

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

ELoGE Grant Application

MMS 2025\_515

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Project** | ELoGE Grant Application for the promotion of the 12 principles of good democratic governance at the local and regional level |
| **Awarding entity** | **Council of Europe** |
| Congress of Local and Regional Authorities |
| **Funding** | OB |
| **Duration** | Projects shall be implemented by30 November 2025.  Reporting requirements shall be completed by10 December 2025. |
| **Estimated starting date** | 01 August 2025 |
| **Issuance date** | 24 June 2025 |
| **Deadline for applications** | 07 July 2025 |

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

[I. INTRODUCTION 3](#_Toc452388442)

[II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT 3](#_Toc452388443)

[III. BUDGET AVAILABLE 3](#_Toc452388444)

[IV. REQUIREMENTS 3](#_Toc452388445)

[1. General objective 3](#_Toc452388446)

[2. Means of action 3](#_Toc452388447)

[3. Implementation period 3](#_Toc452388448)

[4. Target stakeholders 3](#_Toc452388449)

[5. Budgetary requirements 4](#_Toc452388450)

[6. Further to the general objective, preference will be given to: 4](#_Toc452388451)

[7. The following types of action will not be considered: 4](#_Toc452388452)

[8. Funding conditions: 4](#_Toc452388453)

[9. Reporting requirements: 4](#_Toc452388454)

[V. HOW TO APPLY? 5](#_Toc452388455)

[1. Documents to be submitted: 5](#_Toc452388456)

[2. Questions 5](#_Toc452388457)

[3. Deadline for submission 5](#_Toc452388458)

[4. Change, alteration and modification of the application file 6](#_Toc452388459)

[VI. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE 6](#_Toc452388460)

[1. Exclusion criteria: 6](#_Toc452388461)

[2. Eligibility criteria: 7](#_Toc452388462)

[3. Award criteria 7](#_Toc452388463)

[VII. NOTIFICATION OF THE DECISION AND SIGNATURE OF GRANT AGREEMENTS 7](#_Toc452388464)

[VIII. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE 7](#_Toc452388465)

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 a list of all owners and executive officers, for legal persons only
* Attach the other supporting documents:
* Letter confirming accreditation to deliver ELoGE in the designated territory
* Send these documents in electronic form (Word .and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: [congress.cemg@coe.int](mailto:congress.cemg@coe.int). Emails should contain the following reference in subject: ELoGE Grant Application.
* Applications must be received **before 7 July 2025 (at 12:00 CET)**.

1. **INTRODUCTION**

This call for proposals is launched in the framework of the Council of Europe support to promoting good democratic governance at local and regional level overseen by the Centre of Expertise for Multilevel Governance at the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. It aims to co-fund the launch and/or implementation of the [European Label of Governance Excellence (ELoGE)](https://www.coe.int/en/web/congress/the-european-label-of-governance-excellence-eloge-) process in its member states.

This application process is open to all institutions that hold an ELoGE accreditation (valid for the entire grant implementation period). The ELoGE Accreditation Platform at the Congress grants accreditation to deliver ELoGE to a reputable national, regional, or transnational entity which has demonstrable capacity and competence to oversee implementation of ELoGE within the designated territory - the national ELoGE Stakeholders’ Platform.

Successful entities will receive grants to support the launch and implementation of the ELoGE process within their designated territory. ELoGE is awarded to local authorities that can demonstrate their compliance with the Twelve Principles of Good Democratic Governance in the Recommendation [CM/Rec(2023)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the principles of good democratic governance](https://search.coe.int/cm/pages/result_details.aspx?objectid=0900001680abeb87), and further detailed in its [explanatory memorandum](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=0900001680ac77e4). As ELoGE works on the principle of subsidiarity, it is the accredited entity that leads the process in the designated territory.

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

1. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT**

The purpose of the Project is to promote ELoGE across member states thus aligning with the Council of Europe’s strategic objective of securing and strengthening democracy and good governance at all levels of government, fostering resilient, inclusive, and participatory societies.

The primary purpose of ELoGE is to strengthen the quality of local governance by providing municipalities with a comprehensive framework to assess and improve their performance in line with the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance. ELoGE enables local authorities to conduct a thorough 360-degree evaluation that incorporates self-assessment by municipal staff, political reflection by elected representatives, and direct feedback from citizens. This holistic approach helps identify institutional strengths and areas for reform, ultimately contributing to more effective, transparent, and accountable governance.

Beyond its diagnostic value, ELoGE acts as a catalyst for civic engagement and trust-building between local authorities and their communities. By facilitating structured dialogue and showcasing a municipality’s commitment to democratic values, ELoGE empowers citizens to participate meaningfully in local decision-making processes. It also offers a means to visibly demonstrate governance improvements, reinforcing public confidence in local institutions.

Project partners are national associations of local authorities or other entities that, given their role and expertise in local and regional governance, received or are in the process of receiving ELoGE accreditation to implement the tool in their designated territory. The implementation of ELoGE relies on a partnership between the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and the accredited institution, and should involve civil society actors, representatives of central and regional authorities, academia, and independent experts, as outlined in the accreditation request submitted by the accredited institution. Members of the Congress can also play an important role in developing further synergies.

**BUDGET AVAILABLE**

The indicative available budget under this call for proposals is 90 000,00 EUR (ninety thousand euros). The Council of Europe intends to award up to 8 grants of a maximum amount of 15 000,00 EUR (fifteen thousand euros) each.

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 call for proposals.

Participating in this call for proposals does not preclude applicants from requesting additional funding in 2026 to continue or complete the ELoGE cycle, subject to availability of funds.

