

Programme

Active Citizens Fund – Slovakia

**Open Call for Proposals for the Project promoter
of the pre-defined project**

Development and use of life competences of young people

Outcome 1

Increased Citizen Participation in Civic Activities

Call code: 01 – PDP2

Announcement of the call: 19 September 2019
Deadline for submission of project applications: 29 November 2019, 23:59 CET

1. Introduction - Active Citizens Fund Slovakia

This call for proposals for the Project promoter of the pre-defined project (PDP) Development and use of life competences of young people is a part of the implementation of the programme Active Citizens Fund – Slovakia (further as ACF – Slovakia or programme).

One project promoter of the pre-defined project shall be selected as a result of this call.

The ACF – Slovakia in general supports Slovak civic organizations in engaging citizens in decision-making and public policy making, in efforts to create better conditions for good governance, protect human rights and provide civic education and to improve the position of vulnerable groups in society. Particular attention is paid to young people and their participation in public affairs.

The horizontal priorities of the programme are to support bilateral co-operation between Slovak organizations and partners from the donor countries and to develop capacities as well as to improve the position of civic organizations in society.

ACF – Slovakia supports projects of civic organisations through open calls in the following outcomes:

1. Increased citizen participation in civic activities;
2. Strengthened civil society advocacy and watchdog role;
3. Increased support for human rights and civic education;
4. Vulnerable groups empowered;
5. Enhanced capacity and sustainability of civil society.

The programme also addresses the two country-specific concerns:

- Improving outreach to under-served geographic areas and target groups;
- Empowerment and inclusion of minorities including Roma.

In the period 2018 – 2023, the ACF – Slovakia will allocate 7.7 million¹ EUR in 17 open grant calls for projects of civic society organizations (CSO) and will provide other support activities, training in project management, organizational development and self-financing.

The general, non-exhaustive list of the types of activities eligible under the grants:

- Advocacy, awareness-raising and outreach to citizens;
- Watchdog and monitoring, including following up on recommendations of international monitoring bodies;
- Citizen activism, volunteering and civic participation;
- Participation in policy and decision-making processes, including promoting an enabling environment for civil society;
- Support for freedom of expression, investigative journalism and media;
- Countering hate speech, including support to networks working with hate crime victims;
- Promoting LGBTI rights and anti-discrimination activities;
- Capacity building of the civil society sector, including sustainability, networking and accountability of NGOs;
- Partnerships between NGOs, public and private sector entities;

¹ The amount includes allocation for the Bilateral Fund and allocation for the Pre-defined project Development and use of life competences of young people

- Civic education and training;
- Research and analysis to inform policy-making;
- Social innovation and social enterprise development;
- Intercultural dialogue, including platforms for minority/majority interactions;
- Inter-generational cooperation;
- Awareness-raising and capacity building on environmental issues including climate change and adaptation;
- Access to information, participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters in accordance with the Aarhus Convention.

The ACF – Slovakia is part of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway's financial assistance to 15 Member States of the European Union. The programme is managed by the Ekopolis Foundation in partnership with the Open Society Foundation and the Carpathian Foundation.

The information on the ACF – Slovakia is available at www.acfslovakia.sk.

The information on the EEA and Norway Grants is available at www.eeagrants.org.

2. Objective, focus, suggested measures and expected deliverables of the Pre-defined Project

Pre-defined project Development and use of life competences of young people shall respond to the situation in Slovakia where young people experience an increasing drawback of opportunities to contribute to social and community life. Young people often lack access to the tools needed to participate in public life, be useful to their communities and learn the practical skills applicable in both publicly beneficial activities and in their future careers.

The PDP project has an objective to increase civic participation and social inclusion of youth by building their project management and leadership competences and enabling them to apply the acquired skills through implementation of projects in their communities. The Project should be implemented at national level, while paying a specific attention on young people from underprivileged regions.

The project should integrate the training with opportunities to implement the learnt skills in practice.

