



Small Initiatives Support Scheme

Small Initiatives Support Scheme (SIS) is designed to assist applicants looking for funding on small projects that can make a real difference to their local communities.

Guidelines for Applicants

2024 PROJECTS

May 2023 CALL

A SCHEME MANAGED BY



Supported by



GOVERNMENT OF MALTA
MINISTRY FOR INCLUSION,
VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS
AND CONSUMER RIGHTS

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PART A

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHEME

1. Introduction

The **Small Initiatives Support Scheme**, hereinafter referred to as ‘SIS’, is an initiative managed by the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector (MCVS), established under Article 35 of the Voluntary Organisations Act, (Chapter 492 of the Laws of Malta), supported by the Ministry for Inclusion, Voluntary Organisations and Consumer Rights (MIVC).

This call for proposals is being issued by the MCVS under the SIS Scheme. The guidelines for the SIS Scheme (2024) are also published on the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector website (www.maltacvs.org). The guidelines constitute an integral part of the call for proposals.

The **SIS Scheme** is designed to assist applicants looking for funding for small projects that can make a real difference to their local communities.

1.1 Eligible Actions

Enrolled Voluntary Organisations can submit up to one of the following Actions and specific budgets:

- **Action 1: Supports *Project Based Initiatives***
- **Action 2: Supports *Events and Activities***

An enrolled Voluntary Organisation may only submit one application in only one of the above listed actions per deadline. The first application to be submitted is the one that will be considered for evaluation. Should the VO wish to opt for the other submitted application, they are to inform MCVS before the closure of the Call for Applications.

1.2 Objectives

The general objectives establishing **Action 1** of the SIS Scheme are the following:

- a. To stimulate cooperation and networking between voluntary organisations.

- b. Providing a consultative forum that can effectively address issues related to the Voluntary Sector.
- c. To support the work of voluntary organisations as an integral part of civil society.
- d. Provide a platform from which to develop cooperation between voluntary organisations and the Government.
- e. To promote and encourage a culture of volunteering and participation in volunteer activities among people, especially children and youths, as an aspect of personal and social development.
- f. To foster cooperation in the volunteer sector with local and international bodies, entities or other persons for the encouragement and promotion of the development of volunteering programmes, initiatives, and activities.
- g. To encourage collaboration of non-governmental bodies with private entities or persons and local councils to contribute towards the promotion of volunteering in Malta in furtherance of the principle of subsidiarity.

The general objectives establishing **Action 2** of the SIS Scheme are the following:

- a. To stimulate cooperation and networking between voluntary organisations.
- b. To support the work of voluntary organisations as an integral part of civil society.
- c. To enhance the capacity building of voluntary organisations.
- d. Provide a platform from which to develop cooperation between voluntary organisations and the Government.
- e. To promote and encourage a culture of volunteering and participation in volunteer activities among people, especially children and youths, as an aspect of personal and social development.
- f. To foster cooperation in the volunteer sector with local and international bodies, entities or other persons for the encouragement and promotion of the development of volunteering programmes, initiatives, and activities.
- g. To encourage, in furtherance of the principle of subsidiary, non-governmental bodies and private entities or persons and local councils to contribute to the promotion of volunteering in Malta.

1.3 Priorities

In addition to the above-mentioned objectives, the below priorities should be outlined when applying for the SIS Scheme.

- **Volunteering**

This priority is intended to encourage projects aimed at raising awareness of the value and importance of volunteering as a form of active engagement and as a tool to develop or improve competences for personal, social and professional development.

- **Poverty and Social Inclusion**

This priority is intended to encourage projects addressing the issues of poverty and marginalisation and hate speech by focusing on actions such as enhancing awareness and commitment amongst the Maltese society to make it more inclusive. In this context, special emphasis shall be placed on the inclusion of migrants, disabled young people, and other marginalised minorities in fulfilling their potential.

- **Education**

This priority is intended to encourage projects addressing the issues related to education with special focus on the support of marginalised and more challenged groups in the Maltese society.

- **Arts, Culture and Sports**

This priority is intended to encourage projects to address enhancements of awareness in artistic and cultural heritage amongst the Maltese society. The projects should encourage also local initiatives aimed in raising people's awareness of the sport sector, highlighting its contribution to healthy lifestyle and social development through an inclusive approach to fulfil the potential of the Maltese citizens.

