



Guidelines for submitting Expressions of Interest for Official Development Assistance (ODA) Projects 2021 to the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

- i. The Official Development Assistance (ODA) policy, falling under the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs, provides ODA in countries and sectors eligible to receive such ODA funding.
- ii. Only Voluntary Organisations (VOs) working in the field of International Development that are registered and compliant with the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations (CVO) can submit their expression of interest.
- iii. The approval of projects and the provision of such funds shall be governed by clear rules and terms of reference as stipulated by the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs, henceforth referred to as “The Ministry”.
- iv. These guidelines may be revised according to exigencies of the ODA Policy, following consultation with VOs working in the field of International Development and internal consultations as required.¹

B. OBJECTIVES

- i. The main area/s or activity of the proposed project should address at least one or more of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) originating from the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The contribution towards the partial achievement of such SDGs is to be reported in the project completion report.

C. PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

- i. be located in the countries mentioned in the expression of interest;
- ii. be preferably partnered with registered organisation/s in the country where the project will be implemented;
- iii. promote gender equality and empower all women and girls by providing equal rights and opportunities;
- iv. VOs are encouraged to involve the private sector (Malta-registered) and with a clear commitment to follow up and ensure the project’s sustainability.
- v. Participation of multiple CVO-registered VOs is encouraged.

D. BUDGET

- i. The period of implementation should commence upon signature of the Grant Agreement and shall be concluded within twelve (12) calendar months from the last signature on the Grant Agreement.
- ii. For each of the three projects selected, the Ministry is allocating a maximum of €55,000 in grants from its ODA budget. The financing of the project is fully funded by the Ministry. The grant shall be given to projects selected according to their ranking of marks given by a specially appointed selection board.
- iii. The Ministerial grant will be provided upon signature of the Grant Agreement to the lead VO.
- iv. The Ministerial grant shall be released by the lead VO to its partners according to each deliverable. This is to avoid any complications, also in view of *force majeure*, including the current COVID-19 pandemic, should the project be in a position of not being finalised during its implementation period.
- v. The Ministerial grant will be allocated to projects against established selection criteria (refer to Annex D), and subsequent selection outcome ranking list issued by the Ministry. The Ministry reserves the right not to allocate funds, should projects fall under the established quality benchmark. The decision and ranking by the selection board is final with a pass mark set at 60/100.
- vi. While highly encouraging free social media publicity, VOs are to allocate from 1% to 3% of the Ministerial grant for promoting the project minimally three (3) times during implementation and at closure, highlighting project objectives, progress and achieved results while giving due credit to the Ministry's financing assistance. The Ministry's logo and the following wording 'Project financed by the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs' must be invariably included on all promotional material, in social media messages, on the VOs' websites, and in all publicity/promotional measures, as applicable. Images of the Ministry's logo and the Malta Flag shall be provided to successful VOs at project start.
- vii. VOs are requested to apply good governance in their procurement of goods, services, and works throughout project implementation, to ensure transparency, fairness, equality, and value-for-money of public funds. Documentation proving this, in as much as is possible, should be submitted with the progress and completion reports.

E. ELIGIBILITY

i. All VOs should:

- a. be enrolled and in compliance with the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations (CVO);
- b. have the Expression of Interest submitted appropriately by the lead VO and accompanied by all the documents requested in the expression of interest by the deadline.

ii. Ministerial grant will not be awarded to VOs that:

- a. are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business 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;
- b. have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgement which has the force of *res judicata*;



- c. have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means;
- d. 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 country in which they are established, or those of the country where the project is to be performed;
- e. have been the subject of a judgement, which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, and/or involvement in a criminal organisation;
- f. following another procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Government or the European Commission, have been declared to be in breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations;
- g. by the date of signature of the Grant Agreement, are subject to a conflict of interest. **Applicants are to declare any conflict of interest at the time of application;**
- h. by the date of signature of the Grant Agreement, are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the Ministry as a condition of participation in the granting of ODA funds, or fail to supply the required information.

F. SELECTION CRITERIA

- i. The selection criteria (refer to Annex I) describe which elements will be taken into consideration for assessment by the selection board.

G. FUNDING RULES

- i. Participating VOs must prove that they have adequate operational capacity, namely the necessary human resources, skills, competencies, and motivation to complete the proposed project successfully. An organisational chart would need to be presented with the Expression of Interest.

