



REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA) # CEP-RRG-05

Rapid Response Grants (RRG)

Issued on September 7, 2017

I. SUMMARY

USAID's Civic Engagement Project in Macedonia (hereinafter referred to as 'the Project') invites civil society organizations (CSO) in Macedonia to apply for Rapid Response Grants (RRGs).

The Civic Engagement Project (CEP) is a five year USAID-funded program that aims to strengthen the constructive engagement by civil society organizations (CSOs) on policies and issues of public concern, and increase and sustain youth involvement in public life in Macedonia. Through CEP, participating young people and CSOs will acquire knowledge, gain motivation, and develop skills that will allow them to contribute to policy discussions with the government, the private sector, the media, and other CSOs. CEP's overall goal is to enhance CSOs and youth's capacity to advance public policies, improve public services, promote good governance, and contribute to improving the standard of living of people in Macedonia.

The aim of this round of RRGs is to support the Ministry of Culture's efforts to gather and incorporate **public input into the draft 2018-2022 National Cultural Strategy and the 2018 Annual Plan on Culture**. More specifically this RRG seeks to support the following activities:

- (i) Organizing public presentations and discussions in each of the eight statistical planning regions in Macedonia in order to obtain public input for the 2018 - 2022 National Cultural Strategy and the 2018 Annual Plan on Culture;
- (ii) Coordinating closely with the Ministry of Culture in arranging the aforementioned presentations and discussions and facilitating the events;
- (iii) Ensuring substantial participation of local stakeholders (at least 20 relevant participants) in each of the public presentations and discussions;
- (iv) Utilizing the existing Ministry of Culture resources, such as, the Ministry's working group on culture, relevant venues, contacts, and Ministry of Culture-supported spaces to organize and implement the presentations and discussions;
- (v) Coordinating with and involving relevant local stakeholders in the presentations and discussions, such as local CSOs, independent cultural institutions, municipalities, private sector, relevant experts, and the media;

- (vi) Supporting the Ministry's working group on culture by helping to incorporate the input gathered through the presentations and discussions into the new National Cultural Strategy and the 2018 Annual Plan on Culture.

The project will give priority to applications that focus on:

- Promoting citizens' participation and positive interaction with Ministry stakeholders in the presentations/discussions of the National Cultural Strategy and other strategic documents;
- Ensuring that local culture is discussed in the context of the National Cultural Strategy, and developing practical recommendations on how to support it are discussed during the presentation;
- Encourage and increase opportunities for involvement and participation in cultural activities by culturally diverse constituencies;
- Advocate the value of the arts and culture in daily life and their importance to the growth and future of the community.

II. GRANT AWARDS

The Project plans to award up to **1 (one) grant** resulting from this RfA. The maximum grant amount is **7,500 USD** for a project that may last **up to 3 (three) months**. Grant funds may be used only for activities directly related to the implementation of the project. The Project reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

III. FUNDING PRIORITIES

The Project will give priority to CSOs, including think tanks, that:

- Can deliver results in a short time frame of up to **three months**;
- Have a proven track record of engaging in effective and successful interventions related to the field of culture for **at least the last two years**;
- Have a **transparent system of bookkeeping** that complies with the Macedonian legislation and International Accounting Standards (IAS). If such a system is not in place, upon grant award, the grantee must work closely with the Project office to ensure that accurate financial management and transparent bookkeeping systems are developed.
- Effectively reach out to a **wide and diverse audience**, including women, girls, youth, ethnic or religious minorities, the LGBT community, or other vulnerable/marginalized groups.

IV. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicant CSOs should meet the following criteria:

- 1) Be a **Macedonian CSO**, meaning that it is managed by a governing body the majority of who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of Macedonia;
- 2) Have at least **two years of substantial experience in the priority area** of this RFA. The Project will not provide "start-up" funding.

- 3) Must **not be a debtor of the Government of Macedonia** and must have cancelled any debt to the state or arranged for debt collection by the state prior to receiving the first disbursement of grant funds by the Project.
- 4) Must **operate as an independent non-politically affiliated organization**.
- 5) Must **not be debarred, suspended, excluded** or otherwise ineligible to receive US Federal funding.

Civil servants, political appointees, members of the current Parliament, staff of public broadcasting companies, and/or leaders of political parties cannot participate in a grant project as a director or as grant-remunerated participant.

