Iceland Liechtenstein Norway **Civil Society Fund**

ROLLING CALL FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (CSOs) IN CROATIA AND DONOR STATES (ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN, NORWAY)

CALL FOR BILATERAL COLLABORATION LOT 1 - PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND PREPARATION GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

AVAILABLE FUNDING: 80.000 €

Last updated: 22 October 2026 – postponement of the opening date for application submission.

This amendment postpones the opening date for application submission under the Call for Bilateral Cooperation — Lot 1: Partnership Preparation and Development from 23 October 2026 to 3 November 2026 at 12:00 noon (Zagreb time). The revised date replaces all references to the opening date for application submission throughout the document. The provision on the indicative start of bilateral initiatives is also amended to specify that the start date of each initiative is set out in the grant agreement following completion of the selection procedure.

The final application deadline, the deadline for questions and all other provisions of the Call and Guidelines for Applicants remain unchanged.

Applications may be submitted through the E-grant system from 3 November 2026 at 12:00 noon (Zagreb time)

The rolling call will be open until the funds have been fully committed or 31. 12. 2028

Note: The Croatian version is the official document, in case of differences between the two texts the Croatian version is the valid one.

Slagalica SOLIDARNA PRIPREMA POZOR SMART

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 Croatia. 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 Croatia has a total allocation of € 12.013.120, and out of that € 9.766.349 are intended for re-granting. A consortium of Community Foundation Slagalica (hereafter: CF Slagalica), SOLIDARNA - Foundation for Human Rights and Solidarity and Association for Civil Society Development SMART operates the EEA Civil Society Fund in Croatia on behalf of the Donor States.

This call targets Civil Society Organisations (hereafter: CSOs) working in the area of democratization, human rights, including minority rights, social justice, gender equality, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, and LGBTIQ+ rights; as well as climate action and environmental protection and has a total allocation of €80.000,00.

SUMMARY OF THE CALL	
Title of the call	Call for bilateral collaboration LOT 1 - Partnership development and preparation
Purpose of the call	LOT 1 of the call will provide funding for preparatory visits focused on partnership building, strengthening networking, and fostering long-term cooperation between Croatian civil society organizations and organizations from the Donor States (Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein). These activities will lay the foundation for future high-quality co-creation and the development of joint project initiatives in thematic areas including civic and human rights education, LGBTIQ+ and women's rights, accessible public services, climate justice, youth engagement, and community-based care.
Outcome	Strengthened bilateral cooperation in the civil society sector
Output(s)	N/A
Relevant bilateral activities	See section 2.2.3 of this document
Eligible bilateral initiative applicants	Croatian civil society organizations as described in section 3.1. of this document.

	Civil society organizations from one of the Donor States (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway) as described in section 3.1 of this document.
Bilateral initiative duration	Between 1 and 6 months
Bilateral initiative grant amount	Between € 3.000 and € 5.000
Co-financing	No co-financing required.
Partnerships	Bilateral initiatives must be implemented in the form of partnerships between at least one entity in Croatia and at least one entity in the Donor States (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway). See section 3.2 of this document.
Call available in the following language(s)	Croatian, English
Questions deadline	until the funds are fully committed or December 22, 2028, 23:59 Zagreb time
Opening date for application submission:	3 November 2026 at 12:00 noon (Zagreb time)
Application deadline	until the funds are fully committed or until December 31, 2028

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS 4
1. BACKGROUND FOR THE EEA CIVIL SOCIETY FUND IN CROATIA 6
2. FOCUS OF THIS CALL 7
2.1 PURPOSE OF THIS CALL 7
2.2 Bilateral Outcome: Strengthened Bilateral Cooperation In The Civil Society Sector 8
2.2.1 Needs addressed 8
2.2.2 Expected results 9
2.2.3 Possible activities 11
2.2.4 Conditions 12
3. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS AND PARTNERS 12
3.1 Eligible applicants 12
3.2 Eligible bilateral initiative partners 14
4. BILATERAL INITIATIVE CONDITIONS 15
4.1 Co-financing 16
4.2 Location of the bilateral initiative 16
4.3 Eligible expenditure 16
4.4 Ineligible expenditures 18
4.5 Form of eligible expenditures 18
4.6 Payment of the grant 19
5. HOW TO APPLY 19
5.1 Instructions for Completing and Submitting the Grant Application 20
5.2 Mandatory Annexes to the Grant Application 22
6. ADMINISTRATIVE, ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION CRITERIA 22
6.1 Administrative criteria 23
6.2 Eligibility criteria 23
6.2.1 Appeals 24
7. SELECTION PROCESS 25
7.1 Selection criteria 25
7.2 Notification on selection 26
8. PROVISIONS ON BILATERAL INITIATIVE IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING 26
8.1. Contract provisions 26
8.2. Partnership Agreement 27
8.3. Grant Payments and Reporting 28
9. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION 29

10. INFORMATION CONCERNING THE PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA SUBMITTED BY bilateral initiative APPLICANTS TO THE CIVIL SOCIETY FUND IN CROATIA 30
11. COMPLAINT MECHANISM 31
12. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND SUPPORT FOR THE APPLICANTS 31
13. TIMELINE 32
14. CONTACT 33
ANNEX 1: CHECKLIST FOR APPLICANTS 34
ANNEX 2: RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT FOR THE EEA CIVIL SOCIETY FUND 35
ANNEX 3: DETAILED EVALUATION GRID WITH SCORING GUIDANCE 38

1. BACKGROUND FOR THE EEA CIVIL SOCIETY FUND IN CROATIA

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 Croatia is € 12.013.120.

Through an open tender process, the secretariat of the Donor States – the Financial Mechanism Office (FMO) – has selected a consortium led by CF Slagalica as Fund Operator of the EEA Civil Society Fund in Croatia. The Fund Operator manages the EEA Civil Society Fund in Croatia 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 Croatia will include 12 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 Croatia and in the three Donor States Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

The programme uses a results-based management approach. 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.

[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. See more information in Annex 2 of this document.

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 Croatia: www.eea-csf.hr.

2. FOCUS OF THIS CALL

2.1 PURPOSE OF THIS CALL

The EEA Civil Society Fund Croatia programme (hereafter: Programme) aims to strengthen a vibrant and resilient civil society in Croatia. It specifically supports civil society actors that protect and promote democracy, the rule of law and human rights, with a focus on inclusion, participation and social justice. It will support watchdog and human-rights CSOs, non-profit media and community-based organisations to engage in advocacy, civic education, democratic participation and information integrity, with a particular focus on groups facing structural and intersectional discrimination, including Roma, women, LGBTIQ persons, migrants, refugees, youth, persons with disabilities and residents of under-served regions. In line with the EEA and Norway Grants' mission, the programme will also advance a specific bilateral objective: to deepen and institutionalise cooperation between Croatian civil society actors and entities from the Donor States, as well as regional partners, in order to share knowledge, innovative approaches and joint advocacy strategies in the fields of democracy, rule of law and human rights.

To achieve the bilateral objective, the Programme will support a range of bilateral activities, including preparatory visits, thematic matchmaking and partnership-building events, study visits and expert learning exchanges, as well as joint advocacy and networking initiatives. A dedicated Fund for Bilateral Relations will provide continuous support for cooperation between Croatian CSOs and organisations from the Donor States, enabling the development of sustainable partnerships and collaborative initiatives of mutual interest. The Programme will intentionally combine in-person and online formats to ensure broad participation, accessibility, and inclusive exchange among organisations with different capacities and experiences.

Within this framework, LOT 1 of the Call for bilateral collaboration (hereafter: the Call) is designed to provide CSOs from Croatia and Donor States the opportunity to connect through direct contact, trust-building, and practical cooperation between partner organisations.

The overall aim of the Call is to support mobility and participation in bilateral activities such as preparatory meetings and partnership-development events. By enabling organisations to meet, learn from one another, and jointly design future initiatives outside and within Programme, travel grants will contribute to stronger connections, increased knowledge transfer, and the creation of high-quality bilateral partnerships with long-term impact.

All bilateral initiatives selected under this call must contribute to bilateral outcome: Strengthened bilateral cooperation in the civil society sector.

When applying, please make sure that your bilateral initiative clearly aligns with and contributes to this outcome.

The detailed focus of the call is described below.

2.2 Bilateral Outcome: Strengthened Bilateral Cooperation In The Civil Society Sector

Within the Programme's results-based management approach, the primary focus is on the overall results to be achieved. The Programme uses a results framework to support this focus and to define what is eligible for support. Each bilateral initiative must be assigned to a single outcome, that is, the bilateral outcome under this call

This call addresses the following outcome and the following indicators:

- Strengthened bilateral cooperation in the civil society sector

Indicators:

- Number of exchange programmes or study visits organised between bilateral partners
- Number of participants in exchange programmes / study visits (disaggregated by State type: Beneficiary State vs. Donor State).

