



## **EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – Ref: 01/2024**

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**Time:** 12.00hrs / noon

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## Section A: Forward

In line with Malta's Foreign Policy, the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade provides Official Development Assistance (ODA) in countries and sectors eligible to receive such assistance. ODA aligns with Malta's values that are guided by the principles of peace, social justice, solidarity, and human rights.

The pandemic, the effects of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, including the severance of food security world-wide, the devastation brought about by climate change, are some of the challenges that have led to extraordinary economic shocks across the world. Developing countries are no strangers to these economic consequences and are the worst-hit in terms of socio-economic growth, setting off track progress on the attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals.

This Expression of Interest is open for interested Voluntary Organisations (VOs)<sup>1</sup> that are registered with the Commissioner for the Voluntary Sector, on project/s that cooperate with developing countries and that are eligible to receive ODA funding.

Malta will continue to give priority to projects focussing on the attainment of the SDGs in developing countries.<sup>2</sup>

To engage effectively, proposed projects are to demonstrate tangible results that link with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and align with one or more of the Government's Development priorities which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. The fight against hunger
- b. The fight against social and economic inequalities
- c. The discouragement of factors contributing to irregular migration
- d. The creation of jobs
- e. Education
- f. Promoting women's rights, including access to health, education, and employment
- g. Healthcare
- h. Private sector development and agriculture; and
- i. Climate change, renewable energy and clean energy.

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<sup>1</sup> Specializing in initiatives that promote international sustainable development and that have a 'social purpose' as per Cap 492: Voluntary Organisations Act.

<sup>2</sup> Subject that a site visit by Malta's diplomatic, consular representations or Head Office is considered possible by the Ministry.

## Section B: General Instructions

This Expression of Interest should be read in conjunction with the supporting documents<sup>3</sup>. Completed submissions are to be made through the VO Funding portal, which is administered by the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector (MCVS). Applications submitted through other means will not be accepted. Any technical issues while filling and submitting the application through the portal should be addressed to the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector (Tel:+(356)2248 1110; email: [mcv.s.miv@gov.mt](mailto:mcv.s.miv@gov.mt)); by not later than noon of **Friday 19 July 2024**.

## Section C: Project requirements

Government is committed to delivering targeted and high-quality development projects that have to:

1. Align with one or more of the Government's Development priorities (see Section A above).
2. Link with one or more Sustainable Development Goals.
3. Are carried out in an ODA-eligible country<sup>4</sup> AND where a site visit by Malta's diplomatic representations and / or Malta's Consulates and Consulates-General in the host country<sup>5</sup> or Head Office is considered possible by the Ministry.<sup>6</sup>
4. Promotes gender equality and empower all women and girls by providing equal rights and opportunities.
5. Preference will be given to VOs that form partnerships with other local VOs.
6. Preference will be given to VOs that encourage the involvement of the private sector, that is Malta-registered and Malta-based companies or entities with respect to the proposed project.
7. The approval by the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade (MFET) for the VO or the lead VO to form partnerships with other local VOs and/or forms collaborations with the private sector, and/or sub-contracts any part of the contract and/or the engagement by the lead VO of sub-contractors to perform any part of the services/works shall not relieve the lead VO of any obligations under the contract. The Lead VO shall be responsible for the acts, defaults and negligence of its sub-contractors and their experts,

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<sup>3</sup> The following supporting documents accompanying this Expression of Interest form an integral part of this Expression of Interest. These include Form A – ODA Project Proposal Application Form; Form A1 – Project Proposal Guidelines for Voluntary Organisations; Form B- Activity-Based Budget.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/DAC-List-of-ODA-Recipients-for-reporting-2024-25-flows.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://consularplus.gov.mt/malta-representations?lang=en> , excluding Honorary Consulates.

<sup>6</sup> In line with the Travel Advice issued by the Ministry at the project evaluation stage.



agents or employees, as if they were the acts, defaults or negligence of the Lead VO, its experts, agents or employees.

8. The ODA Project is to demonstrate:

- a) A **Tangible IMPACT** - What kind of tangible impact does the proposed initiative have? What are the direct benefits and to whom? We will consider the number of people impacted, the creation of jobs, etc.
- b) An **innovative** or **transformative APPROACH** - How is this initiative new or transformative in comparison to what has been done before? Is it a breakthrough idea or process, or a whole new way to address an issue? Is it including those often left behind?
- c) **Scalability/Replicability** - Does this initiative have the potential to scale up or be replicated to create a greater impact? Is there any evidence that replication or scaling is already happening?

