

CIVIL SOCIETY FUND – GRANTS FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

1. Background

The Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee (MEUSAC) is calling for proposals from Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to cover up to 80% of the expenses related to the affiliation of such organisations in European umbrella organisations, grouping, federations, confederations or networks and attendance at conferences, seminars and meetings abroad on matters directly related to the EU in relation to such affiliation.

The funds available under Part B of the CSF are to be allocated in such manner:

- Type 1. Funds for facilitating the participation of these organizations in European groupings, associations and / or federations following a public call for expression of interest; and
- Type 2. Funds to be allocated as co-financing according to criteria to be elaborated on the same lines as the Co-financing fund for local councils.

Allocation of funds between Type 1 and Type 2 will be at the discretion of the committee responsible for allocating funds. Funds shall be awarded by the committee for co-financing or for other purposes on the basis of the merits of the proposal submitted by the organisation.

The terms and conditions outlines below are restricted to **Type 1** Funds specified above.

The objectives of the CSF under Part B, Type 1 are the following:

- Keep abreast of developments in the European Union;
- Enable CSOs to better educate their members about EU matters related to their respective fields of competence; and
- Enable CSOs to participate effectively in the decision-making process at European level.

2. Eligible Applicants

- Civil Society Organisations that include: Voluntary, self-governing organisations not subject to direction by public authorities, independent of political control and enrolled with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations in terms of the Voluntary Organisations Act, and Social Partners (employers organisations and trade-unions having official recognition under some specific law or regulation or administrative act)¹; and
- are established for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest or in the interest of their mission statement and not having an industrial or commercial character. Supporting documents should be attached to the application form.

Moreover, only organizations actively and regularly participating in the MEUSAC consultation structures (Core Group and Sectoral Committees) are eligible.

Funds under CSF Part B, Type 1 will cover activities from the 1st of September 2009 up till the 31st August 2010.

Organisations benefiting from CSF are to enter into a written grant agreement with MEUSAC whereby they undertake to collaborate with MEUSAC in the organisation of various activities including making available facilities for seminars and meetings related to both MEUSAC and to the respective organisation's roles and functions.

3. Percentage Rate for Type 1 Funds

The funds available under this policy will cover a percentage of up to 80% of the eligible expenses borne by the respective Civil Society Organisation. In the case of expenses incurred in travelling, the Committee will only consider eligible for reimbursement the most economical air fare (on production of the ticket/s and boarding passes)..

The percentage rate will be determined by the Evaluation Committee and such decision shall be final. The selected applicant is expected to provide own resources and/or involve other donors to cover the additional percentage of the expenses incurred.

4. Selection of Applications – First Phase

All applications will be assessed according to the following criteria:

¹ As per Annex 2, Constituted Bodies benefiting from funds under Part A of the CSF or under any fund that may come into existence whereby such constituted bodies would be provided with financial assistance for EU-related activities are not eligible for co-financing under Part B of the CSF or any scheme that may eventually replace this.

(1) Administrative Compliance

Verification that the application is complete in accordance with the checklist.

It is important that the applicant must present a complete Application Form, filled in with all relevant details and documentation. No outline applications, incomplete or handwritten applications shall be considered. Moreover, all required documentation predetermined within the check list are to be attached to the application form. It is important for Applicants to ensure that all sections of the Application Form are completed. Applications received after the stipulated deadline will not be considered. If such terms and conditions are not met the application will be automatically disqualified.

(2) Eligibility of the applicants

Verification that the applicant meets the requirements according to Section 2 - Eligible Applicants

(3) Evaluation of the quality of the proposals

An evaluation of the quality of the proposal that is to be submitted by the Applicant will be carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in the Evaluation Grid set out in Annex 1. Award criteria will allow the quality of the proposal that will be submitted to be evaluated by Committee in relation to the objectives and priorities set under the CSF together with the quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness. The percentage rate grant allocated to the applicant shall be finally determined by the Committee based upon the set of criteria outlined in Annex 1.

5. Approval process and Disbursement – Phase 2

Upon approval of the project proposal, the grant allocated will be paid out in two instalments:

- a. pre-financing of up to 70% of the grant following the signature by the organisation of the grant agreement. The precise pre-financing rate is to be determined by the Committee.
- b. the balance once the final technical implementation report and the financial statement, complete with the relevant receipts have been approved by the Committee.

Provided that as already indicated above, the total amount of the grant shall not exceed 80% of the eligible expenses incurred by the CSO. The precise percentage will be determined on a case by case basis for each individual proposal accepted by the Committee and will depend on the scope of the initiative for which funding is being requested.

