



REQUEST FOR CONCEPT PAPERS (RfCP) # CEP-YESG-03

Youth Engagement Support (YES) Grants

Issued on November 3, 2017

I. SUMMARY

The USAID Civic Engagement Project (CEP) in Macedonia invites youth civil society organizations (CSO) in Macedonia and non-registered youth groups to submit Concept Papers for Youth Engagement Support (YES) grants.

CEP is a five year USAID-funded program that contributes to achieve two objectives: (1) strengthened influence of CSOs on policies and programs related to priority issues of citizen concern; and (2) increased and sustained youth engagement in public life in Macedonia. CEP is implemented by East West Management Institute (EWMI), in partnership with four local CSOs: the Foundation for Internet and Society “Metamorphosis” (Metamorphosis), the Association for Democratic Initiatives (ADI), the Foundation for Open Society in Macedonia (FOSM), and the National Youth Council of Macedonia (NYCM). YES grants will be managed by ADI.

CEP, through YES grants, supports initiatives by youth CSOs and non-registered youth groups that focus on the following priority areas:

- (i) educating young men and women about their rights;
- (ii) supporting young men and women to engage meaningfully and effectively in existing mechanisms for youth participation in public life and government decision-making (including, but not limited to youth CSOs and groups, Youth and CSO Support Centers, municipal Youth Councils, municipal Youth Policies, etc.);
- (iii) building the capacity and skills of young men and women to become informed, active, and engaged citizens that actively participate in public life;
- (iv) devising creative solutions that enable young men and women to constructively engage with public institutions at the central and local government level regarding issues of priority concern for youth or the community at large; and
- (v) providing opportunities for youth to give back to communities and society, and focus on priority socio-economic, educational, cultural and/or environmental issues that might impact their lives.

CEP will give priority to applications by CSOs and youth groups that:

- a) have a proven track record of engaging in effective and successful interventions related to the above-listed priority issues **at least for one year**;
- b) propose **innovative solutions** to address the identified problems and to engage youth;
- c) demonstrate clear potential for **positive and concrete impact** in the lives of youth and/or their communities;
- d) include activities that increase **commitment and ownership by youth and other citizens**, such as volunteering;
- e) ensure substantial engagement of **women, girls, youth, ethnic or religious minorities, the LGBT community**, or other **vulnerable/marginalized groups** in the proposed activities;
- f) support **multi-culturalism and inter-ethnic cooperation** and take progressive stances vis-à-vis **gender equality and social inclusion**; and
- g) demonstrate understanding and commitment to cooperate with a wide range of stakeholders, including **the media, private sector, think tanks and academia, and public institutions**.

CEP **will not accept or review** Concept Papers that include the following activities:

- Support for or lobbying on behalf of a particular political party;
- Religious activities;
- Humanitarian/charitable activities;
- Theoretical research;
- Capital expenditures, including construction activities;
- Training on organizational development or fundraising activities.

II. GRANT AWARDS

CEP will use a three-step application process.

- (i) Applicants will submit Concept Papers in response to this RfCP.
- (ii) CEP will select the best Concept Papers and will invite the respective applicants to present them at an Idea Competition Event. CEP's Grant Review Committee will assess the presentations and will provide feedback to the applicants.
- (iii) CEP will invite the applicants that were selected by the Grant Review Committee to submit full applications based on the respective Concept Paper.

CEP plans to award up to **8 (eight) grants** resulting from this RfCP. The maximum grant award for each proposal is **15,000 USD** for projects that may last up to 12 (twelve) months and minimum 9 (nine) months. Grant funds may be used only for activities directly related to the implementation of the project. CEP reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

III. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Youth CSOs legally registered in Macedonia and non-registered youth groups are eligible to submit Concept Papers for the YES grants.

Applicant youth CSOs and non-registered youth groups which will be invited to submit a full application should meet the following criteria:

- 1) Be a **Macedonian CSO**, meaning that it is managed by a governing body the majority of who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of Macedonia;
- 2) Have at least **one year of operational experience**. As a rule, CEP will not provide “start-up” funding, although CEP may make a rare exception if sufficient evidence is presented to show that the CSO’s leadership has adequate prior experience and the CSO is capable of filling a niche that has been underserved in the past;
- 3) Have a **transparent system of bookkeeping** that complies with the Macedonian legislation and International Accounting Standards (IAS). If such a system is not in place, the grantee must work closely with CEP office to ensure that accurate financial management and transparent bookkeeping systems are developed.

Note: CEP will award YES grants to non-registered youth groups as In-Kind Grants. That means that CEP will pay directly for project-related expenses;

- 4) **Must not be a debtor** of the Government of Macedonia and must have cancelled any debt to the state or arranged for debt collection by the state prior to receiving the first disbursement of grant funds by the Project;
- 5) Must operate as an **independent non-politically affiliated organization**;
- 6) Must not be debarred, suspended, excluded or otherwise ineligible to receive US Federal funding.

Civil servants, political appointees, members of the current parliament, staff of public broadcasting companies, and/or leaders of political parties cannot participate in a grant project as a director or as grant-remunerated participant.