2.2.1 Needs addressed

Croatian CSOs working on democracy, rule of law and rights protection operate in an environment shaped by shrinking civic space, declining public trust, and weakened institutional channels for participation. Civil society agency is constrained by interconnected political, institutional, socio-economic and organisational pressures that directly undermine sustainable public policy advocacy and meaningful civic participation.

This disabling environment is reflected in wider trends of civic disengagement and persistently low trust in political institutions, as well as limited opportunities for CSOs to influence decision-making. Based on the Need Assessment conducted by the FO in 2025, these conditions are further compounded by fragmented efforts within the sector and relatively weak levels of structured cooperation between organisations, which restrict opportunities for joint advocacy, knowledge exchange, and the development of broader coalitions for social change.

Bilateral cooperation presents an important opportunity for strengthening the capacities and resilience of civil society actors. However, such cooperation is often affected by practical and structural barriers, including language differences, cultural and working-style mismatches, as well as administrative and procedural complexities. In addition, establishing and maintaining stable international partnerships can be challenging, particularly when cooperation is not sufficiently structured or supported in its early stages.

With that said, bilateral partnerships represent imperative for building and sustaining cooperation with Donor State civil society organizations which offer valuable reference points in terms of established practices in civil society cooperation, partnership development as well as ways to tackle the issue of narrowed civic space. Collaboration with Donor State civil society organizations provides opportunities for learning how the efforts can be effectively organised and sustained over time.

The call is relevant for transferring know-how, mutual learning, enhanced organisational capacity, and stronger solidarity between civil society actors, particularly in addressing shared societal challenges.

In order to strengthen bilateral relations and cooperation through more structured preparatory exchanges and targeted mobility support, travel-based activities play a key

role in enabling direct interaction between organisations, which is essential for building trust, aligning expectations, and developing shared understanding as a foundation for future cooperation.

Overall, travel grants under the bilateral framework represent a strategic instrument for addressing identified needs by facilitating direct contact, strengthening partnership formation, and enabling the development of joint initiatives. In doing so, they contribute to more connected, resilient, and collaborative civil society relations across participating countries.

2.2.2 Expected results

Expected results under the Outcome "Strengthened bilateral cooperation in the civil society sector" include an increase in the quality partnerships between Croatian CSOs and entities from Donor States. In practical terms, supported bilateral initiatives should demonstrate a clear mutual interest in cooperation focused on learning, knowledge exchange and the development of joint projects.

Bilateral initiatives are expected to enable the exchange of knowledge, good practices and innovative approaches, while strengthening the participating organisations' capacity to address complex societal challenges and operate in challenging civic space environments.

The Call should also contribute to concrete opportunities for future cooperation, including the preparation of joint projects, advocacy initiatives or networks within the Programme and, where relevant, beyond it. Particular value will be placed on partnerships that demonstrate credible potential for continued cooperation following the supported mobility activity.

Ultimately, supported initiatives should strengthen relationships between organisations in Croatia and the Donor States, foster mutual understanding and solidarity, and create a stronger foundation for sustained bilateral cooperation.

Each bilateral initiative is expected to align with these results, and report on its achievements both narratively and through indicators. Indicators provide quantitative evidence of progress and, together with narrative reports and other relevant sources of information, help assess the extent to which the expected results have been achieved. However, indicators alone are not sufficient to demonstrate results. Applicants must also explain the qualitative changes their bilateral initiative aims to achieve.

The indicators listed in the table below are used to monitor progress towards the Outcome of this Call at the programme level. Each supported initiative must contribute to and report against both mandatory Outcome indicators.

Outcome	Expected programme results	Indicator	Description of the indicator	Unit of measurement
Bilateral Outcome	Strengthened bilateral cooperation in the civil society sector	Number of exchange programmes or study visits organised between	This indicator tracks the total number of exchange programmes or study visits organised between bilateral partners, whether in-person or online.	Cumulative number

		bilateral partners	For in-person exchanges to count towards this indicator, the duration must be at least two working days to be considered an exchange. For online exchanges, the total combined duration of activities must be at least 8 hours to be considered an exchange. These activities can be spread over multiple days.	
		Number of participants in exchange programmes / study visits	This indicator tracks the total number of participants – either from the supported entity in the Beneficiary State or an entity in the Donor State – who took part in exchange programmes or study visits between the Donor State and the Beneficiary State, whether in-person or online. Participants are those who completed the exchange. For in-person exchanges to count towards this indicator, the duration must be at least two working days to be considered an exchange. For online exchanges, the total combined duration of activities must be at least 8 hours to be considered an exchange. These activities can be spread over multiple days.	Cumulative number

In addition, applicants can design and use their own additional outcome-level indicators to help track their specific results. However, these project-level indicators are not part of the Programme's overall results framework. For more information, see Annex 2 of this document. When designing their bilateral initiatives, applicants should focus on the

relevance and feasibility of indicators rather than their number. Indicators should measure results that can reasonably be influenced by the bilateral initiative.

2.2.3 Possible activities

Eligible activities under the Call are primarily focused on travel, networking, and partnership-development activities that strengthen cooperation between Croatian civil society organisations and organisations from the Donor States (Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein). The purpose of these activities is to facilitate direct exchange, mutual learning, and the preparation of future joint initiatives and projects within the framework of the Programme.

Eligible activities may include:

1. Preparatory Visits for Project Development

Travel by representatives of Croatian CSOs and Donor States organisations for the purpose of development of donor partnership project applications which includes developing ideas, preparing partnership agreements, designing future activities, and strengthening cooperation in preparation for CSF calls and other international funding opportunities.

2. Meetings for the Preparation of Joint Applications

Travel and coordination meetings dedicated to the preparation of joint project applications, development of consortium structures, planning of activities and budgets, and alignment of strategic objectives between partners.

3. Hybrid and Follow-Up Cooperation Activities

Activities combining physical mobility with online cooperation, including follow-up meetings, virtual coordination sessions, and digital networking activities that ensure continuity of bilateral cooperation after travel activities are completed.

All supported activities should clearly contribute to strengthening bilateral relations, increasing the quality and sustainability of partnerships, and creating stronger foundations for future joint projects and long-term cooperation within the Programme framework.

The following activities are not eligible under this Call:

- Participation in conferences, seminars, or events without partnership-building purpose which do not contribute to networking, knowledge exchange, project preparation, or development of bilateral cooperation;
- Implementation of regular project activities;
- Purchase of equipment, infrastructure works, renovation costs, or investments that are not directly necessary for the implementation of travel, networking, or cooperation activities;
- Research activities, studies, or academic work that do not include a clear element of bilateral cooperation, exchange, or partnership development;
- Travel activities that do not include a clearly defined agenda, cooperation objective, networking purpose, or expected results related to partnership development and the Programme priorities.

Only activities that clearly contribute to strengthening bilateral relations, fostering sustainable partnerships, and supporting future joint cooperation within the Programme framework will be considered for funding.

2.2.4 Conditions

When designing bilateral initiative proposal, applicants must take into account that bilateral initiative proposals will not be considered for funding if they:

• do not include at least one activity/set of activities whose implementation will directly contribute to the achievement of mandatory outcome and corresponding indicators;

• do not show OR explain a clear link between the implementation of the proposed bilateral initiative activities and the achievement of mandatory outcome and corresponding indicators.

3. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS AND PARTNERS

All eligible applicants, partners and bilateral initiative proposals must abide by 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, and comply with the fundamental rights and obligations enshrined in relevant instruments and standards.

Applicants and partners shall confirm their compliance with these principles through the respective Applicant and Partner Declarations.

The Selection Committee and the Steering Committee shall have the authority and obligation to recommend the rejection of a bilateral initiative application where these principles are not respected.

3.1 Eligible applicants

The applicant is the entity responsible for the overall preparation, coordination and implementation of the bilateral initiative (the Project Promoter).

Eligible applicants are:

- civil society organisations (CSOs) established and registered in Croatia and
- CSOs, established and registered as legal persons in one of the Donor States (Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway).

For the purposes of this Call, any applicant qualifying as a CSO, irrespective of the country in which it is established, must fall within the following definition:

A non-profit voluntary organisation with a non-commercial purpose, independent of local, regional and central government, public entities, political parties and commercial organisations.

Eligible CSOs must:

- be non-profit, meaning that they have not been established and do not operate for the purpose of generating personal profit. They may employ paid staff and undertake revenue-generating activities, but profits may not be distributed to members or members of their governing bodies. Where revenue-generating activities are undertaken, these must serve as a means of supporting the organisation's mission and values rather than constitute its primary purpose;
- not pursue the direct commercial or professional interests of their members. Members must not have a direct commercial interest in the results of the organisation's work or its commercial activities. This excludes trade and professional associations whose primary purpose is to advance the specific commercial or professional interests of their members;
- be voluntary in nature, meaning that they are established voluntarily by individuals or groups and, where the organisation is membership-based, membership is not compulsory for any individual or group.

