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Civil Society Fund

Assessment Criteria for grant applications for Call No. 1 for small grants

Version 2 (April 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.

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

1. Suitability, effectiveness, and added value of the project (Group of Criteria, 35 points)

1.1 Significance of the project in relation to the focus of the call, contribution of the project to the outputs and outcome of the programme.	
Maximum score: 20 Location in the grant application: 3. Project, 3.2 Areas of support, 3.5 Relevancy of the project	
The assessment focuses on how the project contributes to the objectives, outcomes, and outputs specified for the given theme and priority area of the EEA CSF SK program (Section 5 of the Guidelines for Applicants and Project Promoters). The clarity and logic of the project's contribution description and the overall significance and extent of the contribution to the defined outcomes and outputs are evaluated.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- the project's contribution to the program's outcomes is negligible or unclear the information is incomprehensible and/or illogical, or there is no direct link to the program's outcomes	0 – 5
- the project's contribution to the program's outcomes is low or only partially described; the project meets only the minimum requirements of the call - the information is not sufficiently clear or is inconsistent;	6 – 10
- the project's contribution to the program's outcomes is significant and measurable - the information is clear and logical, and the project effectively contributes to one or more key outcomes and outputs of the program	11 – 15
- the project's contribution to the program's outcomes and outputs is exceptionally significant and comprehensive - the information is understandable, logical, and convincing - the project has the potential to influence several of the program's outcomes and outputs and achieve above-average indicator values within the scope of the call	16 – 20

1.2 The usefulness of the project in terms of the needs of the direct target groups and the target groups that benefit from the activities and outcomes of the projects (indirect target groups)	
Maximum score: 10 Location in the grant application: 3.4 Target groups, 3.5 Relevancy of the project, 4. Indicators	
The usefulness of the project is assessed comprehensively for both direct and indirect target groups. The correctness and completeness of the definition of target groups, the feasibility of the estimate, and the degree of significance (benefit) of the project for their actual needs are evaluated.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- target groups are not defined, or are defined inappropriately/irrelevant to the project - the significance of the project for the target groups is unrealistically estimated or negligible	0 – 2
- target groups are defined appropriately, but incompletely (e.g., important indirect groups are missing) - the significance of the project for the needs of the target groups is low to average; the needs are not sufficiently substantiated	3 – 5
- target groups are defined appropriately and comprehensively (including both direct and indirect groups) - the significance and contribution of the project to the needs of the target groups is appropriate and based on a realistic estimate	6 – 8
- target groups are defined appropriately, comprehensively, and convincingly - the significance and contribution of the project to the defined needs of the target groups is substantial to exceptional, and the project creates long-term added value for the target community	9 – 10

1.3 Expected sustainability of project outcomes	
Maximum score: 5 Location in the grant application: 6. Sustainability	
The long-term impact of the project outcomes and the sustainability of the proposed solution are assessed from three perspectives: 1. Substantive sustainability: Substantive maintenance of outcomes and related activities after the end of the project. 2. Institutional sustainability: Ensuring and institutional prerequisites for maintaining outcomes within the organization. 3. Sustainability at the policy/environmental level: The project's contribution to changing the external environment and the sustainability of the outcomes from the perspective of the target groups.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- the sustainability of the project outcomes is not described, is unclear, or it is obvious that the outcomes are not sustainable (in terms of substance, institutionally, or financially) - there is no description of key measures	0 – 1

- sustainability is described, but the outcomes are only sustainable to a reasonable extent or there is an obvious weakness in one of the aspects (material/institutional/political) - measures to achieve sustainability are basic but not systematic	2 – 3
- sustainability is described well and realistically - the project outcomes are expected to be highly sustainable in all three aspects, with clearly defined measures and responsibilities	4
- sustainability is described comprehensively and convincingly - the project outcomes are highly sustainable, with the potential for long-term transformational impact on target groups and the external environment - the sustainability plan is underpinned by strong institutional prerequisites	5

