

Call 4:

# ACTIVE CITIZENS FUND IN SLOVENIA

## Call for proposals for organisational (institutional) grants and Guidelines for applicants

Announcement of the call: 14 January 2021

Deadline for submission of project application: 15 March 2021

Note: This is an extract of the full document »Javni razpis za institucionalno podporo 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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## 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;
- Vulnerable groups are empowered;
- 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:

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

- 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;
- Strengthen financial stability of non-governmental organisations, especially those working in the fields of democracy and human rights;
- Encourage use of innovative methods for promotion of active participation of individuals, including vulnerable groups;
- Empower vulnerable groups, including Roma and migrants;
- 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 ORGANISATIONAL (INSTITUTIONAL) GRANTS

### INDICATIVE BUDGET FOR ORGANISATIONAL GRANTS

Total available budget for this call is 450,000.00 euros. It is foreseen that Fund Operator will select 5 organizations to be funded.

| Expected outcome   | Indicative budget per outcome |
|--|-------------------------------|
| <i>Enhanced capacity and sustainability of CSOs and sector</i> | 450,000.00                    |

### ELIGIBILITY RULES

#### ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants for 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>.

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;

<sup>2</sup> Chapter 7.1 of the Manual states that eligible applicants are non-profit, voluntary organisations 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).

- 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.

**➔ Additional criteria of eligibility for applicants**

Eligible applicants must:

- have a legal personality for at least **60 months** before the day of the deadline for submitting applications (This will be checked in the public records of AJ PES); and
- have an average annual turnover between **EUR 100,000 - 500,000 EUR** for the 2017, 2018 and 2019 **financial years** (the applicants will prove this with approved annual financial reports),
- have **implemented or are implementing at least three projects as of 1 January 2017 in one of the following areas of support:** a.) Democracy, active citizenship, good governance and transparency, or b.) 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 (the applicants will prove this with inserting the following project data in the application form: name of the project, donor, number of the contract, project size, amount received by the applicant, project duration, main activities and main results);
- have a **multi-annual organisational work plan and/or strategy,**

Applicants will also need to prove that they have a **sound financial management in place** (namely, that their general spending can comply with the following:

- a.) appears proportionate and necessary for the implementation of the annual organisational work plan / strategy, ensuring the optimal use of resources (this will be evaluated during the quality assessment based on the organisational strategy and organisational budget);
- b) The spending is identifiable and verifiable, in particular through being recorded in their accounting records and determined according to the applicable accounting standards and generally accepted accounting principles (the applicants will confirm this in the applicants' statement); and
- c) The spending complies with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation (the applicant will confirm this in the applicant's statements and submit a *Certificate of paid taxes and compulsory charges*, issued by the Fiscal Office).

If the fund operator, during the project implementation, establishes that the project promoter does not comply with the b.) and c.) criteria of the sound financial management, the project contract can be abolished.

**All eligible applicants 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 will confirm this in the applicant's statements. Selection committee will have the power to suggest a rejection of a project at any stage during the selection procedure, if it establishes that the applicants do not follow the mentioned principles.

The applicants can apply with only one application per organisation. If an applicant submits more than one application, only the **last** application submitted enters the administrative eligibility check phase, others are automatically rejected. In the scope of the organisational grants, partners are not allowed.

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.

## MAIN PURPOSE OF THE CALL

The main purpose of the call is to support semi-developed NGOs (average annual budget between €100,000 and 500,000) on selected areas of support in achieving their strategic objectives, while offering them extensive capacity building support for organisational development.

For the organisational grant, the applicants will apply with their multi-annual organisational work plan or strategy, which needs to set strategic objectives for their programmes as well as organisation (i.e. human resources, fundraising, communications, etc.). From the strategic plan, it needs to be clearly visible, how organisation will function better in the set time limit (better visibility, higher constituency, higher impact, higher transparency, etc.). The difference should be presented with annual quantitative indicators. Thus, the applicants need to carefully think about improvements in their operations (for beneficiaries, stakeholders, employees, etc.). The applicants will also need to submit the organisational budget for the 3-year period. The grant's impact should be clearly visible from the organisational budget.

