Iceland Liechtenstein Norway Civil Society Fund

Assessment criteria for grant applications

Call No. 2 for project 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.

Projects that score less than 85 points will not proceed to the next stage. Achieving the minimum score of 85 points does not constitute a legal claim to financial support. The final decision on project support rests with the funding provider, considering the assessment results, available allocation, and strategic priorities of the programme.

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

1. Relevance, Purposefulness, Added Value, and Participatory Dimension (30 points)

1.1 Relevance of the project in relation to the focus of the call, alignment with the selected Outcome and Output, and clarity of problem analysis	
Maximum score: 12 Location in the grant application: 3. Project; 3.2 Areas of support; 3.5 Relevancy of the project	
The assessment focuses on: • Alignment with the selected Outcome and Output under the call • Logical and evidence-based problem analysis • Clarity of justification for the proposed intervention • Relevance to country-specific focus areas Evaluators assess whether the problem is clearly identified, substantiated by evidence, and logically connected to the proposed intervention and expected results.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- alignment is weak or unclear; - problem analysis is missing, illogical, or unsupported; - links to outcomes are not demonstrated.	0 – 2
- basic alignment is demonstrated; - problem analysis is present but superficial, partially substantiated, or not fully coherent.	3 – 5
- clear and logical alignment; - problem analysis is relevant and reasonably substantiated; intervention logic is coherent.	6 – 9
- very strong strategic alignment; - problem analysis is well-evidenced, analytically sound, and convincingly linked to expected outcomes and outputs.	10 – 12

1.2 Understanding of the needs of direct and indirect target groups and appropriateness of the proposed response	
Maximum score: 8 Location in the grant application: 3.4 Target groups; 3.5 Relevancy of the project; 4. Indicators	
Assessment considers: • Clear identification of direct and indirect target groups • Evidence-based understanding of their needs • Appropriateness and proportionality of the proposed response	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- target groups are undefined, inappropriate, or their needs are not substantiated	0 – 2
- target groups are identified but analysis of needs is limited or partially justified; response only partially addresses identified needs.	3 – 4
- target groups are clearly defined; needs are reasonably substantiated; response is appropriate and realistic.	5 – 6
- target groups are comprehensively and convincingly defined; needs are well evidenced; proposed response is clearly tailored and proportionate.	7 – 8

1.3 Quality and depth of participatory approaches involving relevant target groups	
Maximum score: 5 Location in the grant application: 3. Project; 3.4 Target groups; 3.6 Activities	
Assessment focuses on the meaningful involvement of target groups in: • Project design • Implementation • Monitoring and/or evaluation Participation must go beyond consultation and demonstrate substantive engagement, especially for projects focused on inclusion and empowerment.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- no participatory elements or purely formal involvement.	0
- limited or symbolic participation; involvement is marginal or poorly described.	1 – 2
- clear participatory mechanisms; target groups are meaningfully involved in at least one project phase.	3 - 4
- participation is systematic, well-structured, and integrated across multiple phases; demonstrates community-informed design and ownership.	5

1.4 Expected impact and sustainability of project results
Maximum score: 5 Location in the grant application: 6. Sustainability; 4. Indicators
Assessment considers:

• Likely contribution to intended outputs and outcomes • Potential for longer-term impact beyond project duration • Contribution to systemic change, improved policies, or strengthened rights • Substantive and institutional sustainability	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- impact is unclear or unrealistic; - sustainability measures are absent or weak.	0 - 1
- impact is plausible but limited; - sustainability measures are basic or insufficiently developed.	2– 3
- strong expected impact; - sustainability is realistic and supported by concrete measures.	4
- high potential for long-term or systemic impact; - sustainability is comprehensive, institutionally grounded, and clearly assigned.	5

2. Project Implementation Approach and Partnership Quality (30 points)

2.1 Appropriateness, feasibility, coherence and internal logic of planned activities, including risk analysis and mitigation	
Maximum score: 20 Location in the grant application: 3. Project; 3.6 Activities; 3.7 Organisational arrangement; 4. Indicators	
Assessment examines: • Logical link between activities, outputs and outcomes • Feasibility and sequencing • Adequacy of resources • Identification and mitigation of risks	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- activities are illogical, unrealistic, or disconnected from objectives; - major implementation risks are unaddressed.	0 – 4
- activities are generally relevant but contain weaknesses in planning, sequencing, feasibility, or risk management.	5 – 10
- activities are coherent and feasible; planning is sufficiently detailed; - risks are identified and reasonably addressed.	11 – 15
- activities are comprehensive, logically structured, and fully feasible; - resources are adequate; risk management is robust and well integrated.	16 – 20

