

Call 1:

ACTIVE CITIZENS FUND IN SLOVENIA

Guidelines for applicants to call for medium and large projects

Deadline for submission of concept notes: 11. 12. 2019

Anticipated deadline for submission of full project proposals: 10. 4. 2020 (or 1 month after applicants receive invitations to proceed with preparation and submission of full project proposals)

Note: This is an extract of the full document »**Smernice za prijavitelje projektnih predlogov na javni razpis za srednje in velike projekte**«. 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 – 2021¹, 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:

¹ More on EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms: www.eeagrants.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.

INDICATIVE BUDGET OF ACTIVE CITIZENS FUND IN SLOVENIA

Total budget of ACF in Slovenia is 3.000.000 euros, and out of that 2.5 million euros are intended for project co-financing.

The projects co-financing budget will be distributed via four public calls:

- Public call for medium and large projects – with a budget of 1.530.000 euros, for expectedly about 30 projects.
- Public call for small projects – with a budget of 327.000 euros, for expectedly around 20 projects.
- Public call for micro or »quick response« projects – with a budget of 40.000 euros, for expectedly around 10 projects.
- Public call for institutional support – with a budget of 450.000 euros, for expectedly 5 organisations.

Indicative timeline of public calls:

- Public call for micro or »quick response« projects: March 2020
- Public call for institutional support: June 2020
- Public call for small projects: February 2021

Distribution of the ACF budget according to expected outcomes:

Outcome	Indicative budget in euros TOTAL
Strengthened civil society watchdog/advocacy role	902.000,00
Increased support for civic education and human rights	430.000,00
Vulnerable groups are empowered	373.000,00
Enhanced capacity and sustainability of CSOs and sector	642.000,00

PROVISIONS OF THE CALL FOR MEDIUM AND LARGE PROJECTS 2019

INDICATIVE BUDGET FOR MEDIUM AND LARGE PROJECTS CALL

Total indicative budget of the call is 1.530.000,00 euros. The means are divided between two categories of projects:

1. category: medium projects (EUR 20.000 – 60.000),
2. category: large projects (EUR 60.001 – 120.000).

Expected outcome	Indicative budget for medium projects in euros	Indicative budget for large projects in euros
Strengthened civil society watchdog/advocacy role	352.000,00	357.000,00
Increased support for civic education and human rights	168.000,00	170.000,00
Vulnerable groups are empowered	143.000,00	148.000,00
Enhanced capacity and sustainability of CSOs and sector	117.000,00	75.000,00
SKUPAJ	780.000,00	750.000,00

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. Each project also has to contribute 10-15 % of the project budget for activities contributing to development of their organisation or the NGO sector.

ELIGIBILITY RULES

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants for both categories of projects 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 Fund².

² 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

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. 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 is 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, Cyprus, Czech Republic,

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).

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.

A special emphasis is put on partnerships that are including partners from the donor countries. Projects including such partnerships shall be scored with up to 5 additional points in the 2nd stage selection process.

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/>. 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

Active Citizens Fund follows a common results-based framework, based on which fund operators in each beneficiary country in cooperation with FMO and with help of public consultation identify and set their outcomes and outputs that shall contribute to realisation of the expected results on the level of the programme.

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.
- 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.
- Youth inclusion will be an important part of the projects (e.g. in civic education and civic mobilisation) and organisational development (leadership succession, rejuvenation of staff, etc.) and young people will 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. **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. In the reporting process, we shall pay notice also to the so called 'side effects', i.e. achievements of projects that do not contribute to programme outcomes but are nevertheless very important.

Each of the four outcomes has specific indicators, outputs and outputs' indicators set. Tables present the whole framework while also offering clarifications on individual indicators.

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; evidence-based advocacy, monitoring of public and private decision-making and professional campaigning are examples of practices also expected in project proposals under this outcome.

