



REQUEST FOR CONCEPT PAPERS (RfCP) # CEP-YESG-05

Youth Engagement Support (YES) Grants

Issued on November 9, 2018

SUMMARY

The USAID Civic Engagement Project in Macedonia (CEP) invites youth civil society organizations (CSO) in Macedonia and non-registered youth groups to submit Concept Papers for CEP's Youth Engagement Support (YES) grants.

CEP is a five-year USAID-funded program that contributes to achieving two objectives: (1) strengthen influence of CSOs on policies and programs related to priority issues of citizen concern, and (2) increase and sustain youth engagement in public life in Macedonia. CEP is implemented by East West Management Institute, Inc. (EWMI), in partnership with four local CSOs: The Foundation for Internet and Society "Metamorphosis" (Metamorphosis), the Association for Democratic Initiatives (ADI), the Foundation Open Society - Macedonia (FOSM), and the National Youth Council of Macedonia (NYCM). YES grants are managed by ADI.

CEP is seeking to support through YES grants initiatives by youth CSOs and non-registered youth groups that propose innovative, action-oriented activities related to the following priority areas and that that will yield tangible results or deliver key services:

1. Youth Participation. This includes initiatives that create opportunities for young people to influence the creation and implementation of youth strategies and programs. Illustrative objectives that CEP seeks to support include, but are not limited to:

- Creative solutions that enable young people to constructively engage with public institutions at the central and local government level regarding issues of priority concern for youth or the community at large;
- Providing opportunities for youth to give back to communities and society, and focus on priority socio-economic, educational, cultural and/or environmental issues that might have positive impact on their lives;
- Supporting young people to engage meaningfully and effectively in existing mechanisms for youth participation (including, but not limited to youth CSOs and groups, Youth and CSO Support Centers, municipal Youth Councils, etc.);
- Building the capacity and skills of young people to become informed, active, and engaged citizens;

- Leveraging digital technology to advance youth participation in decision making processes at the local and national level;
- Organizing in-country exchanges and joint actions among diverse communities and regions of Macedonia and focusing on best practices for youth participation.

2. Human Rights and Social Inclusion. This includes initiatives for young people that advance public institutions' accountability, and social justice; empower ethnic and social minorities, women, youth, and other vulnerable groups; ensure the implementation of fundamental human rights; and undertaking actions to advance social inclusion of vulnerable groups.

Illustrative objectives that CEP seeks to support include, but are not limited to:

- Ensuring effective and greater participation of youth groups in activities that enhance their access to justice and social inclusion, based on the national human rights and antidiscrimination legal framework and international human rights standards;
- Enabling the creation of and providing support to mechanisms for the participation of various youth groups in all aspects of political, economic, social, and cultural life by preserving their identity and combating social exclusion;
- Enhancing efforts that defend democratic values, increase public institutions' transparency, and protect human rights through advocacy campaigns that endorse inclusion, equity, and justice for all;
- Minimising risk factors for violent behaviours such as substance abuse, school based issues (like, for example, bullying), and illiteracy;
- Supporting enhanced role for young people in building resilient and safe communities.

3. Youth Employability. This includes initiatives that provide opportunities for young people to be proactive and creative partners in overcoming unemployment by promoting innovative actions.

Illustrative objectives that CEP seeks to support include, but are not limited to:

- Increasing employability of unemployed youth through innovative activities that enhance their professional skills;
- Promoting and optimizing existing vocational education and training programs that lead to job placement for youth;
- Building the capacities and skills of young people in order to enhance and stimulate the development of youth entrepreneurship;
- Developing effective partnerships between all stakeholders to provide a favorable operating context for youth entrepreneurship;
- Promoting and developing non-formal learning that leads to employment.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

CEP will give priority to applications by CSOs and youth groups that:

