**GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS – CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (CSOs)**

**within the Public Call for CSOs for submission of Project Proposals within**

**the Regional Programme on Local Democracy in the Western Balkans (ReLOaD)**

The goal of these guidelines is to provide clear and concise instructions to all potential CSOs[[1]](#footnote-2) applicants regarding the submission of project proposals in line with the framework of the public call.

1. **About ReLOaD**

The Western Balkan countries/territories use similar models for funding of CSOs from public budgets, where common challenges relate to insufficient transparency and/or clear criteria of the selection processes. These uncompleted and often discriminatory models limit heightening the position and importance of civil society in these countries and slowing down further development of participatory democracies in the Western Balkans (WB).

The overall objective of ReLOaD is to strengthen participatory democracies and the EU integration process in the WB by empowering civil society to actively take part in decision making and by stimulating an enabling legal and financial environment for civil society.

Importantly, the underlying intention of the Action is to replicate and sustain a transparent, development-oriented and project-based approach to funding of CSOs by municipal budgets that contributes to realization of legitimate local priorities in line with local development strategies.

The Action builds on and scales up the experiences of the Reinforcement of Local Democracy (LOD) project implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As a regional initiative, the Action is implemented throughout the following IPA beneficiaries: **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\*[[2]](#footnote-3), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia**.

The specific objectiveis to strengthen partnerships between local governments and civil society in the WB by scaling-up a successful model of transparent and project-based funding of CSOs from local government budgets towards greater civic engagement in decision-making and improvement of local service delivery.

**ReLOaD is a three-year regional initiative worth 10 million EUR, and it is funded by European Union and implemented by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).**

In Kosovo, following municipalities are engaged in ReLOaD based on a competitive application process: Istog/k, Kamenicë/a, Lipjan/Lipljan, Viti/Vitina, Zveçan/Zvečan.

Substantive role in selection of CSO project proposals is assigned to the Board of Partners that is consisted of: the EU Office in Kosovo; the Ministry of Local Government Administration (MLGA); the Office of Good Governance of the Office of Prime Minister; the Association of Kosovo Municipalities; CiviKos Platform; the Department for Registration and Liaison with NGOs, Ministry of Public Administration (MPA). In line with the public call, the Board of Partners considers recommendations of evaluation commissions in partner local governments and makes final approval of the CSOs project proposals recommended for funding.

**Overall objective of the public call for CSOs project proposals and priorities of the public call**

The goal of a public call or CSOs is to further strengthen partnerships between CSOs and local authorities and to improve local service delivery. General thematic areas that are in the focus of the ReLOaD Programme are: social services for the most vulnerable groups, social inclusion, gender equality, environmental protection, human rights, etc.

This is an opportunity to invite CSOs from Kosovo to submit project proposals related to the needs of the Municipality of Viti/Vitina as defined in the Municipal development plan of Vitia and Klokot 2010 - 2020+.

Mutually determined priority areas in the Municipality of Viti/Vitina for this public call are:

1. Increase employment opportunities for young people and women;

2. Promotion of cultural, sporting and artistic diversity;

3. Supporting local farmers in increasing the production of local products;

4. Raising awareness and increasing the active participation of citizens in decision-making processes;

5. Protection and Promotion of Human Rights, with focus on people with disabilities and marginalized groups.

Funds will be allocated to those CSOs whose projects contribute to resolving one or more priorities, meeting criteria and other conditions of the public call.

1. **Funds (grants) available for projects**

The total amount dedicated for this call is up to 60,000.00 EUR, while the value of grants allocated within this public call must be between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

* minimum amount: EUR 5,000.00
* maximum amount: EUR 35,000.00

**Applicant CSOs are allowed to submit just one project proposal under this call i.e. only one project can be awarded under this call to the CSO applicant. The maximum amount of funds that can be allocated to CSO applicant for the project duration until January 2020 cannot exceed 60,000.00 EUR.**

**Note:** Grants allocated within this public call may finance administrative costs[[3]](#footnote-4) and staff costs to a maximum of 30% of the requested amount. Total amount allocated for purchasing the equipment and re-construction work cannot in cumulative exceed 30% of the requested amount. The remaining minimum of 40% of the funds should be foreseen for other project activities.