Outcome indicators on the level of programme	Clarification
Number of national policies and laws influenced by the CSOs	<p>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.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>Above mentioned activities can also be implemented on the local level.</p>
Number of CSOs using evidence/research to support their advocacy and policy work	<p>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.</p>
Number of media appearances where CSOs provide expertise on specific issues	<p>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.</p>

Outputs and their indicators of Outcome 1:

Output	Indicator	Clarification
Citizens participation in civic activities promoted	<p>Number of CSOs mobilizing citizens in civic activities, including in public policy decision-making</p>	<p>The purpose of this indicator is to encourage NGOs to include in their (advocacy) activities as many people as possible and to take special care to not lose the voices of those who are not usually a part of their activities (for instance, »unorganised« individuals, members of vulnerable groups who do not want to be exposed). Special emphasis is put on mobilisation of citizens into advocacy campaigns. The purpose of this indicator is for (advocacy) organisations not to lose contact with their</p>

		constituencies and making sure that louder voices don't override the voices of those who may be in the majority but are less active.
Policy input submitted by CSOs	<i>Number of evidence-based policy submissions by CSOs</i>	The purpose of this indicator is to promote professional advocacy in NGOs. It refers to evidence-based initiatives and proposals including concrete solutions for changes or amendments of policies and regulations, or even introduction of new policies and regulations.
	<i>Number of CSOs involved in monitoring of public and private decision-making</i>	This indicator includes development and/or implementation of diverse methodologies, web tools, programmes and mechanisms for long-term monitoring of decision-making processes (for example, monitoring of public procurement, implementation of public services, decision-making in parliament or municipality, as well as decision-making processes in companies and institutions) Indicator refers also to NGOs that are being newly included in existing monitoring mechanisms where NGOs had no representatives yet, in case of systemic solutions being introduced (for example, new regulation stipulates inclusion of at least one NGO representative into the monitoring mechanism).
Innovative (new or improved) methods for advocacy and campaigning applied	<i>Number of innovative methods applied</i>	Advocacy includes a wide range of activities, from monitoring and analysis, to proposal designing, advocacy and lobbying and diverse campaigns. This indicator is intended to promote introduction of new advocacy methods and professionalisation of advocacy. A method or approach is considered innovative when an organisation introduces a method that was not used before, or if existing methods are being evidently/significantly upgraded.
	<i>Number of awareness raising campaigns carried out with innovative methods</i>	Raising awareness is of key importance in achieving good results in all priority areas. The purpose of this indicator is to encourage NGOs to implement well-thought out and result-oriented campaigns (good problem understanding, clear definition of the objective, selection of methods based on the objective and target groups, etc.). Keep in mind: project proposal evaluators will pay special attention to set objectives of the campaign (expected changes to be brought along by the campaign), not only to its outreach (e.g. number of reports on the campaign, number of clicks, etc.).

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; it 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; the projects will foster greater awareness of civic and human rights by working with educational institutions and other public entities, such as courts and police; it is targeting 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. 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. 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>

Outputs and their indicators of Outcome 2:

Output	Indicator	Clarification
Civic and human rights education provided	<i>Number of public and educational institutions partnering with CSOs on civic and human rights education</i>	To enhance outreach and impact of civic and human rights education, cooperation between NGOs and public and educational institutions is necessary. Therefore, this indicator is intended to promote partner work in designing and implementing of such education.
	<i>Number of educational tools for civic and human rights education developed and/or disseminated by CSOs</i>	Indicator encourages development of new or transfers of existing educational tools. Organisations are encouraged to think about current needs and how to address this topic coherently when developing their projects in this area. Systemic, long-term solutions are preferred over implementation of human rights training focused on “only” one of the vulnerable groups.
Implementation of international human rights standards promoted	<i>Number of strategic litigation cases supported</i>	Indicator is promoting development/introduction of NGO practice in the field of strategic litigation. At strategic litigation, the focus is not a specific case, but rather social and/or legal change fostered by the case. In strategic litigation legal means are used to correct legislative or policy gaps. Successful strategic litigation will bring about long-term legal, political,

		social or economic changes.
	<i>Number of CSOs registering and reporting HR violations</i>	Indicator refers to promotion and development of mechanisms, methods, tools, instruments etc. for monitoring and reporting violations of human rights (to the police, Ombudsman, Advocate of the principle of equality, and other institutions). This indicator refers also to projects that will include strategic litigation.
	<i>Number of cases of human rights violations and discrimination filed/lodged</i>	To increase monitoring and number of reports of violations, this indicator encourages NGOs to a more active monitoring and reporting. Reporting refers to all competent institutions (the police, public prosecutors, Ombudsman, Advocate of the principle of equality) and other existing mechanisms (such as, Journalist court of honour, Labour inspectorate, etc.).
	<i>Number of awareness raising campaigns carried out</i>	Raising awareness is key in achieving good results in all priority areas. The purpose of this indicator is to encourage NGOs to implement well-thought out and result-oriented campaigns (good problem understanding, clear definition of the objective, selection of methods based on the objective and target groups, etc.).

