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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Support to local CSOs for measures for fighting discrimination during COVID time
HF 28 – APPLICATION FOR GRANT NORTH MACEDONIA

Project	Horizontal Facility – Joint EU/CoE Action „Promotion of Diversity and Equality in North Macedonia“
Awarding entity	COUNCIL OF EUROPE
Funding	European Union and Council of Europe
Duration	Projects shall be implemented by 30 September 2020. Reporting requirements shall be completed by 31 October 2020.
Estimated starting date	31 May 2020
Issuance date	30 April 2020
Deadline for applications	21 May 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:
 - Work plan;
 - Organogram of the unit/organisation for implementing the proposed project;
 - CV of project manager(s).
- Send these documents in electronic form (Word .and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: tenders.antidiscrimination@coe.int
- Emails should contain the following reference in subject: HF 28 - APPLICATION FOR GRANT DURING COVID.
- Applications must be received **before 21 May 2020 (at 17:00 CET)**.

I. INTRODUCTION

This call for proposals is launched in the framework of the joint European Union and Council of Europe programme “Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey II” (Horizontal Facility II), under the Action “Promotion of Diversity and Equality in North Macedonia”. The programme is co-funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe and implemented by the Council of Europe. It aims to fund specific measures to favour inclusion and combat inequalities of vulnerable groups, and/or raise awareness against hate speech targeting these groups in the specific context of the spread of the COVID virus in the country.

An increase of stigmatization of vulnerable groups is already reported, as well as the urgency for reinforcing inclusion measures for such groups, especially when outside the formal social security schemes offered during the emergency by the authorities.

Project proposals shall aim to produce an added value to the Council of Europe/the European Union work in combating discrimination and hate speech and favouring inclusions in the present circumstances.

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

The purpose of the Action is improving the functioning of anti-discrimination mechanisms and their accessibility to vulnerable groups in line with European standards and CoE monitoring bodies’ findings and recommendations, notably those from the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) as well where applicable those of the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) and those of the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for the Regional and Minorities languages (ECRML).

In particular, it aims to:

- Support initiatives to harmonise the anti-discrimination framework across the country and to develop and implement the respective action plans/strategies in relation to anti-discrimination, LGBTI rights and combating hate speech;
- Strengthen the capacity of the authorities, local governments and/or equality bodies in order to allow them to better tailor their interventions to address discrimination and increase cooperation among authorities in this field;
- Increase the knowledge and awareness of the general public about the importance of anti-discrimination policies, about the rights of LGBTI persons and about the dangers posed by hate speech, offering means to develop counter-narratives.

Project partners include institutions of North Macedonia primarily the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ombudsman, as well as the European Union delegation in Skopje, civil society organisations, local authorities and other relevant stakeholders.

III. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The indicative available budget under this call for proposals is 10.000 Euros (ten thousand Euros). The Council of Europe/the European Union intends to award grants of a maximum amount of 5.000 Euros each.

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

IV. REQUIREMENTS

1. General objective

The grants will fund activities aimed at supporting, in the context of the current situation of COVID virus spread, the concrete follow-up at local level on issues of inequality, challenges to social inclusion and discrimination which were raised in the last country report of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), as well as, where applicable, those of the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) and those of the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for the Regional and Minorities languages (ECRML). For further information, please refer to section IV.6 of this Call.

Projects designed could address the following issues:

- Promotion and protection of the right of vulnerable persons in the local communities including issues related to impaired access to health, adequate accommodation and facilities and social services;
- Combating hate speech and hate motivated violence, notably stigmatization of vulnerable groups and their increased exposure to violence.

2. Means of action

Projects should include specifically tailored activities aiming at supporting the implementation and/or follow-up at local level on findings and recommendations of the last report on North Macedonia of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-commission-against-racism-and-intolerance/-the-former-yugoslav-republic-of-macedonia> as well as, where applicable, those of the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) and those of the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for the Regional and Minorities languages (ECRML).

Activities should reflect how the applicant understands its role in combating discrimination and the additional challenges to social inclusion due to the COVID virus circumstances.