9. Project proposals are to be submitted on the completed Form A - ODA Project Proposal Application Form’.

## Section D: Application Process

1. VOs are to ensure that **all** necessary supporting documentation, as requested hereunder, are submitted by the deadline stipulated in this Expression of Interest. Failure to submit all the necessary supporting documentation will disqualify the submission.

Participating VOs should provide all supporting documentation, as follows:

- a. A fully completed, *Form A: ODA Project Proposal Application Form*.<sup>7</sup>
- b. A fully completed, *Form B: Activity Based Budget*.
- c. Copy of identification documents (valid ID card or Passport) of the physical legal representative/s representing the VO or Lead VO.
- d. Organisation organigram clearly identifying who will be working on the project.
- e. A fully completed *Declaration of Interests* (annexed to the Application Form) by VO.

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<sup>7</sup> For Project Proposal Guidelines please refer to Form A1.



In cases where Lead VO is collaborating with other VOs and or private entities the respective *Declaration of Interests* are also to be submitted.

Soft copies of submissions must be provided in pdf format. Other formats will not be considered.

2. All submissions must be invariably made through the VO Funding portal, which is administered by the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector (MCVS). Applications submitted through other means will not be accepted. Any technical issues while filling and submitting the application through the portal should be addressed to the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector (Tel:+(356)2248 1110; email: [m cvs.miv@gov.mt](mailto:m cvs.miv@gov.mt)); by the deadline stipulated in this Expression of Interest.
3. Only VOs that comply with the eligibility requirements as indicated in *Section E: Eligibility of VOs* may apply.
4. Offers need to include delivery costs (if applicable). The Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade shall not be charged any other charges on delivery which were not reflected in *Form A: ODA Project Proposal Application Form* and in *Form B: Activity Based Budget*.
5. Prices should be inclusive of VAT or similar and applicable taxes. All components of the price should be inclusive of taxes, customs and import duties and discounts, any fuel stop charges, layover costs, catering expenses and all applicable airport taxes.
6. No payment will be made for items that have not been costed in *Form A: ODA Project Proposal Application Form* and *Form B: Activity Based Budget*.
7. Prices quoted should be fixed for a minimum of 90 days and not subject to revision or escalation of costs.
8. The information must be submitted in English.
9. In submitting a project proposal, the applicant accepts in full and in its entirety, the content of this document and of the supporting documents including subsequent clarifications issued by the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade, whatever the applicant's own corresponding conditions may be, which are hereby waived.
10. Applicants are expected to examine carefully and comply with all instructions, forms, and specifications contained and referred to in this document and in the supporting documentation.
11. In case of queries about the call for applications or about project proposals, one may contact the International Development Unit at the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade by e-mail to [development.mfet@gov.mt](mailto:development.mfet@gov.mt)
12. Applying is free of charge.



13. Any project proposals received after the deadline of **noon of Friday 19 July 2024** shall be discarded.

## Section E: Eligibility of Voluntary Organisations

1. All VOs should:
  - a. Be enrolled with the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations (CVO) and compliant with the CVO's Subsidiary Legislation 492.01.
  - b. Preferably, work in the field of International Development.
  - c. Have the Expression of Interest submitted appropriately by the lead VO together with all requested documentation as indicated in this expression of interest by the stipulated deadline.
2. Participating VOs must prove that they have adequate operational capacity, namely the necessary human resources, skills, competencies, and motivation to complete the proposed project successfully. An organizational chart would need to be presented with the Expression of Interest.
3. Ministerial grant will not be awarded to VOs if they:
  - a. are bankrupt or are subject to a winding up procedure or are being dissolved, or whose affairs are being administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business 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.
  - b. Are being administered, managed or represented by a person who has been convicted of a criminal offence by a judgement which has the force of *res judicata*.
  - c. 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 those of the country where the project is to be performed.
  - d. are following another procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Government or the European Commission, and have been declared to be, by any competent authority, in breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations.



- e. by the date of signature of the Grant Agreement, have any financial or other interest or undertaking that could directly or indirectly compromise the performance of their project proposal, that is, a conflict of interest. Applicants are to declare any conflict of interest at the time of application.
- f. by the date of signature of the Grant Agreement, have been found to have acted in bad faith by any misrepresentation; by supplying false information required by the Ministry as a condition of participation in the granting of ODA funds or by having failed to supply the required information.
- g. have pending matters/unresolved issue/s concerning project/s with the Ministry.

