



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Subject of the grant: Supporting implementation of legal clinics on human rights violations

Reference of the grant: **GRANT/HF7/BH2935**

Project	Supporting implementation of legal clinics on human rights violations
Awarding entity	COUNCIL OF EUROPE HF7 action “Strengthening accountability of the judicial system and enhancing protection of victims' rights in Montenegro”
Funding	European Union and Council of Europe
Duration	Projects shall be implemented by 31 July 2025. Interim reporting requirements shall be completed by 11. September 2024. Reporting requirements shall be completed by 30 September 2025.
Estimated starting date	11 September 2023
Issuance date	12 July 2023
Deadline for applications	09 August 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:
 - a **CV of the organisation** and the team members involved with list of similar projects (if relevant);
 - a detailed **project proposal** that outlines the methodology, expected outcomes, timeline, and budget;
 - a **note outlining the steps they will take to enhance the sustainability** of the legal clinic.
- Send these documents in electronic form (Word .and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: dgi-coordination@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: **GRANT/HF7/BH2935**.
- Applications must be received **before 16 April 2022 (at 23:59 PM UTC+1)**.

I. INTRODUCTION

This call for proposals is launched in the framework of the Council of Europe action “Strengthening Accountability of the Judicial System and Enhancing Protection of Victims' Rights in Montenegro”. It aims to strengthen the accountability of the judicial system and enhance the protection of victims' rights in Montenegro by **supporting the implementation of legal clinics in collaboration with three Montenegrin universities**. The legal clinics will provide free legal advice and training on issues related to human rights violations, with a focus on ensuring the sustainability and autonomy of the clinics beyond the grant period. The period of grant implementation is from September 11, 2023, to July 31, 2025.

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 second component of the "Strengthening Accountability of the Judicial System and Enhancing Protection of Victims' Rights in Montenegro" action builds on the success of the "Improved Procedural Safeguards in Judicial Proceedings in Montenegro" initiative. As part of this previous effort, the first legal clinic was established with the support of three Montenegrin law faculties (University of Montenegro, University Donja Gorica, Mediterranean University) and the Law Students' Association Montenegro ELSA.

Since February 2022, Montenegrin citizens have been able to receive free legal advice on www.pravnaklinika.me on any issues related to human rights, with a particular focus on domestic violence and the protection of women and children. The legal clinic has already provided 23 legal opinions to citizens in need. Additionally, over 100 students have received theoretical training and practical experience in providing free legal assistance, under the supervision of experienced mentors who are legal practitioners, judges, lawyers, and civil society activists.

The "Strengthening Accountability of the Judicial System and Enhancing Protection of Victims' Rights in Montenegro" action aims to build on this successful initiative and find a sustainable way to continue the legal clinics in the future. To achieve this goal, the action seeks to identify a partner who can help implement legal clinics for three years and ensure their long-term viability beyond that period¹.

III. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The indicative available budget under this call for proposals is 40 000€ (forty thousand Euros). The Council of Europe intends to award 1 grant of a maximum amount of 40 000€ (forty thousand Euros).

Subject to 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 implement legal clinics related to human rights violations, which were established in cooperation with three Montenegrin universities.

2. Means of action

¹ The grantee shall present the plan for sustainability of the clinic and elaborate the modalities for its long-term functioning, to ensure that the legal clinics continue to operate effectively after the grant support ends.

The grantee will be expected to ensure implementation of the legal clinic established in 2018. Its activities should include but will not be limited to:

1. Training of law students on issues related to human rights.
2. Organising Moot courts and other legal competitions.
3. Preparing students to reflect and theorise.
4. Providing free legal advice and drafting legal opinions.
5. Training students on how to interact with and help the applicants.
6. Finding suitable tutors among experienced legal professionals.
7. Being in contact with three Montenegrin universities to make sure that the legal clinical education is integrated in university curricula.
8. Ensuring that the legal clinic can ultimately function without external support by preparing the plan for sustainability of the clinic and elaborate the modalities for its long-term functioning, to ensure that the legal clinics continue to operate effectively after the grant support ends.