The selected applicants (project promoters) will receive a financial contribution for the realisation of their multi-annual organisational work plan or strategy. Together with the fund operator, they will develop a capacity-building plan for their organisational development. They will receive extensive support in a form of mentoring, training, etc. for the realisation of their capacity building plan.

## FOCUS OF THE CALL

### PRIORITY AREAS AND SPECIFICS OF THE CALL

Grant proposals must address one of the following 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.

### EXPECTED PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

When applying for organisational grants, NGOs have to describe how the grant will contribute to their multi-annual organisational work plan or strategy and demonstrate that the activities of their organisational work plan contribute to one or several outcomes of the Active Citizens Fund. However, they will be required to report on the indicators that correspond to the focus of their work plan at **outcome level, but not at output level.**

In the tables below, expected outcomes on the level of the ACF in Slovenia that are particularly relevant for this call are presented. **Presented information should serve as a guide as only strategies contributing to at least one or more of these outcomes shall be considered for the organisational grant.** However, it is not necessary for strategies to follow only these outcomes.

In the appendix I to this document, we are attaching the whole results framework of the ACF Program in Slovenia. Each of the four outcomes has specific indicators, outputs and outputs' indicators set. The appendix is attached only for informational purposes; applicants are not obliged to address precisely those outputs and indicators. However, the document can help you with the ideas, what could be done when addressing respective outcome.



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

This outcome aims at increasing the number of national law and policies influenced by NGOs' advocacy, contributing to improved legislation and a more influential CSO sector; part of which are evidence-based advocacy, monitoring of public and private decision-making and professional campaigning.

| Outcome indicators on the level of programme                                     | Clarification  |
|--|--|
| Number of national policies and laws influenced by the CSOs                      | <p><i>Indicator refers to the impact NGOs have on policy and regulation development, new policy or regulation initiatives or proposals, on policy and regulatory changes and upgrades. Policy includes strategies, action plans, etc., adopted by the government, ministries or other public institutions on national level. Regulations are legislation on national level that is being adopted or is enacted, or proposals thereof not adopted yet. Indicator refers also to research work, evidence-based advocacy, monitoring of decision-making process or work of executive bodies and institutions (for instance, monitoring and collection of relevant data, development of monitoring methodologies and mechanisms for monitoring public policy decision-making or implementation). It refers also to monitoring and measuring of the effects of own (NGOs') services and activities, such as monitoring of impacts and changes reached by campaigns or services implemented by organisations.</i></p> <p><i>Impact on national policies and legislation can be achieved in various ways, for instance through direct cooperation with relevant public bodies, through stakeholder and public consultation, campaigning, advocacy initiatives etc. Activities can be implemented by one organisation or in cooperation with others (as an NGO coalition or a network).</i></p> <p><i>Above mentioned activities can also be implemented on the local level.</i></p> |
| Number of CSOs using evidence/research to support their advocacy and policy work | <p><i>The purpose of this indicator is to promote professional advocacy in NGOs that is based on analyses, data and evidence. The indicator motivates NGOs to follow domestic and foreign political and legislative developments on their area and base their proposals on facts and (international) comparisons.</i></p>  |
| Number of media appearances where CSOs provide expertise on specific issues      | <p><i>Indicator refers to media contributions, in which NGOs act in the role of competent expert on relevant topic. Indicator does not cover all media appearances (e.g. reports, news about project activities), but only media appearances, where NGOs were asked to comment or provide their expert views on different societal topics.</i></p>   |

