



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Awareness raising about the accountability mechanisms for electoral violations and assessment of their effectiveness upon the results of 2015 local elections in Ukraine

8416/2016/21

Project	COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT “REFORM OF THE ELECTORAL PRACTICE IN UKRAINE “
Awarding entity	COUNCIL OF EUROPE Office of the Director General of Programmes (ODGP) Council of Europe Office in Ukraine
Funding	Project funded and implemented by the Council of Europe
Duration	Project shall be implemented by 05 December 2016. Reporting requirements shall be completed by 16 December 2016.
Estimated starting date of the implementation period	01 June 2016
Issuance date	29 April 2016
Deadline for applications	23 May 2016

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HOW TO APPLY?

- Complete and sign the **Application Form** (See **Appendix I**)
- Attach a provisional budget (using the template reproduced in **Appendix II**)
- Attach the other supporting documents:
 - Certificate of registration as a non-profit organisation;
 - Statute of the organisation , or equivalent
 - Bank statement confirming the existence of the bank account in the name of the applicant
- Send these documents in electronic form (Word .and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: REPU@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: **GRANT Award 8416/2016/21 – Application – Ukraine**.
- Applications must be received **before 23 May 2016 (at midnight, EET, GMT+3)**.

I. INTRODUCTION

This call for proposals is launched in the framework of the Council of Europe Project “Reform of the Electoral Practice in Ukraine”. It aims at co-funding national projects with a view to 1) assess the effectiveness of existing accountability mechanisms for electoral violations in the framework of 2015 local elections in Ukraine and 2) organise public awareness raising campaign on existing accountability mechanisms for electoral violations and their use.

According to the observation reports of international and domestic observers, numerous electoral violations took place during the conduct of 2015 local elections in Ukraine with vote-buying as one of the most wide-spread type of electoral violations.

Based on the official data published on the web-site of the Ministry of Interior of Ukraine, the latter received 8056 notifications on the alleged electoral violations within the period from 5 September, 2015 till 16 November, 2015. Out of the notifications received: 6066 were cancelled; 574 were registered in the Unified Registry of Pre-trial Investigation; administrative protocols were issued on the basis of 149 notifications; 495 notifications were being considered by the police officers as of 16 November 2015.

The project will monitor and analyse the investigation into electoral violations in order to assess the effectiveness of the existing accountability mechanisms and propose recommendations for improvements.

Project proposals shall aim to produce an added value to the Council of Europe efforts in this domain.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT

The purpose of the Project is to improve the integrity, transparency and quality of the electoral process both nationally and locally.

In particular, it aims at:

- preventing vote-buying and other types of electoral fraud thanks to effective mechanisms of accountability;
- ensuring equal treatment of contestants through a more transparent and accountable system of party and campaign finance;
- increasing the capacities of electoral stakeholders to carry out elections due to the implementation of at least 50% of recommendations of international and domestic election observers;
- increasing women’s political participation and enhancement of women’s capacity to engage as candidates and elected officials.

Project partners include the Central Election Commission of Ukraine, the High Administrative Court of Ukraine, the National TV and Radio Broadcasting Council of Ukraine, the Ministry of Interior of Ukraine, all-Ukrainian civil society organizations monitoring the election process and other civil society organizations.

III. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The indicative available budget under this call for proposals is UAH 572, 000.00 (five hundred seventy two thousand UAH). The Council of Europe intends to award one grant of a maximum amount of UAH 572, 000.00 (five hundred seventy two thousand UAH).

Subject to availability of funds and extension of the Project initial duration, the Council of Europe reserves the right not to award all available funds, and/or to redistribute the available funds in a different manner depending on the project proposals received and on the outcome of the award procedure.

IV. REQUIREMENTS

1. General objective

The grants will fund projects designed:

- 1) To assess the effectiveness of the existing mechanisms of accountability in Ukraine;
- 2) To perform due public control with respect to investigations conducted and the court decisions rendered within the criminal proceedings regarding electoral violations committed during 2015 local elections;
- 3) To raise public awareness about existing mechanisms of accountability for electoral violations in Ukraine.

2. Means of action

Projects may include:

- 1) Conduct of the research, monitoring and analysis of the investigations and the court decisions regarding electoral violations committed during 2015 local elections in Ukraine;
- 2) Organisation of round-tables and conferences in Kyiv and in regions throughout Ukraine;
- 3) Preparation and dissemination through media of awareness raising materials (digests, articles, interim and final reports etc.);
- 4) Any other means of action.