The ultimate goal of the grant is to **ensure the sustainability and continuity of the legal clinic beyond the end of the grant period**². As such, the grantee should propose a concept that focuses on providing support to translate into the sustainable and autonomous functioning of the legal clinic after the grant period ends. Overall, the objective of the grant is to strengthen the accountability of the judicial system and enhance the protection of victims' rights in Montenegro by supporting the successful operation of the legal clinic.

Where a Grantee belongs to the category of local³ civil servant or other public administration staff under the third phase of the Horizontal Facility, he or she must be in the position to confirm that:

- he/she has not been involved in the Action design or that the institution for which he/she works will not be a beneficiary thereof;
- he/she is not in a situation of a conflict of interests or a potential conflict of interest in relation to this procedure and understands 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;
- he/she can obtain authorisation from his/her employer to carry out this secondary activity
- the performance of his/her obligations under the potentially awarded Grant Agreement goes beyond the scope of his/her regular official duties;
- confirmation from his/her employer that national/local legislation does not prohibit civil servants or other public administration staff from undertaking secondary activities will be obtained;
- the Grantee will implement the Action as a secondary activity, on a temporary and short-term basis outside his/her regular working hours and/or has been granted leave of absence for this purpose by his/her employer.

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

² *Idem.*

³ For the purpose of this document, the term « local » designates consultants from one of the Horizontal Facility Beneficiaries region and Türkiye.

- 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 11. September 2023 (see indicative timetable under VIII. below) and shall not extend beyond 31 July 2025.

Interim reporting requirements shall be completed by 11 September 2024. **at the latest.**

Reporting requirements shall be completed on 30 September **2025. 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:

- University of Montenegro,
- University Donja Gorica,
- Mediterranean University,
- Judicial Training Centre,
- Bar Association,
- Civil society organisations.

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 40 000€ (forty 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.

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

- Projects/actions targeting human rights issues.
- Projects/actions involving students, and/or lawyers, and/or legal professionals.

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:

- 50 % will be paid to the Grantee or the Lead Grantee in case of a consortium when the Grant Agreement between the Parties is signed;
- 30% representing a second instalment will be paid to the Grantee or the Lead Grantee in case of a consortium after the submission and acceptance by the Council of Europe of the interim financial report;
- 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:
 - an interim report regarding the progress made and activities carried out for the reporting period as well as the activities planned for the next period;
 - a full final 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 following the completion of the project.
- **financial reporting:**
 - an annual interim reports; and
 - one final financial report following the completion of the project.

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:
 - a CV of the organisation and the team members involved with list of similar projects;
 - a detailed project proposal that outlines the methodology, expected outcomes, timeline;
 - a note outlining the steps they will take to enhance the sustainability of the legal clinic.

The project proposal and concept note should be a maximum of 2 pages each, single-spaced, and written in English.

Applications that are incomplete will not be considered.

2. Questions

General information can be found on the website of the Council of Europe: [Council of Europe Human Rights National Implementation website - Human Rights National Implementation \(coe.int\)](https://www.coe.int/t/e/human_rights/national_implementation/).

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: dgi-coordination@coe.int, with the following reference in subject: **GRANT/HF7/BH2935/QUESTIONS**.

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: dgi-coordination@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: **GRANT/HF7/BH2935**.

Applications must be received **before 9 August 2023 (at 23:59 <GMT+1>)**. Applications received after the above-mentioned date will not be considered.

4. Change, alteration and modification of the application file

Any change in the format, or any alteration or modification of the original application file, will cause the immediate rejection of the application concerned.

VI. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

The projects presented will be assessed by an Evaluation Committee composed of 3 Council of Europe staff 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;
1. 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 Montenegro;
- be entitled to carry out activities in Montenegro described in its project proposal;
- have been active for at least 5 years in the field of human rights;
- 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 quality of the submitted project proposal (40%);
- the relevance and quality of the note outlining the steps they will take to enhance the sustainability of the legal clinic (40%);
- 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 (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	12 July
Deadline for submitting applications	09 August 2023
Information to applicants on the results of the award procedure	30 August 2023
Signature of the grant agreements	05. September 2023
Implementation period	11 September 2023 – 31 July 2025
Interim reporting deadline	11 September 2024
Final reporting deadline	30 September 2025

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