## Section F: Financing

1. Successful projects will be part-financed by Official Development Assistance (ODA) funds representing **90% of total eligible project costs**. The Ministry shall allocate a maximum grant not exceeding €8,000 per project.
2. The period of implementation shall be as stipulated in the approved *Form A: ODA Project Proposal Application Form* and commences from the last date that the Grant Agreement is signed off. Only expenditure incurred from the last signature date of the Grant Agreement, shall be considered as eligible.
3. The grant shall be awarded to projects selected according to their ranking of marks allotted by a specially-appointed selection board. Only one grant will be allocated for each successful VO, even if VOs apply with different project proposals.
4. The Ministry reserves the right not to allocate funds should projects fall under the established quality benchmark. The decision and ranking by the selection board is final with a pass mark set at 120/200.
5. Once a project is approved, the grant will be given in three tranches as outlined hereunder:
  - a. First tranche of 30% of funding to be provided upon signature of the last date of the Grant Agreement.
  - b. Second tranche of 50% of funding to be provided following approval by MFET Head Office of the first quarterly monitoring report.
  - c. Third tranche of 20% to be provided following approval by MFET Head Office of the Completion Report that includes supporting documentation and receipts, and assurance that the project has been fully completed as per the original application.



The Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade (MFET) reserves the right not to effect payment if progress of project is deemed unsatisfactory by MFET Head Office.

6. All quotes for the procurement of goods/services/works and reason/s for selection thereof, statements of expenditure, and original invoices and corresponding original receipts must be submitted in electronic and physical format with the corresponding reports. In cases of exceptional, justifiable circumstances where the original invoices and original receipts cannot be provided, notarised *vera copias* of such invoices and receipts may be submitted only if authorisation is sought and granted in writing beforehand by the Ministry.
7. Projects may be subjected to physical on-site monitoring by any representative/body/entity appointed by the Ministry.
8. The last project payment must be affected by not later than one (1) month following the project's satisfactory completion.
9. The Completion Report is to be submitted within three (3) months from the end of the project's completion.
10. While highly encouraging free social media publicity, VOs are to allocate from 1% to 3% of the Ministerial grant for promoting the project minimally three (3) times, during implementation and at closure, highlighting project purpose, progress and achieved results while giving due credit to the Ministry's financing assistance. The Ministry's logo and the following wording 'Project co-financed (90%) by the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade of Malta' must invariably be included on all promotional material, in social media messages, on the VOs websites, and in all publicity/promotional measures, as applicable and unless space is limited or prohibitive. Images of the Ministry's logo and the Malta flag shall be provided to successful VOs at project start.
11. VOs are requested to apply a high degree of due diligence and good governance in their procurement of goods, services, and works throughout project implementation, to ensure transparency, fairness, equality, and value-for-money of public funds. Wherever possible, and unless otherwise justified, the cheapest quote is to be selected if technically compliant. Documentation proving this, in as much as is possible, should be submitted with the ongoing progress and completion reports.

## Section G: Eligible and Ineligible costs financing

### **Other Eligible Costs**





VOs may collectively utilise up to 10% of the grant on staff costs of one or more employees for work on the project. Where applicable, VOs may opt for the method of staff costs calculation which can be found in the table provided in Annex I.

Costs related to the purchase and servicing of office equipment and utility bills related to the VOs premises in Malta are eligible up to a maximum of 5% of the total eligible project cost. Costs incurred by the organization/partner organization implementing the project in the implementation country and in so far that these costs are related to the project, are clearly specified in the application, and do not exceed 20% of the grant, are also deemed as eligible. The Ministry reserves the right to recover funds if this provision is not adhered to.

### **Ineligible Costs**

In-kind contribution will not be considered as part of the total eligible project cost.

## **Section H: Sub-contracting**

Any agreement by which the VO or Lead VO entrusts performance of a part of the services to a third party is considered to be a sub-contract. **The VO or Lead VO must seek the prior written authorisation of the Ministry before entering into a sub-contract.** This authorisation will be based on the services to be sub-contracted and the identity of the intended sub-contractor. The Ministry shall, within 30 days of receipt of the notification, notify the VO or Lead VO in writing of its decision, stating reasons, should it withhold such authorisation. No sub-contractual relationship can create contractual relations between any sub-contractor and the Ministry. The VO or the Lead VO shall be responsible for the acts, defaults and negligence of its sub-contractors and their experts, agents or employees, as if they were the acts, defaults or negligence of the VO or Lead VO, its experts, agents or employees. The approval by the Ministry of the sub-contracting of any part of the Grant Agreement or of the engagement by the VO or Lead VO of sub-contractors to perform any part of the services shall not relieve the VO or Lead VO of any obligations under the Grant Agreement.

