

## **CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS**

***No. 09- 108/1 - 2020***

***“Strengthening regional cooperation to promote civic space in the  
Western Balkan countries”***

## **GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS**

## Contents

1.	RELEVANT BACKGROUND	3
1.1	About BCSDN	3
1.2	Introduction	3
1.3	Brief Overview of the Project	4
2.	ABOUT THIS CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS	4
2.1	Objectives and Priorities of the Call	4
2.2	Financial Allocation	5
	➤ Size of grants	5
2.3	Timeframe	5
3.	RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS	6
3.1	Eligibility Criteria	6
3.1.1	Eligibility Criteria for Applicants	6
	➤ Number of applications per applicant	6
3.1.2	Eligibility of Actions/ Interventions	7
	➤ Location	8
3.1.3.	Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included	8
4.	HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW	11
4.1	Full Applications	11
4.2	Mandatory Documents	11
4.3	Where and How to Send Full Applications	11
4.4	Deadline for Submission of Applications	11
4.5	Further Information About Full Applications	12
5.	EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS	12
5.1	Administrative Compliance and Eligibility Check	12
5.2	Evaluation of Applications	13
5.3	Final Decision	15
5.4	Notification of the Decision	15
6.	APPEALS	15
7.	IMPORTANT TENTATIVE DATES	16

## 1. RELEVANT BACKGROUND

### 1.1 About BCSDN

Balkan Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN) is a network of 14 civil society organizations from countries in Southeast Europe (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Republic of North Macedonia, Romania, Montenegro, Slovenia, Serbia, Turkey and Bulgaria). Our mission is to empower civil society and influence European and national policies towards a more enabling environment for civil society development to ensure sustainable and functioning democracies in the Balkans.

Our goals and objectives are the following:

1. To increase the role of civil society by strengthening its voice in policy- and decision-making at the national, regional and EU levels;
2. To promote civil dialogue between civil society actors, state institutions and the European Union to influence public policies;
3. To develop advocacy knowledge and skills among civil society actors as a base for greater impact; and
4. To strengthen the communication, coordination and cooperation between civil society actors in the Balkan region.

### 1.2 Introduction

The presence of a vibrant, strong and free civil society is essential to guarantee sustainable development and to provide incentives for social and democratic changes. In recent years, a culture of active citizenship has been developing in the Western Balkans and Turkey (WBT region), resulting in the emergence of new social movements and civil society actors who find new ways to organize, demand greater government accountability and offer their voices in policy debates.

CSOs are seen as important and resilient while their operating environment in the WBT region is considered relatively enabling and legally stable. However, unstable political contexts and large-scale or even global events, such as the migration crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic, showcase the fragility of the sector. From the violation of basic freedoms to uncertainty regarding funding and long-term operations, the civil society sector is faced with challenges. In a less-welcoming space for cooperation with public authorities, CSOs in the WBT region have, to some extent, lost their influence on decision-making. New regulations, such as restrictions on foreign funding and barriers to registration related to the FATF<sup>1</sup> recommendations, have allowed for state interference in CSOs' internal affairs, negative narratives, and other forms of harassment to become the new normal, leaving civil society to adapt and survive. The existence of organizations that have no accountability or transparency in their work remains worrisome as many CSOs have lost touch with the real needs of their constituencies.

However, in this challenging situation, there are possibilities for positive uptakes, new forms of collaboration and an opportunity for civil society to regain its relevance to citizens. Regionally, CSOs have showcased a higher amount of mutual understanding, collaboration and, thus, the potential to play a crucial role in maintaining prosperity in the region. Therefore, it is necessary to create platforms to foster further networking and connections between CSOs in the region.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an inter-governmental body that sets international standards to prevent illegal activities such as global money laundering and terrorist financing.

### 1.3 Brief Overview of the Project

The Project “Protecting Civic Space – Regional Civil Society Development Hub” is financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). Through this Project, BCSDN aims to establish a Regional Civil Society Development Hub as a regional center with a global impact that creates and shares knowledge and innovation on the role of CSOs 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 region.

