Iceland Liechtenstein Norway

Civil Society Fund

OPEN CALL FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (CSOs) IN ROMANIA

Call #7 - Organisational Development for Experienced CSOs and Federations

ORGANISATIONAL GRANTS

Guidelines for Applicants

AVAILABLE FUNDING: € 3,000,000

DEADLINE: 08 OCTOBER – 16:00 ROMANIA TIME

Civil Society Development Foundation

environmental partnership foundation

Resource Center for Roma Communities Foundation

Frivillighet Norge

The **EEA Civil Society Fund** is part of the contribution of **Iceland**, **Liechtenstein** and **Norway** to 15 EU Member States under the EEA and Norway Grants, including **Romania**. The aims of the EEA and Norway Grants are to **reduce social and economic disparities** in the European Economic Area (EEA) and to **strengthen bilateral relations** between the Donor States and Beneficiary States.

The EEA Civil Society Fund aims to support **a vibrant and resilient civil society protecting and promoting democracy, the rule of law, and human rights**.

The EEA Civil Society Fund in **Romania** (hereinafter referred to as the CSF Romania or the "Programme") has a total allocation of **€ 53,811,718.** A consortium of Civil Society Development Foundation, Romanian Environmental Partnership Foundation, Resource Center for Roma Communities and Civil Society Norway (Frivillighet Norge), operates the EEA Civil Society Fund in **Romania** on behalf of the Donor States.

This call targets Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working in the area of **promoting democracy, the rule of law, and human rights, and has a total allocation of € 3,000,000.**

SUMMARY OF THE CALL	
Title of the call	Call #7 – Organisational development for experienced CSOs and federations
Purpose of the call	See section 3.3 of this Call
Outcome(s)	Outcome 3. CSOs that Promote Democracy, the Rule of Law, and Human Rights Strengthened
Output(s)	Output 3.1: Organisational development supported
Relevant project activities	Recommended activities - See section 3.5 of this Call
Eligible project Applicants	See section 5 of this Call
Project duration	Between 36 and 48 months
Final date of eligibility of expenditures	No later than 30 April 2031
Project grant amount	Between € 200,001 and € 350,000
Co-financing	No co-financing required
Partnerships	No
Call available in the following language(s)	Romanian, English
Questions deadline	No later than 7 working days before closing date of the Call
Application deadline	08 October 2026 16:00 (Romania time)

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1. BACKGROUND FOR THE EEA CIVIL SOCIETY FUND IN ROMANIA

Support to civil society is a key priority for the EEA and Norway Grants, funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. The overall objectives of EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2021-2028 is to contribute to the reduction of social and economic disparities in the European Economic Area (EEA) and to strengthen bilateral relations between the Donor States and the Beneficiary States.

The EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2021-2028 are based on the **common values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities**. All organisations and activities funded by the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2021-2028 shall be consistent with respect for these values and principles and abstain from supporting operations that may fail to do so. Their implementation shall comply with the fundamental rights and obligations enshrined in relevant instruments and standards.

10% of the overall funding of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2021-2028 has been set aside for support to civil society through the EEA Civil Society Fund.

The allocation for the EEA Civil Society Fund in **Romania** is € 53,811,718.

Through an open tender process, the secretariat of the Donor States – the Financial Mechanism Office (FMO) has selected a consortium composed of Civil Society Development Foundation, Romanian Environmental Partnership Foundation, Resource Center for Roma Communities and Civil Society Norway (Frivillighet Norge) as Fund Operator of the EEA Civil Society Fund in **Romania**. The Fund Operator manages the EEA Civil Society Fund in **Romania** on behalf of the Donor States. This includes the selection, contracting and follow-up of projects.

The objective of the EEA Civil Society Fund is to contribute to **a vibrant and resilient civil society protecting and promoting democracy, the rule of law, and human rights**.

The EEA Civil Society Fund in **Romania** will include **ten** open calls, contributing to the following outcomes[1]:

- Outcome 1: Democratic values and rule of law strengthened
- Outcome 2: Human Rights strengthened
- Outcome 3: CSOs that promote democracy, the rule of law, and human rights, strengthened
- Bilateral Outcome: Strengthened bilateral cooperation in the civil society sector
- Regional Outcome: Strengthened regional cooperation in the civil society sector

The bilateral outcome of strengthened bilateral cooperation is about cooperation between civil society in **Romania** and in the three Donor States Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

The Programme uses a results-based management approach[2]. This means it is designed and managed with a focus on achieving results. The Programme has a results framework that guides what can be supported. To be eligible for support, all projects must contribute to the expected results outlined in this results framework.

An overview of all open calls as well as other activities supported by the Programme can be found on the website of the EEA Civil Society Fund in **Romania**: **www.eeacivilsocietyfund.ro**

[1] Outcomes are the higher-level changes that occur through the achievement of various outputs. Their effects on the target group should continue in the future. Projects are expected to make a measurable contribution to the applicable outcome.

[2] See more information about Results based management in Programme Indicators Guidance, document available at www.eeacivilsocietyfund.ro.

2. OUTCOME 3. CSOS THAT PROMOTE DEMOCRACY, THE RULE OF LAW, AND HUMAN RIGHTS STRENGTHENED

Outcome 3. CSOs that Promote Democracy, the Rule of Law, and Human Rights Strengthened covers mainly one area of support in the Civil Society Fund Romania: Organisational development and an enabling environment for civil society. **Call #7 – Organisational development for experienced CSOs and federations** is implemented under Outcome 3: CSOs that Promote Democracy, the Rule of Law, and Human Rights Strengthened, contributing directly to its achievement.

Aims	• To strengthen the capacity and sustainability of CSOs active in promoting democracy, the rule of law and human rights. • To contribute to a more resilient civil society, capable of addressing operational and administrative burdens, and responding to the human resources crisis in an unstable context marked by increased hostility towards CSOs. • To enhance the financial sustainability by diversifying funding sources, improving the financial planning and management, and leveraging digitalization. • To enhance the research-driven and evidence-based interventions and planning. • To contribute to a strategically coordinated civil society ecosystem, capable of influencing public policy and engaging in long-term advocacy efforts. • To foster an enabling environment for civil society.
Approach	• The Programme integrates organisational development of CSOs through multiple levels of intervention, including organisational development, thematic development of the CSOs based on their areas of expertise, and strengthening regulatory compliance processes while implementing measures to mitigate potential vulnerabilities. • Strengthening CSOs constituency-building efforts by supporting member mobilization and engagement, fostering civic participation, and promoting broader representation. • Fostering networking, mentorship and structured knowledge transfer between established CSOs or federations and grassroots organizations or from underserved areas. • Providing tailored support through organisational grants based on multiannual organisational work plans and/or strategies, ensuring sustainability and strategic alignment. • Promoting an enabling environment for civil society through advocacy, policy dialogue, and systemic support initiatives that reinforce the overall ecosystem.
Financial allocation	The total allocation available for open calls under Outcome 3 is **€ 8,060,000.**

3. FOCUS OF THIS CALL

3.1. Financial allocation, types of grants and deadline

Under this Call, funding is available to support civil society initiatives contributing to **Output 3.1: Organisational development supported.**

Available allocation / Grants / Deadline	
Type of grants	**Organisational grants**
Total Financial Allocation	€ 3,000,000
Publication date of the Call	08 July 2026
Application opening date (online platform only)	08 July 2026
Application deadline	08 October 2026; 16:00 (Romania time)
Project duration (minimum and maximum)	36 - 48 months
Grant amount (minimum and maximum)	€ 200,001 - 350,000
Co-financing	The grant rate of the project is 100%.

