



## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

### Schools of Political Studies Call for projects 2023-25 enlarged

<b>Project</b>	Schools of Political Studies
<b>Awarding entity</b>	<b>COUNCIL OF EUROPE</b> Education Department – Education Policy Division
<b>Funding</b>	1 500 000 € <sup>1</sup>
<b>Duration</b>	Projects shall be implemented by 30 November 2025. Reporting requirements shall be completed by 05 December 2023 and 5 December of each following year.
<b>Estimated starting date</b>	01 February 2023
<b>Issuance date</b>	04 November 2022
<b>Deadline for applications</b>	30 November 2022

<sup>1</sup> The Council of Europe budget is approved by the Committee of Ministers for each budgetary year. Any commitments with budgetary implications may be entered into by the CoE Secretariat only when funds are confirmed and secured following the above-mentioned approval by the Committee of Ministers. A decision of the availability of the funding for Phase I of the implementation period of the grants to be awarded under the present grant award procedure will be taken in November 2022. Applicants are informed that the present grant award procedure will be completed, and the Grant Agreements with the selected applicants signed, **only if and when the availability of funds for Phase I of the implementation period will be confirmed and secured**. Applicants are also informed that the decisions as to the availability of funding for Phases II and III will be taken only at the end of year preceding the start of each Phase. The financial resources – **if any** – available for the implementation of Phases II and III may, therefore, be subject to change and the amount – **if any** – of the instalment to be paid under each Phase may need to be adjusted accordingly. The Council of Europe shall not be held liable for any damage sustained by the applicants in connection with the above.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I. INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>III. BUDGET AVAILABLE</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>IV. REQUIREMENTS</b> .....	<b>5</b>
1. General objective.....	5
2. Means of action.....	5
3. Implementation period .....	5
4. Target stakeholders.....	6
5. Budgetary requirements.....	6
6. Further to the general objective, preference will be given to: .....	6
7. The following types of action will not be considered: .....	6
8. Funding conditions: .....	6
9. Reporting requirements: .....	6
<b>V. HOW TO APPLY?</b> .....	<b>7</b>
1. Documents to be submitted:.....	7
2. Questions.....	8
3. Deadline for submission.....	8
4. Change, alteration and modification of the application file.....	8
<b>VI. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE</b> .....	<b>8</b>
1. Exclusion criteria: .....	8
2. Eligibility criteria:.....	9
3. Award criteria .....	9
<b>VII. NOTIFICATION OF THE DECISION AND SIGNATURE OF GRANT AGREEMENTS</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>VIII. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE</b> .....	<b>10</b>

## APPENDICES:

- Appendix I - Application Form
- Appendix II - Provisional budget (Template)
- Appendix IV - Accompanying explanatory text for the present call

## 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:
  - Document certifying the registration of the applicant as a not-for-profit non-governmental organisation
  - CVs of staff members who will be involved in the project implementation and a brief description of the roles of the staff members
  - Strategic documents containing information about your organization's: mission; sources of funding; communication strategy; activity reports; future work programme; etc.
  - Bank /financial statements authorised by a financial officer of the applicant for the last three years
  - Optional: list of projects that the applicant implemented in the area of democratic leadership education and recommendation letters or references from donors other than the Council of Europe Education Department ascertaining at least 5-year experience in the areas described in the grant proposal and sufficient financial, operational and professional capacity, including staff, to carry out activities described in the proposal.
- Send these documents in electronic form (Word .and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: [SPSoffers@coe.int](mailto:SPSoffers@coe.int). Emails should contain the following reference in subject: "SPS – Application submission for projects 2023-25".
- Applications must be received **before 30.11.2022 (at 23h59 CET)**.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This call for proposals is launched in the framework of the Council of Europe Project “Schools of Political Studies”. It aims to co-fund projects designed to train future generations of young leaders showing potential for contributing to political, economic, social and cultural life in Europe, and to develop their competences for democratic culture, in the sense of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) of the Council of Europe<sup>2</sup>.

The present call gives an opportunity to all interested entities with relevant experience in democratic leadership education to formulate proposals aimed at contributing to the goals of the network.