- **Research**

This priority is intended to encourage projects addressing research to compliment other priorities addressed in this call. Research can be carried out in regard to all aspects of the organisation such as capacity building, services, training, and volunteering. The sector is constantly seeking to identify

innovative approaches through an evidence-based approach which will induce organisations to become more effective and relevant towards societal needs.

2. What is the budget?

The budget allocated for the SIS Scheme 2024 will be **€180,000**.

2.1 Funding Actions and Budgets

The budget shall be divided between the two Actions as follows:

Action 1 - Project Based Initiatives - €120,000

Action 2 - Events and Activities - €60,000

An enrolled Voluntary Organisation may only submit one application in only one of the above listed actions per deadline.

In order for a project to be considered for financial support, a minimum benchmark of 65% marks is to be achieved. The SIS Project Selection Committee may decide to increase the projects assigned in the case of residual funds and reserves the right not to allocate all the funds available. The decision of the SIS Project Selection Committee is final and indisputable.

3. What is the structure of the Scheme?

3.1 Action Procedures

Action 1 – Project Based Initiatives: The projects should address the aims of the Voluntary Organisation and is in line with the priorities of the Scheme. The organisation must also demonstrate that through this project a sustainable and innovative programme will be created to address the needs of both the volunteers and the organisation. The projects shall not be a one-off event but a project-based initiative that the organisation may sustain on its own initiative for at least two more years, having an identified date of commencement and date of termination.

Action 2 – Events & Activities: The proposal should have a main event or activity with a clearly identified date of commencement and date of termination with the focus to invest allocated funds in initiatives which celebrate the work of voluntary organisations and volunteers helping in voluntary organisations. The request shall be practical and backed up by costings and objectives. The proposal may be a one off-event, or a series of events/activities arising from exceptional circumstances that are not considered annual events.

3.2 Eligible Projects

To achieve its objectives, the SIS Scheme foresees projects which fall under the established priorities.

3.3 Criteria

To apply under the SIS Scheme:

- The Project is to be initiated **not earlier than the 1st of February of 2024**.
- The Project must be **completed in 12 consecutive months**.
- The Project must contain all information required at the point of e-application (including annexes).
- The proposal must **not be a continuation, a repetition, or an extension** of an existing project or a past project.
- **Action 1 projects cannot be a one-off standalone event/activity such as concerts, exhibitions, and/or other similar events.**

3.4 Grant Request

The amount requested by a beneficiary shall:

- **Action 1: Not be less than €1,000 and not more than €5,000.**
- **Action 2: Not be less than €1,000 and not more than €4,000.**

4. Who implements the Scheme?

The MCVS is ultimately responsible for the running of the SIS Scheme. It manages the budget and sets priorities, targets, and criteria for the SIS Scheme on an ongoing basis. Furthermore, it guides and monitors the general implementation, follow-up, and evaluation of the SIS Scheme. The MCVS bears overall responsibility for the supervision and monitoring of the ongoing projects.

The MCVS's tasks are to:

- Provide appropriate information on the SIS Scheme.
- Administer a transparent and equitable selection process for project e-applications to be funded through the SIS Scheme.
- Provide effective and efficient administrative processes in the evaluation process and in the implementation of the SIS Scheme.

- Evaluate and monitor the implementation of the SIS Scheme.
- Provide support to project applicants and beneficiaries throughout the project life cycle.
- Improve the visibility of the SIS Scheme.
- Promote the dissemination and exploit the results of the SIS Scheme at a national level.

5. Who can participate in the Scheme?

5.1 Eligible applicants

Voluntary Organisations submitting e-applications must:

- Be enrolled with the Commissioner for the Voluntary Sector.
- Be compliant with the Commissioner for the Voluntary Sector by the deadline of the submission of e-applications.
- Fall in the first two financial brackets according to the VO Law Amendments of 2018 (annual turnover under €250,000).
- Have no pending MCVS projects from previous years.

PART B

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHEME

6. What are the criteria used to assess the Scheme?

6.1 Eligibility Criteria	
Eligible applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicants must be non-profit and non-governmental organisations which are enrolled with the Commissioner for the Voluntary Sector. • Voluntary organisations in compliance with the Commissioner for the Voluntary Sector by the deadline of the submission of e-applications. • Voluntary Organisations who fall in the first two financial brackets according to the New VO Law Amendments of 2018 (annual turnover under €250,000). • Have no pending MCVS projects from previous years.
Number of e-applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only one e-application per Voluntary Organisation shall be submitted in this deadline. <p>This implies that an organisation may only benefit from one e-application, both as a direct applicant and as a project beneficiary.</p>
Duration of project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum of 12 consecutive months which fall between 1st February 2024 and 31st January 2025.