Additional eligibility requirements for Croatian CSOs

Eligible CSOs established in Croatia must, in addition to the general CSO requirements above:

- conduct transparent financial operations, demonstrated through registration in the Register of Non-Profit Organisations (RNO) maintained by the Croatian Ministry of Finance and compliance with applicable financial reporting requirements, or by providing sufficient evidence of transparent financial operations by other appropriate means.

More specifically, and in accordance with applicable national legislation, the following types of Croatian CSOs may be eligible, provided that they fulfil all the conditions set out above:

- Association – established, registered and operating in accordance with the Act on Associations (Official Gazette No. 74/14, 70/17, 98/19, 151/22);
- Foundation – established, registered and operating in accordance with the Act on Foundations (Official Gazette No. 106/18, 98/19, 151/22);
- Artistic organisation – established in accordance with the Act on the Rights of Self-Employed Artists and the Promotion of Cultural and Artistic Creativity (Official Gazette No. 43/96, 44/96 – corrigendum, 127/00) and registered in the Register of Artistic Organisations;
- Cooperative – established in accordance with Article 66(1) of the Cooperatives Act (Official Gazette No. 34/11, 125/13, 76/14, 114/18, 98/19) and registered in the Register of Non-Profit Organisations.

Croatian CSOs falling outside the categories listed above may be considered eligible on a case-by-case basis, provided that they fulfil all the general eligibility conditions set out in this section.

Important:

Faith-based organisations are eligible if they meet the principles identified above and if the funded activities do not directly or indirectly promote a religious doctrine, mission or proselytism related to the beliefs of a particular faith (beyond basic religious/cultural awareness raising).

Religious institutions and political parties, social partners[2] or profit-distributing cooperatives are not eligible applicants.

CSOs led by marginalized groups, working on democracy, the rule of law and human rights, and active in the field of advocacy are strongly encouraged to apply.

3.2 Eligible bilateral initiative partners

Bilateral initiatives must be implemented in the form of partnerships between at least one entity in Croatia and at least one entity in the Donor States (where one is the Applicant and the other party involved is considered Partner of the Bilateral Initiative).

All Partners must share a common goal and actively contribute towards achieving the objective(s) of the bilateral initiative, as defined in the application. Bilateral initiative partners shall be actively involved in, and effectively contributing to, the implementation of the bilateral initiative. The role and specific obligations undertaken by each Partner, must be clearly defined and justified in the application.

The following entities are eligible to be bilateral initiative partners:

- Any public or private entity, commercial or non-commercial, as well as CSOs, established as a legal person either in the Donor States[3] or in Beneficiary States[4] or a country outside the European Economic Area that has a common border with Croatia,
- An international intergovernmental organisation or body or agency thereof;
- Informal, ad hoc and self-help organisations (including grassroots organisations) that are not registered legal entities (hereinafter referred to as “informal groups”). Informal groups are considered eligible bilateral initiative partners provided that:
    - their members are legal residents or based in either the Donor States or Croatia or a country outside the European Economic Area that has a common border with Croatia,
    - they are not established or operating with the purpose of personal profit;
    - membership in the group is voluntary and non-discriminatory;
    - their purpose aligns with the objective of the EEA Civil Society Fund;
    - they are independent of local, regional and national government and other public authorities, as well as of political parties, religious institutions and commercial organisations; and
    - they are represented by one single person, with legal residency in Croatia, who signs the partnership agreement on behalf of the group. An informal group cannot not be a direct recipient of the bilateral initiative grant.

[2] Social partners are defined as trade unions and employers’ negotiating bodies, as defined by the EU

[3] Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

[4] Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia.

A partnership declaration between the Bilateral Initiative Applicant and each of its partners shall be submitted as a supporting document to the application. In case of successful application, the Project Promoter shall conclude a partnership agreement with each of its partners. The agreement shall be in Croatian or in English.

The Partnership agreement should contain the following: i) provisions on the roles and responsibilities of the parties; ii) provisions on the financial arrangements between the parties including, but not limited to, financial reporting obligations, means for proof of expenditure, payment flows and the expenditure for which bilateral initiative partners can be reimbursed from the bilateral initiative budget; iii) currency exchange rules for such expenditure and reimbursement; iv) provisions on the forms of grants for all costs in the bilateral initiative and their calculation method; v) requirements for the submission of proof of expenditure and/or proof of conditions fulfilled where unit costs or lump sums are used; vi) provisions on audits of the bilateral initiative; vii) a detailed budget, which foresees flexible rules for shifts between budget headings; and viii) provisions on dispute resolution.

If one of the parties to the agreement is an entity from the Donor States or an international organisation or body or agency thereof, the partnership agreement shall be in English and shall be based on the template available at www.eea-csf.hr .

A bilateral initiative partnership shall not be mistaken for sub-contracting. Bilateral initiative partners always share a common economic or social goal through the implementation of the bilateral initiative, and are actively involved in, and effectively contributing to, the implementation of the bilateral initiative. In contrast, sub-contracting is aimed at one or several specific deliverables, e.g. services or equipment to realise a specific activity within the bilateral initiative. Sub-contracting shall always be carried out based on an appropriate service or purchase contract. Please see further details on sub-contracting in chapter 4.3.1.

3.3 Number of proposals and partnerships

An organisation may participate in multiple applications under this Call, either as a lead applicant or as a bilateral initiative partner. However, it may have only one application under assessment at any given time as a lead applicant.

A new application will not be eligible for assessment if either the lead applicant or any bilateral initiative partner is implementing another bilateral initiative funded under this Call or has completed such a bilateral initiative, but its required report has not yet been approved.

4. BILATERAL INITIATIVE CONDITIONS

Bilateral initiative duration	Between 1 and 6 months
Bilateral initiative grant amount	Between € 3.000 and € 5.000

Indicative start of bilateral initiative implementation	The start date of each bilateral initiative is specified in the grant agreement following completion of the selection procedure.
Final date of eligibility of expenditure (depending on the start of the bilateral initiative implementation)	no later than 31 December 2031

The cumulative amount of grant funding awarded to a single entity under the Civil Society Fund in Croatia shall not exceed EUR 210,000. For the purposes of this calculation, the total grant amount awarded to an entity in its capacity as Project Promoter and/or project/bilateral initiative partner in projects or bilateral initiatives selected under individual calls shall be taken into account.

4.1 Co-financing

The grant rate of the bilateral initiative is 100%.

4.2 Location of the bilateral initiative

In order to contribute to the relevant outcome and objective of the Call, as well as the overall objectives of the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms to reduce social and economic inequalities in the EEA and strengthen bilateral relations between Croatia and the Donor States, activities of the bilateral initiatives are expected to take place in either Croatia and/or the Donor States.

4.3 Eligible expenditure

Eligible expenditures of bilateral initiatives are those actually declared by the lead applicant or the bilateral initiative partner, which meet the following criteria:

• Declared within the eligibility period defined in the bilateral initiative contract;

• Directly related to the subject of the bilateral initiative;

• Indicated in the approved bilateral initiative budget;

• Proportionate and necessary for the implementation of the bilateral initiative;

• Compliant with the principles of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness;

• Identifiable and verifiable, and are recorded in the accounting records of the Project Promoter/Partner (not applicable to costs reported under Simplified Cost Options - SCOs);

• Compliant with applicable national legislation.

Expenditures are considered to have been declared when the cost has been invoiced, paid and the subject matter delivered (in case of goods) or performed (in case of services and works). Exceptionally, costs in respect of which an invoice has been issued in the final month of eligibility are also deemed to be declared within the dates of eligibility if the costs are paid by the end of the next month after the final date of eligibility.

4.3.1 Eligible cost categories

Direct costs

(a) the cost of personnel:

Personnel costs may include:

1. Employees working under employment contract (including social security charges and other statutory costs)

2. Natural persons working under a contract other than an employment contract, provided that:

- The person works under the instructions and supervision of the project promoter/bilateral initiative partner and, unless otherwise agreed with the project promoter/bilateral initiative partner, in the premises of the project promoter/bilateral initiative partner.
- The results of work belong to the project promoter/ bilateral initiative partner.
- The person is integrated in the bilateral initiative implementation similarly to regular staff.
- The remuneration is comparable to employees performing equivalent tasks under an employment contract with the project promoter/ bilateral initiative partner.
- The person does not act as an external expert or subcontractor.

(b) travel and subsistence:

Travel must be clearly linked to the delivery of the bilateral initiative and carried out by the staff of the project promoter/ bilateral initiative partner and/ or bilateral initiative participant (including volunteers). When choosing transport and accommodation, costs should be reasonable and represent good value for money.

