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EUROPEAN UNION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Implemented by the Council of Europe

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Support to local CSOs to combat hate speech in Kosovo[1]
HF 22 – HATE SPEECH GRANT KOSOVO

Project	EU/COE JP Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey; Action on promoting diversity and equality in Kosovo.
Awarding entity	**COUNCIL OF EUROPE**
Funding	European Union and Council of Europe
Duration	Projects shall be implemented by 31 October 2022. Reporting requirements shall be completed by 30 November 2022.
Estimated starting date	20 July 2022
Issuance date	01 June 2022
Deadline for applications	19 June 2022

[1] *This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

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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 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 22 – HATE SPEECH GRANT KOSOVO.
- Applications must be received **before 19 June 2022** (23:59 (GMT+1))

I. INTRODUCTION

This call for proposals is launched in the framework of the joint European Union and Council of Europe programme "Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey II" (Horizontal Facility II), under the action "Promotion of Diversity and Equality in Kosovo". The programme aims at supporting South East Europe and Turkey to comply with European standards.

As part of the Programme and the related action and its activity, this call aims at sensitising citizens / people living in Kosovo on the dangers posed by hate speech, and support NGOs to develop counternarratives to it, based on human rights language. The activities of grantees will reinforce the messages developed as part of the no hate campaign local rolling.

Project proposals shall aim to produce an added value to the Council of Europe/the European Union work in combating discrimination and hate speech and diminish stigmatisation of vulnerable groups.

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

The purpose of the action is improving the functioning of anti-discrimination mechanisms and their accessibility to vulnerable groups in line with European standards and CoE monitoring bodies' findings and recommendations, notably those from the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI).

In particular, it aims to:

- Support initiatives to harmonise the anti-discrimination framework across Kosovo* and to develop and implement the respective action plans/strategies in relation to anti-discrimination, LGBTI rights and combating 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 importance of ant-discrimination policies, 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 Kosovo, primarily the Office for Good Governance – Prime Ministers Office and the Ombudsperson, as well as the European Union delegation in Pristina, civil society organisations, local authorities and other relevant stakeholders.

III. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The indicative available budget under this call for proposals is 20.000 Euros (twenty thousand Euros). The Council of Europe/the European Union intends to award several grants of a maximum amount of 7.000 Euros each.

Subject to availability of funds and extension of the Project initial duration, the Council of Europe/the European Union 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

A regional campaign against hate speech "Block the hatred. Share the love." was launched in December 2020 and implemented since then in the 6 Beneficiaries in the Western Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. The campaign, launched at local level in Pristina on 28 October 2021, aims at addressing the public on the danger of hate spreading within societies, including by using testimonials

from the region - well known for their responsible use of social media, public intake on diversity, engagement on equality.

The grants will fund activities aimed at spreading the messages against hate speech developed in the context of the campaign and its rolling in Kosovo. Activities will also be closely follow-up at local level on issues of combating hatred, and present a link with the relevant standards of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), notably its General Policy Recommendation nr 15, on combating hate speech. For further information, please refer to section IV.6 of this Call.

The grants will fund projects designed to:

- Increase awareness of the citizens / people living in Kosovo of what is hate speech and its dangers on societies;
- Reinforce capacities of local NGOs and local institutions on responding to hate speech;
- Strengthen partnerships in this regard among the above-mentioned stakeholders;
- Address specific forms of hatred and propose positive messages related to the following vulnerable groups: migrants; LGBTI; persons with disabilities; Roma and minorities (ethnic, religious), women, youngsters.

2. Means of action

Projects should include specifically tailored activities aiming at supporting the implementation at local level relevant standards of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), notably its General Policy Recommendation nr 15, on combating hate speech, as well as, when possible, propose local raise awareness initiatives complementary to the "Block the hatred. Share the love" campaign in Kosovo.

3. Implementation period

The implementation period of the projects should start on 20 July 2022 (see indicative timetable under VIII. below) and shall not extend beyond 31 October 2022.

Reporting requirements shall be completed on 30 November 2022 **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: civil society organizations, state institutions, victims of hate speech and vulnerable communities, for example, but not exclusively, ethnic and religious minorities, Roma, LGBTI, migrants, women, persons with disabilities, etc. As an ultimate end, the public at large is considered a targeted stakeholder.

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 7.000 Euros (seven thousand Euros) that will be awarded by the Council of Europe. The estimated budget must be consistent, accurate, clear, complete and cost-effective, in the light of the activities proposed.

Each grantee is expected to contribute approximately 10% to the overall project budget, in addition to the funds allocated by the Council of Europe.

Each Grantee shall also be required to contribute to the project either by way of its own resources or by contribution from third parties, partnerships with local authorities, municipalities are encouraged. 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:**

- Projects/actions foreseen to be implemented as a partnership between NGOs and local institutions;
- Projects/actions with clear link to the EU/COE "Block the hatred. Share the love." campaign rolling in the Western Balkans and in Kosovo;
- Projects/actions with specific focus on combating hate and generate positive messages to foster inclusion of vulnerable groups, as those mentioned above.

Projects are encouraged to have a gender mainstreaming and an intersectional dimension.

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/the European Union 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 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 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 of the joint EU/CoE programme and information of interest concerning the action "Promotion of diversity and equality in Kosovo" can be found on the website of the Council of Europe. Information on the Block the hatred regional campaign, Block the hatred. Share the love (coe.int).

Other questions regarding this specific call for proposals must be sent at the latest 3 days before the deadline for the submission of proposals, in English and shall be exclusively sent to the following address: tenders.antidiscrimination@coe.int with the following reference in subject: HF 22 – QUESTIONS GRANT HATE SPEECH KOSOVO.

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: tenders.antidiscrimination@coe.int Emails should contain the following reference in the subject: HF 22 – GRANT HATE SPEECH KOSOVO.

Applications must be received **before 19 June 2022 (23:59 (GMT+1))**. 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 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;

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;

g. 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) 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;

- 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 civil society organisation in Kosovo;
- be entitled to carry out the activities described in its project proposal on the territory of Kosovo;
- 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 with regard to the forms of hate speech affecting Kosovo at local level, and the ongoing Block the hatred campaign (40%).
- the extent to which the project is linked to Council of Europe standards, especially those from ECRI and its GPR 15 above mentioned (40%).
- the quality, accuracy, clarity, completeness and cost-effectiveness of the documentation provided as an application (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	1 June 2022
Deadline for submitting applications	19 June 2022
Information to applicants on the results of the award procedure	31 June 2022
Signature of the grant agreements	10 July 2022
Implementation period	20 July – 31 October 2022

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