The municipality and the UNDP reserve the right not to award all available funds in case submitted CSOs project proposals do not meet criteria.

1. **General information on the call for project proposals**

Project documentation must be submitted in three hard copies and one electronic and must contain the following:

### Project proposal (Word format - Annex 1),

### Budget breakdown (Excel format - Annex 2),

### Logical framework matrix (Word format – Annex 3),

### Activity and visibility plan (Excel format – Annex 4),

Additional documents are also important part of the project documentation and they must be submitted in a one hard copy. The following additional documents are mandatory:

* Copy of a valid certificate of registration of an organization (CSO) in Kosovo (for the project lead CSO as well as for other project partners, if any),
* Copy of organisation's statute (for lead CSO as well as for other project partners, if any),
* Copy of a valid certificate of fiscal number (for lead CSO as well as for other project partners, if any);
* Completed Administrative identification form (Annex 5),
* Completed Financial identification form (Annex 6),
* Completed Eligibility statement (Annex 7),
* Copy of the final annual financial report for the previous year (balance sheet and income statement) certified by an organisation’s relevant person if the yearly income is < 100,000.00 USD, and if > 100,000.00 USD by responsible agency for financial operations and licensed and authorized accountant (unless the organisation is established in the current year),
* Copy of the organisation’s annual narrative report for the previous year; (unless the organisation is established in the current year),
* Completed Statement on double funding (Annex 8),
* Completed Partnership statement (defined by applicants or based on predefined format in Annex 9).
* Completed Check list (Annex 10).

In the case of approval of a CSO project proposal, the original documents will be requested.

1. **Who can apply?**

The public call is open to all CSOs formally legally established and registered as a non-profitable entity in Kosovo in accordance with the valid legal regulatory framework.

This public call is not applicable to branches/offices of international organisations, and/or associations and/or foundations, and other international non-profit entities registered to work in Kosovo.

* subject to a conflict of interest especially if:
* municipal official/CSO representative is a member of any structure of the applicant organisation, board of directors etc.;
* municipal official who is fully employed at the municipality is foreseen to be involved in the project implementation full time or part time;
* the project envisages direct or indirect financial benefits for municipal official/CSO representative through awarded CSOs where his/her spouse, children, relatives are employed;
* CSOs applicant is in any way related to public officials, members of the evaluation commission, etc.;
* found guilty for providing false information to the contractual party (ReLOaD Programme) that is a precondition for participation in the public call, or if applicants fail to submit the required information,
* tried to obtain confidential information, exert influence over the evaluation commission or the authorized contractual party during the public call and/or the evaluation process.

1. **Partnerships and partner eligibility**

Applicants may apply individually or as a consortium with other CSOs.

***Partner organisations***

Project partners could be other CSOs. Applicants' partners take part in project design and implementation. Costs they incur will fall under the same rules as those incurred by the applicants themselves, meaning that partner organisations must meet the same eligibility conditions as the applicant CSOs.

When applying in partnership, the Applicant will be the leading organisation, and if selected, as a contractual party (beneficiary), it will assume all legal and financial liability for the project implementation.

**Partnership statement** must be completed correctly and submitted together with the application. The format of the Partnership must contain details on all involved CSOs and the partnership agreement defining the nature of the cooperation. It is recommended to use form of a partnership statement in Annex 9.

**NOTE: CSOs functioning outside the Municipality of Viti/Vitina are encouraged to apply in partnership with local CSOs from the respective municipality.**

***Associate organisations***

Other organisations and/or institutions (e.g. schools, kindergartens, museums, etc.) may be involved in the project. Such organizations, as associate organizations, could have an actual role in the implementation of activities but must not have any financial or other interest from the project.

1. **Duration**

Duration of the awarded projects can be between 6 to 9 months, and CSOs projects must be implemented during the period between April 2019 and December 2019.

1. **Locations**

Awarded projects must be implemented exclusively in the territory of the Municipality of Viti/Vitina and for the benefit of its citizens.

1. **Types of projects**

Awarded CSOs projects must be prepared in accordance with the public call and defined priorities. CSOs projects must provide a solution for specific needs of the local community and the target groups identified by the project.

