

ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL
DEMOCRACY AGENCIES

ACTIVE EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP

CALL FOR PROPOSALS
aiming at supporting the implementation of
THE CODE OF GOOD PRACTICES
FOR CIVIL PARTICIPATION
IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS
of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe

- ALDA/01/10 -

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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA) has been working in the field of the international cooperation, with a special focus on the international multilateral decentralized cooperation, since 1999.

The Association has been carrying out activities in different fields and in various geographical areas promoting dialogue, cooperation and partnerships with the most relevant European Institutions (European Commission, Council of Europe, etc.) and with a wide number of local authorities (regions, provinces and municipalities) and civil society organizations in the “enlarged” Europe: these long-lasting relationships represent the strengths of the Association, which encompasses nowadays more than 160 Members and 300 partners in the enlarged Europe.

In these years, the Association has gained a remarkable experience in planning, managing, administrating and reporting European projects, supported by the European Union, other international, national and regional public Institutions, as well as by other subjects such as foundations, international organizations, etc.

The activities of ALDA has been implemented in various fields and has been developed in many EU Member States, in South East European (Western Balkans) and East European Countries (Caucasus), as well as in some countries of the Community of Independent States- CSI (Belarus and Russia).

In the last few years, together with its original mission related to the coordination of the Local Democracy Agencies in South East Europe, ALDA has been more and more committed in the promotion of a new idea of active citizenship and participation all over Europe, by involving different stakeholders such as local authorities, civil society organizations, groups of citizens and also national and European institutions and authorities.

Nowadays, while experiencing a constant evolution and new challenges, we believe that European citizens have a key and primary role in building Europe. For this reason, ALDA has been promoting and implementing projects, actions and debates regarding the future of Europe, the necessity to get Europe closer to its citizens and the importance of a wider involvement of citizens in the life of the community, both at the local and at the European level, with the aim to promote good governance throughout Europe. There is a need of further thinking over the concept of European active citizenship and it is important to develop other instruments and new and innovative "tools" to promote citizens' participation, at all levels, in the construction of the future Europe.

A relevant document tackling the issue of civil participation is represented by the “The Code of Good Practices for Civil Participation in the Decision Making Process” (Annex II), promoted by the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe in October 2009.

In the running phase of the Code, ALDA has the responsibility to coordinate and promote its implementation, trying to promote, on one hand, a creative and innovative methodology and, on the other hand, to further strengthen the cooperation between local authorities and civil society organizations.

In this framework, ALDA is launching a Call for Proposals in order to collect from its members new and innovative project ideas focused on the implementation of the Code at the local level.

2. OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

The purpose of this Call for Proposals is to support the promotion of **new and innovative projects aiming at supporting the implementation of the Code at the local level**. The Association of Local Democracy Agencies, taking into consideration the growing interest in Europe regarding active citizenship and European citizenship in particular, intends to launch the present Call for Proposals to further strengthen cooperation between both local authorities and civil society organizations towards the promotion of good governance and active participation of all the society in the decision-making processes.

The expected project ideas to be supported should be characterized as follows:

They should include a **training component**, combining different training approaches, including both direct and distance learning methods, employing traditional lectures, workshops, discussions, case-studies, etc. The “traditional” training should be completed with other activities that allow participants to develop analyses and pilot actions in the local community (the trainings include project works which ensure the testing of the knowledge acquired in the specific community where each training takes place).

They should be **participation “processes”**: the proposal should encompass different stages and involving the most relevant local actors appointed to the development of active citizenship and to the promotion of citizens' participation at the local level. The whole process should be based on a participative methodology, followed by a follow-up stage which aims at developing dialogue, partnership and cooperation among different organizations in order to improve the governance at the local level.

They should represent **"citizenship exercises"**: insofar the process should include a common work among participants, based on case-studies and real hypotheses, in order to identify new and innovative solutions and practices to promote civil participation in the decision making process at the local level (namely "transforming" the exercise in a shared real practice).