! Important	**The final form of the project proposal is considered the one uploaded on the online platform (https://finantaripublice.fdsc.ro) and validated until the deadline.** The deadline for completing and validating the online Application form and attaching the required documents is **08 October 2026; 16:00 (Romania time).** After this date, it will no longer be possible to fill in a new project Application and modify / fill in the project Application already submitted for the **Call #7 – Organisational development for experienced CSOs and federations** . Access will be automatically limited by the online platform server. We recommend submitting the Application(s) earlier than on the deadline set in the Guidelines. Postponing the Application(s) submission for the last day may cause problems due to the system overloading that would not enable to complete and validate the Application on time.

3.2. Current social context and rationale

The EU Strategy for Civil Society clearly highlights the crucial roles of civil society in democratic societies, ranging from representing vulnerable groups and delivering social services, to raising awareness about key issues, monitoring policies and decision-making processes, and fostering transparency and accountability. The EU also recognizes that civil society requires an enabling, safe, and supportive environment to effectively fulfil these roles. While civic space at the European level remains classified as ”open”, the trend of increasing challenges for civil society persists in 2025, marked by ”new legal restrictions, insufficient funding or physical and verbal attacks”, as highlighted in 2025 Rule of Law Report.

Although Romania recorded a strong economic progress in the recent years, increasing its GDP per capita to close to 80% of the EU average in 2024, there are still significant challenges regarding the institutional trust and perceptions of corruption (2025 Country Report – Romania). In the same time, several reports

highlight a shrinking civic space, alongside a rise in extremist ideologies and behaviours (Civic Space Report 2025). The current social context is marked by a state of social anomie reflected in deep political polarization, ambiguous social values, and growing inclination towards illiberalism.

Although overall, the level of trust of Romanians in civil society organizations remains stable in 2025 (48% of respondents), according to the most recent opinion survey on civil society (BOSC 2025), the distrust is becoming more vehement (27% of respondents state that they do not trust at all the NGOs, an increase from 21% in 2023). Despite the relatively high level of trust in CSOs compared to other institutions, the population is not sufficiently aware of the impact CSOs have at community or society level (62% of the respondents consider that CSOs do not influence their life at all, while 50% think that they have a positive influence over their direct beneficiaries).

The three principle areas of civil society work regarded as significant by general population in Romania mirror those identified at European level (Special Eurobarometer 568), although with lower share of responses: CSOs should work on exposing corruption (37% in Romania compared to 42% in EU27), defending rights in individuals (31% in Romania and 41% in EU27), and delivering services, such as education or healthcare (29% in Romania and 39% in EU27).

The challenges faced by civil society organizations are also perceived by the general population all over Europe (Special Eurobarometer 568), survey respondents identifying as top three difficulties they are aware of: the abusive legal actions/SLAPPs against CSOs (33% of respondents in Romania, 30% of respondents in the EU27), verbal or physical threats and attacks (32% in Romania and 37% in EU27), and unjustified restrictions in their work (29% in Romania and 28% in EU27).

CSOs that promote democracy, the rule of law, and human rights are facing capacity-building challenges, particularly in strategic management, income diversification, and workforce development according to 2024 The Non-Governmental Sector Profile, Trends, Challenges Report. Many CSOs struggle with financial sustainability, relying on limited funding and small teams. Only 30% have paid staff, while 35% operate solely with volunteers. Alarmingly, 31% of organizations were unable to cover half of their 2023 financial needs and 41% were reporting high burnout risks.

The Programme aims to address these core challenges facing CSOs, including sustainability, governance, financial management, human resources management, and advocacy, through the interventions foreseen under **Outcome 3 - CSOs that promote democracy, the rule of law, and human rights, strengthened.**

The Programme recognizes the role federations or networks play for a resilient civil society ecosystem, through facilitating structured civic dialogue and advocacy interventions, building on diverse expertise and perspectives of their members, and gaining legitimacy in relation to institutional actors. Therefore, the present Call for proposals focuses on strengthening the internal capacity of CSO's federations and experienced CSOs coordinating multi-organisational initiatives, active in the following topics: promoting civic participation in democratic processes; promoting information integrity and media literacy; protecting human rights, including antidiscrimination and social justice; promoting gender equality, including SRHR (Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights) and LGBTIQ+ rights; promoting climate action, environmental protection, and just green transition; or promoting inclusion and empowerment of Roma (see Section 5.1. for all eligibility criteria).

3.3. Purpose of this call

Objectives of the Call	**To strengthen the internal capacity of federations and experienced CSOs** that have a proven track record in leading multi-organisational initiatives promoting democracy, the rule of law, or human rights, enabling them to pursue their missions more effectively and sustainably over the long term.

	To build a more resilient civil society sector, better equipped to respond to emerging social and democratic challenges. **To contribute to a stronger and more coordinated civil society**, capable of mobilizing constituencies, engaging in cross-sectoral collaborations to enhance their impact, and driving policy change.
Programme Areas of support targeted	• Organisational development and an enabling environment for civil society.
Social service provision	**Social service provision shall not be eligible as a stand-alone activity/project.** It can only be supported if they are necessary for enhancing advocacy, community participation, and/or civic engagement.
Partnerships	**Partnership projects will not be supported.**

3.4. Expected project approach

The following section defines the framework and the relevant types of projects supported under this Call. Proposals are not required to address all the elements listed below. The projects supported under this call will follow a specific approach. Areas of intervention will be defined and prioritized in line with the identified needs and strategic objectives set by each organization in its **existing multi-annual strategy/ and/or work plan covering the project duration**.

All the projects should integrate gender equality as a mandatory principle across all project activities, design, and implementation.

