



**NGO Co-Financing Fund (NCF)** is intended to Support the co-financing obligations of Voluntary Organisations (VOs) benefitting from EU institutions funding

# Guidelines for Applicants

## 2022

A SCHEME MANAGED BY



## NGO Co-Financing Fund Guidelines for Applicants 2022

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## **PART A**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHEME**

#### **1. Introduction**

The NGO Co-Financing Fund (NCF) aims to support the co-financing obligations of Voluntary Organisations (VOs) benefitting from funding from EU institutions, EEA Grants, Norway Grants, Bilateral Agreements (including the Swiss Maltese Cooperation Programme), and the Council of Europe. The purpose of this fund is to ensure that VOs successful in the attainment of funding and are not burdened with the excessive financial implications brought about throughout the awarded project.

The NGO Co-Financing Fund will enable funding resources to be made more easily available to VOs, which are often well placed to respond to a specific project, development issues, or project realisation, but not necessarily well equipped to deal with the demands of the required financial element<sup>1</sup>, stipulated under the respective Programme, that the beneficiary is applying for.

The NGO Co-Financing Fund is intended to create and provide an additional funding source and shall not replace financial support from other sources. The NCF should complement and not replace existing activities supported by EU Funding and other financial sources.

#### **2. What is the budget?**

The total amount of funds allocated to the NGO Co-Financing Fund for 2022 is €150,000.

The call for applications for NGO Co-Financing Fund is open on a need basis, and funds are allocated to applicants, subject to evaluation by the NCF Fund Officer and the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector (MCVS) approval on a first-come, first-serve basis until funds are exhausted.

Any applications submitted after the funds are exhausted will not be taken into consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> Under the Co-Financing Funds for NGOs Application, the financial element is referred to as the NGO Financial Share

## PART B

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHEME

#### 3. What are the criteria used to assess the Scheme?

a. Eligibility Criteria	
<b>Eligible applicants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicants must be non-profit and non-governmental organisations that are enrolled with the Commissioner for the Voluntary Sector.</li> <li>• Voluntary organisations must be in compliance with the Commissioner for the Voluntary Sector by the deadline of the submission of e-applications.</li> <li>• Voluntary organisations must have successfully obtained funding for a project from the EU institutions, EEA Grants, Norway Grants, bilateral agreements (including the Swiss Maltese Cooperation Programme) and the Council of Europe.</li> <li>• Registered Voluntary organisations, which have been awarded or are partners to these projects, for which the VO has to cover its own financial contribution from the projects total eligible value.</li> </ul>
<b>Number of e-applications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eligible applicants are to submit one application per project under the NCF Scheme.</li> <li>• The maximum amount per VO per year is capped at €15,000. Once the maximum amount is reached, other applications will automatically be disregarded.</li> </ul>
<b>Where to apply?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E-applications must be submitted to the Malta Council of the Voluntary Sector's online VO Funding portal accessed via: <a href="https://vofunding.org.mt/funds/9">https://vofunding.org.mt/funds/9</a></li> </ul>

<p><b>When to apply?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The e-application shall open on: <b><i>10<sup>th</sup> January 2022</i></b></li> <li>Applications shall close once funds have been allocated.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Eligibility criteria</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be eligible for funding under this scheme, a project needs to be approved by an EU Institution.</li> </ul> <p>In order to apply a VO should have the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Project Approval Letter issued from the Competent Authority</li> <li>A draft or an endorsed Grant Agreement</li> </ul>
<p><b>b. Exclusion criteria</b></p>	
<p><b>Exclusion criteria</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should the project be completed and the period between the date of submission of the NCF Application and the date of the Closure Report is more than one year and a half (18months)</li> <li>VOs not compliant with the Commissioner for VOs</li> <li>Projects which are 100% funded through the above-mentioned institution.</li> <li>Projects not yet approved for funding.</li> </ul>

## **PART C**

### **INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS**

#### **4. What is the VO required to upload?**

The following documents are needed for a project proposal submission under the NCF Scheme:

- Copy of the Approval Letter from the competent Authority indicating the amount awarded to the applying VO.
- Copy of Application Form submitted under EU funding programme.
- Copy of the signed Grant Agreement or copy of draft agreement.
- Declaration letter confirming that there is no double funding being claimed.
- VO Bank account details: account name, account number, branch location and full IBAN number.
- If the project has been concluded the applicant is also required to upload a copy of the endorsed Closure Report not later than 18 months from the closing date of the project.

