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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Support to local self-governments and/or CSOs for fighting discrimination
HF 18 – APPLICATION FOR GRANT

Project	Horizontal Facility – Joint EU/CoE Action “Promotion of diversity and equality in Albania“
Awarding entity	COUNCIL OF EUROPE
Funding	European Union and Council of Europe
Duration	Projects shall be implemented by 17 October 2021. Reporting requirements shall be completed by 16 November 2021.
Estimated starting date	18 October 2020
Issuance date	30 July 2020
Deadline for applications	13 September 2020

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APPENDICES:

- Appendix I - Application Form
- Appendix II - Provisional budget (Template)
- Appendix III - Template Grant Agreement (for information only)

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:
 - Work plan;
 - Organogram of the unit/organisation for implementing the proposed project;
 - CV of project manager(s).
- Send these documents in electronic form (Word .and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: tenders.antidiscrimination@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: HF 18 - APPLICATION FOR GRANT.
- Applications must be received **before 13 September 2020 (at 17:00 CET)**.

I. INTRODUCTION

This call for proposals is launched in the framework of European Union and Council of Europe programmatic framework “Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey” (Horizontal Facility II), Action “Promotion of diversity and equality in Albania”. The Action is financed by the European Union and the Council of Europe. It aims to co-fund national/local projects aimed at local self-governments and/or civil society organisations.

The Call aims to support selected grantees in developing concrete responses on combating discrimination, including discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and/or gender identity, combating hate speech, as well as protecting and promoting national minorities and their languages.

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

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE EUROPEAN UNION/THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT

The purpose of the Action is improving the functioning of anti-discrimination mechanisms and their accessibility to vulnerable groups in line with European standards, especially with recommendations from CoE monitoring bodies, notably those from the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) and/or European Charter for Regional or Minority languages (ECRML).

In particular, it aims to:

- Support initiatives to harmonise the anti-discrimination framework across the country and to develop and implement the respective action plans/strategies in relation to national minorities, LGBTI rights and hate speech;
- Strengthen the capacity of the authorities, local governments and/or equality bodies in order to allow them to better tailor their interventions to address discrimination and increase cooperation among authorities in this field;
- Increase the knowledge and awareness of the general public about the existence and rights of national minorities, about the rights of LGBTI persons and about the dangers posed by hate speech, offering means to develop counter-narratives.

Project partners include institutions of Albania (Ministry for Health and social Protection, Ministry for Europe and Foreign affairs, People’s Advocate, Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination, State Committee on Minorities, Ministry for Education and Sports) as well as the European Union Delegation in Albania, civil society organisations, state police, local authorities and other relevant stakeholders.

III. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The indicative available budget under this call for proposals is 72.000 Euros (seventy-two thousand Euros). The European Union /the Council of Europe intends to award grants of a maximum amount of 10.000 Euros (ten thousand Euros) each.

Subject to availability of funds and extension of the Project initial duration, the European Union/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 call for proposals.

IV. REQUIREMENTS

1. General objective

The grants will fund activities aimed at supporting the concrete implementation and/or follow-up at local level of the recommendations) of the Council of Europe monitoring bodies in the field of anti-discrimination and protection of the rights of minorities and in particular the Advisory Committee of Framework Convention for the protection of National Minorities (FCNM); the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) and the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI). For further information, please refer to section IV.6 of this Call.

Projects designed could address the following issues:

- Promotion and protection of national minorities' rights in the local communities in Albania related to language, culture, education, media, administrative authorities, etc.
- Promotion and protection of the right of LGBTI persons in the local communities in Albania related to access to health and education, and in the area of media and administration, protection against hate speech and hate crime, etc.
- Combating hate speech and rumours in local communities in Albania and creating counter narratives.

2. Means of action

Projects should include specifically tailored activities aiming at supporting the implementation of one or more recommendations and/or issues linked to the topics listed in the reports of the CoE bodies above mentioned.

Applicants can refer to the relevant recommendations at the following links:

- The report of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance: <https://rm.coe.int/report-on-albania-6th-monitoring-cycle-translation-in-albanian-/16809e8240> (pages 31-32)
- The report of the Framework Convention on National Minorities: <https://rm.coe.int/16806f518b>

Sample of activities could include the following:

- **National minorities:** activities towards changes in policies; fostering knowledge of the tradition, culture, history and language of national minority; promotion of common history and cultural values of minority and majority communities, etc. (Note: Projects dealing with national minorities' folklore and food will not be considered.)
- **LGBTI:** fighting human rights violation of LGBTI people; activities towards changes of policies; involvement of authorities and other relevant stakeholders in promoting tolerance and combating discrimination and violence, etc.
- **Hate speech:** combating hate speech; activities towards changes of policies; rising awareness about hate speech and its negative effects; activities towards facilitating prosecution of hate speech; involvement of the authorities in anti-hate speech campaigns, etc.

The proposed areas of concern are not exhaustive, but open to other suggestions and proposals.

