



REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA) # CEP-RRG-03

Rapid Response Grants (RRG)

Issued on August 16, 2017

I. SUMMARY

USAID's Civic Engagement Project in Macedonia (hereinafter referred to as 'the Project') invites civil society organizations (CSO) in Macedonia to apply for Rapid Response Grants (RRGs).

The Civic Engagement Project (CEP) is a five year USAID-funded program that aims to strengthen the constructive engagement by civil society organizations (CSOs) on policies and issues of public concern, and increase and sustain youth involvement in public life in Macedonia. Through CEP, participating young people and CSOs will acquire knowledge, gain motivation and develop skills that will allow them to contribute to policy discussions with the government, the private sector, the media and other CSOs. The overall goal of the Civil Engagement Project is to enhance CSOs and youth's capacity to advance public policies, improve public services, promote good governance and contribute to improving the standard of living of people in Macedonia.

The aim of this round of RRGs is to support initiatives that focus on the **upcoming October local elections in Macedonia** or more specifically on:

- (i) Encouraging and facilitating citizen engagement in scrutinizing, assessing, and advancing the electoral processes;
- (ii) Providing a platform for citizens to communicate their needs and priorities to the political parties and candidates (prior to the local elections), and elected municipal councilors and mayors (after the elections);
- (iii) Facilitating informed public discussion on key electoral processes and players, with particular attention paid to youth, women, ethnic minorities (ex. Roma), sexual minorities and disabled.
- (iv) Voter education: encouraging first time voters to vote, identifying new resources for voters with disabilities, restoring trust in the election process of marginalized populations with particular attention to the groups listed above.

II. GRANT AWARDS

The Project plans to award up to **4 (four) grants** resulting from this RfA. The maximum grant amount is **7,500 USD** for a project that may last **up to 3 (three) months**. Grant funds may

be used only for activities directly related to the implementation of the project. The Project reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

III. FUNDING PRIORITIES

The Project will give priority to CSOs, including think tanks, that:

- Can deliver results in a short time frame of up to **three months**;
- Have a proven track record of engaging in effective and successful interventions related to the electoral process for **at least the last three years**;
- Have a **transparent system of bookkeeping** that complies with the Macedonian legislation and International Accounting Standards (IAS). If such a system is not in place, upon grant award, the grantee must work closely with the Project office to ensure that accurate financial management and transparent bookkeeping systems are developed.
- Effectively reach out to a **wide and diverse audience**, including women, girls, youth, ethnic or religious minorities, the LGBT community, or other vulnerable/marginalized groups.

IV. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicant CSOs should meet the following criteria:

- 1) Be a **Macedonian CSO**, meaning that it is managed by a governing body the majority of who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of Macedonia;
- 2) Have at least **three years of substantial experience in the priority area** of this RFA. The Project will not provide “start-up” funding.
- 3) Must **not be a debtor of the Government of Macedonia** and must have cancelled any debt to the state or arranged for debt collection by the state prior to receiving the first disbursement of grant funds by the Project.
- 4) Must **operate as an independent non-politically affiliated organization**.
- 5) Must **not be debarred, suspended, excluded** or otherwise ineligible to receive US Federal funding.

Civil servants, political appointees, members of the current parliament, staff of public broadcasting companies, and/or leaders of political parties cannot participate in a grant project as a director or as grant-remunerated participant.

The Project **will not accept or review** proposals that include the following activities:

- Support for or lobbying on behalf of a particular political party;
- Religious activities;
- Humanitarian/charitable activities;
- Theoretical research;
- Capital expenditures, including construction activities;

V. APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

The Project will accept proposals only in English. Applicants must submit the following documents using the forms provided by the Project for (i) and (ii):

- (i) **Application Form;**
- (ii) **Project Budget and Budget Notes;**
- (iii) **A copy of the organization's most recent registration document**

Before making the final decision, the Project may request additional documentation such as:

- Auditor's report;
- Financial statements (Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss, Cash Flow)

Incomplete submissions will not be reviewed.