2.2 Quality and feasibility of communication and visibility measures
Maximum score: 5 Location in the grant application: 3. Project, 3.8 Communication plan
Assessment considers:

• Appropriateness of communication methods • Targeting of relevant audiences • Realistic timeframe and scope	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- communication measures are missing or seriously deficient.	0
- communication is partially described; - targeting or methods are weak or unrealistic.	1 – 2
communication plan is appropriate and feasible, - methods, target groups, and timeframe are realistic	3 – 4
- communication plan is comprehensive, well targeted, realistic, and proportionate to project scope.	5

2.3 Quality of the partnership with a project partner from Iceland, Liechtenstein and/or Norway (if applicable)	
Maximum score: 5 Location in the grant application: 1. Basic information; 2.2 Partner information	
Assessment focuses on: • Added value of the donor partner • Active and substantive involvement • Clear and complementary role distribution • Mutual benefit and knowledge exchange	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- no donor partner, or partnership is purely formal without added value.	0
- partnership exists but roles are unclear or added value is limited.	1 - 2
- partnership demonstrates clear roles and substantive cooperation.	3 - 4
- partnership provides strong added value, active engagement, and meaningful knowledge exchange.	5

3. Value for Money – Budget and Cost Efficiency (20 points)

3.1 Cost-effectiveness and adequacy of proposed expenditure
Maximum score: 10 Location in the grant application: 5. Budget
Assessment considers proportionality of costs to scope and complexity of activities, realism of unit costs, and justification of expenditures.
Recommended scoring scale:

- budget is significantly disproportionate, unrealistic, or inadequately justified.	0 – 3
- budget is generally reasonable but contains weaknesses or minor disproportions.	4 – 6
- budget is realistic, justified, and proportionate.	7 – 8
- budget demonstrates strong cost-efficiency, clear justification, and optimized allocation.	9 – 10

3.2 Coherence between the budget and proposed activities	
Maximum score: 10 Location in the grant application: 3. Project; 5. Budget	
Assessment examines whether financial allocations correspond logically to planned activities and ensure smooth implementation.	
Recommended scoring scale:	
- budget does not adequately cover key activities or shows major imbalance.	0 – 3
- budget generally aligns with activities but contains some inconsistencies.	4 – 6
- budget aligns well with activities and enables feasible implementation.	7 – 8
- budget is optimally structured and fully coherent with the implementation plan.	9 – 10

4. Profile, Capacity, and Experience of the Applicant (and Partner) (20 points)

4.1 Alignment with the shared values and principles of the EEA Civil Society Fund Slovakia	
Maximum score: 10 Location in the grant application: 2.1 Applicant information; 2.2 Partner information	
The EEA Civil Society Fund programme is based on shared values and principles, which are respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. The assessment will assess whether the organisation and the proposed project demonstrably act in accordance with the principles of the programme. The organisation's track record and whether its past and current activities, approaches and proposed project respect and support these principles will also be taken into account.	
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	0 – 3

- 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 Organisational and professional competence, governance systems, and capacity to implement the project
Maximum score: 5 Location in the grant application: 2.1 Applicant; 3.7 Organisational arrangement
The assessment is proportionate to the size and operating environment of the organization and considers: • Relevant experience. • Team composition and competencies. • Governance and management systems. **Important note for assessors:** In cases where the applicant is an organization whose leadership or decision-making positions are held by representatives of communities identified in the call text as marginalized or in vulnerable situations, and where the submitted project concurrently addresses issues related to the status of that specific marginalized or vulnerable group, it is recommended to lean toward higher scores for such organizations. This ensures the involvement of these groups beyond the level of project activities. For the purposes of this criterion, groups that are marginalised and individuals in vulnerable situations include (the list is non-exhaustive): Roma communities (including women, girls, and LGBTQI+ persons within the community); LGBTQI+ persons; persons with disabilities; migrants and refugees (including persons displaced by conflict); members of ethnic or national minorities; women facing structural discrimination; youth at risk of social exclusion; seniors in vulnerable situations; and communities in disadvantaged or environmentally burdened regions.

Recommended scoring scale:	
- Insufficient competence; serious risks in terms of capacity.	0 – 1
- Adequate but limited capacity; presence of certain gaps.	2 – 3
- Competent team, appropriate governance systems, sufficient capacity for successful implementation.	4 – 5

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