The main target audiences of the PDP are:

- Young people in general: learning project management, team work, public participation, and social entrepreneurship skills
- Young people at risk (including Roma and other young people coming from disadvantaged environments): increasing social inclusion, learning new skills, increasing self-confidence

The PDP should provide the targeted young people with training, support and resources to enable them to implement projects that address needs in their communities. Training and workshops should be held as residential courses in format of non-formal education.

The content training may include, but is not limited to:

- Project design & management skills (Action planning, Partnership building, Fundraising, Social campaigning)
- Social & interpersonal skills (Communication, Leadership, Team work, Mental wellbeing, Empathy)

Financial resources to support the practical activities implemented by the groups of young people should be allocated as part of the proposed project budget. During implementation, these expenses should be directly incurred by the project promoter.

The selected project promoter of the PDP is expected to provide an ongoing support to young people involved in the PDP, e.g. in following forms:

- Access to advice on an ongoing basis
- Mentoring by the PDP promoter and external experts
- Peer-to-peer learning through connecting the young people with peers and partner organisations

It is anticipated that this project should be linked with other progressive youth-focused initiatives. The pre-defined project promoter may invite external experts to share their experience in training and mentoring – e.g. young peers with relevant experience.

As a minimum, the pre-defined project should deliver the following:

- 6 residential training or workshops
- 60 young people trained,
- 60 small actions implemented by young people on the local level. Applicant is encouraged to define a financial allocation for these actions in total amount of at least 30 000 EUR for the activities on the local level as part of the project budget. Expenses for these activities may not be provided in a form of grants the third parties and must be administered as the direct expenses of the pre-defined project’s promoter.
- 2 joint networking seminars for all project participants
- Public awareness raising campaign bringing attention to the needs of young people. The overall objective of the public awareness raising campaign is to inform and educate public about problems that young people in Slovakia are facing and possible solutions of these problems. The applicant is encouraged to specify the campaign objective, strategy and the target groups.

Administratively, this call within the ACF – Slovakia is part of the Outcome 1: Increased Citizen Participation in Civic Activities. The following expected results and their indicators are defined for this Outcome:

Expected programme results	Indicator	Guidance for applicants
Programme Objective – Civil society and active citizenship strengthened and vulnerable groups empowered	Programme-level Indicator Number of people engaged in civil society organisation activities	
Outcome 1 Increased citizen participation in civic activities	Outcome 1 Indicator [a] Number of people participating in consultations with a public decision-making body	
	Outcome 1 Indicator [b] Number of initiatives implemented through environment/climate change partnerships between CSOs and public/private institutions	

<i>Output 1.1</i> Citizens involved in public policy decision-making at national and local levels	<i>Output 1.1 Indicator</i> Number of CSO initiatives consulting citizens on public policy decisions	All projects contributing to this output indicator will also report against the Outcome 1 (Increased citizen participation in civic activities) Indicators [a] and [b]
<i>Output 1.2</i> Physical and virtual spaces for public civic participation created or upgraded	<i>Output 1.2 Indicator 1</i> Number of created or upgraded physical spaces for civic participation	All projects contributing to this output indicator will also report against the Outcome 1 (Increased citizen participation in civic activities) Indicators [a] and [b]
	<i>Output 1.2 Indicator 2</i> Number of virtual platforms created or supported for civic participation	All projects contributing to this output indicator will also report against the Outcome 1 (Increased citizen participation in civic activities) Indicators [a] and [b]
<i>Output 1.3</i> Partnerships on environment/climate change between CSOs and public/private entities established or sustained	<i>Output 1.3 Indicator</i> Number of public institutions and/or businesses involved in environment/climate change-related partnerships	All projects contributing to this output indicator will also report against the Outcome 1 (Increased citizen participation in civic activities) Indicators [a] and [b]
<i>Output 1.4</i> Citizens educated (by CSOs) in environmental protection and climate change	<i>Output 1.4 Indicator</i> Number of citizens educated in environment/climate change	All projects contributing to this output indicator will also report against the Outcome 1 (Increased citizen participation in civic activities) Indicators [a] and [b]
<i>Output 1.5</i> Youth engagement in civic activities supported	<i>Output 1.5 Indicator</i> Number of initiatives successfully engaging young people in civic activities	All projects contributing to this output indicator will also report against the Outcome 1 (Increased citizen participation in civic activities) Indicators [a] and [b]
Outcome 2 Strengthened civil society advocacy and watchdog role	<i>Outcome 2 Indicator [b]</i> Number of initiatives successful in obtaining information on public/private decision making	
	<i>Outcome Indicator [d]</i> Number of national policies and laws influenced by CSO input	
<i>Output 2.1</i> Policy input submitted by CSOs	<i>Output 2.1 Indicator</i>	All projects contributing to this output indicator will also report against the Outcome 2 (Strengthened civil society