3. Implementation period

The implementation period of the Projects shall start on 01 June 2016 (see indicative timetable under VIII. below) and shall not extend beyond 05 December 2016.

Reporting requirements shall be completed by 16 December 2016 **at the latest**.

Projects completed prior to the date of submission of the applications will be automatically excluded. As regard projects started prior to the date of submission of the applications, or prior to the date of signature of the grant agreement, only those costs incurred after the date of submission of the grant application will be eligible.

4. Target stakeholders

Projects should target in particular the following key stakeholders:

- the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, in particular, its relevant Committees;
- the Ministry of Interior of Ukraine and its offices in regions;
- the Judiciary;
- civil society organizations;
- journalists of national and local media;
- the general public.

The above list is not exhaustive and projects may propose to target other relevant stakeholders, while keeping in mind the final objective of the Project.

5. Budgetary requirements

Project proposals shall be accompanied by a draft budget (See **Template Budget, in Appendix II**) amounting to a maximum of UAH 572, 000.00 (five hundred seventy two thousand UAH). The estimated budget must be consistent, accurate, clear, complete and cost-effective, in the light of the activities proposed.

Each Grantee shall also be required to contribute to the project either by way of its own resources or by contribution from third parties. Co-financing may take the form of financial or human resources, in-kind contributions or income generated by the action or project.

6. Further to the general objective, preference will be given to:

- actions proposed by Ukrainian NGOs
 - (i) having wide range of domestic observers and long-standing experience in domestic election observation throughout Ukraine;
 - (ii) having previous successful systematic cooperation and communication with the law-enforcement authorities regarding ensuring effective mechanisms of accountability for vote-buying and other election-related violations;
 - (iii) having previous experience in implementation of similar project/activities;
- actions targeting a wide range of stakeholders (see paragraph 4 above);
- actions involving national and local civil society organizations;
- actions involving media.

7. The following types of action will not be considered:

- actions providing financial support to third parties (re-granting schemes);
- actions concerning only or mainly individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- actions supporting political parties.

8. Payment conditions:

The funds for each grant should in principle be distributed as follows:

- 50 % will be paid when the Grant Agreement between the two parties is signed;
- the balance will be paid based on actual expenditures incurred after the presentation and acceptance by the Council of Europe of the final narrative and financial reports for the Grant implementation.

9. Reporting requirements:

- **narrative reporting** requires a full narrative report on the use made of the grant and a copy of the register of the persons present during each of the activities, including names and signatures of participants;
- **financial reporting** requires in particular a statement in the currency in which the Grant Agreement will be concluded (in local currency - UAH), in English, stating the payments made for the implementation of the activities, certified by the responsible financial officer of the Grantee, accompanied by “appropriate original supporting documents” (see below). The Council of Europe reserves the right to ask for summary translations of invoices into English. If for legal reasons the original documents must be retained by the Grantee, certified copies must be submitted with the financial statement.

“Appropriate original supporting documents” refers to signed contracts, invoices and acceptances of work (for all transactions), payment authorisation for all transactions should also be provided in case the Grantee uses such practice, and reliable evidence of payment (authorised payment order and bank statement).

As regards round tables / conferences, presenting “appropriate original supporting documents” requires presentation of a programme indicating the title, dates, venue, and agenda of the event; the names of persons facilitating the event, a signed list of participants, the contracts with the owner of venue of the

event (e.g. hotel) for the rent of premises, food and beverages of participants, invoices from the owner of the venue of the event for the above services, and a report on the results of the event (see narrative reporting above).

As regards consultancy services, presenting “appropriate original supporting documents” requires presentation of evidence of the outputs produced, contracts with experts and consultants containing a specific description of services to be carried out, invoices produced after the works have been performed and delivered (the specialities of the consultants shall correspond to the nature of activities for which they are contracted).

As regards travel fees / lodging of experts and participants, presenting “appropriate original supporting documents” requires presentation, where relevant, of contracts with a travel agency for travel fees and lodging, invoices of the travel agency indicating destinations, dates, ticket costs, and names of the travelling persons, a programme of the event indicating the names of the experts and signed lists of participants.

The above description is not comprehensive. Any doubt regarding the interpretation of the notion of “appropriate original supporting documents” should lead the Grantee to consult the Council of Europe.

