



PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS 2018/2019

Strengthening members and solidarity within the Forum

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

1. Background information

Partnership Projects (PP, former Open Call Mechanism) is a call for proposals for bilateral projects by the EU-Russia Civil Society (CSF or Forum) members, which goal is to strengthen the capacity of Forum's members to contribute to the CSF mission and strategy and to maximise outreach to target audiences. At least¹ 5 projects designed by CSF members will be supported in this cycle (2018/2019). Projects will be supported by a maximum of 30.000€, and should last between 6 and 12 months. All members are encouraged to apply.

Thematically, this implies that funding is available for co-operation in all the major topics of the CSF existing and emerging working and expert groups: human rights, environment, social issues, development of democratic structures, civic education, historical memory and education, fighting transborder corruption, migration.

Project proposals must address topics of general interest to the civil societies and the EU-Russia relations and be consistent with CSF mission.

Each project shall fit several criteria

- (a) Clearly formulated expected practical outcomes;
- (b) Bi-lateral participation - participation of both the EU and Russian members' as well as activities taking place in the EU country or/and in Russia;
- (c) High-quality content and integrity of the project;
- (d) Activities reaching out to local or international communities and presenting the work implemented on behalf of the CSF (e.g. public events).

¹ Supporting more than 5 projects is subject to funds availability. A budget of 150,000€ has been earmarked for the initiative for one cycle. There will be two cycles.

2. Objectives and Eligibility for the Projects

Partnership Projects is an essential part of the action “*EU-Russia Civil Society Forum 2018-2020: Agenda 2020*”². This action seeks to support such target groups as civil society initiatives in the EU and Russia and – both through them and directly – be of direct benefit to various societal groups in the EU and Russia, interested in people-to-people contacts, including the youth.

Objectives

- (a) Foster regular dialogue, cooperation and solidarity action between independent civil society actors in Russia and the EU;
- (b) Increase visibility of civil society in Russia and the EU member states;
- (c) Broaden networking and on-going cooperation among CSF members, to enhance internationalisation, promote activities and projects of the CSF members.

Eligibility

Project proposals must address topics of general interest to the EU-Russia relations and civil societies. The PP shall support thematically diverse projects within CSF working and expert groups³ and shall indicate the objectives set out in this call. Please, note that no projects aiming to support political parties or religious activities can be a part of this competition.

Project proposals required to:

- (a) Be led by a registered CSF member NGO either in the EU or Russia as a main applicant;
- (b) Involve at least one CSF Member from the EU and one from Russia;
- (c) Include at least one face-to-face working meeting of involved participants;
- (d) Include at least one public event, thematically linked to the project;
- (e) Ensure both the EU and Russian partners' contribution.

Applications can be initiated by any **NGO member of CSF**, in partnership with one or more members (at least one should be registered in either Russia or the EU, and a registered NGO is formally indicated as a main applicant).

Project proposals may also involve non-member NGOs, external institutions and experts on the topic addressed by the project. In such cases applicants should explain how the project and the CSF benefit from non-member participation.

² Grant Contract 2017/388-611 signed in December 2017 between the EU Delegation Representation in Russia and the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum e.V.

³ This includes all the major topics of the CSF existing and emerging working and expert groups: human rights, environment, social issues, development of democratic structures, civic education, historical memory and education, fighting transborder corruption, migration.

All project partners should submit a written confirmation on their participation in the project, signed by the director of the organisation. The applying organisation shall provide an official registration of their organisation in the original language and certified by the signature of the organisation's head. No translation or notary's certification is required.

Activities

The following types of activities can be supported:

- Organisation of events, thematic conferences, workshops, seminars;
- Research and studies including publication, printing and translation;
- Technical and legal assistance;
- People-to-people exchanges (students/ volunteers exchange, etc.);
- Creative formats (exhibitions, theatre, visual products, etc.).

The following types of activities can NOT be supported

- Study tours of CSF working/expert groups;
- Staff traineeships;
- Projects in support of political parties or religious activities;
- Public protests.

3. How to fill in application form and budget

Please do not modify the templates, particularly the budget. If you have difficulties fitting the structure of your project in, kindly contact the CSF Secretariat.

Budget

Please only use our template for the Budget (in EUR). Bear in mind that, if your project is selected for funding, all significant amendments to the budget already approved by the jury shall be also justified and approved by the Secretariat to ensure full compliance with the Action.