Moreover, where the total amount of the grant to be awarded exceeds €2,500 the need for advancing funds (pre-financing), and the actual percentage advanced may

be subject to assessment by the Committee of the applicant's cashflow position prevailing at the time and funds will be advanced only if the cashflow position demonstrates that an advance is in fact required.

6. Final Technical Report – Phase 3

A final technical report is to be submitted in order for the organisation to benefit from any remaining balance of the grant that is being allocated. It is important that the final technical report reflects the total expenditure of the activity.

For example: Organisation X estimated that the activity would cost €1,000. The Committee approved the activity and based on the selection criteria, Organisation X qualified for 60% of the incurred expenses (maximum percentage rate is 80%).

Therefore the following will be applied:

60% of the total estimated activity costs (€1,000) = €600

A pre-financing of 70% of EUR 600 is allocated to Organisation X totalling an amount of €420. The final 30% amounting to EUR 180 will be given once Organisation X submits its technical report attaching all the necessary receipts as evidence of payment that amount to €1,000. Should the total amount estimated for the activity cost is less than €1,000 then the percentage will be re-worked accordingly based on the total expenditure. However, the percentage rate cannot be revised if the activity cost is greater than €1,000.

If the organisation does not present a full report supported with the relevant receipts by the stipulated deadline, it will also be requested to reimburse any amount that was advanced to it by the Committee.

Once the activity has been terminated, under no circumstances may the applicant organisation generate profit or have excess funding. Should such a case arise, the Administrative Board will automatically withdraw and terminate the funds allocated to the applicant organisation.

7. Submission of applications

The applicants shall fill in the Application Form which is available on MEUSAC's website: www.meusac.gov.mt Supporting documents are to be attached to the application where applicable. The application (including any annexes and supporting documents) are to be submitted in 4 hard copies (1 original and 3 copies), as well as one copy in electronic format (CDs) that must be identical to the hard copy.

Applications are to be submitted in a sealed, intact envelope by mail or in person and addressed to: The CSF Committee, 280, Republic Street, Valletta, VLT1112.

The envelope containing the application shall be marked "Co-Financing Fund B1 – CSF". Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered at

other addresses will not be accepted or deemed eligible. Upon receipt of an application a letter of acknowledgment will be sent to the applicant organisation within 5 working days.

Applicants should keep strictly to the format of the application and are to complete the application form carefully and as clearly as possible. Handwritten applications will not be accepted. Applications should be submitted by not later than **21st August, 2009**.

The final technical report is to then reach the Committee by not later than the **15th September 2010**, failing which, the organisation would lose its right for the remaining balance of the grant and will have to reimburse the any pre-financing received.

Those Organisations that fail to abide by the above deadlines will not be considered for fund allocation.

Annex 1 - EVALUATION GRID

	Maximum Score
Project/Activity	
Keeping abreast of the development in the European Union;	10
Enabling the organisation to better educate its members about EU matters related to its respective field of competence	10
Enabling the organisation to participate effectively in the decision-making process at European level	15
Level of International partnership	10
Relevance of the activity to the National Priorities and to the members of the organisation	15
Expected Impact of the activity on the members of the organisation	15
Results achieved by the activity - multiplier effects (outcome of the activity and sustainability)	15
Cost-effectiveness of the proposal	10
TOTAL SCORE	100

Annex 2 - Exclusion Criteria

Potential applicants may not participate in this call for proposals or be awarded funds if:

- (a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, or are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations; and / or
- (b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgement which is *res judicata* (i.e. against which no appeal is possible); and /or
- (c) they are guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the European Commission can justify; and / or
- (d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the Maltese Law; and / or
- (e) they have been the subject of a judgement which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to Malta's or to the Communities' financial interests; and / or
- (f) they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations in connection with a procurement or other grant award procedure financed by the Community budget; and / or
- (g) the CSOs are profit making organisations or political parties or organisations affiliated to such profit making organisations or political parties; and / or
- (h) the CSOs are not represented on the Core Group of MEUSAC or on any of its nine sectoral committees; and / or
- (i) they are not constituted bodies and civil society organizations recognized by law or enrolled under the Voluntary Organisations Act; and / or
- (j) the entities are presenting an application for funding not related to the purpose set out under the CSF Part B Type 1 Funds; And / or
- (k) the entities are constituted bodies benefiting under Part A of the CSF; and / or
- (l) they are already receiving public funding from any government Ministry, department or entity.