Organisational grants	**Projects approach: strategic objectives for impactful promotion of democracy, the rule of law, or human rights.** The proposed projects must be rooted in the Applicant's existing strategy and/or work plan. The projects should not create a parallel set of objectives but should clearly demonstrate how the grant will (1) operationalize the multi-annual strategy/ work plan by connecting the strategic documents with planned activities and concrete actions. (2) enable impact by funding relevant activities that support the achievement of objectives in democracy, the rule of law, or human rights that were previously difficult to be achieved due to a lack of flexible funding. The proposed projects must adopt an integrated approach, ensuring a balance between strengthening organisational capacity and implementing activities that advance the organization's mission. The proposal should articulate a dual-track plan: targeted activities to improve organisational governance, financial sustainability, staff technical skills, or digital resilience & mission-driven activities through programmatic work that contributes to Outcome 1 and/or 2, ensuring the organization remains an active and effective advocate for its core values. All organisational development activities must be aligned with the objectives set out in the existing multi-annual strategy and/or work plan. The projects should demonstrate a multiplier or an ecosystem effect by indirectly strengthening the broader civil society and increasing its ability to respond to emerging social and democratic challenges. Applicants should explain how their growth will benefit other parts of the CSO sector through: knowledge-sharing,

	joint initiatives, coordinated advocacy efforts, organisational development, peer learning, and the dissemination of tools and best practices. **Expected changes:** • Increased abilities of organisations to effectively pursue and deliver their missions; • Strategic plans that are actively implemented and regularly monitored; • Enhanced medium- and long-term organisational sustainability; • Improved internal management systems and governance procedures that are successfully implemented; • Strengthened core functions and capacities of federations/network secretariats, including dedicated human resources for public policy and advocacy; • More diverse and inclusive membership base of federations and networks, with increased participation of local and regional CSOs, particularly grassroot organisations; • Enhanced human resource stability and capacity within federations/experienced CSOs; • Increased fundraising capacity of federations and experienced CSOs; • Effective transfer of good practices among CSOs, particularly between grassroots and more established organisations; • Improved coordination and stronger relationships among CSOs, leading to collective actions.

3.5. Project activities and Programme indicators

The project shall include tailored activities and interventions based on the multi-annual strategy and/or work plan, the current organisational development needs and the operating context of the organization. The application must follow the specified format, and include a plan of activities covering the duration of the project, with clearly defined targets to be supported through the grant.

Please note that the activities described below are indicative examples. They must be part of the multi-annual strategy and/or work plan and implemented in a logical sequence to achieve the annual target results within the available resources.

Type of possible activities:

- Developing and/or improving internal management systems, governance and internal management procedures and codes of conduct;
- Strengthening the core functions and capacities of federations' or networks' secretariats;
- Developing or improving services for members of the federations or coalitions/networks (e.g., training, communication, fundraising support), based on comprehensive needs assessments;
- Developing and/or strengthening monitoring and evaluation frameworks;
- Strengthening evidence-based planning and results-based management capacities;
- Improving financial management systems and practices to enhance transparency, accountability and long-term sustainability by improving procedures, increasing cost-efficiency, optimizing resource allocation, and diversifying the funding sources;

- Developing and implementing tailored fundraising strategies and action plans;
- Developing and improving fundraising tools and materials;
- Designing and implementing human resources management policies, including recruitment, retention, performance management, volunteer coordination, and measures addressing staff well-being, burnout prevention, and high turnover;
- Designing and delivering targeted capacity-building and training programmes for staff and volunteers, aligned with the strategic priorities;
- Designing and implementing digital-related policies (e.g. data protection, cybersecurity, online engagement, digital advocacy, ethical use of technology etc.);
- Expanding and diversifying the membership base of federations, informal coalitions or networks;
- Broadening and strengthening the constituency base;
- Developing new partnerships and collaborative initiatives, including cooperation with informal groups or civic initiatives;
- Facilitating trust-building activities, including retreats, workshops, and joint reflection sessions;
- Supporting knowledge sharing and the exchange of good practices, including through mentoring and peer-to-peer learning among member organisations and strategic partner CSOs;
- Strengthening external communication capacity through new or improved communication strategies or plans;
- Enhancing the capacity to contribute to policymaking and to design and implement effective advocacy initiatives, including on the regulatory framework affecting CSOs;
- Strengthening the capacity to monitor institutional performance, document human rights violations, conduct watchdog activities and hold public and private institutions accountable;
- Integrating human rights principles across the organization's work through dedicated policies, procedures, and approaches, including safeguarding policies, the design of projects based on a human rights approach etc;
- Developing and implementing interventions aiming to promote democracy, the rule of law, or human rights.

To track progress, projects should also contribute to Programme-level indicators from the selected Outcome and Output(s).[3] Indicators are a means to quantifiably measure progress. Alongside narrative reports and other sources of information, indicators are used to help *indicate* the extent to which an outcome or output has been achieved. **The indicators listed in the table below are used to monitor progress and measure results at the Programme level for this call. All projects funded under the Call #7 shall contribute to the achievement of:**

[3] By achieving results under the selected outcome and related output(s), projects will contribute indirectly to the Programme's high-level objective to contribute to a vibrant and resilient civil society protecting and promoting democracy, the rule of law, and human rights. However, project Applicants are not required to measure results at this higher objective level, neither with narrative reporting nor with indicator reporting.

Expected Programme results	Indicators	Programme level targets*	Requirements for Applicants
Outcome 3: CSOs that promote democracy, the rule of law, and human rights, strengthened	30. Number of supported CSOs that have diversified their funding base	30	All projects must select and report against **at least indicator 31.**
	31. Number of supported CSOs with improved overall organisational strength	60	
Output 3.1: Organisational development supported	32. Number of supported CSOs with a new or improved organisational policy on fundraising	20	All projects must contribute to Output 3.1, respectively select and report against **at least one corresponding Output level indicator**.
	33. Number of supported CSOs with a new or improved organisational policy on human resources management	15	

! Important	* The target values to be reached at Programme level are presented for informative purposes only. Within the project proposals, Applicants will establish the target values proportionally with the project objectives and project budget. For detailed information on the indicators (definitions, measurement, etc.), please consult the *Programme Indicators Guidance,* document available at **www.eeacivilsocietyfund.ro**.

! Important	An **Organisational Development Matrix** (self-assessment tool) is available on the platform https://app.crestem.ong/. Applicants are encouraged to consult it, as it will serve as the instrument for measuring the baseline and final scores of Indicator 31. The Matrix allows for assessment across multiple dimensions of organisational capacity, providing a comprehensive view of strengths and areas for development. Data collected through the Matrix will inform both the initial baseline assessment and the final evaluation at the end of the project, ensuring consistency in measuring progress over time.

! Important	According to the State aid compliance principles of the Civil Society Fund, the EEA CSF **does not provide any economic advantage** to undertakings. The supported activities are of non-economic nature. In case the projects contributed also to diversifying funding sources, the amount raised through fundraising activities during the project duration must be spent for the cause it was raised and in accordance with CSF principles and values. At the end of the project, it will have to be submitted by the respective organisation a declaration in which it will be specified the size of the raised amount, the aim for which it is going to be spent and the acknowledgement that the funds it will be spent according to this aim.