Regular activities of a CSOs applicant, or project partner, cannot be considered eligible for this public call. This is related to the activities that CSO is implementing on regular basis every year (e.g. if the CSO operates daycare facility then supporting such activity is considered as regular activity). However, if the CSO proposes activities aiming to spread its work by bringing more beneficiaries or proposes different and new set of activities with the existing users of a daycare center then it is not regular activity and it could be funded).

**The following activities are not acceptable:**

* Individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;
* Individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
* Occasional conferences (unless necessary for successful project implementation);
* Purchase of equipment and reconstruction or rehabilitation works (unless necessary for successful project implementation and even then, it cannot exceed allowed maximum of 30% of the total budget of the project);
* Funding of projects which are already in progress or are finalized;
* Projects for exclusive benefit of individuals;
* Projects supporting political parties;
* Allocating grants to a third party.

Existence of this type of activities is not the cause for immediate rejection of a project proposal but it will negatively influence scoring during the evaluation. Furthermore, if selected for the funding this type of activities, along with funds foreseen for this type of activities, will be removed.

1. **Number of project proposals and grants per applicant**

Applicants may submit one application, containing all required documents i.e. only one project can be awarded under this call to the CSO applicant. The maximum amount of funds that can be allocated to CSO applicant for the project duration until January 2020 cannot exceed 60,000.00 EUR.

1. **Where and how to collect and submit the application set**

Documentation for the public call in the Municipality of Viti/Vitina can be obtained from 09 January 2019 until 19 February 2019.

Application documents can be obtained:

1. By sending a request for the application set with the name of the interested CSO to the email address: **ismet\_96@hotmail.com** or in person, at the address:

Ismet Sejdiu, Officer for Culture, House of Culture, II floor, office number. 3

61000, Viti/Vitina

1. An electronic version of the application set can also be downloaded from:

Municipal website (<https://kk.rks-gov.net/viti>);

UNDP website ([www.ks.undp.org](http://www.ks.undp.org)) and

<https://kosovofunding.org>

Completed applications with all mandatory documentation must be submitted **in three (3) printed/hard copies and one electronic copy (on CD or USB stick)** by registered e-mail, or in person, in a sealed envelope indicating full title of the public call, during work days (Monday to Friday), between 09:00 and 15:00 hours, to the address:

Ismet Sejdiu, Officer for Culture

House of Culture, II floor, office number. 3

61000, Viti/Vitina

The deadline for submitting applications is 19 February 2019 at 15:00 hours. Applications received after the deadline will only be considered if the postal mark indicates a sending date before the official deadline.

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or e-mail) or delivered to other addresses **will not be taken into consideration**.

The outer side of the envelope must contain the name of the public call for project proposals, full name and address of the applicant, full name of the project and the words: **“Do not open before official opening.”** The municipality will keep records of all received CSOs project proposals and will issue pertinent receipts.

Before submitting full application CSO applicant are advised to verify that the required documentation/application set is completed. It is done by filling in the Check list (Annex 10).

1. **Further information**

***Informative session (open day)*** will be conducted in the Municipality of Viti/Vitina on **09 January 2019, followed by PCM training on the same day, and continuing on 10 and 11 January 2019** **in the** **municipal assembly, starting at 10:00 am**. In case of high interest of CSOs the session will be repeated. Rules and propositions of the public call will be presented on each session along with presentation of common mistakes CSOs make when applying. Informative sessions will take place during the public call.

Project Cycle Management (PCM) training for CSOs will be organized with focus on proposal preparation (project application, budget, logical framework and activity plan).

Throughout the duration of the ***public call expert/mentor support*** will be provided. The assistance will be open and public while the schedule, including date and time, will be shared through the municipal website.

In addition, all questions related to the public call can be submitted by e-mail to the following address: [registry.ks@undp.org](mailto:registry.ks@undp.org) referencing the public call. Queries can be submitted by 14 February 2019**,** and the answers will be provided in writing within three (3) working days from the date of receiving. For transparency purposes all answers will be published at the UNDP web site ([www.ks.undp.org](http://www.ks.undp.org)).

