

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### **Q: Can organisations from North Macedonia apply?**

A: Yes, the organisation Innovative Media is responsible for collecting applications from that country. On their website, you can find the call for proposals, application form, budget template, and the contact email address to which applications should be submitted.

Link: <https://innovativemedia.mk/en/open-call-for-project-applications/>

### **Q: In the open call for project proposals by the Reporting Diversity Network, it is stated that partnerships with local media are an advantage and will be awarded additional points. In this regard, I would appreciate clarification on how partnerships with local media are defined in the context of this project.**

A: Partnerships are very welcome, and you are encouraged to apply together with a media outlet, as long as you ensure that you are jointly contributing to the same goal. This alignment is very important and will be carefully considered in the evaluation process.

### **Q: As a newly established civil society organisation with very limited prior experience, having implemented only one self-initiated project for the purpose of producing independent media content, would you encourage organisations at our level to apply? Or would this particular call be more suitable for more experienced applicants? Our organisation has not previously applied for external funding.**

A: There are no eligibility requirements in the call that specify how long an organisation must have been established in order to apply, so it is possible for newly established organisations to submit a proposal. However, it is important to note that one of the evaluation criteria is the applicant's financial and operational capacity to implement the proposed activities independently—this includes demonstrating a basic level of organisational and managerial capacity (worth 20 points). Therefore, applicants should make sure to highlight any existing capacities they have in these areas.

### **Q: What is the budget range available under this grant scheme?**

A: According to the Call for Proposals, "...the anticipated size of grants is a minimum of 5,000 euros and a maximum of 7,000 euros."

### **Q: Should the proposed action be a specific campaign, or if it is acceptable to apply with a project focused on the production of feminist media content, such as a podcast.**

A: At this stage, we are not in a position to assess whether a specific idea fits the objectives of the call. However, what is important is that the proposed project aligns with the overall goals of the call, rather than whether the campaign was created specifically for this funding opportunity.

**Q: If a non-profit foundation operates registered media outlets (including both print and online editions), is it eligible to apply with a project proposal under this call, or is eligibility limited to media outlets that are specifically registered as civil society organisations (CSOs)?**

A: The call is specifically open to civil society organisations (CSOs), as defined in the eligibility criteria. Therefore, in the evaluation of project proposals, we are required to adhere strictly to those criteria.

**Q: If VAT is not an eligible cost under this call, is there a possibility for exemption from VAT for the implementation of the project?**

A: VAT is not an eligible cost under this call. However, tax exemption is possible. As you may know, this process depends on the Tax Administration, but in the previous support cycle, we were able to secure VAT exemption for projects supported under this programme.<sup>1</sup>

**Q: Is it possible for individuals who are not formally registered as Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to apply, even if they are registered as physical persons (with NUIS) and pay taxes? For example, can independent artists or influencers with extensive experience in diversity and inclusion projects be eligible?**

A: This call is strictly open to formally registered Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). Individuals who are registered as physical persons, including influencers, artists, or other professionals—even those with extensive project experience and tax registration (NUIS)—are not eligible under this specific call. For applicants based in Albania, please explore the opportunity here:

□ [Open Call for Project Applications – Albania](#)

**Q: Is the call open to applicants from outside the Western Balkans, such as countries in Africa?**

A: No, the call is open only to applicants based in the Western Balkan 6 (WB6) countries.

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<sup>1</sup> The question and answer refer to Serbia.

**Q: Are projects related to reporting on diversity inclusive of topics like persons with disabilities and gender roles, and are projects involving cooperation across different entities or focusing on women with disabilities eligible?**

**A:** The call for projects and the reporting network cover diverse diversity topics including persons with disabilities, gender, and ethnicity. The relevance and eligibility of each project proposal will be assessed by the evaluation committee.

**Q: Can a multiethnic association apply for a project aimed at preventing hate speech, especially one promoting peace, coexistence, and overcoming post-war trauma?**

**A:** Organisations that meet the criteria listed in the call for proposals can apply. These criteria typically include being legally registered, having relevant experience in diversity representation or hate speech prevention, direct responsibility for project management, and compliance with financial and legal obligations. Multiethnic associations are eligible provided they meet these conditions.

**Q: What should applicants do if they experience technical issues downloading budget Excel documents?**

**A:** Applicants facing technical difficulties can contact the funder to receive the required documents via email or an alternative delivery method.

**Q: Is additional registration required on the funder's or EU platform before applying? Also, besides the application and budget forms, is there a need to submit extra documentation like registration certificates or proof of a non-blocked bank account during the application phase?**

**A:** No additional registration is required. For the application phase, only the application and budget forms need to be submitted. Other documents may be requested if the project passes the initial selection.

**Q: What is the expected timeline for the selection process and contract signing after submitting a project proposal?**

**A:** It is planned that grant recipients will be notified by the end of July. Contract signing is expected by the end of August, with project implementation starting in early September, the earliest.

**Q: Is a project proposal that focuses on reducing stigma against persons with substance use disorders and involving media training, round tables, or campaigns relevant for the call?**

**A:** While specific assessments are part of the evaluation process after the call closes, project ideas contributing to countering hate speech and improving diversity representation are generally considered eligible. The call is not limited to ethnic, religious, and gender diversity but also covers broader issues of tolerance and inclusion.

**Q: How should organisations without employees complete the budget section regarding personnel costs? Are bank fees eligible expenses? Is obtaining three quotes mandatory for service procurements such as publication design, event catering, or venue rental?**

**A:** If the organisation has no employees and personnel work under service contracts, it is not necessary to specify the percentage of engagement. Personnel will report on their work instead of submitting timesheets. Bank fees can be included as project expenses only if they are project-related. The three-offer principle is not mandatory for all types of procurements; detailed financial management instructions will be provided to selected organisations.

**Q: Are any documents besides the application form and budget form required to be submitted at the time of application?**

**A:** Only the application form and the budget form are required at this stage. No additional documents need to be submitted with the initial application. Additional documentation may be requested later from selected applicants.

**Q: Are CVs of team members required to be submitted as part of the project application?**

**A:** No, CVs are not required at the application stage. However, applicants are welcome to include short bios of key team members in the narrative section of the application if they find it relevant.

**Q: What are the requirements and procedures for becoming a member of the Reporting Diversity Network?**

**A:** Interested organisations should send a short letter of interest explaining their motivation and how they can contribute to the Network's objectives. All membership requests are reviewed collectively by the founding members of the Network.