Important:

• Travel and accommodation costs of participants of trainings/events should be budgeted for and
reported under category “Consumables and supplies”
• Travel and accommodation costs of external experts and service providers should be budgeted for
and reported under Costs of services (subcontracting).

(c) the full purchase price of new or second hand equipment, provided that it is proportionate and necessary for the implementation of the bilateral initiative;

(d) costs of consumables and supplies;

(e) costs entailed by other contracts awarded by the project promoter or bilateral initiative partner for the purposes of carrying out the bilateral initiative, provided that the awarding complies with the applicable rules on procurement[5]

Costs related to reconstruction, renovation, or refurbishment of a real estate shall not exceed 50 % of the eligible direct cost of the bilateral initiative.

Indirect costs

7% of eligible direct costs to calculate indirect costs of the bilateral initiative.

4.4 Ineligible expenditures

The following costs shall not be considered eligible:

- interest on debt, debt service charges and late payment charges;
- charges for financial transactions and other purely financial costs, except costs related to accounts and financial services imposed by the grant contract;
- costs related to purchase of land or real estate;
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- exchange losses;
- recoverable VAT;
- costs that are covered by other sources;
- fines, penalties and costs of litigation, except where litigation is an integral and necessary component for achieving the outcomes of the bilateral initiative;
- excessive or reckless expenditure; and
- re-granting.

4.5 Form of eligible expenditures

Lump sums based on the detailed draft budget - direct costs budgeted based on eligible cost categories, indirect costs are calculated as flat rate of 7% of direct eligible costs. Lump sums will be based on clearly defined and measurable milestones and/or results of the activity.

Selected bilateral initiatives and their activities will be funded using a lump sum. This model works by predefining the lump sum based on clearly defined and measurable activities and/or results of the bilateral initiative. This approach shifts the focus from detailed financial reporting to the performance of agreed activities and or the achievement of agreed activity results.

Applicants must submit a detailed draft budget for the bilateral initiative they wish to finance via lump sum using the Budget Form C available in E-grant system, clearly marking the linked activity and/or result for each budget item in the budget. The Fund Operator will review the submission and, in agreement with the Project Promoter, set the lump sum amount for the agreed activities and/or results and connected indicators, which will then be included in the grant contract.

[5] For contracts above EUR 15,000 and the Project Promoter shall ensure fair competition between potential providers for example by way of effective price comparison.

For activities funded via lump sum, detailed financial statements of actual costs are not required. However, payment of the lump sum is subject to the following conditions:

a) The agreed results must be fully achieved (100%) as per the grant contract.

b) Partial completion of the result does not entitle the Project Promoter or Bilateral Initiative Partner to a partial payment.

Important!

The specific SCO to be applied, its rates/amounts, and calculation methods are defined in advance and confirmed in the Grant Contract and Partnership Agreement. Once agreed, SCOs cannot be modified during the bilateral initiative to compensate for under- or overspending.

When using simplified cost options, changes to the budget are not allowed. The amount, rate, and calculation method are determined in advance and confirmed in the grant contract and partnership agreement.

The applicant shall submit a detailed bilateral initiative budget based on template C available in the E-grant system. Please note that the inclusion of an expenditure item in a bilateral initiative budget approved by the Fund Operator shall not be considered as confirmation of the eligibility of that expenditure item.

In the case of a bilateral initiative, the same SCO will be used for the Project Promoter and Partner.

When preparing the draft budget, the applicant must pay attention to eligible costs, as only these will be included in the final budget of the bilateral initiative. Upon approval of the bilateral initiative, the costs will be thoroughly reviewed once again by the grant managers; any ineligible, incorrectly calculated or excessive costs will be removed. The basic criteria for the eligibility of costs are set out in section 4.3.

The planned results will also be reviewed and, where necessary, further specified with indicators and methods of measurement. In defining the results, grant managers will look at the information provided in all sections of the application, not only the section on results.

In accordance with the grant contract, beneficiaries will demonstrate eligibility for financial support through evidence of achieved results. There is no financial reporting. The provisions on lump sums do not affect general accounting rules. Beneficiaries must maintain detailed records of costs in accordance with applicable accounting standards and generally accepted accounting principles, even though this will not be the subject of a potential audit or regular project monitoring.

4.6 Payment of the grant

The grant will be paid in euro (€).

The grant will be paid in instalments defined in the grant contract. For details see section 8.3.1.

5. HOW TO APPLY

The Programme uses the E-grant system for all administrative and project-related operations connected with its grant activities.

Applications must be submitted in English language, electronically to the E-grant system. The date and time of receipt recorded by the E-grant system will determine whether the deadline has been met.

This is a rolling call. Applications may be submitted through the E-grant system from 3 November 2026 at 12:00 noon (Zagreb time) until the available funds are exhausted, or until 31 December 2028 at 23:59 (Zagreb time), whichever occurs first.

Due to the temporary suspension of procedures under the Programme from 2 October to 2 November 2026, inclusive, the opening date for application submission is postponed from 23 October to 3 November 2026. Applications cannot be submitted before the revised opening date and time.

Only applications submitted through the E-grant system will be accepted. Submissions by email or post will not be accepted.

It is recommended that applicants familiarize themselves with the E-grant system in advance. Technical support is available at podpora@egrant.sk. Work in the E-grant system is divided into three levels:

- Completion and submission of the grant application
- Evaluation of grant applications – administrative and expert assessment of bilateral initiative applications
- Project module, which includes:
    - Basic project documents
    - Submission and approval of project reports
    - Monitoring and processing of project output data, as well as communication between the Project Promoter and the Fund Operator.

5.1 Instructions for Completing and Submitting the Grant Application

After logging into the online grant system and selecting the relevant call, outcome and output the applicant completes the application form. The application form is fully integrated into the E-grant system, where applicants can find detailed instructions directly within the system.

Instructions are provided only for the budget section of the application, with the aim of clarifying its correct preparation, as follows:

5.1.1 Instructions for Preparing the Budget

The first step in completing the budget form is to click “Project” which indicates whether the bilateral initiative will be implemented with or without a partner/ partners. Applicant must select an option “With partner”. If the applicant included partner in the section “Project”, the option “With partner” will be visible in the drop-down menu within the budget section.

The next step in completing the budget form - click the “Type of budget” to select the budget type C the Applicant will use when submitting the grant application.

Instructions for completing the budget:

Budget Type C:

For Budget Type C, the budget consists of six expenditure categories. The table below presents the budget structure, along with instructions for completion.

Expenditure Category	Instructions for Completion	Requested documentation for financial reporting
Direct Costs		
Personnel Costs	Provide justification with bilateral initiative activities and describe the calculation method as well as provide supporting documents to justify amounts, quantities and prices etc. Each cost must be clearly linked with single proposed result of the bilateral initiative.	Documentation requested only refers to the achievement/completion of linked results, i.e. fulfilment of linked indicators and target values.
Travel Expenses	Provide justification with bilateral initiative activities and describe the calculation method as well as provide supporting documents to justify amounts, quantities and prices. Each cost must be clearly linked with single proposed result of the bilateral initiative.	
Consumables	Provide justification with bilateral initiative activities and describe the calculation method. Provide sources to justify amounts, quantities and prices. Each cost must be clearly linked with single proposed result of the bilateral initiative. Indicate whether the expenditure is related to renovation or refurbishment These expenses may represent a maximum of 50% of total eligible direct costs.	
Services / Subcontracting		
Equipment Costs		
Other Direct Costs	Provide justification with bilateral initiative activities and describe the calculation method. Provide sources to justify amounts, quantities and prices. Each	

	cost must be clearly linked with single proposed result of the bilateral initiative. Indicate whether the expenditure is related to renovation or refurbishment These expenses may represent a maximum of 50% of total eligible direct costs.	
Indirect Costs (flat rate)	7% of eligible direct costs	

The final table of the budget is the Summary, with separate columns for the applicant and the partner, including a dedicated control total for expenditures related to renovation or refurbishment.

Note on Budget Adequacy:

When assessing a grant application, the Fund Operator verifies the adequacy, justification, and realism of the requested amount. Budgeted amounts must align with the bilateral initiative's objectives, activities and planned outputs and must correspond to standard market prices and the scope of activities described in the bilateral initiative proposal.

Budget items that are unreasonable or insufficiently justified may be adjusted or reduced during the assessment process.

5.2 Mandatory Annexes to the Grant Application

- Annex No. 1: Partnership Declaration (for each partner);
- Annex No. 2: Declaration by the Applicant

All Annexes must be submitted in .pdf format.

In addition, the applicant and/or a bilateral initiative partner from the Donor State shall include in their application a copy of the resolution, law, decree or decision establishing the entity in question or, failing that, any other official document attesting to the establishment of the entity by the national authorities - if this is not freely available online[6].

