Iceland
Liechtenstein
Norway

Civil Society Fund

Assessment Criteria for Grant Applications

for Call No. 3 and No.4 for pre-defined projects

(March 2026)

The expert assessment of grant applications in the EEA Civil Society Fund Slovakia Program (hereinafter referred to as "EEA CSF SK") aims to provide a professional, objective, independent, and transparent assessment of the compliance of grant applications with the assessment criteria. Its purpose is to ensure a clear ranking of submitted applications according to the number of points obtained, which serves as the basis for the Selection Committee 's assessment.

The system of assessment criteria is based on the information provided by applicants in their grant applications and attachments, allowing an objective assessment of the relevant application. Each assessment criterion is linked to a specific part of the grant application or mandatory attachment that forms the basis for its assessment.

To be considered for funding, projects will be evaluated and ranked based on the established award criteria. The Fund Operator reserves the right not to award the grant if none of the submitted applications is deemed to meet the required quality standards. Projects that receive a score of 0 under any of the subheadings may be rejected. The final decision on project support rests with the funding provider, considering the assessment results, available allocation, and strategic priorities of the program.

Explanation of Criteria for Expert Assessment of Applications and Recommendation for Determining Point Scores

1. Understanding, Contextual Relevance, and Added Operational Value (Group of Criteria, 35 points)

1.1 Quality of the applicant's understanding of the predefined project's objectives, activities, intervention logic, target groups, and expected results	
Maximum score: 15 Location in the grant application: 3.5. Project Relevance, 4. Indicators	
The assessment focuses on the extent to which the applicant demonstrates a clear, accurate, and comprehensive understanding of the predefined project framework. This includes understanding of the project's objectives, intervention logic, planned activities, target groups, expected results, and overall rationale. The assessor examines: • clarity and correctness of interpretation of the predefined project, • consistency of the applicant's understanding with the predefined framework, • ability to translate the predefined intervention logic into an operational understanding.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- the applicant demonstrates little or no understanding of the predefined project - interpretation is incorrect, superficial, inconsistent, or contradictory - key elements (objectives, target groups, results) are misunderstood or omitted	0 – 4
- the applicant demonstrates partial understanding of the predefined project - some elements are interpreted correctly, but there are inconsistencies or gaps - intervention logic is not fully grasped or is insufficiently explained	5 – 8
- the applicant demonstrates good and coherent understanding of the predefined project - objectives, activities, and results are correctly interpreted - intervention logic is described clearly and logically	9 – 12
- the applicant demonstrates excellent, comprehensive, and precise understanding of the predefined project - all elements are clearly interpreted and interconnected - the explanation reflects strong analytical capacity and operational readiness	13 – 15

1.2 Understanding of the needs of target groups and the appropriateness of the proposed approach within the predefined framework	
Maximum score: 10 Location in the grant application: 3.5. Project Relevance, 3.4. Target Groups	
The assessment examines how well the applicant understands the specific needs of the relevant target groups and whether the proposed approach appropriately addresses these needs within the limits of the predefined project. The assessor examines: • accuracy and relevance of the identified needs, • justification and evidence supporting the needs analysis, • appropriateness of the proposed approach within the predefined scope.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- target groups' needs are poorly described, inadequately justified, or irrelevant - the proposed approach does not appropriately address identified needs	0 – 2
- needs are identified but described only generally or without sufficient justification - the proposed approach addresses needs only partially or weakly	3 – 5
- needs are clearly and realistically described - the proposed approach appropriately addresses the identified needs within the predefined framework	6 – 8
- needs analysis is comprehensive, evidence-based, and convincing - the proposed approach is highly appropriate, targeted, and well adapted to the predefined scope	9 – 10

1.3 Added value through proposed methodological approaches, measures, or refinements within the predefined scope	
Maximum score: 5 Location in the grant application: 3.5. Project Relevance, 3.6. Activities	
This criterion assesses the extent to which the applicant brings added operational value to the predefined project through methodological refinements, innovative tools, improved processes, or context-sensitive adaptations, while fully respecting the predefined scope.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- no added value is demonstrated - the proposal merely repeats predefined elements without refinement	0 – 1
- limited added value is demonstrated - refinements are minor, insufficiently developed, or not clearly justified	2 – 3
- clear and relevant added value is demonstrated - proposed refinements are feasible and improve implementation quality	4
- substantial and well-justified added value is demonstrated - proposed methodological enhancements significantly strengthen implementation quality and effectiveness within the predefined framework	5

1.4 Sustainability of project results beyond the implementation period

Maximum score: 5 Location in the grant application: 6. Long-term impact of results	
The assessment considers the likelihood that project results will be maintained after the implementation period. Substantive, institutional, and practical sustainability aspects are examined.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- sustainability is not addressed or is unrealistic - no concrete measures are described	0 – 1
- sustainability is described only generally - measures are basic or insufficiently structured	2 – 3
- sustainability measures are realistic and clearly described - continuation of results is plausible	4
- sustainability strategy is comprehensive, credible, and well-embedded institutionally - strong potential for long-term impact is demonstrated	5

2. Implementation Methodology and Feasibility (Group of Criteria, 25 points)

2.1 Quality, feasibility, and coherence of the proposed implementation plan	
Maximum score: 20 Location in the grant application: 1. Schedule, 3.5. Project Relevance, 3.6. Activities	
The assessment focuses on the quality and realism of the proposed implementation methodology, including: • work planning and sequencing, • allocation of responsibilities, • time planning, • risk management measures, • monitoring and reporting arrangements.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- implementation plan is unclear, unrealistic, or internally inconsistent - major weaknesses in planning, sequencing, or risk management	0 – 4
- implementation plan is generally described but contains weaknesses - sequencing, risk management, or monitoring arrangements are insufficiently developed	5 – 10
- implementation plan is coherent and realistic - work planning, risk mitigation, and monitoring arrangements are adequately described	11 – 15
- implementation plan is highly coherent, detailed, and feasible - sequencing, responsibilities, risk management, and monitoring are thoroughly elaborated - high level of operational readiness is demonstrated	16 – 20

