



CIVIL SOCIETY FUND

Grants for Civil Society Organisations

Managed by the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector

Guidelines for Applicants
July 2022

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1. Background

Civil Society Organisations (hereinafter 'CSOs'¹) are considered to be the backbone of any democratic society. CSOs often fail to adopt an active role at European Union (EU) level primarily because of financial restraints. As a result, the government is committed to provide financial incentives to support CSOs engagement in activities with other organisations not only at a local level but also at a European level with the aim to encourage the exchange of best practices, knowledge and information among organisations at a local and at an international level.

Potential applicants are encouraged to read the following Guidelines thoroughly to avoid submitting ineligible e-applications.

2. Purpose of the Civil Society Fund

This fund is intended to provide successful applicants with financial assistance for the purpose of facilitating their affiliation with and their participation in European groupings, associations, federations, confederation networks, and training related to EU Policy/Programmes.

The objectives of the Civil Society Fund (CSF) are the following:

1. To assist CSOs to keep abreast with the developments occurring at EU level;
2. To enable CSOs to better educate their members on EU matters related to their respective fields of competence; and
3. To enable CSOs to participate effectively in the decision-making process at European level.

¹ According to the European Commission, Civil Society Organisations (CSO's) encompasses non-governmental organisations (voluntary organisations), grassroots organisations, cooperatives, trade unions, professional associations, universities, media and independent foundations.

3. Eligible Actions

Applicants are to submit a proposal that corresponds with the following eligible actions:

Action 1: The affiliation of CSOs with European umbrella organisations, grouping, federations, confederations or networks.

and/or

Action 2: Attendance at conferences, seminars and meetings abroad in relation to affiliations in European umbrella organisations, groupings, federations, confederations or networks and participation in Training Abroad related to EU Policy or Programmes.

Allocation of these funds shall be at the discretion of the Civil Society Fund (CSF) Evaluation Committee who are responsible for allocating funds. The Committee will award the funds on the basis of the merits of the proposal submitted by the CSO according to the eligibility and selection criteria established in these Guidelines.

4. Eligible Criteria

Eligible applicants are Civil Society Organisations that include one of the following:

- Voluntary, self-governing organisations not subject to direction by public authorities, independent of political control, enrolled and compliant with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations in terms of the Voluntary Organisations Act.
- Social Partners or any other Civil Society Organisation having official recognition under some specific law or regulation or administrative act².
- CSOs that are established for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest or in the interest of their mission statement and not having an industrial or commercial character.

² Constituted Bodies benefiting from funds under other budget lines of the CSF or under any fund that may come into existence whereby such constituted bodies would be provided with financial assistance for EU-related activities are not eligible for co-financing under this call.

5. Eligible Costs

1. Affiliation Fees, Conference registration fees, Flights (Annex I) are considered as eligible costs.
2. Once the grant is approved, a consequent subsistence fee will be reimbursed through a daily rate (Annex II).
3. VAT is an eligible cost when it is borne by the Beneficiary. This must be listed separately on an invoice.

6. Exclusion Criteria

Potential applicants may not participate in this call for proposals or be awarded funds if:

- They are bankrupt or being wound up, or are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations; and / or
- They have been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgement which is *res judicata* (i.e. against which no appeal is possible); and / or
- They are guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the European Commission can justify; and / or
- They have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the Maltese Law; and / or
- They have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to Malta's or to the Unions' financial interests; and / or

- They have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations in connection with a procurement or other grant award procedure financed by the Union budget; and / or
- The CSOs are profit-making organisations or political parties or organisations affiliated to such profit-making organisations or political parties; and / or
- They are not constituted bodies and civil society organisations recognised by law or enrolled under the Voluntary Organisations Act; and / or
- The entities are presenting an e-application for funding not related to the purpose set out under the CSF eligibility criteria; and / or
- The entities are constituted bodies benefiting under Part 1 of the CSF; and / or
- They are already receiving public funding from any other government ministry, department or entity or other institution including European Union funds for the activities for which funding is being claimed under the CSF.

7. Eligibility Period

This call shall cover activities carried out during the **1st of July 2021 until the 30th of June 2022**. Only activities that have taken place during this time period are eligible.

8. Budget Available

Financial contribution from the CSF will not exceed **80%** of the total eligible costs borne by the respective CSO and will not exceed the amount of **€6,000.00**, whichever is the lowest, for any one organisation. (*E.g. Total Project Cost: €7,500, Reimbursement: €6,000, co-financing: €1,500*).

The amount awarded is subject to the availability of funds. The CSF Evaluation Committee may decide to allocate less than 80% to each e-application to support a larger amount of eligible applicants.

9. Documentation

1. A complete e-application form.

The following documentation is to be submitted together with the e-application form in pdf format where applicable.

2. In the case of Action 1: proof of payment of the affiliation fee needs to be presented.
3. In the case of Action 2: conference invite, conference programme and/or agenda, conference registration receipt, proof of participation and other relevant documentation should be submitted. With regards to flights original invoices³/fiscal receipts, boarding passes/e-ticket and all relevant proof of payment.

Only proposals which are supported by the said documentation will be considered for reimbursement under this Call.

Incomplete e-application forms shall be automatically rejected.

Applicants who do not provide ALL the relevant documentation (as per guidelines and as per e-application) shall have their final amount calculated as per documents submitted.

10. Evaluation Process

Projects received will be evaluated by the CSF Evaluation Committee in accordance with the eligibility and selection criteria. All e-applications will be assessed according to the following criteria:

(i) Eligibility of the applicants

Verification that the applicant meets the requirements as per section 4 - 'Eligible Criteria' of the Guidelines.

³ As per public procurement procedures.

