



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Support to local self-governments and/or civil society organisations (CSOs) for fighting discrimination and hate speech
HF 23

Project	Horizontal Facility – Joint EU/CoE Action HF23 – “Towards an equal, inclusive and tolerant Bosnia and Herzegovina”
Awarding entity	COUNCIL OF EUROPE OFFICE IN SARAJEVO
Funding	European Union and Council of Europe
Duration	Projects shall be implemented by 15 February 2025. Reporting requirements shall be completed by 15 March 2025.
Estimated starting date	15 February 2024
Issuance date	17 October 2024
Deadline for applications	19 November 2023

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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 of the proposed project;
 - Organigram of the unit/organisation for implementing the proposed project;
 - CV of project manager(s) involved in the implementation of the proposed project;
 - References for previously implemented projects;
 - Bank certificate confirming the solvency of the account with the minimum liquidity of 2000 Euro (or its equivalent in the local currency);
 - Registration documents/settlement status (statut).
- Send these documents in electronic form (Word .and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: anti-discrimination@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: HF 23-APPLICATION FOR GRANT.

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 Türkiye” (Horizontal Facility III) and its Action “Towards and equal, inclusive and tolerant Bosnia and Herzegovina”. It aims to co-fund national/local projects aimed at local self-governments and/or civil society organisations.

The Call aims to support selected grantees in developing concrete responses on combating discrimination, including discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and/or gender identity, and combating hate speech.

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

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

The purpose of the Action is to enhance the implementation of anti-discrimination mechanisms especially those on combating intolerance, hate speech and inequality, in line with the ECHR case law, recommendations of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), as well as other applicable standards such as the Committee of Ministers recommendation on SOGI grounds and on combating hate speech.

From the EU perspective, the action aims at supporting Bosnia and Herzegovina to implement the 2019 [Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina’s application for membership of the European Union](#), notably its recommendations focused on Fundamental Rights. The Action will specifically help meeting Recommendations number 9 (*Strengthen the protection of the rights of all citizens, notably by ensuring the implementation of the legislation on non-discrimination and on gender equality*) and 13 (*Improve the protection and inclusion of vulnerable groups, in particular persons with disabilities, children, LGBTI persons, members of the Roma community, detainees, migrants and asylum seekers, as well as displaced persons and refugees in line with the objective of closure of Annex VII of the Dayton Peace Agreement*).

In particular, it aims to continue revising and developing legal framework in line with European standards as well as to continue enhancing the implementation of the current relevant laws, through capacity building for relevant institutions. The objective is to implement the respective action plans, strategies and other government’s guidelines and support them to better tailor their interventions to counter discrimination, hate speech and to promote tolerance and inclusion. In addition, the action will aim to support the fight against hate speech, improve the protection and inclusion of vulnerable groups and promote rights of the LGBTI persons.

Project partners include institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina such as the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, the Gender equality agency BiH and the Institution of Ombudsperson for human rights. Other partners include institutions in Republika Srpska, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Brcko District as well as the European Union delegation in BiH, civil society organisations, local authorities and other relevant stakeholders.

III. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The indicative available budget under this call for proposals is 60.000 Euros (sixty thousand Euros). The Council of Europe intends to award 6 (six) grants of a maximum amount of 10.000 Euros (ten thousand Euros) each.

Subject to availability of funds and extension of the initial duration of the Action “Towards and equal, inclusive and tolerant Bosnia and Herzegovina”, 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 activities aimed at supporting the concrete implementation and/or follow-up at local level of the recommendations of the Council of Europe monitoring body in the field of anti-discrimination, namely the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), other applicable standards such as the Committee of Ministers recommendation on SOGI grounds and on combating hate speech as well as national action plans and roadmaps such as the LGBTI Action plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Mapping responses to hate speech in Bosnia and Herzegovina. For further information, please refer to part 2 and 6 of this section below.

Projects designed could address the following issues:

- Promotion and protection of rights of LGBTI persons in the local communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina related to access to health and education, in the area of sports, media and administration, protection against hate speech and hate crime, etc.
- Combating hate speech and/or countering intolerance, exclusion, inequality, hatred and racism in local communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, whereby focusing on vulnerable groups such as irregularly present migrants, Roma, people with disabilities, LGBTI people, Jews, people of different ethnicity/religions, etc.

2. Means of action

Projects should include specifically tailored activities aiming at supporting the implementation of one or more recommendations/documents and/or issues linked to the topics.

