

## **ACTIVE CITIZENS FUND**

### **CALL FOR APPLICATIONS #16 – SMALL PROJECTS**

# **"BUILDING CAPACITIES AND EMPOWERING"**

The Active Citizens Fund has been implemented in Portugal within the “Memorandum of Understanding on the Implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021” between Iceland, Liechtenstein, and 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 for small projects aiming to build NGO capacities and empower vulnerable groups under several Outcomes of the Programme, as outlined in Article 3 of the Programme Rules. Given the timeframe of the Programme, this call is the last to be open during its implementation period. It focuses on strengthening the capacities and competencies of weak components of our social organisation.

In a territorially unbalanced country like Portugal, the weaknesses of the Portuguese society are mainly present in regions outside the growth drivers of Lisbon and Porto, where capacities and competencies are lacking. For that reason, the current call shall enforce positive discrimination in those areas, in line with efforts made since 2018 to achieve a more equitable distribution of grants across the country.

The present call notice is structured according to two areas of support, for which applications are expected to be submitted:

- A. Building NGO capacities for a more democratic society;
- B. Empowering vulnerable groups and respecting diversity.

Applications shall be submitted online through the website: [activecitizensfund.pt](http://activecitizensfund.pt) and shall follow the evaluation and selection procedures detailed on this notice.

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

### **1. Objectives**

#### **A. Building NGO capacities for a more democratic society**

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- 1.1 The projects to be selected under this Area shall aim primarily to enhance civil society's capacity and sustainability. They shall consider the overall objectives of the Programme as outlined in Article 2 of the Programme Rules but may also include complementary activities to raise civic awareness and promote democratic values. They shall be supported under Outcome 4 - "Enhanced Capacity and Sustainability of Civil Society (Organisations and the Sector)".
- 1.2 To attain the objectives mentioned above, the following project types may be supported:
- a. Implementation of action plans / strategic plans related to organisational/operational capacity building;
  - b. Training, mentoring and consulting in the priority cross-cutting areas of advocacy, watchdog and digitalisation;
  - c. Training, mentoring and consulting on governance, strategic planning, administrative and financial management, communication and marketing, monitoring and evaluation techniques, human resources management, leadership and team management, project management;
  - d. Acquisition of know-how, tools and methodologies.

The typologies mentioned above may be complemented by initiatives resulting in the practical implementation of the acquired knowledge, skills, tools and methodologies, namely through the following activities:

- e. Advocacy and public policy watchdog activities, including the development and dissemination of policy papers/policy proposals, sharing of information in decision-making processes concerning public policies, the promotion of structured dialogue between NGOs and public and private entities and the implementation of recommendations or decisions taken at the international level;
  - f. Awareness-raising campaigns that counter-extremism, hate speech and populism, fake news and disinformation and promote media literacy.
- 1.3 Projects for this call must be focused on the capacity building of the project promoter.
- 1.4 All capacity-building actions must be based on a previously prepared organisational or thematic needs assessment and action plan.
- 1.5 Each supported project shall contribute at least to one outcome indicator (from paragraph 1.7) and deliver at least one output (from paragraphs 1.6 a) or b)). It can also contribute to other targets, selected from the indicators set by the Programme in paragraph 1.6 and quantified according to its nature and objectives.

1.6 The output indicators established for this call are:

- a. Number of NGOs participating in capacity building initiatives funded by the programme;

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- b. Number of professional staff trained;
- c. Number of NGOs engaged in monitoring public and private decision-making;
- d. Number of NGO initiatives promoting access to information on public/private policies;
- e. Number of awareness-raising campaigns carried out.

1.7 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.

## **B. Empowering vulnerable groups and respecting diversity**

1.8 The projects to be selected under this Area shall aim primarily at empowering vulnerable groups. They shall consider the overall objectives of the Programme as outlined in Article 2 of the Programme Rules but may also include complementary activities to promote and defend human rights. They shall be supported under Outcome 3 - "Vulnerable groups are empowered".

1.9 To attain the objectives mentioned above, the following project types may be supported:

- a. Creation or improvement of support services to empower vulnerable groups;
- b. Provision of training for the economic empowerment of vulnerable individuals to promote their integration in the labour market;
- c. Support for groups at risk of social exclusion;
- d. Support for victims of domestic and sexual violence, including their physical, psychological, and social rehabilitation;
- e. Support for the integration, in its various components, of refugees, migrants, Roma, LGBTQI+ and other minority groups;
- f. Support for the integration of former prisoners, homeless people, and other marginalised or at-risk groups, including through the use of the arts, sport, or culture;
- g. Adoption of participatory methods and/or innovative solutions in addressing the needs of vulnerable groups.

The typologies mentioned above may be complemented by initiatives aiming at promoting knowledge and respect for diversity, namely through the following activities:

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- h. Human rights education and training for professionals working with vulnerable groups;
- i. Awareness-raising campaigns and actions that prevent or fight human rights violations such as discrimination on any ground, racism, hate speech, and all forms of violence;
- j. Collection and reporting of data to inform activities preventing and denouncing human rights violations against migrants and refugees and the Roma people.

