**Contracting Authority**: United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) as the implementing agency of the project ‘Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia’

Open Call for Proposals

For Support to Civil Society Organizations and Media for EU Integration Projects

Guidelines
for grant applicants

Reference: Call for Proposals number (CFP 07-2019)

The Call is open for 60 days. The deadline for submission of applications is 30 October 2019

Contents

[1. Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia 3](#_Toc17887969)

[1.1. Background 3](#_Toc17887970)

[1.2. Introduction 3](#_Toc17887971)

[1.3. Justification for the Intervention 4](#_Toc17887972)

[1.4. Objectives 5](#_Toc17887973)

[1.5. Financial allocation provided by the Project 6](#_Toc17887974)

[2. Rules for This Call for Proposals 6](#_Toc17887975)

[2.1. General Eligibility Criteria 6](#_Toc17887976)

[2.1.1. Eligibility of applicants (i.e. applicant and co-applicant(s)) 6](#_Toc17887977)

[2.1.2. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made 7](#_Toc17887978)

[2.1.3. Costs 10](#_Toc17887979)

[2.2. How to apply and the procedures to follow 11](#_Toc17887980)

[2.2.1. Submitting the Project Proposals 11](#_Toc17887981)

[2.3. Evaluation and selection of applications 14](#_Toc17887982)

[2.4. Notification of the Project’s decision 20](#_Toc17887983)

[2.5. Indicative timetable 21](#_Toc17887984)

[2.6. Conditions for implementation after the Project’s decision to award a grant 22](#_Toc17887985)

[2.7. Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation 22](#_Toc17887986)

[3. List of Annexes 22](#_Toc17887987)

1. Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia
	1. Background

The Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia project is funded by the Kingdom of Norway, through the Norwegian Embassy, and the Kingdom of Sweden, through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. The project aims to enhance the capacity of the Republic of North Macedonia for EU integration by providing technical assistance to state institutions during the accession period. The project activities are, among other, aimed toward communication of the benefits of the EU integration process, as well as at strengthening the transparency of the process and strengthening the public awareness by inclusion of CSO’s and media in all phases of the accession process.

At the local level, the project will strengthen the local infrastructure of the less developed municipalities by financially supporting certain infrastructure projects, thus contributing to an improved social inclusion in these regions. Additionally, the project will support new employments by embedding project activities within the active labour measures and supporting start-up companies and conducting workplace trainings.

The Secretariat for European Affairs (SEA) is the project owner and responsible partner for sustainability of project results in the country. Key project stakeholders and beneficiaries, beside SEA, are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Parliaments Committee for European Affairs, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Agency for Promotion of Entrepreneurship, CSO’s, national and local media outlets and ultimately the citizens of the Republic of North Macedonia.

* 1. Introduction

One of the important interventions of the project relates to providing support for active citizens participation in North Macedonia’s EU accession process. A working democracy is a political requirement to join the European Union and civil engagement is perceived as evidence of democracy and good governance at work because it allows citizens to freely associate and engage in civic action. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have so far played a pivotal role in voicing citizen’s interests in the process of implementation of strategic reforms and execution of key policies and strategies for EU accession. As put forward by the European Commission “an empowered civil society is a crucial component of any democratic system and is an asset in itself. It represents and fosters pluralism and can contribute to more effective policies, equitable and sustainable development and inclusive growth. It is an important player in fostering peace and in conflict resolution. By articulating citizens' concerns, civil society organisations (CSOs) are active in the public arena, engaging in initiatives to further participatory democracy. They embody a growing demand for transparent and accountable governance. While states carry the primary responsibility for development and democratic governance, synergies between states and CSOs can help overcome challenges of poverty, widening inequalities, social exclusion and unsustainable development. CSOs' participation in policy processes is key to ensuring inclusive and effective policies. CSOs therefore contribute to building more accountable and legitimate states, leading to enhanced social cohesion and more open and deeper democracies.”

The fundamental role of media in the EU accession process derives from the EU political and cultural background. With freedom of speech as a fundamental value and with media as the main platform for enabling this right, media becomes irreplaceable in shaping public opinion as well as acting as ‘watchdogs’, closely monitoring governmental institutions. Media play the main role in providing information to citizens and play an important role in the process of facilitating educated choices for citizens.

