

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

LOCAL INITIATIVES ON TRANSPARENCY AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN UKRAINE

Project	"Promoting local democracy in Ukraine"
Awarding entity	COUNCIL OF EUROPE Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe
Funding	Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine 2015-2017
Duration	Projects shall be implemented by 15 November 2017 Reporting requirements shall be completed by 26 November 2017 .
Estimated starting date	21 June 2017
Issuance date	24 April 2017
Deadline for applications	21 May 2017

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APPENDICES:

- Appendix I - Application Form
- Appendix II - Estimated 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 in **Appendix II**)
- Attach the other supporting documents:
 - CVs of the person delegated to submit and ensure the co-ordination of the project, and the key personnel to be involved in the project (same format for the whole team);
 - Other materials considered to be relevant in order to increase the applicant's credibility and complement the project proposal: recommendation letters from other donors; annual activity reports, developed materials: studies, strategies, manuals, informative materials; copies of written, audio and video materials etc.
- The application package shall be submitted in English and in Ukrainian. The English version will serve as the basis for evaluation.
- Please send these documents in electronic form (Word and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: congress.cooperation@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: **APPLICATION 2017: Local initiatives on transparency and citizen participation in Ukraine**
- Applications must be received by **21 May 2017 (at midnight, CET, GMT + 1)**.

I. INTRODUCTION

This call for proposals is launched in the framework of the Council of Europe project “Promoting Local Democracy in Ukraine”, implemented by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (hereafter the Congress) from August 2015 until December 2017. It is part of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine 2015-2017 (Section 3.1 “De-centralisation and local government reform”), which is a joint initiative between the Council of Europe and the Ukrainian authorities.

Projects in the Action Plan are funded from multiple sources and co-ordinated with the European Union delegation. Funding is provided from the Council of Europe’s ordinary budget as well as voluntary contributions from donor countries and international organisations.

The current call for proposals aims to support the implementation of local initiatives by municipalities in **Ukraine**. Selected municipalities will benefit from a grant, expert support and peer reviews.

Project proposals shall aim to deliver an added value to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe efforts in the establishment of a transparent, reliable and efficient local self-government, in line with the provisions of the European Charter of Local Self-Government,¹ and its Additional Protocol, on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority². In addition, project proposals shall aim to contribute to reaching objective 4 of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017: “Achieving balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making”.³

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT

The project’s overall objective is to improve the implementation of democratic principles through enhanced institutional and leadership capacities of local elected authorities and by disseminating nation-wide best practices of local democracy through:

- strengthening institutional and leadership capacities of local elected representatives to become more citizens-oriented, responsive and accountable in the performance of their functions;
- reinforcing capabilities of local elected representatives to provide effective support to the implementation of the local self-government reform through better coordination, planning and management;
- fostering active democratic citizenship and supporting the implementation of local democratic participatory processes.

Project beneficiaries include:

- local elected representatives (mayors and councillors) as well as national associations of local and regional authorities, members of the Parliament;
- young leaders of local NGOs, representatives of youth organisation, political activists, as well as young local politicians and representatives of civil society and media⁴.

¹ <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/122>

² <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/207>

³ <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=0900001680590176>

⁴ These include the following:

- leaders of NGOs (human rights, professional organisations, e.g. lawyers, students, alumni of universities, women’s associations, representatives of Tatar people and other minorities);
- recently elected city councillors or mayors (up to 25%) or who were candidates for such posts during the last local elections;
- members of political parties, including youth organisations of political parties;
- informal leaders : bloggers, journalists, in particular journalists representing local media, so that they could also post information on this event and spread news;
- persons involved in democratic participation, e.g. «committees of participatory communities », active community groups.

III. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The Council of Europe intends to award a maximum of EUR 78,000 (seventy-eight thousand Euros) to municipalities in Ukraine.

The Council of Europe is therefore seeking proposals:

- For municipalities with up to 20,000 inhabitants, a maximum budgeted amount of EUR 8,000 (eight thousand Euros).
- For municipalities from 20,000 to 50,000 inhabitants, a maximum budgeted amount of EUR 14,000 (fourteen thousand Euros).
- For municipalities with above 50,000 inhabitants, a maximum budgeted amount of EUR 20,000 (twenty thousand Euros).

