

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

REGIONAL GRANTS CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Reference number SB RG 01/22

20.07.2022.

Question 1: Does the concept note need to be submitted on English language?

Answer: For the regional grants, the whole application, including concept note, has to be submitted in English.

Question 2: Is a 2020 audit sufficient to register at platform for application?

Answer: Yes in case that your 2021 audit is not finalised. Upon finalisation of the 2021 audit report, you should upload it to Grants Management Platform (GMP).

Question 3: Do you have working definition of “digital literacy”?

Answer: Call for Applications (CfA) did not provide the definition of digital literacy, because that can limit project ideas, hence it should be used in the broadest sense.

Question 4: Is the direct support for journalists to produce article/news content eligible cost?

Answer: It depends on the project idea. It is important to follow the guidelines for the relevant call for proposals.

Question 5: Concept note document is not available on the link, there are completely different ones annex 2 and annex 3 in the local language.

Answer: At the moment, two CfAs are opened – one is for Regional grants and the other one is for Core grants. Process of application to Regional grants is in English language, thus all the documents are in English. Process of application to Core grants is in local languages of all six SMART Balkans countries, thus all respective documents are in local languages.

Question 6: There is not notice consortium of 3 partners... You just clarified the confusion, there is a regional call, but also national core call in the local languages. Does the core grant call require regional partners or not?

Answer: Core grant applications do not require partners.

Question 7: The deadlines for both regional and core grant applications are the same – August 7?

Answer: Yes, the application deadline for submission of both applications is August 7, 2022 at 17:00.

Question 8: Can public institution like school can be applicants?

Answer: As per eligibility criteria, no, public institutions can not be applicants.

Question 9: Our question is regarding the grant amount. Is it applicable for the three organization e.g. lead and applicants or how the amount will be divided?

Answer: The budget for the project is joint for all project partners and its division is up to internal agreement between the consortium partners.

Question 10: In the range from minimum to maximum of grant amount, is this amount applicable for the whole consortium or is it planned for individual applicants. Is the amount separate for one organization or is it for other organizations?

Answer: Please refer to answer to Question 9.

Question 11: Will the grant amount be given directly to the lead applicant and then the lead applicant would manage it or will it, based on the budget and description provided, be transferred to the co-applicants their part?

Answer: The Lead applicant will sign a contract with CPCD and will be responsible for the administrative tasks and reporting as a lead applicant. The Lead applicant will subsequently sign contracts with the project partners that regulate their relationships. Therefore, the Lead applicant will transfer the respective portions of the budget to the project partners.

Question 12: My question is whether it is allowed to apply in both regional and core grant calls? Is it allowed to apply in both calls as lead or we are allowed to apply as lead in only one of these calls.

Answer: Yes, it is possible to apply to both Regional and Core grant at the same time.

Question 13: Can a regional network of NGOs apply for the call for regional grants?

Answer: Yes.

Question 14: Are there some limits regarding the allocation of funds in human resources part of the budget, and what will be the treatment when the institute have internal capacity for implementation of some of the activities that usually are direct costs? For example, the institute engages some person, a consultant in some specific research – could this be within the Human Resources part of the budget?

Answer: In this phase of the application process, which is the concept note phase, it is not required for the budget to be submitted, only the total amount of the budget. In the second phase, when the submission of the full application is required, you will be submitting the budget and you will have additional instructions on how to fill out the budget form. Employees of the applicant can only be included in the Human resources budget heading.

Question 15: We are an informal network and have partnerships with other organizations. Could we apply as a network, or do we have to apply just as partners?

Answer: As an informal network, you are eligible to apply. However, the network cannot be applicant as it is not formally registered. You need to apply as a group of individual organisations.

Question 16: To what extent are advocacy activities expected in the projects (I.e. to what extent are they intention of the call)?

Answer: It is expected for the majority of supported initiatives to be advocacy initiatives.

Question 17: Do project proposals have to address all four specific objectives of the call?

Answer: The project proposal do not have to address all four specific objectives. It is important to address clearly at least one or more of the specific objectives of the call.

Question 18: Is it mandatory that an organization from the EU be involved in the implementation of the project, or is it possible for it to be an individual expert from the EU?

Answer: Eligible applicants are only the organisations from the six SMART Balkans countries. However, an organization from the EU can be involved in implementation of the project if it is logical and necessary in the project design. The same is with the individual experts from the EU, they can be involved in the project. In both cases, engagement of an EU organisation or an expert, should be through the consultancy contracts and should be justified in the application.

Question 19: What about the existing networks applicants? How it works to register on the grants management platform? Should the registration be on the name of the network, or it should be one of the network members?

Answer: If the network is formally registered, then it can be registered on the grants management platform. If the network is informal, then your members should be registered on the grants management platform individually. Please refer to the answer to Question 15.