3.6. Information and communication activities

When developing project proposals, the Applicants should describe information and communication actions aiming to create awareness of the project and its objectives, any bilateral cooperation with entities in Iceland, Liechtenstein and/or Norway, as well as of the implementation, results and the impact of support from the Donors to the project. Applicants should consider the following minimal obligatory requirements that have to be planned, developed, budgeted, implemented and reported to the FO:

- to provide information to relevant audiences and stakeholders on the existence of the project, its objectives, progress and results, as well as the support from the Programme and Donor support;
- to clearly highlight the contributions from Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants, and emphasize the EEA Civil Society Fund as an integral part of the EEA and Norway Grants;
- to emphasize any bilateral cooperation with entities from the Donor States (DS);
- to ensure that those taking part in the project have been informed of the funding from the Programme and the Donor States;
- **to make information about the project available on the web and/or on social media**, in accordance with the web requirements established the **EEA Civil Society Fund Communication and Design Manual**;
- **for projects with a budget larger than € 100,000 and whose project finances a physical object, infrastructure or construction:** to put up a billboard at the site during implementation and replace it with a permanent commemorative plaque no later than six months after completion, ensuring both comply with the requirements and designs set out in the **EEA Civil Society Fund Communication and Design Manual**.

! Important	Applicants should describe how they will fulfil all these minimal requirements in the Application form (Annex 1), under A2 Information and Communication, and budget them accordingly, if the case. The proposed information and communication actions should be closely connected and adapted to the project activities. All information and communication materials related to projects carried out with CSF support must be in line with the EEA Civil Society Fund Communication and Design Manual, available at www.eeacivilsocietyfund.ro. Please note that, if the Application is selected for funding, Applicants shall develop a Communication Plan in a format to be provided by the FO. During project implementation, the Fund Operator may, in well justified exceptional cases, waive the requirement for information and communication activities if these could jeopardise the project or put stakeholders at risk.

4. PROJECT BUDGETING RULES

4.1. Principles of project budgeting

Financial management is not just about keeping accounting records. It is an important part of project management and must not be seen as a separate activity. This chapter is supplemented by the provisions of Annex 2b – Guidelines for budgeting, which forms an integral part of the Guidelines for Applicants. In the event of discrepancies between this Guidelines and Annex 2b – Guidelines for budgeting, the provisions of Annex 2b shall prevail.

Organisational grants are awarded as a lump sum, being completely independent of justification based on real or unit costs. The Applicant must demonstrate in the funding application the specific way in which this grant will contribute to the implementation of its strategy and to the strengthening of institutional capacity. Therefore, the Applicant must include in the funding application the organisation's overall general budget for the implementation of the strategy (to illustrate the context in which the grant will be used). The Applicant must align the timeline for achieving the results with the payment scheme, in order to ensure a sustainable financial flow for the implementation of the grant.

Although Project Promoters are not required to submit proof of expenditure of the organisational grant under the lump-sum funding model, funded CSOs must retain all accounting records, supporting documentation, and audit trails in accordance with applicable national legislation, relevant accounting standards, and generally accepted accounting principles.

5. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Territorial scope: the Programme aims to support **Romanian CSO projects in Romania**. In exceptional and well justified cases, there could be allowed initiatives to participate/ organize organisational development activities in Donor States (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein) or Beneficiary States (Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia and Slovenia) or States outside the European Economic Area that have a common border with Romania (Moldova, Ukraine and Serbia) as well as in other EU countries than the ones already mentioned above.

5.1. Eligible Applicants

A. Eligible Applicants are **non-governmental and non-profit organizations**, legally established in Romania, organized and operated in accordance with the relevant Romanian laws, respectively:

- Associations, foundations or federations legally established in Romania, having acquired either Romanian legal personality or the status of foreign legal entities recognized in Romania, and operating under the Government Ordinance 26/2000 and/or the Law 21/1924 on associations and foundations (with subsequent amendments and completions); or
- National Red Cross Society in Romania, established under the Law 139/1995 (amended and by the Law 524/2004) and its structures with legal personality.

Voluntary[4], non-profit organisations, established as legal entities in Romania, with a non-commercial purpose falling outside the above categories may be considered eligible on a case-by-case basis if they are, and fulfil the requirements described below at sections B and C and if they are not in the situations described in sections D and E.

B. Additionally, Applicants shall meet the following requirements:
(a) have had legal personality for at least 60 months prior to the submission deadline, and
(b) have reported an average yearly total budget in the last three completed financial years (2023-2025) of minimum: (1) 500.000 Lei in case of entities registered as federations as defined in Government Ordinance 26/2000, or (2) 1.500.000 Lei in case of all other CSOs which are not federations, and

[4] i.e. have a voluntary nature, namely it should the result of an initiative of association arising from the will of the founding members, and that the capacity of associate should not be based on a legal obligation but on the member's own will.

(c)	have an average annual turnover over the last three completed financial years (2023-2025) that is at least twice the annualised value[5] of the grant amount applied for, and
(d)	have a multiannual organisational strategy and/or workplan, and
(e)	demonstrate solid expertise, proven through at least two relevant projects implemented as project lead in the last five years in the following topics: • promoting civic participation in democratic processes; • promoting information integrity and media literacy; • protecting human rights, including antidiscrimination and social justice; • promoting gender equality, including SRHR (Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights) and LGBTIQ+ rights; • promoting climate action, environmental protection, and just green transition; • promoting inclusion and empowerment of Roma, and
(f)	abide by the principles of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and the respect for human rights for all, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, and
(g)	have the capacity, according to their statutes, to act in the field addressed by the project, and
(h)	are independent of the local, regional and national government and other public entities[6], and
(i)	are independent of political parties, and
(j)	are independent of profit-making entities (commercial entities)[7], and

[5] For the purpose of assessing this condition, the average turnover over the last three years will be converted into EUR using the applicable InforEuro annual exchange rate as follows: 2023: 1 Euro = 4,9478 lei; 2024: 1 Euro = 4,9753 lei; 2025: 1 Euro = 5,0352 lei.
Example of calculation: If an Applicant requests a grant of €300,000 for a period of 3 years, the annualized value of the grant is €100,000 per year. Accordingly, the Applicant must demonstrate an average annual turnover of at least €200,000 over the last 3 financial years.

[6] To verify if an organisation fulfils this conditions, the FO's assessment will mainly include the following aspects:
- public institutions and/or public authorities do not represent more than half of the members with voting rights within the organization;
- public institutions and/or public authorities, or their representatives acting as natural persons on behalf of such entities, do not hold more than half of the voting power within the Board of Directors or the General Assembly;
- the purpose and objectives set out in the statues are established autonomously by the organization, without being subordinated to or limited to supporting a public institution and/or public authorities;
- the organisational operational structures and their strategic decisions, the planning and implementation of its activities are neither influenced by public institutions / public authorities, nor conditioned by the administrative priorities of public institutions and/or public authorities.