Submitted proposals must be the original and sole work of the applicant organization. Plagiarism will result in disqualification from the grant competition. The Project will retain all materials and documents submitted by applicants. It will not use this information for purposes other than proposal review and will not share it with other persons or institutions, except when required by Macedonian law or requested by USAID.

Please note that in line with our donor coordination efforts, we may share the names of the applicants and a short description of their respective proposals with other Macedonian and international programs that support CSOs in Macedonia.

VI. EVALUATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

The selection process will be administered by a Grants Review Committee (GRC) established by the Project for the purpose of this RfA. If an application is short-listed for potential funding, the respective applicant may be requested to provide additional information.

The Project will assess proposals based on the following criteria:

I. Technical Approach– 55% of the total score

a. Project Design and Feasibility– 30%

- The degree to which the application is responsive to this RfA;
- The potential of the proposed actions to successfully and efficiently achieve the RFA's objectives;
- The extent to which the proposed actions introduce innovative and potentially replicable approaches;
- Reliable quantitative and qualitative indicators for measuring and evaluating the proposed actions' impact;

b. Geography– 5%

- The extent of the geographical outreach of the proposed actions;

c. Beneficiaries– 20%

- The extent to which the proposed actions reach out to and meaningfully include girls, women, ethnic and religious minorities, people with disabilities, the LGBT community, and other marginalized groups in the proposed activities.

II. Organizational, Technical and Management Capability and Past Performance– 30% of the total score

a. Technical and Management Capacity– 10%

The technical and managerial capacity of the applicant to successfully carry out Program Description implementation on a timely basis, and to produce the targeted results. This includes an evaluation of:

- The track record and demonstrated commitment of the applicant to implement proposed activities;
- The ability to deliver results in a short time frame;
- The experience and expertise of the management team and proposed personnel; and
- The provision for appropriate monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms and staff.

b. Organizational Capability – 10%

- The general financial strength of the applicant;
- The organizational structure and good governance practices of the applicant;

c. Past Performance– 10%

- Past performance in achieving positive results when implementing activities similar to those proposed;
- Experience working with USAID/other donor funds and ability to meet reporting and accountability requirements;
- Demonstrated ability to gather and analyze data on program outcomes.

III. Cost Effectiveness – 15% of the total score

- The budget must be (i) complete and fully documented, including budget notes (ii) reasonable, and (iii) allocated to appropriate budget categories – 5%
- The budget should maximize the impact of the available resources and the proposed activities– 5%
- The budget must demonstrate a clear and direct relationship between proposed activities and the proposed use of funds – 5%

VII. TIMELINE

RfA launch date	August 16, 2017
Deadline for submitting clarification requests to the Project	August 21, 2017
Date when the Project will issue clarifications	August 23, 2017
DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS	13:00, AUGUST 25, 2017
Evaluation of applications	August 31, 2017
Grant award notification to successful applicants	September 4, 2017
Grant agreement signing	September 18, 2017

Please note that the award date is subject to change

VIII. CONTACT INFORMATION

Application Form: Please contact ADI Grants Manager, Ms. Lindita Bexheti, at linda@adi.org.mk.

Clarifications: Applicants should submit clarification requests by the deadline listed above via email to ADI Grants Manager, Ms. Lindita Bexheti, at linda@adi.org.mk. The Project will issue clarifications via e-mail.

Proposals: Applicants should submit their proposal and required documents via e-mail to ADI's Grants Manager, Ms. Lindita Bexheti, at linda@adi.org.mk. E-mails must have "RFA # CEP-RRG -03: Rapid Response Grants" in the subject line.

Alternatively, applications may be submitted in a sealed envelope to: **ADI, Bul. B. Ginoski 61/3, 1230 Gostivar**, att: Ms. Lindita Bexheti. Should you choose to mail the hard copy of the proposal, please note that the time when the sealed envelope is delivered to ADI will be taken into consideration and not the time the when the envelope is mailed. The mail should be delivered to ADI's office by **13:00, August 25, 2017**.

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