

ACTIVE CITIZENS FUND

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS #06 – HUMAN RIGHTS PLATFORM

"ENHANCED CAPACITY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF CIVIL SOCIETY (ORGANISATIONS AND THE SECTOR)"

The Active Citizens Fund is implemented in Portugal within the framework of the “Memorandum of Understanding on the Implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021” between Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway (the Donor States) and Portugal, in force since 22 May 2017.

The Financial Mechanism Office, the programme operator of the Active Citizens Fund in Portugal, has selected the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation as Fund Operator in Portugal, in consortium with the Bissaya Barreto Foundation. The Active Citizens Fund is operated in Portugal under the terms and conditions of the ‘Programme Implementation Agreement’ (PIA), signed on 9 July 2018.

The present call for applications concerns the creation of a platform for the defence and promotion of human rights, which is part of Outcome 4 - “Enhanced capacity and sustainability of civil society (organisations and the sector)”, one of the four areas of the Active Citizens Fund in Portugal as set forth in Article 3 of the Programme Rules.

This call is a new edition of the call launched in March 2019, which did not raise sufficiently meritorious applications to be selected. This notice makes some adjustments to the text of the previous notice, to clarify the objectives and nature of the project to be implemented and the elements to be included in the applications.

Applications shall be submitted online through activecitizensfund.pt and shall follow the evaluation and selection procedures detailed on this notice.

Without prejudice to the specifications contained in this notice, the provisions of the Programme Rules regarding large projects shall apply fully to this call for applications and should therefore be consulted by applicants, especially regarding the rules on eligibility of applicants and the selection procedures. The Programme Rules, the Promoter’s Manual and other useful information can be found on the Programme’s website.

1. Framework of the call

The subsector of non-governmental human rights organisations is relatively recent and still poorly consolidated in Portuguese Civil Society, perhaps, because NGOs find themselves more focused on their individual affirmation in Society than on maximising the combined effectiveness of their actions, in an area where funding from the State, companies and individuals is neither regular nor sufficient, preventing each of these organisations to have an active voice and influence per se.

The high atomisation, the tendency to work in isolation and the difficulty in establishing coalitions in order to reinforce the impact of its advocacy services and activities are well-known features of the social sector in Portugal, even more prevalent in the area of human rights.

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Aware of this situation and of solutions adopted in other countries to reinforce the voice and performance of Civil Society in this area, the Active Citizens Fund, funded by the EEA Grants with resources from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, decided, within the scope of its overall objective of strengthening civil society, to proactively respond to what was diagnosed as a deficiency of the sector. It should be noted that this diagnosis was confirmed in the framework of the public consultation of non-governmental organisations, online and in person, held in January 2018, during the design of the Active Citizens Fund.

It was therefore decided to launch a call under Outcome 4 – “Enhanced capacity and sustainability of civil society (organisations and the sector)” - for the creation of an umbrella organisation – a platform – that could bring together the various existing organisations and others that may arise in this area and which, without undermining the diversity that characterizes the subsector and the autonomy of its organisations, can find common denominators and principles that lead to more shared and evidence-based work, with greater potential for impact on society and policy makers.

The objective of this project is, therefore, to bring together the main NGOs that have as their primary objective to defend and promote human rights in Portugal, through the creation of a platform capable of enhancing the work of its associates; to better defend the fundamental rights of citizens, in particular those who are victims of any kind of discrimination; to monitor public policies; to undertake research on human rights issues; to support the training of its members; to receive and handle complaints of human rights violations; and to sensitize the media and the public administration to the problems underlying this issue.

The Active Citizens Fund does not intend to condition, in any way, what may be the final result of the project now launched: the platform – so designated only to facilitate communication – will only exist if the subsector deems it useful, will adopt the designation and the form that the member organisations consider most appropriate or necessary and will pursue the mission and activities the associates determine.

The project will have a duration of four years (48 months), since it’s a complex process, requiring time and maturity in order to be successful. The congregation of multiple organisations, in a new, broader umbrella organisation with more cross-cutting concerns and defending the various forms of human dignity, is a complex challenge that requires persistence and conviction but also time to allow for wills to align and advantages of working together to become visible.

For this reason, the process that will lead to the potential constitution of the platform is no less important than its final outcome and applicants should specify the methodology to be used in the various stages of project development to ensure the mobilisation, active participation and involvement of the organisations of the subsector throughout the country in the creation of the new entity.

