

**PROGRAMME FOR GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
AVAILABLE UNDER THE PROJECT
“PROTECTING CIVIC SPACE- REGIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT HUB”
IMPLEMENTED BY THE
BALKAN CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT NETWORK**

1. Basic Act and Financing Source

Grant Agreement No. 12715 01 signed between the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the Balkan Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN) for the provision of financial support to the project “Protecting Civic Space – Regional Civil Society Development Hub” (hereinafter referred to as “the Project”).

2. Project’s Objectives and Priorities

BCSDN through the Project aims to establish a Regional Civil Society Development Hub as a regional center with a global impact that will create and share knowledge and innovation on CSOs’ role in promoting democracy and supporting the development of civil society in the Western Balkans in the long term. The Hub will support effective, transparent, and accountable CSOs that will contribute to protecting civic space by enabling the use of new and established funding mechanisms, working methods, and means of cooperation.

The overall objective of the Hub is strengthened regional cooperation to promote civic space in the Western Balkan countries.

This will be achieved by addressing the following specific objectives:

SO 1: CSOs contributed to a conducive environment for civil society development that enables them to be influential actors in society;

SO 2: CSOs contributed towards effective, transparent, and accountable work in protecting civic space.

3. Types of assistance

To facilitate this, the re-granting component of the Hub, the Regional Fund, will provide different types of funding mechanisms to respond rapidly to changing conditions and emerging needs of civil society in the Western Balkans, being flexible to support civil society’s needs and address new challenges as they arise. The available funds will be disbursed through the Regional Fund in the following manner:

- a) Grant scheme for regional multi-country grants;
- b) Ad- hoc support grants.

a) **Grant Scheme:** “Strengthening Regional Cooperation in the Western Balkan Region for Promoting Civic Space”

Short description of the grant scheme: The grant scheme will contribute to a conducive environment for civil society development that enables CSOs to be influential actors in society. Also, the scheme will support effective, transparent, and accountable CSOs that are part of regional initiatives for promoting civic space.

Results and priorities to be achieved with the implementation of the projects: The scheme will contribute to strengthening the regional cooperation for promoting civic space for a vibrant, pluralistic, and rights-based civil society in the Balkans. The proposed activities should address the discrepancies in the development of civil society in the region through an exchange of knowledge, experience, and skills across CSOs and establish a platform for solidarity and cooperation in case of demonstrated need.

b) **Ad-hoc support grants**

Short description of the ad-hoc support grants mechanism: Funds will be awarded for organizations in case of an immediate need or for innovation in thematic priorities such as human rights, gender equality, and the environment and their role in reclaiming civic space. The organization of single- or multi-country events with specific topics, such as mainstreaming human rights, gender equality, environment, and a healthy planet, are also eligible for funding.

Results and priorities to be achieved with the implementation of the ad-hoc support grants: Strengthened regional cooperation for promoting civic space through peer advice and an exchange of experience provided to organizations in need on specific civic space topics: e.g. an opinion of a new law, support in advocacy strategy, support in improving internal accountability mechanisms, etc. Innovative uptakes to the fight for reclaiming civic space, such as exploring collective power of different groups (e.g. young people, women, and vulnerable groups) to lead and transform their communities, hackathons that would work to find solutions to restrictions of civic space, etc.

4. Eligibility Conditions

a) **Grant Scheme**

Grants will be awarded to regional networks and initiatives that submit the most promising proposals, based on agreed criteria, on how to advance the civic space in their region and further strengthen regional cooperation.

The eligibility conditions shall be set out in the respective call for proposals.

b) **Ad-hoc support grants**

This measure will be implemented by awarding direct grant support to an organization that has declared an immediate need or that is innovating in a thematic field. The funds can be granted in two manners:

- **Experts missions:** The use of identified expert support can be funded in other Western Balkan organizations that have requested peer advice and the exchange of experience on a specific civic space topic: e.g. an opinion of a new law, support in advocacy strategy, support in improving internal accountability mechanisms, etc.

- **Regional conferences/ Workshops/ Community actions:** funding will be available to organize single- or multi-country events. Mainstreaming human rights, gender equality, environment and a healthy planet as organizational themes will be one of the priorities of this component. The space for their actions and support for their participation in policy- and decision-making would be the primary aim of this support. Innovative uptakes to the fight for reclaiming civic space will also be supported, including exploring collective power of different groups (e.g. young people, women, and vulnerable groups) to lead and transform their communities; hackathons that would work to find solutions to restrictions of civic space and so on.

Details about the eligibility criteria for the organizations that can apply for funding, the activities that can be funded, and how funding can be approved, will be provided in the respective call for proposals for receiving funding for ad-hoc support grants.

5. Indicative amount of financing

- a) **Grant Scheme** – the overall indicative amount made available under this grant scheme is EUR 690.000,00. It is planned that these funds will be allocated to about 14 grantees.
- b) **Ad-hoc support grants** - the overall indicative amount made available under this action is EUR 340.000,00. It is planned that these funds will be allocated to about 30 small grants.

BCSDN is not obliged to distribute all funds available under each type of financing. BCSDN reserves the right to change these amounts (decrease or increase) indicatively allocated to the types of support depending on the outcome of the calls for proposals. BCSDN also retains its right not to allocate part of the available funds and to re-allocate them to other types of assistance.

6. Indicative time-schedule of calls for proposals

- a) **Grant Scheme**- will be launched in the third quarter of 2020. The duration of an action may not be less than 6 months nor exceed 10 months.
- b) **Ad-hoc support grants**- will be launched in the second quarter of 2020. The award of the direct grants is planned for the entire period of the Project's implementation, starting from July 2020 until July 2021.

7. How to apply

- a) **Grant Scheme** - details about the criteria and the application process will be further elaborated in the respective Call for Proposals.
- b) **Ad-hoc support grants** - details about the application process for the ad-hoc support grants will be further elaborated in the respective Call for proposals for receiving funding for ad-hoc support grants.