UNOV / UNICRI
Call for Proposals
Guidelines for grant applicants

Name of the grants programme: **Grant Initiative to Strengthen Cooperation with Civil Society Organizations in Conflict Mitigation**

Deadline for receipt of Concept Notes: 3 July 2016, h. 23.59 (CET time)

Notice:

This Call for Proposals forms the basis for applying for UNICRI grants. It must neither be construed as a grant agreement, nor be regarded as a confirmation of a grant awarded by UNICRI to any entity. Consequently, UNICRI is not liable for any financial obligations, or otherwise, incurred by any entity in responding to this call for proposals. Such costs will not be considered as part of the grant budget in the event that a grant is awarded to an applicant.

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1 THE GRANTS PROGRAMME

1.1 Background

UNICRI is a United Nations entity established in 1965 to support countries worldwide in preventing crime and facilitating criminal justice. Crime is a common concern both for governments and citizens across the globe. As crime becomes increasingly internationalized, new forms of crime emerge, and organized crime spreads, national responses and international cooperation are required in the fields of crime prevention and criminal justice. UNICRI is mandated to assist intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental organizations in formulating and implementing improved policies in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice.

To effectively mitigate conflict in society it is necessary to strengthen and promote a bottom-up approach, implementing practical, innovative and sustainable measures that are customized to local and regional conditions. This is a domain where civil society stakeholders can be very useful and are a crucial partner to engage with.

As part of UNICRI mandate and in line with the Institute's programmatic strategy, this Call for Proposals aims at reinforcing partnership and cooperation with civil society organizations and non-state actors, supporting them in delivering innovative projects and disseminate lessons learned and good practices for conflict mitigation.

In particular, the main objectives of this Grants programme are:

- Strengthen the capacity of civil society and non-state actors to deliver innovative actions aimed at conflict mitigation in the Maghreb region;
- Strengthen the capacity of media to contribute to a responsible and pluralistic media environment;
- Support innovative projects in the field of conflict mitigation and disseminate lessons learned and best practices.

The main target groups and beneficiaries will be civil society organizations, media, cultural and religious associations, women and youth organizations and local communities.

1.2 Thematic focus of this Call for Proposals and priority issues

This Call for Proposals seeks to provide funding support to Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and other Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working in the area of democratic citizenship, conflict prevention and mitigation, human rights, intercultural dialogue, peace building and inclusive societies, education, social entrepreneurship and innovation in the North Africa region, with particular focus on Libya and Tunisia. Regional cross-border cooperation is encouraged. Particular focus and priority will be given to projects that will contribute to test innovative ideas and that show strong capacity to handle and mitigate possible risks.

Grant funding under this Call for Proposals shall be provided under 3 categories:

Category 1: Promoting democratic citizenship

Category 2: Conflict prevention and mitigation

Category 3: Communities empowerment

The three (3) categories, though all contributing to the same objective and targeting NGOs and media, are independent of each other and are to be treated separately. However, a maximum of two categories can be combined to a bigger project, where of benefit.

<u>**Category 1: Promoting democratic citizenship**</u>

Under this Category, activities that contribute to the following results will be given priority, inter alia:

- Raising communities' engagement and action conducive to democratic citizenship outcomes;
- Strengthening youth engagement and citizen participation in the public and civic spheres;
- Strengthening women engagement in building inclusive societies;
- Strategic communications and messaging, through traditional and social media;
- Promoting cross-border cooperation and networks of civil society actors.

<u>**Category 2: Conflict prevention and mitigation**</u>

Under this Category, activities that contribute to the following results will be given priority, inter alia:

- Promoting conflict prevention and mitigation;
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder mitigation;
- Strengthening the role of women and youth;
- Strategic communications and messaging, through traditional and social media;
- Person-to-person engagement;
- Promoting cross-border cooperation and networks of civil society actors.

<u>**Category 3: Communities empowerment**</u>

Under this Category, activities that contribute to the following results will be given priority, inter alia:

- Providing participatory opportunities for communities, especially youth and families;
- Promote community development by providing motivation, education and proper cognitive, democratic and social skills;
- Increase participation of local communities in decision-making processes;
- Cultural and religious traditions;
- Promoting cross-border cooperation and networks of civil society actors.

1.3   Award amounts

Proposals with budgets ranging from 30,000 USD to maximum 60,000 USD will be considered for award. All applications with different budgetary needs will be considered. However, value for money will be assessed as a part of the rating criteria.

