



**Applicant's Guide for Small Grants Funded by the European Union under a
grant project**

**"EU Support to Civil Society and Media Organizations in the Republic of North
Macedonia", IPA Civil Society Programme 2022–2023**

**Reference: IPAIII/2024/453-343 - Civil Society in Action for environment
protection and sustainable urban development – CSA**

**Title of the Action: Community-Based Green Action sub-grant scheme –
A2.1**

Contracting Body: Centro Laici Italiani per le Missioni - CELIM

Deadline for submission of full application: 15.02.2026, 4:30 p.m.



DEFINITIONS

Beneficiary (sub/grant) - Any legal entity that receives a sub/grant.

Best value for money - The tender proposal evaluated best in terms of the criteria established for the contract, e.g. quality, technical properties, aesthetic and functional qualities, after-sales service and technical assistance in relation to the bid price. These criteria must be published in the tender file.

Conflict of Interest - Any event that affects the ability of the applicant, bidder, applicant or contractor or grantee to give an objective and impartial professional opinion or to prevent, at any time, the priority of the interests of the Contracting Authority. Any event that compromises the impartial and objective performance of the functions or the Contracting Authority, or respect for the principles of competition, non-discrimination or equal treatment of candidates/bidders/applicants with respect to the award procedure or contract. Any consideration regarding possible future contracts or conflicts with other obligations, past or present, of the applicant, bidder, applicant or contractor. These restrictions also apply to all subcontractors and employees of the applicant, bidder, applicant or contractor.

There is also a conflict of interest when the impartial and objective exercise of the functions of a budget implementation player or internal auditor is compromised for reasons that include family, emotional life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other common interest with the beneficiary.

Duration, implementation period - The period from the signing of the financing agreement or to the implementation of all project activities.

End beneficiaries of a (sub)grant – Those who will benefit from the project in the long term at the level of society or the sector as a whole.

Grant (sub-grant) - A direct payment of a non-commercial nature by the Contracting Authority to a specific beneficiary for the purpose of conducting an operation.

Most economically advantageous offer – See the best value for money.

Successful Applicant – The applicant selected at the end of a call procedure for draft contracts to be awarded.

Good financial management – A budgetary principle according to which budget funds must be used according to economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.

Sub-Granting Authority/Contracting Authority – the entity that concludes the sub-grant agreement, Centro Laici Italiani per le Missioni – CELIM which is the leader of the consortium with ADRR Solntse from Tetovo who is responsible for managing the grant scheme and Roma Perspektiv from Prilep who jointly implement the EU-funded project "Civil Society in Action for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Urban Development – CSA" within the framework of which this Call for Proposals is published.

Other terms that are not specifically presented here should be understood under the provisions of PraG version 2021.1.

Days should be understood as calendar days unless otherwise stated





Table of Contents

1. General information about the call	5
2. Goals and priorities of the call.....	5
2.1 General purpose.....	5
2.2 Specific objectives.....	5
2.3 Priority areas	6
3. Who can apply	6
Part 1. Administrative check	6
Part 2. Similarity.....	6
4. Available Funds and Grant Amount	7
5. Partnership Rules and Mandatory Terms.....	10
6. Selection and evaluation criteria	10
7. Application Process	13
8. Deadlines and Time Frame	14
9. Support and mentorship	14
10. Contact information	15



1. General information about the call

This call for proposals is being implemented under the project "Civil Society in Action for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Urban Development – CSA", funded by the European Union through **the IPA Civil Society Programme 2022–2023**. The project is sponsored by Centro Laici Italiani per le Missioni – CELIM in partnership **with** ADDR SUN (SONCE) **and** the Roma Perspective Association.

The aim of the call is to provide financial support to civil society organizations at the local level in the Pelagonia region, in order to strengthen their role in environmental protection and promotion of sustainable urban development.

Funding is awarded through a Community-Based Green Action Fund whose mission is to encourage initiatives that:

- promote responsible environmental stewardship;
- contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- support the development of a circular economy;
- create models for sustainable cities and communities;
- strengthen the role of citizens in decision-making processes.

Through this call, it is expected to encourage greater involvement of local stakeholders and create sustainable practices that will contribute to green and inclusive development in the region.

2. Goals and priorities of the call

2.1 General purpose

The overall objective of the call is to strengthen the role of civil society organizations established and operative in the Pelagonia region in the implementation of local initiatives that contribute to environmental protection, combating climate change and promoting sustainable urban development, in line with the principles and policies of the European Union.

