



Republic of Serbia
ANTI-CORRUPTION AGENCY

**OPEN COMPETITION
FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORT TO COMMUNITY ANTI-
CORRUPTION CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED
BY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS**

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Anti-Corruption Agency (hereinafter referred to as “the Agency”), recognising the civil society as one of the government’s strategic partners in its anti-corruption activities and promotion of social cohesion, hereby opens a competition for the award of funding for 2012 to civil society organisations with project proposals focused on the same objective.

The Agency has chosen to award this year’s funding for two small-value projects to organisations whose project proposals receive the highest score according to the defined criteria.

1.2 Objectives and Goals

1.2.1 Overall Objective of the Open Competition for Funding

To ensure sustainable civil society involvement in anti-corruption activities and promotion of social cohesion.

1.2.2 Goals of the Open Competition for Funding

- (a) To support the development of accountability and transparency mechanisms and strengthening of integrity of social stakeholders in the fight against corruption.
- (b) To take part in the implementation of recommendations and activities outlined in strategic documents in connection with the role of the civil society in the fight against corruption.
- (c) To affirm the UN Convention against Corruption and recommendations contained in other international documents in the field of fight against corruption, with the aim of promoting an anti-corruption culture.

1.3 Total Amount of Funding and Project Duration

The total amount of funding available for project execution is RSD 4,216,000.00 (2,108,000 per project). Applicants whose project proposals are chosen for the funding should open a special-purpose account, to be used for the approved project only.

The Agency reserves the right not to award funding if none of the projects submitted receive the required minimum score (73) according to the evaluation criteria set out in 3.1.2 below.

Project duration shall be 8 months – from the 1st of April to the 30th of November 2012.

The funding will be disbursed in two tranches: the first will be disbursed at the beginning of the project, while the second will be disbursed halfway through the project term, after four months.

2. RULES OF OPEN COMPETITION

2.1. Eligibility Criteria

Four groups of eligibility criteria have been established for participation in the open competition and for the award of funding, relating to:

- Project applicants;
- Partnership;
- The content of project proposals;
- Eligible costs.

2.1.1 Eligibility criteria relating to project applicants (Who is eligible to apply?)

(a) For a project proposal to be taken into consideration, it has to be submitted by an applicant that:

- Acquired the status of an association in accordance with the Law on Associations (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia No. 51/09),
- In the last 3 years (2009, 2010 and 2011) implemented projects in the total value of minimum EUR 50,000.00 (this relates to the project applicant only, not to its partner associations),
- Submitted a project proposal within the period specified in the open competition, and
- Submitted a project proposal on a requisite form, with all necessary supporting documents.

(b) A project proposal will be given advantage if its applicant documents:

- That it has either independently adopted and put in place ethical rules or has acceded to and implements the ethical rules adopted at the level of a group and/or network of organisations. If an applicant documents this fact, its project proposal will be awarded 5 additional points in the evaluation procedure implemented by the Competition Committee.

(c) An applicant's project proposal will not be taken into consideration if it is found that the applicant:

- Is an entity that does not have the status of an association in accordance with the Law on Associations (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia No. 51/09) or if its partner organisations involved in the project do not have the status of an association in accordance with the Law on Associations; or
- Is in bankruptcy or liquidation; or
- Is responsible for a gross violation of the principles of professional conduct (e.g. conflict of interest, wasteful spending of project funding, employee abuse etc.) and such violation can be demonstrated on the basis of valid information obtained by the Agency during the open competition; or
- Misinterpreted or provided false or inaccurate information requested by the Agency as a requirement for participation in the open competition in its supporting documents or failed to provide the information required; or
- Attempted to obtain confidential information or to exert influence on the Project Proposal Evaluation and Selection Committee;
- Failed to sign and certify by seal the project applicant's declaration form or failed to provide declarations made by project partners, signed by the association's representative/authorised officer and certified by the association's seal.