IV. APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

CEP will accept Concept Papers in English. Applicants must submit the following documents using the forms provided by CEP for (i), (ii), and (iii) (please refer to the Checklist attachment):

- (i) **Three printed copies** of the Concept Paper Application. At least one of the copies must contain the original stamp and signature;
- (ii) **Three printed copies** of the Concept Paper Budget;
- (iii) **Budget notes** added to the Concept Paper Budget;
- (iv) **Three printed copies** of the organization’s most recent registration document issued by the Central Registry of the Republic of Macedonia (for registered CSOs);
Non-registered youth groups must fill out section **II. Background Information, subsection b)** in the application form regarding any similar previous activities they have implemented in the past year.
- (v) **One printed copy** of the Checklist.

Incomplete submissions will not be reviewed.

Submitted Concept Papers must be the original and sole work of the applicant organization. Plagiarism will result in disqualification from the grant competition. CEP will retain all materials and documents submitted by applicants. It will not use this information for purposes other than proposal review and will not share it with other persons or institutions, except when required by Macedonian law or requested by USAID.

Please note that in line with our donor coordination efforts, we may share the names of the applicants and a short description of their respective Concept Papers with other Macedonian and international programs that support CSOs in Macedonia.

V. EVALUATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

The selection process will be administered by a Grants Review Committee (GRC) established by CEP for the purpose of this RfCP.

CEP will assess Concept Papers based on the following criteria:

a. Collaborative Posture – 20%

- The extent to which the CSO or non-registered youth group plans to foster cooperation among CSOs, government, media, and citizens to better achieve the project goal;
- A demonstration of the level of collaboration with other CSOs in sharing expertise and resources to implement innovative advocacy, civic engagement, and technology approaches in fulfilling project goals.

b. Problem Statement and Implementation Plan – 20%

A clear and concise statement of the problem(s) to be addressed. The problem statement must address details such as:

- the conceptualization of the problem and the solution;
- strategic visioning in how to implement the proposed solution;
- outline of the detailed plan for implementation that shows how the strategic vision will be achieved;
- plans for monitoring and evaluation of the proposed implementation plan;
- plans for public outreach/interaction with the media; and
- plans for periodic reporting on the implementation plan.

c. Beneficiaries – 20%

- The level and nature of proposed actions to ensure large-scale engagement of youth and other citizens: generate awareness, support for advocacy, and/or other activities involving youth and other citizens;
- The level and nature of proposed actions to encourage volunteerism, as well as youth engagement;
- The level and nature of proposed actions to include girls, women, ethnic and religious minorities, people with disabilities, the LGBT community, and other marginalized groups in the proposed activities.

d. Impact – 20%

- A description of how the proposed solution will be objectively measured as it pertains to the success or extent of success in addressing the issue/problem;
- The effectiveness of the proposed method(s) to reach out and to engage the targeted beneficiaries in project activities;
- The extent to which the project highlights, contributes to, and influences important policy issues, which may be addressed by local, regional, and national policy makers.

e. **Sustainability – 20%**

- Description of how the proposed solution(s) will be sustained once the grant funding expires.

VI. TIMELINE

RfCP launch date	November 3, 2017
Deadline for submitting clarification requests to CEP	November 10, 2017
Date when CEP will issue clarifications or/and organize Information Sessions for interested applicants	November 6 - 17, 2017
DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING CONCEPT PAPERS	November 24, 2017
Evaluation of Concept Papers	November 29, 2017
Idea Competition notification to successful applicants	December 4, 2017
Idea Competition Event	December 12, 2017
Invitation to successful applicants to submit full applications	December 14, 2017
Deadline for submitting clarification requests to CEP	December 18, 2017
Date when CEP will issue clarifications	December 20, 2017
DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING FULL APPLICATIONS	December 25, 2017
Evaluation of full applications	December 28, 2017
Grant award notification to successful applicants	January 4, 2018
Grant agreement signing	March 1, 2018
<i>Please note that evaluation, idea competition event, and award dates are subject to change</i>	
<i>Please note that the earliest Project starting date should be March 1, 2018</i>	

VII. CONTACT INFORMATION

Application Form: To download the Concept Paper application form, please see the RfCP announcement at www.adimacedonia.org. Alternatively, please contact ADI Grants Manager, Mr. Nino Sotirovski, at nino@adi.org.mk for a Concept Paper Application Form.

Clarifications: Applicants should submit clarification requests by the deadline listed above via email to ADI Grants Manager, Mr. Nino Sotirovski, at nino@adi.org.mk. CEP will issue clarifications to all interested organizations via e-mail and on www.adimacedonia.org.

Proposals: Applicants have two options to submit their Concept Paper Applications:

- a. Via e-mail to ADI Grants Manager, Mr. Nino Sotirovski, at nino@adi.org.mk. E-mails must have "RfCP # CEP-YESG - 03: Youth Engagement Support Grants" in the subject line. E-mails should be received by **13:00, November 24, 2017**.
- b. In a sealed envelope to: **ADI, Bul. B. Ginoski 61/3, 1230 Gostivar**, attn: Mr. Nino Sotirovski. Should you choose to mail the hard copy of the proposal, please note that the time when the sealed envelope is delivered to ADI will be taken into consideration and not the time the when the envelope is mailed. The mail should be delivered to ADI's office by **13:00, November 24, 2017**.

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