Applicants should refer to the relevant recommendations/documents at the following links:

- [Recommendations by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance \(ECRI\) for BiH](#)
- [ECRI General policy recommendation \(GPR\) No.15 on combating hate speech](#)
- [ECRI GPR No.10 on combating racism and racial discrimination in and through school education](#)
- [ECRI GPR No.12 on combating racism and racial discrimination in the field of sport](#)
- [ECRI GPR No. 16 on safeguarding irregularly present migrants from discrimination](#)
- [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2022\)16 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on combating hate speech](#)
- [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2010\)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on combating discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity](#)
- [EU Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)
- [EU Country Report for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2022](#)
- [LGBTI Action plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)
- [Mapping responses to hate speech in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

Sample of activities could include the following:

- **LGBTI:** fighting human rights violation of LGBTI people; activities towards changes of policies; involvement of authorities, local self-governments, CSOs and other relevant stakeholders in promoting equality and diversity and combating discrimination and violence, etc.
- **Countering hate speech and promoting diversity, equality, inclusion and tolerance:** combating hate speech; activities towards changes of policies; rising awareness about hate speech and its negative effects; activities towards facilitating prosecution of hate speech; raising awareness through authorities and CSOs about entitlements and access to services for all persons, regardless of their status; involvement of the authorities, schools, religious and sports communities in combating hate speech and promoting diverse and inclusive society; supporting initiatives and actions that promote and encourage fighting discrimination on ground of ethnic or national origin; and enhancing intercultural dialogue, mutual respect,

understanding and cooperation among all persons living in the local community, including different vulnerable groups, etc.

The proposed areas are not exhaustive, the call is also open to other suggestions and proposals.

The applicants' attention is drawn to the fact that restrictions apply to the engagement of local¹ civil servants and other public administration staff under this grant procedure.

First, applicants are informed that if a Grantee intends to procure, in connection with a part of the Action, the consultancy services of a civil servant or other public administration staff or to assign the performance of a part of the Action to a civil servant or other public administration staff, only civil servants or other public administration staff falling under one of the following categories may be engaged

- I) Educational staff (including academics, pedagogical institutes, pre-university teachers, school teachers, curriculum experts).
- II) Judges, prosecutors, staff from the prosecution offices and judicial and prosecutorial bodies.
- III) Staff from the ministries for social affairs, ministries of justice, ministries of interior and ministries of health and public institutes.
- IV) Law enforcement staff (including staff from the specialised police departments and Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs)),
- V) Staff from equality bodies and central electoral commissions.

In addition, where a Grantee procures the consultancy services of a natural person in connection with a part of the Action or assigns the performance of a part of the Action to an individual within the Grantee organisation and that natural person is a local civil servant or other public administration staff under the third phase of the Horizontal Facility, the Grantee must confirm that neither the signatory of the service contract, nor if relevant the organisation he/she represents, are in a situation of a conflict of interests or a potential conflict of interest in relation to this procedure; the signatory and if relevant the organisation have been notified and understand that a conflict of interests may arise, in particular, from economic interests, political or national affinities, emotional or family ties or any other type of shared relationship or interest.

The Grantee must undertake to verify and provide the Council of Europe with the necessary supporting documents confirming that this individual belonging to the category of civil servant or other public administration staff under the third phase of the Horizontal Facility:

- a) has obtained authorisation of his/her public employer to carry out this secondary activity
- b) the performance of his/her obligations under this Agreement goes beyond the scope of his/her regular official duties
- c) undertakes this secondary activity on a temporary and short-term basis and that it will be performed outside his/her working hours or when he/she is on leave of absence from his/her official public duties
- d) obtained the confirmation from his/her employer that national/local legislation does not prohibit civil servants or other public administration staff from undertaking secondary activities
- e) is not in a situation of conflict of interests as described above
- f) has not been involved in the Action design or that the public institution for which he/she works will not be a beneficiary thereof unless foreseen otherwise by the Horizontal Facility Description of Action.

3. Implementation period

The implementation period of the projects should start on 15 February 2024 (see indicative timetable under VIII. below) and shall not extend beyond 15 February 2025.

Reporting requirements shall be completed on 15 March 2025 **at the latest**.

¹ For the purpose of this document, the term « local » designates consultants from one of the Horizontal Facility Beneficiaries region and Türkiye.