* 1. Justification for the Intervention

The Treaty on the European Union (Article 49) establishes that any European State which respects and is committed to promoting the principles of human dignity, freedom, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, may apply to become a member of the Union.

An empowered civil society can play an important role in ensuring these principles are upheld in practice. It is also in itself a crucial component of any democracy. By articulating citizens' concerns, civil society organisations (CSOs) - understood as all non-state, not-for-profit structures in which people organise to pursue shared objectives and ideals – are active in the public arena and engage in initiatives which foster pluralism and further participatory democracy. Civil society continued to play a constructive role in supporting democratic processes and ensuring greater checks and balances in North Macedonia. As noted in the Key findings of the 2018 Report on North Macedonia, since the second half of 2017, the climate in which civil society organisations operate has improved and the government has shown commitment to dialogue and inclusion. The 2019 Report also notes: “the climate in which civil society organisations operate has continued to improve. Civil society continued to play a constructive role in supporting democratic processes. Strategic documents have been adopted, providing guidance on the cooperation between government and civil society. Both governmental and non-governmental actors should aim at a meaningful consultation process”. The report also notes that there is a need for continuous support for media pluralism, promotion of professionalism, objective reporting and investigative journalism. The capacity of journalists should be increased to effectively combat disinformation. The overall situation and political climate for media continued to improve. The government intensified its efforts to support media through legislative changes and by providing financial subsidies for print media. The open dialogue and increased transparency of institutions is acknowledged by professional organisations. Challenges remain however and additional measures are needed to support freedom of expression.

North Macedonia faces a range of challenges in the road to EU accession, especially in fields such as the rule of law and judicial system, fight against corruption and organised crime, the economy and social cohesion. Active engagement of Civil Society Organisations and media in these sectors can have a considerable impact on improving the transparency, monitoring of the work of the public servants and the active citizens participation in the policy making processes through their lobbying, advocacy and oversight activities at national and local level.

* 1. Objectives

The Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia project is launching this Open Call for Proposals for Support to Civil Society Organizations and Media for EU Integration Projects with the objective to empower active participation and engagement of the civil sector and media in pursuing activities considered to be in the broad public interest and in support of the country’s EU accession process. This relates to preparation of CSOs and media to organise and start monitoring and conduct public-awareness activities early on, even before the negotiations are formally open and foster the inclusion of civil society at all levels of decision making, with particular attention paid to the negotiation process preparations.

It is paramount that the activities proposed in the work programme should result in, but should not be limited to:

* Increased initiatives of CSOs and media to monitor, advocate and participate in processes associated with implementation of key reforms related to the EU accession process, ensuring good quality comprehensive legislation and the development of sustainable policies that benefit the citizens;
* Improved capacities of CSOs and media as effective and accountable independent actors that conduct activities that result in improved life of citizens;
* Increased awareness of the general public of the EU accession process and promotion of the benefits of EU membership;
	1. Financial allocation provided by the Project

The Call for Proposals (the CfP) includes two LOTs:

• LOT 1 is focused on support of CSO’s with grants with of minimum 30,000 USD to maximum of 40,000 USD, and

• LOT 2 is focused on support to media with grants of minimum 65,000 USD to maximum 95,000 USD.

Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia does not have an obligation to spend all funds available for this activity of **USD 623,000** and will fund only quality projects that meet specific criteria, selected in a transparent and competitive process. It is envisaged that the project will award at least six grants for CSO’s and at least four grants for media. Depending on quality of applications the Project may decide to increase or decrease the number of grants planned per LOT. Cooperation between CSO’s and media is strongly encouraged.