Subject to availability of funds, 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 award procedure.

IV. REQUIREMENTS

1. General objective

The local initiatives scheme will support selected municipalities in planning, designing and implementing sustainable and replicable citizen participation actions with the larger aim to encourage local authorities to become more open, inclusive, responsive, transparent and accountable to citizens, and to take gender perspective into account.

2. Means of action

Municipalities are invited to experiment with innovative, participatory and democratic mechanisms in order to foster citizen involvement in local decision-making, and ensure transparency and accountability. The local initiatives should include meaningful processes of dialogue with the public at all stages and should take into account the following:

- Feasibility: the process should concern a local issue for which citizens have room to influence decisions to be made by the municipality;
- Responsiveness: local authorities should indicate in which ways the inputs from citizens will be taken into account;
- Inclusiveness: opportunities should be given to a wider range of citizens, including those representing vulnerable social groups (children, teenagers, people with disabilities, the elderly, ethnic and cultural minorities, refugees, internally displaced persons and immigrants etc.), to enable them to express their views and to take part in the participatory processes implemented;
- Result-oriented: the process should be constructive and solution-oriented;
- Continuity: citizens should be included in the successive phases of the project, from design to implementation and follow-up;
- Gender Equality: a fair representation of women and men in all spheres of the project.

Projects may include, *inter alia*:

- Development of tools and methodologies to ensure transparent local decision-making and accountability;
- Setting up of instruments to ensure greater involvement of citizens in local decision-making ;
- Establishment of tools to ensure public oversight and transparent relations, and procurement;
- Development and/or improvement of procedures and tools that ensure transparency of administrative procedures;

- Development and/or enactment of Code of Conduct and/or Code of Ethics for local elected representatives and/or local government public officials.

Please note that the above list is not exhaustive and projects may propose other approaches, in line with the general objective of the Project.

3. Implementation period

Following the conclusion of the selection process, grantees will benefit from guidance and assistance provided by the experts throughout the project implementation period.

The implementation period of the activities funded under this scheme should **start no later than 1 July 2017** (see indicative timetable under VIII. below) and shall **not extend beyond 15 November** (although the implementation of the project may extend beyond this date). Reporting shall be completed on **26 November 2017 at the latest**.

Projects completed prior to the date of submission of the applications will be automatically excluded. For projects that 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). For more information, please see **Item VIII. Indicative timetable**.

4. Target stakeholders

Projects should target in particular the following key stakeholders:

- local and regional authorities;
- citizens, civil society organisations, etc.

In addressing these stakeholders, a gender perspective should be taken into account.

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 **Appendix II Estimated Budget**) amounting to a maximum of:

- For municipalities with up to 20,000 inhabitants, a maximum budgeted amount of EUR 8,000 (eight thousand Euros).
- For municipalities from 20,000 to 50,000 inhabitants, a maximum budgeted amount of EUR 14,000 (fourteen thousand Euros).
- For municipalities with above 50,000 inhabitants, a maximum budgeted amount of EUR 20,000 (twenty thousand Euros).

Municipalities should submit their budgets in the local currency with an indicative conversion into EUR at the conversion rate determined by the central national bank in Ukraine on the day of submission of their proposal (see Appendix II, estimated budget). Grants shall be paid in the local currency and all financial reporting shall be done in the local currency.

The estimated budget must be consistent, accurate, clear, complete and cost-effective, in the light of the activities proposed. Municipal staff shall not be funded by the grant and no more than 1/3 of the total estimated budget should be spent on technical services, such as purchase of technical equipment and/or renovation of municipal premises.

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.

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

- taking into account fair representation of women and men throughout the design, implementation and evaluation of the project;
- taking into account fair representation of minorities throughout the design, implementation and evaluation of the project;
- ensuring sustainability following completion of the project;
- introducing initiatives with the potential to be replicated at country level.

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;
- Projects/actions not corresponding to the call for proposal's objectives;
- Current activity of the applicant.

8. Funding conditions:

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

- 70% 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.