Although networking in the Western Balkan (WB) region is common with examples of successful cooperation, there is a significant lack of funding for regional CSO initiatives. A crucial goal of the Regional Hub is to strengthen regional connections and cooperation by providing opportunities to build stronger regional alliances to promote civic space in the Western Balkans.

## 2. ABOUT THIS CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS

### 2.1 Objectives and Priorities of the Call

The overall objective of this Call is to support regional networks and regional initiatives in the Western Balkan region by financially backing projects that will contribute to enhanced regional cooperation among CSOs to promote civic space.

This Call has two specific objectives:

1. CSOs contributed to a conducive environment for civil society development that enables them to be influential actors in society.
2. CSOs contributed towards effective, transparent and accountable work in protecting civic space.

The funding provided with this Call *has the purpose of building strong regional connections to promote civic space and provide for long term prosperity for civil society in the Western Balkan region by addressing the discrepancies and bottlenecks identified in the development of civil society in the region.*

The submitted project proposals should contribute to achieving one of the above-stated objectives, through the exchange of knowledge, experience and skills among CSOs, with special focus on the enabling environment and accountability.

Grants will be awarded to regional networks and initiatives (formal and informal), with a mission and demonstrated experience in the thematic priorities of this Call. Applicants should present complete and convincing project proposals. To be considered as regional, the network needs participating CSOs from more than two countries from the Western Balkan region<sup>2</sup>.

Subject to the quality of applications, maximum efforts will be given to ensure equal distribution of grants across the specific objectives.

---

<sup>2</sup> Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia and Serbia

## 2.2 Financial Allocation

The overall amount made available under this Call for Project Proposals is **EUR 690.000,00**.

The indicative distribution of funds among the two specific objectives is as follows:

1. For Specific Objective 1, the amount of **EUR 490.000,00** is allocated for applications that will contribute to a more enabling environment for civil society development;
2. For Specific Objective 2, the amount of **EUR 200.000,00** is allocated for applications that will contribute to increased transparency and accountability in the CSOs' work.

The distribution of the available funds per specific objective is an indicative one. The contracting authority reserves the right not to award all of the available funds and/or to reallocate funds between the specific objectives depending on the outcome of this Call for Project Proposals.

### ➤ **Size of grants**

Any grant requested under this Call must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

- 1. For Specific Objective 1:**
  - minimum amount: EUR 30.000,00 (including the audit costs of the project),
  - maximum amount: EUR 70.000,00 (including the audit costs of the project).
- 2. For Specific Objective 2:**
  - minimum amount: EUR 20.000,00 (including the audit costs of the project),
  - maximum amount: EUR 40.000,00 (including the audit costs of the project).

Co-funding is not mandatory for this Call. The contracting authority will cover 100% of the total budget of the successful applications.

## 2.3 Timeframe

The minimum duration for the implementation of the proposed projects is 6 months and the maximum is 10 months.

The implementation of the selected projects is expected to start in November 2020.

### 3. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS

#### 3.1 Eligibility Criteria

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

1. The **applicants**;
2. The **action** for which a grant may be awarded;
3. The **costs** - types of costs that may be taken into account when setting the amount of the grant.

##### 3.1.1 Eligibility Criteria for Applicants

An applicant shall be considered the organization that is the headquarters or coordinator of the network, or any other member of the network that has received a mandate from the network to act on its behalf.

To be eligible for financing, an applicant should:

1. Be a **regional formal/ informal network** of active CSOs, associations and foundations, including non-governmental, and not-for-profit coalitions, partnerships, networks, sectoral or thematic interest groups, media outlets, research institutes and think tanks:
  - **registered/ established** in at least one of the Western Balkan countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia and Serbia),
  - registered/ established **at least one year before the publication of this Call**,
  - **comprised of member organizations in more than 2 countries from the WB region**;
2. Be directly responsible for project implementation. The leading organization takes full responsibility for project implementation and management, including the execution of all project expenditures;
3. Have a mission that is in line with the specific objectives of this Call, and
4. Demonstrate experience in project management in the application form, by listing as many as three of their greatest, relevant achievements and their partners' achievements, if any.

The applicant may act alone or in partnership with another network. **Potential partners must satisfy the same eligibility criteria as the applicant.**

##### ➤ Number of applications per applicant

Each applicant can apply only with one project proposal to this Call as a lead applicant. There are, however, no limitations on the number of project proposals in which an applicant (for example a regional network) serves as a partner.