<p>Project Calendar</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overview of the activity must be annexed to the e-application form.
<p>Where to apply?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-applications must be submitted to the Malta Council of the Voluntary Sector online, accessed via: vofunding.org.mt
<p>When to apply?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The e-application shall open on: 26th May 2023¹ • The deadline of submission of e-applications: 7th July 2023 till noon
<p>How to apply?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-applications must be submitted to the Malta Council of the Voluntary Sector online, accessed via: vofunding.org.mt
<p>Safety procedures of project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant must guarantee that appropriate measures are implemented as part of the project proposal, to ensure the safety and protection of participants directly involved in the project.
<p>6.2 Exclusion criteria</p>	
<p>Exclusion criteria</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project proposal is or has been granted through another EU/national fund. • If the organisation proposes the same project as per previous years, it will not be considered. • If the organisation has any pending MCVS projects which are not finalised in full following end date of Grant Agreement.

¹ Kindly note that e-applications cannot be accessed online prior to the opening of the call

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Also, as per Article 9.1.b of these guidelines – Exclusion criteria
6.3 Selection Criteria	
Financial capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant must show that they have stable and sufficient financial resources to support the final payments of the amount granted until they are reimbursed following successful evaluation of final report and financial documentation.
Operational capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant must show that they have the adequate operational capacity that is the necessary people, skills, competencies, and motivation to complete the proposed project.
6.4 Award criteria Refer to Annex I and Annex II – Eligibility Criteria/Marking Scheme for Action 1 and Action 2	

7. What are the funding rules?

Overview of funding rules					
The budget of the project must be drafted according to the following funding rules:					
	Eligible costs	Financing mechanism	Amount	Rule of allocation	Reporting obligations
Activity costs	Any cost directly linked to the implementation of the project.	Lump sum	100% of eligible costs	Provided that it is consistent with the budget presented in this e-application.	Full justification of the costs incurred (including quotations where applicable), original invoices, cash sales and VAT receipts. Achievements to be described in final report.
Costs for additional dissemination and exploitation of results	Costs linked to additional dissemination and exploitation of project's results.	Lump sum	100% of eligible costs	Conditional: additional dissemination and exploitation activities must be clearly outlined in the e-application form.	Full justification of the costs incurred (including quotations where applicable), original invoices, cash sales and VAT receipts. Achievements to be described in final report.

8. How to develop a good project?

The 'Eligibility Criteria/Marking Scheme' table on page 9/10/11 lists the criteria against which the quality of a project will be assessed.

Some brief advice to help you develop a good project:

8.1 Quality of project design

a. Quality of the preparation phase

The preparation phase is of crucial importance for the success of a project. During this phase, the organisation should choose and commonly agree on a **theme** relevant to the organisation itself and to the local community. They should look at creating a well-structured programme of the activities by presenting a timetable, including working methods and the benefits of their project for the local community.

b. Quality of the activity programme

The activity programme should be linked to the objectives of the project, to the project outcomes and it should be clearly defined, realistic and balanced.

c. Quality of the marketing of the programme

The marketing programme should be linked to the activity programme and each activity should be communicated to the target population of the project and if possible, to the general public.

d. Quality of project content and methodology

- **Theme of the project**

The project should have a clearly identified theme and should reflect the interests and needs of participants. Some examples of potential project themes are art and culture, social exclusion, environment, heritage protection, youth information, European awareness, rural/urban development, health in the community, anti-racism/xenophobia, disability, support for the elderly, homelessness, migrants, equal opportunities, peer education, unemployment, sports, leisure, media, and communications, etc. The theme has to be translated into concrete activities/outcomes.

- **Innovative creativity and entrepreneurship**

Within the context of the SIS scheme, the accent is put on promotion of innovative elements in the project. The project should aim at introducing, implementing, and promoting innovative approaches. These innovative aspects may be related to the content and objectives of the activity, the involvement of promoters from different backgrounds, creative and unexplored ways of solving problems related to the community, experimentation with new methodologies and project formats, or dissemination of the project results. The project should not be a continuation, repetition, or extension of a project that was previously supported by the SIS scheme.