The definition of the model to be adopted by the new organisation also requires time and consideration, particularly for involving sensitive aspects such as the division of tasks between the parties and the autonomy of each associated NGO.

The present call aims, in practice, to check whether there are objective and subjective conditions to proceed with the creation of the platform and, in that case, to assess the economic and financial viability and the sustainability of the platform and support the entire process of formalization of its

institutionalization. The proposed project is therefore concluded with the creation of a new organisation ready to operate, if that is the will of the organisations of the subsector, not including the subsequent phase of operation of the platform; at this stage, the associates should be responsible for its development, implementation and financing, in accordance with the business plan previously defined within the scope of this project.

The project's promoter is expected to lead a consortium of Civil Society organisations representing a diverse set of human rights areas, so that it can function as an initial core of organisations to join the project, with the ability to "enter" these thematic areas, mobilising other organisations. Applicants should be aware that only the promoter and partners requesting funding must meet the criteria of Article 7 of the Programme Rules (NGO Definition).

In the first six months of the project implementation, the promoter and its partners shall present a definition of the perimeter of the human rights area in which they will act, a survey of human rights organisations in Portugal, according to this definition, and a detailed and scheduled plan of action in order to achieve the objectives (inception report, taking into account the first months of work on the field).

Key-elements of the work to be undertaken by the consortium will therefore be the definition of the perimeter of the area of defence and promotion of human rights, the selection of the core of NGOs with which the work will be initiated, its designation, the definition of the legal form to be adopted by the platform and the preparation of a business plan that ensures its sustainability.

Given these challenges – which are complemented by others that the process itself will possibly unveil – the role and profile of the project manager is essential to ensure its success.

It should be noted that the consortium should aim for the full autonomy of the new entity, as soon as the articles of association are approved. This naturally does not affect participation of the consortium members, if desired, in future governing bodies, in equal rights with the other members.

Although this project will be entrusted, through this call, to a consortium of several organisations of this subsector, the Fund Operator – the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and the Bissaya Barreto Foundation – will closely follow the process and give all their technical and institutional support to the entity/consortium selected to carry it out. Both foundations are fully committed to the success of the project and, in that sense, will have the involvement that the promoter considers useful.

2. Objectives

- 2.1 The project to be selected under this call aims at enhancing the capacity and sustainability of civil society and shall consider the overall objectives of the Programme as set forth in Article 2 of the Programme Rules.
- 2.2 In order to attain the above-mentioned objectives, the project specifically should aim at the creation of an umbrella organisation grouping human rights organisations / associations (hereinafter referred to as "platform"), as described in the framework.
- 2.3 The supported project shall contribute to the output "Number of NGOs that are members of civil society networks/platforms", and should foresee at the end of the project a minimum of 30 NGOs joining the platform.

3. Eligible Applicants

- 3.1 Project promoters must comply with the general conditions of eligibility of the Programme established in Articles 9 and 10 of the Programme Rules.
- 3.2 In the context of this call for applications it is mandatory that the project is implemented through a partnership. Partner entities must comply with Article 9 of the Programme Rules.
- 3.3 An application submitted under this call will not be counted for the purposes of paragraph 4 of Article 19 of the Programme Rules.

4. Project manager

- 4.1 The project manager shall demonstrate the skills, experience and commitment needed to conduct the activities and to mobilise and to gather consensus in order to achieve the set objectives.
- 4.2 The project manager to be proposed by the consortium should have personal and social skills characteristic of a facilitator, mobiliser and congregator of wills, and should have as consensual a profile as possible, preferably independent of the NGOs participating in the platform, being able to develop all the activities and contacts necessary so that at the end of the project this aggregating entity is created. The degree of independence of the project manager from the participating NGOs shall be considered in the respective selection criterion.
- 4.3 The project manager must, of course, also have the capacity to ensure the administrative and financial management of the project.
- 4.4 By way of derogation of paragraph 3 of article 15 of the Programme Rules, the minimum of 50% of working time allocated to the project is not applicable, though the project manager must guarantee the necessary allocation of time to ensure its proper execution.