A partnership is not obligatory and does not bring additional favour to the project automatically. Partnerships must be based on quality and concrete challenges that are common to all organisations involved in the project. The partnership shall strive to address such challenges based on a long-term, mutual relationship reflected in common ownership of the project. All partners shall be included in the preparation, as well as the actual and financial implementation of the project. In the evaluation and selection process of project proposals, the capacity of the entire partnership will be considered.

**All partners are requested to sign a Partnership Statement in the process of project submission.**

**Regional grant recipients, both the lead applicants and their partners, may not also apply to the Call for Ad-hoc Grants published by BCSDN while they are implementing a project awarded under this Call for Project Proposals.**

### 3.1.2 Eligibility of Actions/ Interventions

The proposed interventions should target one of the specific objectives of the Call for Proposals and aim to deliver concrete results that feed the overall goal of this Call. The proposed activities should address discrepancies in the development of civil society in the WB region through the exchange of knowledge, experience and skills among CSOs and should establish a platform for solidarity and cooperation in case of need.

**Specific Objective 1- CSOs contributed to a conducive environment for civil society development that enables them to be influential actors in society**

The eligible activities should address any of the following key issues concerning civil society's operating environment:

- To advance the state of fundamental freedoms (freedom of association, freedom of expression and freedom of assembly);
- To improve civic dialogue and the cooperation between civil society and public institutions;
- To advocate for the improvement of the operating environment for CSOs before EU, national governments and other stakeholders;
- To improve the legal framework and practices regarding the financial viability of civil society;
- To encourage broader CSO and multi-stakeholder coordination and cooperation to promote civic space;
- To support resource mobilization to promote civic space;
- Other initiatives contributing to an improved environment.

**Specific Objective 2- CSOs contributed towards effective, transparent and accountable work in protecting civic space**

The eligible activities should focus on any of the following key issues aimed to improve CSOs' capacities and legitimacy and should focus on improving levels of trust between CSOs and their constituencies, citizens, donors and policymakers:

- To improve trust in CSOs by introducing accountability mechanisms and standards for CSOs' work in the WB region, including the Dynamic Accountability approach of the Global Standard for CSO Accountability;
- To support CSOs' constituencies and trust-building, like innovative outreach activities, CSO rebranding, capacity building for CSOs' resilience against attack, etc.;
- To encourage meaningful participation of stakeholders at all levels;
- To encourage feedback culture among CSOs and to close the feedback loop;
- Other dynamic accountability practices.

The potential applicants are advised to consider the following activities when preparing their project's proposals (the list is not an exhaustive one):

- Advocacy and raising awareness,
- Research, analysis and studies – as a basis for further project activities,
- Participation in decision-making processes,
- Monitoring and watchdog activities,

- Promotion of active citizenship,
- Promotion of direct democracy mechanisms,
- Strategic litigation,
- Social innovation and promotion of social entrepreneurship,
- Development of new services,
- Training and education,
- Community development and activation,
- Inter-sectoral partnerships,
- NGO networking,
- Study visits,
- Mentorship.

➤ **Location**

Actions must take place in one or more of the following countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. However, business trips, study visits or similar types of specific activities may take place outside these countries.

### **3.1.3. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included**

Only 'eligible costs' can be covered by a grant. The categories of costs that are eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and an overall ceiling for 'eligible costs'.

The reimbursement of eligible costs is based on actual costs incurred by the applicant in the implementation of the project's activities.

Recommendations to award a grant are subject to the condition that the checks preceding the signing of the grant contract do not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget (such as arithmetical errors, inaccuracies, unrealistic costs and ineligible costs). The checks may lead to clarification requests and may lead the contracting authority to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. It is, therefore, in the applicants' interest to provide a realistic and cost-effective budget.