3. Implementation period

The implementation period of the projects should start on 31 May 2020 (see indicative timetable under VIII. below) and shall not extend beyond 30 September 2020.

Reporting requirements shall be completed on 31 October 2020 **at the latest**.

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

4. Target stakeholders

Projects should target, in particular, the following key stakeholders:

- Civil society organisations
- Vulnerable groups
- 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 Action.

5. Budgetary requirements

Project proposals shall be accompanied by a draft budget (See **Template Budget, in Appendix II**) amounting to a maximum of 5,500 Euros (five thousand five hundred Euros), more specifically a maximum of 5000 Euros (five

thousand Euros) can be awarded by the Council of Europe/the European Union, while selected CSOs are expected to contribute 10% to the overall project budget in amount of maximum 5.000 Euros (five 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.

In case visibility/work with media is not focus of the project, selected CSOs are expected to allocate certain financial amount from the grant for the purpose of implementation of defined visibility activities.

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

Projects/actions:

- Combining multiple forms of discrimination and/or hate speech (e.g. against national minorities, LGBTI persons, women etc.);
- Supporting initiatives and actions that promote and encourage fighting discrimination such as on ground of ethnic or national origin, and enhancing intercultural dialogue, mutual respect, understanding and cooperation among all persons living in the local community;
- Linking local level existing strategies in the above-mentioned relevant areas (anti-discrimination, LGBTI persons, combating hate speech and hate motivated violence) or supporting the preparation of such strategies;
- Incorporating gender mainstreaming elements and paying particular attention to the interplay between gender and other discrimination grounds, such as ethnicity, nationality and language, which in time of COVID-19 emergency is likely to worsen the already existing structural disparities related to gender; With a strong link with Council of Europe work in the field of inclusion and anti-discrimination policies
- Including list of visibility activities that should be implemented through the grant, aiming to promote tolerance, among general public - public has access to fact-based/well-researched information on anti-discrimination and/or 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 increase the number of media reports aimed at increasing awareness related to the promotion of tolerance, combating hate speech and discrimination; provide visibility of the contribution of the HF II Programme as well as EU and CoE support to “Promotion of diversity and equality in North Macedonia”.

7. The following types of action will not be considered:

- Projects/actions providing financial support to third parties (re-granting schemes);
- Projects/actions concerning only or mainly individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- Projects/actions supporting political parties.

8. Funding conditions:

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

- 80 % will be paid when the Grant Agreement between the two parties is signed;
- the balance will be paid based on actual expenditures incurred, and after the presentation and acceptance by the Council of Europe/the European Union of the final narrative and financial reports for the Grant implementation.

9. Reporting requirements:

- **narrative reporting** requires a full narrative report on the use made of the grant and a copy of the register of the persons present during each of the activities, including names and signatures of participants;
- **financial reporting** requires in particular a statement in the currency in which the Grant Agreement will be concluded (Euros or local currency), in English, stating the payments made for the implementation of the activities, certified by the responsible financial officer of the Grantee, accompanied by “appropriate original supporting documents” (see below). The Council of Europe reserves the right to ask for summary translations of invoices into English. If for legal reasons the original documents must be retained by the Grantee, certified copies must be submitted with the financial statement.

“Appropriate original supporting documents” refers to signed contracts, invoices and acceptances of work (for all transactions), payment authorisation for all transactions should also be provided in case the Grantee uses such practice, and reliable evidence of payment (authorised payment order and bank statement).

As regards round tables/conferences, presenting “appropriate original supporting documents” requires presentation of a programme indicating the title, dates, venue, and agenda of the event; the names of persons facilitating the event, a signed list of participants, the contracts with the owner of venue of the event (e.g. hotel) for the rent of premises, food and beverages of participants, invoices from the owner of the venue of the event for the above services, and a report on the results of the event (see narrative reporting above).

As regards consultancy services, presenting “appropriate original supporting documents” requires presentation of evidence of the outputs produced, contracts with experts and consultants containing a specific description of services to be carried out, invoices produced after the works have been performed and delivered (the specialities of the consultants shall correspond to the nature of activities for which they are contracted).