2. Project implementation method (Criteria group, 25 points)

2.1 Suitability and feasibility of planned activities in relation to the project's objectives	
Maximum score: 20 Location in the grant application: 3. Project, 3.6 Activities, 3.7 Organisational arrangement of the project, 4. Indicators	
An assessment is made as to whether the planned activities represent a realistic and logical approach to achieving the planned outcomes. The focus of the activities, the adequacy of the resources to ensure them, the timetable, and the degree of preparedness and reliability of the overall implementation arrangements are evaluated.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- activities are presented inadequately or illogically (they do not demonstrate a logical path towards the objectives) - resources are inadequate - preparation for implementation shows significant shortcomings that could fundamentally disrupt the course of the project	0 – 4
- the activities are listed and have a basic logical connection to the objectives, but contain weaknesses (e.g., inconsistency, impractical planning, insufficient timetable) - the project has several less developed areas that need to be supplemented or clarified in order to ensure smooth implementation	5 – 10
- activities are presented appropriately, the implementation process is logically coherent, and resources are generally adequate - planning is sufficiently detailed, and the project is in a form that allows for its realistic implementation	11 – 15
- the activities are presented appropriately and comprehensively, and the procedure for their implementation is logically coherent - the resources are entirely adequate - the project is carefully prepared, well thought out, and highly feasible	16 – 20

2.2 Quality of the plan for communicating project outputs and outcomes to the public	
Maximum score: 5 Location in the grant application: 3. Project, 3.8 Communication plan	
Measures to ensure awareness and publicity, the appropriateness of the selection of target groups for communication, implementation methods, the appropriate scope and effectiveness of communication activities are assessed.	
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. Value for money – budget and spending efficiency (Criteria group, 20 points)

3.1 Justification and appropriateness of budget expenditures	
Maximum score: 10 Location in the grant application: 5. Budget	
An assessment is made as to whether the project costs are proportionate to the complexity and scope of the planned activities and whether they are directly related to them. It is monitored whether the costs of works, goods, and services are reasonable and whether the budget is based on the actual needs of the project and not just on using up the entire amount available.	
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 Alignment of the budget with proposed activities	
Maximum score: 10 Location in the grant application: 3. Project, 5. Budget	
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. Profile, capacity, and experience of the applicant (and partner) (Criteria group, 20 points)

4.1 Compliance of the applicant's (and partner's) activities with the common values and principles of the EEA Civil Society Fund	
Maximum score: 10 Location in the grant application: 2.1 Applicant information, 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	0 – 3

- 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	
- 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: 5 Location in the grant application: 2.1 Applicant information, 2.2 Partner information	
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 – 1
- 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	2 – 3
- the team is appropriately composed, fully competent, and effectively covers all planned activities	4 – 5

- the applicant's/partner's previous activities are highly relevant	

4.3 The applicant's registered office and project implementation are located outside the Bratislava Self-Governing Region (NUTS 3 / SK010).	
Maximum score: 5 Location in the grant application: 2. Project Applicant and Partner, 3.3 Geographical location of implemented project	
This criterion serves to support regional development and ensure the spread of activities benefiting civil society outside Slovakia's most developed region. It assesses whether the applicant's and partners' headquarters are located outside the Bratislava Self-Governing Region (BSK) and to what extent the project focuses on activities in other regions.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- the applicant's registered office is located in the BSK - the project is implemented within the BSK	0
- the applicant's registered office is located in the BSK - the project is implemented predominantly within the BSK territory; activities outside the BSK are limited in scope and the project's impact beyond the BSK is negligible – score 1 - the project is implemented both within and outside the BSK territory in roughly equal proportions, with comparable impact in both areas – score 2 - the project is implemented predominantly outside the BSK territory, or its reach and impact extend across Slovakia as a whole (nationwide impact) – score 3	1 – 3
- the applicant's registered office is located outside the BSK and has one or more partners with registered offices outside the BSK, thereby increasing regional coverage - the project is implemented predominantly outside the BSK	4
- the applicant's registered office is located outside the BSK and the project focuses on several (at least three) different regions of the Slovak Republic outside the BSK, or focuses on a region that is statistically considered less developed	5