- a) Focus on **priority areas of this RfCP** listed above;
- b) Have a proven track record of engaging in effective and successful interventions related to the above-mentioned priority areas for **at least for one year**;
- c) 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 CEP to ensure that accurate financial management and transparent bookkeeping systems are developed;
- d) Propose **innovative solutions** to address the identified problems and to engage youth;
 - e) Demonstrate clear potential for **positive and concrete impact** in the lives of youth and/or their communities;
 - f) Include activities that increase **commitment and ownership by youth and other citizens**, such as volunteering;
 - g) Ensure substantial engagement of **women, girls, youth, ethnic or religious minorities, the LGBT community**, or other **vulnerable/marginalized groups** in the proposed activities;
 - h) Support **multi-culturalism and inter-ethnic cooperation** and take progressive stances vis-à-vis **gender equality and social inclusion**;
 - i) Demonstrate understanding and have a concretely elaborated commitment to **cooperate with a wide range of stakeholders**, including the media, private sector, think tanks and academia, and public institutions;
 - j) **Demonstrate a clear and feasible sustainability plan** that increases the likelihood that CEP-funded activities will have lasting positive impact or will continue after the end of the grant.

CEP **will not accept or review** Concept Papers that include the following activities:

- Support for or lobbying on behalf of a particular political party;
- Religious activities;
- Humanitarian/charitable activities;
- Theoretical research;
- Training on organizational development or fundraising activities;
- Sub-awards.

For more details on the unallowable costs under CEP, please consult Annex B – Budget Guidelines.

GRANT AWARDS

CEP will use a three-step application process.

- (i) Applicants will submit Concept Papers in response to this RfCP.
- (ii) CEP will select the best Concept Papers and will invite the respective applicants to present them at an Idea Competition Event. CEP's Grant Review Committee will assess the presentations and will provide feedback to the applicants.
- (iii) CEP will invite the applicants that were selected by the Grant Review Committee to submit full applications based on the respective Concept Paper.

CEP plans to award up to **10 (ten)** grants under this RfCP. The maximum grant award for each proposal is **15,000 USD** covering activities that may last up to 12 (twelve) months and not less than 9 (nine) months. Grant funds may be used only for activities directly related to the implementation of the grant activities. CEP reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Youth CSOs legally registered in Macedonia and non-registered youth groups are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RfCP.

Applicant youth CSOs and non-registered youth groups which will be invited to submit a full application 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 **one year of operational experience**. As a rule, CEP will not provide “start-up” funding, although CEP may make a rare exception if sufficient evidence is presented to show that the CSO’s leadership has adequate prior experience and the CSO is capable of filling a niche that has been underserved in the past;
- 3) **Must not be a debtor** of the Government of Macedonia and must have canceled any debt to the state or arranged for debt collection by the state prior to receiving the first disbursement of grant funds by CEP;
- 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.

Note: CEP will award YES grants to non-registered youth groups as In-Kind Grants. That means that CEP will pay directly for project-related expenses.

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

APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

CEP will accept proposals only in English. Applications can be e-mailed, sent by post or hand-delivered to the ADI’ office. Faxed applications will not be accepted.

In case of submitting applications by post or hand – delivery, the applicants must submit the following documents using the forms provided by CEP for (i), (ii), and (iii) (please refer to the Checklist attachment):

- (i) **Three printed copies** of the Concept Paper Application. At least one of the copies must contain the original stamp and signature;
- (ii) **Three printed copies** of the Concept Paper Budget;
- (iii) **Budget notes** added to the Concept Paper Budget; and
- (iv) **Three printed copies** of the organization’s registration document not older than six months (for registered CSOs); Non-registered youth groups must fill out section **II. Background Information, subsection b)** in the application form regarding any similar previous activities they have implemented in the past year.

While in the case of e-mailed submission the applicants should submit **only one copy** of the referred documents. 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.

CEP 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 will share the names of the applicants and a short description of their respective projects with other Macedonian and international programs that support CSOs in Macedonia.

EVALUATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

The selection process will be administered by a Grants Review Committee (GRC) established by CEP for the purpose of this RfCP.