- **Active involvement of participants in the project**

The activity programme and working methods should aim to have an impact on the members of the organisation and on the Maltese community. The project should engage the active involvement of the members of the organisation and Maltese citizens possibly identified as the target population of the activity. Participants should also be actively involved in the preparation and evaluation phases of the project as one of the project outcomes.

e. Quality of project reach

- **Impact, multiplier effect, and follow-up**

The impact of SIS scheme should not be limited to the participants in the activity. Applicants should, as much as possible, involve other people (from the neighbourhood, local area, etc.) in the Activity.

- **Visibility of the project/ Visibility of the Scheme**

Promoters should reflect together on measures aimed at enhancing the visibility of their project and the visibility of the SIS Scheme. The creativity of applicants in offering additional potential whilst disseminating information about the planned activity and the opportunities offered by the SIS Scheme will be highly scored in the evaluation process. Visibility measures mainly occur before and during the implementation of the initiative. Such measures can be divided into two broad categories:

- **Visibility of the project**

Beneficiaries and participants should 'publicise' the project - as well as its aims and objectives. In order to raise awareness of the project the beneficiary could for example develop information material; send a mail shot or SMS mailing; prepare posters, stickers, promotional items (t-shirts, caps, pens, etc.); invite journalists to observe; issue 'press releases' or write articles for local papers, develop websites or newsletters; engage in social network activities such as creating a Facebook page; create an e-group, a web space, a photo-gallery or blog on the Internet.

- **Visibility of the Small Initiatives Support Scheme**

The compulsory use of the official logos of the SIS Scheme, MCVS and Ministry should be included in all the project material used for communication purposes (internal and external).

The communication objectives should include a description of the multiplier effect of the Small Initiatives Support Scheme on Maltese society whilst also outlining the opportunities offered by the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector through the Scheme.

PART C

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

All applicants who intend to submit a project to be considered for financial support from the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector – Small Initiatives Support Scheme are invited to carefully read this section.

9. How to submit a Small Initiatives Support Scheme (SIS) project?

To submit a project proposal under the SIS Scheme you must follow these three steps:

1. Check that your project complies with the Scheme criteria.
2. Check that you present an accurate budget proposal.
3. Fill in and submit your e-application form without leaving any missing Annexes that are required.

9.1 Check compliance with the Scheme criteria

As an applicant and potential beneficiary, you must verify and ensure that your project meets the eligibility criteria; does not include any exclusion criteria; is aligned with the selection criteria and outlines the award criteria.

a. Eligibility criteria

The eligibility criteria relate to the project type, the target group, and the conditions for submitting a grant request under the SIS Scheme. If your project does not meet the eligibility criteria, it will be rejected without being further evaluated (as stated in Annex I and Annex II – Eligibility Criteria/Marking Scheme for Action 1 and 2). To be deemed eligible, your project must meet all the eligibility criteria. For details of the eligibility criteria please consult Part B of this Guide.

b. Exclusion criteria

Applicants will be excluded from participating in the SIS Scheme if they are in any of the following situations:

- They are bankrupt or being wound up.
- They are having their affairs administered by the courts, and/or have entered into an arrangement with creditors, and/or have suspended business activities, and/or are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, and/or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations.
- They are under investigation by the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations.
- They have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of *res judicata*.
- They have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means that the contracting authority can justify.
- 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 country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority.
- 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 the MCVS's financial interests.
- They are following another procurement disciplinary procedure or grant award procedure financed by the MCVS or any other Government Agency; they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations.

Applicants will not be granted financial assistance if, on the date of the signing of the grant award, they:

- Are subject to a conflict of interests.
- Are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the grant award procedure or fail to supply this information.

c. Selection criteria

The selection criteria enable the External Evaluators to assess the applicant's financial and operational capacity to complete the proposed project.

d. Operational capacity

This means that the applicant must show that they have the adequate operational capacity that is the necessary people, skills, competencies, and motivation to complete the proposed project. This constitutes a specific section of the e-application form.

e. The applicant must submit with the e-application

A copy of the **bank statements of the organisation's main account** as of the last month prior to the opening of the call (May bank statement). The bank statement shall clearly indicate the name of the Voluntary Organisation, date, and balance as of the end of the month of the indicated month. The account presented shall be the same account presented to the Commissioner for the Voluntary Organisations in the organisation's Financial Returns to the same Commissioner. If the Voluntary Organisation does not have a bank account by the deadline of the SIS 2023 call, they will automatically be deemed ineligible.

f. Award criteria

The award criteria are indicators/outcomes that allow the External Evaluators to evaluate the quality of projects submitted for grants. Based on these criteria, grants will be awarded to those projects which are maximising and aligned to the overarching objectives of the SIS Scheme.