1. Rules for This Call for Proposals
	1. General Eligibility Criteria

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

1. the applicants:
* the **applicant**, i.e. the entity submitting the application form,
* if any, their **co-applicant(s)** (**where it is not specified otherwise, the applicant and their co-applicant(s) are hereinafter jointly referred to as the "*applicants***") (2.1.1.);
1. the actions:
* actions for which a grant may be awarded;
1. the costs:
* types of costs that may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant (2.1.3).
	+ 1. Eligibility of applicants (i.e. applicant and co-applicant(s))

Eligible to apply for the CfP are:

* Fully registered citizens’ non-for-profit organizations or associations (CSOs) in accordance with the Law on associations and foundations, or media registered in the register of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services.
* Independent video/audio content producers can also apply to the call given that they submit a valid agreement with a registered media for airing of content.
* CSOs legally registered for a minimum of 3 (three) years will have a possibility to apply for the CfP.
* Applicants must have clear records from previous projects involving international donors and organizations.
* Applicants need to provide clear financial statements for the previous years of operation, as proscribed by law.
* CSO applicants need to provide proof that they have implemented similar projects with a budget of at least 30.000 USD.
* Media applicants need to provide proof that they have produced and aired similar content with a budget of at least 65.000 USD.
* Co-applicants can be any CSO, media or legal entity that clearly contributes to the attainment of project objectives and without whose participation the project cannot achieve the defined results, regardless of their time of registration and status.
	+ 1. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made

***Sectors or topics***

The Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia project will award projects selected, evaluated and approved in a transparent and structured process, which are addressing the following key thematic areas:

* Increased engagement of CSO’s and media in key areas of EU accession, namely, public administration reforms, judicial system, human rights, gender equality, education, internal market rules, environmental issues, rural and regional development and regional cooperation, and inter-ethnic dialogue and inter-cultural cooperation.
* Improving Good Governance at central and local level, improved cooperation between public institutions and civic sector.
* Information-Education and advocacy activities on EU accession processes and its impact on citizens.
* Improving capacity and role of media, freedom of expression.

***Eligible activities***

* Research including, but not limited to, comparative research, impact studies and benchmark studies on key EU accession issues, review of existing national and EU legislation and drafting of recommendations for policy changes for EU accession.
* Promotional activities, information-education campaigns and public presentations.
* Analysis of current status, findings and recommendations for improvement in key sectors, based on best practices and regional experiences.
* Capacity Building for cooperation between CSO’s, CSO’s and other stakeholders including political stakeholders, business community, academia, media and other relevant actors.
* Activities that build or reinforce existing CSO networks and coalitions, including practices for communication and cooperation between CSO’s, as well as CSO’s and relevant stakeholders.

***The following types of action are ineligible:***

Following projects and/or activities will weigh low in evaluation and below listed expenditures will not be considered eligible:

1. Projects that do not cover the sectors that have been listed above.
2. Projects aimed at filling up any funding gaps from on-going activities.
3. Activities that can be more appropriately funded from other funding sources.
4. Activities where a substantial part of the budget covers recurrent costs and/or personnel costs.
5. Travel, catering and/or conference services costs not found in project rationale.
6. Projects focused on research, or promotional activities with no specific outcomes.
7. Items from the budget, including office costs, fees or salaries, already funded by other sources (other projects, other organizations – public or civic, etc.).
8. Workplans and projects supporting specific political entities.
9. Projects that benefit a small community or partial group of people.
10. All costs originating before the project beginning or accrued after project closure.
11. Individual sponsorships for participation in seminars, workshops, conferences both in the country or abroad.
12. Financial support to third parties.

***Duration of Projects***

The implementation of the projects will last for a **maximum of 12 (twelve) months**, and for a **minimum of 8 (eight)**, from the day the grant contract is signed.

***Location***

Actions should take place in the Republic of North Macedonia. Actions in EU and Western Balkan countries are also eligible, however should be justified and should directly contribute to achievement of project outcomes.

***Sustainability***

The applicant is expected to demonstrate in the application **in a clear and unequivocal way** how the project outputs will continue to function after the grant formally closes. The sustainability and relevance of the project activities will weigh **decisively** during the project proposal evaluation.

***Crosscutting issues***

Successful project proposals must demonstrate awareness of good governance requirements, sensitivity to gender and social inclusion issues. Cross-cutting potential can be further demonstrated by implementation of joint activities by CSO’s and media, implementation of capacity-building/training activities on EU accession issues for both CSO and media representatives, delivered by CSOs and/or SEA training center. The applicant must also clearly indicate how socially excluded groups will be involved in and/or benefit from the project. The applicant is expected to reduce environmentally harmful practices and ensure environmentally and socially sound management of the Project during its entire lifecycle.