2   HOW TO APPLY FOR A GRANT

These guidelines under this section set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of grants projects financed under this grants programme.

2.1   Eligibility Criteria

There are eligibility criteria relating to:

- who may apply (2.1.1);
- projects for which a grant/contract may be awarded (2.1.3); and
- costs which may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant/contract (2.1.4).

2.1.1   *Fundamental principles*

Grant applicants should consider the following fundamental principles in designing their grant proposals:

- an ethical approach to grant implementation;
- a demonstrable commitment to democratic citizenship;
- partnership with other stakeholders;
- project design with the potential for replication;
- sustainability of project.

2.1.2   *Eligibility of applicants: who may apply*?

In order to be eligible for a Grant, applicants **must**:

- be a non-profit making organisation or NGO registered under the relevant Laws of the country where it is registered;
- have been registered not less than two (2) years;
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the project, i.e. not acting as an intermediary;
- demonstrate prior experience of at least two years implementing activities in one of the areas mentioned in section 1.2;
- have a bank account.

2.1.3   *Eligible projects: which proposals may be funded?*

Duration

All activities financed by this Grants programme must be implemented in a period of 24 months and are expected to start in January 2017.

Location

For this Call for Proposals, activities have to be implemented in the North Africa region[1], with particular focus on Libya and Tunisia. Regional cross-border cooperation and cooperation with actors from other countries of the region is encouraged.

<u>Types of proposals</u>

Only proposals aimed at achieving the main objectives, categories and related results as indicated in section 1.2 are eligible for funding under this Call for Proposals.

The following types of proposals are **not eligible**:

- proposals concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;

- proposals concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;

- credit or loan schemes;

- debts and provisions for losses or debts;

- proposals which consist exclusively or primarily of capital expenditure e.g. land, buildings, equipment, vehicles, etc. These can be better dealt with through procurement;

- proposals which discriminate against individuals or groups of people on grounds of their gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, or lack of them, or their ethnic origin;

- scholarships, sponsorships and school fees;

- cash donations;

- political party and religious activities;

- proposals which provide funding for terrorist activities.

<u>Number of applications per applicant</u>

An applicant may submit only one proposal per category under this Call for Proposals. However where the demonstrated benefit is clear or strategic, two categories may be combined to a bigger project for a maximum of USD 60,000.

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[1] The UNICRI initiative covers the following countries: Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Chad and Burkina Faso.

2.1.4 *Eligibility of costs: which costs may be taken into consideration?*

The categories of costs considered as eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and a ceiling for "eligible costs". Note that the eligible costs must be based on real costs based on supporting documents. Costs that do not appear realistic may be rejected.

It is therefore in the applicant's interest to provide a **realistic and cost-effective budget**.

<u>Eligible direct costs</u>

To be eligible under this Call for Proposals, costs must be directly verifiable and traceable to the activities being implemented.

<u>Contributions in kind</u>

Contributions in kind are not considered actual expenditure and are not eligible costs for reimbursement.

<u>Ineligible costs</u>

The following costs are **not eligible**:

- debts and provisions for losses or debts;

- interest owed;

- salary top-ups and similar emoluments to government employees

- items already financed in another framework, i.e. existing capacity should not be included in the budget ;

- purchases of land or buildings [2];

- currency exchange losses;

- taxes, including VAT, unless the Beneficiary (or the Beneficiary's partners) cannot reclaim them and the applicable regulations do not forbid coverage of taxes;

- credit to third parties.

2.2 Application procedures

This Call for Proposals takes a phased-approach. Applicants are to submit a concept note first which will be reviewed by the Project Review Committee. Shortlisted applicants will be contacted by UNICRI with an invitation to submit a full project proposal.

Please note that the elements outlined in the concept note cannot be modified by the applicant in the full project proposal.

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[2] Except where necessary for the direct implementation of the project, in which case ownership belongs to UNICRI until it is transferred to the final beneficiaries. Any such transfer shall be done in accordance with the internal rules of UNICRI.

2.2.1   *Application forms*

Concept notes must be submitted in accordance with the instructions in the concept note application form annexed to this document.

Full project proposals must be submitted in accordance with the instructions in the concept note application form annexed to this document by shortlisted applicants.

All applications must be in English or French.

Due care must be taken to complete the application form. Any error or major discrepancy related in the application form (e.g. the amounts mentioned in the budget are inconsistent with those mentioned in the application form) may lead to rejection of the application.

Clarifications will only be requested if information provided is unclear, and prevents objective assessment of the proposal.