These documents are referenced in the online application and must be uploaded as attachments within the E-grant system. Separate submissions will not be accepted.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE, ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Prior to the quality evaluation of the bilateral initiative proposals, the eligibility of the applicants and administrative compliance assessment will be done based on the administrative and eligibility compliance criteria presented in tables below. The Fund

[6] The application form in the E-Grant system includes a mandatory field in which the applicant must provide a link to the publicly accessible online national registry where the organisation's legal registration in the country concerned can be verified, for both the applicant and the partner organization.

Operator can request for additional information or clarifications referring to administrative compliance criteria.

6.1 Administrative criteria

Administrative compliance is checked against the following criteria:

Criteria	Meeting the criteria		Notes
Application is submitted via E-grant system.	YES	NO	Rejection
Application form is completed in English language.	YES	NO	Rejection
All information on the applicant and bilateral initiative is submitted	YES	NO	request for supplementation
Declaration by the legal representative of the Applicant, signed and stamped, is submitted in E-grant system	YES	NO	request for supplementation
Partnership declaration of each partner, as per chapter 5.1, signed and stamped, by the legal representative of partner is submitted in E-grant system.	YES	NO	request for supplementation
For applicant/partner organization from the Donor State: the entity's copy of the resolution, law, decree or decision establishing the entity in question or, failing that, any other official document attesting to the establishment of the entity by the national authorities - is attached (if this is not freely available online).	YES	NO	request for supplementation

6.2 Eligibility criteria

Eligibility is checked against the following criteria:

Criteria	Meeting the criteria		Notes
Applicant is a) an eligible Croatian civil-society organization as per chapter 3.1 of these Guidelines OR b) an eligible entity from one of the Donor States (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway) as per chapter 3.1 of these Guidelines	YES	NO	rejection

Application involves at least one entity from Donor States and at least one eligible CSO from Croatia.	YES	NO	rejection
Partner organisation(s) is (are) eligible as per chapter 3.2 of these Guidelines.	YES	NO	rejection
Bilateral initiative duration is between 1 and 6 months.	YES	NO	rejection
For Croatian Applicant organizations: Applicant is registered at RNO and conducts transparent financial operations or provided sufficient evidence of the transparent financial operations by other means.[7]	YES	NO	rejection
Applicant does not have any other active applications to this call (in the process of selection or implementation).	YES	NO	rejection

In case the application will miss certain parts (documents or information) that can be supplemented according to the above criteria, applicants will be invited to provide respective missing parts within five (5) calendar days. An invitation to provide the missing parts of the application will be sent to the e-mail address of the applicant listed in the application form (e-mail address of the contact person).

6.2.1 Appeals

After the administrative and eligibility assessment process is completed, ineligible applicants will be notified of the rejection of their application from further evaluation. Applicants of ineligible bilateral initiative proposals will have eight (8) calendar days available for appeal against the eligibility decision. Appeals will be considered by the Appeal Committee.

Appeals must be submitted through the E-grant system and must clearly justify the grounds for reconsideration, based on procedural or factual errors. The applicant cannot modify the content of the initially submitted application, but the Appeal Committee may request additional information from the applicant. The Appeal Committee may uphold or reverse the original decision. Applicants will be informed of the decision via the E-grant system within ten (10) calendar days. The decision on the appeal is final, and no further appeal on the same application may be submitted.

[7] Applicants who are CSO by their legal status, by transparent financial operations, are considered to have submitted to the FINA, for the Croatian Ministry of Finance, an annual revenue and expenditure account and a balance sheet or annual financial statement of receipts and expenditures for last closed financial year, in accordance with the accounting regulations of non-profit organizations, whereby the Annual Financial Report is visible in the Register of Nonprofit Organizations.

7. SELECTION PROCESS

7.1 Selection criteria

Applications that meet the administrative and eligibility criteria outlined in chapters 6.1 and 6.2 of these Guidelines will be reviewed against the evaluation criteria by the evaluation committee using a 'Yes/No' score.

The evaluation committee shall consist of two impartial assessors, appointed by the Fund Operator. The experts will independently assess the bilateral initiative application according to the selection criteria presented in the grid below.

	Selection criterion	Score
1	Relevance and contribution to bilateral cooperation	YES/NO
2	Quality and feasibility of the proposed activities	YES/NO
3	Capacity and Partnership	YES/NO
4	Financial quality and efficiency	YES/NO

Detailed information for each criterion and scoring guidelines are provided in Annex 3 of this document.

Only bilateral initiatives that scored "yes" for all evaluation criteria will be recommended and submitted to the Executive Committee of the Fund Operator, which shall take the final decision. The decision of the Executive Committee is final and there is no right of appeal.

The Executive Committee may deviate from the recommendation of the assessors in justified cases. The justification shall be documented and included in the decision.

Executive Committee will have the authority and obligation to propose the rejection of the bilateral initiative application in case the principles referred in Article 1.4.1 of the PIA are not respected or disregarded.

In cases where the number of eligible applications exceeds the available budget, priority may be given to applications demonstrating stronger bilateral relevance, clear added value, sustainability of cooperation, and potential for future joint initiatives within the Civil Society Fund framework.

The selection procedure, including notification of the applicant, shall be concluded within one month from the submission of the application.

Acceptance of an application does not imply an obligation to award it up to the amount claimed by the applicant. The amount claimed may be decreased by the Executive Committee based on the assessors' findings on the appropriateness of the financial plan. Based on the findings of the assessors on the appropriateness of the activities for

achieving the bilateral initiative objectives, the Executive Committee may reject financing of activities that do not contribute to the objectives.

7.2 Notification on selection

Applicants will be notified on the selection results of their bilateral initiative proposals in accordance with the indicative timeline in section 13.

The Fund Operator will publish the grant decision on the Programme's website www.eea-csf.hr after it has been taken and will notify the result in writing to all applicants within 15 working days via the E-grant system, using the contact details provided by the organisation. The notification will include the scores of the application, the conditions of support (if any) and, in the case of unsuccessful applicants, the justification of the reasons for rejection.

8. PROVISIONS ON BILATERAL INITIATIVE IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

After the grant decision on selection of bilateral initiative, the applicant will receive a grant contract based on standard contract sample as presented in the call documentation. Before the signature of the contract, negotiations between applicants and Fund Operator to determine final definition of bilateral initiative activities and costs are possible.

8.1. Contract provisions

For each approved bilateral initiative, a bilateral initiative implementation grant contract shall be concluded between the SOLIDARNA Foundation and the Project Promoter setting out the terms and conditions of the grant, as well as the role and responsibilities of the parties. In case a delay in bilateral initiative implementation occurs due to objective reasons, Project Promoter can request for a prolongation of the bilateral initiative for a maximum of 3 months. The request will be considered by the Fund Operator. Prolongation of the bilateral initiative does not impact the financial plan of the bilateral initiative.

The Grant Contract includes, in particular:

- the commitment of the Project Promoter to act in accordance with the values and principles of the Programme;
- a summary of the main expected results (outputs and outcomes) of the bilateral initiative including the indicators and target values;
- obligations related to financial and both narrative and indicator reporting;
- responsibilities for data collection and storage;
- the maximum grant amount;
- the grant type, overview, and method of calculating eligible expenditures;
- the start and end dates of the eligibility period for expenditures;
- requirements for cost reporting (submission of supporting documents and/or evidence of fulfilment of conditions in the case of simplified cost options);
- provisions for bilateral initiative change management and approval;
- provisions ensuring timely and unimpeded access for monitoring, audits, and evaluations;
- obligations concerning information and publicity;

• the right of the Fund Operator to suspend payments or request reimbursement of funds from the Project Promoter;
• provisions for dispute resolution and jurisdiction;
• provisions on disclaimer of liability in accordance with Article 17.2 of the Programme Implementation Agreement (PIA);
• a contracted bilateral initiative budget;
• provisions on procurement;
• provisions on termination of the contract;
• references to partnership agreements or letters of intent, where applicable;
• provisions on record-keeping;
• provisions on irregularities and related reporting procedures;
• waiver of responsibility.

The Grant Contract also establishes the obligation of the Project Promoter to inform all bilateral initiative partners about any parts of the Contract that concern them, and to notify them in advance of any bilateral initiative changes that may affect their participation.

Any amendments to the Grant Contract shall follow the conditions set therein and must take the form of a written Addendum (which may be initiated either by the Project Promoter or the Fund Operator).

Annexes to the Grant Contract:
• Bilateral initiative Results Framework

The Grant Contract is signed electronically through the E-grant system, with the exception in cases where the Project Promoter is unable to sign the contract electronically.