[7] To verify if an organisation fulfils this conditions, the FO's assessment will mainly include the following aspects:
- profit making entities do not represent more than half of the members with voting rights within the organization;
- profit making entities, or their representatives acting as natural persons (such as owners, directors, or employees acting on behalf of these companies), do not hold more than half of the voting power within the Board of Directors or the General Assembly;
- the purpose and objectives set out in the statues are established autonomously by the organization, without being subordinated to or limited to supporting the commercial interests, market positions, profitability or promotion of any profit-making entity;
- the organisational operational structures and their strategic decisions, the planning and implementation of its activities are neither influenced by profit-making entity nor conditioned by the administrative priorities of profit-making entity.

(k) do not promote a religious doctrine, mission or proselytism related to the beliefs of a particular faith (beyond basic religious/cultural awareness raising) and
(l) have transparent structures and governing bodies which are accountable to their members and donors, and
(m) are directly responsible for designing and managing the project and do not act as an intermediary.

C. Additionally, Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria, applicable to the past 5 years:
(a) have not promoted or engaged in documents or actions that contravene PSEAH (prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment) standards;
(b) have not promoted or engaged in documents or actions of sexual harassment, moral harassment in the workplace, or any form of harassment, sexual assault, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation, discrimination, as well as any other form of abuse or attempted abuse against a person in a position of vulnerability, in a relationship of power or trust, or any form of physical, psychological, or coercive aggression or violence;
(c) have not promoted or engaged in documents or actions that have violated or aimed to restrict fundamental human rights, as defined by the Romanian Constitution and the jurisprudence of the Romanian Constitutional Court, national legislation, and other international treaties to which Romania is a party in the field of fundamental human rights, at the level of the European Union and the Council of Europe, including through the jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the European Union and the European Court of Human Rights;
(d) have not promoted or engaged in acts or actions of discrimination, including by supporting a cause or making public statements that have discriminated against a person, a group of persons, or a community based on race, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, social category, beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, chronic disease, HIV infection, or belonging to any other disadvantaged category;
(e) have not promoted or engaged in public behaviour that fosters nationalist-chauvinist propaganda, incitement to hatred, violence, and discrimination, or behaviour aimed at or resulting in the violation of dignity or the creation of an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive atmosphere against a person, a group of persons, or a community, directly or indirectly related to their belonging to a certain race, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, social category, beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, chronic disease, HIV infection, or any other disadvantaged category;
(f) have not used, promoted, or displayed in their activities or in public spaces symbols, messages, or ideologies associated with organizations, movements, or extremist groups prohibited by the national legislation.

The eligibility criteria will be verified by the FO, in accordance with the following available sources:

1. the existence of a decision or judgment by an authority, public institution, or court that establishes and/or sanctions the Applicant for violating the documents or actions mentioned in section C letters a)-f);
2. the existence of a complaint from other CSOs indicating that the Applicant engaged in documents or actions mentioned in section C letters a)-f);
3. the existence of activities or projects through which the Applicant carried out documents or actions mentioned in section C letters a)-f);

4. the initiation, support, or signing of position papers, endorsements, petitions, or requests addressed to authorities, public institutions, or other natural or legal persons through which the organization engages in documents or actions mentioned in section C letters a)-f);
5. the existence of statements made by the Applicant and/or its representatives in the public space, including on social media or in mass media, through which they engage in documents or actions mentioned in section C letters a)-f) – for this criterion to be considered, the statements must be confirmed by at least three verifiable public sources, such as online press, social media platforms or other recognized publications;
6. any other verifiable and credible public source, including social media, demonstrating the violation of the documents and actions mentioned in section C letters a)-f) – for example, but not limited to, reports from national, European or international CSOs, independent journalistic investigations, etc.

The FO is not limited in its compliance analysis solely to the existence of a decision or judgment by an authority, public institution, or court that establishes and/or sanctions the Applicant. The FO has the right to base its decision on the verification sources mentioned above.

The eligibility criteria mentioned in section C, will be verified only for those proposals that are recommended for funding after the technical and financial evaluation, and before the decision is taken by the Selection Committee. In case an Applicant does not meet the additional eligibility criteria, the project will not be proposed for financing.

D. Not eligible Applicants
(a) any legal entities who do not meet all criteria mentioned in sections A, B & C;
(b) political parties;
(c) religious institutions (religious cults, religious associations established under the Law 489/2006 on freedom of religion and general regime of cults);
(d) professional associations (the associations which makes conditional the exercise of a certain profession with the membership in the association, and the purpose and objectives of the association are to further the specific interests of its members only);
(e) social partners (trade unions and employers' organizations);
(f) profit-distributing cooperatives.

E. Applicants will be considered non-eligible and will not be awarded grants if they fall under one of the supplementary situations below:
(a) are bankrupt, are in the administration of a judicial authority or are being winding up, have suspended the activity, are subject of proceedings concerning these issues or are in a similar situation following the application of a similar procedure provided for in the national legislation or regulations in force;
(b) are guilty of serious professional misconduct proven by any means the FO can justify;
(c) have not fulfilled obligations related to the payment of social security contributions or taxes to the state budget in accordance with the national legislation;
(d) have been the subject of a final decision *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organization or any other illegal activity to the detriment of financial interests, without the evidence that corrective action has been taken in this respect in recent years;
(e) organisations from which the amount due was not recovered, following a final court decision in connection with the NGO Fund Programme 2009-2014.

! Important	Each Applicant is required to submit a Declaration of eligibility (Annex 3) stating that the Applicant meets all the eligibility criteria outlined above. The Declaration of eligibility shall be completed, signed with a wet or qualified electronic signature by the legal representative of the Applicant, dated, scanned (if needed) and uploaded as a digital document within the Application form. For projects selected for funding, Applicants will be required to submit an updated Declaration of eligibility. The FO reserves the right to request any supporting documentation to verify the information provided in the Declaration. The eligibility of the Applicant will be assessed on an individual basis, considering the specific documents presented. The FO reserves the right to evaluate each situation *in concreto* and to make a final decision on eligibility based on its own assessment. If the FO determines that the eligibility criteria are not fulfilled, the Applicant will be informed of the rationale behind the decision.

5.2. Limitations

An Applicant shall submit **maximum one project proposal for the Call #7**. In case an Applicant submits more than one project proposal under the Call #7, the FO will request the Applicant to indicate the application that will enter the administrative and eligibility verification to comply with the limitation established. If the Applicant does not respond in 5 working days from the receipt of the FO request, all its applications will be rejected and none of them will enter the administrative and eligibility verification.

