

CALL FOR PROPOSALS AND GUIDELINES

'Europe supports!' Our Common Values Programme

Rapid intervention(action) grants

Ökotárs – Hungarian Environmental Partnership Foundation, together with the Autonomia Foundation, Carpathian Foundation-Hungary and the Hungarian Association of Community Development (HACD), is hereby launching an open call for applications, funded by the European Union, for Hungarian civil society organisations (CSOs) working to protect and promote EU fundamental rights and values, with the following conditions.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

The goal of this call is to support the organisation and implementation of actions, communication campaigns, mobilisation and advocacy (ad-hoc coalitions), to address current local or national public issues and social problems in Hungary, with the involvement of community members in areas which are in line with the general objectives of the „Our Common Values Programme”.

Support may also be given to activities that provide a basis for launching campaigns and actions, particularly at local level, for example by organising interested and/or active citizens into groups, exploring problems with them, confronting arguments and opinions on the issue (e.g. by organising citizens' forums) and to win new people to the cause.

In addition, campaigns and actions aimed at expanding the circle of supporters of the applicant organisation and increasing its social base and visibility may also be supported, if they focus on an issue of the applicant organisation that fits with the overall objectives of the Our Common Values Programme.

The general aim of the programme is for winning applicants to implement their ideas that

- contribute to the protection and promotion of our common European values (human dignity, freedom, democracy and equality, including gender equality, the rule of law and human rights, including minority rights)
- involve, engage and encourage citizens to participate and take collective action
- and, while doing so, also work to stabilise their own organisation and build their capacities.

The rights based on these values are detailed in the EU's single, common document, the Charter of Fundamental Rights, in 52 short articles. The Charter is also the compass for the Common Values programme, as it is often through our rights that fundamental human values can be realised. Civil society actors in the country can therefore apply to the call for proposals with projects related to (one or more of) the fundamental rights set out in the charter.

Campaigns are defined as a series of short-term, intensive activities serving a specific objective, reaching and involving a wide range of target groups, accompanied by strong

communication, using traditional and social media in a conscious way. Mobilising and advocacy activities are understood as bottom-up, grassroots initiatives that involve the general or smaller community in concrete actions, such as petitions or demonstrations, to address a local, regional or national social issue in line with the general objectives of the call for proposals, in order to achieve a concrete, timely and realistic goal.

We are therefore looking for ideas that

- draw attention to a concrete social problem, local, regional or national issue related to the above rights and values
- increase the visibility of the cause and/or the social base of the organisation
- reach the public through strong communication and various means (if possible also through the media), they address a wide range of target groups
- motivate people to take action to solve the problem (individually or collectively) and/or to support the cause (e.g. through donations, volunteering)
- reach people who have not previously been involved in similar activities
- contribute to solving problems and changing the status quo.

Conferences, festivals, annual and/or regular events in a substantially unchanged format, (children's) camps, predominantly recreational, sporting or cultural events, charity events, projects with a substantially local community-building purpose, and any event that does not reach new target groups are not eligible within the framework of this call for proposals.

The Union Values programme does not support political organisations or their candidates, political actions or faith-based activities under this call.

SIZE AND LENGTH OF THE SUPPORTED PROJECTS

The amount awarded per project under this call for proposals is a **minimum of € 1000 and a maximum of € 20,000**, representing 100% of the total project cost (i.e. no co-financing is required). The maximum duration of projects is **nine (9) months** (no lower limit). In any case, the actions/campaigns must be completed by 31 January 2026.

The project budget must be prepared and submitted in HUF, but the grant contract will be concluded in EUR. The budget table to be filled in as part of the application form will automatically convert the amounts entered into euros, using the official InforEuro monthly exchange rate for the month preceding the month of submission.

The total budget available to support action grants in this call is € 319,130.



ELIGIBLE ORGANISATIONS

The call is open to CSOs registered in Hungary that meet the following criteria:

- they are not profit-making, i.e. they are not set up for personal profit (although they may have paid employees and engage in economic activities, they cannot share the results of these activities between their members and managers; their economic activities must not be primary, but must serve the mission and objectives of the organisation)
- their members have no financial interest in the results of the organisation's work or in its economic activities, and the main purpose and activities of the organisation must not be solely to represent the economic or professional interests of its members
- are voluntary in nature, formed voluntarily by groups or individuals and usually involve an element of voluntary participation in the organisation.
- act in the public arena and for the public good on concerns and issues related to the well-being of people, groups or society as a whole, but not strive to gain political power.
- have some degree of formal or institutional existence, unlike ad hoc groups, involving formal statutes or other governing documents defining their mission, objectives and scope.
- are membership-based, with transparent structures and an elected chair / board, and are accountable to their members and donors
- are independent of local, regional and national government and other public authorities (in case of foundations, the majority of the above shall not be among of its founders); of political parties and commercial organisations (these bodies must not have a majority representation among their founders and/or senior management)
- have no outstanding public debt
- respect the fundamental rights and values on which the EU is founded (and make a declaration to this effect in their application.