Question 20: In case official registered network applies, can their members be partners in the project?

Answer: Yes.

Question 21: Is it possible to apply with partners from EU as examples of good practice? Is it possible to lobby for project that have been subject of application?

Answer: Please refer to answer to Question 18. It is not possible to lobby for a project that has been submitted.

Question 22: The guidelines are in Macedonian, there is no mention of regional partners - NONE, and the application forms available are only in Macedonian and Serbian, are we talking about the same call here? Macedonian call: SB MKD CG 01/22 is it regional, does it require partners, its app forms are available only in MK and Serbian! there is no mention of partners in the guidelines available in Macedonian only

Answer: Please refer to answer to Question 5.

Question 23: In the call is required to have 1 year experience in the field. Is this applicable also for registration? We have changed our status and our new registration is below one year. Are we eligible to apply?

Answer: New organisations can register on the Grants Management Platform. However, to be eligible for a Regional grants, organization need to have a minimum one year (i.e. 12 months) experience in the areas of this call under which the concept note is submitted.

Question 24: Can more organizations from one country apply within a regional grants call?

Answer: Since this is a regional grant, it is important to have a regional component in mind. More organizations from one country can apply within a single project as long as the consortium has at least three members that come from three different SMART Balkans project countries.

Question 25: I wanted to ask questions regarding the registration. If we've uploaded a wrong document, is there a possibility to correct this mistake and can the name of the registered organization be changed? I've tried yesterday, and I wasn't able to change it.

Answer: Please contact us via info.bih@smartbalkansproject.org email so we could unlock your profile and enable this.

Question 26: In registration to the platform, how to choose an area of expertise if you have more than 1 and would that predefine the application processes we wish to apply?

Answer: There is a possibility of choosing more than one area of expertise since the drop down menu on the GMP allows for the multiple choices. That would not predefine the application process.

Question 27: Do we upload documents like registration and tax certificate in English or Serbian?

Answer: You need to upload the original document in the language it was issued.

Question 28: Do we need to have all organisations as partners also registered to the platform or not?

Answer: Yes, all organizations have to be registered on the Grants Management Platform.

Question 29: Outside of the minimum 3 partners from the region, are we allowed to have partners from outside (we cooperate with a non-EU NGO at times)

Answer: Please refer to answer to Question 18.

Question 30: Is this grants affects on other Smart Balkan Grants, for individual CSOs?

Answer: As per the principle of non-cumulation individual CSO may not get more than one grant per grant line at the same time.

Question 31: Does all of the three organizations should be from three different countries?

Answer: Yes.

Question 32: Is fighting organized environmental crime eligible for this grant?

Answer: The [guidelines](#) for applications contain non-exhaustive list of subtopics that are related to Security and Stability, and Governance. It is important for applicant to explain clearly how the proposed topic of choice is relevant to the CfA.

Question 33: How long does it take until the registration process on the grants management platform is completed? Does it take time that you check all documents etc.

Answer: You will receive an information within five working days whether your profile is approved or if you need to upload more documents.

Question 34: Is it eligible to apply with project on creating the Network of Rural women because we are in discussion with some organization to create the network and is very important to have the network?

Answer: The main aim of your application should not be the creation of the network, but rather it should focus on what the network of rural women is planning on doing in areas of Security and Stability and/or Governance.

Question 35: Can the representative office of EU organization be lead partner or any other partner in the consortium?

Answer: No.

Question 36: Can we state in the project that the beginning of the implementation of the project would be in April 2023 and the end in April 2025?

Answer: Yes, you need to state the time frame for the implementation of your project and will have to explain why you want to start from a specific date.

Question 37: Can you send us the link from the registration platform?

Answer: <https://gmp.smartbalkansproject.org/>

Question 38: Do we need to have all organisations as partners also registered to the platform or not?

Answer: Yes, everyone must be registered on the Grant Management Platform.

Question 39: In case of an informal network, each partner organisation has to be registered in the portal... Yet, who do we put as a lead applicant? The informal network or one of the member organisations?

Answer: Lead applicant should be one of the member organizations of the informal network.

Question 40: Does all partners in the consortium need to be registered via Smart Balkans portal, or that is only a requirement for the leading partner?

Answer: Registration on the Grants Management Platform is mandatory for lead applicant and for consortium partners.

Question 41: If a network of CSO is applying in the call, can the members of the Network be official partners in the consortium? Also, is the number of consortiums limited to 3 partners from 3 countries, or is it allowed to be more?

Answer: Yes, members of the officially registered network can be partners. As for the number of consortium partners, 3 partners from 3 countries are the minimum, but it is possible to have more partners (either form the same or the different countries as long as they are registered in one six SMART Balkans countries).