Programme outcome 3: Vulnerable groups empowered

Overall objective of this area is to promote social inclusion and empowerment by supporting NGOs to pilot participatory methods for involving vulnerable groups in the development of new approaches for addressing their needs. This includes also capacity building in participatory advocacy methods and awareness raising campaigns that aim to a better understanding of vulnerable groups, their needs and encourage their acceptance (e.g. inclusive education, inclusive playgrounds etc.). While the initial target group are all vulnerable groups, special attention will be given to those with multiple factors of vulnerability.

Outcome indicators on the level of programme	Clarification
<i>Number of vulnerable individuals reached by empowerment measures</i>	<i>Empowerment measures refer to activities contributing to improvement of conditions and building of skills of individuals of the vulnerable groups to enact their rights and to enable them for active participation in social and economic life. Hence, this indicator refers only to individuals included in empowerment measures, not all individuals included in other project activities. Target of this indicator are new approaches to development of services for vulnerable groups, especially participatory methods for inclusion of vulnerable groups in service development aimed at their needs (development of services in collaboration with end users). Ensuring access of services for vulnerable groups can be one of the activities, if it represents a service in a wider awareness raising, advocacy, empowerment efforts, or as a part of reform and change initiatives, litigation (for example, ensuring 'sole' existence of day centre for a vulnerable group is not eligible, however, if such centre is a necessary mean for a vulnerable group to gather in one</i>

	<i>place to then be able to develop an awareness raising campaign, then such daily centre can be one of the project activities). Special attention will be given to projects that aim to address vulnerable groups with multiple factors of vulnerability (such as, Roma and poverty, migrants and gender, asylum seekers and sexual orientation,).</i>
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Outputs and their indicators of Outcome 3:

Output	Indicator	Clarification
Innovative (new or improved) methods and approaches addressing the needs of vulnerable groups promoted	<i>Number of new or improved methods developed and/or implemented to address the needs of vulnerable groups</i>	This indicator refers to identification of needs of vulnerable groups and development and implementation of new or upgraded methods, i.e. methods not being in use in the organisation before.
Members of vulnerable groups mobilised to advocate for their needs/ the needs of their communities	<i>Number of vulnerable individuals trained in advocating for their needs/the needs of their communities</i>	For empowerment process it is of utmost importance that members of vulnerable groups take on an active role in advocating their own needs (to make the step from passive to active stakeholders). But for them to be able to embark on such journey, they need to know how advocacy works. Therefore, this indicator is addressing skills and competence development of individuals in vulnerable groups. And the emphasis is not on methods here, it is in training results – individual is competent to participate in advocacy.
	<i>Number of CSOs adopting participatory methods with vulnerable groups</i>	This indicator is aimed at addressing development of new or upgrade of existing methods of work with vulnerable groups. Methods must be inclusive, meaning that individuals from vulnerable groups have to be included in the process from the beginning until the end – identification of needs, designing of solutions, testing the solutions and evaluation thereof (are the solutions appropriate, can they be improved, do they need a different approach,).
	<i>Number of awareness raising campaigns carried out (in cooperation with vulnerable groups)</i>	The purpose of this indicator is to encourage NGOs to implement well-thought out and result-oriented campaigns (good problem understanding, clear definition of the objective, selection of methods based on the objective and target groups, etc.). However, with this indicator inclusion and active participation of individuals from vulnerable groups is especially important. Project proposal evaluators will pay special attention to set objectives of the campaign (expected changes to be brought along by the campaign), not only to its reach (number of reports on the campaign).

Organisational development

One of more important goals of the programme is promotion of long-term and sustainable operation of NGOs and capacity building of NGO sector.

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

Overall objective of this area is to build capacities of applicant and partner organisations 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.

