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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Supporting a democratic education environment
HFII-BH4679 Grants School based projects (Quality ED-MNE)

Project	Horizontal Facility II – Joint EU/CoE Action « Quality Education for All »
Awarding entity	COUNCIL OF EUROPE Council of Europe
Funding	Council of Europe and European Union
Duration	Projects shall be implemented by 01 May 2021. Reporting requirements shall be completed by 25 May 2021.
Estimated starting date	15 September 2020
Issuance date	23 June 2020
Deadline for applications	31 July 2020

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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:
 - Documents certifying the registration of the NGO;
 - Bank/financial statements authorised by a financial officer of the NGO;
 - CVs of staff members who will be involved in project implementation;
 - Contact details of three relevant referees.
- Send these documents in electronic form (Word .and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: Education.podgorica@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: Application - School based projects (Quality ED-MNE).

I. INTRODUCTION

This call for proposals is launched within the framework of the action “Quality Education for All” in Montenegro as a part of the joint European Union/Council of Europe programme “Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey 2019-2022”.

The call aims to co-fund local school-based projects to promote a democratic education environment with the involvement of the local community.

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 purpose of the Action is *inter alia* to foster quality education by supporting schools, their communities and relevant education institutions to fight discrimination in education and to accommodate and value vulnerable children in the education system through the promotion and implementation of the [Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture](#) (CDC).

In particular, it aims to strengthen a whole-school approach that ensures the development of competences for a democratic culture in learners, for a democratic school culture and ultimately for a sustainable democratic and inclusive society for all.

The Action is built along three lines:

1) Policy

Implement the “[Roadmap to education policy for fostering democratic school culture in Montenegro](#)” - developed under the previous project HF26 and endorsed by the key stakeholders - and to scale up from the experiences of the pilot schools to the policy level by developing an education strategy based on those recommendations.

2) Capacity Building

Build capacity of schools and education professionals to adopt a democratic school culture and develop democratic competences in learners.

3) Heightened awareness of education professionals, schools and the wider communities of the benefits of a democratic school culture will be increased, while policy makers will be more aware of the common issues of inclusion and discrimination in the region and solutions to resolve them.

Action partners include the Ministry of Education, the Bureau for Educational Services, selected pilot schools, local communities, media and NGOs.

III. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The indicative available budget under this call for proposals is €53 000 (fifty three thousand Euros). The Council of Europe intends to award four grants of a maximum amount of €13 250 (thirteen thousand, two hundred and fifty Euros) each.

Subject to the availability of funds and extension of the Project initial duration, the Council of Europe reserves the right not to award all available funds, and/or to redistribute the available funds in a different manner depending on the project proposals received and on the outcome of the call for proposals.

IV. REQUIREMENTS

1. General objective

The grants will fund projects designed to contribute to stronger involvement and capacity-building of schools and local communities in promoting democratic education environment through a whole-school-approach.¹

The current action builds upon the achievements and results from the project HF 26 “Fostering a democratic school culture 2016-2019”. A network of 25 primary and secondary pilot schools established within the previous HF action has been reinforced with an additional 15 primary schools, thus there are now 40 schools implementing a democratic culture within the current action. The schools are divided in three clusters per geographical criteria (northern, southern, and central region clusters) and one mixed cluster comprised of vocational and primary schools (*Table 1*).

Table 1: List of pilot schools involved in the Action

Central region	Northern region	Southern region	Mixed cluster
1.Secondary school “Slobodan Škerović“, Podgorica	1. Secondary school “Tanasije Pejatović“, Pljevlja	1. Secondary school “Ivan Goran Kovačić“, Herceg Novi	1. Secondary school „Bećo Bašić“, Plav
2. Secondary school “Petar I Petrović Njegoš“, Danilovgrad	2. Secondary school “Miloje Dobrašinović“, Bijelo Polje	2. Secondary school “Niko Rolović“, Bar	2.Secondary school Andrijevica
3. Secondary school “25. maj“, Tuzi	3. Secondary school “Panto Mališić“, Berane	3. Secondary school “Danilo Kiš“, Budva	3.Secondary school “Braća Selić“Kolašin
4.Secondary school Cetinje	4. Secondary school „, 30. septembar“, Rožaje	4. Secondary school “Mladost“, Tivat	4.Secondary school “Vuksan Đukić“, Mojkovac
5.Secondary school “Stojan Cerović“, Nikšić	5. Secondary school “17. Septembar“ Žabljak	5. Secondary school “Bratstvo jedinstvo“, Ulcinj	5.Educational center Plužine
6. Primary school “Božidar Vuković Podgoričanin“	6. Primary school “Radomir Mitrović“, Berane	6. Primary school “Drago Milović“, Tivat	6.Educational center Šavnik
7. Primary school “Dragisa Ivanovic“, Podgorica	7. Primary school “Vladislav Rajko Korac“, Berane	7. Primary school “Orjenski bataljon“, Herceg Novi	7. Primary school “Aleksa Djilas Beco“, Mojkovac
8. Primary school “21.maj“, Podgorica	8.Primary school “Nedakusi“, Bijelo Polje	8. Primary school Druga osnovna škola" Budva	
9. Primary school "Sutjeska", Podgorica	9. Pilot school “Trpezi“, Berane	9. Primary school “Veljko Drobnjakovic“, Risan	
10. Primary school “Milorad Musa Burzan“, Podgorica	10. Primary school “Braca Ribar“, Bijelo Polje	10. Primary school “Bosko Strugar“, Ulcinj	
11. Primary school "Milija Nikcevic" Niksic	11. Primary school "Risto Ratkovic“, Bijelo Polje	11. Primary school “Srbija“, Bar	

The previous project, HF26, helped 25 pilot schools to introduce a number of specific measures to improve their inclusive environment and promote tolerance and inter-ethnic dialogue. The teams of those pilot schools have already been trained to assess the situation and integrate a democratic and inclusive perspective into the school ethos. A [curriculum for teacher training](#) was developed to build capacities to foster a democratic school culture. Given that 15 primary schools have recently joined the pilot schools network, they do not have the same knowledge and awareness of CDC as the original 25 pilot schools.

