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OPEN CALL FOR PROPOSALS

“Building Bridges: Bridging the Gap in Employment Rights through Youth and CSO Engagement”

Guideline for Applicants

Sub-granting scheme to support the CSOs capacitate on monitoring the application of labour human rights models/approaches

Reference number of grant contract: EuropeAid/177069/DD/ACT/AL

Deadline for submission of applications: March 24th, 2025

Contracting Authority: Studies and Development Center (SDC)



Studies and Development Center

Project partnership:

KREO





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1. PROJECT SUB-GRANTING SCHEME

1.1. BACKGROUND

Studies and Development Center “SDC”, in cooperation with KREO organization in Albania and REDU organization in Italy, is implementing the project “**Building Bridges: Bridging the Gap in Employment Rights through Youth and CSO Engagement**” (BB-YCSE). This project is funded by the European Commission IPA III/2023/177069-2/7, reference: EuropeAid/177069/DD/ACT/AL.

The overall objective of the project is to Improve Youth, CSOs, and local authorities’ capacities to integrate Programs/approaches and activities in social labour rights in their agenda and strengthen governmental and civil society efforts related to inclusion of vulnerable youth to promoting human rights on employment.

The specific objectives are:

SO1: Increased knowledge and information on situation of young people and capacities of CSOs with regard to the main challenges on human rights particularly the social labour rights;

SO2: Increased awareness of CSOs, local youth organizations, government and private business in 10 municipalities on social labour rights.

SO3: Enable environment for CSOs and Young people (male and female) especially in rural areas and from poor marginalized/disadvantages communities to benefit from direct actions in support of promotion and implementing social labour rights.

The objective will be achieved through three working packages as follow:

1. An evidence-based assessment on application of social labour rights in 10 municipalities, Himara, Gramsh, Cërrik, Lushnjë, Selenicë, Rrogozhinë, Fushë-Arrëz, Pukë, Klos, Berat and identifying the specific needs of young people and CSOs in terms of skills, knowledge, and resources.

2. Awareness and promotion of social labour rights protection actions at local level (10 municipalities). Development of the toolkits that provide practical guidance on how to effectively advocate for social labour rights.

3. Young people (male and female) especially in rural areas and from poor marginalized/disadvantages communities’ network/collaborate and benefit from direct actions (inclusive and gender sensitive) in support of promoting and implementing social labour rights.

The key target group of the action are young people (male and female, incl. marginalized groups), job seekers and employed, human rights’ local CSOs, including youth CSOs, local authorities, Community Based Organizations in urban and rural areas in 10 municipalities.

The Action will be implemented in 10 municipalities selected based on the criteria of low level of developed capacities of youth and CSOs in promoting and monitoring the labour human rights, high rates of informal employment and no information/data/assessment on knowledge and capacities as well as no management of cases of violations of the law enforcements.

Sub-granting scheme is to the CSOs to capacitate them on monitoring the application of labour human rights models/approaches. Enable environment for CSOs and Young people (male and female) especially in rural areas and from poor marginalized/disadvantages communities to benefit from direct actions in support of promoting and monitoring social labour rights. The sub-granting scheme, constitutes an important component of the BB-YCSE project.



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The call is expected to award grants to up to 6 local civil society organizations.

The Sub-granting scheme of the Action will be designed in accordance with the general principles for contracting in the context of EU external actions (a) ensuring sufficient transparency, fair competition and adequate ex-ante publicity; (b) ensuring equal treatment, proportionality and non-discrimination; and (c) avoiding conflicts of interests throughout the entire procurement procedure.

The CSOs selected through this call are expected to implement actions that monitor, advocate for, and raise awareness of organizations focused on the protection of labour and social rights. They are encouraged to create local advocacy plans focused on enhancing accountability and transparency within public institutions at the local level.

1.2 OBJECTIVE OF THE OPEN CALL

The overall goal of the Sub-granting is to support CSO's on monitoring the application of social labour rights models/approaches.