#### **4.1 How to fill in the Financial Section of the Application:**

- The 'Project Value' under the NGO Co-Financing Funds for the VO's application is equal to the EU Contribution PLUS the VO Financial Share PLUS the Partners' Financial Contribution.
- The 'VO Financial Share' under the NGO Co-Financing Funds for VO's Application is the estimated amount that is expected to be incurred by the VO, i.e., the VO financial contribution and eligible share of the Applicant, in accordance with the NGO co-financing rate.

**Example:**

Total Project Value	€	25,000.00
EU Contribution	€	20,000.00
	Share	
NGO Financial	€	5,000.00
	Share	
Co-Financing Rate		20%
	(NGO Share)	
Amount requested to the NGO Co- Financing Fund	€	5,000.00
	Board	

**Note:**

It is important that the applicant uploads all documentation under the online system, which substantiates the figures provided under the application.

**4.2 Evaluation Process:**

The call for applications for the NCF Scheme is subject to the approval of the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector. This scheme allocates funds according to the needs of the sector and until funds are exhausted.

Once the online application has been properly filled in, the electronic form will be reviewed and evaluated to:

- validate the information provided under the application
- verify whether the applicant is compliant with a set of administrative or eligibility criteria
- evaluate and where applicable rank applicants for grant
- recommend the final estimated maximum grant amount to the MCVS, and
- issue the grant agreement/ approval letter.

Nevertheless, at any stage of the application process, the application may be **rejected**.

In the case where information or clarifications are required, the applicants will be notified in writing.

### **4.3 Check the financial conditions**

#### **a. Financial Contribution**

The Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector shall support the public funds percentage (according to the EU project submitted and EU contribution) which will be financed by the VOs from their own sources, and award the actual VO financing share, however subject to **Part B 3a “Number of e-applications”** of these guidelines.

#### **b. Double Financing**

To avoid the risk of double-funding, the applicant must indicate in the relevant section of the e-application form, the sources and the amounts of any other funding received or applied for in the same financial year.

#### **c. Partners**

The partners' financial contribution is the estimated amount, which is expected to be incurred by the partners, i.e., the partners' contribution to the project. There are cases whereby an applicant has partners who do not contribute financially to the project but provide administrative assistance and expertise. Nonetheless, this is specified under the grant agreement.

## **5. What happens if your e-application is approved?**

### **5.1 Grant agreement**

In the event of a definitive approval of the application form submitted, a grant agreement is drawn up between the MCVS and the beneficiary. The agreement is drawn up in Euros (€) with the details of the conditions and funding amount. The grant decision is a unilateral act awarding a subsidy to a beneficiary.

This agreement must be signed and returned to the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector. The MCVS will be the last party to sign.

If during the application stage the project is finalised, a commitment letter is issued for a one-time payment.

## **5.2 Grant amount**

Acceptance of an e-application does not necessarily mean that the funds being awarded equal the same requested amount by the applicant. This funding may be reduced depending on the final EU contribution.

It should be noted that the forecasted grant amount by the agreement is to be considered as the maximum allocated funds which cannot be increased in any circumstance. Furthermore, the amount allocated may not exceed the maximum NCF grant amount of €15,000 per VO per year.

## **5.3 Payment procedures**

The projects supported under the NCF Scheme will be subject to a payment procedure consisting of one pre-financing payment and a final payment/recovery of the balance due, as described below:

### **a) Pre-financing payment**

A pre-financing payment of 50% of the estimated maximum grant amount will be transferred to the beneficiary within 60 days of the date when the last of the two parties sign the agreement. Pre-financing is intended to provide the beneficiary with afloat.

### **b) Payment or recovery of the balance**

1. The amount of the final payment to be made to the beneficiary will be established upon the submission of the endorsed Closure Report and is subject to MCVS verification. Closure report must be submitted not later than one (1) year from the closing date of the project.
2. If the eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiary during the project are lower than the pre-financing payment, the beneficiary will be required to refund the excess amount already transferred under the pre-financing payments.
3. If the closure report of the amount contributed by the EU is different from the application amount, the total amount of the co-financing grant will be reviewed and is subject to the EU final contribution amount on the closure report.