2.2 Quality and feasibility of proposed communication and visibility measures	
Maximum score: 5 Location in the grant application: 3.8. Communication Plan	
The assessment examines whether communication and visibility measures are appropriate, realistic, and proportionate to the predefined project.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- measures to ensure communication of project outcomes are not planned or are insufficiently described, or contain serious shortcomings	0
- measures to ensure communication are only partially described - their setting is inappropriate and may significantly reduce the effectiveness of communication (e.g., inappropriately chosen methods or target groups)	1 – 2
- measures to ensure communication of outcomes are appropriate and proportionate - methods, target groups, and timeframe are realistic	3 – 4
- measures to ensure communication of outcomes are appropriate, comprehensive, and sufficient to effectively and meaningfully ensure the wide dissemination of information to target groups	5

3. Budget and Cost Efficiency (Group of Criteria, 20 points)

3.1 Cost-effectiveness and adequacy of proposed expenditure	
Maximum score: 10 Location in the grant application: 5. Project Budget	
The assessment examines whether proposed costs are: • proportionate to assigned tasks, • reasonable in amount, • necessary for implementation, • aligned with principles of economy and efficiency.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- expenses are significantly overestimated (unusual prices) and/or significantly disproportionate to the objectives and outcomes of the project - it is clear that the budget was drawn up in order to use up the available financial support, rather than according to the actual needs of the project	0 – 3
- most of the expenses are proposed at reasonable prices, however: - in some respects, the budget is disproportionate to the needs of the project or shows minor shortcomings in the justification of some items	4 – 6
- expenses are proposed at reasonable prices and are proportional to the objectives and outcomes of the project - the budget is justified and realistic	7 – 8
- the total budget and individual expenditures are proposed in an effective and cost-efficient manner regarding the project's objectives and outcomes - the budget demonstrates a high degree of justification and cost optimization	9 – 10

3.2 Coherence between the budget structure and the proposed implementation methodology	
Maximum score: 10 Location in the grant application: 5. Project Budget in relation to 3.6. Activities and 3.7. Personnel and Staffing	
An assessment is made of whether the requested budget is balanced and whether it covers all planned activities financially, which should enable smooth and trouble-free implementation of the project. The extent to which the budget reflects the needs of individual activities is evaluated.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- the project budget does not cover the implementation of all activities (or key activities), or is financially unfeasible (fundamental imbalance/underestimation)	0 – 3
- the project budget adequately covers the implementation of activities, but the implementation of some activities is financially at risk (e.g., they are disproportionately underfunded) or the budget is unbalanced in some areas	4 – 6
- the project budget covers the implementation of all activities in an appropriate and reasonable manner - the project is financially feasible without any obvious problems	7 – 8
- the project budget covers the implementation of all activities optimally and is extremely well balanced - the financial structure is fully in line with the planned activities, ensuring smooth and effective implementation	9 – 10

4. Organisational Capacity and Institutional Alignment (Group of Criteria, 20 points)

4.1 Alignment with the values and principles of the EEA Civil Society Fund Slovakia	
Maximum score: 10 Location in the grant application: 2.1. Applicant Information - Value Alignment, 2.2. Partner Information	
The EEA Civil Society Fund program is based on shared values and principles, namely respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. An assessment is made as to whether the organization and the submitted project demonstrably act in accordance with the principles of the program. The organization's track record is also taken into account, as well as whether its past and present activities, approaches, and the proposed project respect and support these principles.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- the applicant and/or the submitted project do not respect the principles of the program or there are fundamental contradictions - the organization's activities to date show a repetition of procedures or activities that conflict with the values of the program - the project does not contain argumentation that it would support the principles of the program or contribute to their fulfillment	0 – 3

- the applicant and the project partially reflect the principles of the program, but concrete manifestations are limited - the organization's activities to date partially reflect the values of the program, but a systematic approach is lacking - the project may support the principles of the program, but its contribution is only partial	4 – 6
- the applicant and the project clearly act in accordance with the principles of the program, although not equally strongly in all areas - the organization's past and present activities systematically respect the values of the program, and the project supports them - the project has clear potential for the development of the organization in accordance with the principles of the program - the project is carried out in partnership with a donor state partner	7 – 8
- the applicant and the project fully and consistently reflect the principles of the program in all relevant areas - the organization's activities to date exemplify its commitment to and support for the values of the program - the project will significantly strengthen the principles of the program and has the potential to inspire broader community or sector involvement - the project is carried out in partnership with a donor state partner, who plays a significant role in the project's implementation	8 – 10

4.2 Organizational and professional preparedness and relevance of previous activities of the applicant (and partner) in relation to the project	
Maximum score: 10 Location in the grant application: 2.1. Applicant Information - Significant Projects, Short Description, 3.7. Organizational Capacity	
The applicant's (or partnership's) ability to successfully implement the project is assessed on the basis of their capacities, previous relevant activities, and the composition of the project team. Particular attention is paid to the competence and allocation of responsibilities within the team and the identified internal risks of implementation.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- the team is insufficiently competent, there is no clear division of responsibilities or relevant previous activities - there are obvious or defined significant internal risks that threaten the implementation of the project	0 – 3
- the team is composed of experts in the relevant fields, but does not cover all necessary activities or its capacity is limited - previous activities are only partially relevant	4 - 6
- the team is appropriately composed, fully competent, and effectively covers all planned activities - the applicant's/partner's previous activities are highly relevant	7 - 10