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

Overall objective of this programme area is to contribute to an increased share of the target group showing concern for human rights and disapproving of public statements that express negative views or hatred towards minorities. The outcome includes addressing the implementation gap between the legislation and practice through strategic litigation and by monitoring and reporting violations of

human rights, with more research-based and expert arguments, including promotion of international human rights standards. It is also focused on addressing the pressing need to resist populist rhetoric, hate speech and increased degradation of human rights in public discourse. Organisations could also foster greater awareness of civic and human rights by working with educational institutions and other public entities, such as courts and police. The outcome targets gender, gender-based violence, youth and marginalised groups, such as refugees, migrants, Roma, LGBTI communities and other victims of discrimination.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <i>Increased support for civic education and human rights</i>   | <i>Increased support for civic education and human rights</i>  |
| <i>Share of target group disapproving of public statements that express negative views or hatred against minorities</i> | <i>Indicator refers to increased number of individuals or groups disapproving of public statements that express negative views or hatred towards minorities.<br/>The indicator will be measured by project promoters at their target groups (state of affairs at the beginning and at the end of the project).</i> |
| <i>Share of target group showing concern for human rights (disaggregated by gender, age)</i>                            | <i>Indicator refers to increased number of individuals or groups showing concern for human rights.<br/>The indicator will be measured by project promoters at their target groups (state of affairs at the beginning and at the end of the project).</i>   |

#### Programme outcome 4: Enhanced capacity and sustainability of CSOs and sector

Overall objective of this area is to build capacities of applicant through improvement of transparency, governance and management. This includes development of strategies for fundraising of new resources, organisation and/or project management skills development, financial management, advocacy skills development, etc.

**Capacity building is an integral part of the organisational grants. Applicants should in their multi-annual organisational work plan or strategy, alongside the objectives targeting the above outcomes, address also the objectives targeting their capacities.**

| Outcome indicators on the level of programme   | Clarification   |
|--|---|
| <i>Number of NGOs with transparent and accountable governance procedure and management</i> | <i>The indicator refers to measures for improvement of transparency and accountability assurance in organisation operation; including skills and capacity improvement for effective organisation management (decision-making, task delegation, work processes definition), financial and other resources management, publication of information, etc.</i> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><i>Number of CSOs with effective management procedures</i></p>                   | <p><i>The indicator refers to improvement of management of organisations, including clearly defined organisational structure, clearly defined vision, mission and activities for reaching strategic objectives, description of work places, clear human resource management policies, etc.</i></p> |
| <p><i>Number of NGOs demonstrating an increase of donations by at least 30%</i></p> | <p><i>The indicator refers to capacity building and development of tools and approaches for fundraising from companies and individuals (for example, diverse fundraising actions, initiatives, crowdfunding, etc.)</i></p>   |

## FINANCIAL PROVISIONS OF THE CALL FOR ORGANISATIONAL GRANTS

### GENERAL RULES

Total budget available: 450,000.00 EUR. The selected organizations will receive a grant in the amount of 90,000.00 EUR. It is foreseen that 5 organizations will be supported.

#### *Financial management of organisational grant*

In the application form, the applicant will describe what will be the grant's share of the total revenue that the applicant envisions for the duration of the call. The applicant will need to provide an organisational budget for the duration of the grant. The project promoter receives the grant as a lump sum.

The accounts of organisations should be kept in accordance with the double-entry method of bookkeeping.

#### *Project grant rate*

The grant is a lump sum with 100% of funding provided by the programme.

#### *Project duration*

The envisaged project duration is **36 months**. The concrete implementation period will be set in the grant agreement.

#### *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, allowing for a full and fair competition between potential providers, for example by way of effective price comparison, and ensuring the optimal use of resources from the ACF in Slovenia.

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

The project promoter receives the grant as a lump sum. The project promoter **does not** need to provide financial reports on the specific expenditures made under the grant. Payments of the grant do not depend on specific and individual expenditure incurred by the project promoter.

An applicant will need to supply the organisational budget including the grant amount to allow the Fund Operator to assess the grant's potential impact. The organisational budget including the grant should be proportionate and necessary in relation to the implementation of the annual organisational workplan/strategy, ensuring the optimal use of resources.