V. HOW TO APPLY?

1. Documents to be submitted:

Each application shall contain:

- the completed and signed **Application Form** (See **Appendix I**);
- a provisional budget (using the template reproduced in **Appendix II**);
- the other supporting documents:
 - Certificate of registration as a non-profit organisation;
 - Statutes of the organisation , or equivalent;
 - Bank statement confirming the existence of the bank account in the name of the applicant.

Applications that are incomplete will not be considered.

2. Questions

General information can be found on the website of the Council of Europe: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/kyiv/reform-of-the-electoral-practice-in-ukraine>.

Other questions regarding this specific call for proposals must be sent at the latest one week before the deadline for the submission of proposals, in English or Ukrainian, and shall be exclusively sent to the following address: REPU@coe.int, with the following reference in subject: **Questions – GRANT Award 8416/2016/21 – Ukraine**.

3. Deadline for submission

The application form, **completed and signed**, together with the supporting documents, must be submitted in electronic form (Word and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: REPU@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: **GRANT Award 8416/2016/21 – Application – Ukraine**.

Applications must be received **before 23 May 2016 (at midnight, EET, GMT+3)**. Applications received after the above mentioned date will not be considered.

4. Change, alteration and modification of the application file

Any change in the format, or any alteration or modification of the original application file, will cause the immediate rejection of the application concerned.

VI. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

The projects presented will be assessed by an Evaluation Committee composed of at least three members, including staff members of the Council of Europe.

The procedure shall be based on the underlying principles of grant award procedures, which are transparency, non-retroactivity, non-cumulative awards, not-for-profit, co-financing and non-discrimination, in accordance with [Rule 1374 of 16 December 2015 on the grant award procedures of the Council of Europe](#).

The applicants, and their projects, shall fulfil all of the following criteria:

1. Exclusion criteria:

Applicants shall be excluded from the grant award procedure where they:

- a. have been sentenced by final judgment on one or more of the following charges: participation in a criminal organisation, corruption, fraud, money laundering;
- b. are in a situation of bankruptcy, liquidation, termination of activity, insolvency or arrangement with creditors or any like situation arising from a procedure of the same kind, or are subject to a procedure of the same kind;
- c. have received a judgement with res judicata force, finding an offence that affects their professional integrity or constitutes a serious professional misconduct;
- d. do not comply with their obligations as regards payment of social security contributions, taxes and dues, according to the statutory provisions of the country where they are established.

By signing the Application Form, applicants shall declare on their honour that they are not in any of the above-mentioned situations (See **Appendix I, Item 10**).

The Council of Europe reserves the right to ask applicants at a later stage to supply the following supporting documents:

- for the items set out in paragraphs a), b) and c), an extract from the record of convictions or failing that an equivalent document issued by the competent judicial or administrative authority of the country where the applicant is established, indicating that these requirements are met;
- for the items set out in paragraph d), a certificate issued by the competent authority of the country of establishment.

2. Eligibility criteria:

In order to be eligible for a grant, an applicant must:

- be legally constituted as a non-governmental organisation in Ukraine;
- be entitled to carry out in Ukraine activities described in its project proposal;

- have been active for at least 5 (five) years in the field of domestic election observation throughout Ukraine;
- have sufficient financial capacity (stable and sufficient sources of funding) to maintain its activity throughout the period for which the grant is awarded and to participate by way of its own resources (including human resources or in-kind contributions);
- have sufficient operational and professional capacity, including staff, to carry out activities described in its project proposal;
- have a bank account.

Multiple applications are not allowed and shall lead to the exclusion of all applications concerned.

3. Award criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- the relevance and added value of the project with regard to the objective of the call (30 %)
- the extent to which the action meets the requirements of the call (30 %);
- the quality, accuracy, clarity, completeness and cost-effectiveness of the application and the estimated budget (20 %);
- the relevance of the experience of the applying organisation(s) and staff (20 %).

VII. NOTIFICATION OF THE DECISION AND SIGNATURE OF GRANT AGREEMENTS

On completion of the selection process, all applicants will be notified in writing of the final decision concerning their respective applications as well as on the next steps to be undertaken.

The selected Grantees will be invited to sign a Grant Agreement (See Appendix III, for information only), formalising their legal commitments. **Potential applicants are strongly advised to read the draft contract, in particular its requirements in terms of payment and reporting.**

VIII. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Phases	Indicative timing
Publication of the call	29 April 2016
Deadline for submitting applications	23 May 2016
Information to applicants on the results of the award procedure	30 May 2016
Signature of the grant agreement	June 2016
Implementation period	Up to 5 December 2016

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