

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

Grants to support communities hosting refugees in Armenia

9229-2024-01

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| **Project** | “Support to Communities Hosting Refugees in Armenia”  |
| **Awarding entity** | **Council of Europe** |
| Council of Europe Office in Yerevan |
| **Funding** | [Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2023-2026](https://rm.coe.int/ap-armenia-2023-2026/1680a977bf) |
| **Duration** | Projects shall be implemented by10 March 2025.Reporting requirements shall be completed by10 April 2025. |
| **Estimated starting date** | 10 May 2024 |
| **Issuance date** | 11 March 2024 |
| **Deadline for applications** | 12 April 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-bh9229@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: **Grant application: Support to communities hosting refugees in Armenia**.
* Applications must be received **before 12 April 2024 (****by 23:59 Armenian time)**.
1. **INTRODUCTION**

This call for proposals is launched in the framework of the Council of Europe Project “Support to Communities Hosting Refugees in Armenia”. It is designed to support local authorities to implement projects aimed at responding to the urgent and mid-term needs of the refugees who had to flee from Karabakh in the Republic of Armenia in September-October 2023.

Since October 2023, the Government of the Republic of Armenia has registered 115,183 refugees. More than half of them are women and girls, nearly one third are children, and nearly one fifth are elderly.

This application process is open to **43 most affected communities** **from 6 marzes (regions) of Armenia: Kotayk, Ararat, Armavir, Syunik, Gegharkunik and Lori.** The list of communities per region is available under section IX below. Successful municipalities will receive grants for projects, which are focused on addressing issues of the refugees such as information, education, shelter and housing, social services, access to livelihood opportunities and labour markets, integration, childcare, and psycho-social support. Local authorities should implement the proposed project activities in a whole-of-society approach, mobilising local civil society actors where appropriate.

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 43 host communities in Armenia in order to reach those to whom the call for proposals is 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.

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

The purpose of the Project “Support to Communities Hosting Refugees in Armenia” is to support local communities in Armenia to develop effective and human-rights oriented responses to the influx of refugees from Karabakh.

As a response to the immediate influx of refugees from Karabakh, the Project includes the launching of a grant scheme to support those local communities, which are more confronted with the urgent and mid-term needs of the sudden influx of population, especially of vulnerable groups.

Secondly, in order to ensure that the emergency response translates into an effective long-term resilience mechanism for local communities, and that the funds are allocated on the basis of a robust needs assessment, the access to the grants will be made **conditional upon a commitment** to implementation of Resilience Building Strategies in line with CoE standards and [Resilience Building Strategies toolkit](https://rm.coe.int/0900001680a0700f) of the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities.

Thus, the Project is aimed at fostering the establishment of short and long-term solutions to the refugee crisis by:

* Supporting tailored projects (grants) aiming at addressing the immediate and mid-term needs of host communities, with a longer-term view of strengthening public services.
* Supporting the development and adoption of resilience building strategies by consolidated communities to enhance their preparedness in facing future crises.

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

1. **BUDGET AVAILABLE**

The indicative available budget under this call for proposals is **42,000,000 AMD (forty-two million Armenian drams)**. The Council of Europe intends to award up to **4 (four) grants** of a maximum amount of **10,500,000‬ AMD (ten million and five hundred thousand Armenian drams)** 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.

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

The grants will fund projects **to support local governments** that were the first entities to offer the refugees safety, inclusion, and new opportunities.

Eligible activities are those aimed at supporting and integrating the refugees, namely women, children and disadvantaged people, in the host communities.

Eligible actors are municipalities of consolidated communities from Kotayk, Ararat, Armavir, Syunik, Gegharkunik and Lori regions that will design grant project proposals and implement grant projects in close co-operation with local CSOs.

The applicants are invited to submit proposals that will contribute to (a) reinforcing access to basic social services for refugees and/or aiming at enhancing the protection of their human rights; and/or (b) involving rapid socio-economic integration and inclusion of the refugees and strengthening social cohesion.