	Number of CSO policy submissions aimed at influencing policies, legal regulations and public decisions	advocacy and watchdog role) Indicators [b] and [d]
<i>Output 2.2</i> Good governance and transparency fostered	<i>Output 2.2 Indicator 1</i> Number of CSO campaigns focused on good governance and transparency carried out	All projects contributing to this output indicator will also report against the Outcome 2 (Strengthened civil society advocacy and watchdog role) Indicators [b] and [d]
	<i>Output 2.2 Indicator 2</i> Number of CSOs engaged in monitoring the application of provisions on access to information	All projects contributing to this output indicator will also report against the Outcome 2 (Strengthened civil society advocacy and watchdog role) Indicators [b] and [d]
	<i>Output 2.2 Indicator 3</i> Number of legal actions on good governance and transparency filed by CSOs	All projects contributing to this output indicator will also report against the Outcome 2 (Strengthened civil society advocacy and watchdog role) Indicators [b] and [d]

The applicant may choose to select the relevant Outcomes and Outputs indicators as appropriate in the application form in the online grant system.

For guidance on the outcomes, outputs and indicators applicable for ACF Slovakia, please refer to the *ACF – Slovakia Guidelines for Applicants and Project Promoters*.

In addition to the indicators set out in the programme, applicants may add additional relevant indicators at their own discretion.

3. Administrative and eligibility criteria

3.1. Project application administrative criteria

A project application must meet the following administrative criteria:

- the project application was submitted in electronic format in the online grant system
- the project application was submitted within the deadline of this call;
- the project application is the first project application registered on the basis of submission date and hour and submitted by the same applicant within this call;
- the project application includes all annexes requested in the call.

3.2. Eligible project application

An eligible project application must meet the following criteria:

- requested sum corresponds with the terms set in the section 3.6 of this call for proposals;
- project implementation duration corresponds with the terms stated in the section 3.7 of this call for proposals.

3.3. The number of project applications and grants per the applicant / project partner

- The applicant **may not submit more than one project application** in this call for proposals
- The applicant **may not be in a role of a project partner** in other project applications submitted within this call.

Should an applicant submit more than 1 project application, the FO will register as eligible only the first project application arrived on the basis of submission date and hour. Any other project application submitted by the same applicant will be rejected.

3.4. Eligible applicants

Applicants eligible to carry out and implement the project are non-governmental organisations (NGOs). An NGO is a legal entity in the Slovak Republic, having a non-commercial purpose, independent of local, regional and central government, public entities, political parties and commercial organisations. NGOs are voluntary in nature, formed voluntarily by groups or individuals and usually involving an element of voluntary participation in the organisation.

