

ACTIVE CITIZENS FUND
CALL FOR APPLICATIONS #15 – LARGE PROJECTS
"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 lays down the specifications to apply for large projects under Outcome 4 of the Programme – “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](#).

Applications shall be submitted online through the website: 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](#) 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 Application Manual and other useful information can be found on the [Programme’s website](#).

1. Objectives

- 1.1 The projects to be selected under this Outcome shall aim primarily 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](#).
- 1.2 In order to attain the above-mentioned objectives, Outcome 4 - “Enhanced capacity and sustainability of civil society (organisations and the sector)” encompasses namely the following indicative project types:
 - a. Elaboration of needs assessments and action plans / strategic plans for organisations;
 - b. Implementation of action plans / strategic plans related to organisational / operational capacity building;
 - c. Training, mentoring, coaching and consulting in the priority cross-cutting areas of advocacy, watchdog and fundraising;

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- d. Traineeships for NGO staff members in other NGOs;
- e. Cross-cutting training, mentoring, coaching and consulting on governance, planning, administrative and financial management, communication and marketing, volunteer attraction and management, monitoring and evaluation techniques;
- f. Participation in networks and other vehicles for the internationalisation of organisations and their associative structures;
- g. Transfer of knowledge between large and small civil society organisations;
- h. Exchange of experiences for benchmarking;
- i. Conducting studies and publications and creation of data bases and knowledge and information repositories;
- j. Reinforcement of the sector's capacity and notoriety through networking, fundraising and dissemination events.
- k. Creation of a social business based on a business plan.

- 1.3 Projects for this call can be directed towards the promoter and/or towards other organisations.
- 1.4 All capacity building actions directed towards the promoter must be based on a previously prepared organisational needs assessment and action plan.
- 1.5 Capacity building actions directed towards other organisations, i.e., not the promoter organisation, do not require individual needs assessments and action plans, but must be justified by a needs assessment/diagnosis described in the application form. The project cannot entail the elaboration of an assessment of the organisations' needs, as this should already be known at the time of the application.
- 1.6 Despite what is mentioned in paragraph 1.5, needs assessments and action plans (as mentioned in paragraph 1.2 (a)) may be supported in projects directed towards other organisations but where other activities are not dependent on those documents.
- 1.7 For the purposes of this call a social business must be a business owned by the project promoter, whose profits will be applied to its social mission, in order to reduce its dependency on public funds. If the project's main objective is the creation of a social business, a business plan is required to be presented with the application.
- 1.8 Each supported project shall contribute at least to one outcome and deliver at least one output, to be selected from the indicators set for the Programme and quantified according to its nature and objectives.
- 1.9 The output indicators established for this call are:
- a. Number of NGOs participating in capacity building initiatives funded by the programme;
 - b. Number of professional staff trained.
 - c. Number of NGOs conducting an assessment of their organisational capacity building needs and preparing action plans;

- d. Number of NGOs that are members of civil society networks/platforms;
- e. Number of partnerships between NGOs or with public/private entities supported.

1.10 The outcome indicators established for this call are:

- a. Number of NGOs with transparent and accountable governance procedures;
- b. Number of NGOs with effective management procedures;
- c. Number of NGOs referencing research/evidence in their advocacy work;
- d. Number of NGOs less dependent on public funding (excluding ACF funding) by at least 10%;
- e. Number of initiatives implemented through partnerships between NGOs or with public/private entities.

1.11 In addition to the NGOs that during their project's implementation reduce the weight of its funding coming from public entities (by at least 10%), the successful creation of a social business, in accordance to a business plan that foresees such reduction, will also be considered to contribute to the outcome indicator of paragraph 1.10 (d).

1.12 The Programme gives priority to projects that contribute to the indicator in paragraph 1.9 (b).

2. Eligible applicants

2.1 Project promoters must comply with the general conditions of eligibility of the Programme provided for in Articles 9 and 10 of the [Programme Rules](#).