Question 42: We are faith based organisations registered in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well non-profit. Can we apply for Regional Grants?

Answer: If under „faith based organization“ you mean religious organization, than according the Call guidelines religious organizations are not eligible for this type of grant.

Question 43: Do the signed partnership statements have to be submitted in the first stage (CONCEPT NOTE approval stage) of your application review?

Answer: Yes

Question 44: Will the project idea include the Balkan Region or only Albania?

Answer: Regional grants must have regional approach.

Question 45: Can you clarify the period of implementation of the project? (18-24 months, from-to)

Answer: Regional grants can last from 18 to 24 months. Project application must indicate exact duration of the project in months. It is not obligatory to put a certain dates as a commencement and finalisation dates of the project.

Question 46: Is it mandatory for the application to have experience in the region? We have worked only in Albania. Is our application eligible or not?

Answer: it is not mandatory, but it is preferable. The consortium must show a strong regional experience and approach.

Question 47: Regarding the Registration Process we have some questions: Organisation didn't have any activities previously (up to May 2022) so we do not have yet an audit report nor annual report. Is it a restriction for the application?

Answer: No, it is not restriction for registration process on to a Grants Management Platform, but it is weakness for the consortium since relevant experience is one of the criteria.

Question 48: Would you please clarify whether the grant may be used as a contribution to a much larger project that will increase visibility and impact of grant itself?

Answer: Yes. While it is possible for these grants to be co-financing to some other projects, SMART Balkans will not support projects with less than 60% of its total value.

Question 49: One of the conditions for applying to the Regional grants is also that the applicants must have experience in working in the Western Balkans region and with various stakeholders (state and non-state). Does the applicant must have regional experience outside its country of origin? What is the scope and format of that experience? When it comes to partners from EU countries which will be involved as a good practice example should we mention them in the concept note?

Answer: The applicant doesn't have to have regional experience outside its country of origin, but it is weakness for the consortium since relevant experience is one of the criteria. It is preferable that the consortium have relevant experience in the region. Relevance of the experience is highly important. As for the good practice examples from the EU, please refer to the answer to Question 18.

Question 50: Organisation has planned to apply for the call No: SB RG 01/22 with activities which are within the framework of the Initiative. All activities would be implemented by organisation and its

partner organizations from the Western Balkan countries. Centar za promociju civilnog drustva (CPCD) is a member organization of the Initiative. We would like to check whether this membership potentially creates the conflict of interests?

We underline that an organization would be the only member of the Initiative responsible for the implementation of the project.

Answer: No, it wouldn't be perceived as the conflict of interest since external evaluators will evaluate applications.

Question 51: We would like to kindly ask you for the clarification if the co-financing of ongoing and/or future projects is allowed.

Answer: Please refer to the answer to Question 48.

Question 52: During yesterday's info session on the call for applications for regional grants, it was stated that the same organisation may apply for both a regional grant and a core grant. However, as one of your colleagues clarified, two applications must be different in terms of content, theme, etc. Regarding that, our question asks for your additional clarification of the meaning of 'theme' in this very context. To present it plainly, we wonder if, e.g., our two applications (one for regional and one for core grant) would be related both to migration issues but tackling different specific themes (for instance, the first application relating to the smuggling of migrants while other to some issues of integration) — will those two applications be perceived and assessed as different (i.e., applications tackling two different 'themes')?

Answer: Regional grants are about specific project and have specific themes related to security & stability and governance. Core grants are about organization itself (and about those organizations who implement projects in those areas and having impact in society). In other words, the Core grants do not envisage development of the project with specific activities.

Question 53: Taking into account that the invitation states that one of the conditions for the applicant and partners is that it is a registered legal entity that is non-profit making. What we are interested in is whether the University can apply as a lead applicant or partner. Namely, according to Article 30 paragraph 2 of the Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Srpska: "A higher education institution is a non-profit organization and performs its activities as a public service in accordance with the regulation governing the system of public services, and the profit it makes from the performance of higher education activities is used exclusively for development and improvement of one's own activity of higher education." Therefore, according to our domestic legislation, Higher education institutions, i.e. Universities and faculties are considered non-profit organizations, in this regard we are interested in whether, in terms of the conditions set by the call for this grant, we as a University can apply as a leading applicant or partner.

Answer: Please refer to the answer to Question 8.

Question 54: As an organization we are interested in applying cooperation with other organizations are any criteria for how many NGO-s should be in a partnership? Or should we cooperate from 6 Balkan countries or only 2 of them, or there is no criteria for this? Should we have activities for 6 Balkan countries or only in our country?

Answer: Different calls have different eligibility criteria, which you can find in the application guidelines. For the regional grants it is important to apply at least 3 CSOs from 3 countries of the Western Balkans.