the project. Such contractual relationship as well as submission of application to a public call (as a request for such contractual relationship) represent legal basis for all personal data processing by CNVOS, Institute PIP and DRPD as noted in this information.

With whole application, including personal data submitted with it, also third persons can get acquainted, and that is Financial Mechanism Office (Financial Mechanism Office, Rue Joseph II 12-16, 1000 Brussels, Belgium), donor states and their authorized persons.

In accordance with GDPR and respective national legislation, individuals whose personal data is included in application to public call have the right to be acquainted with all of their personal data, to correction, in the case of conditions as laid down by applicable regulations also the right to deletion, restriction of processing and to their portability. Individuals concerned can address their requests or questions regarding their personal data processing to CNVOS.

**Please note: At submission of project proposal application to public call of ACF Slovenia, legal representative of applicant organisation is obliged to sign a statement that they are aware of and in agreement with processing of personal data included in project proposal and relevant parts thereof.**

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND SUPPORT FOR THE APPLICANTS

Within the application process, applicants will have a wide range of support activities and services at their disposal: info workshop, phone counselling for project development ideas and brief counselling via phone or e-mail at [podpora@acfslovenia.si](mailto:podpora@acfslovenia.si). Telephone and email support will be available until one week before the application deadline..

All inquiries concerning the call for proposals should be directed to [podpora@acfslovenia.si](mailto:podpora@acfslovenia.si). All questions and answers will be replied within one week and will be published on the programme's website. With brief questions applicants can turn to: Veronika Vodlan or Emilija kastelic (+386 1 542 14 22) or Tina Cigler (+386 7 39 39 311) or Brigita Horvat (+ 386 2 234 21 27).

Timetable of workshops:

Event	Main purpose	Date
On line Information workshop	Detailed presentation of the call for proposal, especially result framework	November 24, at 10:00, on ZOOM

### PUBLIC CALL STEP BY STEP TIMELINE

Date	Step
14. 11. 2022	Publication of Call for medium projects
24. 11. 2022 at 10.00	Phone and e-mail counselling
Do 15. 1. 2023	Online Info workshop
23. 1. 2023 at noon	Deadline for submission of project proposals
24. 1. – 3.2. 2023	Applicant and application eligibility check, supplementing applications
3. 2. 2023 – 28. 2. 2023	Project proposal assessment
Beginning of March	Selection Committee meeting
Until 20. 3. 2023	Preparation of decision argumentations
End of March 2023	Notification of applicants and appeal consideration

## Appendix 1: ACF Slovenia's Results framework

Number	Expected programme results	Indicator
Programme Level	Civil society and active citizenship strengthened, and vulnerable groups empowered	Number of people engaged in civil society organisation activities (disaggregated by gender, age)
		Number of NGO directly funded (disaggregated by CSO Roma focus)
Outcome 1	Strengthened civil society watchdog/advocacy role	Number of national policies and laws influenced by the CSOs
		Number of CSOs using evidence/research to support their advocacy and policy work
		Number of media appearances where CSOs provide expertise on specific issues
Output 1.1	Citizens participation in civic activities promoted	Number of CSOs mobilizing citizens in civic activities, including in public policy decision-making
Output 1.2	Policy input submitted by CSOs	Number of evidence-based policy submissions by CSOs
		Number of CSOs involved in monitoring of public and private decision-making
Output 1.3	Innovative (new or improved) methods for advocacy and campaigning applied	Number of innovative methods applied
		Number of awareness raising campaigns carried out with innovative methods
Outcome 2	Increased support for civic education and human rights	Share of target group disapproving of public statements that express negative views or hatred against minorities
		Share of target group showing concern for human rights (disaggregated by gender, age)

Number	Expected programme results	Indicator
Output 2.1	Civic and human rights education provided	Number of public and educational institutions partnering with CSOs on civic and human rights education
		Number of educational tools for civic and human rights education developed and/or disseminated by CSOs
Output 2.2	Implementation of international human rights standards promoted	Number of strategic litigation cases supported
		Number of CSOs registering and reporting HR violations
		Number of cases of human rights violations and discrimination filed/lodged
		Number of awareness raising campaigns carried out
Outcome 3	Vulnerable groups are empowered	Number of vulnerable individuals reached by empowerment measures (disaggregated by gender, age, Roma)
Output 3.1	Innovative (new or improved) methods and approaches addressing the needs of vulnerable groups promoted	Number of new or improved methods developed and/or implemented to address the needs of vulnerable groups
Output 3.2	Members of vulnerable groups mobilised to advocate for their needs/ the needs of their communities	Number of vulnerable individuals trained in advocating for their needs/the needs of their communities
		Number of CSOs adopting participatory methods with vulnerable groups
		Number of awareness raising campaigns carried out (in cooperation with vulnerable groups)
Outcome 4	Enhanced capacity and sustainability of civil society organisations and sector	Number of CSOs with transparent and accountable governance procedure
		Number of CSOs with effective management procedures



Number	Expected programme results	Indicator
		Number of CSOs demonstrating an increase of donations by at least 30%
Output 4.1	Capacity building provided to CSOs	Number of CSOs participating in capacity building activities funded by the programme
		Number of CSO staff trained in capacity building activities funded by the programme (disaggregated by gender)
		Number of innovative (new and improved) methods developed to improve the transparency, accountability and efficiency of CSOs
Output 4.2	CSOs strategies to engage citizens in CSOs activities developed	Number of CSOs with new or updated plans to engage their constituencies
Output 4.3	Organizational capacities enhanced	Number of CSO with comprehensive capacity building plans for organizational development