Actions may take place in any of the 43 most affected communities from six regions of Armenia (see list of communities per region under section IX below).

Grant awards will be made to successful applicant projects, which effectively and clearly meet the criteria for the grant.

1. **Means of action**

The projects may include, but are not limited to the support to the host communities with the organisation of activities aimed at promoting economic and social inclusion of refugees, information-sharing on available services and referral mechanisms, access to public services, and protection of the refugees’ human rights.

Applicants should provide sufficient details on: the main issues to be addressed; the description of activities, including timeline and methods of implementation; the mapping of target groups and other stakeholders, including how to reach out to women, children and disadvantaged people.

1. **Implementation period**

The implementation period of the projects should start on **10 May 2024** (see indicative timetable under section VIII below) and shall not extend beyond **10 March 2025.**

Reporting requirements shall be completed on **10 April 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 of consolidated communities from 6 regions of Armenia,
* Refugees in the most affected communities,
* Women, children and disadvantaged people.

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 maximum of **10,500,000‬ AMD (ten million and five hundred thousand Armenian drams).** 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.

1. **Further to the general objective, preference will be given to:**
* Projects/actions proposed by municipalities, in close co-operation with local CSOs or involving inter-municipal cooperation.
* Projects/actions involving socio-economic inclusion and integration of the refugees, enhancing their well-being, fostering their access to municipal services, strengthening social cohesion in the host communities, as well as ensuring protection of the target groups of refugees.
* Projects/actions targeting the most vulnerable groups of refugees: women, children, persons with disabilities and elderly.
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:

* 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.
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;
* **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.

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 provisional **Workplan** (using the template reproduced in **Appendix III**).

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

1. **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)](https://www.coe.int/en/web/Yerevan) and [Centre of Expertise for Good Governance - Good Governance (coe.int)](https://www.coe.int/en/web/good-governance/centre-of-expertise).

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-bh9229@coe.int, with the following reference in subject: **Questions: Support to communities hosting refugees in Armenia.**

1. **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-bh9229@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: **Grant application: Support to communities hosting refugees in Armenia**.

Applications must be received **before 12 April 2024 (by 23:59 Armenian time)**. 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 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](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):

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 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), 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. **Eligibility criteria:**

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

* be local authority of a consolidated community from Kotayk, Ararat, Armavir, Syunik, Gegharkunik and Lori regions of 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 are not allowed and shall lead to the exclusion of all applications concerned.**

1. **Award criteria**

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

* relevance and added value 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%).
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 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.**

1. **INDICATIVE TIMETABLE**

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| --- | --- |
| **Phases** | **Indicative timing** |
| **Publication of the call** | 11 March 2024 |
| **Deadline for submitting applications** | 12 April 2024 |
| **Information to applicants on the results of the award procedure** | 3 May 2024 |
| **Signature of the grant agreements** | 8 May 2024 |
| **Implementation period** | May 2024 – March 2025 |

1. **LIST OF COMMUNITIES**

**Ararat region**

* Artashat
* Ararat
* Masis
* Vedi

**Armavir region**

* Armavir
* Vagharshapat
* Metsamor
* Baghramyan
* Araks
* Khoy
* Parakar

**Gegharkunik region**

* Gavar
* Chambarak
* Martuni
* Sevan
* Vardenis

**Kotayk region**

* Hrazdan
* Abovyan
* Byureghavan
* Nairi
* Tsaghkadzor
* Nor Hachn
* Charentsavan
* Akunq
* Garni
* Jrvezh

**Lori region**

* Vanadzor
* Alaverdi
* Tumanyan
* Spitak
* Stepanavan
* Tashir
* Gyulagarak
* Lermontovo
* Lori Berd
* Pambak

**Syunik region**

* Goris
* Meghri
* Tatev
* Tegh
* Kapan
* Sisian
* Kajaran

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