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>
<i>Number of CSOs with effective management procedures</i>	<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>
<i>Number of NGOs demonstrating an increase of donations by at least 30%</i>	<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>

Outputs and their indicators of Outcome 4:

Output	Indicator	Clarification
Capacity building provided to CSOs	<i>Number of CSOs participating in capacity building activities funded by the programme</i>	Indicator refers to organisations participating in fund operator's activities (for example, communications workshop for applicants). Applicants can include time and travel expenses of their employees participating in workshops in project's financial plan.
	<i>Number of CSO staff trained in capacity building activities funded by the programme (disaggregated by gender, age)</i>	Indicator refers to individual participants in fund operator's activities (for example, communications workshop for applicants). Applicants can

		include time and travel expenses of their employees participating in workshops in project's financial plan.
	<i>Number of innovative (new and improved) methods developed to improve the transparency, accountability and efficiency of CSOs</i>	The purpose of organisational development is to recognise organisation's needs related to set objectives and to address those needs. For an organisation to be able to achieve set objectives, content must be supported by adequate processes of leadership, management of organisation, of its financial resources etc. This indicator therefore refers to introduction of new methods in this field.
CSOs strategies to engage citizens in CSOs activities developed	<i>Number of CSOs with new or updated plans to engage their constituencies</i>	Indicator aims to address the need of NGOs for a stronger connection with its constituencies, for widening their membership or network of supporters.
Organizational capacities enhanced	<i>Number of CSO with comprehensive capacity building plans for organizational development</i>	Indicator refers to Public call for institutional support.

To reach this outcome, applicants have to allocate at least 10 % (large projects) and at least 15 % (medium projects) of project budget for organisational development of their organisation or for strengthening of NGO sector (for example, for mentorship of smaller NGOs, functioning of networks, etc.).

In the first phase of project proposal application process applicants and partner organisations only have to think about improvements they need in their organisations. Examples of such improvements are:

- Development/upgrade of strategic plan;
- Development/upgrade of transparency and good governance of organisation;
- Development/upgrade of organisation management processes;
- Development/upgrade of human resources management (including staff training)
- Development/upgrade of volunteers' management (including volunteer training)
- Development/upgrade of networking and consultation with target groups and other stakeholders of organisation;
- Development/upgrade of sustainability and financial stability of organisation;
- Capacity building in advocacy, communications and other skills;
- Strengthening of cooperation/networking with other organisations;

- Support for smaller organisations;
- Strengthening of intersectoral cooperation.

In the second phase of the project proposal application, applicants will have to define activities for organisational development, along with their outputs, outcomes and indicators. For all organisations selected for the second phase, fund operator's expert support in planning and developing activities will be available.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The list of activities is non-exhaustive. The important thing is that activities lead to set objectives, and that both, activities and objectives, lead to and contribute to programme objectives, outcomes and outputs (see above). Project can, beside objectives referring to the programme objectives, include also additional objectives and activities if they are coherent with and contribute to wider project objectives.

Approval of project proposal for co-financing by the ACF, does not automatically mean also approval of all proposed activities. Based on evaluators' findings regarding adequacy of activities for realisation of set objectives, selection committee can decide to not approve financing of non-relevant activities. Final design of action and financial plans is subject of agreement between fund operator and applicant.

When thinking about possible activities, illustrative lists below should be of assistance:

- Advocacy and raising awareness,
- Research, analysis and studies – as basis for further project activities,
- Participation in decision-making processes,
- Monitoring and watchdog activities,
- Promotion of active citizenship,
- Promotion of direct democracy mechanisms,
- Strategic litigation,
- Social innovation and promotion of social entrepreneurship,
- Development of new services,
- Training and education,
- Community development and activation,
- Intersectoral partnerships,
- NGO networking,
- Mentorship.

FINANCIAL PROVISIONS OF THE CALL

GENERAL RULES

Budget for medium and large projects: 1.530.000,00 euros.

The applicants can apply either for the medium or for the large grant. The grant requested must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

Grant amount for medium projects:

- Minimum: 20.000,00 euros,
- Maximum: 60.000,00 euros.

Grant amount for large projects:

- Minimum: 60.001,00 euros,
- Maximum: 120.000,00 euros.

Project grant rate

The maximum project grant rate indicated in the application may not exceed 90% of the total eligible project costs. The applicant shall provide the remaining co-financing (at least 10%) in the form of cash or in-kind contribution as voluntary work. The in-kind contribution may constitute up to 50% of the required co-financing. For the calculation of the in-kind contribution, the price for each hour of voluntary work shall be set in accordance with the Rules on voluntary work areas and Register (Official Gazette of RS, no. 48/11, 60/11 and 29/16). Organisation does not need to be registered as voluntary organisation.

Organisational development budget

Each applicant must allocate at least 10 % (large projects) and at least 15 % (medium projects) of project budget for organisational development of their organisation or for strengthening of NGO sector.