5. Size and duration of the project

- 5.1 The project shall have, at most, a total supportable cost of 166 500 euros, with the eligible costs of the project co-financed at a rate of 90%.
- 5.2 The duration of the project is up to 48 months, with an expected start date of February 1, 2020.
- 5.3 In addition to the continuous monitoring of the Programme, which will include quarterly follow-up meetings with the project manager and semi-annual with the consortium, an assessment of the feasibility and sustainability of the project will be made by the end of the second year of implementation, in January 2022. If, by that time, it becomes clear that the project is not viable - for instance, for reasons of disinterest / lack of support by potential beneficiaries or for economic and financial reasons - the grant contract will foresee the possibility that the Fund Operator may terminate the project.
- 5.4 Being successful, the project should include a final event of dissemination and membership recruitment to the platform and may also foresee the training of the staff of the new entity necessary for a successful launch.

6. Grants, eligible expenditure and promoter's contribution

- 6.1 Expenditures of entities (promoter and partners) that meet the requirements stated in Article 9 of the Programme Rules shall be eligible under the present call for applications, for the purposes of calculating the grant.
- 6.2 The eligible costs of the project are those necessary to run the whole process of preparation and constitution of the new entity, its promotion and the training of its direct collaborators, if foreseen, excluding any other expenses that may be incurred after its creation.
- 6.3 Eligible costs are those actually incurred, and paid by the project promoter or its eligible partners, according to the criteria laid down in Article 17 of the Programme Rules, until the new entity is constituted or, at the latest, by the project's closure date.
- 6.4 The contribution required by the project promoter and partner entities (10% of the total supporting cost of the project) can be provided in cash or in-kind, through voluntary work, calculated according to the formula set forth in paragraph 5 of Article 18 of the Programme Rules. The in kind contribution may reach 100% of the required contribution, as stated for in paragraph 4 of Article 18 of the Programme Rules.

7. Territorial scope

The project shall be implemented in mainland Portugal and in the Autonomous Regions of the Azores and Madeira, in accordance with the provisions of Article 8 of the Programme Rules.

8. Submission of applications

- 8.1 Applications shall be submitted, electronically, via SIPPCA (the Programme's information system) using an application form available on the Programme's website: activecitizensfund.pt. The call notice, the Programme Rules, the documents to be presented and the minutes that are to be used are also available on the website of the Active Citizens Fund.
- 8.2 Applications must be submitted through SIPPCA from 5 September 2019 until 29 November 2019, at 12:00 (GMT/Lisbon time).
- 8.3 A description of the project should be attached to the application, which should include:
 - a) Motivation of the consortium (promoter and partners) to present the proposal;
 - b) Description of the consortium, the role and mobilising capacity of the promoter and its partners in each Human Rights topic, and how they will articulate with each other (task breakdown by entity);
 - c) Description of the promoter's experience in building processes of congregation and consensus of purposes of third sector entities;
 - d) Description of the project manager's role and experience;

e) Objectives to be achieved (with quantification of the number of organisations to be involved/commit to the platform in the various human rights themes);

f) Description of the activities and methodology to be used to achieve the objectives of the project, focusing in particular on the following steps:

- Mapping of the subsector;
- Definition of the perimeter of the human rights area to be considered for the constitution of the platform;
- Mobilisation of actors throughout the country and wide-ranging discussion of the objectives, mission and activities of the new entity, including articulation with the associates;
- Possible future articulation with academic institutions for the development of its activities;
- Incorporation of experiences from other countries;

g) Plan and schedule of work to be carried out, which must necessarily reflect the activities described in the previous paragraph;

h) Communication/awareness raising plan that allows, in particular, to promote the adherence to the project of more organisations in the course of the project.

8.4 The detailed budget attached to the application should include the time allocation of the project manager and his/her travels abroad to know similar experiences.

8.5 Only complete applications shall be considered for evaluation and selection purposes. Clerical errors made during the online submission of documents may still be corrected within two working days, at the promoter's initiative, as mentioned in paragraph 2 of Article 22 of the Programme Rules, following the procedure indicated in the Promoter's Manual.

8.6 Applicants are responsible for the truthfulness and authenticity of all submitted documents and are expressly informed that they may be required to present the original documents to the Programme's Management Unit (PMU) at any stage of the application process.