(d) Applicants are allowed to enter only one project proposal each in the open competition for funding. Any applicant who enters two or more project proposals will be disqualified.

2.1.2 Eligibility criteria relating to partnerships

A project applicant must have at least two partner organisations established in different municipalities/cities. The cooperation between a project applicant and its partner organisation shall be subject to the following requirements:

- Partners of the project applicant participate in the implementation of project activities;
- Only associations that acquired the status of an association in accordance with the Law on Associations are eligible as partners of the project applicant;
- The project applicant is the lead partner and, if selected, a contracting party (Beneficiary);
- The project applicant and its partner associations may participate in the open competition for one project only.

2.1.3 Eligibility criteria relating to the content of project proposals

- (a) For a project proposal to be taken into consideration, its content must comply with the goals listed in item 1.2.2 under (a), (b) and (c), the overall objective set out in item 1.2.1 and the criteria listed in item 2.1.3 under (b).
- (b) Project proposals should meet the following criteria:

- They should involve one or two of the following target groups: school-age youth; youth organisations/associations; educators; employees and officials of local self-government establishments, organisations and institutions (public enterprises, cultural institutions, schools, medical centres, local self-government units...); civil society organisations; journalists; citizens;
- They should foster dialogue, cooperation and partner relations between stakeholders;
- They should, *inter alia*, envisage some of the following activities: awareness raising campaigns; education; professional skills upgrade; research; creation of printed and/or electronic education material; broadcasting of programs and other forms of dissemination of information...
- They should address some of the topics listed below, which must be specific and concrete, including: public good; responsibility of all stakeholders for the public good; consequences of non-ethical decisions and behaviour; integrity of citizens, holders of public responsibilities and public authorities; anti-corruption mechanisms and their application; systemic solutions to prevent corruption and the issue of their application.

A project applicant may also include support from the Agency and promotion of project outcomes as eligible activities. These activities could include the provision of technical support by the staff of the Agency's administrative and professional service and/or publication of promotional material on project activities and outcomes, organisation of press conferences, publication of information on the project in the press and in electronic media through interviews, articles etc. The total costs of implementation of project outcome promotion activities can range from 5% to 10% of the funding available under this open competition.

2.1.4 Eligibility criteria relating to costs

- (a) Project proposals will be taken into consideration only if the costs of their implementation are eligible. Eligible costs must be based on the actual costs resulting from budget implementation and they must be supported by relevant and accurate documentation. Advantage will therefore be given to project proposals that contain realistic and cost-effective budgets.

(b) Eligible direct costs

In order to be eligible, costs have to:

- Be necessary for the implementation of project activities and compliant with the principles of lawfulness and economical financial management, in particular with regard to the value of invested money and cost-effectiveness of the costs (value for money);

- Be actually incurred by the project applicant in the course of project implementation;
- Be subject to recording during project implementation, in the project applicant's accounts or tax documents, recognisable and verifiable and supported by original documents the copies of which are used for their justification;
- Involve the engagement of team members from partner organisations.

The costs of mandatory audit should be included in the project proposal and should not exceed 3% of the funding available under this open competition.

(c) Eligible indirect costs

In order to be considered eligible, indirect costs should not exceed 10% of the funding available under this open competition.

(d) Ineligible costs

The following costs shall be considered ineligible:

- Purchase of vehicles and equipment;
- Debts and compensation of losses or debt and retrospective payments;
- Due and payable borrowing interest;
- Items already funded from other programs and projects;
- Participation in international conferences and payment of tuition fees;
- Any costs unrelated to project implementation;
- Costs of alcoholic beverages.

3. PROJECT SELECTION

Projects that will receive funding will be selected by a Competition Committee of five, formed under a decision of the Agency's director. The Competition Committee shall decide on the award of funding to selected projects within 15 days of expiration of the time limit for the submission of project proposals.

3.1 Stages in the Selection of Project Proposals

The project selection procedure involves two stages: review of compliance with formal requirements and evaluation of project proposals.