Project promoter needs to keep detailed account of the expenditure according to the accounting standards and generally accepted accounting principles. The Project Promoter must provide an assurance report by an external auditor at the end of the project implementation. This report shall provide assurance that the project promoter has used the grant in accordance with the purpose and provisions of the grant agreement. The audit will be paid by the Fund operator. If the project promoter commissions annual statutory audit reports for other purposes, the report of the latest year of the project implementation may be provided instead, provided it covers and specifically mentions the EEA and Norway Grants contribution.

## CALL DOCUMENTATION AND APPLICATION PROCESS

Call documentation can be found at: <https://acfslovenia.si/>.

Call documentation consist of:

- Call for proposals for organisational (institutional) grants with Guidelines for applicants (pdf)
- Information on the applicant and project (excel)
- Application form (word)
- Organisational budget form (excel)
- Applicant's statement
- Contract sample

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicants submit the application on a designated forms in accordance with the instructions.

### *Deadline and submission process*

Complete application consists of:

- A completed application form (word)
- A completed organisational budget (excel),
- Organisation's multi-annual organisational work plan or strategy,
- A completed Information on the applicant and project (excel),
- A scan of signed and stamped Applicant's statement,
- A scan of annual financial reports for the completed financial years of 2019, 2018 and 2017 as submitted to AJPES,
- A scan of Certificate of paid taxes and compulsory charges, issued by the Fiscal Office that includes last day of the month before the deadline for submission of applications,
- A scan of a current statute or the founding act of the applicant clearly indicate the fulfilment of the conditions under Article 2 of the Non-Governmental Organisations Act.

Applications shall be submitted **only in electronic form** to the following e-mail address: [prijava.IP@acfslovenia.si](mailto:prijava.IP@acfslovenia.si). In case you have questions regarding the call, the 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.**

The application form and all the required annexes should only be submitted in Slovenian with a project summary in English.

Applications must **be delivered** to the e-mails provided above by **15 March 2021 before 12 p.m. (noon)**, Slovenian time. Applications delivered to the respective e-mails past the 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.

### *Application assessment procedure and criteria*

After the delivery of the application, Fund Operator will check its eligibility based on the copy of the financial reports, the statute and on the administrative compliance criteria. Fund Operator can request additional information or clarifications referring to administrative compliance criteria.

### *Application administrative criteria*

| Criteria | Meeting the | Notes |
|----------|-------------|-------|
|----------|-------------|-------|

|   | criteria |    |   |
|---|----------|----|---|
| Application is submitted to designated email.   | YES      | NO | rejection   |
| Application is submitted within the deadline.   | YES      | NO | rejection   |
| The applicant submitted only one application.   | YES      | NO | Rejection of all applications, except of the last one submitted |
| Application form is submitted and fully completed.  | YES      | NO | rejection   |
| Priority area of the application is clearly indicated.  | YES      | NO | request for supplementation                                     |
| Application completed in Slovene language.  | YES      | NO | rejection   |
| Short brief on the strategy is prepared in English language.  | YES      | NO | request for supplementation                                     |
| Organisational budget is submitted and completed.   | YES      | NO | rejection   |
| Information on the applicant is submitted   | YES      | NO | request for supplementation                                     |
| Applicant's statement, signed and stamped, is submitted.  | YES      | NO | request for supplementation                                     |
| Multi-annual organisational work plan and/or strategy is attached.  | YES      | NO | rejection   |
| Financial reports for the completed financial years of 2019, 2018 and 2017 are attached.  | YES      | NO | request for supplementation                                     |
| Certificate of paid taxes and compulsory charges that includes last day of the month before the deadline for submission of applications is attached | YES      | NO | request for supplementation                                     |
| The organisation's statute is attached.   | YES      | NO | request for supplementation                                     |