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 Schools of Political Studies of the Council of Europe train future generations of young leaders showing potential for contributing to political, economic, social and cultural life in their countries. With the participation of national and international experts, the schools carry out annual series of seminars and conferences on topics such as democracy, human rights, the rule of law, European integration and global affairs.

In view of the internal and external challenges which European democracies are facing today, Schools of Political Studies need to continue engaging young political and civic leaders in reflection on how democracy should respond to these new realities against the backdrop of the core values of the Council of Europe.

The purpose of this call is to support organisations in developing competences for democratic culture among their learners.

The Council of Europe’s Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (hereafter RFCDC) is the cornerstone of the Education Department’s work and the basis for this call for projects. The RFCDC is a set of materials that can be used by education systems to equip young people with the competences that are needed to take action to defend and promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law, to participate effectively in a culture of democracy, and to live peacefully together with others in culturally diverse societies. It is intended for use by education policy makers and by education practitioners in all sectors of education systems, from pre-school through primary and secondary schooling to higher education, including adult education and vocational education. The RFCDC provides a systematic approach to designing the teaching, learning and assessment of competences for democratic culture, and introducing them into education systems and practice in ways that are coherent, comprehensive and transparent. It contains detailed guidance on how the conceptual model of competences and the descriptors can be used to create more effective education for promoting learners’ competences for democratic culture.

## **III. BUDGET AVAILABLE**

The indicative available budget under this call for proposals is 1 500 000 Euros (one million five hundred thousand Euros) over the period from February 2023 to November 2025<sup>3</sup>. The Council of Europe intends to award up to 24 grant(s) of a maximum amount of 72 000 Euros (seventy-two thousand Euros) each, covering the entire period of the project implementation<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Detailed information on the RFCDC is accessible on the following webpage: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/reference-framework-of-competences-for-democratic-culture/guidance-for-implementation>

<sup>3</sup> See above, footnote no. 1

<sup>4</sup> See above, footnote no. 1.

Subject to availability of funds and extension of the initial Project 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 grant will fund a 3-year project cycle designed to strengthen the democratic leadership potential of young political and social leaders and to develop their competences for democratic culture in the understanding of the RFCDC within the geographical scope of the Council of Europe membership.

##### 2. Means of action

Projects may include capacity building of participants selected to join the school's regular training cycles, curriculum development, organising round tables, conferences, peer learning events, visibility actions, undertaking research work and drafting of analytical papers and policy briefs. The above list is not exhaustive, and applicants may propose to undertake other relevant actions, while keeping in mind the general objective of the Project.

##### 3. Implementation period

The implementation period of the projects will start on 1 February 2023 (see indicative timetable under VIII. below), shall not extend beyond 30 November 2025, and will take place in 3 phases as follows<sup>5</sup>:

Phase I: 1 February 2023 – 31 January 2024;  
Phase II: 1 February 2024 – 31 January 2025;  
Phase III: 1 February 2025 – 30 November 2025.

At the end of each Phase, each Grantee shall submit a **narrative report** and a **financial report** (see below Section IV.9). All reporting requirements shall be completed as follows:

Period	Deadline for submitting reports
1 February 2023 – 31 January 2024	5 December 2023
1 February 2024 – 31 January 2025	5 December 2024
1 February 2025 – 30 November 2025	5 December 2025

Please note that all the activities within each phase would have to be completed until submission of the financial and narrative report for that phase.

The implementation of Phases II and III, and the payment of the related instalment, is conditional on the approval of the narrative and financial reports – and on the reimbursement of any amount due to the Council of Europe – for the preceding Phase<sup>6</sup>.

In addition, for the purpose of regular monitoring, interim reports shall be submitted by 1 October of each year, comprising an abridged narrative report and an overview of the spending of the year to date.

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 application, 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).

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<sup>5</sup> See above, footnote no. 1.

<sup>6</sup> As explained above, the implementation of Phases II and III will also be conditional of the availability of funding. In this regard, see above footnote no. 1.

#### **4. Target stakeholders**

Projects should target in particular young leaders in the political and social spheres, business and administration, academia, elected representatives on all levels, journalists etc.

However, projects may propose to target other relevant stakeholders, such as partner organisations, while keeping in mind the general objective of the present call.