***Branding and Visibility Requirements***

Successful applicant will be expected to comply with communications and visibility requirements as set by Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia project. The Project will provide the grantees with adequate guidelines and other information prior to beginning of the project implementation.

These requirements cover the written and visual identity of the project, the donors, the implementing agency and the project owner, and they apply to print, electronic and any other material, presentation, banner, invitation, sign, plaque or goods purchased with the funds provided by the donors and managed by the project.

During a project implementation, the lead partner must organize at least one event to present project results and achievements. The concept for this event should be outlined in the project proposal.

***Number of applications and grants per applicant***

An applicant may submit one application under this CfP and only one grant per applicant can be awarded. One CSO can only apply as applicant or co-applicant. Partnerships between CSO’s and CSO’s and media are allowed and encouraged.

* + 1. Costs

Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia will provide grants up to 40,000 USD for LOT 1 and 95,000 USD for LOT 2 per project. Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia does not have an obligation to spend all funds available for this activity (**USD 623,000**) and will fund only quality projects that meet specific criteria, selected in a transparent and competitive process.

***Eligible costs***

Only ‘eligible costs’ can be covered by a grant. The categories of costs that are eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and an overall ceiling for ‘eligible costs’.

The eligible costs must be based on: actual costs incurred by the Beneficiary (-ies), presented in the form of:

* Unit costs: covering all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by reference to an amount per unit.
* Lump sums: covering in global terms all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance.
* Flat-rate financing: covering specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by applying a percentage fixed ex ante.

***Eligible direct costs***

To be eligible under the CfP, costs must refer only to activities specified in the section 2.1.2.

The Project reserves right to perform budget verification and may ask for budget adjustments before signing the Grant Agreements with Applicants.

***Ineligible costs***

The following costs are not eligible:

* debts and debt service charges (interest).
* bank fees.
* provisions for losses or potential future liabilities.
* costs declared by the Beneficiary (-ies) and financed by another project or founding source.
* currency exchange losses.
* credit to third parties.
* fees for personnel employed in public administration.
	1. How to apply and the procedures to follow
		1. Submitting the Project Proposals

The Application Form must be submitted via e-mail in PDF format (signed, stamped and scanned/or digitally signed) and in original editable format, while using MS Office Word and Excel. Signed, stamped and scanned/or digitally signed versions must contain exactly the same application documents as the electronic versions in original editable format. In case of discrepancies, signed, stamped and scanned version will prevail.

* The Applicant must submit Application Forms in English language. The total e-mail size of the application should not exceed 15 MB, as that is the maximum allowed e-mail message size by the UNOPS server. If the application is larger than 15 MB, documents should be sent in series of e-mails, with each e-mail not exceeding 15 MB size thresholds. Each part of the application should be numbered in the e-mail subject field (e-mail subject/number).
* Applications must be submitted to the e-mail address below:
rsoc.applications@unops.org. Automatic notification of the delivery will follow upon successful submission of the email application (in case of multiple mails, only the first email will receive the automatic notification).
* When sending the application, the e-mail subject field must contain the reference number of the Call and the title of the CfP (CFP 07-2019 – CSO’s and Media) including the name of the applicant and the appropriate LOT.
* Requests for clarifications should be submitted to the e-mail address below:

rsoc.cfp.clarifications@unops.org

* The deadline for the submission of applications is 30 October 2019. Any application submitted after the deadline will be rejected.
* Applications must be received before midnight-local time on the closing date of the CfP. Applicants are kindly advised to submit the application timely, as late deliveries due to slow internet connection or other network/hardware/software related problems may lead to disqualification of the application. Only bids received by UNOPS mail server before the deadline will be accepted.
* Applicants must verify that their Application is complete using the Checklist. Incomplete applications may be rejected.
* Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by post or by hand delivery) or delivered to other e-mails different from the stated in CfP will be rejected. Hand-written applications will not be accepted.
* UNOPS reserves the right to request the original versions of submitted documents from applicants where/when original documentation is required by the Evaluation Team.
* Project proposals must be submitted in English, and must contain following application files:
	1. Application Form;
		1. Brief overview in the Application Form: state how much funds the project will need etc. A detailed budget proposal must be submitted as a separate Excel file and presented in a clear and intelligible way. All amounts must be presented in USD.
		2. All expenses that should be funded by Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia presented in the budget must include VAT. Please Note that VAT can be paid from the grant and can also be a contribution/co-funding by the applicant.
		3. Institutional Profile. Description of the organization, including registration details, contact information, casting of the roles within the partnership, relevant experience on similar projects with international donors and organizations.
	2. Project Proposal;
		1. Context and Problem Analysis, backed by available and relevant data.
		2. Project Strategy. Description of how your project is going to address the problem, what strategies are going to be used, what major activities are planned and how these activities are going to contribute to achieving the project objective.
		3. Project sustainability. Describe the main preconditions and assumptions during and after the implementation phase. Provide a detailed risk analysis and possible contingency plans. This should include at least a list of risks associated with each activity proposed accompanied by relevant corrective measures to mitigate such risks. Describe how you plan to secure sustainability of the project after the implementation ends. This can include aspects of necessary measures and strategies built into the action, follow-up activities, and ownership by target groups etc. Please make distinction between: Financial sustainability (financing of follow-up activities, if needed.), Institutional level (which structures would allow, and how, the results of the action to continue be in place after the end of the action? Address issues about the local "ownership" of action outcomes) and Policy level where applicable (what structural impact will the action have - e.g. will it lead to improved EU accession preparedness, improved local and national policies, methods, etc.).
		4. Evaluation Strategy. Project proposal must have a proposal for project evaluation strategy, with outlined set of indicators.
		5. Communication and dissemination strategy, only outlining the key methods and tools to be used.
		6. Detailed project budget proposal (as a separate Excel document) composed of overall budget and narrative budget.
	3. Logframe (as a separate Excel document).
	4. Detailed Work Plan (as a separate Excel document). The Detailed WP for the whole implementation period presented in a clear and intelligible way, with timelines that include weeks and months, must be submitted in a separate Excel file (example attached as Add-On).
	5. CSO Fact Sheet / Media Fact Sheet is attached to this Call and is to be submitted as a separate file.

Failing to submit either of these documents will mean immediate disqualification of the application.

Any major inconsistency in the application form (e.g. the amounts mentioned in the budget are inconsistent with those mentioned in the application form) may lead to the rejection of the application.

The applicant should submit all supporting documents (organization’s statute, bank statements, reference lists, agreement for cooperation of media if needed, etc.) in electronic form as scanned documents.

* 1. Evaluation and selection of applications

Firstly, the following will be assessed:

***Compliance with the submission deadline***

If the deadline has not been met, the application will automatically be rejected.

The full application form satisfies all criteria specified in points 1-6 of the Checklist (Section III of Part A of the Grant Application Form). If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that sole basis and it will not be evaluated further.

The quality of the applications, including the proposed budget and capacity of the applicants will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria in the evaluation grid below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and award criteria.

* The **selection criteria** help to evaluate the Applicant(s)'s operational capacity and the Applicant's financial capacity and to ensure that they have the management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed action.
* The **award criteria** help to evaluate the quality of the applications in relation to the objectives and priorities and to award grants to projects which maximize the overall effectiveness of the CfP. They help to select applications of which the Project can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities. They cover the relevance of the action, its consistency with the objectives of the CfP, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

***Scoring***

The evaluation grid is divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good, except in subsections where the score is specifically defined.

***Evaluation Grid***

**LOT 1 evaluation grid**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section** | **Maximum Score** |
| 1. **Operational capacity**
 | **25** |
| * 1. Does the Applicant have sufficient technical expertise (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)? – number of specialists planned for the project:
* The proposed Project Team is composed of project manager with experience in implementation of donor-funded projects (3 points)
* Project Team is composed of project specialists that have experience in implementation of donor-funded projects (2 points)
* The principle of gender balance is represented in the proposed Project Team (5 points)
 | **10**  |
| * 1. The organizations have experience in implementation of any donor-funded project:
* at least two similar projects implemented with donor or government funds in the past five years (15 points)
* at least one similar project implemented with donor or government funds in the past five years (5 points)
* no projects implemented with donor or government funds in the past five years (0 points)
 | **15** |
| 1. **Relevance of the proposal to the objectives of the Call**
 | **35** |
| * 1. How clearly are the beneficiaries defined? (2 points)

Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately? (5 points)Does the proposal include verifiable estimate of the number of direct beneficiaries? (3 points) | **10** |
| * 1. Does the project proposal clearly address any constraint noted in the latest EU Progress Report for North Macedonia? (5 points)
 | **5** |
| * 1. Is the action plan clear and feasible? (5 points)
 | **5** |
| * 1. Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results? (5 points)
 | **5** |
| * 1. Does the project proposal contain specific crosscutting issues, such as capacity-building/training activities on EU accession issues for both CSO and media representatives, delivered by CSOs? Does the project tackle environmental issues, promotion of gender equality, respect of human rights and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of local population, innovation and best practices, or anti-corruption? (5 points)
 | **5** |
| * 1. Submitted project proposal is linked to relevant and valid strategic documents and/or corresponding action plans (3 points)
 | **3** |
| * 1. The proposal contributes to implementation of national/or improvement and or regional development policies (2 points)
 | **2** |
| 1. **Sustainability and impact of the proposed project**
 | **30** |
| * 1. Is the action likely to have a positive impact on its target groups and on final beneficiaries? (5 points)
 | **5** |
| * 1. Is the action likely to have a positive impact on political development beyond the level of immediate users? (5 points)
 | **5** |
| * 1. Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable? (5 points)
	2. Institutionally (which institutions and/or structures will sustain the results of the project upon its completion? Will the roles and responsibilities of these institutions be defined? Does the proposal define how the commitment of institutions will be built/ensured? (10 points)
	3. At policy level (what will be the effect of the project on regulations, procedures, and processes? If policy changes are needed to facilitate sustainability of the project, have they been envisaged by the proposal? (2 points)
 | **17** |
| * 1. Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the action? (3 points)
 | **3** |
| 1. **Proposed Budget and its Cost-Effectiveness**
 | **10** |
| * 1. Is the proposed budget relevant to the project objective and the proposed action plan?
 | **5** |
| * 1. Are the project costs in line with the usual project practice?
 | **2** |
| * 1. Will the project budget provide cost effectiveness of activities as opposed to the projected results?
 | **3** |
| **Maximum total score** | **100** |

**LOT 2 evaluation grid**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section** | **Maximum Score** |
| 1. **Operational capacity**
 | **25** |
| * 1. Does the Applicant have sufficient technical expertise (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)? – number of specialists planned for the project:
* The proposed Project Team is composed of project manager with experience in implementation of similar media projects (3 points)
* Project Team is composed of project specialists that have experience in implementation of similar media projects (2 points)
* The principle of gender balance is represented in the proposed Project Team (5 points)
 | **10**  |
| * 1. The applicant has experience in creation and implementation of media content:
* at least two similar projects implemented with donor or government funds in the past five years (15 points)
* at least one similar project implemented with donor or government funds in the past five years (5 points)
* no projects implemented with donor or government funds in the past five years (0 points)
 | **15** |
| 1. **Relevance of the proposal to the objectives of the Call**
 | **35** |
| * 1. How clearly are the beneficiaries defined? (2 points)

Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately? (5 points)Does the proposal include verifiable estimate of the number of direct beneficiaries? (3 points) | **10** |
| * 1. Does the project proposal clearly address any constraint noted in the latest EU Progress Report for North Macedonia? (5 points)
 | **5** |
| * 1. Is the action plan clear and feasible? (5 points)
 | **5** |
| * 1. Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results? (5 points)
 | **5** |
| * 1. Does the project proposal contain specific crosscutting issues, such as capacity-building/training activities on EU accession issues for media representatives? Does the project tackle environmental issues, promotion of gender equality, respect of human rights and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of local population, innovation and best practices, or anti-corruption? (5 points)
 | **5** |
| * 1. Submitted project proposal is linked to relevant and valid strategic documents and/or corresponding action plans (3 points)
 | **3** |
| * 1. The proposal contributes to raising awareness of EU integration at national level? (2 points)
 | **2** |
| 1. **Sustainability and impact of the proposed project**
 | **30** |
| * 1. Is the action likely to have a positive impact on its target groups and on final beneficiaries? (5 points)
 | **5** |
| * 1. Is the action likely to have a positive impact on political development beyond the level of immediate users? (5 points)
 | **5** |
| * 1. Does the action envisage establishing a functional partnership between media and CSO’s? (8 points)
	2. Will the project activities impact larger communities or groups of people? What will be the projected outreach of the proposed project? (5 points)
	3. Is the level of involvement and participation of media in the proposed action satisfactory and does it strengthen their capacities for future project implementation? (4 points)
 | **17** |
| * 1. Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the action? (3 points)
 | **3** |
| 1. **Proposed Budget and its Cost-Effectiveness**
 | **10** |
| * 1. Is the proposed budget relevant to the project objective and the proposed action plan?
 | **5** |
| * 1. Are the project costs in line with the usual project practice?
 | **2** |
| * 1. Will the project budget provide cost effectiveness of activities as opposed to the projected results?
 | **3** |
| **Maximum total score** | **100** |

**Note**

If the total score is less than 60 points, the application will be rejected and will not be graded/considered for financing.

* 1. Notification of the Project’s decision

The Applicants will be informed in writing of the Project’s decision concerning their Application.

Applicant who believes that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may lodge a complaint to the Contracting Authority and may seek additional information.

* 1. Indicative timetable

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **DATE** | **TIME** |
| **Information meeting (if any)[[1]](#footnote-1)** | 19.09.2019 in Tetovo; \*24.09.2019 in Bitola; \*26.09.2019 in Skopje; \* | 12.00 – 13.30 |
| **Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the Project[[2]](#footnote-2)** | 04.10.2019. | 17.00 |
| **Last date on which clarifications are issued by the Project** | 11.10.2019. | 17.00 |
| **Deadline for submission of Applications**  | 30.10.2019. | midnight-local time |
| **Information to Applicants on opening, administrative checks (Step 1)** | 08.11.2019.\* |  |
| **Information on the evaluation of the Full Application Form (Step 2)** | 22.11.2019.\* |  |
| **Notification of award (after the eligibility check) (Step 3)** | 01.12.2019.\* |  |
| **Contract signature (official award ceremony)** | 10.12.2019.\* | 11.00 |

\***Provisional date.**

All times are in the time zone of North Macedonia.

* 1. Conditions for implementation after the Project’s decision to award a grant

Following the decision to award a grant, the successful Applicants (-ies) will be offered a contract. By signing the Application Form (Annex 1 of these Guidelines), the Applicants agree, if awarded a grant, to accept the contractual conditions of the standard grant contract.

The Project will predominantly use grant methodology for implementation of the approved projects. In cases where complexity and/or duration of the approved project is such that implementation through the grant methodology could endanger completion of the project, the Project may change the methodology.

* 1. Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

The grantees must monitor their own projects and make relevant records, including photos, which must be included all reports.

The following reports will be expected from the grantee:

* Monthly progress reports (after first month and thereafter).
* First Interim upon disbursement of 70 % of the first instalment.
* Final report assessing and analyzing project implemented, its outputs and outcomes.

All reports include narrative and financial aspects. These reports will be considered public information.

Nordic Support for Progress of North Macedonia will monitor implementation and audit grantees. The grantee can be evaluated at any time during the project implementation and subsequent actions may be taken according to the assessment’s findings. The payment schedule will be linked to project milestones and findings from the Project’s audits.

1. List of Annexes

Annex 1) Grant Application Form Application Checklist

Annex 2) Project Budget

Annex 3) Logframe Form

Annex 4) Work Plan

Annex 5) CSO/Media Factsheet

Annex 6) Application Checklist

Annex 7) Statement of Applicant

1. Information regarding the exact dates, timings and locations of the info sessions will be published on [www.nordiskapoddrska.org.mk](http://www.nordiskapoddrska.org.mk) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Requests for clarifications to be sent to: rsoc.cfp.clarifications@unops.org [↑](#footnote-ref-2)