8.2. Partnership Agreement

The Project Promoter is obliged to conclude a written Partnership Agreement with each bilateral initiative partner before signing the Grant Contract. A draft of the Partnership Agreement must be submitted to the Fund Operator for approval.

The Partnership Agreement must include at least the following provisions:
• Roles and responsibilities of the parties – clearly defined duties and responsibilities of the Project Promoter and the Partner in bilateral initiative implementation, monitoring and reporting;
• Financial arrangements – a detailed bilateral initiative budget for the Partner, including the rates and values applied under simplified cost options, where relevant;
• Obligations concerning financial and technical reporting;
• Communication obligations related to bilateral initiative promotion and visibility;
• Obligation of the Project Promoter to inform the Partner of all provisions of the Grant Contract relevant to the Partner and of any subsequent changes that may affect it;
• Project audit – provisions ensuring access for the Fund Operator and auditors to the Partner's documents for monitoring and verification purposes;
• Dispute resolution – provisions defining the procedure for resolving disputes and the competent jurisdiction.

The Partnership Agreement shall be drawn up in English, using the Partnership Agreement template provided by the Fund Operator and available at www.eea-csf.hr .
The Agreement ensures transparent and effective cooperation, establishes clear rules for financing, reporting, auditing, and dispute resolution, and forms a mandatory part of bilateral initiative implementation.

8.3. Grant Payments and Reporting

Each Project Promoter will be assigned a grant officer, staff member of the Fund Operator consortium, who will keep regular contact with the Project Promoter and can be approached with questions, issues to be discussed or success stories any time (in working hours) throughout implementation via messaging in the E-grant system, telephone or in person.

The submission of narrative (both qualitative and quantitative reporting) report is a mandatory condition for the execution of the final payments. The number of bilateral initiative reports depends on the bilateral initiative size and duration. Reports must be approved by the Fund Operator before payments are made. The Fund Operator can request for additional information on implementation progress at any time.

8.3.1 Grant Payments

Bilateral initiative financing is provided under the EEA Civil Society Fund at a rate of 100% of the total eligible bilateral initiative costs.

Payments of the bilateral initiative grant shall take the form of advance payment and final payment. The level of advance payment to bilateral initiative shall be set out in the Grant Contract.

The level of advance and final instalments shall be linked to the bilateral initiative budget and duration as follows:

Grant Type	Bilateral Initiative Duration	Advance Payment	Final Payment (retention)
Grant Size EUR 3000 – EUR 5000	1–6 months	Up to 90%	10% - 15%

The advance payment is to be paid up to 15 days after the signature date of the Grant Contract.

The final payment/payment of the final balance of 10% - 15% of the grant, or up to the maximum grant amount according to the actually declared eligible project expenses, is based upon approval of the Final Report. Final payments/retained amounts are to be paid up to 15 working days after the date of the written approval of the final narrative bilateral initiative report.

Approval of bilateral initiative reports shall be completed within 60 days from the submission of all required information.

In exceptional cases, where bilateral initiatives are assessed as high-risk based on a risk

analysis conducted and documented by the Fund Operator, the Fund Operator may take a justified decision to modify the payment scheme – by reducing or cancelling advance financing, or by requiring the Project Promoter to provide a financial guarantee in advance, in order to mitigate financial risks associated with pre- financing.

8.3.2 Bilateral Initiative Reporting

Bilateral initiative report is fully integrated into the E-grant online system, which collects sufficient information on bilateral initiative progress, achievement of objectives and expected results, statistical data, and financial settlement. Report must be completed and submitted via the E-grant system in the required format within 30 days after bilateral initiative completion.

Bilateral initiative report follows a predefined format and provides comprehensive, structured, and verifiable information enabling assessment of actual bilateral initiative progress and results in relation to planned outcomes and outputs, covering:

- Summary of activities implemented during the reporting period.
- Progress towards bilateral initiative expected results, clearly distinguishing outcomes and outputs, supported by quantitative and/or qualitative evidence.
- Monitoring of indicators, including baseline, current, and target values; data sources; and interpretation of data in terms of performance and effectiveness.
- Analysis of deviations from the implementation plan, indicator targets, or schedule, outlining causes, implications, and corrective actions taken.
- Communication and outreach activities,

As the budget type is lump sum, the Project Promoter doesn't have to provide any financial report.

9. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Project promoters are obliged to inform the public on receiving a grant from Civil Society Fund. In all written publications, communications and products, at publication of bilateral initiative products, public events, such as conferences, seminars, fairs or exhibitions, related to project activities, project promoters are obliged to make explicit and visible the support of the Donor countries.

Guidelines for informing and communicating are available on the web site: www.eea-csf.hr.

Where a social media profile is created for a bilateral initiative and, the social media profile must remain visible, and all information shall remain accessible after the final eligibility date of the bilateral initiative.

When designing, planning and organising all communication activities, applicants/project promoters must explicitly point out the support of Iceland, the Principality of Liechtenstein and the Republic of Norway through the EEA Grants i.e. Civil Society Fund (logo and

funding statement). Also, participants in bilateral initiative activities must be informed about funding from the Civil Society Fund, as well as funding from Donor States.

10. INFORMATION CONCERNING THE PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA SUBMITTED BY BILATERAL INITIATIVE APPLICANTS TO THE CIVIL SOCIETY FUND IN CROATIA

With personal data submitted (included) in application to public calls of the Civil Society Fund in Croatia and reporting documentation by the applicants, CF Slagalica as Fund Operator and SOLIDARNA - Foundation for Human Rights and Solidarity and Association for Civil Society Development SMART as partners and fund co-operators will be acquainted. Hence, the fund operator and co-operators enter the role of common personal data controllers. Submitted personal data will be used for the purposes of implementation of public calls (application assessment, informing of applicants) and in applications rewarded with grants also for preparation of grant agreements, for monitoring, control of co-financing and for related informing of beneficiaries or for other related business communication (request for additional information, informing on financial means) as well as for the purpose of proving of eligibility for funding.

Co-financing of a selected bilateral initiative means establishing a contractual relation between CF Slagalica and the applicant in which CF Slagalica assumes the liability of the co-financing party and has therefore, together with its partners, the right to monitor and control the implementation of the bilateral initiative. Such contractual relationship as well as submission of application to a public call (as a request for such contractual relationship) represent legal basis for all personal data processing by CF Slagalica, SOLIDARNA - Foundation for Human Rights and Solidarity and Association for Civil Society Development SMART as noted in this information.

With the whole application, including personal data submitted with it, also third persons can get acquainted, and that is Financial Mechanism Office (Financial Mechanism Office, Rue Joseph II 12-16, 1000 Brussels, Belgium), donor states and their authorized persons.

In accordance with GDPR and respective national legislation, individuals whose personal data is included in application to public call have the right to be acquainted with all of their personal data, to correction, in the case of conditions as laid down by applicable regulations also the right to deletion, restriction of processing and to their portability. Individuals concerned can address their requests or questions regarding their personal data processing to CF Slagalica.

Please note: At submission of bilateral initiative proposal application to public call of CSF Croatia, legal representative of applicant organisation is obliged to sign a statement that they are aware of and in agreement with processing of personal data included in bilateral initiative proposal and relevant parts thereof.

11. COMPLAINT MECHANISM

In accordance with the terms and conditions for the Civil Society Fund in Croatia, the Fund Operator has established a Complaints Committee. Complaints/alerts may be submitted in case of suspicion of irregularity, bad governance, corruption in implementation of Civil Society Fund in Croatia programme, including those on possible misuse of funding projects/bilateral initiatives submitted by general public.

Complaints/alerts can also be submitted anonymously. Complaint/report/alert must be justified and consisted of the following information:

- Description of the irregularity (including whether it is alleged or real and how it occurred);
- Period the irregularity refers to or the timeline of its occurrence;
- How did the reporting person become aware of the irregularity;
- Identification of the individuals or legal entities related to the irregularity, and other information.

The decisions related to the administrative compliance and eligibility verification as part of the selection process are not subject to verification by the Complaints Committee but will be handled by the Appeal Committee referred to in section 6.2.1. The final decision of the Steering Committee whether to approve or reject support to a project/bilateral initiative is not subject to complaint/appeal.

All complaints are first assessed by the Fund Operator. A complainant who is not satisfied with the conclusion made by the Fund Operator has the right to take the case to the Complaints Committee, which includes two members who are external to the Fund Operator and its Board and does not include programme staff responsible for grant management.

The complaints must be submitted electronically to the following email: prituzbe@eea-csf.hr

12. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND SUPPORT FOR THE APPLICANTS

Support for the preparation of bilateral initiative proposals will be available continuously by email and through online consultations until the available funds have been fully committed, or no later than 22 December 2028. All written questions and requests for information related to this Call must be submitted exclusively to the following email address: csf@zaklada-slagalica.hr .