#### **Eligible direct costs**

To be considered eligible, costs should meet the following criteria:

- a) Are necessary for the successful implementation and achievement of the indicated project's results;
- b) Are reasonable, justified and comply with the requirements of sound financial management including fair and market-based calculations and cost-efficiency;
- c) Are in accordance with the requirements of applicable taxes and social legislation;
- d) Will occur during the implementation of the project;
- e) Are indicated in the proposed budget;
- f) Are identifiable and verifiable, in particular by being recorded in the accounting records of the applicant according to the applicable accounting standards and generally accepted accounting principles.

All costs must comply with the eligibility provisions of the standard grant contract (see Annex 4).

Expenditures are considered to have been incurred when the cost has been invoiced, paid and the subject matter delivered (in case of goods) or performed (in case of services). Exceptionally, costs in which an invoice has been issued in the final month of eligibility are also deemed to be incurred within the dates of eligibility if the costs are paid within 30 days of the final date of eligibility.



The internal accounting and bookkeeping procedures must enable direct reconciliation of the reported costs and revenues of the project with the corresponding accounting documents and supporting documents.

### **Eligible indirect costs**

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding, but the total must not exceed 10% of the estimated total eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another budget heading in the standard grant contract. The applicant may be asked to justify the percentage requested before the contract is signed. However, once the flat rate has been fixed in the grant contract, no supporting documents need to be provided.

***If any of the applicants or partner(s) receives an operating grant financed by SIDA, they may not claim indirect costs on their incurred costs within the proposed budget for the action.***

### **Ineligible costs**

The following costs are not eligible:

- a) Costs related to the preparation of the project proposal;
- b) Costs covered from other financing sources;
- c) Currency exchange losses;
- d) Repayment of loans, debts and debt service charges (interest), fines, penalties and other legal costs;
- e) Credits to third parties;
- f) The build-up of reserves;
- g) Travel costs for business or first class;
- h) Extra allowances, such as sitting allowances, or the equivalent to finance allowances for participating staff/ invited speakers/ participation in workshops;
- i) Purchases or the construction of real estate (land or buildings);
- j) In-kind contributions;
- k) Performance-based bonuses included in the costs of staff;
- l) Recoverable VAT;
- m) Excessive and reckless expenditures.

Value-added tax (VAT) is eligible cost only in case the applicant is not entitled to recoverable VAT. Applicants shall be aware of this rule when preparing their financial plan for the projects, and consider only those VAT costs that are non-recoverable by the state. *Applicants whose project proposals will be awarded a grant contract will be asked to provide a statement on non-recoverable VAT.*

### **Simplified Cost Option OR Result- Based Costs**

The reimbursement of eligible costs may be also based on a simplified cost option.

A simplified cost option may take the form of a lump sum, where the reimbursement of a certain specific category of eligible costs will be done upon delivery of a specific result/ output. This category of so-called "result - based costs" includes costs linked to outputs, results, activities, deliverables in the framework of a specific project. For example, the determination of a lump sum for the organization of a conference, event, preparation of analysis report, study, or production of information videos, etc.

The applicant shall indicate in the budget at the proposal stage the category/ activity for which the result-based cost option shall be used. This means that in the first worksheet of the budget proposal, the applicant shall state "lump sum" in the column "unit", and shall include the lump sum necessary for the

delivery of the result in the column “unit value”. In the column “# of units,” the applicant shall include the number of deliverables.

For example:

Costs	Unit	# of units	Unit value (in EUR)	Total Cost (in EUR)
<b>5. Other costs, services</b>				
5.1 Production of information videos	LUMP SUM	2	100	200
5.1. Analysis Report on .....	LUMP SUM	1	100	100

*\*the deliverables presented in the table, the number of units and the unit value are for illustration purposes only.*

In the second worksheet of the budget (Justification), the applicant shall provide a detailed justification on how the calculation of the lump sum was determined. For each corresponding budget item or heading where the result-based costs option shall be used, the applicants shall:

- Describe the information and methods used to determine the lump sums for the costs to which these refer;
- Explain the formulas for calculating the final eligible amount for the result- based costs.

The evaluation committee and the contracting authority will decide whether such costs can be accepted during the contracting phase based on the proposed budget and the respective, submitted justification. The contracting authority will base its decision on the analysis of the budget presented against the conditions set in these guidelines.

In case the evaluation committee and the contracting authority are not satisfied with the quality of the justification provided, reimbursement based on actually incurred costs is always possible. In this case, the budget shall be adapted accordingly.