3.1.1 Stage of review of compliance with formal requirements

During the review of compliance with formal requirements, the Competition Committee determines whether the requirements set out in item 2.1.1 (a), (c) and (d) are met. If the applicant of a project proposal does not comply with one or more eligibility criteria set out in item 2.1.1 (a), (c) and (d), such proposal shall not be taken into consideration. Furthermore, any project proposals sent by fax or electronic mail or delivered to a different address, as well as any project proposals that are incomplete or filled out in hand on the appropriate form, shall likewise not be taken into consideration.

3.1.2 Stage of evaluation of project proposals

During evaluation, the Competition Committee appraises the quality and relevance of project proposals, including the budget, of project proposals that are found to be compliant with the requirements set out in item 2.1.1 (a), (c) and (d). Evaluation is based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Maximum score
1. Financial and organisational capacity (coefficients: 0.1, 0.5 and 1)	8
1.1 Does the project applicant have sufficient managerial capacity (including employees, equipment, ability to manage the budget for the envisaged activities)? coefficient: 1	5
1.2 Does the project applicant have sufficient technical knowledge and professional capacities, including expertise and experience in the management of anti-corruption projects? coefficient: 0.1	0.5
1.3. Does the project applicant have sufficient technical knowledge and professional capacities, including expertise and experience in in the implementation of public campaigns? coefficient: 0.5	2.5
2. Relevance and methodology (coefficients: 2.1, 2.5 and 3)	76
2.1 Compliance of the project proposal with the objectives and priorities of the open competition. coefficient: 2.5	12.5
2.2 Is the described problem clearly defined? coefficient: 2.1	10.5
2.3 Are the activities clear, appropriate and harmonised with the objectives and goals and expected outcomes of the project? coefficient: 3	15
2.4 Are expected outcomes realistically set? coefficient: 3	15
2.5 Are goal indicators appropriate and objectively measurable? coefficient: 2.5	12.5
2.6 Is the project implementation plan clear and feasible? coefficient: 2.1	10.5
3. Sustainability (coefficients: 2.1, 2.5 and 3)	36
3.1 Will the activities envisaged under the project have concrete effects for target groups? coefficient: 3	15

3.2 Are the expected outcomes sustainable (financially, institutionally, at public policy level etc.) coefficient: 2.5	10.5
3.3 Evaluation of identified key assumptions and risks coefficient: 2.5	10.5
4. Inclusiveness and visibility (coefficients: 1.1, 1.5 and 2)	17.5
4.1 Level of involvement and participation of partners and/or other stakeholders in the implementation of project activities. coefficient: 2	10
4.2 Visibility of the project to wider social groups. coefficient: 1.5	7.5
5. Budget and cost-effectiveness (coefficients: 1.1, 1.5 and 2)	17.5
5.1 Is the ratio of estimated costs and expected results satisfactory? coefficient: 1.5	7.5
5.2. Is the proposed cost necessary for project implementation? coefficient: 2	10
Total	155.5

Project proposals shall be evaluated as follows:

- Each individual criterion within the above subcategories shall be given a score on a scale of 1 to 5;
- Each subcategory is ranked in terms of importance and assigned an appropriate coefficient, shown in brackets after the name of the relevant subcategory:
 - (a) For subcategory 1, the coefficient is 0.1 for a criterion of low importance, 0.5 for a criterion of medium importance and 1 for a criterion of high importance;
 - (b) For subcategories 2 and 3, the coefficient is 2.1 for a criterion of low importance, 2.5 for a criterion of medium importance and 3 for a criterion of high importance;
 - (c) For subcategories 4 and 5, the coefficient is 1.1 for a criterion of low importance, 1.5 for a criterion of medium importance and 2 for a criterion of high importance;
- The score is multiplied with the appropriate coefficient;
- The total score is arrived at by adding the scores for each criterion within a subcategory;
- If applicable, the total score is increased by the score provided for in item 2.1.1 (b).