The Fund Operator is under no obligation to respond to questions received after the available funds have been fully committed or after the Call has been closed. In order to ensure equal treatment of all applicants, individual responses to questions will not be provided. Questions and answers will be published on the Programme website, www.eea-csf.hr, on a weekly basis. Applicants are therefore advised to consult the website regularly.

An online presentation of the Call will take place via Zoom on 22 September 2026, as part of a Matchmaking Event held from 11:00 to 13:00. The working language of the event will be English. The presentation of the Call is scheduled for the first 45 minutes of the event, while the Matchmaking Event is intended to connect civil society organisations and other eligible organisations from Croatia, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein with a view to developing partnerships and future project cooperation within the EEA Civil Society Fund Croatia.

Registration is available via the following link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XXW5V6J, where participants may also indicate which part of the event they wish to attend. The registration deadline is 21 September 2026 at 14:00.

Throughout the duration of this Call, the form available at the same link may also be used to express interest in being included in a database of organisations interested in establishing partnerships within the EEA Civil Society Fund Croatia, regardless of whether the organisation participates in the Matchmaking Event.

Information on organisations that express an interest in being included in the database may be published on the Programme website, www.eea-csf.hr, in order to facilitate the identification of potential partners for future Calls under the EEA Civil Society Fund Croatia.

A recording of the Call presentation will be published on the Programme website as an additional source of support for applicants.

13. TIMELINE

Timeline for the Call

August 12, 2026	Announcement of call
September 22, 2026	Presentation of the Call during the Matchmaking event
From September 1, 2026 until the available funds have been fully committed, or no later than 22 December 2028.	Online consultations and e-mail communication
From 3 November 2026 at 12:00 noon (Zagreb time) until the available funds are exhausted, or until 31 December 2028 at 23:59 (Zagreb time), whichever occurs first.	Application submission through the E-grant system
One month after the submission	Notification of applicants on the results of the selection process Publication of approved bilateral initiatives on www.eea-csf.hr

14. CONTACT

Web site: www.eea-csf.hr
Community Foundation Slagalica: csf@zaklada-slagalica.hr
Phone: +385(0)31 213 255, Mon – Fri, 10-14 o'clock

ANNEX 1: CHECKLIST FOR APPLICANTS

CHECKLIST FOR APPLICANTS	Yes/No
Administrative criteria	
Submission deadline: Compliance with the deadline given on the front page and in Chapter 5 of the Call text and Guidelines for Applicants	
Submission method and language: Applications must be submitted electronically via the e-grant platform in English language as per Chapter 5 of the Call text and Guidelines for Applicants.	
Required documents: Applications must include all relevant supporting documents and attachments as per Chapter 5.2 and Annex 1 of the Call text and Guidelines for Applicants	
Bilateral initiative duration: 1-6 months	
Requested amount: 3.000-5.000 €	
Eligibility criteria	
Organisation eligibility: See section 3 on eligible applicants and partners.	
Financial and time limits: The requested grant amount and proposed implementation period must be within the permissible limits provided in the call.	

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS
• Declaration by the Applicant • Partnership declaration(s) • Statutes or any other official document attesting to the establishment of the entity by the national authorities of partners/applicants from Donor States, if not freely available online.

ANNEX 2: RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT FOR THE EEA CIVIL SOCIETY FUND

All programmes and funds supported by the EEA and Norway Grants shall follow the principles of results-based management.

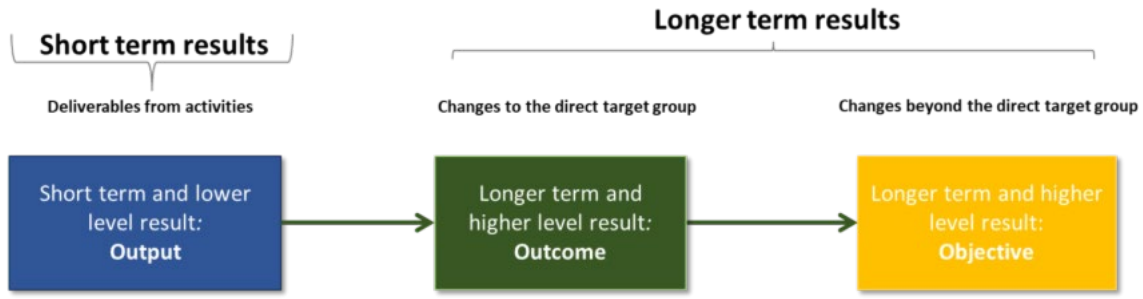
In results-based management, focus is first and foremost on the overall results to be achieved. For the EEA Civil Society Fund, this means focus is on the overall objective. The overall objective is, “A vibrant and resilient civil society protecting and promoting democracy, the rule of law and human rights”.

The next step in results-based management is to set a strategy for how to best achieve this overall objective. Results-based management offers a set of tools to do this including result chains, result frameworks, monitoring, and evaluation. We also manage risks for the achievement of results.

Overall about results in the EEA Civil Society Fund

A result chain includes lower-level results that are called outputs, medium level results that are called outcomes, and finally the highest-level result that is the objective.

The result chain can be presented in a figure as follows:

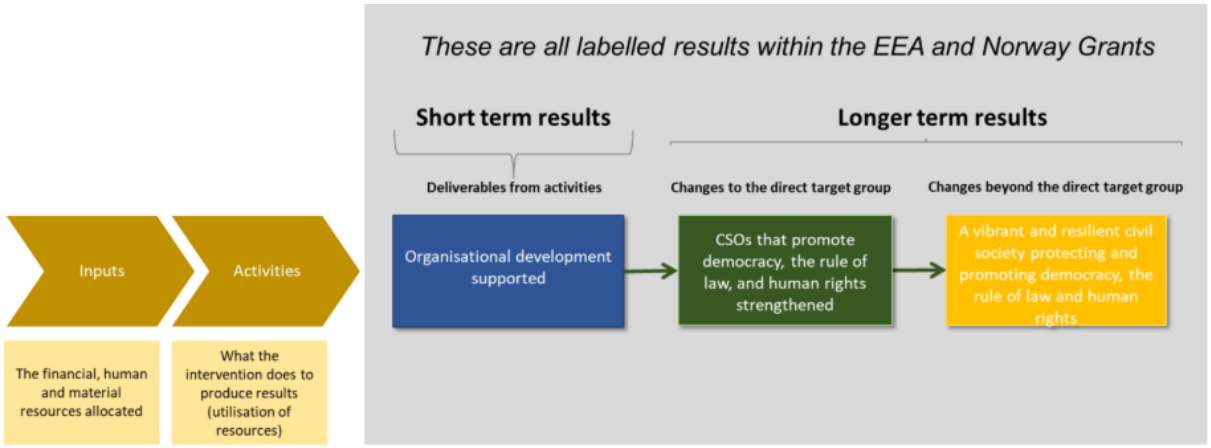


Here is one of the result chains for the EEA Civil Society Fund:

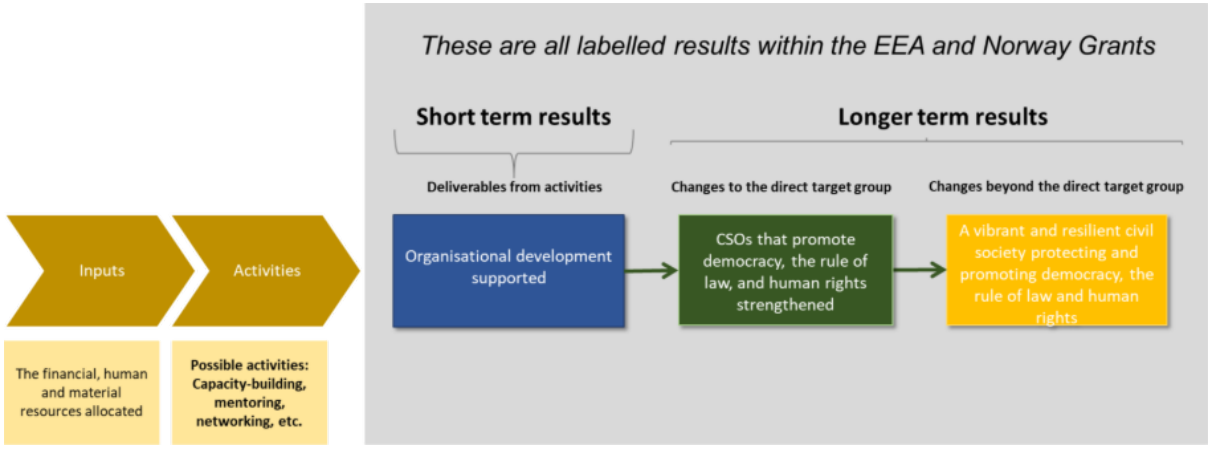


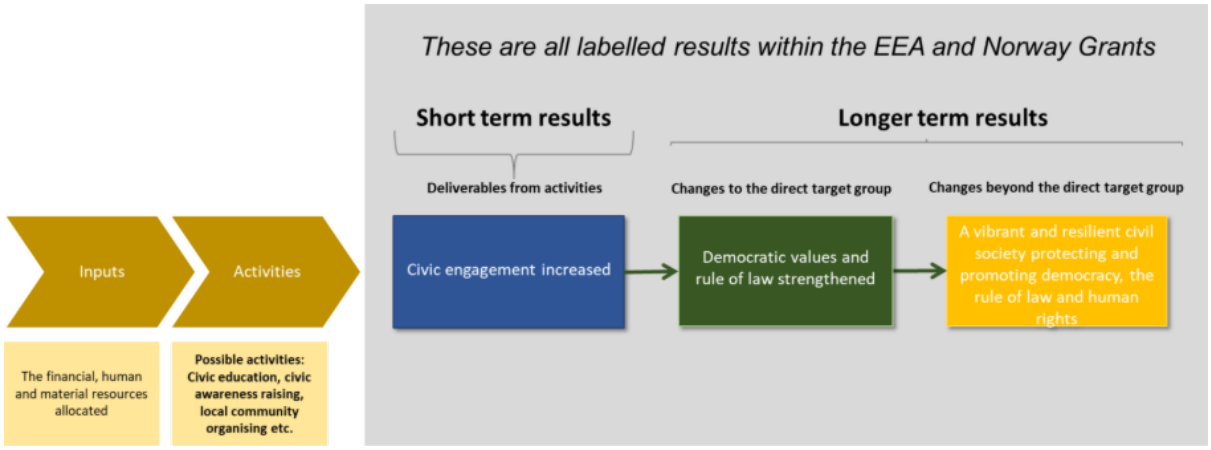
To achieve the outputs, it is necessary to implement activities using the available resources which can be called inputs.

Together with the activities and inputs, the result chain can be presented in a figure as follows:



The two figures below provide general examples of some activities that may be identified to achieve two of the outputs and outcomes in the EEA Civil Society Fund.

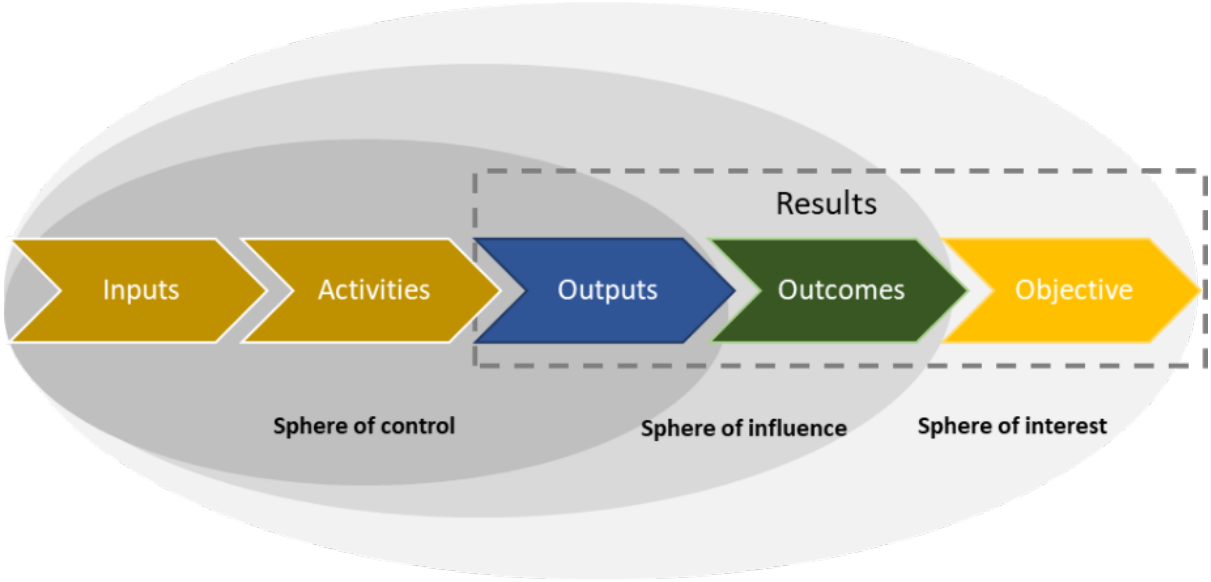




There are assumptions for how one level in the result chain connects to the next. For example, it is an assumption that if CSOs are supported to develop their organisations, then they will be stronger as CSOs. For each assumption it is useful to either provide evidence or plan for evidence through for example an evaluation. For this particular assumption on supporting organisational development, the FMO commissioned an external assessment of organisational grants in 2023 which is available on the EEA and Norway Grants website.

The higher up in the result chain, the less control stakeholders have on the achievement of the desired result. The evidence for how the previous level of the result chain contributes to this higher level of the result chain might also be more ambiguous.

Together with the inputs and activities, the different levels of control along the result chain can be presented in a figure as follows:



Key elements for project result-based management in the EEA Civil Society Fund

The EEA Civil Society Fund follows the Programme model. This means that the desired results at both the outcome and output levels will be derived from projects. As the Civil Society Results Framework specifies what is eligible for support, this means that all projects that would be eligible for support have to contribute to the results expected as per the result framework.

Every project must be situated only under one of the three outcomes (not multiple outcomes). Within the same outcome, projects may contribute to one output or more outputs. In addition to contributing to one single outcome, all projects that include bilateral cooperation must also report on bilateral results.

Each project within the programme can also have its own specific results chains. Applicants are encouraged to check alignment between their project specific results chains with the overall programme results chains. This can help preclude challenges in the implementation and reporting of the projects. However, applicants are not required to develop or work with project specific results chains.

Progress against the EEA Civil Society Fund programme results framework will be measured with the use of indicators. The indicators, including their unit of measurement, data sources of verification, baselines and targets, will be agreed in the project contract.

During implementation, the agreed indicators become a reporting tool. Project Promoters will be responsible for collecting and analysing data to report on the indicators and with narrative against the selected output(s) and outcome.

To ensure accountability and learning, applicants may plan for an evaluation either during or after project implementation.

ANNEX 3: DETAILED EVALUATION GRID WITH SCORING GUIDANCE

Bilateral initiative proposals will be assessed against the criteria below using a binary Yes/No scale to ensure a transparent, proportionate and consistent assessment process. To be recommended for funding, a proposal must receive a “Yes” for every selection criterion. A proposal receiving a “No” for any criterion will not be recommended for funding. A criterion should be assessed as “Yes” only where the information provided in the application is sufficiently clear, credible and complete to confirm that the criterion has been met.

Characteristics of proposals recommended for funding

Proposals recommended for funding:

- clearly explain the purpose of the travel, why the visit is necessary and what the participating organisations intend to achieve;
- demonstrate a credible contribution to the bilateral outcome by showing how the proposed meetings, exchanges and networking activities will initiate or strengthen cooperation between organisations from eligible countries;
- identify the participating organisations and explain why they are relevant and suitably positioned to develop future cooperation;
- present a realistic agenda, an appropriate travel duration and activities that are proportionate to the purpose and amount of the requested grant;
- define realistic and verifiable expected outputs, such as a partnership agreement, concept note, draft project idea, action plan or agreed follow-up activities; and
- demonstrate a clear and feasible pathway from the proposed visit towards continued cooperation, a future joint initiative or a joint project application.

Selection criterion		Score
1	Relevance and contribution to bilateral cooperation	YES/NO
1.1	Is the application aligned with the Call and result framework? Does the activity clearly contribute to strengthening or initiating bilateral cooperation between partners?	

2	Quality and feasibility of the proposed activities	YES/NO
2.1	Are the proposed meetings, networking activities and other elements of the visit clearly described, realistic and appropriate for achieving the stated purpose? Is the proposed agenda coherent, and is the duration of the travel/preparatory activity justified in relation to the planned activities?	
2.2	Are the expected outputs of the visit specific, realistic and verifiable? Does the application present a credible follow-up plan and a clear pathway towards continued cooperation, a future joint initiative or a joint project application? Does the proposed partnership demonstrate credible potential for continuity beyond the supported activity, based on mutual interest, complementary roles and concrete next steps?	
3	Capacity and Partnership	YES/NO
3.1	Is there a clear project management structure? Is there enough experience in project implementation? Is the partner organization relevant for the implementation of activities?	
4	Financial quality and efficiency	YES/NO
4.1	Is the requested grant reasonable, necessary and proportionate to the proposed activities? Can the planned activities realistically be implemented within the requested budget, and are the estimated costs consistent with the applicable financial rules of the Call?	