Changes to the proposed payment structure will only be accepted where legal or technical constraints related to the operation of municipality funding in Ukraine make this unavoidable.

Any funds which are not spent by the municipality in pursuit of the grant agreement must be fully refunded to the Council of Europe.

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. Narrative reports shall include:
 - a summary of the project activities and results achieved;
 - monitoring and evaluation means (including problems encountered during the implementation process and remedies applied; lessons learnt);
 - a section on the sustainability (what steps were taken towards ensuring the sustainability of the current initiative);
 - a description of the way the gender dimension was taken into account during design, implementation and evaluation;
 - a brief summary of the findings; and
 - the annexes on documentation / publications / visibility (what activities have been carried out to present project results; lists of participants in project activities etc.).

- **financial reporting** requires in particular a statement in the currency in which the Grant Agreement will be concluded (the 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 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 consultants 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 consultants 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:

(compulsory)

- The completed and signed **Application Form** (See **Appendix I**);
- A provisional budget (using the template in **Appendix II**);
- Other supporting documents:
 - CVs of the person delegated to ensure the co-ordination of the project, and the key personnel to be involved in the project (same format for the whole team);
 - CVs of the consultants to be involved in project implementation (where known);

(non-compulsory but advisable)

- Other materials considered to be relevant in order to increase the local authority's credibility and to complement the project proposal: recommendation letters from other donors; annual activity reports, developed materials: studies, strategies, manuals, informative materials; copies of written, audio and video materials etc.

Please also provide a list of the documents submitted.

Applications should be submitted in English and in Ukrainian. The English version will serve as the basis for evaluation.

Applications that are incomplete will not be considered.

2. Questions

General information can be found on the website of the Council of Europe, Congress of Local and Regional Activities <http://www.coe.int/t/congress/Activities/cooperation/> and the web page of the Council of Europe Office in Kyiv (www.coe.int/kyiv).

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 or Ukrainian, and shall be exclusively sent to the following address: congress.cooperation@coe.int with the following reference in subject: **QUESTIONS: 2017 - Local initiatives on transparency and citizen participation in Ukraine.**

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: congress.cooperation@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: **APPLICATION: 2017 - Local initiatives on transparency and citizen participation in Ukraine.**

Applications must be received **before 21 May 2017 (at 12.00 CET, 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 at least three members, including experts in the field of local governance and/or ethics, and 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.

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. Declaration**).

The Council of Europe reserves the right to ask applicants 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.

2. Eligibility criteria:

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

- be a local authority from **Ukraine**, whose mayors and/or chairpersons of local councils have participated in the workshops “Mayors, leaders for change” organised during 2014 – 2017, within the project “Promoting local democracy in Ukraine”.⁵
- be entitled to carry out activities described in its project proposal;
- not apply with a proposal which has been completed or shall be completed prior to 21 June 2017 phase;
- 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 Human Resources, to carry out activities described in its project proposal;
- indicate an official bank account in UAH which the receiving entity can securely deposit the funds for the grant.

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

⁵ Kyiv, 11-13 November 2014; Kyiv, 15-16 December 2015; Vinnytsya, 2-3 March 2016; Kyiv, 18-19 May 2016; Lviv, 5-6 October 2016; Kharkiv, 1-2 February 2017; and Odessa, 15-16 February 2017.

3. Award criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

#	Criteria	Weight
1.	the relevance and added value of the project with regard to the promotion of a more responsive, flexible, transparent and accountable governance	40%
2.	the quality, accuracy, clarity, completeness and cost-effectiveness of the application, strategy and the estimated budget	20%
3.	the extent to which the action is sustainable and replicable	20%
4.	the inclusivity of the process: active involvement of vulnerable groups in the whole consultation and implementation process	10%
5.	the resources invested by the local administration: budget, time, staff, commitment in continuing after the end of this project, etc...	10%
TOTAL		100%

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 / Launching the call for proposals	24 April 2017
Deadline for submitting applications	21 May 2017
Information to applicants on the results of the award procedure	Week 24
Signature of the grant agreements	Week 27
Implementation period	Maximum five months between end June and mid November 2017