The Competition Committee draws up a ranking list according to the total score (and any additional scores where applicable) assigned to each project proposal that entered the evaluation stage and publishes that list on the Agency's website.

If the two top-ranking project proposals on the list are submitted by associations from the same city/municipality, the Committee has the right to propose the

award of funding to the first lower-ranking project proposal that is not submitted by an applicant from the same city/municipality as the first-ranking applicant.

3.2 Publication of Decision on Award of Funding

The ranking list will be published on the Agency's website on 14 March 2012.

3.2.1 Right to appeal

Applicants whose project proposals were evaluated may lodge an appeal/complaint to the ranking list within 3 business days of publication of the ranking list on the Agency's website (i.e. by 19 March 2012 at the latest).

Appeals/complaints, if any, shall be reviewed by an Appeals Committee with three members, set up by a decision of the Agency's director. A person who sat on the Competition Committee may not be a member of the Appeals Committee.

The Appeals Committee shall not take into consideration any appeals:

- Lodged by an entity that did not submit a project proposal in this open competition; or
- Lodged by an applicant that does not comply with the eligibility criteria set out in item 2.1.1 (a), (c) and (d); or
- Lodged after the expiration of the relevant period for lodging of appeals.

An applicant whose project proposal was evaluated and included in the ranking list may appeal on the following grounds:

- If the Competition Committee breached applicable rules of procedure; or
- If the Competition Committee made an error in scoring or computation and such error was decisive for not awarding the highest score to a project proposal or for not including it in as the top-ranking or the second-ranking proposal in the ranking list; or
- If the Competition Committee failed to take into account or wrongly evaluated an element of a project proposal and this was decisive in the evaluation stage for not awarding the highest score to a project proposal or for not including it in as the top-ranking or the second-ranking proposal in the ranking list.

The Appeals Committee shall decide on appeals within 5 business days of expiration of the time limit for appealing against a decision on the award of funding made by the Competition Committee (i.e. by 26 March 2012 at the latest).

Awards of the Appeals Committee are final. A final decision on the winners of the open competition for the award of funding to civil society organisations for the

implementation of community capacity-building projects in the fight against corruption will be published on the Agency's website on 28 March 2012.

4. LIST OF CORE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

(a) Core documents:

1. Project Proposal Form, signed by the association's representative/authorised officer and certified by the association's seal;
2. Project Budget Form, signed by the association's representative/authorised officer and certified by the association's seal;
3. Declarations by project partners, signed by the association's representative/authorised officer and certified by the association's seal.

(b) Mandatory supporting documents:

1. Copies of evidence (certificate, excerpt) of registration of the applying association and its partner associations with the relevant register of the Business Registers Agency;
2. A copy of a certificate of registration of regular annual financial statements for 2009 and 2010 and evidence of submission of a report for 2011 to the Business Registers Agency (for the applying association only);
3. A copy of the association's Articles of Association (both for project applicant and partner associations);
4. CV's of the managerial structure of the applying association and CV's of project team members (including those from partner associations).

5. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The competition for project proposals will be open from the 3rd to the 27th of February 2012.

The competition is public and will be published on the Agency's website (www.acas.rs), where instructions to project applicants, Project Proposal Form, Project Budget Form and partner declaration forms will be available for download.

Applications are to be sent in print in a sealed envelope to the following address:

Anti-Corruption Agency
Carice Milice 1
11000 Belgrade

Details of the applicant (name and address of the association) must be stated on the envelope, as well as the following wording: "Application for the Open Competition for CSO Projects – do not open before expiration of the deadline for application".

Project proposals will be considered timely if sent by registered mail at a post office not later than 4:00 PM on 27 February 2011 (as evidenced by postal stamp), regardless of the date of receipt.

Any requests for additional information and questions in connection with the application procedure may be sent by e-mail to: konkurs-ocd@acas.rs.