The award criteria indicated in Part B of these guidelines describe exactly which elements will be taken into consideration to assess the quality of the project.

9.2 Check the financial conditions

a. Types of grants

The grant under the SIS Scheme is of a lump sum (fixed amounts) approach. 60% of the contracted grant will be given to the beneficiary on the signing of the agreement, 20% will be given on the submission and verification of a satisfactory interim report and the final balance of 20% will be given to the beneficiary on

closure of the project with submission of a satisfactory final report, and after verification of receipts of declared expenditure and other relevant documentation is verified.

b. Co-financing

Co-financing implies that the SIS Scheme grant may not finance the entire costs of the project because the total sum requested is greater than the maximum possible fund allocation by the SIS Scheme. In this case, the applicant may complement the sum granted through the voluntary organisation's own financial resources or by seeking private assistance.

Contributions in kind are considered an eligible source of co-financing. The value calculated for such contributions must not exceed:

- The costs borne and duly supported by accounting documents of the third parties who made these contributions to the beneficiary free of charge but bear the corresponding costs.
- The costs generally accepted on the market in question for the type of contribution concerned when no costs are borne.

c. No double-financing

A project supported under the SIS Scheme may not be in receipt of any other Government or European Union funding.

To avoid the risk of double-financing, 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.

9.3 Fill in and submit the e-application form

Once an applicant assumes the role of coordinator, the applicant must submit to the SIS Project Selection Committee a single e-application for the whole project on behalf of all the promoters. If the e-application is positively assessed and selected, the applicant will be the beneficiary of a single grant agreement proposed by the SIS Scheme for the funding of the project.

a. E-application procedure

The eligibility criteria to be met regarding the procedure to be followed for the submission of a project are described in Part B of these guidelines. Furthermore, the applicants must respect the provisions described below.

An e-application will be accepted only if:

1. Submitted via the correct e-application form which is completed in full.
2. It shows a budget in conformity with these guidelines.
3. It is submitted by the stipulated deadline.

Please note that not more than one project can be submitted by the same applicant organisation.

b. Use the official e-application form

E-applications must be submitted only through the following link:
www.vofunding.org.mt

c. Provide proof of your legal status

The ***successful*** applicants must be enrolled and compliant with the Commissioner for the Voluntary Sector.

d. Estimated budget

E-applications must include a detailed estimated budget (included in the e-application form) in which all prices are given in Euros (€).

Any e-application which exceeds the maximum limits will not be automatically excluded but will be scaled down within the limits set by the guidelines.

No changes can be made to the e-application past the deadline.

10. What happens once the e-application is submitted?

All e-applications received by the SIS Project Selection Committee will undergo an evaluation and selection procedure.

10.1 The Evaluation and selection procedure

The selection of e-applications is as follows:

1. All e-applications are checked against the eligibility criteria, the selection criteria, and the exclusion criteria.
2. Those e-applications which have successfully passed these checks are evaluated by two independent external evaluators and ranked accordingly, by taking the average of both marks.
3. In case of a 15% or more variant between the final marks of the two External Evaluators, a third External Evaluator shall be asked to evaluate the project e-application. In the case of a third evaluator, the two nearest marks are taken for average purpose and the third (furthest) mark is discarded.
4. For a project to be considered for financial support a minimum benchmark of 65% marks is to be achieved.

The process is described in Annex I and II titled Eligibility Criteria/ Marking Scheme.

10.2 Decision

Once the evaluation, including the verification of financial conditions, is completed, the Fund Officer prepares a ranking list of the final mark of each project according to the final marks issued by the External Evaluators.

The SIS Project Evaluation Committee shall review the final marks and may decide to approve or question any of the results. The Evaluation Committee decides on the projects to be granted funding, based on the final ranking order list and the budget available.

10.3 Notification of award decisions

Applicants should be notified with the results, and these will be available also online on www.maltacvs.org. All successful applicants will be informed in writing.