1. **REQUIREMENTS**
2. **General objective**

The project aims to promote ELoGE across member states, supporting the Council of Europe’s strategic objective of strengthening democracy and fostering inclusive, participatory governance. Through grants, the Centre of Expertise at the Congress will fund projects that raise awareness of the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance and support the launch and implementation of ELoGE among local authorities in the territories of accredited entities, enhancing local government performance, civic engagement, and public trust.

1. **Means of action**

Projects may include meetings between relevant stakeholders, conferences, training and coaching sessions, peer exchange, awareness raising activities, technical assistance, adaptation and translation of the toolkit and material, and any other action that aligns with the goals of ELoGE.

1. **Implementation period**

The implementation period of the projects should start on **1 August 2025** (see indicative timetable under VIII. below) and shall not extend beyond **30 November 2025**.

Reporting requirements shall be completed on **10 December 2025 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 could be eligible (provided the agreement concerned so provides).

1. **Target stakeholders**

Projects should target in particular the following key stakeholders:

* Local authorities,
* Municipal elected officials and staff,
* Community residents at large, with specific attention to youth, women and vulnerable groups.

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

1. **Budgetary requirements**

Project proposals shall be accompanied by a draft budget (See **Template Budget, in Appendix II**) amounting to a maximum of 15 000,00 EUR (fifteen thousand euros). 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 and must be clearly presented in the application.

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

* Projects/actions proposed by accredited entities introducing ELoGE for the first time in a designated territory.
* Projects/actions elaborating an implementation plan to achieve broad outreach to local authorities that have not previously participated in the process.
* Projects/actions with the potential for replication across the designated territory.
* Projects/actions that promote mutually reinforcing cooperation and coordination among different levels of governance.

1. **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.

1. **Funding conditions:**

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

* 70 % will be paid to the Grantee or the Lead Grantee in case of a consortium when the Grant Agreement between the Parties is signed;
* the balance will be paid to the Grantee or the Lead Grantee in case of a consortium 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.

1. **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. Where applicable, the narrative report should document the ELoGE process implementation as per the ELoGE Reporting Templates for accredited institutions (overview of key activities, municipality involvement, strategic reflections and lessons learned).
* **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 Grantees, 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 Grantees, 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 Grantees use 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 or the Lead Grantee in case of a consortium to consult the Council of Europe.

1. **HOW TO APPLY?**
2. **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**);
* a list of all owners and executive officers, for legal persons only;
* the other supporting documents:
* Letter confirming accreditation to deliver ELoGE in the designated territory

**Applications that are incomplete will not be considered.**

1. **Questions**

General information can be found on the website of the Council of Europe: [The European Label of Governance Excellence (ELoGE) - Congress of Local and Regional Authorities](https://www.coe.int/en/web/congress/the-european-label-of-governance-excellence-eloge-)

Other questions regarding this specific call for proposals must be sent at the latest one week before the deadline for the submission of proposals (by 1 July at the latest), in English, and shall be exclusively sent to the following address: [congress.cemg@coe.int](mailto:congress.cemg@coe.int), with the following reference in subject: **Questions: ELoGE grant application.**

1. **Deadline for submission**

The application form, **completed and signed by all Grantees**, together with the supporting documents, must be submitted in electronic form (Word and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: [congress.cemg@coe.int](mailto:congress.cemg@coe.int). Emails should contain the following reference in subject: **ELoGE Grant Application**.

Applications must be received **before 7 July 2025 (at 12:00 CET)**. Applications received after the above mentioned date will not be considered.

1. **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.

1. **EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE**

The projects presented will be assessed by an Evaluation Committee composed of at least three staff members of the Secretariat of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities 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](https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=SG/Rule(2015)1374&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=original&BackColorInternet=99CCFF&BackColorIntranet=99CCFF&BackColorLogged=99CCCC).

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 or, in the case of legal persons, their owner(s) or executive officer(s):

1. have been sentenced by final judgment on one or more of the following charges: participation in a criminal organisation, corruption, fraud, money laundering, terrorist financing, terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities, child labour or trafficking in human beings;
2. 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;
3. have received a judgement with res judicata force, finding an offence that affects their professional integrity or constitutes a serious professional misconduct;
4. 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;
5. are an entity created to circumvent tax, social or other legal obligations (empty shell company), have ever created or are in the process of creation of such an entity;
6. have been involved in mismanagement of the Council of Europe funds or public funds;
7. are included in the lists of persons or entities subject to restrictive measures applied by the United Nations Security Council or the European Union.

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), c) and f), 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 a legal entity holding a valid ELoGE accreditation for the entire grant implementation period;
* have a bank account;
* 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)[[1]](#footnote-1);
* have sufficient operational and professional capacity, including staff, to carry out activities described in its project proposal[[2]](#footnote-2);

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

1. **Award criteria**

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

* extent to which the proposed project meets the objective and requirements of the call (60%);
* accuracy, clarity and cost-effectiveness of the application and the estimated budget (30%);
* previous experience of working with, and knowledge of, Council of Europe standards (10%).

1. **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.**

1. **INDICATIVE TIMETABLE**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Phases** | **Indicative timing** |
| **Publication of the call** | 24 June 2025 |
| **Deadline for submitting applications** | 7 July 2025 |
| **Information to applicants on the results of the award procedure** | 15 July 2025 |
| **Signature of the grant agreements** | 18 July 2025 |
| **Implementation period** | 1 August – 30 November 2025 |

**\* \* \***

1. The Council of Europe shall have full discretion in determining whether applicants are considered to have sufficient financial capacity in light of the complexity of the project/action proposed. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The Council of Europe shall have full discretion in determining whether applicants are considered to have sufficient operational and professional capacity in light of the complexity of the project/action proposed. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)