1.10 Each supported project shall contribute at least to one outcome indicator (from paragraph 1.12) and deliver at least one output (from paragraphs 1.11 a), b) or c)). It can also contribute to other targets, selected from the indicators set by the Programme in paragraph 1.11 and quantified according to its nature and objectives.

1.11 The output indicators established for this call are:

- a. Number of vulnerable individuals trained in economic empowerment;
- b. Number of NGOs specifically working with youth at risk of social exclusion;
- c. Number of NGOs adopting participatory methods with vulnerable groups;
- d. Number of awareness-raising campaigns carried out;
- e. Number of professional staff trained.

1.12 The outcome indicators established for this call are:

- a. Number of beneficiaries of services provided or improved;
- b. Number of vulnerable individuals reached by empowerment measures.

## **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 Each entity, either as a promoter or as a partner, must comply with the limits on accessing support stated in paragraph 4, Article 19 of the Programme Rules.

## **3. Size and duration of projects**

3.1 Small projects shall have a total supportable cost between 10 000 euros and 35 000 euros, with the project's eligible costs co-financed at a rate of up to 90%.

3.2 Projects under area B shall include a capacity-building component with a cost of 5 000 euros. The threshold and ceiling indicated in 3.1 already encompass this cost.

3.3 The maximum duration of small projects to be selected under this call for applications shall be 12 months, with an expected start date in January 2023.

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#### 4. Grants, eligible expenditure and financial contribution

- 4.1 Expenditures of entities that meet the requirements stated in Article 9 of the Programme Rules shall be eligible under the present call for applications to calculate the grant.
- 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 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 turnover in the last three years was on 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 11.3 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 must be implemented in the territories referred to in Article 8 of the Programme Rules.

#### 6. Submission of applications

- 6.1 The applications shall be submitted electronically via SIPPCA (the Programme information system) using an application form available on the Programme's website: [activecitizensfund.pt](http://activecitizensfund.pt).
- 6.2 Applications must be submitted through SIPPCA from 6 June 2022 until 16 September 2022 at 12:00 (GMT+1/Lisbon time).
- 6.3 Only complete applications (see Article 21, paragraph 2 of the Programme Rules) shall be considered for evaluation and selection. Clerical errors made during the online 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. They are expressly informed that they may be required to present the original documents to the 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 in Article 22 of the Programme Rules. Applicants whose applications are rejected at this stage shall be informed and have ten 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

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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 appeal mentioned above 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 Two independent experts shall perform the evaluation and scoring of the applications according to the following selection criteria, with the weights set in this notice as follows:

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Weight</b>
1. Coherence between the project's objectives, activities, results and expected impact and clarity and appropriateness of the proposed methodology to tackle problems identified in the diagnosis	30
2. Relevance of the project towards the achievement of the Programme's objectives and subsequent results, through the relevant outcome, including value for money	30
3. Project sustainability	15
4. Experience and ability of the Promoter NGO	10
5. Experience, knowledge and skills of the appointed Project Manager	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

7.4 The scores shall be assigned between 0 and 100 points. The application's final classification will be the simple average of the two scores given by the two independent experts except in the cases foreseen in paragraph 7.5.

7.5 If the difference between the two scores is more than 30% of the higher score, a third expert shall assess the application independently. In such cases, the final classification shall be the average of the two closest scores.

7.6 If the promoter's headquarters are located outside the Metropolitan Areas of Lisbon and Porto, the average score of the application shall be multiplied by 1.1 for the final classification.

## **8. Selection process and reserve list**

8.1 Only applications with a score equal to 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 the score to the Selection Committee. The selection will be made based on the best classifications, up to the limit of the available budget, and a balanced weight between Areas A and B shall be sought.

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

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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 Board of Trustees of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation approves the list of selected projects and the reserve list 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 3 months following the notification decision, meaning that applications that are not selected to receive a grant until that date are automatically considered 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 Before 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 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 prepared 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](http://activecitizensfund.pt).

## 10. Payment system

- 10.1 The project promoter shall inform the PMU of the bank account number (IBAN) to be associated with 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 promoter signed the grant contract and the PMU receives the partnership contract, the approved grant is disbursed according to the payment system set in Articles 37 and 39 of the Programme Rules.

## 11. Support to applicants

- 11.1 To ensure fair competition and equal opportunities and improve chances of success, the PMU is available to support all applicants. Whenever relevant, enquiries and answers are published in the FAQ section of the Programme's website. The PMU can be contacted by phone or e-mail, as indicated on the Programme's website - [activecitizensfund.pt](http://activecitizensfund.pt)
- 11.2 Specific support, as established in Article 20 of the [Programme Rules](#), is available to applicants with an annual turnover of up to 250 000 euros.

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11.3 In addition to the conditions mentioned in 11.2, applicant NGOs can only receive specific support if one of the following conditions is met:

- a) They are located in under-served geographic areas (outside the Lisbon and Porto Metropolitan Areas);
- b) 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 600 000 euros.

## 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](http://activecitizensfund.pt).

13.2 Any amendments to the terms and conditions outlined in this notice shall also be publicised on the website mentioned above, with a minimum of three working days before it enters into force.

Lisbon, 6 June 2022