4. The Board may also award grants to projects that have already been completed. In such cases, following the necessary checks, the initial payment will be on a one-time, full, and final payment.

**c) Calculation of the total actual grant amount and the final balance, upon project closure**

Upon finalisation of the project, the NCF official shall make all necessary checks with the VO to present the closure report which stipulates the actual EU contribution. The NCF official shall confirm the final total actual grant amount due to the VO calculated in accordance with the following method:

<b>Step 1:</b>	<b>Calculate the reduction in the original EU Contribution</b> The Actual EU Contribution divided by the Estimated EU Contribution times 100% equals Y%
<b>Step 2:</b>	<b>Apply a proportionate reduction to the amount awarded by the NCF Selection Board, as per Co-Financing Fund Grant Agreement</b> Y% multiplied by the estimated maximum grant amount agreed under the Co-Financing Fund Grant Agreement between MCVS and the VO, equals EUR Z.
<b>Step 3:</b>	<b>Deduct the first interim payment</b> EUR Z is deducted by the pre-financing payment, equals the final balance.

**d) Other Considerations:**

1. If the total eligible project cost at the closure of the project is more than the amount stipulated under the approval letter for funding or the grant agreement with the managing authority, the VO will be awarded the total amount according to the NCF grant agreement.
2. Other considerations as per the Funding letter approved or the Grant agreement with the managing authority should the total eligible project cost at the closure of the project be lower than the stipulated amount:
  - i. If the percentage is still above the maximum amount after the calculations in section 5C, the VO will be awarded the amount agreed in the NCF grant agreement of the maximum financial assistance of €15,000.

- ii. If the percentage is below the maximum amount after the calculations in section 5C, the VO will be awarded a percentage of the total amount specified in the NCF grant agreement according to the final EU contribution.
3. If following the presentation of the closure report, the actual VO financial share which occurred during the project is lower than the initial payment paid by the MCVS, the beneficiary will be required to refund to the MCVS any excess amounts transferred under the initial payment.
4. Following the aforementioned verifications, the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector shall issue balance payments or recovery orders on a case-by-case basis.
5. In situations where the initial payment is less than the maximum amount agreed as per grant agreement, or a recovery of funds is required, the beneficiary shall have 5 days during which an appeal to the decision of MCVS can be filed. MCVS shall receive and examine any appeals lodged in writing. The decision of the MCVS shall be final.
6. The beneficiary will be required to refund back the whole sum received, with reservation for any further actions that MCVS may deem appropriate in case of:
  - i. misappropriation of funds received
  - ii. falsification of the documentation
  - iii. falsifications of declarations

In certain cases, the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector shall reserve the right to institute legal proceedings against the VO.

7. In the case where the co-funded project is for any reason withdrawn or not fully implemented, MCVS shall release the allocated funds and utilise them for other projects. MCVS reserves the right to issue a recovery order for the whole or part of the allocated funds, including funds that have not been utilised or ineligible expenses. In the case that the beneficiary fails to comply with the provisions of this clause, the VO may be precluded from applying for funds issued by the MCVS in the future.

## **6. Publicity**

Besides the legal obligations, VOs are requested to provide proper publicity to inform the public of the European Union's financial support. In addition, they are obliged to follow the Marketing Guidelines issued by MCVS.

This must be done according to the following instructions:

1. Use of the MCVS and the NCF logos.



**Beneficiaries are to use the official logos of the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector (MCVS) and of the NGO Co-Financing (NCF) as per Marketing Guidelines published by MCVS.**

*If these provisions are not fully complied with, the beneficiary's grant may be revoked.*

## 5.2 Data protection

All personal data contained in the e-application forms and grant agreements shall be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act as per local legislation.

This data will be processed solely according to the guidelines of the implementation and evaluation of the NCF Scheme, without prejudice of the possibility that such data may be transferred to the bodies responsible for inspection and audit purposes appointed by the responsible Ministry, through which the funds for the NCF Scheme are made available.

## CONTACT DETAILS

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