The Project **will not accept or review** proposals that include the following activities:

- Support for or lobbying on behalf of a particular political party;
- Religious activities;
- Humanitarian/charitable activities;
- Theoretical research;
- Capital expenditures, including construction activities;

V. APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

The Project will accept proposals only in English. Applicants must submit the following documents using the forms provided by the Project for (i) and (ii):

- (i) **Application Form;**
- (ii) **Project Budget and Budget Notes;**
- (iii) **A copy of the organization's most recent registration document**

Incomplete submissions will not be reviewed.

Submitted proposals must be the original and sole work of the applicant organization. Plagiarism will result in disqualification from the grant competition. The Project will retain all materials and documents submitted by applicants. It will not use this information for purposes other than proposal review and will not share it with other persons or institutions, except when required by Macedonian law or requested by USAID.

Please note that in line with our donor coordination efforts, we may share the names of the applicants and a short description of their respective proposals with other Macedonian and international programs that support CSOs in Macedonia.

Upon selection the successful applicant will need to submit a **letter of support** from the Ministry of Culture indicating the Ministry of Culture's interest and support in the project activities. The letter of support should be submitted to CEP before signing the grant agreement.

VI. EVALUATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

The selection process will be administered by a Grants Review Committee (GRC) established by the Project for the purpose of this RfA. If an application is short-listed for potential funding, the respective applicant may be requested to provide additional information.

The Project will assess proposals based on the following criteria:

I. Technical Approach – 55% of the total score

a. Project Design and Feasibility – 30%

- The degree to which the application is responsive to this RfA;
- The potential of the proposed actions to successfully and efficiently achieve the RFA's objectives;
- The extent to which the proposed actions introduce innovative and potentially replicable approaches;
- Reliable quantitative and qualitative indicators for measuring and evaluating the proposed actions' impact;

b. Geography – 5%

- The extent of the geographical outreach of the proposed actions;

c. Beneficiaries – 20%

- The extent to which the proposed actions reach out to and meaningfully include girls, women, ethnic and religious minorities, people with disabilities, the LGBT community, and other marginalized groups in the proposed activities.

II. Organizational, Technical and Management Capability and Past Performance – 30% of the total score

a. Technical and Management Capacity – 10%

The technical and managerial capacity of the applicant to successfully carry out Program Description implementation on a timely basis, and to produce the targeted results. This includes an evaluation of:

- The track record and demonstrated commitment of the applicant to implement proposed activities;
- The ability to deliver results in a short time frame;
- The experience and expertise of the management team and proposed personnel; and
- The provision for appropriate monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms and staff.

b. Organizational Capability – 10%

- The general financial strength of the applicant;
- The organizational structure and good governance practices of the applicant;

c. Past Performance – 10%

- Past performance in achieving positive results when implementing activities similar to those proposed;
- Experience working with USAID/other donor funds and ability to meet reporting and accountability requirements;
- Demonstrated ability to gather and analyze data on program outcomes.

III. Cost Effectiveness – 15% of the total score

- The budget must be (i) complete and fully documented, including budget notes (ii) reasonable, and (iii) allocated to appropriate budget categories – 5%
- The budget should maximize the impact of the available resources and the proposed activities – 5%
- The budget must demonstrate a clear and direct relationship between proposed activities and the proposed use of funds – 5%

VII. TIMELINE

Invitation to applicants to submit applications	September 7 2017
Deadline for submitting clarification requests to the Project	September 13, 2017
Date when the Project will issue clarifications	September 14, 2017
DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS	13:00, SEPTEMBER 21, 2017
Evaluation of applications	September 26, 2017
Grant award notification to successful applicants	September 28, 2017
Grant agreement signing	OCTOBER 10, 2017

Please note that the award date is subject to change

VIII. CONTACT INFORMATION

Application Form: Please contact ADI Grants Manager, Ms. Lindita Bexheti, at linda@adi.org.mk.

Clarifications: Applicants should submit clarification requests by the deadline listed above via email to ADI Grants Manager, Ms. Lindita Bexheti, at linda@adi.org.mk. The Project will issue clarifications via e-mail.

Proposals: Applicants should submit their proposal and required documents via e-mail to ADI’s Grants Manager, Ms. Lindita Bexheti, at linda@adi.org.mk. E-mails must have “RFA # CEP-RRG -05: Rapid Response Grants” in the subject line.

Alternatively, applications may be submitted in a sealed envelope to: **ADI, Bul. B. Ginoski 61/3, 1230 Gostivar**, att: Ms. Lindita Bexheti. Should you choose to mail the hard copy of the proposal, please note that the time when the sealed envelope is delivered to ADI will be taken into consideration and not the time when the envelope is mailed. The mail should be delivered to ADI’s office by **13:00, September 21, 2017**.

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