

Active Citizenship and Inclusion

NGO Programme



Programme *Active Citizenship and Inclusion*

1st Open Call for Project Proposals

Area of support:
Active citizenship

Call for proposals code: AOI-AO-1

Announcement of the 1st Call for proposals: 28th February 2013

Deadline for Project Proposals submission: 30th April 2013

Call published by: Ekopolis Foundation

1. Introduction

This call for proposals is a part of the implementation of the programme Active Citizenship and Inclusion (further as well as Programme).

Programme is a grant scheme for supporting activities of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) active in enhancing participative democracy, decreasing social inequalities, poverty and exclusion, supporting children and youth, protecting the environment and providing welfare and basic social services.

Horizontal priorities of the Programme are bilateral co-operation between Slovak NGOs and partners from the donor states, capacity building of NGOs and enhancing the position of NGOs in society.

A special interest of the Program is paid to supporting projects with broader positive impact in society, especially when reducing hate speech, extremism, racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia, encourage multicultural understanding, gender balance and involvement of marginalised groups, including Roma, foster equal opportunities and suppressing sexual harassment, violence against women and trafficking.

The Programme supports projects of NGOs through open calls in the following areas of support: Active citizenship, Protection of the environment and climate change, Children and youth, including children and youth at risk and Welfare and basic services to vulnerable groups.

Programme is operated by the consortium led by the Ekopolis Foundation in partnership with Children of Slovakia Foundation and SOCIA – Social Reform Foundation. It is be implemented in the period January 2013 – December 2015. The total financial allocation for supporting projects of NGOs is 2.9 million €, which includes allocation of 100,000 € for supporting bilateral cooperation.

The Programme is a part of the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014, financed by Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland. In Slovakia, there are two NGO Programmes supported by the EEA Financial Mechanism – along with the Active citizenship and inclusion there is Human rights and democracy Programme operated by the Open Society Foundation and including the areas i) Democracy, good governance and transparency, ii) Human rights, including minorities' rights iii) Gender equality and Gender based violence, iv) Anti-discrimination and Combat racism and xenophobia. The information about both Programmes is available through the webpage www.eeango.sk.

2. Purpose of the call for proposals

The purpose of this call for proposals is supporting projects of Slovak NGOs in the area of support **Active citizenship**. Supported projects should foster participatory democracy (especially by increasing public participation in decision-making and improving access to information) and reduction of social inequalities, poverty and exclusion (especially by improving access to income and social inclusion).

3. Priority areas

Priority area 1 – Participatory democracy

Thematic support 1A: Public participation in decision-making

Specific eligible activities:

- using instruments of participatory democracy in practice, advocacy and anti-corruption activities;
- participation in policy and decision-making processes and watchdog and monitoring activities;
- fostering instruments of participatory democracy;
- awareness raising in area of participatory democracy at various levels;
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Thematic support 1B: Access to information

Specific eligible activities:

- access to information at all levels;

- strengthening „watch-dog“ roles of NGOs, network and coalition building in the area of access to information

Priority area 2 – Social inequalities, poverty and exclusion, including in rural areas

Thematic support 2A: Access to income

Specific eligible activities:

- innovative and pilot models of linking demand and supply of working opportunities;
- pilot business and self-employment models;
- supporting employment by improving welfare.

Thematic support 2B: Social inclusion

Specific eligible activities:

- participation of poor and excluded people in relevant public issues;
- awareness-raising in area of poverty and social exclusion issues;
- activities towards local sustainable social and economic development.

Under all priority areas general eligible activities can be implemented in the projects:

- fostering active citizenship and participatory democracy, including grassroots / local level;
- advocacy, watchdog and monitoring activities;
- awareness-raising activities;
- multicultural dialogue activities;
- participation in policy and decision-making processes;
- capacity-building and organisational support to NGOs;
- strengthening governance in membership-based NGOs;
- network and coalition building;
- mutual learning and dissemination;
- education and training activities;
- cultural initiatives to promote key areas of support as mentioned above;
- provision of welfare and basic services.

4. Eligibility criteria

4.1 Eligible applicants

Applicants eligible to realise projects are non-governmental organisations (NGOs) active in one of the priority areas. Non-governmental organisation is non-profit voluntary organisations established as a legal entity in the Slovak Republic, having a non-commercial purpose, independent of local, regional and central government, public entities, political parties and commercial organisations.

Eligible applicant must be registered in the Slovak Republic in one of the following categories:

- Civic Association** according the Act No. 83/1990 Coll. on the Association of Citizens,
- Foundation** according the Act No. 34/2002 Coll. on Foundations,
- Non-profit Organisation Providing Public Beneficial Services** according the Act No. 83/1990 Coll.,
- Non-investment Fund** according the Act No. 34/2002 Coll. on Non-investment Funds,

- e) **Non-profit Organisation** according the Act No. 116/85 Coll. on terms for activities of organisations with international aspect,
- f) **Association of Legal Entities** under the Act no. 40/1964 Coll. - Civil Code

Political parties, religious organisations, social partners and individuals (sole entrepreneurs) are not eligible applicants.