An eligible applicant is registered in the Slovak Republic in one of the following categories:

- a) Civic Association according the Act No. 83/1990 Coll. on the Association of Citizens;
- b) Foundation according the Act No. 34/2002 Coll. on Foundations;
- c) Non-profit Organisation Providing Public Beneficial Services according the Act No. 83/1990 Coll.
- d) Non-investment Fund according the Act No. 34/2002 Coll. on Non-investment Funds;
- e) Non-profit Organisation according the Act No. 116/85 Coll. on terms for activities of organisations with international aspect;
- f) Association of Legal Entities under the Act No. 40/1964 Coll. on Civil Code;
- g) Slovak Red Cross under the Act No. 460/2007 Coll. on the Slovak Red Cross.

Political parties, religious organisations, social partners, profit distributing cooperatives, informal and ad-hoc groups and individuals are not eligible applicants.

Organizations that have not recovered amounts due, following a final court decision in connection with the NGO Programmes 2009 – 2014 in Slovakia, shall not be considered eligible applicants and/or project partners.

3.5. Eligible project partners

The project may be implemented in partnership with project partners. Project partners share a common economic or social goal with the project promoter, which is to be realised through the implementation of the project. The purpose of creating a partnership is to ensure close co-operation between different types of organizations with different experience in solving the issues in the field. Project partners shall be actively involved in and effectively contributing to the implementation of the project.

The following entities are eligible to be project partners:

- a) Any public or private entity, commercial or non-commercial, as well as non-governmental organisations established as a legal person either in the donor states (donor project partnership), beneficiary states or a country outside the European Economic Area that has a common border with Slovakia;
- b) Any international organisation or body or agency thereof;
- c) Informal, ad hoc and self-help organisations (including grassroots organisations) that are not registered legal entities in the beneficiary state (informal groups). Such organisations must however meet the requirements that they are not for personal profit, act for public good, are

voluntary and non-discriminatory in nature, independent of local, regional and national government and other public authorities, and are independent of political parties, religious institutions and commercial organisations. These informal groups shall be represented by one single person, who signs the project partnership agreement on behalf of the group. An informal group cannot not be a direct recipient of the project grant.

Legal entities **based according to the Commercial Code** are eligible project partners, but they **cannot receive financial contribution** from the Programme.

Applicants may participate in the partnership with **up to two other partners**.

Further requirements for partners' participation in the project:

- participation of project partners is irreplaceable, without partnership it would not be possible to implement the project properly and meet its goals;
- partnership normally involves financial transactions, where the partner is awarded a financial compensation for realisation of activities in the project;
- cooperation is not be that of supplier – customer relationship.

In case of a project planned in partnership, the Partnership Declaration (Annex No. 3a, respectively 3b) is a mandatory attachment to the project application.

3.6. Project funding

A grant for project funding consists of:

- a) the contribution from the programme amounting up to 90 % of the total eligible project costs (the grant amount),
- b) the own resources (co-financing) of the project promoter and project partner/s in amount of minimum 10 % of the total eligible project costs. The co-financing shall be provided in the form of cash or in-kind contribution in the form of voluntary work.

The maximum grant amount of the project shall be **300 000 €**. The minimum amount is not set for this call.

The budget of the project shall include the following activities and corresponding allocations:

Activity	Amount	Comment
Project management	45 000 €	Project management including project audit provided by independent auditor appointed by Project Promoter at the end of the project implementation.
Activity 1 Provision of non-formal education	110 000 €	6 residential training or workshops, 2 joint networking seminars. Proposed items: personal costs, travel costs, rental, food and refreshments, stationary.
Activity 2 Direct support to local youth actions	155 000 €	Direct support to 60 local youth actions, consulting, mentoring and connecting 60 young local leaders Proposed items: personal costs, services, travel costs. Small goods, equipments and promotional materials for local activities delivered by young people (min. 30 000 €)
Activity 3 Awareness raising campaign	23 333 €	Awareness raising campaign
Total project costs including co-financing	333 333 €	
Maximum grant amount	300 000 €	90%
Minimum amount of co-financing	33 333 €	10%

The applicant may propose changes between the amounts between activities, while the proposed change may be up to 10 % of the amount of the allocation for that activity, where the change is proposed. Maximum grant amount shall not be exceeded.