## 4. HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

### 4.1 Full Applications

Applicants are invited to submit their full application using the grant application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex 1). Applicants should strictly adhere to the format of the grant application and fill in the paragraphs and pages in order.

Applicants are requested to submit their full applications in English.

*Hand-written applications will not be accepted.*

Please complete the full application form as carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly. Clarifications will only be requested when the information provided is unclear and thus prevents the evaluators from conducting an objective assessment.

Please note that only the full application form (Annex 1), the budget (Annex 2) and the logical framework (Annex 3) will be transmitted to the evaluators. It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL the relevant information concerning the action.

### 4.2 Mandatory Documents

**For registered networks:**

- A Court Decision or Certificate of Registration for the network, issued by the relevant public entity/ organization;
- The statute of the network.

**For informal partnership/ networking:**

- An Agreement for the establishment of cooperation between partner organizations.

**For all types of networks:**

- Application form – Annex 1(.doc);
- Budget – Annex 2 (.xls);
- Logical framework – Annex 3 (.xls).

### 4.3 Where and How to Send Full Applications

Full applications including all mandatory documents must be submitted electronically via email ONLY to the following e-mail address: <mailto:regionalhub@balkancsd.net>, with the subject: Application for the Call for Regional Grants.

### 4.4 Deadline for Submission of Applications

The deadline for the submission of applications is **15 September 2020, until 24:00 CET** as evidenced on the email server.

Any application submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

Each applicant shall receive an e-mail message as a confirmation of receipt.

#### 4.5 Further Information About Full Applications

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 20 days before the deadline for the submission of full applications to the e-mail address listed below, referencing the Call:

E-mail address: <mailto:regionalhub@balkancsd.net>.

The contracting authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

**To ensure equal treatment of applicants and full transparency, the contracting authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants or an action.**

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers will be published on the following website, no later than 10 days before the deadline for the submission of the applications: <http://www.balkancsd.net/regional-cs-hub/>.

Applicants are strongly advised to read the questions and answers published on the website.

Please refrain from contacting BCSDN in any form aside of the above-presented e-mail.

### 5. EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

Project proposals submitted through an open and competitive process will be evaluated against “best impact and value for money” criteria, which include administrative and content criteria (compliance with the Call’s priorities and objectives, applicants’ capacities and their past performance record).

Applications will be examined and assessed by an evaluation committee established by the contracting authority. All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in Section 3.1, the application will be rejected solely on this basis.

#### 5.1 Administrative Compliance and Eligibility Check

During this phase, all applications are assessed if the following criteria have been met:

1. Deadline for submitting the project proposals;
2. Mandatory documents properly submitted;
3. The eligibility of the applicant;
4. Budget size;
5. Project duration;
6. Geographical coverage- regional context.

Applications that do not meet the specified criteria will be automatically rejected.

The results of the administrative compliance and eligibility check are communicated to each applicant in writing within 10 working days after the deadline for submission of applications.

## Administrative Compliance and Eligibility Checklist

Criteria	Meeting the criteria		Notes
	YES	NO	
Application is submitted within the deadline (section <a href="#">4.4</a> )	YES	NO	If NO- Rejection
All mandatory documents are provided (section <a href="#">4.2</a> )	YES	NO	If NO- Request for supplementation
The applicant (including the lead applicant and partners, if any) is eligible to apply (section <a href="#">3.1</a> )	YES	NO	If NO- Rejection
The applicant has submitted only one application as a lead applicant (section <a href="#">3.1</a> )	YES	NO	If NO- Rejection
Project budget is between EUR 30.000 – EUR 70.000 for Specific Objective 1 OR EUR 20.000- EUR 40.000 for Specific Objective 2 (section <a href="#">2.2</a> )	YES	NO	If NO- Rejection
Project duration is between 6 and 10 months (section <a href="#">2.2</a> )	YES	NO	If NO- Rejection
Geographical coverage of the action- regional context (section <a href="#">3.1</a> )	YES	NO	If NO- Rejection

### 5.2 Evaluation of Applications

Applications that pass the administrative compliance and eligibility check will be evaluated by the criteria presented below. The evaluation will be carried out by independent evaluators who have experience in assessing project applications and who have knowledge of the relevant areas and related developments.

