



European Center for  
Not-for-Profit Law

**CATALYST OF  
CHANGE**

SUPPORTING A VIBRANT CIVIL SOCIETY IN EUROPE

## **CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

**COALITION BUILDING AND STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT  
FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE &  
ANTICORRUPTION GRASS ROOTS CSO'**

### **Background**

Against the background of concerning shrinking civic space trends in the European Union (EU), this project aims to contribute to creating an enabling environment for civil society in five EU Member States that are in acute need of civil society strengthening: Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia, and Portugal. The project will allow Civil Society Organisations (CSO's) working on women's rights, environmental justice, and anti-corruption to be more effective in the promotion of EU values, be more resilient to threats, and be able to quickly respond to concerning trends affecting space for civil society in their respective countries. This will ultimately lead to better protection, promotion, and acknowledgment of the EU fundamental rights and values in the target countries and, consequently, will contribute to strengthening respect for the EU values at the EU level too. To address these concerning developments, the project will contribute to:

- Enhancing civil society's response to new trends affecting democratic and civic space and civil society;
- Strengthening effectiveness, accountability and sustainability of grassroots CSOs;
- Enhancing visibility and understanding of the work of grassroots CSOs supported by the project.



## Objective of the Call

The NHC aims to provide grants to its partner civil society organisations and grassroots initiatives working in the field of women's rights, environmental justice and anti-corruption, within the five countries of the project: Portugal, Slovenia, Romania, Croatia and Bulgaria.

Coalition building is a key dimension of this project, as this is a proven strategy to build the resilience of CSOs, and offers the possibility to better coordinate actions and exchange information to more effectively operate. These coalition-building activities will take place at local, regional, national and cross country levels, as well as on a EU level, thus bringing together relevant stakeholders from the different target countries to discuss and develop joint strategies to address shrinking civic space and policy recommendations that will be presented to national and EU policy makers. This call will also enable local CSOs to more systematically contribute to national and EU policy consultations, to influence and monitor new policies and to flag concerning trends in relation to civic space and the protection of Union values.

## Expected Results

### Enhanced Coalition Formation:

- Formation of diverse and inclusive coalitions comprising multiple CSOs, community groups, and stakeholders with aligned goals.
- Increased networking and collaboration among CSOs from different sectors, sharing resources, knowledge, and expertise.
- Strengthened relationships between CSOs and relevant government bodies, leading to more effective advocacy and policy engagement.

### Robust Strategy Development:

- Development of well-defined and evidence-based strategies by participating CSOs to address specific challenges in the field of women's rights, environmental justice and anti-corruption.
- Enhanced capacity of CSOs to analyse complex issues, identify root causes, and design comprehensive strategies for sustainable change.
- Creation of adaptable strategies that incorporate stakeholder input, innovative approaches, and measurable objectives.

### Increased Advocacy Impact:

- Successful implementation of advocacy campaigns resulting in policy changes at national or regional levels.



- Amplified voice of CSOs in policy discussions, leading to greater influence over decisions affecting their target issues.
- Improved ability to communicate and advocate for policy changes, using data-driven arguments and compelling narratives.

### Capacity Strengthening and Knowledge Sharing:

- Enhanced skills and capacities of CSO staff and members in areas such as coalition building, strategic planning, advocacy, and communication.
- Regular knowledge exchange sessions and workshops within the coalition, leading to cross-learning and the adoption of best practices.
- Documentation of lessons learned and success stories to share with the broader CSO community and inspire replication.

### Promoting Civic Engagement:

- Increased engagement and participation of community members in CSO-led initiatives, resulting in more informed and empowered citizens.
- Establishment of platforms for ongoing dialogue between CSOs and decision-makers/policy-makers.

## Grant amount and duration

The NHC aims to **provide up to 3 grants per target country (Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, Croatia and Portugal)**, each grant between **30,000 and 40,000 EUR**. The project will have a **duration between of 12 and 18 months**.

The anticipated starting date for the selected projects is **November 2024**.