Based on their legal form the following types of organisations are eligible:

1. Actively operating civil organisations, associations and trade unions established under act CLXXV of 2011 on the right of association, public benefit status and the functioning and support of civil organisations (except political parties, chambers of commerce, public bodies, employers' representative organisations, insurance associations and churches)
2. Actively operating associations and foundations (excluding trusts and public foundations) established under Act V of 2013, i.e. the Hungarian Civil Code.

Informal (unregistered) citizens' groups and communities can also participate, through a "hosting" organisation. The host organisation must meet the above conditions and commit to receiving the grant and managing it in accordance with the financial rules (see below).

An organisation can only submit one project at a time for this call, but **can resubmit a new one once the previous action project has been completed and approved by Ökotárs Foundation.** Organisations that have received a grant under other calls for proposals under the Union Values programme can also participate, regardless of whether their other project is closed or not, until their total support reaches the limit of maximum 60,000 €!

PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED IN PARTNERSHIP (IN CONSORTIA)

Applicant organisations may **carry out their proposed project alone or in a consortium with partner organisations or other collaborators**. The lead applicant may involve a maximum of two (2) partners that will be actively involved in the preparation and implementation of the project and therefore receive financial support on the basis of a cooperation agreement with the lead applicant. In all cases, the lead applicant is responsible for the technical and financial implementation of the project and the partners will receive support and report their expenditures through the lead applicant (partners are not subcontractors, so invoices issued by the partner to the applicant cannot be accepted, they must be in the name of either the lead or the partner).

The partner organisations must meet the same eligibility criteria as the main applicant (see above), except that they may be CSOs registered not only in Hungary but also in other Member States of the European Union (but even then the project must be implemented in Hungary)

The lead applicant and its consortium partner(s) must conclude a cooperation agreement in the event of a successful proposal, which must be sent to the intermediary after the grant decision has been received and no later than the signature of the grant agreement (cooperation agreements will be annexed to the grant agreement). The cooperation agreement must set out the obligations and rights of the parties, as follows:

- the division of tasks and responsibilities between partners
- the financial agreement on the sharing of costs between the partners, in particular their share of the grant amount
- the conversion rules to be applied for the accounting and payment of expenditures
- the arrangements for reporting and monitoring by the partners
- an itemised and detailed budget
- the method of settling disputes and jurisdiction.

Partners may only invoice their own costs (invoices in their name), which must be included in the financial report submitted by the main applicant. The same restrictions apply to the costs that can be claimed by partners as to those of the main applicant.

The applicant may also cooperate with other organisations and institutions in the implementation of the project, but these are not considered as consortium partners and are not eligible for funding.

PROCEDURE FOR SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

Applications may be submitted continuously from the date of publication of this call (1 March 2023) until 30 June 2025 (18:00) or until the budget is exhausted (whichever comes first).

Applicants must first submit a short project idea of up to two A4 pages (6000 characters) to Ökotárs Foundation as an attached text document (word) via the messaging interface of [the Our Common Values Programme website](#) (accessible after registration) that includes:

- The name (in the case of an informal group, the name of the group and the host organisation), address, tax number, website and/or social media contact details and brief description of the applicant organisation/group, which must cover all the aspects detailed under the section on eligible organisations.
- How does the proposed action/campaign or public activity fit to the protection or promotion of democracy, the rule of law and EU rights and values?



- What specific issue or social problem does the proposed action/campaign or public activity address? How serious or widespread is the problem?
- Which existing knowledge, experience, individual or community strengths of the applicants does the action/campaign or public activity build on?
- What is the specific objective of the planned action/campaign or public activity - what are they trying to achieve? How will this contribute to solving the problem?
- What are the target groups of the action/campaign or public activity and their main characteristics? Who will the campaign reach? Who will be targeted by the action?
- List of the main steps of the planned activities.
- The ideal and latest date for the start of the project.

Within 10 working days of receiving the project idea by e-mail, Ökotárs Foundation's programme manager will check whether the organisation meets the criteria and whether the proposed action or campaign idea is relevant to the objectives of the call, i.e. whether it fits one of the above-mentioned objectives. If not, they will inform the proposer of the project idea by e-mail.