The roadmap stresses the need for creation of whole-school policy that requires school stakeholders working together to provide a whole-school experience for learners and help them to understand the importance of

¹ More information about a whole-school approach can be found at <https://rm.coe.int/prems-008518-gbr-2508-reference-framework-of-competences-vol-3-8575-co/16807bc66e> pages 89-100.

education for democratic culture in relation to overall school activities. The joint effort and co-operation of school administration, teachers, students and parents as well as local community members in school life are essential. A school's relations with the wider community – including parents, authorities, NGOs, universities, businesses, media, health workers and other schools – can help to foster a culture of democracy in the school.

A recent survey among the pilot schools advocated for strengthening teacher practice on fostering democratic school environment in an innovative way and for involving as many children as possible, especially children from vulnerable groups (Roma and Egyptian population, children with disabilities, gifted children, etc.). It was also recommended to set up democratic culture school teams and to endorse action plans with an aim to tackle a number of CDC issues such as the prevention of peer violence, the protection of students who are particularly vulnerable to discrimination, reducing prejudices, environmental activities, valuing diversity, promoting multiculturalism and interculturalism, encouraging student activism etc.). Networking and exchange among schools and with the local community, particularly parents are seen as the most effective instruments for achieving sustainable results.

The general objective is thus to propose a project *which will involve all the pilot schools within one cluster* to strengthen both school to school partnership and links with the surrounding community as a way for CDC development and which combine the achievement of new knowledge and critical understanding but also experience-based development of skills and attitudes. [CDC descriptors](#) can serve as a good toolbox to operationalise competences.

2. Means of action

Projects may include but are not limited to:

- Capacity-building through training and coaching;
- Research and studies;
- Peer learning and observation;
- Monitoring and reporting;
- Setting up experimental school services;
- Awareness-raising and communication campaigns;
- Web-based materials and application software;
- Educational tools and professional didactic materials;

3. Implementation period

The implementation period of the projects should start on 15 September 2020 (see indicative timetable under VIII. below) and shall not extend beyond 1 May 2021.

Reporting requirements shall be completed on 25 May 2021 **at the latest**.

Projects completed prior to the date of submission of the applications will be automatically excluded. As regard projects started prior to the date of submission of the applications, or prior to the date of signature of the grant agreement, only those costs incurred after the date of submission of the grant application could be eligible (provided the agreement concerned so provides).

4. Target stakeholders

Projects should target in particular the following key stakeholders:

- School administrative staff, teachers, students and parents as well as local community members involved in the school life of 40 pilot schools;
- Students from vulnerable groups;
- Public and civil society organisations;

The above list is not exhaustive and projects may propose targeting 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 €13 250(thirteen thousand two hundred and fifty 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.

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

- Projects/actions targeting, to some extent, sustaining a culture of democracy in the education system and helping vulnerable groups during and post Covid-19 era;
- Projects/actions involving small-scale activities with the pilot schools that address either school or wider community problems and based on the [Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture](#) and other, already developed, Council of Europe resources.

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 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**);
- the other supporting documents:
 - Documents certifying the registration of the NGO;
 - Bank/financial statements authorised by a financial officer of the NGO;
 - CVs of staff members who will be involved in project implementation;
 - Contact details of three relevant referees.

Applications that are incomplete will not be considered.

2. Questions

General information can be found on the website of the Council of Europe: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/horizontal-facility/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 and shall be exclusively sent to the following address: Education.podgorica@coe.int, with the following reference in subject: Questions and clarifications: School based projects (Quality ED – MNE).

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: Education.podgorica@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: Application - School based projects (Quality ED – MNE).

Applications must be received **before 31 July 2020 (at 00:00 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

- 2 representatives of the Council of Europe, and
- 1 representative of the Ministry of Education.

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 or if their owner(s) or executive officer(s), in the case of legal persons, 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) 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;
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 Montenegro;
- be entitled to carry out in all the activities described in its project proposal;
- have been active for at least 3 years in the field of inclusive education and/or education for human rights and democratic citizenship;
- 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 regards to the objective of the call (20%)
- the extent to which the action meets the requirements of the call (30%);
- the quality, accuracy, clarity, completeness and cost-effectiveness of the application and the estimated budget (10%);
- the relevance of the experience of the applying organisation(s) and staff (40%).

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	23 June 2020

Orientation day	7 July 2020
Deadline for submitting applications	31 July 2020
Information to applicants on the results of the award procedure	18 August 2020
Signature of the grant agreements	1 September 2020
Implementation period	15 September 2020 – 1 May 2021

The Council of Europe reserves the right to modify the calendar and planning, including the implementation and reporting periods, if this is necessary to comply with instructions issued by national, regional or local authorities or may be necessary to protect the health of the persons involved in the project's implementation.

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