#### Scoring:

The evaluation grid is divided into sections and these are divided into subsections. Each subsection will be assessed on whether the criteria have been fulfilled or not.

Each subsection of sections 1, 2, and 3 will be given a score between 1 and 5, OR between 1 and 10, as per the guidelines given below:

When the maximum score is 5, the scoring should be done as follows:

1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

When the maximum score is 10, the scoring should be done as follows:

1 = very poor; 3 = poor; 5 = adequate; 7 = good; 10 = very good.

#### i. Capacity of the applicant (20%)

Whether the applicant has sufficient management and technical capacities, relevant experience in the thematic area and project management experience to implement the proposed intervention.

## ii. Quality of application (60%)

Whether the proposed intervention is relevant to the objectives and priorities of this Call and the particular needs and constraints of the target countries/region. Does the application clearly define the target groups and final beneficiaries, are their needs properly expressed and does the proposal address them appropriately? Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results? Whether the application has clear, measurable and achievable project results and whether these expected results sustainable.

## iii. Budget (20%)

Whether the activities are appropriately reflected in the budget and is the budget realistic and cost-effective.

### Evaluation Grid

SECTION	POINTS
<b>1. Capacity of the applicant</b>	<b>20</b>
Does the applicant have sufficient management capacity (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)	5
Does the applicant have relevant experience in the thematic area and skills for implementing the proposed intervention/project ( <i>especially knowledge and expertise of the issues to be addressed</i> )	10
Does the applicant have experience in project management?	5
<b>2. Quality of application</b>	<b>60</b>
How relevant is the proposal to the objective and priorities of the Call for Project Proposals?	10
Does the proposal clearly identify the problems, constraints in the country(ies) and the target groups/ final beneficiaries that need to be addressed in particular?	10
Are the activities proposed appropriate and consistent with the project's objectives? Is the action plan feasible and consistent with the objectives?	10
Does the proposal contain clear and achievable project results? Are there objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the action?	5
Does the proposal contain specific added-value elements, such as environmental issues, the promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, the needs	5

of disabled people, the rights of minorities, or innovation and best practices?	
Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	10
Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable? (are there structures allowing the activities to continue at the end of the action? How will the activities be financed after the funding ends? Will there be local 'ownership' of the results of the action?)	10
<b>3. Budget</b>	<b>20</b>
Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	10
Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	10

The maximum evaluation per application is 100 points.

***The minimum passing threshold is 70 points, as well as the half of the available points in each broad category.***

### 5.3 Final Decision

Applications with maximum evaluation scores, up to the expense of the allocated budget for this Call, will be supported.

For the successful applicants, the process of checking and clarifying the proposed budget shall be conducted before the signing of the contract, to address mistakes or inaccuracies. In terms of the budget, such corrections shall not in any circumstance lead to an increase of the budget to be supported by the contracting authority.

### 5.4 Notification of the Decision

Each applicant will be informed of their overall assessment/total scores in writing.

Information on the selected applications will be published on the BCSDN Regional Hub website <http://www.balkancsd.net/regional-cs-hub/> after the contracts are signed.

## 6. APPEALS

Applicants whose project proposals are not selected for funding will have 5 working days as of the date of the notification, to appeal the decision. Appeals can be submitted at [regionalhub@balkancsd.net](mailto:regionalhub@balkancsd.net).

Appeals will be considered by the Complaints Committee and its decision will be final.

***The complaint procedure will not delay or cancel the selection process.***

## 7. IMPORTANT TENTATIVE DATES

Process	Tentative dates
Launch of the Call for Project Proposals	<b>4 August 2020</b>
Deadline for requesting clarifications/questions	<b>26 August 2020 (24:00 CET)</b>
Information session (on-line session)	<b>2 September 2020</b>
Last date on which answers are published	<b>4 September 2020</b>
Deadline for submission of applications	<b>15 September 2020</b>
Information on administrative compliance	<b>1 October 2020</b>
Information on evaluation	<b>Beginning of November 2020</b>
Contract signing	<b>Mid-November 2020</b>