## Eligibility Criteria

The grant can be received by:

- **Registered civil society organisations<sup>1</sup>** working on the protection and promotion of EU values including on enhancing women's rights, and/or environmental justice and/ or anti-corruption.
- **CSO's upholding and respecting EU values** in their work (such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities).

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<sup>1</sup> Registered CSO "refers to an organization that is a legal entity, operates on a non-profit basis, and has been established in one of the project's target countries.



### **Exclusion criteria:**

- **CSO's breaching EU values or with a political/religious affiliation** as well as public administration institutions, state agencies, local or regional authorities, are not eligible for this call.

## **Eligible types of activities**

- Coalition building & coordination meetings
- Strategy development & strategy meetings
- Preparation of policy documents based on strategies
- Development of civic space monitoring and protection tools

## **Eligible Costs**

The development of a realistic budget is crucial for a successful implementation of the project's activities. The costs **may include (but are not limited to):**

- Personnel Expenses;
- Travel and Accommodation;
- Communication and Outreach;
- Research and Data collection;
- Training and Capacity Building;
- Advocacy and Lobbying;
- Technology and Equipment;
- Venue Rental;
- Translation and Interpretation;
- Administrative expenses/office supplies;
- Costs associated with monitoring project progress and evaluating the impact of project activities.

## **Ineligible Costs**

The budget must be in line with the activities described in the application form. The following activities and expenditures **are not eligible under this call:**

- Personal Expenses (any expenses of a personal nature, such as personal phone bills, personal shopping, or personal travel not directly related to the project);
- Retrospective activities (costs related to activities implemented prior to signing the grant agreement);
- Humanitarian support to third parties;
- Medical or any other unexpected (emergency) expenses;



- Commercial activities;
- Infrastructure projects (constructing roads, bridges, buildings, etc.);
- Capital Expenditures (expenses for purchasing fixed assets, such as buildings or land);
- Political or religious activities;
- Purchase of Non-Essential Items (costs or items not directly essential for project implementation);
- Environmentally harmful projects;

## Application Process

Interested organisations are encouraged to [APPLY ONLINE](#) in English or in their respective language no later than **22<sup>nd</sup> of October, 2024.**

The following documents need to be attached:

- **Complete application form** (answering all the questions);
- **Filled out budget form** (download the template);
- **Registration certificate** of the organisation or a proof of registration from earlier years;
- **Statute of the organisation.**

For questions regarding the call for proposals or the application procedure, please send us an email to [hrd@nhc.nl](mailto:hrd@nhc.nl) **no later than 6<sup>th</sup> of October, 2024.**

**Only full applications** consisting of a completed online application form and all requested additional documents **will be assessed.**

## Selection Process

An independent evaluation committee will evaluate submitted proposals consisting of three experts with voting power, a chairperson and a secretary. The group of experts will be composed of experts affiliated to NHC and/or NHC partners in the countries. **The evaluation will be based on the following criteria:**

	Criteria	Maximum score
1	How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals?	15
2	How relevant is the proposal to the particular needs and constraints of the target groups?	15
3	How coherent is the design of the action? Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale to achieve the expected results? Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the envisaged outcome(s)?	15

<b>4</b>	Is the action plan for implementing the action clear and feasible? Is the timeline realistic?	5
<b>5</b>	Organization's experience in establishing and maintaining partnerships	10
<b>6</b>	Previous participation in coalition building initiatives	10
<b>7</b>	Does the proposal include an effective and efficient monitoring system?	10
<b>8</b>	Realistic and feasible budget (Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?)	10
<b>9</b>	Analysis of risks and mitigation measures	5
<b>10</b>	Sustainability of activities after the end of the project	5
<b>Total:</b>		<b>100</b>

The threshold score for receiving sub-grants is **70 points**.

The applicants will receive feedback on their proposals via email **within 4 weeks** after the **submission deadline**.

The outcomes of the call will be published on the [project's website](#) and will include a description of the selected projects, award dates, project durations as well as the names and countries of the grantees.

Any concerns or feedback related to the proposal selection process can be submitted to the NHC via e-mail to [hrd@nhc.nl](mailto:hrd@nhc.nl)