Eligible applicant shall also:

- abide by the principles of democratic values and human rights,
- be responsible for preparation of its Grant Application and cannot act only as a mediator,
- deliver documents proving availability of financial resources for minimum co-financing 10 % of the grant.

4.2 Partnership

The applicant may submit the Grant Application individually or together with a partner organization. It shares with the project promoter a common economic or social goal which is to be realised through the implementation of the project. The partnership aims to enable close cooperation among different types of organizations disposing different experience of problem-solving in a given area.

Applicants may participate in the partnership with **up to two other partners**.

Requirements for partners' participation in the project:

- participation of project partners is irreplaceable, without partnership it would not be possible to implement the project properly and meet its goals,
- partnership normally involves financial transactions, where the partner is awarded a financial compensation for realisation of activities in the project,
- cooperation is not be that of supplier – customer relationship.

A project partner is a public or private entity, commercial or non-commercial, including non-governmental organisations, all of whose primary locations are either in the Donor States, Beneficiary States of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014, or a country outside the European Economic Area that has a common border with Slovakia, or any inter-governmental organisation, actively involved in, and effectively contributing to, the implementation of a project.

Legal entities based according to the Commercial Code are eligible project partners, but they cannot receive financial contribution from the Programme.

In case implementation of the project is planned in collaboration with a partner, a mandatory attachment to the Grant Application is also the Partnership Declaration (Annex No. 6a, respectively 6b). If a partnership with a foreign institution is planned, a mandatory attachment to the Grant Application is also a copy of registration documents of the partner with a translation of relevant parts into the Slovak language (Annex No. 7).

4.3 Grant Application eligibility criteria

Eligible Grant Application must meet the following criteria:

- Grant Application must meet administration compliance criteria. The criteria are stated in the *Guideline for the applicants and project promoters in the Programme Active Citizenship and Inclusion*, section 11.1.1,
- project focus must be in agreement with the set areas of support and their priorities,
- project realisation period does not exceed maximum stated in the section 4.5 of this call for proposals,
- requested sum corresponds with the terms set in the section 4.4 of this call for proposals,
- documents on partnership are signed and submitted (if relevant).

4.4 Project funding

A grant for project funding consists of:

- a) the contribution from the Programme amounting to 90 % of the total eligible project costs,
- b) the own resources of the Beneficiary in amount of minimum 10 % of the total eligible project costs.

The minimum and maximum grant amount per project shall be as follows:

10 000 € - 60 000 €

The maximum grant amount per project may be increased up to 30 % for projects implemented in partnership with partners from the Donor States (Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway). These extra resources can be used solely for financing of expenses related to common co-operation of international partners (while the portion of resources allocated for this purpose can exceed 30 % from the total budget).

Payments of the project grant to the project promoters may take the form of advance payments, interim payments and payments of the final balance:

- Advance payments will be paid to project promoter after the signing the project contract. Advance payments shall not exceed 40% of the total eligible expenditure of the project and shall cover up to 2 reporting periods.
- Interim payments shall be paid after the approval of interim reports.
- The final balance of at least 10% shall be paid after the approval of the final report.

The applicant must indicate in the submitted Grant Application availability of resources for on-going project co-financing, **at minimum 10 %** of the total eligible costs of the project. Applicant may submit a copy of bank statement with necessary amount of available funds together with a solemn declaration on co-financing of the project from its own resources under the submitted budget and/or by valid grant agreements with other donors. In-kind contribution is eligible only as voluntary work. The in-kind contribution may constitute up to 50 % of the co-financing of the project.

4.5 Duration of projects

The duration of projects in this call for proposals must be as follows:

6 – 18 months

A project must be finished until 31st December 2014 at the latest.

4.7 Eligibility of expenses

Eligibility of expenses is stipulated in the document ***Guideline to the eligibility of expenses for project promoters in the Programme Active Citizenship and Inclusion.***

5. Timeframe

Publishing of the call for proposals:	28 th February 2013
Deadline for submitting Grant Applications:	30 th April 2013
Publishing of Grant Application evaluation results (indicative):	20 th June 2013

6. Financial allocations

Approximate financial allocation in this call for proposals is **424 635 €**.

7. Preparation, submission, evaluation and approval of Grant Applications

7.1 Preparation of Grant Applications

Grant Application must be prepared:

- in compliance with the **Guideline for the applicants and project promoters** in the Programme Active Citizenship and Inclusion,

- in compliance the **Guideline to the eligibility of expenses** for project promoters in the Programme Active Citizenship and Inclusion,
- in the form of **Grant Application form** and its annexes.

The documents above are inseparable from this call for proposals.

7.2 Consultations and providing information to applicants

The Fund Operator shall provide information to the applicants in written form, by phone, e-mail, in the form of personal consultations, at information seminars and through the document Questions and answers at www.eeango.sk/aoi till 5 working days before the deadline for Grant Application submission.