#### Application eligibility criteria

| Criteria  | Meeting the criteria |    | Notes     |
|---|----------------------|----|-----------|
| Applicant is a non-governmental organisation.   | YES                  | NO | rejection |
| The applicant obtained a legal personality for at least 60 months before the day of the deadline for submitting applications.   | YES                  | NO | rejection |
| The applicant has an average annual turnover between EUR 100,000 - 500,000 EUR for the last 2017, 2018 in 2019 financial years  | YES                  | NO | rejection |
| The applicant <b>implemented or is implementing at least three projects as of 1 January 2017 in one of the following areas of support:</b> a.) Democracy, active citizenship, good governance and transparency, or b.) 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. | YES                  | NO | rejection |

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 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). If the application will not be supplemented in the given deadline, it will be rejected.

After the administrative eligibility assessment process is completed, ineligible applicants or applicants that did not supplement their applications on time will be notified of the rejection of their project proposals from further evaluation. Applicants of ineligible project proposals will have 8 working days available for 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.

#### Application adequacy criteria (max. total points: 100)

| QUALITY OF THE MULTI-ANNUAL ORGANISATIONAL WORK-PLAN OR STRATEGY (45 points)  |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>*eliminating criterion: If below 20, the project is automatically rejected *</b>   |             |
| Description of criteria   | Score       |
| <i>To what extent does the multi-annual organisational work-plan/strategy identify clear and measurable objectives (results), indicators and targets?</i>                               | / 15        |
| <i>To what extent does the multi-annual organisational work-plan/strategy contain visible progress related to implementation of the programs <b>and</b> organisational development?</i> | / 10        |
| <i>To what extent is the applicant's dedication to innovativeness visible from the multi-annual organisational work-plan/strategy?</i>  | / 10        |
| <i>To what extent is the applicant's understanding of importance of constituency building visible from the multi-annual organisational work-plan/strategy?</i>                          | / 10        |
|   | <b>/ 45</b> |

| RELEVANCE OF THE MULTI-ANNUAL ORGANISATIONAL WORK-PLAN OR STRATEGY (20 points)   |       |
|--|-------|
| Description of criteria  | Score |
| <i>To what extent is the multi-annual organisational work-plan/strategy relevant for Slovenia (To what extent does it target relevant needs, niche, etc.)?</i> | / 10  |
| <i>To what extent is the multi-annual organisational work-plan/strategy relevant for the ACF (To what extent does it target ACF's result framework)?</i>       | / 10  |

/ 20

| <b>FINANCIAL VIABILITY (20 points)</b>   |       |
|--|-------|
| <b>*eliminating criterion: If below 10, the project is automatically rejected *</b>  |       |
| Description of criteria  | Score |
| <i>To what extent does the applicant demonstrate sufficient financial sources of funding to maintain its activity throughout grant duration?</i>   | / 10  |
| <i>To what extent does the organisational budget appear proportionate and necessary for the implementation of the multi-annual organisational work-plan/strategy, ensuring the optimal use of resources?</i> | / 10  |
| <b>/ 20</b>  |       |

| <b>TRANSPARANCY (5 points)</b>   |       |
|--|-------|
| Description of criteria  | Score |
| <i>Does the applicant publish members of the governing structures, annual narrative and financial reports, activities and results on its web site?</i> | / 5   |
| <b>/ 5</b>   |       |

| <b>EXPERIENCE OF THE APPLICANT (10 points)</b>   |       |
|--|-------|
| Description of criteria  | Score |
| <i>To what extent does the applicant have appropriate organisational, managerial and expert capacities to implement the multi-annual organisational work-plan/strategy (with the envisaged capacity building support)?</i> | / 10  |
| <b>/ 10</b>  |       |

Project proposals scoring a minimum of 70 points in quality assessment can be recommended for funding. The recommendation is made by the Selection Committee. Only the highest scoring project proposals will be awarded with ACF grant. The final decision will be made by the Fund Operator.