2.2 Specific objectives

The call aims to:

- support civil society organizations that develop innovative solutions and practices for environmental and waste management;
- encourage actions that contribute to the introduction of circular economy models and pollution reduction;
- promotes sustainable cities and urban communities, through initiatives that integrate the environment into local planning;
- ensure the involvement of citizens and marginalized groups, especially Roma communities and informal waste collectors, in decision-making processes and implementation of local green actions;
- Strengthen cooperation between civil society organizations, local authorities and institutions through joint activities and partnerships.



2.3 Priority areas

Types of activities eligible for financial support:

1. activities that are in line or related to one or more of the 5 main areas of the Green Agenda for Western Balkans (mandatory): Decarbonisation: climate, energy, mobility; Circular economy; Depollution: air, water & soil; Sustainable food systems & rural areas; Biodiversity: protection & restoration of ecosystems;
2. awareness campaigns on environmental issues on Green Agenda for Western Balkans addressed to citizens through social-media, mass-media (tv, radio, digital technologies) volunteering (mandatory) to be aligned to the Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society and Development of Civil Society 2022-2024 - Civil Resilience Mechanism > 3. Informing the citizens on the EU accession process and related sector reforms in the country;
3. partnership with one or more relevant central or local authorities in Pelagonia Region (municipalities, protected areas institutions, ministries, governmental agencies, etc...) (mandatory);
4. to identify a public area, urban or green, to clean or to requalify collectively;
5. requalification of a natural site and initiatives related to watercourses;
6. advocacy work for environment protection, fight against environmental crime, climate mitigation and adaptation, pollution and GHGs emissions reduction;
7. watchdog activities and monitoring of public policies, action plans and indicators; monitoring of legislative developments and implementation of laws and by-laws;
8. collaboration among CSOs, private sector and public entities in circular economy sector;
9. measures for support behavioural change to protect the environment, biodiversity among school children, youth and parents/relatives;
10. activities to develop the organisational, professional, technical and advocacy capacities of CSOs to address environmental issues, according to their needs; conducting independent reports.

3. Who can apply

Project proposals will be evaluated according to the administrative and eligibility criteria outlined below.

Phase 1. Administrative check

1. The application form published in the Guidelines for this call for proposals (Annex 1) has been used.
2. The proposal was prepared in Macedonian.
3. The application was submitted by e-mail to the correct addresses of CELIM and SONCE.
4. Included is a declaration (statement) by the holder of the project application, signed by the legal representative and stamped (Annex 2).
5. Each co-applicant, if any, has completed, signed and stamped the term included in the application (Annex 3).
6. The budget is attached in the required format, in euros, according to the budget form (Annex 4).
7. The logical framework has been completed and implemented (Annex 5).
8. Declaration of Honour is compiled, signed and stamped

Phase 2. Eligibility of the Lead Applicants and Co-applicants (applicants)

1. The applicants are a legal entities **registered and operating**, with a proven track, on the territory of the Pelagonia Region, Republic of North Macedonia. The applicant is a registered civil society organization under the Law on Associations and Foundations of the Republic of North Macedonia.



2. The Lead Applicant are non-profit organizations that have been established for at least one year from the date of filing this application.
3. The Lead Applicant is directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and does not act as an intermediary.
4. The following supporting documents (in Macedonian, original or copies, according to the Guidelines) shall be submitted: a) Current status of the Central Registry, not older than 6 months; (b) Statute of the Organization; c) Balance sheet and balance sheet for the last three years (if the applicant has been registered for 1 or 2 years as of this call, then appropriate financial statements for the period of existence shall be submitted; if not applicable, a letter of explanation, signed and stamped, shall be submitted); d) CVs of key personnel involved in the implementation of the project; e) Previous experience of the Lead Applicant (Annex 6).
5. Eligibility of Co-Applicants: the proposal shall include as Co-applicant at least a Municipality of Pelagonia Region or any other public institution at national level relevant to the environmental activities of the proposal. The Lead Applicant can include another CSO as Co-applicant which meets the same eligibility criteria of the Lead Applicant .

Phase 3 – Relevance of the Proposal and Evaluation Criteria:

1. The action will be carried out in one of the municipalities of the Pelagonia Region
2. The duration of the action is at least 6 months and a maximum of 8 months.
3. The required grant amount is in line with the set thresholds (up to €14,500).
4. The proposal must be consistent with the priority areas of the call, namely:
 - environmental protection and conservation;
 - climate change – mitigation and adaptation;
 - circular economy and sustainable production and consumption practices;
 - sustainable urban development and green public spaces;
 - Active involvement of the local community in green actions.
5. Under the call, it is mandatory for applicants to establish a partnership (signed letter of support) with at least one public institution, such as a municipality, a regional development centre, a ministry or an institution responsible for one of the priority areas of the call.
 - Please see Section 6 for the table of the Evaluation Criteria.