9. Methodology of analysis, evaluation and scoring of applications

9.1 The PMU shall review the applications for compliance with the administrative and eligibility criteria set in paragraph 1 of Article 22 of the Programme Rules. Applicants whose applications are rejected at this stage shall be notified by e-mail and have a period of 10 days, counted from the day after the notification, to appeal the decision not to admit the application. Appeals must be sent by registered mail to the address indicated on paragraph 9.2 below; received appeals shall be analysed by the PMU, which then proposes a final decision to the Board of Trustees of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

9.2 The above-mentioned appeal shall be sent to the following address:

Fund Operated by:

Programa Cidadãos Ativ@s
Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian
Avenida de Berna, 45 A
1067-001 Lisboa – Portugal

9.3 The evaluation and scoring of the applications shall be performed by two independent experts taking as a basis the selection criteria referred to in Annex 1 of the Programme Rules, the actual specific criteria and weights being set in this notice as follows:

Criteria	Weight
1. Clarity and appropriateness of the proposed methodology and probability of achieving the objectives	25
2. Experience and ability of the Promoter NGO	20
3. Experience, knowledge and skills of the appointed Project Manager	30
4. Composition, comprehensiveness and diversity of the partnership	25
Total	100

9.4 The scores shall be assigned on a scale between 0 and 100 points, and the final classification of the application will be the simple average of the two scores assigned by the two independent experts except in the cases foreseen in paragraph 9.5 below.

9.5 If the difference between the two scores is more than 30% of the higher score, the application shall be assessed independently by a third expert, and in such cases, the final classification shall be the average of the two closest scores.

10. Selection process and reserve list

10.1 Only applications with a score equal or above 50 points may be selected to receive a grant.

10.2 After the evaluation and scoring of all candidate projects, the PMU submits the list ranked by score to the Selection Committee. The selection will be made on the basis of the best classifications.

10.3 Applications referred to in paragraph 10.1 which are not selected under the terms of paragraph 10.2 are eligible to join the reserve list mentioned in Article 26 of the Programme Rules. The reserve list is composed of the two applications with the second and third best scores.

10.4 The selected project and the reserve list are approved by the Board of Trustees of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation on the basis of the recommendations made by the Selection Committee.

10.5 The reserve list is valid for up to 4 months following the notification decision, meaning that applications which are not selected to receive a grant until that date are automatically considered as not selected.

11. Grant contracting

11.1 The promoter of the selected project shall be notified of the Board of Trustees' decisions as foreseen in Article 27 of the Programme Rules.

11.2 Prior to grant contracting, the PMU shall organise meetings with the project promoter and its partners, where they will be informed of the outcome of the technical analysis made by its staff and of the recommendations made by the independent evaluators, in order to improve, develop and/or specify the content of the project, its budget and targets as indicated in Article 28 of the Programme Rules.

11.3 Once the PMU considers the information provided sufficient and appropriate for drafting the grant contract, a grant contract is drafted and sent to the promoter, to be signed as stated in Article 28 of the Programme Rules.

11.4 The information regarding the selected project and its respective promoter will be advertised on the Programme's website - activecitizensfund.pt - upon receipt of the signed grant contract.

12. Payment system

12.1 The project promoter shall inform the PMU of the bank account number (IBAN) to be associated to the implementation of the project on the terms and for the purposes set in Article 36 of the Programme Rules. This information is a prerequisite for the signing of the grant contract and the processing of any payment to the project promoter.

12.2 Once the grant contract is signed by the promoter and the partnership contract is received by the PMU, the approved funding is disbursed according to the payment system set in Articles 37 and 40 of the Programme Rules.

13. Expected outputs

By the end of the project, the following outputs are expected to be delivered:

- a) Chart of principles;
- b) The platform's approved articles of association or statutes;
- c) Institutionalisation of the new organisation (constitutional documents and registry);
- d) Strategic guidelines and priorities for action, approved by its members;
- e) Business plan, approved by its members;
- f) Training, if applicable, of an initial core of employees of the new entity.

These outputs should be attached to the final project report, which should describe in detail the process and the steps taken to build the platform.

14. Budget Allocation

The total budget allocated to this call cannot exceed 149 850 euros, corresponding to 90% of the total supporting cost of the project.

15. Publicity and additional information

- 15.1 This notice, the framework document for this call and other relevant information, including the Programme Rules, the application forms and the Promoter's Manual, are available on the Programme's website: activecitizensfund.pt.
- 15.2 Any amendments to the terms and conditions set forth in this notice shall also be publicised in the above-mentioned website, with a minimum of three working days prior to the date of its entry into force.

Lisbon, 5 September 2019