#### *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 April 2021. Applicants whose project proposals will not be selected for funding, will have 10 working days available 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.

## REPORTING AND PAYMENTS

When reporting on results, organisations will have to demonstrate that the activities of their organisational work plan contribute to one or several outcomes of the Active Citizens Fund. They will



be required to report on the indicators that correspond to the focus of their work plan at outcome level, but not at output level.

Progress will be assessed against the multi-annual organisational work plan / strategy and its budget at the end of each implementation year. To this end, a narrative and financial report consisting of the latest narrative and financial general annual reports of the organisation must be submitted for approval prior to releasing interim and final payments. The final narrative and financial report needs to be submitted within two months after the conclusion of the grant. However, Fund Operator can request for additional information on implementation progress at any time. The Fund Operator undertakes further monitoring through the on-the-spot verifications. The FO and the FMO have the right to commission audits of the entire organisational accounts.

The Project promoter needs to keep detailed account of the expenditure according to the accounting standards and generally accepted accounting principles. The Project Promoter must provide an assurance report by an external auditor at the end of the project implementation. This report shall provide assurance that the project promoter has used the grant in accordance with the purpose and provisions of the grant agreement. The audit will be paid by the Fund operator. If the project promoter commissions annual statutory audit reports for other purposes, the report of the latest year of the project implementation may be provided instead, provided it covers and specifically mentions the EEA contribution.

The project promoter will not need to provide financial reports on the specific expenditures made under the grant. Payments do not depend on the costs actually incurred by the project promoter. The costs are considered as incurred within the project once paid to the project promoter.

In case the information provided by the project promoter proves evident non-satisfactory performance, or the work plan/strategy is not implemented in line with the principles set in Article 1.4 of the PIA<sup>3</sup>, the grant paid to the project promoter may be cancelled or reduced proportionately. Relevant provisions in this respect shall be included in the project contract.

Payments will be provided in four instalments:

- 30 % prepayment 14 days after the contract is signed,
- 30 % payment in 30 days after the approval of the first interim report,
- 30 % payment in 30 days after the approval of the second interim report,
- 10 % in 30 days after the approval of the final report.

## INFORMING THE PUBLIC

Project promoters are obliged to inform the public on receiving a grant from ACF.

<sup>3</sup> 1. The Programme [in the case of organizational grants, “the programme” should be read as “the organization”] shall be based on the common values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.

2. The Programme shall follow the principles of good governance; it shall be participatory and inclusive, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient. There shall be zero-tolerance towards corruption.

3. The Programme shall be consistent with sustainable development, long-term economic growth, social cohesion and environmental protection.

4. The Programme shall follow a results and risk management approach.

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.

## 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

Support to project applicants is available by telephone and email until one week before the submission 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. For quick information you can contact Veronika Vodlan (+386 1 542 14 22) or Tina Cigler (+386 7 39 39 311) or Brigita Horvat (+ 386 2 234 21 27).

Timetable of events:

| Event                          | Main purpose   | Date             |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------|
| Information workshop - webinar | Detailed presentation of the call for proposals  | January 22, 2021 |
| Strategic planning webinar     | Support to potential applicants on the development of the strategic plan, main features, measurability of progress, etc. | February 2, 2021 |

#### PUBLIC CALL STEP BY STEP TIMELINE

| Date                      | Step  |
|---------------------------|---|
| January 14, 2021          | Publication of Call for institutional grants                            |
| Until March 8, 2021       | Phone and e-mail counselling  |
| January 22, 2021          | Informational webinar   |
| February 2, 2021          | Strategic planning webinar  |
| March 15, 2021, noon      | Application deadline  |
| March 15 – March 22, 2021 | Applicant and application eligibility check, supplementing applications |
| Second week of April      | Project proposal assessment   |
| Third week of April       | Selection Committee meeting   |
| Fourth week of April      | Preparation of decision argumentations                                  |
| Fourth week of April      | 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                                      |