Costs

The following types of costs can be supported within the PP:

- Salaries (employer's gross) of the project staff. The salaries funded from the PP budget have to correspond to the historical salaries of the participating organisations, thus cannot be artificially inflated;
- Per diems for travel, provided they do not exceed those normally received by the applicant, according to its national or the EU regulations (depending on which practice the applicant is applying);
- International travel (within Russia and the EU). This includes economy class flights and second-class train tickets;
- Local travel (within locations indicated for activities of the project);
- Russian and Schengen visa costs (including insurance);
- Local office rental (share, proportional to the relevance of the project in the context of all the projects, run by the applicant at the time of project implementation), maintenance costs like water, electricity;
- Stationary and office supplies (only project relevant);
- Bank fees/ services such as fees for bank transfer;
- Communication expenses (internet, telecommunication, postage costs etc.);
- Publications (layout, translating, editing, printing);
- Events organisation (rental costs for the venues, catering, support staff, accommodation of participants, interpreting services, rent of equipment but no purchasing of equipment, etc.);
- Experts' fees. The honorarium cannot be artificially inflated but be corresponding to expert fees according to qualification in the home country or as guest expert abroad;
- Website development and maintenance when needed for project implementation.

Please be aware that the following costs are **not eligible**:

- Losses of currency exchange;
- International travel to destinations outside the EU and the Russian Federation;
- Renting of vehicles;
- Purchasing equipment.

Budget is expected to be balanced, i.e. no budget heading should exceed 40% of the total budget.

The budget should be a realistic plan for the future expressed in quantitative terms. It should be based on the objectives and activities set out in the project contract. The budget should be based on a combination of financial, quantitative and qualitative information.

Please also bear in mind that:

- The budget is a planning tool. An organisation with objectives and activities in the form of a budget will be able to plan and make better justified decisions.
- The budget is a control tool. A budget helps an organisation to control expenditure by setting cost guidelines, benchmarks, estimates and criteria. The budget must reflect all expenditure in line with the planned activities.
- The budget is a tool for financial compliance. The contractually agreed budget categories and lines are overall spending limits.
- The budget mirrors the financial report. Actual expenditure incurred will be presented in the financial report and be compared with budgeted expenditure.

Application form – narrative part

Applications should be written using clear language and in a logical manner. Overall objectives, outputs and outcomes of the project should be kept clear and concise. It is also useful to standardise the way in which the project objectives are described.

A useful convention to follow in this regard is:

- Explain activities in the present tense starting with an active verb, such as ‘Prepare, design, construct, research...’
- For the Overall Objective - explain this as ‘To contribute to...’;
- For the Specific Objectives / Outcome – explain these in terms of benefits to the target group as ‘Increased/improved/ etc...’;
- Describe Results in terms of a tangible outputs / measurable indicators - as ‘Delivered/ produced/ conducted etc.’.

Present measureable indicators, which are quantifiable or qualitative variables or factors that can be observed, in order to provide reliable information to assess / measure performance and change, or progress towards the achievement of outputs, outcomes and impact over time. Be as concrete as possible in explaining how exactly would the target group be reached by and benefit from your project, how can this beneficial effect can be sustained after the project ends, how will the local community or broader public can get involved.

Specific objectives/ outcome

This is a medium-term result that your project is expected to achieve in the civic/legal, social, economic or environmental area (of the Action) and/or on direct addressees of the project (participants/ target groups). In order for an outcome to materialise, a change in behaviour/perception/engagement is necessary. Outcomes are expected to materialise within the

lifetime of the Action and are under its direct influence. However, other external factors and players also influence the outcome and participants / target groups.

Expected results / outputs

Provide direct products generated by activities under your project, produced or accomplished with the resources allocated to the project. For instance, these can be persons trained; working papers produced, etc.

Timeline

When filling in your project's schedule, indicate activities in complete months. Please fill in only the names of the activities according to the application form and the start and end date for each activity.

4. Assistance to applicants

Please do not hesitate to address all the questions you might have about the PP to Kristina Smolijaninovaitė, deputy director, by opencall@eu-russia-csf.org (in Russian or English, use "Partnership Projects" in the subject line for enquiries). For phone calls use: + 49 (0)30 46 06 45 40.

For detailed explanations on how to fill the application form and for any other advice related to the application, you are invited to attend a Q&A session at the General Assembly (Sofia, Bulgaria) on **16 May 2018**.

In July 2018, at the outset of all the projects, beneficiaries will participate in a workshop in Berlin organised by the Secretariat to discuss project management and reporting requirements.

5. Submission of application

The templates for application forms and complementary documentation, including these guidelines, are available at: www.eu-russia-csf.org.

Applicants will submit a filled application form following the [LINK](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/6940410fd2604dd1a5bb2d78dec86bf5) (<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/6940410fd2604dd1a5bb2d78dec86bf5>).

Applications can be submitted in either Russian or English before the deadline: **3 June 2018, 5pm CET/ 6pm Moscow Time**.

When filling in the application, please make sure that:

- (1) Your application and budget are filled in line with these guidelines and complementary documentation.
- (2) Documents confirming the official registration of the applicant organisation are in place. A scanned copy in the original language certified by the signature of the organisation's head is required, but no translation or notary's certification.
- (3) Confirmations from all partner member NGOs are there, each signed by the respective organisation's head.