10.4 Appeal

Unsuccessful applicants have a right to appeal within five working days of the issue of the official results on the funding portal. An Appeals Board shall be appointed by the SIS Project Selection Committee to decide on the appeals. The decision of the Appeals Board is final and indisputable.

11. What happens if your e-application is approved?

11.1 Grant agreement

In the event of definitive approval by the SIS Project Selection Committee, a grant agreement is drawn up between the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector 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.

For projects approved by the SIS Project Selection Committee, it is intended that beneficiaries should receive the agreements for signature by the first quarter of 2024. This agreement must be signed and returned to the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector. The Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector will be the last party to sign.

11.2 Grant amount

Acceptance of an e-application does not necessarily constitute an undertaking to award funding equal to the amount requested by the applicant (this funding could be reduced).

The awarding of a grant does not establish an entitlement for subsequent years.

It should be noted that the grant amount foreseen by the agreement is to be considered as a maximum which cannot be increased in any circumstances.

Furthermore, the amount allocated may not exceed the amount requested.

11.3 Eligible costs

In order to be eligible under this SIS Scheme, costs must be:

- Necessary for the implementation of the project.
- Included in the provisional budget attached to the agreement.
- Consistent with the principles of sound financial management, in terms of value for money and cost-effectiveness.
- Incurred during the lifetime of the project as defined in the agreement.
- Truly and actually incurred by the beneficiary.
- Recorded in the beneficiary's accounts in accordance with applicable accounting principles.
- Deposited in a standalone account.
- Declared in accordance with the requirements of the applicable tax and social security legislation.
- Identifiable and verifiable and be backed up by original supporting documents.

11.3.1 Eligible direct costs

Eligible direct costs are costs which, with due regard for the conditions of eligibility set out above, are identifiable as specific costs directly linked to the performance of the project and which can therefore be booked to it directly.

- **Staff costs** are eligible but are limited to a **maximum of 10% of the allocated total direct cost** (only applicable for Project Management).

Staff costs may be applicable when:

- The VO has staff employed on its payroll
- If the person is an external provider (not employed with the VO), a VAT receipt must be provided and abide by the public procurement regulations.

If the VO is utilising its own members/ employees beyond Project Management (services), they need to pre-inform MCVS and give evidence that the person has competencies in the specific area of the deliverable.

- **Hospitality (catering) costs** are eligible but are limited to a **maximum of 10% of the allocated total direct cost under Action 1** and a **maximum of 25% of the allocated total direct cost under Action 2**.
- **Marketing costs** such as newspapers, leaflets, posters, banners, roll-ups, Facebook, radio, and television advertisements are eligible but are limited

to a **maximum of 15% of the allocated total direct cost under Action 1** and a **maximum of 40% of the allocated total direct cost under Action 2**.

- Events costs as part of the Activity costs are eligible but are limited to a **maximum of 20% of the total allocated direct costs under Action 1**.
- **Infrastructural costs** are eligible but are limited to a **maximum of 25% of the allocated total direct cost**. This is only applicable to Action 1.

11.3.2 Eligible indirect costs (administrative costs)

A flat rate amount **not exceeding 5% of the eligible direct costs** of the project is eligible under indirect costs, representing the beneficiary's general administrative costs which can be regarded as chargeable to the project such as postage, photocopying, transport, etc. Indirect costs may not include costs already entered under another budget heading.

11.4 Payment procedures with one pre-financing instalment

The projects supported under the SIS 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 60% will be transferred to the beneficiary within 30 days of the date when the last of the two parties signs the agreement. Pre-financing is intended to provide the beneficiary with a float.

b. Interim Reporting

An interim payment of 20% will be transferred to the beneficiary within 30 days of the date of the satisfactory delivery of the interim report. The report shall be presented in a typed format either in soft or hard copy.

c. Final Reporting - Payment or recovery of the balance

1. The amount of the final payment to be made to the beneficiary will be established on the basis of the complete final report which is to be submitted within one month following the end date of the project.
2. The report shall be presented in a typed format either in soft or hard copy.
3. The beneficiary must provide documents giving evidence that the activities organised with the support of the SIS Scheme funding effectively took place. These shall include:
 - i. A final report on the implementation of the project.
 - ii. A final detailed financial statement of eligible costs actually incurred, following the structure of the estimated budget, which justifies the funding requested expressed as a percentage of the eligible costs actually incurred.
 - iii. A full summary statement of the actual receipts and expenditure of the project.
 - iv. Full justification of the costs incurred (including quotations where applicable), original invoices, cash sales and VAT receipts.
 - v. Achievements to be described in final report.
4. 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 excess amounts already transferred under the pre-financing payments.