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 self-governments
- Civil society organisations
- Vulnerable groups such as irregularly present migrants, Roma, people with disabilities, LGBTI people, Jews, people of different ethnic/religions, etc
- Youth
- General population

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**) amounting to a maximum of 10.000 Euros (ten 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.

The applicants should include some visibility activities in their project proposals through introducing relevant costs in the estimated budget even if the visibility and work with media are not the focus of their project proposals.

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

- Projects proposed by a local self-government in cooperation with CSOs or proposed by a CSO in cooperation with local self-government or/and other relevant stakeholders/institutions;
- Projects and their activities implemented in partnership between local self-governments/CSOs from different entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- Projects that aim to fight multiple forms of discrimination or to support multiple vulnerable groups;
- Projects/actions that involve vulnerable groups themselves;
- Projects that make links between strategies in fighting discrimination and hate speech that exists at the local level towards above mentioned groups or that support the preparation of such strategies;
- Projects that incorporate gender mainstreaming elements;
- Projects that include a list of visibility activities that should be implemented through the grant, aiming to: promote tolerance, intercultural dialogue and cultural pluralism among general public - public has access to fact-based/well-researched information about sexual minorities (and their rights) and/or on hate speech. Based on this it can make a positive connotation with issues linked to the vulnerable groups in society; stimulate media interest and to increase the number of media reports aimed at increasing awareness related to the promotion of tolerance, combating hate speech; provide visibility of the contribution of the Horizontal Facility Programme.

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 to the Grantee or the Lead Grantee in case of a consortium when the Grant Agreement between the Parties is signed;
- the balance will be paid to the Grantee or the Lead Grantee in case of a consortium 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 (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 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 or the Lead Grantee in case of a consortium 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**);
- the other supporting documents:
 - work plan of the proposed project,
 - organigram of the unit for implementing the proposed project,
 - CV(s) of project staff,
 - references for previously implemented projects,
 - bank certificate confirming the solvency of the account with the minimum liquidity of 2000 Euro (or its equivalent in the local currency),
 - registration documents/settlement status (statut).

Applications that are incomplete will not be considered.

2. Questions

General information can be found on the website of the Council of Europe: <https://pip-eu.coe.int/en/web/horizontal-facility> and information of interest concerning the Action “Towards an equal, inclusive and tolerant Bosnia and Herzegovina” can be found on the website of the Council of Europe office in Sarajevo <https://www.coe.int/en/web/sarajevo/towards-an-equal-inclusive-and-tolerant-bosnia-and-herzegovina> .

An informative session about the grant procedure will be held online on **6 November 2023** via [Link](#) (Meeting ID: 313 997 955 527; Passcode: Wuosd5) **at 14:00**. In case you have not possibilities to join online, please, write us on the email anti-discrimination@coe.int until **1 November 2023 15:00**, for an alternative solution.

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 and shall be exclusively sent to the following address: anti-discrimination@coe.int, with the following reference in subject: **HF 23 – QUESTION FOR GRANT**.

3. Deadline for submission

The application form, **completed and signed by all Grantees**, together with the supporting documents, must be submitted in electronic form (Word and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: anti-discrimination@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: **HF 23 APPLICATION FOR GRANT**.

Applications must be received **before 19 November 2023 (at 23:59 CEST)**. 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 one member belonging to the Institution which is part of the action’s Steering Committee and two Council of Europe members.

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;
- 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;
1. 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 non-governmental organisation in Bosnia and Herzegovina or is a local self-government;
- be entitled to carry out in Bosnia and Herzegovina activities described in its project proposal;
- for CSOs: have been active for at least three years in the field of human rights/anti-discrimination, hate speech;
- have sufficient financial capacity on the bank account: at least 2000 Euro or the equivalent in the local currency
- have sufficient operational and professional capacity, including at least two staff, to carry out activities described in its project proposal and who have at least three years experience in project implementation
- 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 and its activities with regard to the implementation of recommendations/documents (listed under 2. *Means of action and 6 Further to the general objective, preference will be given to which* are to be found under Section IV Requirements of the present document) , thus meeting the requirements of the call (60%)
- the quality of the application, cost-effectiveness and relevance of the experience of the applicant (30%)
- sustainability of the activities (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 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.**

I. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Phases	Indicative timing
Publication of the call	17 October 2023
Deadline for submitting applications	19 November 2023 (at 23:59 CEST)
Information to applicants on the results of the award procedure	15 January 2024
Signature of the grant agreements	1 February 2024
Implementation period	15 February 2024 – 15 February 2025

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