If the project proposal meets the criteria and the purpose of the call for proposals, Ökotárs Foundation will give the applicant access to the online application platform of the website kozosertekeink.okotars.hu to fill in and submit the full application form, which will be available for 20 working days from the date the applicant receives the notification approving the project idea.

Please take care to understand the questions on the form and to be concise and clear in your answers. Avoid generalities, be to the point and help us to understand what you have to say.

After being notified of the acceptance/rejection of the project idea, the applicant can request an online consultation, where they can ask questions about the submitted project idea. The aim of the consultation is to help turn accepted ideas into successful proposals, to clarify the reasons for rejections and to help address any weaknesses in order to re-submit successfully, but participation in the consultation does not guarantee funding. To register for the consultation, please use the Our Common Values Programme website's messaging interface. Consultations are scheduled in advance on Fridays of even weeks at 13:00. The first session will be 6 October 2023, and every two weeks thereafter (excluding public and other holidays.)

All applicants are encouraged to contact Ökotárs Foundation if they are unsure and ask questions via the Our Common Values website's messaging interface (registration required), and to read the FAQ (frequently asked questions) before submitting an application. The Foundation's staff are not available to read and comment on completed applications.

MEASURING THE RESULTS

Projects should be designed in such a way that the achievement of objectives and results can be measured in concrete terms. Applicants should therefore define in their application specific **qualitative indicators that measure the progress of their project and the target value to be achieved**, and monitor their achievement in their reports. In addition, all applicants must report on the achievement of the following **quantitative indicators** (according to the nature of the project):

- number of publications and other information materials (websites, social media pages, etc.) and their numbers/reach
- number of events (workshops, trainings, etc.) and number of participants
- number of people involved in the activities of the supported organisation
- number of awareness-raising actions and campaigns carried out
- number of national and local policies, laws or regulations influenced
- number of beneficiaries (members of the general public and vulnerable groups) and other organisations to whom the grantee provides services (e.g. advice, training)
- the number of partnerships strengthened or built
- other quantitative results.

ELIGIBLE COSTS

All direct costs necessary and proportionate to the implementation of the project and incurred by the beneficiary organisation or its partners are eligible, as follows:

- incurred during the implementation of the project (i.e., the costs are incurred and invoiced during the lifetime of the project)
- they are necessary for the implementation of the project and are included in the project budget submitted in the application and approved by the Selection Committee
- costs that are identifiable and verifiable and are included in the accounting records of the grantee or its partners in accordance with the relevant legislation
- are reasonable, justified and comply with the requirements of sound financial management
- comply with relevant legislation.

In view of the above, the following direct costs are eligible:

- the wage and benefit costs of the staff involved in the project (total cost of employment, whether it is an employment relationship, a mandate contract of agency or a contractor the basis invoicing);
- travel and subsistence expenses of project staff and other participants (e.g. volunteers, participants) (specifying the purpose, mode and distance of travel)
- rent or purchase of equipment and supplies (new or used) needed for the project
- costs of services, including communication costs, events, printing and publication costs, training and other services (with a brief description of the name and content of the service).

In addition to the direct project costs, other costs that are related to the general operation of the applicant and not directly related to the project (office rent, cleaning, maintenance, utilities, telephone, internet, accounting, etc.) are also eligible. Such indirect overheads may be claimed up to a maximum of 10% of the eligible direct project costs. Indirect costs need not be itemised, but must be included in the organisation's accounts in accordance with the accounting rules, in such a way that they do not include costs already included under another budget heading.

INELIGIBLE COSTS

The following costs are ineligible:

- purchase of land real estate
- construction of new buildings



- purchase of a motor vehicle
- cost of overdraft and other financial charges
- recoverable taxes (including recoverable VAT)
- leasing charges
- foreign exchange losses
- commissions and dividends, profit payments, write-off of losses and future receivables
- settlement of interest and late payment interest
- fines, penalties and litigation costs (except litigation costs incurred in the course of public interest litigation)
- items already financed from other sources
- costs incurred before the grant decision
- excessive and unnecessary expenditure.

FINANCIAL TIMELINE

Ökotárs Foundation will pay 80% of the grant as an advance within 10 working days of the signature of the contract, and the remaining maximum 20% will be paid after the project has been closed and the final report submitted and accepted.

The earliest date from which projects can start to be implemented is the date of receipt of the notification of the grant decision, and costs can be charged from that date until the last day of the project (as specified in the grant agreement). No costs may be charged retroactively, either for activities incurred previously or for activities already carried out.

