

## **ODA Call for Projects | Information Session | 2 July 2024, 14:00 – 16:00**

The Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade held an information session with interested voluntary organisations on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024. The Ministry thanks the participants for the fruitful discussion and feedback and endeavors to ameliorate its practices for the benefit of the intended recipients of the ODA Calls for Projects that the Ministry issues from time to time.

The Ministry has prepared the following categories of topics in an effort to clarify certain aspects of the Call for Projects and to address issues of common concern that arose during the information session.

### **General**

The Ministry welcomes the commentaries received from interested parties and appreciates the existing collaborative approach. In this spirit, the Ministry assessed several issues and shall simplify its working methods for future Calls.

Due note has been taken of the fact that the Call is accompanied by two accompanying documents: the Expression of Interest and the Guidelines. The former approaches the projects from a wider angle including relevant policies while the latter is more application-focused. We will explore the possibility of merging these documents into a single document.

### **Eligible countries**

Footnote 4 on page 3 of the Expression of Interest has in the meantime been updated by the OECD and now reads: <https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/sub-issues/oda-eligibility-and-conditions/dac-list-of-oda-recipients.html>

The comprehensive list of eligible countries under this Call for Projects includes:

Algeria, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Brazil, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Djibouti, Ghana, West Bank & Gaza Strip, Jordan, Iraq, Yemen, Uzbekistan, Türkiye, India, Bangladesh, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Nepal, China, Cambodia, Mongolia, Vietnam, Philippines, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Montenegro, Cuba, Serbia, Lebanon, Mauritania, North Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Moldova, Kosovo, South Africa, Morocco, Iran, Thailand, Malaysia, Argentina, Namibia, Pakistan.

### **Accounts**

The requirement to submit Audit Accounts for years 2021 and 2022 is justified since the requirement to submit audited accounts for 2022 to the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations was end of August 2023. It is also a fact that the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations confirms the submission of reports when conducting the compliance check. The Ministry believes that a copy of the accounts for two consecutive years provides sufficient assurances to the Selection Board as to the financial capacity of the organisation to implement the project. Different accounting obligations apply for different VOs.

### **Eligible and Non-Eligible Costs**

Including all costs (eligible and non-eligible) helps provide a complete financial overview of the project, even if those costs will not be met by public co-financing. Goods, services, works, staff costs (capped), office equipment/utilities (capped), and communication material/publicity are all considered as eligible costs. VOs are allowed to use up to 25% of the grant to acquire services or resources from the private sector (Malta-registered), subject that the private sector contributes financially to at least a corresponding amount or higher towards the project. Applicants are to note the limits set on eligible costs such as staff costs. All costs outside the limits set by the application form and/or other contributions such as in-kind donations should be listed as ineligible.

### **Role of Private Sector**

The involvement of the private sector is encouraged and the Selection Criteria award a maximum of 5 marks to projects that integrate this involvement. The private sector may pitch in through human resources, expertise or in-kind assistance and the more efforts are put in, the better for the effectiveness and sustainability of the project. When entrepreneuring such ventures, applicants are to keep in mind the limits set by the application form. VOs are in fact allowed to use up to 25% of the grant to acquire services or resources from the private sector (Malta-registered), subject that the private sector contributes financially to at least a corresponding amount or higher towards the project. While this is encouraged and awarded, this requirement does not determine eligibility and projects who do not include such a component, will not be excluded from the project selection process.

### **Partnerships**

Section C, sub-point 5 of the Expression of Interest, indicates that preference will be given to VOs that form partnerships with other local VOs (that are registered with the Commissioner for VOs). In fact, the Selection Criteria allocates a maximum of 5 marks to such project proposals. This is also mentioned in Section C, sub-point v of the Guidelines. The same Section C also notes the importance of partnering with registered organisations in the country of implementation. While applicants are encouraged to partner with organisations in the country of implementation, please note that scoring will take into account VO partnering with other local/CVO-registered organisations.