4. Available Funds and Grant Amount

The total budget earmarked for sub-grants under the Common Green Action Fund is €87,000. A maximum of six initiatives are expected to be supported.

The maximum amount of an individual grant is set at €14,500. The funding covers 100% of the eligible costs and no co-financing is required by applicants.

The duration of supported projects should be at least 6 months and a maximum of 8 months.

Eligible costs are the actual costs incurred by the Applicants that meet all of the following criteria: a. incurred during the implementation of the Action; - Costs relating to services and works relating to activities carried out during the implementation period.

Only reasonable costs can be covered by this sub-grant scheme. The categories of expenses that meet the requirements and do not meet the conditions are listed below. The budget is both a cost estimate and an overall upper limit on "acceptable spending".



Reimbursement of eligible costs may be based on actual costs incurred by the user(s) in accordance with the agreed budget, set out in units and unit costs, according to the form set out in Appendix 4.

At the contractual stage, the Contracting Authority decides whether to accept the proposed amounts on the basis of the interim budget submitted by the applicants, through the analysis of factual data on grants made by the applicants or similar actions.

The Contracting Authority may request an amendment to the budget if arithmetic errors, unrealistic expenditure or unacceptable expenditure are involved. Checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead to the imposition of amendments or reductions by the Contracting Authority to address such errors or inaccuracies. It is not possible to increase the grant as a result of these adjustments.

The purchase of services, goods and work are subjected to the EU PRAG procedure and formats.

Eligible costs are the actual costs incurred by Applicants who meet all of the following criteria:

- occurred during the implementation of the Action;
- Costs relating to services, goods and works refer to activities carried out during the implementation period. Procurement costs refer to the delivery and assembly of items during the implementation period. Entering into a contract, placing an order, or entering into any obligation for costs within the implementation period for the future delivery of services, works, or purchases after the expiration of the implementation period does not meet this requirement;
- The costs incurred must be paid before the project completion date.
- are listed in the estimated total budget for the Action;
- they are necessary for the implementation of the Action;
- they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular recorded in the accounting records of the User(s) and determined according to accounting standards and common cost accounting practices applicable to the User(s);
- cash payments will only be allowed up to a maximum amount of EUR 50 per transaction and no more than EUR 250 in total for cash transactions;
- comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- They are reasonable, justifiable, and consistent with the requirements of sound financial management, especially with regard to economy and efficiency.

Subject to the foregoing, and where it is relevant to comply with the provisions relating to contract award procedures, the following direct costs to the User and its partners are acceptable:

- personnel costs assigned to the Action, corresponding to real salaries, including statutory deductions and other costs associated with awarding; wages and expenses must not exceed those normally incurred by the User or his partners, as the case may be, unless justified by demonstrating that it is essential to the implementation of the Action. The percentage of staff engagement depends on the number of end users and the number of services provided. A full staff position may be considered for 10 or more clients. The combined percentage of human resources and office costs may not exceed 25% of the total eligible costs for the Action.
- travel and daily expenses for staff and other persons participating in the Action, provided that they do not exceed those normally incurred by the User or its partners, as the case may be;
- the cost of consumables;



- operating expenses, provided that they are based on real costs attributable to the conduct of the relevant operation and do not exceed 5% of the total eligible costs of the action;
- costs arising from contracts awarded by the User(s) for the purposes of the Action;
- costs arising directly from the requirements of the Agreement (dissemination of information, translation, reproduction, etc.)
- any other expenditure necessary for the implementation of the Action, in accordance with national legislation and the Budget of the Action.

In-kind contribution

In-kind contribution means the provision of goods or services to the user(s) free of charge by a third party. Since contributions in kind do not include any costs to the User(s), they are not an acceptable cost to this application.

This type of contribution should not be treated as co-financing. However, if the description of the action as proposed includes this kind of contribution, contributions must be made.

Unacceptable costs

The following costs are not acceptable:

- debts and debt servicing costs (interest);
- commissions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- banking security and bank expenses;
- expenditures declared by the beneficiary(s) and financed by another action or work programme receiving a grant from the European Union (including through EDF);
- purchase of land and existing facilities;
- customs and import duties and duties and/or duties with equivalent effect;
- Value Added Tax/VAT- (mandatory for the organisation to register the project with the Secretariat for European Affairs and the Public Revenue Authority with the Grant Scheme Implementer (RRC), excise duties and other special consumption taxes or other similar taxes, levies or charges with equivalent effect;
- a special communication tax;
- motor vehicle taxes;
- special costs applied by regional or local authorities or special boards in the context of the performance of the contract, which are not proportionate to the costs involved in their performance or have equivalent effect or taxes;
- losses from currency exchange;
- third parties;
- in-kind contributions;
- the cost of salaries of the staff of the National Administrations, unless otherwise specified in the sub-grant agreement and only to the extent that they relate to the costs of activities which the relevant public authority would not have carried out if the Action had not been undertaken.