#### **5. Budgetary requirements**

Project proposals shall be accompanied by a draft budget (See **Budget Template in Appendix II**) amounting to a maximum of 72 000 Euros (seventy-two thousand Euros) distributed equally over the 3 phases of the project, i.e. 24 000 Euros for each year. 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.

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

- Projects/actions proposed by entities with at least 5-year experience in democratic leadership education and training and of non-partisan character;
- Projects/actions targeting young democratic leaders in one or several countries, meant to benefit from being involved in the project in a manner well described by the applicant;
- Projects/actions involving partner entities whose aims are consistent with those of the applicant.

#### **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 individual political parties.

#### **8. Funding conditions:**

The funds for each instalment, under each Phase, should in principle be distributed as follows:

- 80 % of the amount granted for each of the yearly phases will be paid to the Grantee, when the Grant Agreement between the Parties is signed (for Phase I) or upon approval of the reports from the preceding phase (for Phases II and III);
- the balance will be paid to the Grantee based on actual expenditures incurred, and after the presentation by the Grantee and acceptance by the Council of Europe of the narrative and financial reports for the Grant implementation in each of the phases of the project; in case the budget is not fully spent the balance will be reimbursed to the Council of Europe by the Grantee.

#### **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, unless the latter requirement cannot be met for duly justified reasons; the narrative report will include a brief account of all the activities implemented in the reporting period, results of the evaluation of the learning

achievements of the project participants and other indications of the project's impact within its context; the narrative report template may be elaborated based on the selected proposals.

- **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 events such as round tables, conferences, seminars, training sessions etc., presenting “appropriate original supporting documents” requires presentation of a programme indicating the title, dates, venue, and agenda of the event; the names of speakers and 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.

The timeline of reporting requirements may be found in chapter IV, paragraph 3 above.

## 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**);
- the other supporting documents:
  - Document certifying the registration of the applicant as a not-for-profit non-governmental organisation
  - CVs of staff members who will be involved in the project implementation and a brief description of the roles of the staff members

- Strategic documents containing information about the mission of the applicant organisation, its sources of funding, communication strategy, activity reports, future work programme, etc.
- Bank /financial statements authorised by a financial officer of the applicant for the last three years
- List of projects that the applicant implemented in the area of democratic leadership education and recommendation letters or references from donors other than the Council of Europe Education Department ascertaining at least 5-year experience in the areas described in the grant proposal and sufficient financial, operational and professional capacity, including staff, to carry out activities described in the proposal.

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

## **2. Questions**

General information can be found on the following websites of the Council of Europe:

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/education>

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/schools-political-studies/home>

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 French, and shall be exclusively sent to the following address: [SPSquestions@coe.int](mailto:SPSquestions@coe.int), with the following reference in subject: “Question related to the SPS call for projects 2023-25 enlarged”.

## **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: [SPSoffers@coe.int](mailto:SPSoffers@coe.int). Emails should contain the following reference in subject: “SPS – Application submission for projects 2023-25 enlarged”

Applications must be received **before 30 November 2022 (at 23h59 CET)**. 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 Secretariat members and external consultants with expertise in the area of the present call.

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 13**).

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 legally constituted as a not-for-profit, non-governmental organisation in Europe;
- be entitled to carry out activities described in its project proposal;
- have been active for at least 5 years in the field of democratic leadership education;
- 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, including the proposed Competencies for Democratic Culture Plan<sup>7</sup>, with regard to the objective of the call (40%)
- the extent to which the action meets the requirements of the call (20%);
- the quality, accuracy, clarity, completeness and cost-effectiveness of the application and the estimated budget (20%);
- the relevance of the experience of the applying organisation(s), staff and partners (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, formalising their legal commitments.

## VIII. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

<b>Phases</b>	<b>Indicative timing</b>
<b>Publication of the call</b>	04/11/2022
<b>Deadline for submitting applications</b>	30/11/2022
<b>Information to applicants on the results of the award procedure</b>	23/12/2022
<b>Signature of the grant agreements</b>	31/01/2023
<b>Implementation period</b>	01/02/2023 – 30/11/2025

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<sup>7</sup> Please see the explanatory note accompanying this call.