Project duration

Project duration is limited to at least 12 and maximum 24 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, even if the project was planned to take 24 months. 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 5 % 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 5 % 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 medium and large projects (pdf)
- Guidelines for applicants to the call for medium and large projects (pdf)
- Information on the applicant and project (excel)
- Application form:
 - 1st phase: concept note (presentation of project idea rationale, including financial estimate of project total cost) (word)
 - 2nd phase: full project proposal (argumentation, content, action plan, timeline, expected outcomes and outputs, etc.) (word)
- Financial plan_2nd phase_medium project (excel) and Financial plan_2nd phase_large project (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

Please note, that the application process is divided into two stages: in the first stage concept notes will be evaluated and those with highest scoring will be invited to the second phase.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Application process of this call is divided into two phases: in the first phase, concept notes prepared and submitted by applicants will be evaluated by external evaluators. Based on the evaluation, the selection committee will select those with highest scoring to be invited to the second phase of the application process – preparation and submission of full project proposals. The final decision is on the fund operator.

FIRST PHASE – PRESENTATION OF CONCEPT NOTE

Applicants submit the concept note on a designated form in accordance with the instructions. In the form, applicants will also have to indicate total value of the project, primary priority area addressed by

the project (Strengthened civil society watchdog/advocacy role, Increased support for civic education and human rights, or Vulnerable groups are empowered) and primary program outcome addressed by the project (democracy, human rights, social inclusion, gender equality, environment and climate change).

Please note: total value of the project, primary priority area and program outcome addressed by the project are final and cannot be changed in the second phase of application process. However, primary priority area and program outcome addressed by the project can be changed by the selection committee if the project, according to their opinion, actually belongs in another priority area or addresses other program outcome.

In addition to the application form, applicants will also have to submit Applicant statement, Partner statement (in case of submission of partnership project), and current statute or the founding act of the applicant, which must clearly indicate the fulfilment of the conditions under Article 2 of the Non-Governmental Organisations Act.

Please note: in the second phase of the application process, changes of existing partnership are possible only exceptionally. In case a change is inevitable due to objective reasons, partner shall be replaced with another partner of similar nature and characteristics (for instance, if the partner that needs to be replaced was a municipality, it can be replaced only by another municipality or another appropriate public institution of the municipality; it cannot, for instance, be replaced by an NGO). Reasons for change will have to be explained in the application form. Nevertheless, expansions of partnerships are welcomed (for example, in cases when applicant did not manage to set a partnership by the time of submission of the concept note, this can be done in the second phase).

Deadline and submission process for the first phase

Complete application of the concept note consists of:

- A completed application form for the first phase of the application process,
- A scan of signed and stamped Applicant statement,
- A scan of signed (and stamped) Partner statement,
- A scan of a current statute or the founding act of the applicant.

Application shall be submitted **only in electronic form** to the following e-mail addresses respectively: prijava_veliki@acfslovenia.si for large projects and prijava_srednji@acfslovenia.si for medium projects (these two e-mails are intended exclusively for submission of applications for this call and will therefore not be checked before the deadline for submission of project proposals. In case you have questions regarding the call, Fund, etc., please contact us at: podpora@acfslovenia.si).

The subject of the submitting e-mail shall be: Application to call for medium and large projects

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.

Applications must **be delivered** to the e-mails provided above by **11 December 2019 before 12 p.m. (noon)**, Slovenian noon. 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.

Concept note assessment procedure and criteria

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

Application administrative criteria

Criteria	Meeting the criteria		Notes
	YES	NO	
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
Applicant statement, signed and stamped, is submitted.	YES	NO	request for supplementation
Partner statement of each partner, signed and stamped, is submitted.	YES	NO	request for supplementation

Application eligibility criteria

Criteria	Meeting the criteria		Notes
	YES	NO	
Applicant is a non-governmental organisation.	YES	NO	rejection
Partner organisation(s) is(are) eligible.	YES	NO	rejection
Project duration is between 12 and 24 months.	YES	NO	rejection
Grant amount corresponds to determined frames of 20.000 € and 60.000 € for medium projects, and 60.001 € and 120.000 €.	YES	NO	rejection
Grant rate does not exceed 90% of total eligible project budget.	YES	NO	rejection
Applicant submitted only one project proposal to the call (in the role of the applicant).	YES	NO	first delivered application remains in the process of assessment, while other are rejected due to ineligibility.

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).