Furthermore, a document providing an *overview of the most common mistakes* is also available along with other Public call documents as well as Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ). Both documents are the results of the previously published call in the Municipality of Viti/Vitina and refer to new applicants to avoid same or similar wrongdoings during this call.

1. **Evaluating and selecting project proposals**

CSOs applications will be evaluated by the evaluation commission that is consisted of two representatives from the Municipality of Viti/Vitina, one CSOs representative and two UNDP representatives.

The application will be evaluated in accordance with the following:

(1) Administrative criteria:

* Application is completed in accordance with the Check list;
* Project documentation is submitted in three (3) hard copies and one (1) electronic copy

(CD or USB stick);

* Additional documentation is submitted in one (1) hard copy.

1. Conditions related to the CSO applicant, partner and activities:

* Confirmation that the applicant, partner (and associates, if any) and the activities, meet the conditions set out in chapters 3,4,5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

(3) Evaluation of project quality design and financial evaluation:

Evaluation of the project quality design, including proposed budget, will be carried out in accordance with the criteria set out in the Evaluation Table that is integral part of this document. There are two types of evaluation criteria: **selection criteria** and **fund allocation criteria**.

The aim of the **selection criteria** is to assess the financial and operational capabilities of applicants in order to ensure that they:

* Have stable and sufficient funds for their regular activities during the entire project implementation period;
* Possess professional capacity and qualifications necessary for the successful implementation of the project. Same applies to the applicant's partners.

**Fund allocation criteria** ensure that the quality of submitted projects is evaluated based on the defined priority areas and that funds are approved based on the activities which maximise the general impact of this public call. The criteria refer to the significance of the proposed project, alignment of the project with the goal of the public call and the priority areas, project quality, expected results, project sustainability and cost-effectiveness of requested funds.

***Scoring system:***

Scoring criteria is divided into sections and subsections. ***Each subsection must be evaluated with assigned scores between 1 and 5 in a following way: 1 = very bad; 2 = bad; 3 = appropriate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.*** Each member of the commission completes an individual evaluation table, and all members sign the summary evaluation table for each project proposal. Ranking the project proposals is carried out in a manner that the first ranked project proposal is the one with the highest score, followed by the project proposal with the next lowest score up until the project proposal with lowest scores.

Only projects with a score of 50 or more will be taken into further consideration, as the proposals below this threshold have not met the set standards.

In order to be taken into consideration for funding, projects with budgets over EUR 10,000.00 have to receive 75 or more points during the evaluation process. The decision on grant approval is based on the total number of projects that can be financed within the available funds. These limits are set in order to define minimum quality of project proposals and ensure the best value for money.

**Evaluation table**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Section** | **Maximum score** | **Total score** |
| **1. Financial and operational capacity** | **15** |  |
| 1.1 Are applicant and partners sufficiently **experienced in project management**? | 5 |  |
| 1.2 Do applicant and partners have sufficient **professional capacities**? (specific knowledge in the relevant field) | 5 |  |
| 1.3. Do applicant and partners have sufficient **management capacities**?  (including staff, equipment and capacities for financial management)? | 5 |  |
|  | | |
| **2. Relevance** | **25** |  |
| 2.1. How relevant is the project compared to the **goal** and one or more **priorities** defined in the Public call?  Note: score 5 (very good) can be assigned only if the project is addressing at **least one of the priorities.** | 5 |  |
| 2.2 Are stakeholders clearly defined and strategically selected (agents, final beneficiaries, **target groups**)? | 5 |  |
| 2.3 Are the **needs of the target group** and final beneficiaries clearly defined and does the project address them in the right way? | 5 |  |
| 2.4 Does the project incorporate **added value**, like innovative approach and good practice models? | 5 |  |
| 2.5 Does the project proposal advocate for **approach** and does it influence vulnerable groups? (Promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment, protection of environment, international cooperation, youth, etc.). | 5 |  |
|  | | |
| **3. Methodology** | **20** |  |
| 3.1 Does the **plan of activities** and proposed **activities** logically and practically correspond with goals and expected results? | 5 |  |
| 3.2 How consistent is the overall project design? (especially, does it reflect analysis of identified problems, possible external factors) | 5 |  |
| 3.3 Is the level of **involvement of partners in project implementation** satisfactory? Note: if there are no partners the score will be **1.** | 5 |  |
| 3.4 Are **objectively measurable indicators** included in the project? | 5 |  |
|  | | |
| **4. Sustainability** | **25** |  |
| 4.1 Will proposed activities have **concrete influence** on target groups? | 5 |  |
| 4.2 Will the project have **multiple effects**? *(including possibility for application on the other target groups or implementation at the different location and/or extending the effects of the activities as well as exchange of information on the experience gained through the implementation of the project)* | 5 |  |
| 4.3 Are expected results of suggested activities **institutionally sustainable**? *(will the structures that enable project activities exist after the completion of the project? Will there be a local ownership over the project results?)* | 5 |  |
| 4.4Are expected **results sustainable**? (if applicable, name the *structural impact of implemented activities – improvements of legal frameworks, methods, code of conduct, etc.)* | 5 |  |
| 4.5 Is it likely that expected long term results/outcomes will influence local economic conditions and/or quality of life in target areas? | 5 |  |
|  | | |
| **5. Budget and cost efficiency** | **15** |  |
| 5.1 Is the ratio between estimated costs and expected results satisfactory? | 5 |  |
| 5.2 Are suggested costs **necessary** for project implementation? | 5 |  |
| 5.3 Budget  - is the budget clear and does it include a narrative part? (including explanations for technical equipment)  - meets the principle that administrative and personnel costs cannot be above 30% of the total budget?  - is the budget gender-sensitive?  - have CVs and job descriptions been enclosed where applicable? | 5 |  |
| **Maximum total score** | **100** |  |