Payments of the project grant shall take the form of advance payments, interim payments and a final payment. Interim and final payments to the project shall be based on approved interim and final project reports. The maximum level of the advance payment to project is 20 % from the total budget, of the interim payment 40 % from the total budget and of the final payment 10 % of the total budget.

For more information regarding payments, please refer to the *ACF – Slovakia Guidelines to the eligibility of expenses*.

In-kind contribution is eligible only in the form of voluntary work. Such in-kind contribution may constitute up to 50 % of the co-financing required for the project. The price of voluntary work shall be set in the range of 2.759 € per hour (minimal gross hourly wage in Slovakia) to 5.60 € hour (average gross hourly wage in Slovakia) depending on the character of delivered work.

3.7. Duration of project

The duration of project in this call for proposals must be as follows:

36 – 42 months

3.8. Eligibility of expenses

Costs within project may be eligible from the date on which the grant is awarded or at a later date set in the project contract. The project contract shall set the final date of eligibility of costs which shall be no later than 30 April 2024. Costs incurred after that date are not eligible.

The inclusion of an expenditure item in a project budget approved by the FO cannot be considered as a prerequisite of its eligibility.

Detailed information on eligibility of expenses is stipulated in the document *ACF – Slovakia Guidelines to the eligibility of expenses*.

3.9. Calculation of indirect costs

Indirect costs may not include any eligible direct costs. Indirect costs of the project shall represent a fair apportionment of the overall overheads of the project promoter or the project partner. Applicants (project promoters) and their project partners may apply a flat rate of up to 15 % of direct eligible personnel costs to cover these costs.

4. Evaluation criteria

The evaluation criteria and a scoring chart:

Group of criteria / criterion	Maximum score
1. Relevance, usefulness and added value of the project	45
1.1 Coherence between the project and the Programme results and their indicators	20
1.2 Implementation of the project with a partner from a donor country	10

1.3 Relevance of the project to the needs of direct and indirect target groups and beneficiaries	10
1.4 Sustainability of the project results	5
2. Implementation of the project	22
2.1 Relevance and feasibility of the suggested activities	10
2.2 Collaboration with other organizations and experts, involving the public and professionals	5
2.3 Quality of communication of project results towards the public	7
3. Value for money – the budget and effectiveness of expenses	20
3.1 Reasonable and justifiable budget	12
3.2 Coherence with the proposed activities	8
4. Experience of the applicant (and partner) and capacity to implement the project	13
4.1 Experience of the applicant (and partner) and relevancy of previous activities of the applicant (and partner) in relation to the project	8
4.2 Personnel and technical capacities of the applicant (and partner)	5
Total	100

The average score of 70 points from each of two used independent experts' evaluations must be received as part of the Expert evaluation for the application to be recommendable for funding (see part 7.5.2. of this Open Call for Proposals)

5. Timeframe

Publishing of the call for proposals:	19 September 2019
Deadline for submitting project applications:	29 November 2019, 23:59 (CET)
Publishing of project application evaluation results (indicative):	28 February 2020
Anticipated start of the project implementation:	15 March 2020

6. Financial allocation

The financial allocation in this call for proposals is **€ 300 000**.

No additional funds will be allocated to the call while the call is still running.

7. Preparation, submission, evaluation and approval of project applications

7.1. Preparation of project applications

A project application must be prepared:

- in compliance with the *ACF – Slovakia Guidelines for Applicants and Project Promoters*;
- in compliance the *ACF – Slovakia Guidelines to the Eligibility of Expenses*;
- using the *Project Application Form* and its prescribed annexes forms available in the online grant system.

The documents above are inseparable from this call for proposals and are available at www.acfslovakia.sk.

7.2. Consultations and providing information to applicants

The Fund Operator shall provide information to applicants in written form, by phone, e-mail, in the form of personal consultations till 5 working days before the deadline for project application submission and also at information seminars. The questions collected on information seminars and through personal consultations will be addressed in the document *Questions and answers* at www.acfslovakia.sk.