7.3 Grant Application submission

Grant Application must be submitted together with the following documents:

- **Grant Application** (prescribed form)
- **Mandatory annexes:**
 - Annex No. 1 – Project budget (prescribed form);
 - Annex No. 2 – Budget explanation (prescribed form);
 - Annex No. 3 – Project summary in English (prescribed form);
 - Annex No. 4 – A copy of the Registration document of the applicant from a relevant register of institutions;
 - Annex No. 5 – Statutes or other relevant documents of the applicant;
 - Annex No. 6 – Annex No. 6a: Partnership Declaration (if the project is implemented in partnership) and Annex No. 6b: Partnership Declaration in English (if the project is implemented in partnership with a foreign institution) (prescribed form);
 - Annex No. 7 – A copy of registration documents of the partner with a translation of relevant sections into the Slovak language (if the project is implemented in partnership with a foreign institution) and a solemn declaration of the applicant that the translation is consistent with its original;
 - Annex No. 8 – Financial statement of the applicant for the year 2011;
 - Annex No. 9 – Certificate of registration from the Tax authority for Value Added Tax, or a solemn declaration of the applicant that the organisation is not a subject to VAT;
 - Annex No. 10 – Documents proving resources available for co-financing;
 - Annex No. 11 – Documents on readiness to project capital expenditures.
- **Non-mandatory annexes:**
 - Annex No. 12 – Annual Reports of the applicant for the last two years, or their equivalent;
 - Annex No. 13 – Preliminary approval of a public or expert organisation with realisation of a project activity, if it is necessary for realisation of the activity;

Documents must be submitted in the following way:

Original of Grant Application, 1 set of documents. An original of Grant Application contains:

1. Grant Application form signed by the Statutory of applicant;
2. Annexes No. 1 – 13 (Annexes No. 12 and 13 are non-mandatory);
3. CD with electronic version of the Grant Application with Annexes in the following formats: Excel, Word, PDF.

Grant Applications or their attachments shall not be returned to their applicants for technical reasons. Grant Applications delivered only by e-mail or fax will be rejected.

Applicants must send their Grant Applications via the post to the address: Nadácia Ekopolis, Komenského 21, 974 01 Banská Bystrica until the date 30th April 2013 (including this date). The date in the postmark of the post office accepting the mail is relevant.

The envelope with the Grant Application must contain the following information:

Programme AOI-ZP

Applicant's name: ...

Applicant's address: ...

Nadácia Ekopolis
Komenského 21
974 01 Banská Bystrica

7.4 Confirmation of Grant Application registration

The Fund Operator shall inform the applicant on registration of the Grant Application by e-mail and by publishing a list of registered Grant Application at www.eeango.sk/aoi no later than 7 working days since the deadline for submitting Grant Applications in this call for proposals.

7.5 Evaluation of Grant Applications

Grant Application evaluation process:

- **Fund Operator** – Grant Application review in terms of meeting criteria of administrative compliance, eligibility of applicant and eligibility of Grant Application;
- **Expert Evaluation** – each application that meets the administrative and eligibility criteria shall be reviewed by two independent and impartial experts appointed by the Fund Operator. The experts shall separately and independently score the project according to the selection criteria published with the call for proposals. For the purposes of ranking the projects, the average of the scores awarded by the experts shall be used. If the difference between the scores given by the two experts is more than 30% of the higher score, a third expert shall be commissioned by the Fund Operator to score the project independently. In such cases the average score of the two closest scores shall be used for the ranking of the projects.
- **Selection Committee** – evaluation of Grant Applications based on expert evaluation and making recommendations to the Board of the Ekopolis Foundation in terms of its approval or rejection. The Selection Committee is within the project evaluation entitled to design some changes for the project, such as modifications or withdrawal of selected activities, reducing the budget or set additional conditions for granting;
- **Board of the Ekopolis foundation** – makes a final decision on which Grant Applications shall be approved.

The list of criteria of administrative compliance, eligibility of applicant, eligibility of Grant Application and expert evaluation criteria is stated in the document Guideline for the applicants and project promoters in the Programme Active Citizenship and Inclusion (section 1.1).

7.6 Information on the results of Grant Application evaluation

Expected date of informing on approval or rejection of a Grant Application is June 2013.

The list of supported and rejected projects shall be published at www.eeango.sk/aoi

8. Contact details

Programme web pages: www.eeango.sk/aoi

Contacts on the Ekopolis Foundation and its staff responsible for implementation of the Programme in the area of support Active citizenship:

Ekopolis Foundation

Address: Komenského 21, 974 01 Banská Bystrica

Tel./Fax: +421 48 4145259

www.ekopolis.sk

Programme manager:

Ján Roháč, e-mail: rohac@ekopolis.sk, tel: +421 48 4701095, +421 905 240137

Financial controllers:

Marta Šedivcová sedivcova@ekopolis.sk, tel.: +421 48 4701091

Lucia Bárdošová bardosova@ekopolis.sk, tel.: +421 48 4701094