The specific objective of this Call for Proposals is to: *Improve Youth, CSOs, and local authorities' capacities to integrate Programs/approaches and activities in social labour rights in their agenda and strengthen governmental and civil society efforts related to inclusion of vulnerable youth to promoting human rights*

The expected results to be obtained under this call for proposals are a) Increased awareness of CSOs, local youth organizations, government and private business in 10 municipalities on social labour rights'; b) Increase capacity of the CSOs on monitoring the application of labour human rights models/approaches; c) CSOs and Young people (male and female) especially in rural areas and from poor marginalized/disadvantages communities benefit from direct actions in support of promoting and monitoring social labour rights.

1.3 FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE SUB - GRANTING AUTHORITY

Total indicative budget available for this call for proposals: **42.000 EUR**

Amount contribution per proposal: **5000 - 7000 EUR**

Coverage of costs: The sub-granting scheme will finance 100% of eligible costs.

Duration of the Action: **6-9 months**

Action must take place at least two of the following municipalities: **Municipality of Puka; Fushë-Arrëz; Klos; Cërrik; Gramsh; Rrogozhina; Lushnje; Berat; Selenicë and Himara.**

2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

2.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

2.1.1 Eligibility of applicants

In order to be eligible for a sub-grant, the applicant must:



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- Be a civil society organization established in one of the forms recognized by the Albanian legislation in force for non-profit organizations;
- Be non-profit making;
- Be legally established and registered in Albania;
- Be located and operating in Albania;

Applicants must sign the Declaration by the Applicant (Annex 3).

2.1.2 Eligible actions

The proposed actions for this call for proposals should focus on delivering results based on the objectives set out in section 1 of this document.

Indicative types of actions suggested – non exhaustive.

Particular priority will be given to the specific activities of this Action (in 10 targeted municipalities) including but not limited to:

- Documenting and reporting on cases of rights violations and implementation of policies.
 - Advocacy for policy and legal changes in accordance with EU standards.
 - Participation in policy formulation and promotion of greater contact and cooperation between civic and political actors, including fostering structured dialogue mechanisms.
 - Capacity building (including training and mentoring) of CSOs and/or CSOs networks/coalitions/platforms to reinforce organizational development, service delivery capacity, monitoring, oversight, advocacy and awareness raising skills.
 - Capacity building of civic and political actors to develop responsive policy platforms, adequately representing the interests of the groups targeted under these lots.
 - Support regular and structured dialogue among stakeholders.
- Building of strategic partnerships, networking and cooperation with CSOs and other relevant stakeholders or among CSOs.
- Watchdog activities and monitoring of national action plans and indicators; monitoring and analysis of legislative developments and implementation of laws and by-laws.
 - Exchange of information, know-how and experience.

SDC as contracting authority will provide for the awarded sub-grantees support as below:

- Capacity building on project implementation and advocacy/ awareness raisings.
- Technical support/ mentoring during the project implementation

The following types of activities are non-eligible for financial support:

- Actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;
- Actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- Projects which consist entirely, or in most part, of preparatory works or studies;
- Projects supporting political parties or illegal activities, and religious activities;



- Deficit funding and capital endowments;
- Activities undertaken before signature of the grant contract;
- Actions aimed at profit making activities;
- Actions related to charitable donations;
- Financial subventions to other organizations;
- Purchase of land, building and offices/ Renovation of buildings or offices;
- Retroactive financing for projects that are already in implementation or completed;
- Actions taking place outside Albania and outside specific region mentioned in section 1.3;

Visibility

The applicants must take all necessary steps to publicize the fact that the **European Union** is financing the action through “**Building Bridges: Bridging the Gap in Employment Rights through Youth and CSO Engagement**” (BB-YCSE), a project implemented by a consortium led by Studies and Development Center (SDC).

The proposals that are wholly or partially funded by the European Union must ensure the visibility of EU financing by displaying the EU emblem in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Operational guidelines for recipients of EU funding, published by the European Commission. If applicable, communication activities may be undertaken to raise the awareness of specific or general audiences of the reasons for the action and the EU support for the action in the country or region concerned, as well as the results and the impact of this support.

All measures and activities relating to visibility and, if applicable, communication, must comply with the latest Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU-funded external action, laid down and published by the European Commission ([Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU External Actions | International Partnerships \(europa.eu\)](#)).

2.1.3 Eligibility of costs

Only “eligible costs” can be covered by a sub-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”.