As regards travel fees / lodging of experts and participants, presenting “appropriate original supporting documents” requires presentation, where relevant, of contracts with a travel agency for travel fees and lodging, invoices of the travel agency indicating destinations, dates, ticket costs, and names of the travelling persons, a programme of the event indicating the names of the experts and signed lists of participants.

The above description is not comprehensive. Any doubt regarding the interpretation of the notion of “appropriate original supporting documents” should lead the Grantee to consult the Council of Europe.

V. HOW TO APPLY?

1. Documents to be submitted:

Each application shall contain:

- the completed and signed **Application Form** (See **Appendix I**);
- a provisional budget (using the template reproduced in **Appendix II and Appendix IV Guidelines for using Grant Agreement budget templates**);
- the other supporting documents: work plan, organogram of the unit for implementing the proposed project and the CV of project manager(s).

Applications that are incomplete will not be considered.

2. Questions

General information about Horizontal Facility II can be found on the website of the Council of Europe: <https://pip-eu.coe.int/en/web/horizontal-facility> and information of interest concerning the Action “Promotion of diversity

and equality in North Macedonia” can be found on the website of the Council of Europe, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/skopje/promotion-of-diversity-and-equality-in-north-macedonia>

Other questions regarding this specific call for proposals must be sent at the latest 3 days before the deadline for the submission of proposals, in English and shall be exclusively sent to the following address: tenders.antidiscrimination@coe.int with the following reference in subject: HF 28 – QUESTIONS APPLICATION FOR GRANT NORTH MACEDONIA.

3. Deadline for submission

The application form, **completed and signed**, together with the supporting documents, must be submitted in electronic form (Word and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: tenders.antidiscrimination@coe.int Emails should contain the following reference in the subject: HF 28 – APPLICATION FOR GRANT NORTH MACEDONIA

Applications must be received **before 21 May 2020 (at 17:00 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 three staff members of the Council of Europe.

The procedure shall be based on the underlying principles of grant award procedures, which are transparency, non-retroactivity, non-cumulative awards, not-for-profit, co-financing and non-discrimination, in accordance with [Rule 1374 of 16 December 2015 on the grant award procedures of the Council of Europe](#).

The applicants, and their projects, shall fulfil all of the following criteria:

1. Exclusion criteria:

Applicants shall be excluded from the grant award procedure where they:

- a. have been sentenced by final judgment on one or more of the following charges: participation in a criminal organisation, corruption, fraud, money laundering;
- b. are in a situation of bankruptcy, liquidation, termination of activity, insolvency or arrangement with creditors or any like situation arising from a procedure of the same kind, or are subject to a procedure of the same kind;
- c. have received a judgement with res judicata force, finding an offence that affects their professional integrity or constitutes a serious professional misconduct;
- d. do not comply with their obligations as regards payment of social security contributions, taxes and dues, according to the statutory provisions of the country where they are established;

- e. are 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 North Macedonia;
- be entitled to carry out the activities described in its project proposal on the territory of North Macedonia;
- have been active for at least three years in the field of human rights/anti-discrimination;
- have sufficient financial capacity (stable and sufficient sources of funding) to maintain its activity throughout the period for which the grant is awarded and to participate by way of its own resources (including human resources or in-kind contributions);
- have sufficient operational and professional capacity, including staff, to carry out activities described in its project proposal;
- have a bank account.

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

3. Award criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- the relevance and added value of the project with regard to the implementation of ECRI recommendations during COVID times (35%)
- the extent to which the action meets the requirements of the call (35%);
- the quality, accuracy, clarity, completeness and cost-effectiveness of the application and the estimated budget (20%);
- 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.**

VIII. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Phases	Indicative timing
Publication of the call	30 April 2020
Deadline for submitting applications	21 May 2020
Information to applicants on the results of the award procedure	28 May 2020
Signature of the grant agreements	04 June 2020
Implementation period	31 May – 30 September

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