12. Other main contractual provisions

12.1 Non retroactivity

1. No grant may be awarded retrospectively for projects already completed.
2. Expenditure eligible for financing may not have been incurred prior to the date of commencement of the project on the e-application form.
3. A grant may be awarded for a project which has already begun following the publication of the results and only where the applicant can

demonstrate the need to start the project before the agreement has been signed.

4. Starting the project before signing the grant agreement is done at the risk of the beneficiary.

12.2 Finance, Sub-contracting, and Award of procurement contract

1. In all cases beneficiaries shall abide fully by Public Procurement Regulations.
2. In all cases the beneficiaries are obliged to allocate a specific bank account.
3. In those cases where the implementation of the project requires sub-contracting or the award of procurement contracts, beneficiaries of grants shall award the contract to the tender offering the best value for money, that is to say, to the tender offering the best price-quality ratio, while taking care to avoid any conflict of interest.

12.3 Applicable Procurement Regulations

When undergoing the project under the SIS Scheme, beneficiaries must abide with the procurement thresholds and relevant requirements so as to guarantee transparency and accountability as per the table hereunder.

1. Grant beneficiaries are obliged to abide by the Procurement Thresholds and Procedures for Public listed hereunder.
2. In the case of Direct Orders (under €500 exclusive of VAT) the beneficiary may only utilise this for a total of €1,000 (exclusive of VAT).
3. Repetitions of Direct Orders for identical supplies/works/services should be avoided.
4. Division of Direct Orders to bypass thresholds are strictly prohibited.
5. If the service/item costs between €501 and €4,999 (exclusive of VAT), the beneficiaries are requested to submit **a minimum of 3 quotations, as per Public Procurement Procedures.**

PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES SUPPLIES & SERVICES		
RANGES	MADE THROUGH	REQUIREMENTS
Under EUR 500	Direct Order	May only utilise this for a total of €1,000 (exclusive of VAT). Minimum of 3 quotations after using the direct order amount.
EUR 501 – EUR 4,999.99	Request for Quotations	Obtaining Quotes - Minimum of 3 quotations
		Publish Call for Quotes on social media or Publication in Government Gazette, & Local Apolitical Commercial Newspaper approved by MCVS, & circulated through MCVS' mass mail
EUR 5,000 – EUR 9,999	Published Call for Quotations	Call for Quotes - Minimum of 3 quotations
		Publication of Call for quotes mandatory on Government Gazette
		Contact 10 prospective bidders
		Internal Evaluation of Quotes
		Publication of Results & communication to bidders
		Agreement/Contract with successful bidder
Unsuccessful bidders have a right of appeal		

NOTE: ALL figures are NET [exclusive of VAT]

12.4 Publicity

Apart from the measures foreseen for the visibility of the project and for the dissemination and exploitation of its results (which are award criteria), there is an obligation of minimal publicity for each granted project. Beneficiaries must clearly acknowledge the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector's support in all communications or publications, in whatever form or whatever medium, including the Internet, or on the occasion of activities for which the grant is used.

NGOs are obliged to inform the public of the financial support provided and provide evidence of any publicity undertaken, following closure of project. This is to be done through images, presentations, reports, brochures, footage, documentaries, publications, posters, news articles, billboards, websites, CDs, and DVDs etc. Any equipment funded through this scheme should also be marked using stickers. If the project includes infrastructural works a plaque

should be placed. Any merchandise produced using the fund cannot be sold or used to make a profit from it. A declaration is to be made by the VO that they will not be selling or making a profit from the said items. The beneficiaries are to publish a minimum of five (5) social media posts (Facebook/ Instagram) promoting the project before, during and after implementation. In these posts, the official pages of the MCVS, “Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector” on Facebook or “mcvs_malta” on Instagram, should be tagged. **SIS beneficiaries must ask the responsible fund officer for approval of any publicity/marketing items and the design of the items that will be funded through the SIS project. They must also inform the responsible fund officer regarding any upcoming events or activities related to the project being funded through the scheme.**

This must be done according to the following instructions:

1. Use of the MCVS, SIS and MIVC logos.
2. Use of credits and disclaimer text stating the following: *“This project has been funded by the Small Initiatives Support Scheme (SIS), managed by the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector (MCVS). This project/publication reflects the views only of the author, and the MCVS cannot be held responsible for the content or any use which may be made of the information contained therein.”*

The font *Arial* must be used when quoting this text. If these provisions are not fully complied with, the beneficiary’s grant may be reduced.