**Note on Section 1. of the evaluation table - Financial and operational capacity of the applicant**

In case the total score in Section 1 is lower than 10 points, the project proposal will be excluded from the further evaluation process, as the organisation does not have the minimum capacities to ensure quality implementation of the proposed project.

**Note on Section 2. Relevance**

In case that the total score in Section 2 is lower than 18 points, the project proposal will be excluded from further consideration as the score implies that, although the applicant meets financial and operational capacities, the project’s concept is not relevant or is not in line with the priorities of the public call the project does not address the needs of the local community.

**Notification on the results of the public call**

All applicants, whether their project proposals are approved for funding or rejected, will be notified in writing about the results within 30 days of closing the public call. Results will be published at the web site of the Municipality of Viti/Vitina (<https://kk.rks-gov.net/viti>), municipal notice board and on UNDP website ([www.ks.undp.org](http://www.ks.undp.org)). A decision to reject a project proposal will be made if:

* The applicant CSO, or one or more of its partners, do not meet the criteria of the public call;
* The project activities are unacceptable (e.g. proposed activities go beyond the scope of the public call, the project's duration exceeds the maximum allowed time period, the requested amount of funds exceeds the maximum amount, or is lower than the minimum, etc);
* The project proposal was not relevant; financial and operational capacities of the applicant are not sufficient, or the projects selected for funding have been superior (received better scores);
* The quality of the project proposal was technically and financially lower in comparison to the projects selected for funding.

**Conditions related to CSO project implementation after formal approval**

Approved CSOs projects will be offered a contract. Before signing the contract, if and where necessary, the ReLOaD program is entitled to request modifications of the CSO project proposals and/or budgets in order to align them with the rules and procedures of project implementation.

**LIST OF ANNEXES**

### Annex 1 Project Proposal

**Annex 2** Budget Breakdown

**Annex 3** Logical Framework

**Annex 4** Activity and Visibility Plan

**Annex 5** Administrative Identification Form

**Annex 6** Financial Identification Form

**Annex 7** Eligibility Statement

**Annex 8** Statement on double funding

**Annex 9** Partnership statement

**Annex 10** Check List

1. As stated in the Council of Europe (CoE)’s Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process1, the term “civil participation” refers to NGOs and “organized civil society including voluntary groups, non-profit organizations, associations, foundations, charities, as well as geographic or interest-based community and advocacy groups” actively contributing to the development and the realization of democracy and human rights [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. \* For UNDP, references to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). For the European Union, this designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of Independence. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. General and administrative expenses include all non-selling expenses. These expenses include things like overhead, management salaries, accounting fees, and other expenses used to run the project. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)