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 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.

Application quality assessment

All eligible and administratively compliant project proposals will be assessed 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 which concept notes shall enter the second phase of the application process. Final decision is made by the Fund Operator.

Concept note adequacy criteria (max. total points: 100)

Relevance / adequacy of the concept note (40 points)		
*eliminating criterion: If below 20, the project is automatically rejected		
Criteria	Description of criteria	Score
Argumentation of problem and its relevance to the target group	<i>To what extent are the target groups and their needs defined? To what extent is the addressed problem relevant to the target group?</i>	/ 10
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? To what extent will the proposed project contribute to outputs of ACF programme?</i>	/ 10
Added value of the project	<i>Why is this project different? To what extent does the project provide for new, innovative solutions or upgrades to existing solutions? To what extent does the project provide for sustainable solutions with a potential to contribute to a problem solution in the long-term?</i>	/10
Adequacy of the applicant or partnership for proposed solution to the problem	<i>To what extent is project team adequate for optimal problem solution?</i>	/ 10

Implementation (30 points)		
Criteria	Description of criteria	Score
Project objectives adequacy in relation to addressed problem	<i>To what extent are set project objectives relevant to the addressed problem and the needs of target group?</i>	/ 10
Adequacy and feasibility of proposed activities, and feasibility of proposed outcomes	<i>To what extent do planned expected outcomes lead to reaching project objectives? To what extent are the activities of the project adequate and feasible?</i>	/ 10
Sustainability of the organisation	<i>To what extent are the needs in the field of organisational development identified? To what extent will the project contribute to capacity building of the organisation?</i>	/10
		/ 30

Financial efficiency (30 points)		
*eliminating criterion: If below 10, the project is automatically rejected		
Criteria	Description of criteria	Score
Cost efficiency	<i>To what extent is the proposed project idea cost efficient («value for money»)? To what extent is the value of the project adequate to project objectives (are project objectives achievable with the indicated budget)?</i>	/ 20
Division of project budget between project partners	<i>To what extent are the project costs adequately divided between partners according to their respective roles in the project?</i>	/ 10
		/ 30

Threshold for inclusion of the concept note into the next phase of application process is 70 out of 100 possible points.

Selection committee will select around 90 best scored project proposals – i.e. around 60 medium and around 30 large projects – to enter the second phase of application process.

Notification on selection

Applicants will be notified on the selection of their project proposals to enter the second phase of the application process via e-mail indicated in application form, in February 2020. Applicants whose project proposals will not be selected for further development in the second phase of the process will have 10 working days available to appeal the decision. Appeals can be submitted at: pritozbe@acfslovenia.si. Appeals will be considered by Complaints Committee and its decision will be final.

SECOND PHASE – FULL PROJECT PROPOSAL

Applicants invited to submit full project proposals in the second phase of the application process shall prepare and fill in the form »Celovita projektna prijava« in accordance with instructions. Full proposal shall be based on the concept note submitted in the first phase of the application process.

Deadline and submission process for the second phase

Complete application in the second phase of the application process consists of:

- Complete application form for the second phase – Full project proposal (word),
- Complete form for project financial plan (excel),
- Scan of partner statement (signed and stamped) for those partners that have not been included in the first phase.

Application shall be submitted **only in electronical form** to the following e-mail addresses respectively: prijava_veliki@acfslovenia.si for large projects and prijava_srednji@acfslovenia.si for medium projects (these two e-mails are 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).

The subject of the submitting e-mail shall be: Application to call for medium and large projects – second phase.

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.

Applications must **be delivered** to the e-mails provided above by the deadline indicated in the invitation for participation in the second phase of application process, which will be received by all applicants whose concept notes will be selected into the second phase.

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.

Full 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
	YES	NO	
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
Partner statement, signed and stamped, for each partner is attached (only for those partners that have not been included in the first phase of application process).	YES	NO	request for supplementation
Project duration is between 12 and 24 months.	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 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 available 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.

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.