Beneficiaries are to use the official logos of the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector (MCVS), the Small Initiatives Support Scheme (SIS) and the Ministry, and any other publicity material such as credits and disclaimers as per Marketing Guidelines published by MCVS.

If these provisions are not fully complied with, the beneficiary’s grant may be reduced.

12.5 Audits and monitoring

A granted project may be subject to monitoring visits. The beneficiary will undertake, with the signature of its legal representative, to provide proof that the grant has been used correctly. The Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector may itself check or appoint an authorised delegate to audit the use made of the grant at any time during the term of the agreement. Such audits may be carried out up to 24 months from the date of the signing of the Grant Agreement. Consequently, all documentation pertaining to this project including copies of invoices and fiscal receipts (VAT) should be retained for audit purposes. Original copies of invoices and fiscal receipts (VAT) shall be submitted to MCVS with the final report.

12.6 Recovery of Funds

The audit conclusions may necessitate that the Grant Award, in full or in part, may be recovered from the applicant's Voluntary Organisation due to a failure to honour one or more of the conditions stated in the Grant Agreement.

Recovery may also be applied in the case of underutilisation/wrong utilisation of the previously advanced funds.

12.7 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 in connection with the implementation and evaluation of the SIS Scheme, without prejudice to the possibility of transferring such data to the bodies responsible for inspection and audit appointed by the Ministry for Inclusion, Voluntary Organisations and Consumer Rights and/or the Ministry of Finance, through whom the funds for the SIS Scheme are made available.

CONTACT DETAILS

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Annex I: Eligibility Criteria/Marking application for Action 1 supporting the “Project Based Initiatives”

Project Code	
Yes/No	Complete e-application form
Yes/No	Project fits within one or more of the focus areas of SIS objectives
Yes/No	The applicant is not in any of the situations which would prevent it from receiving a grant, as per Part C of this Guide
Yes/No	Project remit falls within the mandate of the applicant
Yes/No	The applicant is enrolled with the Commissioner for VOs and compliant by the deadline of the funding scheme
Yes/No	The applicant has applied for only one project under the SIS of the same year
Yes/No	The project should be innovative and not a repeat of previously approved projects by the same organisation
Yes/No	Maximum project duration is of 12 months (including the preparatory phase)
Yes/No	Submitted supporting financial documentation
Yes/No	Do not have pending MCVS projects from previous years
10	Clarity of E-application Form
15	Relevance towards objectives and priorities of SIS
10	Project overview and programme of events
25	The quality of the project (Content and methodology)
5	Budget Breakdown
10	Impact and long-term sustainability
5	The operational capacity of the applicant to implement the project
10	Involvement of people with fewer opportunities (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion)
10	Previous Project Performance
100	Total Marks:
	Ranking:

Annex II: Eligibility Criteria/Marking application for Action 2 supporting the “Events and Activities”

Project Code	
Yes/No	Complete e-application form
Yes/No	Project fits within one or more of the focus areas of SIS objectives
Yes/No	The applicant is not in any of the situations which would prevent it from receiving a grant, as per Part C of this Guide
Yes/No	Project remit within the mandate of the applicant
Yes/No	The applicant is enrolled with the Commissioner for VOs and compliant by the deadline of the funding scheme
Yes/No	The applicant has applied for only one project under the SIS of the same year
Yes/No	The project should be innovative and not a repeat of previously approved projects by the same organisation
Yes/No	Maximum project duration is of 12 months (including the preparatory phase)
Yes/No	Submitted supporting financial documentation
Yes/No	Do not have pending MCVS projects from previous years
10	Clarity of E-application Form
15	Relevance towards objectives and priorities of SIS
15	Project overview and programme of events
20	The quality of the project (Content and methodology)
5	Budget Breakdown
10	Impact and long-term sustainability
5	The operational capacity of the applicant to implement the project
10	Involvement of people with fewer opportunities (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion)
10	Previous Project Performance
100	Total Marks:
	Ranking:

ANNEX III

Evaluation Process