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Please note that only the application form and the completed annexes will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL relevant information concerning the project.

2.2.2   *Where and how to send the application?*

Applications must be submitted by email to cveprogramme@unicri.it, marked "Grant Application - *name of organization*" in the subject.

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by mail) or delivered to other addresses will not be considered under this Call for Proposals.

Incomplete applications will be rejected.

2.2.3   *Deadline for submission of applications*

The deadline for the submission of concept notes is **3 July 2016, h. 23.59 (CET time)** as evidenced by the date of receipt of submission email. Any application submitted after the deadline will be automatically rejected.

The deadline for the submission of full project proposals will be communicated to short-listed applicants.

3   EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

3.1   Evaluation and selection of applications

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the Project Review Committee. All proposals submitted by applicants will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria:

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed project does not meet the <u>eligibility criteria</u> stated in section 2.1, the application shall be rejected on this <u>sole</u> basis.

STEP 1: ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT

The following will be assessed:

- The submission deadline has been respected. If the deadline has not been respected the application will automatically be rejected.

- The correct application form is duly filled and requested documents are attached to the application. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected solely on that basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

- The application meets the rest of the eligibility criteria.

STEP 2: EVALUATION OF THE APPLICATION

An evaluation of the quality of the applications will be carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in the evaluation grids included below.

3.1.1 *Scoring*

The evaluation criteria are divided into sections. Each section will be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following guidelines: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

All applicants who fail to obtain the minimum pass mark of 15 out of 25 will not be considered further.

Concept note evaluation grid

Sections	Maximum Score
1. Experience and knowledge of the substantive areas of work	**5**
How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and the priorities of the Call for Proposals? How coherent is the overall design of the project? Does the applicant have sufficient technical expertise?	
2. Innovation component of the concept note	**5**
What is the innovative component of the proposal (methodology, approach, target groups, actions, etc.)? What makes it different from other initiatives? Can be replicated in other contexts?	
3. Geographical scope and cross border cooperation	**5**
Are the activities foreseen to take place in the priority countries? Are the activities planned to be implemented in more than one country of the region? If so, will they promote synergies and cooperation among countries?	
4. Target Group	**5**
How clearly defined and strategically chosen are the target groups? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	
5. Capacity to handle risks	**5**
Have the risks been properly identified? Has a mitigation strategy been clearly defined?	
Total	**25**

3.1.2 *Shortlisting of concept note applications*

Following the evaluation of eligible concept notes, the applications are ranked according to their scores and a shortlist is defined by the evaluation team. Shortlisted applications will then be contacted by UNICRI with the invitation for the submission of a full project proposal.

3.1.3 *Provisional selection*

Following the evaluation of eligible full project proposals, a table listing the applications ranked according to their scores is established. A provisional selection of applications is made at this stage depending on their ranking following the evaluation.

STEP 3: APPROVAL OF THE GRANTEE

3.2 Approval of awards

The final approval of selected applications follows UNICRI's procedures. The review considers whether the proposals put forward conform to the UN regulations and rules, with special attention to the general principles of:

- fairness, transparency and integrity;
- effective competition;
- best value for money; and
- the interest of the UN.

3.3 Notification of Decision

Applicants are informed in writing of UNICRI's decision concerning their application.

3.4 Indicative Timetable

Item	Date
Deadline for submission of concept notes	3 July 2016
Information to applicants about the outcome of the evaluation of the concept note and invitation to shortlisted applicants to submit full project proposals	22 July 2016
Deadline for the submission of full project proposals	15 September 2016
Estimated start date /project implementation	1 January 2017

4   DOCUMENTATION

4.1   Documents to be submitted on application

The following documents must be submitted as part of the concept note application:

- Concept note application form (template provided);

- Registration certificate.

If the applicant is shortlisted and is contacted by UNICRI, the following documents must be submitted as part of the full project proposal application:

- Project proposal application form (template will be provided);

- Budget (template will be provided);

- Financial statements for the last 2 years (or audit reports where available).

Further documentation may be required and these may be communicated to provisionally selected applicants in due course.

Documents may be checked for truthfulness and accuracy of representation through various means, including but not limited to internet searches, formally official confirmation from responsible offices, letters of recommendation, etc.

4.2   Documents to be signed between UNICRI and the Contractual Party

The following documents will be signed as part of the grant agreement between UNICRI and grant recipients:

- Grant agreement based on the standard UNICRI Grant agreement

- Annex A – Project Proposal

- Annex B – Budget breakdown