At the contracting phase, the Contracting Authority decides whether to accept the proposed amounts on the basis of the provisional budget submitted by the applicants, by analyzing factual data of grants carried out by the applicants or of similar actions.

Recommendations to award a sub-grant are always subject to the condition that the checks preceding the signing of the sub-grant contract do not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget (such as arithmetic errors, inaccuracies, unrealistic costs and ineligible costs). The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the contracting authority to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. It is not possible to increase the grant or the percentage of financing as a result of these corrections.

Eligible direct costs are actual costs incurred by the Applicants which meet all the following criteria:

- they are incurred during the implementation of the action;



- costs incurred should be paid before the project closing date;
- they are indicated in the estimated overall budget for the Action;
- they are necessary for the implementation of the Action;
- they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the Beneficiary(ies) and determined according to the accounting standards and the usual cost accounting practices applicable to the Beneficiary(ies);
- they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- they are reasonable, justified and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

2.1.4 Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- debts and debt service charges (interest);
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- interest owed (loss from banking account);
- costs declared by the beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme receiving a European Union (including through EDF) grant;
- purchases of land or buildings;
- currency exchange losses;
- fines, financial penalties and expenses of litigation;
- in kind contributions;
- bonuses included in costs of staff;
- negative interest charged by banks or other financial institutions;
- credit to third parties (not involved in the target group R/E community);
- salary costs of the personnel of national administrations;
- Value Added Tax (VAT), excise duties and other special consumption taxes or any other similar tax, duties or charges having equivalent effect;

2.2 HOW TO APPLY AND PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

2.2.1 Submitting the application

The application must be submitted in accordance with the instructions provided in this Guideline for Applicants and the published formats (the application form, budget). It is therefore of major importance that these documents contain all the relevant information concerning the proposed action. Any error and major inconsistency related to the application instruction and required documents may lead to the rejection of the application.

The application form attached to this call for proposals must be completed and submitted in English or Albanian language. Last page of the application form must bear the signature of the legal representative of the applicant and the stamp of the organization.

The other annexes should be completed in English language. Handwritten applications will not be accepted.



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2.2.2 Supporting documents:

The applicants (lead applicant and co-applicant, if any) should submit the following documents in accordance with the applicable Albanian law:

- a) Court Registration Act;
- b) Statute of the organization;
- c) Fiscal registration Certification (NIUS);
- d) CV of the organization that will be involved in project implementation;
- e) Court Extract (with the Court seal and within the last three months).
- f) A document issued by the Department of Taxes certifying that the organization has no pending financial obligations, such as social, health or tax obligations – issued within the Call period.
- g) Bank Proof (Vërtetim bankar) with the bank account, and IBAN in the name of the organization - issued within the Call period.
- h) The legal representative of the Applicant must sign and stamp: Declaration by the Applicant (Annex A4).

2.2.3 Where and how to send the applications

The application should be submitted within **March 24th, 2025, at 16:00 hrs**, hand delivered or via email, (including the annexes) to the following address: Rr. Gjin Bue Shpata, 6/29, Tirana, or email: info@sdcc.org.al

The applicant must clarify in the envelope or email subject:

- the reference number of the call for proposal - EuropeAid/177069/DD/ACT/AL
- the title of the call for proposal: Sub-granting scheme to support the CSOs capacitate on monitoring the application of labour human rights models/approaches.
- the name of the applicant.

2.2.4 Deadline for the submission of the application

The deadline for the submission of the applicants is **March 24th, 2025 at 16:00**. Any application submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

2.2.5 Further information about the applications

Questions regarding the application process may be sent by email no later than March 3rd, 2025, clearly indicating the title of the call for proposals: Sub-granting scheme to support the CSOs capacitate on monitoring the application of labour human rights models/approaches.

Email address: info@sdcc.org.al

Studies and Development Center (SDC), as the sub-granting authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date. To ensure equal treatment of applicants, SDC cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of applicants, an action or specific activities.

Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with the answers, will be published on Project Website, website: www.labourrightsproject-al.com . To stay informed about the questions and answers published, it is advisable to regularly visit the above website.



An online information session will be organized on February 10th, 2025 at 12:00 a.m.

The link to the information session will be published in the coming days on the Project Website and social media accounts.