Full project proposal adequacy criteria (max. total points: 100)

Relevance and importance of the project (20 points)		
*eliminating criterion: If below 10, the project is automatically rejected		
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
		/ 20

Implementation methodology (25 points) *eliminating criterion: If below 10, the project is automatically rejected		
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>	/ 10
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
		/ 25

Financial efficiency (20 points) *eliminating criterion: If below 10, the project is automatically rejected		
Criteria	Description of criteria	Score
Cost – action plan compliance	<i>To what extent are proposed costs compliant with action plan? Are costs presented sufficiently enough for detection of respective activities and outputs?</i>	/ 5
Adequacy of cost justification	<i>To what extent does cost justification make evident what the cost entails and at what price?</i> <i>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?</i> <i>To what extent are indicated costs needed for project implementation?</i> <i>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
		/ 20

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

Innovation of the proposed approaches (5 points)		
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
		/ 5

Impact and sustainability of the project (15 points)		
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 the organisation	<i>To what extent are the needs of applicant organisation in the field of organisational development defined?</i> <i>To what extent will the project contribute to capacity building of organisation?</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
		/15

Quality of the donor country organisation partnership (5 points)		
Criteria	Description of criteria	Score
Quality of the donor	<i>To what extent is the donor state partner relevant</i>	/ 5

state partnership and contribution to strengthening of bilateral relations	<p><i>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></p> <p>Scoring scale for partnership quality: 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.</p>	
		/ 5

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, in June 2020. 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. 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 24 months. 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 and rate 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 agreement guardian 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 5 % 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 5 % 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 intervals of 6 to 8 months. Reporting and payment system will be dependant of project duration:

- Projects with up to 16 month of duration will receive first instalment of 50 % of total eligible grant value within 14 days after the signature of the grant agreement; 40 % of total eligible grant value will be transferred to them within 30 days after approval of interim report, while the last 10 % of total grant value will be transferred to them within 30 days after the approval of final report. For projects of up to 16 months of duration there will be only one interim progress report, expected to be submitted around the middle of project implementation period.
- Projects with more than 16 months of duration will receive first instalment of 40 % of total eligible grant value within 14 days after the signature of the grant agreement; 30 % of total eligible grant value will be transferred to them within 30 days after approval of first interim report; 20 % of total grant value within 30 days after approval of second interim report; and the last 10 % of total grant value will be transferred to them within 30 days after the approval of final report. There will be two interim progress reports on the project implementation for project with more than 16 months duration, expected to be submitted in intervals of 6 to 8 months within project implementation period.

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.

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

In the first phase of application process, applicants will have a wide range of support activities and services at their disposal: info workshops in the end of October 2019, project development workshops in the beginning of November 2019, and brief counselling via phone or e-mail at podpora@acfslovenia.si, until the beginning of December 2019 (4. 12. 2019). Answers to applicants' questions asked via phone or e-mail will also be updated and published weekly on the ACF in Slovenia web site <https://acfslovenia.si>.

For the second application stage (full application) individual personal assistance will be available upon request. Telephone and email support will also be available until one week before the application deadline. All inquiries concerning the call for proposals should be directed to 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 (+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	Venue
Information workshop	Detailed presentation of the call for proposal, especially result framework	October 21 and 23	Ljubljana, Maribor
Quick info session	Presentation of the call, tailored to grass-roots	October 22, 23 and 24	Martjanci, Laško, Črnomelj, Mežica
Workshop for development of project ideas	Development of project ideas in accordance to Programme's outcomes and call for proposal's guidelines	November 4, 6, 8, 11 and 13	Ljubljana (outcome 1), Novo mesto, Maribor, Nova Gorica, Koper, Celje, Kranj

PUBLIC CALL STEP BY STEP TIMELINE

Date	Step
11. 10. 2019	Publication of Call for medium and large projects
14. 10. to 4. 12. 2019	Phone and e-mail counselling
21. and 24. October 2019	Info workshops in Ljubljana and Maribor
22., 23. and 24. October 2019	Short regional info workshops
4., 6., 8., 11. and 13. November 2019	Project development workshops
11. 12. 2019	Deadline for submission of project proposals (concept note)
11. – 20. December 2019	Applicant and application eligibility check, supplementing applications
20. 12. 2019 – 15. 1. 2020	Project proposal assessment

Last week of January 2020	Selection Committee meeting
Until the end of February 2020	Preparation of decision argumentations
End of February 2020	Notification of applicants and appeal consideration
March 2020	Individual counselling
(planned) 10. 4. 2020	Deadline for submission of full project proposals
(planned) by 15. 4. 2020	Application eligibility check, supplementing applications
(planned) until 15. 5. 2020	Project proposal assessment
End of May	Selection Committee meeting
Middle of June	Preparation of decision argumentations
Middle of June	Notification of applicants and appeal consideration