(ii) Verification that the content of the e-application is complete

The applicant must present a complete e-application form, filled in with all relevant details. Applicants need to ensure that all sections of the e-application form are completed. E-applications received after the stipulated deadline will not be considered.

(iii) Presentation of all required documentation

Supporting documentation is to be submitted together with the e-application in pdf format where requested. Original documentation (where applicable) is to be sent via post to the following postal address: Volunteers Centre, 181, Melita Street, Valletta, VLT 1129.

Those applicants that are found not to have presented all the obligatory documentation as requested in section 9 – ‘Documentation’ will be informed in writing to submit the missing documentation within 5 working days of the written communication. Failure to provide these documents after the stipulated period will render that part of the request as ineligible.

11. Means of redress

If at any stage of the administrative treatment of grant e-applications, the CSOs concerned consider that they have been affected by an instance of maladministration, they may irrespective of any other means of redress, make a complaint to the Ombudsman in accordance with Chapter 385 of the Laws of Malta.

12. Approval of Grant

The CSF is a national fund. When the project is selected, the beneficiary will be bound by the principles of good governance, sound financial management and the relevant national regulations pertaining to public funds.

Upon approval of the proposal, the grant allocated will be paid out in full, provided that proof of expenditure of the total amount is submitted and that the grant shall not exceed 80% of the eligible expenses incurred by the CSO up to a maximum of €6,000.00.

13. Submission of Project Proposals

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Where to apply? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Online e-applications must be submitted to the Malta Council of the Voluntary Sector and can be found on the MCVS home page www.vofunding.org.mt |
| When to apply? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The e-application may be submitted as of: Wednesday 27th July 2022• The deadline to submit e-applications is: Wednesday 7th September 2022 till noon |
| How to apply? | <p><u>Step One: Access Website</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Access the link: www.vofunding.org.mt <p><u>Step Two: Register the Voluntary Organisation/Civil Society Organisation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Click on the register button (top right)✓ Fill in details (important to include the official email address of your organisation e.g. info@mcvs.com)✓ Click on submit✓ A message stating <i>“Thank you for registering. Your registration will be validated within one (1) working day. Following validation, you may proceed with the online e-application”</i> <p><u>Step Three: Validation of Registration</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ After registering kindly wait for validation issued by the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector since we need to confirm that the details inputted are congruent to our database.✓ Once your registration is approved the email address that you would have submitted will be used for all sort of correspondence related to the various funding schemes.✓ The validation will be granted by a maximum of one WORKING day after registering. <p><u>Step Four: E-application form</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Access the e-application form of the specific funding scheme. |

For further guidance, kindly contact our offices on 22481122 or send an email to Ms Rebecca Pisani on rebecca.a.pisani@gov.mt.

ANNEX I – Calculation of Flights⁴

| Type of Flight | Mean Amount |
|----------------|-------------|
| Region 1 | € 220.00 |
| Region 2 | € 230.00 |
| Region 3 | € 230.00 |
| Region 4 | € 250.00 |
| Region 5 | € 300.00 |
| Region 6 | € 400.00 |

| Region | Major Airports |
|----------|--|
| Region 1 | Catania, Rome, Tripoli, Athens, Bologna |
| Region 2 | Reggio, Sofia, Verona, Marseille, Milan, Budapest, Lyons, Zurich, Istanbul, Geneva, Vienna, Munich |
| Region 3 | Stuttgart, Prague, Frankfurt, Madrid |
| Region 4 | Paris, Dusseldorf, Brussels, Berlin, Amsterdam, Hamburg, London Heathrow, London Gatwick |
| Region 5 | Copenhagen, Birmingham, Manchester, Dublin |
| Region 6 | Inter-connecting Flights |

⁴ In the case that the country where the meeting was held is not included in the above table kindly contact our offices to provide further assistance in calculations needed.

ANNEX II – Per Diem Allowances

The applicable daily rates of subsistence allowances (per diem allowances) are calculated to cover complete periods of 24 hours and are fixed for countries to which public officers may be sent for duty visits. The per diem allowance covers accommodation costs and subsistence allowance in respect of breakfast and two main meals, local travel, telecommunications and all other incidental and sundry expenses.

The applicable per diem allowances are set as follows (equivalent to Class B in the Public Service as per MF Circular 201/92/B dated 18th October 2017):

| Per Diem Allowance for Overseas Duty Travel - Rates | |
|--|----------|
| COUNTRY | € |
| ALBANIA | 162 |
| AUSTRIA | 203 |
| BELGIUM | 218 |
| BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA | 143 |
| BULGARIA | 204 |
| CROATIA | 162 |
| CYPRUS | 214 |
| CZECH REPUBLIC | 207 |
| DENMARK | 243 |
| ESTONIA | 163 |
| FINLAND | 220 |
| FRANCE | 221 |
| GEORGIA | 178 |
| GERMANY | 187 |
| GREECE | 200 |
| HUNGARY | 200 |
| ICELAND | 314 |
| IRELAND | 229 |
| ISRAEL | 325 |
| ITALY | 207 |
| LATVIA | 190 |
| LITHUANIA | 165 |
| LUXEMBOURG | 213 |
| MONACO | 269 |
| MONTENEGRO | 121 |
| NETHERLANDS | 237 |
| NORWAY | 248 |
| POLAND | 195 |
| PORTUGAL | 184 |
| ROMANIA | 200 |
| RUSSIAN FEDERATION | 226 |
| SERBIA | 142 |
| SLOVAKIA | 185 |
| SLOVENIA | 162 |
| SPAIN | 191 |
| SWEDEN | 231 |
| SWITZERLAND | 313 |
| TURKEY | 200 |
| UKRAINE | 261 |
| UNITED KINGDOM | 248 |