6. HOW TO APPLY: PREPARATION, SUBMISSION AND REGISTRATION

Only applications submitted before the deadline in the prescribed format with all the annexes and in an electronic version via platform https://finantaripublice.fdsc.ro will be evaluated. To apply it is necessary to follow the next steps:

(1) Download from the Programme website	**Guidelines for Applicants and all Annexes:** Annex 1 – Application form Annex 2a – General Budget of the Applicant Annex 2b - Guidelines for budgeting Annex 3 – Declaration of eligibility **Supporting documents:** Programme Indicators Guidance EEA Civil Society Fund Communication and Design Manual Guidelines for using the online platform Organisational Development Matrix (https://app.crestem.ong/) Toolkit for integrating intersectionality in project design
(2) Develop the Application	The project must be formulated clearly and concisely, based on the multi-annual strategy/ work-plan, and clearly state how the grant will contribute to the selected results. The detailed project implementation plan, including the timeline, organization's budget, communication plan, and the organisation's capacity are part of the Application. Applicants should carefully select the relevant **Outcome and Output indicators** from the tables provided at section 3.5.

	In drafting the application, the working version (Word format) of the Application form can be used. Please read **Annex 2b – Guidelines for Budgeting** carefully before completing your financial proposal. The general budget of the Applicant must be attached to the Application. In the main Application form, you should only enter the **requested grant amount** expressed in **Euro**.
(3) Submit the Application	Create/ log into your account on the application platform. Fill in the Application on the online platform. Make sure that all compulsory **annexes (2a and 3) and requested documents** (**multi (Annual strategy and/or work plan)** are **uploaded in the accepted formats**. **Validate the final form of the Application before the deadline, 08 October 2026, 16:00 (Romania time).** Before validation, please ensure that all compulsory annexes and requested documents have been included. Once validated, you will be able to view the entire application and the uploaded annexes, but **no further changes or edits can be made**. If you identify any issues after validation, but before the deadline, please contact the FO immediately.

! Important	The final version of the Application submitted for evaluation must be completed, have the mandatory annexes & requested documents uploaded, and be validated on the application platform before the deadline. Not uploading the mandatory annexes & requested documents leads to the exclusion of the application during the administrative compliance and eligibility assessment. **Only** the information included in the **Application and in the compulsory annexes & requested documents** will be considered for evaluation.

A detailed procedure for online application is described in the *Guidelines for using the online platform* available on the Programme website.

The Application will be filled in Romanian (the only exceptions are the sections indicating otherwise). The Application is complete only when it contains all following documents:

Document	Submission through https://finantaripublice.fdsc.ro/
Application form	Filled in the platform
Applicant's multi annual strategy and/or work plan	Uploaded as PDF or a single compressed archive (ZIP, RAR)
General budget of the Applicant (Annex 2a)	Uploaded as annex in EXCEL format
Declaration of eligibility (Annex 3)	Uploaded as PDF or JPEG format

A registration number will automatically be generated once the first information of the Application is saved to the platform. This number will further be used in the correspondence between the FO and the Applicant.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE, ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION CRITERIA

7.1. Evaluation and project selection process

All applications received under this Call for project proposals will enter the evaluation and selection procedure as follows:

1. Verification of administrative compliance and eligibility	• Verification of administrative compliance and eligibility. • Requests for clarifications (if the case). • Informing the Applicants on the results of the administrative and eligibility verification.
2. Technical and financial evaluation	• Applications that are compliant with the criteria in Step 1 are randomly assigned to two impartial evaluators. • Applications are scored based on the evaluation criteria. • According to the total average scores, a ranking list is prepared.
3. Selection Committee	• The Selection Committee approves a list of projects to be financed, conditions (if existing), reserve list and/or rejected applications. • The Selection Committee provides the Steering Committee with its recommendation.
4. Steering Committee	• The Steering Committee confirms the decisions of the Selection Committee and justifies any changes (if the case). • The Steering Committee makes the final decision on the list of projects to be financed, reserve list and/or rejected applications.
5. Announcing the results	• Applicants are informed about the final decision of the Steering Committee.

To ensure transparency, the FO publishes the lists with the applications received, as well as the list of applications entering each evaluation stage.

7.2. Verification of administrative compliance and eligibility

All Applications submitted within the deadline will be assessed according to the administrative compliance and eligibility criteria, based on a Yes/No grid. Below is the grid that shall be used for the verification of administrative compliance and eligibility:

1. ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLIANCE	**Yes**	**No**
The project application includes all the annexes and required documents for the current Call for proposals:		
1.1. The online Application Form (Annex 1) is filled in Romanian, including the summary in English and is complete (all compulsory fields are filled in)		
1.2. The Applicant's multi-annual strategy and/or work-plan is uploaded		
1.3. The General budget of the Applicant is filled in, respects the format from Annex 2a, is provided in Euro and is uploaded (in Excel format)		

1.4. The Declaration of eligibility (Annex 3) is filled in Romanian, signed with a wet or qualified electronic signature by the legal representative of the Applicant, dated, scanned (if needed) and is uploaded		
The assessment of eligibility will be conducted only for the applications that are compliant with the administrative criteria.		
2. ELIGIBILITY	**Yes**	**No**
2.1. The Applicant is eligible		
2.2. The project falls into the types of grants (amount, duration) that can be awarded within the current Call for proposals		

The FO may request clarifications when the information provided is not clear enough and sufficient to allow an objective assessment of the administrative compliance and eligibility of the application. The clarification shall be submitted by the Applicant in no more than 2 working days from the FO's notification. The information exchange will take place on the application platform.Please note that Annex 2a, Annex 3 and Applicant's multi-annual strategy and/or work-plan cannot be requested in case they are missing from the submitted application.

! Important	In case of inconsistencies between the amounts mentioned in the Application form and those included in the General budget of the Applicant (Annex 2a), those from the Applicant's General budget will be taken into consideration. Should any Application be submitted with sections containing unintelligible sequences of letters and/or numbers, the FO reserves the right to consider them invalid applications and exclude them from the evaluation process.

The Applicants will be notified via e-mail once the result of the administrative compliance and eligibility assessment is available in their organization's account.

Applicants may **appeal the decision over compliance with administrative and eligibility criteria** within **10 calendar days** from the notification date of the results, to apel7csf@fdsc.ro as follows:

- the appeal will be formulated in writing and will include the reason for which such a request is well justified.
- no new documents may be submitted in support of the case, and the content of the initial submitted application cannot be modified;

The FO will take into consideration only the appeals submitted by the legal representative of the Applicant or by the person empowered on his behalf. The FO's decision after appeal is final and will be communicated to the Applicant within **15 working days** from the receipt of the appeal. No further appeal on the same application could be formulated afterwards.