The contact details for consultations are provided in the section 8 of this call.

7.3. Project application submission

Project application must be submitted online together with the following documents:

- **Project application** (prescribed online form)
- **Mandatory annexes:**
 - Annex No. 1 – Project budget (a prescribed online form)
 - Annex No. 2 – Applicant's legal registration document
 - Annex No. 3 – Annex No. 3a: Partnership Declaration (if the project is implemented in partnership) and Annex No. 3b: Partnership Declaration in English (if the project is implemented in partnership with a foreign institution) (prescribed form)
- **Non-mandatory annexes:**
 - Preliminary approval of a public or expert organisation with realisation of a project activity, if it is necessary for realisation of the activity

The documents must be submitted only through electronic submission in the [ACF Slovakia online grant system](#) in the following way:

- the project application by filling in the project application form;
- the Annexes No. 1 – 3 electronically as attached documents in the xls, pdf, jpg formats.

7.4. Confirmation of project application registration

The applicant shall be informed on registration of the project application automatically by online grant system by sending an e-mail notification. The Fund Operator shall publish a list of registered project

applications at www.acfslovakia.sk no later than 7 days since the deadline for submitting project applications in this call.

7.5. Evaluation of project applications

Project application evaluation process:

7.5.1. Reviewing compliance with the administrative and eligibility criteria

The FO shall review the project application in terms of meeting criteria of administrative and eligibility criteria.

If missing, the applicant will be able to supplement the Annexes No. 2 and No. 3 by e-mail within a period of 5 working days, based on the FO e-mail request sent to the applicant contact e-mail address.

The FO may request also additional information / documents from the applicant to determine the compliance with administrative criteria.

Without compliance with the set administrative criteria, the project application shall not be further assessed.

Applicants whose project applications are rejected at this stage shall be informed by the FO of the reasons for the rejection and given a period of 10 working days to appeal that decision through the complaint form available at www.acfslovakia.sk.

Those project applications, where the appeal has been accepted are included back in the further process of evaluation and it shall be a responsibility of the Complaint Committee and the Selection Committee to review the reasons for rejection.

7.5.2. Expert evaluation

Each project application that meets the administrative and eligibility criteria and also each project application that was excluded by the Fund Operator on the basis of non-compliance with the administrative and eligibility criteria but the applicant has successfully appealed shall be reviewed by two impartial experts appointed by the Fund Operator. At least one expert shall be independent of the Fund Operator. The experts shall separately and independently score the project application according to the selection criteria published with the call for proposals (for the details, please refer to the *ACF – Slovakia Guidelines for Applicants and Project Promoters*). For the purposes of ranking the project, the average of the scores awarded by the experts shall be used. If the difference between the scores given by the two experts is more than 30 % of the higher score, the project application shall be scored by a third expert. This expert shall be commissioned by, and be independent of, the Fund Operator. In such cases the average score of the two closest scores shall be used for the ranking of the project applications.

7.5.3. Recommendations of the Selection Committee on approval / rejection

The Selection Committee evaluates project applications based on expert evaluation and making recommendations to the Board of the Ekopolis Foundation in terms of their approval or rejection.

7.5.4. Final decision of the Board of the Ekopolis Foundation

The Board of the Ekopolis Foundation makes a final decision on which project applications shall be approved.

7.6. Information on the results of project application evaluation

Expected date of informing on approval or rejection of project applications is 28 February 2020.

The list of supported and rejected project applications shall be published at www.acfslovakia.sk.

8. Contact details

Programme web pages: www.acfslovakia.sk

The Ekopolis Foundation staff responsible for implementation of the Programme in the Outcome Increased Citizen Participation in Civic Activities:

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E-mail contact for submitting a complaint to the ACF – Slovakia Complaints Committee:

staznost@acf.sk