If a sub-contractor is found by the Ministry to be incompetent in discharging its duties, the Ministry may request the VO or Lead VO forthwith, either to substitute the sub-contractor with qualifications and experience acceptable to the Ministry which shall accept such as a replacement, or to resume the performance of the services by the VO and Lead VO.

In the execution of the contract, a sub-contractor must ensure that he/she complies with all the applicable obligations in the fields of environmental, social, tax, health and safety and labour law established by Union law, national law, collective agreements or by any international provisions in the aforementioned fields of law. Those services entrusted to a sub-contractor by the VO or Lead VO cannot be entrusted to third parties by the sub-contractor.



The Ministry shall not have any obligations towards any sub-contractors. The Ministry's legal contractual relationship shall be solely with the VO or Lead VO. Any change of sub-contractor without the prior written consent of the Ministry shall be considered to be a breach of the Grant Agreement. The Ministry's right to seek redress in terms of the applicable law before any judicial body shall not be prejudiced.

## Section I: Circumstances of Force Majeure

1. All participating VOs must take into consideration the following eventual circumstances of *force majeure* which may arise during the project implementation processes:
  - a. Riot, war, invasion, act of hostility by foreign enemies, acts of terrorism, civil war, rebellion, revolution, insurrection of military or usurped power.
  - b. Ionising radiation or contamination, radio activity from any nuclear fuel or nuclear waste, radioactive toxic explosive or any other material hazardous properties of any explosive assembly or nuclear component.
  - c. Earthquakes, floods, fire, or other physical natural disasters but excluding weather conditions regardless of severity; and
  - d. Strikes at a national level or industrial disputes at a national level, however excluding any industrial dispute which is specific to the performance of the works of this Project.
  - e. A pandemic or epidemic, as declared by the competent health authorities, hitting the region.
2. All participating VOs shall have no entitlement to claim from the Ministry any costs, losses, or damages should the Ministry be required to cancel the project after the selection results ensue due to *force majeure*.

## Section J: Selection Criteria

1. The selection criteria (refer to Annex II) describe which elements will be taken into consideration for assessment of the applications by the selection board.

## Section K: Results

1. Results will be published on the website of the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade: <https://foreign.gov.mt/en/pages/home.aspx>
2. Individual evaluation scores can be provided upon request by the applicant by e-mail to [development.mfet@gov.mt](mailto:development.mfet@gov.mt)



## Section L: Signing of Grant Agreement

1. The draft version of the Grant Agreement will be circulated by the Ministry ahead of signing.



## ANNEX I - Method for staff cost calculation

<b>Method</b>	<b>Supporting documents required</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Employee/s dedicate/s a flexible share of his/her working time to the project (up to 10% of the Grant).</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Time sheets - Formal registration of the working time covering all actual working time of the employee/s on the project. A time sheet template shall be provided to successful VOs at project start.</li><li>Employment contract for the calculation of the hourly rate for the related reporting period.</li></ul>



## ANNEX II – Selection Criteria

	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Maximum Points</b>	<b>Points Given</b>
<b>1.</b>	Context and need for the Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of Project’s Tangible impact</li> <li>• Extent of project’s alignment to the development objectives of the country of implementation</li> </ul>	10  10 <hr/> 20	
<b>2.</b>	Location of Project vis-à-vis presence of or vicinity to a Maltese Representation	<b>10</b>	
<b>3.</b>	VOs Operational Capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Resources</li> <li>• Skills and competencies</li> <li>• Motivation to complete project successfully</li> </ul>	5 5 5 <hr/> 15	
<b>4.</b>	Extent of alignment to Government Priorities	<b>10</b>	
<b>5.</b>	Extent of alignment to Sustainable Development Goals	<b>10</b>	
<b>6.</b>	Assessment of Project Plan	<b>20</b>	
<b>7.</b>	Assessment of <i>Form B</i> : Activity-Based Budget	<b>20</b>	
<b>9.</b>	Extent of Sustainability/Durability of results	<b>15</b>	
<b>10.</b>	Extent of Scalability/Replicability	<b>10</b>	



<b>11.</b>	Extent of consideration to Gender Equality	<b>10</b>	
<b>12.</b>	Assessment of Project Monitoring and Control measures	<b>15</b>	
<b>13.</b>	Assessment of Risk Management	<b>15</b>	
<b>14.</b>	Assessment of engagement/communication management plan with stakeholders	<b>10</b>	
<b>15.</b>	Assessment of Involvement and/or participation of beneficiaries on the implementation of the project	<b>10</b>	
<b>16.</b>	Partnership with other Voluntary Organisations that are registered with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations	<b>5</b>	
<b>17.</b>	Involvement of the Maltese private sector	<b>5</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>200</b>	

Pass mark: 120/200