H. APPLICATION PROCESS

- i. Only VOs that are registered and compliant with the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations (CVO) are eligible;
- ii. All submissions must be invariably made through the following e-mail: development.mfea@gov.mt by the deadline stipulated in the Expression of Interest;
- iii. VOs are to ensure that **all** necessary supporting documentation, as requested in the Guidelines, are submitted via email. Failure to submit all the necessary supporting documentation will disqualify the submission. Supporting documents are to be submitted in pdf. The Ministry reserves the right to request further clarifications and supporting documents in assessing expressions received.
- iv. All participating VOs should provide all supporting documentation, which include:
 - a. Full name of lead VO (including VO registration number) and applicant details of who is submitting the expression of interest (name, address and contact details including email);
 - b. Copy of legal representative's identification documents (valid ID card or Passport of who is submitting the expression of interest);
 - c. Organisation organigram clearly identifying who will be working on the project;

- d. Details and description of role of other partners (VOs or private entities), who will be working on the project that could be both based in Malta or within the country of implementation (name, address and contact details including email address);
- e. Budget pre-set by the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs against listed activities, deliverables and timeframes;
- f. Soft copies of the submission must be provided in Excel, pdf or jpg formats. Other formats will not be considered.
- g. Offers need to include (if applicable) delivery costs. The Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs shall not be responsible for any other charges on delivery, which were not reflected in the respective expression of interest;
- h. The information must be submitted in English;
- i. Any submission received after the deadline stipulated in the Expression of Interest shall be disregarded;
- j. In submitting an expression of interest, the applicant accepts in full and its entirety, the content of this document, including subsequent clarifications issued by the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs, whatever the applicant's own corresponding conditions may be, which are hereby waived;
- k. Applicants are expected to examine carefully and comply with all instructions, forms, and specifications contained in this document;
- l. Applying is free of charge.

I. RESULTS

- i. Results will be published on the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs website www.foreignandeu.gov.mt;
- ii. Individual evaluation scores can be provided upon request by the applicant by e-mail to development.mfea@gov.mt

J. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

- i. Projects must be physically completed within twelve (12) calendar months from the date of signature of the Grant Agreement;
- ii. The last project payment must be affected not later than one (1) month following the project's physical completion;
- iii. Lead VOs are requested to submit one (1) progress implementation report covering the first six (6) months of project implementation, and a completion report at the end. Both reports are to be submitted within two (2) months from the end of the corresponding reporting period;
- iv. All quotes for the procurement of goods/services/works and reason/s for selection thereof, statements of expenditure, and original invoices and corresponding original receipts must be submitted with the corresponding reports. In cases of exceptional, justifiable circumstances where the original invoices and original receipts cannot be provided, notarised *vera copias* of such invoices and receipts may be submitted if authorisation is sought beforehand from the Ministry;
- v. The Grant Agreement is distributed and signed by the lead VO. The draft version will be circulated by the Ministry ahead of signing;
- vi. Projects may be subjected to physical monitoring by any representative/body/entity appointed by the Ministry;



- vii. In case of queries about the call for applications or about project proposals, one may contact the International Development Unit at the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs by e-mail to development.mfea@gov.mt.

K. ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE COSTS FINANCING

Other Eligible Costs

- i. VOs may collectively utilise up to 10% of the grant on staff costs of one or more employees, who need to be indicated at application stage, as follows:

Method	Description	Specific supporting documents
Part-time assignment with a flexible number of hours (up to 10% of Grant) worked on the project per month.	Employee/s dedicate/s a flexible share of his/her working time to the project (up to 10% of the Grant). Staff costs = number of hours actually worked on the project multiplied by hourly rate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Registration of the working time (i.e. time sheets) covering all actual working time of the employee/s on the project.• payslips for the related reporting period and last FS3/s• Indicate method how the hourly rate for the related reporting period has been calculated.

Ineligible Costs

- i. The VOs commit themselves not to utilise the grant, or any part thereof, for covering costs related to the purchase and servicing of office equipment and utility bills. The partner organisation implementing the project in the implementation country is not restricted by this condition as long as these costs are related to the project, are clearly specified in the application, and do not exceed 20% of the grant. The Ministry reserves the right to recover funds if this is not adhered to.

- ii. In-kind contribution will not be considered as part of the total eligible project cost.

L. CIRCUMSTANCES OF FORCE MAJEURE

- i. All participating VOs must take into consideration the following eventual circumstances of *force majeure* which may arise during the application process, especially in view of the current COVID-19 situation:

- a. Riot, war, invasion, act of hostility by foreign enemies, acts of terrorism, civil war, rebellion, revolution, insurrection of military or usurped power;
- b. Ionising radiation or contamination, radio activity from any nuclear fuel or nuclear waste, radioactive toxic explosive or any other material hazardous properties of any explosive assembly or nuclear component;
- c. Earthquakes, floods, fire or other physical natural disasters but excluding weather conditions regardless of severity; and
- d. Strikes at national level or industrial disputes at a national level, however excluding any industrial dispute which is specific to the performance of the works or this Project.
- e. A pandemic or epidemic, as declared by the competent health authorities, hitting the region.

- ii. All participating VOs shall have no entitlement to claim from the Ministry any costs, losses, or

damages should the Ministry be required to cancel the projects after the selection results are issued due to *force majeure*.

ANNEX I – Selection Criteria

	Criteria	Maximum Points (up to)	Points Given
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of the level of the material provided for the application 	10	
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity/expertise of the VO/s: Technical	15	
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project targets the Ministry's requirements/objectives set out in the Expression of Interest 	15	
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project aligns to the development objectives of the country of implementation 	10	
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of sustainability and innovation 	20	
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involvement and/or participation of the local community in the implementation of the project 	10	
7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership with other CVO-registered VOs 	10	
8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involvement of the Maltese private sector 	10	

Pass mark: 60/100

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