2.3 EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be examined and evaluated by an evaluation committee.

All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

Step 1: Administrative Check

During the opening and administrative check, the evaluation committee will assess the submission deadline has been met and if the application form satisfies all the criteria specified in the administrated checklist.

Administrative Criteria	YES	NO	Comments
1. The proposal is submitted within the deadline.			
2. The application forms published in the guideline for the call for proposals have been used (typed, in Albanian/English language as explained in session 2.2.1).			
3. All supporting documents are submitted in the required form.			
4. The applicant is a CSO established and registered in Albania.			
5. The applicant is a CSO located and operates in Albania			
6. The duration of the action is: not lower than 6 months nor exceed 9 months.			

After the Administrative check the Evaluation committee will continue the technical evaluation of the proposals for the administratively compliant applications.

Step 2: Technical evaluation of the applications.

The quality of the applications, including the proposed budget and capacity of the applicants, will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria as per the evaluation grid below.

The evaluation grid is divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follow: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Section	Score
1. Operational capacity Adm	10
1.1 Do the applicants have sufficient experience of project management?	5



1.2 Do the applicants have sufficient technical expertise in the field of proposed action?	5
2. Relevance	35
2.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals and to the specific themes/sectors/areas or any other specific requirement stated in the guidelines for applicants? Are the expected results of the action aligned with the priorities defined in the guidelines for applicants?	5x2*
2.2 How relevant is the proposal to the particular needs and constraints of the social labour rights?	5x2*
2.3 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs (as rights holders and/or duty bearers) and constraints been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5
2.4 Does the proposal contain particular added-value elements (e.g. innovation, best practices)?	10
3. Design of the action	25
3.1 How coherent is the design of the action? Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the action?	5
3.2 Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved?	5x2*
3.3 Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the envisaged results? Is the timeline realistic?	5x2*
4. Sustainability of the action	20
4.1 Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5*2
4.2 Have the risks have been realistically identified, as well as the risk reduction measures?	5
5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action	10
5.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	5
5.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the results satisfactory?	5
Maximum total score	100

** These scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance*

After the evaluation, a table will be drawn up listing the applications ranked according to their score. The highest scoring applications will be provisionally selected until the available budget for this call for proposals is reached. In addition, a reserve list will be drawn up following the same criteria.

Step 3: Final evaluation and decision

The Evaluation Committee will take the final decision and the results of the evaluation process will be communicated officially to the applicants.



The Contracting Authority, prior to signing the contract, reserves the right to negotiate with the applicants in order to ensure cost efficiency of the action, ensure a fair balance between operational and non-operational costs, reflect real market costs, and reflect costs in accordance with proposed activities.

After reaching an agreement, the sub - grant contract will be signed between the selected applicant and the contracting authority – Studies and Development Center (SDC).

Step 4: Notification of the contracting authority's decision

The applicants will be informed via e-mail of the contracting authority's decision concerning their application and, if rejected, the reasons for the negative decision.

Appeals

Without prejudice, where an applicant believes he has been adversely affected by an error or irregularity allegedly committed as part of the selection procedure, or that the procedure was vitiated by any maladministration, may file a complaint within 5 (five) working days from the day when the rejection email has been received.

The Evaluation Committee shall answer to the be summited complaint no later than 5 (five) working days from the receipt of the complaint. The reply to the appeal represents the final decision regarding the application.

3. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE OF THE PROCESS

INDICATIVE TIMETABLE	DATE
1. Official public launch of the Call for Proposals	03/02/2025
2. Online information session	10/02/2025
3. Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the contracting authority.	03/03/2025
4. Last date on which clarifications are issued by the contracting authority.	13/03/2025
5. Deadline for submission of applications	24/03/2025 at 16:00
6. Notification of award	15/04/2025
7. Contract signature	15/05/2025

The indicative timetable refers to provisional dates (except for dates 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5) and may be updated by the contracting authority during the procedure. In such cases, the updated timetable will be published on the website where the call was published: www.labourrightsproject-al.com



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LIST OF ANNEXES

Annex A1: Application Form (Word format)

Annex A2: Budget Template (Excel format)

Annex A3: Logical Framework (Word format)

Annex A4: Declaration by the Applicant (Word format)