The proposals should strengthen knowledge and skills of local authorities and civil society organizations in the field of active citizenship. Nowadays, local authorities and civil society play a key role both at the European and at the local level: it is therefore necessary and crucial to get ready for this challenge in order to be better equipped as local actors in the development of active citizenship.

The proposals should also aim at building new relationships and developing synergies in order to activate new participation and citizenship processes at the local level.

The present Call supports the development of new and innovative projects aiming at supporting the implementation of “The code of good practices for civil participation in the decision making process” (Annex II) in different local communities in Europe.

The proposals should include direct activities lasting minimum 25 hours.

Structure of the proposal

It is important to highlight that the structure of the proposal is free and could include: trainings, workshops, working groups, round tables, production of communication tools, etc. (the list is not exhaustive). The proposals need to be adapted to the needs of the communities where they will be implemented. For further details see Annex II attached.

3. TIME SCHEDULE

ALDA members interested to develop a project proposal must submit their applications to the Association of Local Democracy Agency no later than the **20th of August 2010** (please read carefully Section 9 of this Call for Proposals concerning the procedures for submitting the applications).

Projects must start between 15th September 2010 and 15th October 2010. They will have a minimum duration of 2 months and a maximum duration of 3 months and a half.

All projects need to be concluded by the 31st of December 2010.

Applications will not be accepted if the project is scheduled to run for a shorter or longer period than that indicated herein. Applicants should be notified of the outcome of the selection procedure in September 2010. It is intended that beneficiaries should receive the agreements for signature in September 2010.

The eligibility period for costs will start on the date specified in the agreement, in other words the starting date of the project. The Association of Local Democracy Agencies reserves the possibility to consider eligible expenses incurred before the project starts when they are related to the implementation of the action.

4. BUDGET AVAILABLE AND ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

The total budget allocated to the co financing of projects under this Call for Proposals is estimated at EUR 12.500.

Financial assistance from ALDA may not be granted for more than 1/3 (one third) of a project's total eligible expenses. Any grant awarded under this Call will amount at: € **2.500** (two-thousands five-hundreds euro).

ALDA proposes financing a maximum of 5 proposals, possibly involving 5 different countries. However, depending on the number and quality of applications submitted, ALDA reserves the right to award more than 1 project for a single country.

ALDA also reserves the possibility of not allocating all the funds available.

The amount of the grant awarded to a given project will take account of the co-funding allocated by the Beneficiaries. A ceiling has been set as follows:

Amount of the grant of co-funding	Minimum co-funding from Beneficiaries
2.500 euro	5.000 euro

5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Only applications that comply with the following criteria will be considered eligible and will be the subject of evaluation.

5.1. Establishments/bodies/types of beneficiaries eligible

Only proposals submitted by the following are eligible:

- non-profit-making, non governmental organizations
- local authorities

with legal status and legally established in a European Union country, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania where the project is to take place. **Only members of the Association of Local Democracy Agencies can apply within the present Call for Proposals.**

Each applicant may submit only one proposal.

Projects are strongly invited to involve partner organizations at the local level.

Where appropriate, applicants must provide evidence of the Partnership established to ensure the smooth running of the project by submitting a support letter duly completed and signed.

Natural persons may not claim a grant under this Call for proposals.

5.2. Non-eligible activities

Profit-making activities of whatever type shall not be eligible

5.3. Eligible proposals

Only proposals submitted using the official application form, completed in full, signed and received by the deadline specified in Section 3 of this Call for Proposals will be considered. Applicants also need to provide all the other documents referred to in the checklist annexed.

6. AWARD CRITERIA

Eligible applications will be assessed on the following main criteria:

Quantitative criteria

- number of Partners' organizations involved
- expected number of participants/target groups reached by the activity
- capacity to co-fund the initiative
- number and variety of media supports used during the project

Qualitative criteria

- originality and innovation of the proposal
- capacity to reach those who are not usually reached by other project of European nature
- sustainability of the action
- relevance of the activity for the local community

7. FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

The grants are based on the principle of co-financing. They complement the applicant's own financial input and/or national, regional or private assistance that has been obtained elsewhere.