7.3. Technical and financial evaluation

Applications that meet the administrative compliance and eligibility criteria will enter the technical and financial evaluation and be scored on a scale from 0 to 100, by two impartial evaluators. The evaluation process is conducted against specific criteria, each being assigned a score. The final score of each application is calculated as the arithmetic average of the points given by both evaluators. The grid for technical and financial evaluation is outlined below:

Dimensions and criteria of evaluation	Maximum score
1. Relevance and contribution to Programme objectives and results	**25**
1.1. The proposal demonstrates clear alignment with the objective of the Programme and with the objectives and approach of the Call	10
1.2. The proposal integrates a "dual approach" balancing internal organisational development with activities that advance democracy, the rule of law, or human rights	5
1.3. The proposal demonstrates high relevance for the CSO ecosystem, showing potential for a multiplier effect, increased sector coordination, or enhanced representation	5
1.4. The proposal demonstrates a coherent link between the proposed activities, expected results, and the selected Programme indicators	5
2. Applicant's experience and accomplishments in the thematic areas and within the CSO ecosystem	**30**
2.1. The Applicant's previous activities have led to measurable and sustainable results demonstrating the Applicant's capacity to influence policy or drive social change in promoting democracy, the rule of law, or human rights	10
2.2. The Applicant has consistently implemented activities in the relevant thematic, beyond isolated or project-based interventions	5
2.3. The Applicant demonstrates relevant and structured collaboration with other CSOs in pursuing common objectives, ensuring complementarity with other actors active in the field	5
2.4. The Applicant demonstrates the capacity to coordinate, support, and to represent its members/partners effectively	5
2.5. The Applicant's cooperation with other CSOs contributed to enhanced impact or policy influence	5
3. The organisational and financial management capacity	**15**
3.1. The Applicant has a clear organisational structure, with well-defined roles, responsibilities, and decision-making procedures, including a team actively engaged in the implementation of the strategy	5
3.2. The Applicant demonstrates systematic use of a monitoring and evaluation system and strategic planning to drive continuous organisational performance	5
3.3. The Applicant demonstrates robust financial management capacity and transparency mechanisms in force to implement and manage the proposed project effectively	5
4. Assessment of the multi-annual strategy/workplan and grant's contribution	**20**

4.1. The strategy and/or work plan includes objectives relevant to Outcome 3, and the grant's contribution is directly linked to strengthening the Applicant's capacity and to achieving the stated strategic objectives	6
4.2. The proposed activities and timeline are realistic, feasible, and logically structured to ensure the achievement of results within the grant period.	7
4.3. The proposal identifies relevant potential risks and proposes appropriate mitigation measures to address them	4
4.4. The expected results of the strategy/work plan are likely to be sustained beyond the grant period, with mechanisms for their integration into the organisation's permanent practices	3
5. Financial justification for organisational budget	**10**
5.1. The budget is transparent and reflects a reasonable and duly justified balance between allocations across strategic objectives and cost categories	4
5.2. The project demonstrates value for money in relation to cost and expected impact	4
5.3. The anticipated additional funding sources are realistic, and adequate to support the implementation of the strategy/work plan	2
Total	**100**

! Important	In case a project receives **less than 17 points in the "Relevance and contribution to Programme objectives and results" evaluation dimension, it will be excluded from further evaluation.** **70 out of 100 points is the minimum score** for each Application to be selected and recommended for funding. In case **the difference between the scores given by the two experts is more than 30%** of the higher score, the Application will be scored by a third impartial and independent evaluator. The average total score of the two closest scores shall be used for the ranking of the projects. If the score given by a third expert would not in any way result in recommending the application for financing, a third expert will not be appointed. In case two applications have the same average score, the one with the higher score in the "Relevance and contribution to Programme objectives and results" evaluation dimension will be ranked higher. If this criterion does not allow for differentiation, the following criteria will be applied in order: "Applicant's experience and accomplishments in the thematic areas and within the CSO ecosystem"; "Assessment of the multi-annual strategy/workplan and grant's contribution"; "The organisational and financial management capacity"; "Financial justification for organisational budget".

7.4. Selection Committee

Following the technical and financial evaluation, a ranking list will result based on the average scores awarded by the impartial evaluators.

The ranking list will be submitted by the FO to a **Selection Committee** consisting of independent experts and representatives of the FO Consortium with relevant expertise and experience. At this stage, representatives of FMO and the Embassies of the Donor States to Romania are invited as observers. Also, representatives from relevant institutions (ministries, governmental agencies etc.) may be invited as observers.

The **Selection Committee** will review the ranking lists and the recommendations made by the evaluators and will recommend to the FO the applications to receive grants, within the amount available for the Call for project proposals. The **Selection Committee** may amend and modify the ranking of the project applications in justified cases.

The conclusions of the **Selection Committee** may include conditions, clarifications and a reserve list with the project applications that are recommended to receive grants but cannot be supported at the time of the decision due to lack of funding.

7.5. Steering Committee

A **Steering Committee** of the Programme is responsible for taking the final decision concerning the selection of applications. The Steering Committee may modify the decision of the Selection Committee in justified cases. If such a modification results in a rejection of a project that otherwise would have been approved, the affected Applicant will be informed in writing about the justification for the modification.

The decision of the Steering Committee is definitive and is not subject to appeal.

7.6. Announcing the results

Once the final decision is taken, the result of the selection process for both successful and unsuccessful Applicants will be accessible, in the organisation's online platform account (the average score obtained for each evaluation criterion and the total average score of their application). Applicants will be informed via e-mail on the fact that the selection results are available in the organisation's account.

Upon request, unsuccessful Applicants and Applicants whose applications are on the reserve list will be provided with more detailed feedback on the assessment of their application. Applicants who have projects proposed for funding will be informed via an award letter, on the conditions they have to fulfil to sign Grant Contracts.

The final list of selected projects will be uploaded on the Programme's website only upon the signature of all Grant Contracts for the Call.

7.7. Complaints Committee

A **Complaints Committee** is established at the level of the Programme and is composed of three members. The objective of the Complaints Committee is to provide an accessible, transparent and consistent mechanism for complainants to express concerns regarding a supposed occurrence of mismanagement at the level of the Programme.

The decisions related to the administrative compliance and eligibility verification as well as the decisions related to the selection process are not subject to verification by the Complaints Committee.

8. CONTRACTING

All Applicants whose projects are selected for funding will receive an award letter outlining the next steps required for contracting. The FO will also ask for specific documents to be submitted prior to the signature of the Grant Contract.

! Important	**All the Grant Contracts and further documents elaborated during implementation shall be signed with a qualified electronic signature.** The Applicant must ensure that, upon signing the Grant Contract, the mandates of the Board of Directors are valid, updated and officially registered in the Register of Associations and Foundations/ or Register of Federations at the competent court. The FO will refrain from signing any contract with organisations whose mandates have expired or lack proper registration. Four further details regarding the validity and procedure registration of mandates in the Registers, please consult Legixplore.ONG on the platform: https://crestem.ong/ro/legixplore.