CEP will assess Concept Papers based on the following criteria:

a. Problem Statement and Implementation Plan – 20%

A clear and concise statement of the problem(s) to be addressed. The problem statement must address details such as:

- The conceptualization of the problem and the solution;
- Strategic visioning in how to implement the proposed solution;
- Outline of the detailed plan for implementation that shows how the strategic vision will be achieved;
- Plans for monitoring and evaluation of the proposed implementation plan;
- Plans for public outreach/interaction with the media; and
- Plans for periodic reporting on the implementation plan.

b. Mobilizing external resources – 20%

- The extent to which applicants can demonstrate existing or likely resource mobilization from external (i.e. central government institutions and/or municipal level institutions, private sector, community) sources or own-sources;
- The level and nature of proposed actions to ensure cooperation and coordination among donors, CSOs, public institutions, media, private sector and citizens to better achieve the application's Program Description's goal.

c. Beneficiaries – 20%

- The level and nature of proposed actions to ensure large-scale engagement of youth and other citizens: generate awareness, support for advocacy, and/or other activities involving youth and other citizens;
- The level and nature of proposed actions to encourage volunteerism, as well as youth engagement;
- The level and nature of proposed actions to include girls, women, ethnic and religious minorities, people with disabilities, the LGBT community, and other marginalized groups in the proposed activities.

d. Impact – 20%

- A description of how the proposed solution will be objectively measured as it pertains to the success or extent of success in addressing the issue/problem;

- The effectiveness of the proposed method(s) to reach out and to engage the targeted beneficiaries in project activities;
- The extent to which the project highlights, contributes to, and influences important policy issues, which may be addressed by local, regional, and national policy makers.

e. Sustainability – 20%

- Description of how the proposed solution(s) will be sustained once the grant funding expires;
- Clear articulation of tangible results and/or impact of the proposed actions – In other words, does the activity support youth, either individually or as organized groups, interacting with the public sector, either national or locally, to strengthen mechanisms for inclusion, accountability and participation in order to enhance youths’ role in shaping public policies, community development or improving public services.

TIMELINE

RfCP launch date	November 9, 2018
Deadline for submitting clarification requests to CEP	November 16, 2018
Information Sessions Schedule	November 16-22, 2018
Date when CEP will issue clarifications	November 22, 2018
DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING CONCEPT PAPERS	November 27, 2018
Evaluation of Concept Papers	December 4-6, 2018
Idea Competition notification to successful applicants	December 7, 2018
Idea Competition Event	December 13, 2018
Invitation to successful applicants to submit full applications	December 21, 2018
Deadline for submitting clarification requests to CEP	December 24, 2018
Date when CEP will issue clarifications and organize Joint Info Workshop to assist applicants in development of full applications	December 26, 2018
DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING FULL APPLICATIONS	January 9, 2019
Evaluation of full applications	January 14, 2019
Grant award notification to successful applicants	January 17, 2019
Grant agreement signing	March 1, 2019
<i>Please note that evaluation, idea competition event, and award dates are subject to change</i>	
<i>Please note that the earliest Project starting date should be March 1, 2019</i>	

CONTACT INFORMATION

Application Form: To download the Concept Paper application form, please see the RfCP announcement at www.adimacedonia.org. Alternatively, please contact ADI’s Grants Manager, Mr. Nino Sotirovski, at nino@adi.org.mk for a Concept Paper Application Form.

Clarifications: Applicants should submit clarification requests by the deadline listed above via email to ADI Grants Manager, Mr. Nino Sotirovski, at nino@adi.org.mk. CEP will issue clarifications to all interested organizations via e-mail and on www.adimacedonia.org.

Proposals: Applicants have two options to submit their Concept Paper Applications:

- a. Via e-mail to ADI Grants Manager, Mr. Nino Sotirovski, at nino@adi.org.mk. E-mails must have "RfCP # CEP-YESG-05: Youth Engagement Support Grants" in the subject line. E-mails should be received by **13:00, November 27, 2018**.
- b. In a sealed envelope to **ADI, Bul. B. Ginoski 61/3, 1230 Gostivar**, Attn: Mr. Nino Sotirovski. 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, November 27, 2018**.

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