2.2 In the context of this call for applications project promoters whose projects are exclusively dedicated to their own capacity building must have at least 2 staff members at the time of the application.

2.3 In the context of this call for applications it is mandatory that projects above 30 000 euros are implemented through partnerships. Partner entities must comply with Article 12 of the [Programme Rules](#). If the partner entities require funding, they must also comply with Article 9 of the [Programme Rules](#).

2.4 For projects up to 30 000 euros, Articles 10.3, 11.4, 15.3, 44.2, 45 and 48 of the [Programme Rules](#) shall not apply, i.e.:

- the two years rule for registration before submission and the three times rule for the annual expenditure are not applicable;
- partnerships are not mandatory;
- a minimum time allocation for the project manager is not applicable;
- the submission of external evaluation and follow-up reports is not mandatory.

2.5 Each entity, either as promoter or as partner, must comply with the limits on accessing support stated in paragraph 4, Article 19 of the [Programme Rules](#).

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2.6 Applicants may also have access to bilateral cooperation initiatives for matchmaking and search for project partners, and to prepare donor partnerships for large projects under a separate call for applications. Information and notice available at activecitizensfund.pt.

3. Size and duration of projects

3.1 Large projects under this call shall have a total supportable cost above 20 000 euros and less than or equal to 75 000 euros, with the eligible costs of the project co-financed at a rate of up to 90%.

3.2 The maximum duration of large projects to be selected under this call for applications shall be 20 months, with an expected start date in March 2022.

4. Grants, eligible expenditure and financial contribution

4.1 Expenditures of entities that meet the requirements stated in Article 9 of the [Programme Rules](#), are eligible under the present call for applications.

4.2 Eligible costs are those actually incurred by the project promoter or the eligible partners according to the criteria laid down in Article 17 of the [Programme Rules](#).

4.3 The project promoters and partner entities' financial contribution can be provided in cash or in-kind (up to 50%) as voluntary work, calculated according to the formula set out in paragraph 5 of Article 18 of the [Programme Rules](#).

4.4 By derogation of the previous paragraph and based on the provisions laid down in paragraph 4 of Article 18 of the [Programme Rules](#), the project promoters and partner entities whose annual expenditure in the last three years was in average below 250 000 euros may provide their financial contribution up to 100% as voluntary work provided that at least one of the conditions set in 11.2 are met.

4.5 Income directly generated by the project during its implementation period must be deducted from the amount of its eligible expenses.

5. Territorial scope

Projects under this call have to be implemented in the territories referred to in Article 8 of the [Programme Rules](#).

6. Submission of applications

6.1 The applications must be submitted, electronically, via SIPPCA (the Programme information system) using an application form available on the Programme's website: activecitizensfund.pt.

6.2 Applications must be submitted through SIPPCA from 1 September 2021 until 15 November 2021, at 12:00 (GMT/Lisbon time).

6.3 Only complete applications (see Article 21 paragraph 2 of the [Programme Rules](#)) shall be considered for evaluation and selection purposes. Clerical errors made during the online

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submission of documents may still be corrected within two working days, as mentioned in paragraph 2 of Article 22 of the [Programme Rules](#), following the procedure indicated in the Application Manual.

6.4 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 Management Unit (PMU) at any stage of the application process.

7. Methodology of analysis, evaluation and scoring of applications

7.1 The PMU shall review the applications for compliance with the administrative and eligibility criteria set on Article 22 of the [Programme Rules](#). Applicants whose applications are rejected at this stage shall be informed and have a period of 10 days to appeal, counted from the day after the notification. Appeals may be sent by registered mail to the address indicated in paragraph 7.2 below; received appeals shall be analysed by the PMU which then proposes the final decision to the Board of Trustees of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

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

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

7.3 The evaluation and scoring of the applications shall be performed by two independent experts according to selection criteria referred to in Annex 1 of the [Programme Rules](#), with the weights set in this notice as follows:

Criteria	Weight
1. Coherence between project's objectives, activities, results and expected impact and clarity and appropriateness of the proposed methodology to tackle problems identified in the diagnosis	25
2. Relevance of the project towards achievement of Programme's objectives and Outcome results (considering paragraph 1.12 of this call notice), including value for money	25
3. Project sustainability	15
4. Experience and ability of the Promoter NGO and participation of donor country entities	15
5. Experience, knowledge and skills of the appointed Project Manager	10
6. Proposed mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation	10
Total	100

7.4 The scores of each criterion 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 7.5.

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- 7.5 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.
- 7.6 If the project includes capacity building of the project promoter and/or the project's main objective is the creation of a social business, the plans mentioned in 1.4 and 1.7 are subject to the evaluation of the external experts. The score of the project's plans shall be considered in the first criterion. If this criterion fails to score at least 50 points, the application cannot be selected.
- 7.7 Partnership with a donor country entity entails an automatic score of 5% of criterion 4 above (out of 15%). The participation of donor country entities shall not be considered in the evaluation of applications with a total supportable cost up to 30 000 euros and without a partner from the donor countries. These applications shall have its score adjusted to reflect the missing 5%.
- 7.8 The evaluation of the experience and ability of the Promoter NGO in criterion 4 is thus limited to 10% of the overall score. The experience and ability of the promoter shall not be considered for projects exclusively dedicated to the capacity building of the project promoter. Applications dedicated to the capacity building of the project promoter shall have its score adjusted to reflect the missing 10%.
- 7.9 If both scenarios from paragraphs 7.7 and 7.8 apply, the application shall have its score adjusted to reflect the missing 15%.

8. Selection process and reserve list

- 8.1 Only applications with a score equal or above 50 points may be selected to receive a grant.
- 8.2 After the evaluation and scoring of all candidate projects, the PMU submits the lists ranked by score to the Selection Committee. The selection will be made based on the best classifications, up to the limit of the available budget.
- 8.3 Applications referred to in paragraph 8.1 which cannot be selected under the terms of paragraph 8.2 are eligible to join the reserve list mentioned in Article 26 of the [Programme Rules](#). The reserve list is ranked according to the score of each application up to a limit of 30% of the budget available for this call.
- 8.4 The list of selected projects and the reserve list are approved by the Board of Trustees of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation based on the recommendations made by the Selection Committee.
- 8.5 The Programme Director may draw applications from the reserve list to be granted, should funding become available due to savings or unused funds in previously approved projects. 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.

9. Grant contracting

- 9.1 Promoters of selected projects shall be notified individually of the Board of Trustees' decisions as foreseen in Article 27 of the [Programme Rules](#).
- 9.2 Prior to grant contracting, the PMU shall organise meetings with promoters and 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](#).
- 9.3 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](#).
- 9.4 The final list of selected projects and promoters is advertised on the Programme's website - activecitizensfund.pt.

10. Payment system

- 10.1 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.
- 10.2 Once the grant contract is signed by the promoter and the partnership contract is received by the PMU, the approved grant is disbursed according to the payment system set in Articles 37 and 40 of the [Programme Rules](#).

11. Support to applicants

- 11.1 A specific support, as established in Article 20 of the [Programme Rules](#), is available to applicants having an annual turnover up to 250 000 euros.
- 11.2 In addition to the condition mentioned in 11.1, applicant NGOs can only receive specific support if one of the following conditions is met:
- They are located in under-served geographic areas (outside the Lisbon and Porto Metropolitan Areas);
 - They have been created and are composed of youth, migrants or minority groups.

12. Budget allocation

- 12.1 The total budget allocated to this call is 445 000 euros.
- 12.2 Whenever part of the budget allocated to this call isn't fully used to fund the applications selected and the applications on the reserve list, the remainder budget is transferred to future calls.

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13. Publicity and additional information

13.1 This notice and other relevant information, including the Programme Rules, the application forms and the Application Manual, are available on the Programme's website: activecitizensfund.pt.

13.2 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, 1 September 2021

