



## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Grants on feasibility studies for IMC or CBC projects  
8900-2023-01

|                                  |                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Project</b>                   | “Democratic Development, Decentralisation and Good Governance in Armenia – Phase II” Project                     |
| <b>Awarding entity</b>           | <b>COUNCIL OF EUROPE</b><br>Council of Europe Office in Yerevan                                                  |
| <b>Funding</b>                   | Austrian Development Co-operation, under the <a href="#">Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2023-2026</a> |
| <b>Duration</b>                  | Projects shall be implemented by 31 July 2024.<br>Reporting requirements shall be completed by 31 August 2024.   |
| <b>Estimated starting date</b>   | 01 February 2024                                                                                                 |
| <b>Issuance date</b>             | 06 December 2023                                                                                                 |
| <b>Deadline for applications</b> | 05 January 2024                                                                                                  |

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## APPENDICES:

- Appendix I - Application Form
- Appendix II - Provisional budget (Template)
- Appendix III - Workplan (Template)
- Appendix IV - 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 provisional **Workplan** (using the template reproduced in **Appendix III**)
- Send these documents in electronic form (Word .and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: [tender.armenia-bh8900@coe.int](mailto:tender.armenia-bh8900@coe.int). Emails should contain the following reference in subject: **Grant application: Feasibility study.**
- Applications must be received **before 5 January 2024 (by 24:00 Armenian time)**.

## I. INTRODUCTION

This call for proposals is launched in the framework of the Council of Europe Project “Democratic Development, Decentralisation and Good Governance in Armenia – Phase II”. It aims to co-fund **the development of feasibility studies into inter-municipal co-operation (IMC), or cross-border co-operation (CBC).**

This application process is open to **all 64 consolidated communities in Armenia**. Successful municipalities will receive grants for projects, which are focused on undertaking a feasibility study for the delivery of shared services in the frames of either inter-municipal co-operation, or cross-border co-operation. The inter-municipal co-operation will encompass neighbouring consolidated communities all over Armenia. The cross-border co-operation will cover neighbouring local authorities in Shirak, Lori and Tavush (regions) of Armenia and Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo-Kartli regions of Georgia.

The call for proposals, including the application form, budget form, workplan form and template of Grant agreement, will be sent to official email addresses of all 64 consolidated communities in Armenia in order to reach those to whom the call for proposals is primarily directed. It will be also published on the Council of Europe Office in Yerevan website.

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

## II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT

The purpose of the Project “Democratic Development, Decentralisation and Good Governance in Armenia – Phase II” is to support the adoption of revised legislative framework for local self-government in line with European standards to reflect the new territorial-administrative map of Armenia and develop the capacities of local authorities of newly enlarged communities to ensure they can assume new responsibilities and competences. It also seeks to further raise awareness of good governance principles and promote cross-border co-operation, inter-municipal co-operation and economic development at local level.

In particular, by the end of the project, the Armenian communities will benefit from enhanced management, and Armenian citizens will benefit from more inclusive, effective, efficient and resilient institutional structures, improved delivery of public services in areas such as waste management, culture, tourism or public transportation, and increased opportunities for economic development at local level.

The main project partner is the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of the Republic of Armenia.

## III. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The indicative available budget under this call for proposals is **EUR 80,000 (eighty thousand Euros)**. The Council of Europe intends to award up to **10 grants** of a maximum amount of **EUR 8,000 (eight 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.

## **IV. REQUIREMENTS**

### **1. General objective**

The grants will fund projects designed to develop **feasibility studies into inter-municipal co-operation, or cross-border co-operation.**

Grant awards will be made to successful applicant projects, which effectively and clearly meet the criteria for the grant, across the following types of projects:

- Feasibility studies on specific inter-municipal cooperation projects to support the establishment of inter-community arrangements for shared service delivery;
- Feasibility studies on specific cross-border cooperation projects, for example, in economic development, or shared municipal services/infrastructural initiatives.

### **2. Means of action**

Types of feasibility study grants include:

- Feasibility studies on inter-municipal cooperation;
- Feasibility studies on cross-border cooperation.

Any project funded will be expected to focus on feasibility work, in other words, gathering the kind of evidence a community needs to prove that what they propose to undertake in IMC or CBC is feasible, based on documented needs or other forms of demographic, geographic, economic, social and environmental evidence.

### **3. Implementation period**

The implementation period of the projects should start on **1 February 2024** (see indicative timetable under VIII. below) and shall not extend beyond **31 July 2024**.

Reporting requirements shall be completed on **31 August 2024 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).

### **4. Target stakeholders**

Projects should target in particular the following key stakeholders:

- Local authorities of consolidated communities,
- Municipal staff,
- Women, youth, disadvantaged / people living in poverty,
- Community residents at large.

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.

## 5. Budgetary requirements

Project proposals shall be accompanied by a draft budget (See **Template Budget, in Appendix II**) in **AMD equivalent to a maximum of EUR 8,000 (eight 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.

Council of Europe expects at least **10%** co-financing of the Project.

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

- Projects/actions relevant to the communities' needs;
- Projects/actions focused on inter-municipal or cross-border co-operation;
- Projects/actions targeting youth, women and disadvantaged / poor people.

## 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:

- 75% will be paid to the Grantee when the Grant Agreement between the Parties is signed;
- the balance will be paid to the Grantee 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 (in AMD), 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 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**);
- a provisional **Workplan** (using the template reproduced in **Appendix III**).

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

### 2. Questions

General information can be found on the websites of the Council of Europe: [Council of Europe Office in Yerevan - Council of Europe Office in Yerevan \(coe.int\)](http://CouncilofEuropeOfficeinYerevan-CouncilofEuropeOfficeinYerevan(coe.int)) and [Centre of Expertise for Good Governance - Good Governance \(coe.int\)](http://CentreofExpertiseforGoodGovernance-GoodGovernance(coe.int)).

Other questions regarding this specific call for proposals must be sent at the latest one week before the deadline for the submission of proposals, and shall be exclusively sent to the following address: [tender.armenia-bh8900@coe.int](mailto:tender.armenia-bh8900@coe.int), with the following reference in subject: **Questions: Feasibility study**.

### 3. Deadline for submission

The application form, **completed and signed by the Grantee**, together with the supporting documents, must be submitted in electronic form (Word and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: [tender.armenia-bh8900@coe.int](mailto:tender.armenia-bh8900@coe.int). Emails should contain the following reference in subject: **Grant application: Feasibility study**.

Applications must be received **before 5 January 2024 (by 24:00 Armenian time)**. 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 the Evaluation Committee composed of representatives of the Council of Europe, RoA Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure and local government association.

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

- a. 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;
- 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 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;
- f. have been involved in mismanagement of the Council of Europe funds or public funds.

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 11**).

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.

## **2. Eligibility criteria:**

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

- be local authority of a consolidated community from Armenia;
- have sufficient operational and professional capacity, including human resources (staff), to carry out activities described in its project proposal;
- indicate an official bank account in Armenian Drams, in which the grantee can securely deposit the funds for the grant.

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

## **3. Award criteria**

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- relevance of the proposed project with regard to the objective of the call (40%)
- extent to which the proposed project meets the requirements of the call (30%);
- accuracy, clarity and cost-effectiveness of the application and the estimated budget (20%);
- previous experience with grant projects (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 IV, 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                                         | 06 December 2023   |
| Deadline for submitting applications                            | 05 January 2024    |
| Information to applicants on the results of the award procedure | 22 January 2024    |
| Signature of the grant agreements                               | 01 February 2024   |
| Implementation period                                           | February-July 2024 |

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