Please find below the list of the **documents necessary** for the Contract signature:

Applicant	• The certified true copy of the latest updated statute of the organization and of the corresponding final Court decision. If a consolidated version of the statute is not available, certified true copies of the initial statue and of all subsequent amendments, accompanied by the corresponding final Court decision, must be summited; • The excerpt from the Register of Associations and Foundations, in original, issued no more than 90 days before the date of its submission to the FO; • Financial statements for the last three years (2023-2025); • Valid tax certificate, in original, issued by the National Agency for Fiscal Administration; • Valid organization criminal record certificate, in original, issued by the competent authorities; • A bank statement or a formal letter confirming that the EUR account is owned by the Applicant; • Declaration of eligibility (according to the format from Annex 3), in original; The FO reserves the right to request the Applicant any kind of documents in support of the Declaration; • The Communication Plan (according to the format provided by the FO); • CVs of all key team members.

For all projects: to prove the eligibility conditions, additional documents may be required, if the case, during the pre-contracting period. If the Applicant fulfils all the requirements included in the letter, the FO will sign a Grant Contract with the Applicant, who will then become Project Promoter (PP) and will take the administrative lead during implementation.

9. RULES APPLICABLE FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

9.1. Reporting

Each Project Promoter must submit to the FO the following types of reports:

Project Duration	Interim 1 (At Month 12)	Interim 2 (At Month 24)	Interim 3 (At Month 36)	Final Report (At Project End)
36 – 48 Months	**Within 30 calendar days** from the end of month 12 (covers months 1–12)	**Within 30 calendar days** from the end of month 24 (covers months 13–24)	**Within 30 calendar days** from the end of month 36 (covers months 25–36)	**Within 45 calendar days** from the end of implementation (covers months 37 to end)

Interim Technical reports will contain overall information on the implementation of the organisation's multiannual strategy/work plan, details on the activities and achieved results supported through the grant, the progress towards achieving indicators target values, risks and major shifts in strategic priorities etc.

Interim Financial reports shall as a minimum consist of the general financial annual report of the organisation. Since the organisational grants are provided as a lump sum, the Project Promoter will not need to provide financial reports on the specific expenditures made under the grant.

After the submission of the narrative and financial reports, the Fund Operator will organise an **annual meeting with the Project Promoter** to review the progress of implementation.

Interim payments are conditioned by the submission of interim technical and financial reports by the Project Promoter. Together with the final technical and financial reports, they will serve as the basis on which the final project balance will be calculated.

Final Report Requirements:

- **Technical Report:** must be **cumulative**, covering the entire project implementation period. However, it must specifically **detail and highlight the activities carried out during the final unreported period**, while summarizing the overall project achievements.
- **Financial Report and Audit:** In addition to an annual financial report submitted at the end of the implementation period, the Project Promoter shall provide a report by an external auditor to provide assurance that the grant has been used in accordance with the purpose and provisions of the project contract.

9.2. Payment's procedures

The payment system ensures a **positive financial flow** for the projects, while minimising as much as possible the risks related to difficulties/ impossibility to recover the unspent amounts from the PPs. Payments to Project Promoters will be made in Euro (to project dedicated Euro bank accounts indicated by themselves and mentioned in the Grant Contract) and reporting will be made at the InforEuro rate[8] corresponding to the month when the expense was committed/invoiced (e.g. date of the invoice not the date of the actual payment).

[8] InforEuro rate is published on http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/inforeuro/index_en.cfm

Every Project Promoter has the obligation to have one Euro bank account in which it will receive the Grant Contract related payments in Euro from the FO.

Payments of the project grant to Project Promoters may take the form of advance payments, interim payments and payments of the final balance. The maximum amount of the advance payment as well as the number and value of the interim payments will be differentiated according to the duration of the project and will be clearly stated in the Grant Contract.

The table below summarises the payment method applicable for projects based on organisational grants under Call #7 within CSF Romania:

Project duration	Advance payment	No. of interim payments	Interim payment percentage	Maximum percentage of the balance
Between 36-48 months (including)	Up to 30%	3 (three)	20%	At least 10%

In cases of projects that have been assessed as posing a high risk for the Programme[9], the FO may make a justified decision to change the payments scheme (reducing pre-financing or exceptionally, applying a scheme without pre-financing under which the FO reimburses Project Promoters only the amount of grant verified by the FO).

The payment method shall not change in case of extension of project Grant Contracts based on addendum, unless otherwise specified in the respective addendum. As a rule:

Payments general rule		
Advance payments	**Interim payments**	**Final payment / Reimbursement by the PP**
Payments shall be made by the FO within **10 working** days from the date of the Grant Contract signature, unless a later date has been set in the project contract.	Payments shall be processed within **30 working days** from the completion of the annual meeting, following the submission of the interim reports and payment claims.	Payments shall be made by the FO within **10 working** days from the date of FO acceptance of the final report and payment claim. The reimbursement shall be paid by the PP (in case of a negative balance) within 10 working days from the date of receiving the notification from the FO regarding the amount to be reimbursed.

9.3. Audit

If the Project Promoter commissions annual statutory audit reports for other purposes, the report of the latest year of implementation may be submitted, together with this statutory audit report, provided that it **explicitly** includes a dedicated disclosure or a specific emphasis of matter regarding the contribution from the Programme (the project title and reference number; the exact amount of the contribution received from

[9] This shall be based on a risk assessment prepared and documented by the FO, considering, inter alia, the Project Promoter's previous experience and/or its administrative and financial capacity.

the Programme, Confirmation that the grant funds were managed in accordance with the terms of the Grant Agreement.

In the absence of a statutory audit report, the Project Promoter shall commission an independent audit engagement to be conducted by a certified auditor, who must be a member in good standing of the Chamber of Financial Auditors of Romania (CAFR). The audit verification must be performed in accordance with the International Standard on Related Services (ISRS) 4400 (Engagements to Perform Agreed-Upon Procedures Regarding Financial Information). The resulting report shall provide findings regarding the correct application of the simplified cost options and the achievement of the reported outputs.

The FMO could organise audits and on-the-spot verification for Programme and projects and EFTA Board of Auditors/Office of Auditor General of Norway may conduct audits of the Programme and projects.

10. CONTACT DETAILS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

While the Call for proposals is open, the FO will provide support to potential Applicants through info sessions, workshops and helpdesk (via email, phone or meetings) and the publication of the most relevant FAQs. Questions related to this Call for proposals may be addressed by potential Applicants by e-mail and/ or phone by at least **7 working days prior to closing date to:**

For the Call #7
Civil Society Development Foundation / Fundația pentru Dezvoltarea Societății Civile
Tel: 0040 752 444 309
E-mail: apel7csf@fdsc.ro
Contact person: Daniela Mita, Grants Specialist
Technical support for the online application platform: support@fdsc.ro
Programme website: www.eeacivilsocietyfund.ro

The FO will submit the answers in **5 working days** from the reception of the questions and with at least two days before the deadline.

Questions that may be relevant to other Applicants, together with the corresponding answers, will be published regularly on the Programme website.

Please check regularly the Programme website for updated information on this Call for proposals or for upcoming calls and events.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Application form **/** Annex 2a – General budget of the Applicant **/** Annex 2b – Guidelines for budgeting **/** Annex 3 – Declaration of eligibility