3. Implementation period

The implementation period of the projects should start on 18 October 2020 (see indicative timetable under VIII. below) and shall not extend beyond 17 October 2021 (twelve months).

Reporting requirements shall be completed on 16 November 2021 **at the latest**.

Projects completed prior to the date of submission of the applications will be automatically excluded. As regards 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 can be eligible (provided the agreement concerned so provides).

4. Target stakeholders

Projects should target in particular the following key stakeholders:

- Local self-governments
- Civil society organisations
- National minorities and/or LGBTI people
- General population

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

5. Budgetary requirements

Project proposals shall be accompanied by a draft budget (See **Template Budget, in Appendix II**) amounting to a maximum of 11.000 Euros (eleven thousand Euros), more specifically a maximum of 10.000 Euros (ten thousand Euros) can be awarded by the European Union/the Council of Europe, while selected municipalities / CSOs are expected to contribute 10% to the overall project budget 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. The estimated budget must be consistent, accurate, clear, complete and cost-effective, in the light of the activities proposed.

In case visibility/work with media is not the focus of the project, selected grantees are expected to allocate certain financial amount from the grant for the purpose of implementation of defined visibility activities.

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

Projects/actions:

- Proposed jointly by local self-governments or by a local self-government and a CSO
- Combining multiple forms of discrimination (against national minorities and LGBTI persons) and/or hate speech (but defining which is the main topic of the grant)
- Supporting initiatives and actions that promote and encourage fighting discrimination such as on ground of ethnic or national origin, and enhancing intercultural dialogue, mutual respect, understanding and cooperation among all persons living in the local community, still as per issues and vulnerable groups included in the COE reports above mentioned
- Related to Local self-government cooperation with CSO and other relevant stakeholders
- Related to CSOs cooperation with local self-government and other relevant stakeholders
- Linking local level existing strategies in the three above mentioned relevant areas (National Minorities, LGBTI persons, combating Hate Speech) or supporting the preparation such strategies;
- Incorporating gender mainstreaming elements
- Adaptable to the unpredictable situation with COVID 19 or proposing alternative activities in case meetings in person won't be possible.
- Including list of visibility activities that should be implemented through the grant, aiming to: promote tolerance, intercultural dialogue and cultural pluralism among general public - public has access to fact-based/well-researched information about national and/or sexual minorities (and their rights) and/or on hate speech. Based on this it can make a positive connotation with issues linked to the vulnerable groups in society; stimulate media interest and to increase the number of media reports aimed at increasing awareness related to the promotion of tolerance, combating hate speech and minority rights; provide visibility of the contribution of the HF II Programme as well as EU and CoE support to "Promotion of diversity and equality in Albania".

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

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

8. Funding conditions:

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

- 80 % will be paid when the Grant Agreement between the two parties is signed;
- the balance will be paid based on actual expenditures incurred, and 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 (Euros or local currency), 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 exhaustive. 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 and Appendix IV Guidelines for using Grant Agreement budget templates**);
- the other supporting documents: work plan, organogram of the unit for implementing the proposed project and the CV of project manager(s).

Applications that are incomplete will not be considered.

2. Questions

General information about Horizontal Facility II can be found on the website: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/horizontal-facility> and information of interest concerning the Action “Promotion of diversity and equality in Albania” can be found on the website of the Council of Europe office in Tirana <https://www.coe.int/en/web/tirana/promotion-of-diversity-and-equality-in-albania>.

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 and shall be exclusively sent to the following address: anti-discrimination@coe.int with the following reference in subject: HF 18 – APPLICATION FOR GRANT, FAQ.

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: tender.antidiscrimination@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: HF 18 – APPLICATION FOR GRANT

Applications must be submitted **in English language**. Applications must be received **before 13 September 2020 (at 17:00 CET)**. 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 three members of the Action Steering Committee, one Council of Europe member and one EU Delegation staff member appointed as observer.

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;
- e. are or if their owner(s) or executive officer(s), in the case of legal persons, are included in the lists of persons or entities subject to restrictive measures applied by the European Union (available at www.sanctionsmap.eu).

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 12**).

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;
1. for the items set out in paragraph e);
 1. for natural persons, a scanned copy of a valid photographic proof of identity (e.g. passport)
 2. for legal persons, an extract from the companies register or other official document proving ownership and control of the applicant.

2. Eligibility criteria:

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

- be legally constituted as a non-governmental organisation in Albania or is a local self-government;
- be entitled to carry out in Albania activities described in its project proposal;
- have been active for at least three years in the field of human rights/anti-discrimination;
- 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 and its activities with regard to the implementation of FCNM, ECRML and/or ECRI recommendations and possible listed preferences (question 6), thus meeting the requirements of the call (60%)
- the quality, accuracy, clarity, completeness and cost-effectiveness of the application and the estimated budget (30%);
- sustainability of the activities (10%)

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	30 July 2020
Deadline for submitting applications	13 September 2020
Information to applicants on the results of the award procedure	02 October 2020
Signature of the grant agreements	18 October 2020
Implementation period	18 October 2020-17 October 2021

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