No paper applications will be accepted. Please do not send separate files of your application larger than 1MB, use respective resolution than scanning or copying the documents for sending.

6. Selection process and awarding stage

The CSF Secretariat will confirm the receipt of your application by e-mail and check applications' formal admissibility. Applicants can be contacted back to clarify specific minor issues regarding their applications.

The winners will be selected by 5 impartial jury members. All jury members will be approved by the CSF Board and sign a declaration of impartiality.

The jury shall disregard incomplete applications. All admissible applications will be passed to the jury for assessment on the following criteria:

- (1) Relevance to the overall Partnership Projects objectives;
- (2) Bi-lateral EU-Russia members' participation and the activity taking place in the EU country or/and in Russia;
- (3) Capacity to reach out to local or international communities and presenting the work implemented on behalf of the CSF;
- (4) Feasibility of expected outcomes;
- (5) Feasibility of expected outputs;
- (6) Sustainability;
- (7) Cost efficiency;
- (8) Project content and integrity.

The evaluation of proposals will be a two-step process. First, each jury member will rate each project by each criterion on a scale from 1 (minimum) to 10 (maximum). Second, the jury will gather for online deliberations organised by the Secretariat.

The jury may request additional documents and information / explanations from the applicants, to be responded within a short period of time. The response should address specific issues pointed out by the jury. A new application will not be requested. If an applicant fails to provide the requested clarifications/ information before the deadline indicated by the jury, their applications are likely to be dismissed.

CSF Secretariat will receive the final decision of the jury, inform the awarded CSF members by e-mail and phone, will publish the information on its website and newsletter. Non-awarded members will receive notifications/ explanatory notes.

7. Project administration process

After the final selection of projects, the Secretariat will support the grant winners and monitor the implementation of the projects. This includes receiving, processing, approving reports by the CSF members, supporting visibility of the projects, and communicating with project managers. The Secretariat shall also participate in the events organised by CSF members and their partners in the framework of the PP. In conflict situations, the Board gets engaged.

All members participating in the PP call should follow these Guidelines' requirements and other relevant guidance at any given stage of the project.

In July 2018 and at the outset of all the projects, beneficiaries will participate in a workshop in Berlin organised by the Secretariat to discuss project management and reporting requirements.

8. Indicative timetable

19 April 2018	Partnership Projects call is published at www.eu-russia-csf.org .
15-18 May 2018	CSF General Assembly in Sofia, Bulgaria. Members are encouraged to discuss proposals face-to-face with their potential project partners.
16 May 2018	Q&A session at CSF General Assembly in Sofia, Bulgaria.
3 June 2018, 5pm CET / 6pm Moscow Time	Deadline for applications.
June 2018	Secretariat checks admissibility of applications and passes these to the Jury

20 June 2018	The jury selects awarded projects
1 July 2018	Start of the Partnership Projects.
July	Secretariat will organise a workshop for the managers of the winning projects

9. Conditions for the awarded projects

Funding will be transferred according to the schedule indicated in the contract with a respective NGO. The instalment is processed within 14 days after both parties have signed the agreement. Depending on a project's scope of work and timeframe, a scheme of two or three instalments shall be applied. Note that in all cases a final instalment of 10% of funds will be transferred only after the final report has been submitted and approved, thus, the whole granted amount has to be reported before the last instalment can be paid. As a general rule, those projects running for more than 6 months should deliver interim report(s) and will be funded in two or three instalments.

In July 2018 the Secretariat will organise a workshop for the managers of the winning projects on project management and reporting, attendance is compulsory.

The Secretariat will monitor projects' implementation. Monitoring activities shall include exchange of information by e-mail, telephone, online talk, and visiting of events. The Secretariat may request specific materials/ documents, including those produced along the project for the website, newsletter, and other publications as well as for reporting to the European Union.

10. Logos, visibility

All printed material or products shall use CSF logo and other logos necessary according to funding rules for CSF.

Unless agreed or requested otherwise, all necessary steps shall be taken to publicise the fact that the European Union has financed or co-financed the projects. The EU visibility will be ensured in several ways.

- Indication of the EU support for all online materials and web pages related to the project;
- Placement of the EU logo and information about the EU funding in all external documents;
- Placement of the logo on all publications;
- Press releases will contain information about the EU support for this project.

In some cases, applicants may request to lower visibility requirement. The project managers of awarded projects shall inform the Secretariat about such cases in advance.

Good luck with your applications!

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Completed applications in Russian or English shall arrive before 3 June 2018, 5pm CET / 6pm Moscow Time following the [LINK](#)

(<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/6940410fd2604dd1a5bb2d78dec86bf5>).

For more information contact:

opencall@eu-russia-csf.org (Kristina Smolijaninovaitė, deputy director).