The grant contract will include the approved budget and the two instalments in EUR. Ökotárs Foundation will pay 80% of the grant as an advance within 10 working days of the signature of the contract, and the remaining maximum 20% will be paid after the project has been closed and the final report submitted and accepted. The grantee will receive the grant in euro to its HUF account, which will then automatically be converted into HUF. The exchange rate used by the applicant's bank on the date of the transfer will be the rate used to settle the costs incurred in HUF.

Exceptionally, if some of the project costs are incurred in euros, the applicant may request that part of the grant be paid in euros. This must be specified in the grant agreement. If certain costs are not incurred in euro or forint, the InfoEuro exchange rate should be used (http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/inforeuro/inforeuro_en.cfm).

THE PROCESS OF EVALUATION

- 1) Within 10 working days of receipt of the two-page project idea, the Ökotárs Foundation's programme manager will verify that:
 - the project idea is relevant, i.e. whether the idea fits the objectives of the call as detailed above
 - the applicant organisation meets the above detailed definition of an CSO and the conditions of this call for proposals.

The programme manager of Ökotárs Foundation will decide whether the above two criteria are met. If the applicant and the project idea meet the requirements, the programme manager will notify the applicant by e-mail about where and how to start filling in the full application form.

In case of ambiguities, the programme manager may request further information and/or documents from the applicant by e-mail. The deadline for replying (or sending the requested document) is specified in the e-mail - usually up to 5 working days. It is the applicants' responsibility to check their e-mail account regularly!

The applicant organisation or applicant excluded due to non-compliance with the above criteria may request the Ökotárs Foundation to review the decision within 10 calendar days of receipt of the notification.

If the two-page project idea is accepted, the evaluation of the application will proceed as follows.

2) Full applications completed using the online form will be screened for formal and legal eligibility (length of project, budget and suitability of partners) by Ökotárs Foundation's programme manager within 5 working days of submission. If necessary, the programme manager may ask further clarifying questions via email from the online system, which the applicant must answer within 5 working days. **If the applicant fails to reply by the deadline**, the application will either be rejected or will continue to be processed without the missing information(s), depending on the nature of the deficiency.

The applicant organisation or the project **excluded due to non-compliance with the formal and legal/administrative criteria detailed above may request the Ökotárs Foundation to review** the decision within 10 calendar days of receipt of the notification. If the detailed application is accepted, the evaluation will proceed.

3) After the formal pre-screening, the complete application will be scored individually by three assessors on a scale of 0-3 (not at all suitable - slightly suitable - partly suitable - fully suitable), on the following criteria:

- What is the quality of the needs assessment? Does the proposal address a real and current problem within the objectives of the call? Is the plan consistent with the objectives of the call?
- How clear, well defined and practical is the planned action/campaign or public activity? Are the expected results of the project realistically achievable?
- Will the organisation be able to successfully implement the project based on its history and experience?
- Will the planned activity be able to capture the attention of the target audience? Is it expected that the project will reach out to new and wider targets with its topic?
- Does the project reflect the needs and circumstances of the target group and the community? Is there a real community behind the idea and are its members involved in the planning and implementation process, and is it expected that the project will generate community/civic activity?
- How creative/innovative is the proposal's approach, how innovative are the methods to be used - in terms of the target group and the topic?
- Is the planned budget and duration appropriate for the implementation of the project?

(Maximum score available: 21.)

The evaluators will also provide a written justification for their scores, listing the strengths and weaknesses of the application and recommending whether to support or reject it. The evaluation



will normally take place within 15 working days. During the substantive evaluation, the evaluators may request additional information on the project and the organisation via the online system. The questions will be forwarded by the Ökotárs Foundation programme manager to the applicant via email through the online system. The email will also indicate the deadline for response - normally 5 working days from the date of sending. Failure to reply will result in the application being assessed on the basis of the information available.

4) Based on the scores given by the evaluators, the Ökotárs Foundation will rank the applications and recommend the funding of the application based on the scores. This recommendation will be reviewed by the three-member Selection committee (two members representing the operating foundations and one external expert invited). **The Evaluation Committee meets once a month (last Wednesday of each month).** The Selection committee may modify the ranking if justified and will inform the applicants concerned. In addition, the committee may impose conditions, delete activities and cost lines from the project if justified.

Applications submitted at least 3 weeks prior to the date of a Selection committee meeting will be evaluated. If less than 5 applications are received by this date, a decision will be taken at the next meeting, and applicants will be informed of this. Exceptions will be made for applications which clearly involve urgent activities, i.e. delaying the start of the project would make it impossible to implement the plans, or which are no longer relevant after a certain period of time.