Acceptance of an application by ALDA does not constitute an undertaking to award funding equal to the amount requested by the applicant. The awarding of a grant does not establish an entitlement for subsequent years.

The amount allocated may not exceed the amount requested.

7.1. Methods of payment

If the application is finally approved by ALDA, a financing agreement, expressed in euro and specifying the terms and the level of financing, will be entered into between ALDA and the beneficiary. The original version of this agreement must be signed and returned to ALDA immediately. ALDA will be the last party to sign.

Decisions are unilaterally signed by ALDA.

A pre-financing payment of 50% will be transferred to the beneficiary within 45 days of the date on which the two parties sign the agreement. ALDA will establish the amount of the final payment to be made to the beneficiary on the basis of the final report.

7.2. Double financing

Projects funded may not benefit from any other Community funding for the same activity. Applicants have to co-fund the activity with other resources than out of the budget of the European Institutions.

7.3. Eligible costs

Eligible costs are the costs actually incurred by the beneficiary of a grant which meet the following criteria:

- they are incurred during the action or work programme
- they are necessary for performing the action or work programme for which a grant has been awarded;
- they are identifiable and verifiable, and are recorded in the beneficiary's accounts in accordance with the applicable accounting principles of the country in which the beneficiary is established and with the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices;
- they comply with the requirements of the applicable tax and social security legislation.

Eligible direct costs for the project are those costs that, with due regard for the eligibility conditions set out in the previous paragraph, can be identified as specific costs with a direct link to the project's realisation and directly chargeable to it. In particular, the following direct costs are eligible, provided they satisfy the criteria set out in the previous paragraph:

- costs for personnel assigned to the project, comprising actual salaries plus social security contributions and other statutory costs included in their remuneration,
- travel and subsistence costs for personnel participating in the project, provided they do not exceed the scales approved annually by the European Commission
- costs of consumables, materials, supplies, provided that they are identifiable and earmarked for the project.

The eligible costs should be equally split in the three categories mentioned above: each category of eligible cost should thus represent 1/3 of the total budget of the project.

8. PUBLICITY

Beneficiaries must clearly acknowledge the **European Union's contribution** in all the outputs or on the occasion of activities for which the grant is used. Furthermore, beneficiaries are required to clearly show the name and emblem of the European Commission on all publications, posters, programmes and other products produced under the co- financed project. To that end, they shall use the logo of the „**Europe for Citizens**“ programme and the European flag.

Furthermore, beneficiaries are required to clearly show the name and emblem of ALDA.

If this provision is not fully complied with, the beneficiary's grant may be reduced.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY AND COPYRIGHT

Applicants selected shall pay particular attention to the confidentiality of the data.

Copyright on all reports and other materials prepared and produced – such as training methods, tools, handbooks, etc. – under the contract between the two parties shall reside with the Association of Local Democracy Agencies. With prior written authorization, the materials prepared may be used, reproduced, photocopied, recorded and disseminated by third parties.

10. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

This Call for Proposals is published in the official website of the Association of Local Democracy Agencies at the following address: <http://alda-europe.eu>

Grant applications must be drawn up in English, French or Italian, using the application form specifically designed for this purpose. Please note that only typed applications will be considered.

Application forms can be obtained from the following website: <http://alda-europe.eu>

Only applications that are submitted using the correct form, duly completed and dated, sent within the deadline of 20th of August 2010 will be accepted. Applications that have not been submitted within the specified deadline will be disregarded.

Applications (and annexes) must be sent by e-mail to the following address:

Aline Schwoob – aline.schwoob@aldaintranet.org

Only applications that meet the eligibility criteria will be considered for possible award of a grant.

All unsuccessful applicants will be informed in writing.

11. CONTACT

For information, please contact:

Aline Schwoob

Project Manager

e-mail: aline.schwoob@aldaintranet.org