The Representation of the European Commission in Hungary will be invited participate as observer to the meetings of the Selection committee.

The decision of the evaluation committee is final, **there is no right of appeal, but the applicant may submit a new proposal.** The grant decision will be published by the Ökotárs Foundation on the website of the Our Common Values Programme and the applicant will be informed in writing (via the online system) within 15 working days. The notification will include the scores obtained by the application and, in the case of rejected applicants, the justification of the reasons for the decision.

CONTRACTING

Grantees will receive their grant agreement and a summary of approved activities and budget as an annex via the online system. This must be printed in triplicate and signed and be sent both electronically (PDF format) and in hard copy via post within 30 days to the designated contact foundation, which will after verification forward it to the Ökotárs Foundation. The Foundation will then transfer the corresponding amount to the grantee.

Mandatory annexes to the grant agreement (to be sent at the same time as the signed contract is returned):

- Annex 1: project summary, expected results and indicators, agreed budget (signed!)
- Annex 2: a court certificate not older than 30 days of the registration of the organisation (which can be obtained from the competent county courts, also electronically)
- Attachment 3: a certificate from the tax authority (NAV), not older than 30 days, stating that the organisation has no public debts (the "zero" certificate issued by the competent regional NAV directorate; this can be replaced if the grantee is listed in the database of 'positive')

- taxpayers free of public debts printed from the NAV website)
- Annex 4: a simple copy of the articles of association or statutes
- Annex 5: an immediate direct debit order issued by the grantee's bank, valid for all bank accounts of the organisation
- Annex 6: a simple copy of the latest annual public benefit report (and annexes)
- Annex 7: a declaration by the grantee that it undertakes to observe the highest ethical standards, respect the fundamental rights and values on which the EU is founded (Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union and Article 21 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and other applicable laws) and that it refrains from any action of discrimination or intolerance. (Annexes 2 to 7 do not need to be submitted if the organisation has already submitted them in connection with another grant under the Union Values programme.)

Grantees implementing their project in partnership, a Cooperation Agreement between the grantee (lead applicant) and the partner(s). In case of a foreign partner, the Cooperation Agreement must be submitted in English.

A model agreement can be downloaded from the website of the Our Common Values Programme.

The **grant agreement may be amended** during the implementation of the project. Any significant change in the general objectives of the grant, any change in the timetable exceeding 2 months or any transfer of funds **between the main budget categories (cost lines) exceeding 20% or EUR 1000 must be requested in writing by the grantee from the designated managing foundation at least 15 days before** the planned expenditure.

MONITORING OF PROJECTS

Project-level monitoring covers three areas: professional, financial and technical. The purpose of monitoring is:

1. collect data on the tasks carried out in the project, the objectives achieved (along the indicators)
2. technical and financial monitoring
3. professional and financial-technical assistance.

The three functions are complementary. The information received is used to check whether the beneficiary is following the contract, but also to see whether it needs professional or technical assistance.

Grantees can ask for help or questions from the designated intermediary foundation contact at any time during the implementation of the project.

REPORTING ON PROJECTS

Grantees must submit a final report within 30 days of the end of the project, as specified in the agreement.

The reports will consist of a **substantive and a financial part**, which will be prepared in the online system (only reports submitted in this way will be accepted). The substantive report must cover activities, results, impacts achieved and justification of deviations from plans. The report should be accompanied by tangible products and documents generated during the implementation of the project (e.g. publications, press releases, attendance sheets of events, etc.).



The financial section consists of a table listing details of itemised costs. Prior to the payment of interim and final grant instalments, the designated intermediary foundation will request (in electronic form) the submission of financial supporting documents and statements for the items selected at random from the financial table for verification. This check covers 10% of the expenditure items (including all types of costs), with the right to verify all financial data, if necessary, by Ökotárs Foundation.

The foundation's programme manager will check the report within 20 working days of submission, after which they may ask clarifying questions and request additional documents (including copies of financial documents). Grantees have 8 days to rectify any omissions (with the possibility of an extension of 8 days if necessary).

For more details on the reporting process, please consult the reporting guidelines, which can be downloaded [here](#).

FURTHER INFORMATION

The conditions and procedures of the programme are governed by a contract concluded with the European Union's European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). The consortium is managed by the Ökotárs Foundation, which concludes the grant contracts, transfers the payments and is also responsible for the implementation of this call for proposals.

The European Commission's support for the preparation of this document does not imply an endorsement of its contents, which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.