5. Partnership Rules and Mandatory Terms

All applicants are required, within the framework of their project proposals, to establish a partnership with at least one public institution in the form of a letter of support. Acceptable partners are: municipalities, regional development centers and other institutions that are relevant to the topic at the regional or national level.

Applicants are required to provide a clearly defined role of the co-applicants (if any) in the preparation and implementation of the project, as well as a letter of support or memorandum of cooperation.

Each project must envisage activities to raise public awareness through campaigns using various channels (social media, television, radio, digital tools, volunteer actions).

Applicants are required to ensure the active participation of the local community in the implementation of the proposed activities, including marginalized groups.

All grantees are obliged to comply with the visibility rules laid down by the European Union. This implies the mandatory use of the EU and project logo in all promotional materials, publications, websites, events and activities funded under the grant.

6. Selection and evaluation criteria

All submitted project proposals will be evaluated according to predetermined criteria. The evaluation will be carried out by a Grants Committee composed of representatives of the holder, partner organizations and relevant institutions.

Project proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. Relevance of the project in relation to the goals and priorities of the call.
2. Clearly defined goals, results, and activities.
3. Involving the local community and marginalized groups in the activities.
4. Quality of partnership and clearly defined role of public institutions.
5. Sustainability of the proposed activities after the completion of funding.
6. Budgetary feasibility and alignment of costs with planned activities.
7. Innovative approach and potential to multiply results.

Projects will be selected based on their quality and contribution to the objectives of the call, respecting the principles of transparency, equal access and non-discrimination.

Criteria	Maximum score
1. Relevance for the purposes of the Call	25



<p>1.1. How relevant is the proposal to the goals and priorities of the call for proposals? Relevance check-list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The action will be carried out in one of the municipalities of the Pelagonia Region – The duration of the action is at least 6 months and a maximum of 8 months. – The required grant amount is in line with the set thresholds (up to €14,500). – The proposal must be consistent with the priority areas of the call, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • environmental protection and conservation; • climate change – mitigation and adaptation; • circular economy and sustainable production and consumption practices; • sustainable urban development and green public spaces; • active involvement of the local community in green actions. – Under the call, it is mandatory for applicants to establish a partnership (signed letter of support) with at least one public institution, such as a municipality, a regional development centre, a ministry or an institution responsible for one of the priority areas of the call 	5
<p>1.2. How relevant is the proposal to the specific needs and constraints of the target region(s) (including synergies with other EU initiatives or those of other donors or applicants), and Avoid duplication?</p>	5
<p>1.3. How clearly defined and strategically selected are those involved (end users, target groups, other relevant stakeholders)? Are their needs clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?</p>	5
<p>1.4. Does the proposal contain specific value-added elements? a) Actions targeting hard-to-access/high-risk populations (e.g. Roma, minorities, etc.) – 2p b) Action targeting local civil society organisations and local communities – 2p c) Action in remote/isolated or high-risk areas – 2p d) Action by a consortium of eligible NGOs – 2p d) An action that offers particularly innovative services – 2p</p>	10
<p>2. Applicants' experience and operational capacity</p>	20
<p>2.1. Applicants' experience with the Roma community and community civil society organizations</p>	
<p>a) Do applicants have previous experience working with Roma and community civic organizations?</p>	5
<p>b) Whether the applicants have relevant work experience in the implementation of similar projects?</p>	5
<p>2.2. Operational capacity of applicants</p>	
<p>a) Do applicants have experience in project management?</p>	5
<p>b) Do applicants have the appropriate managerial and administrative resources to successfully manage this project?</p>	5
<p>3. Human Resources</p>	20
<p>3.1. Are the qualifications and expertise of the proposed staff relevant and sufficient to implement the proposal?</p>	2x5
<p>3.2. Is the experience of the proposed staff relevant and appropriate to the proposal?</p>	2x5
<p>4. Efficiency and Feasibility of Action</p>	5



Are the proposed actions appropriate, practical, and in line with the objectives and expected results? Is the action plan clear and feasible? Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators of the outcome of the action?	5
5. Impact and sustainability of the action	10
5.1. Is the action likely to have a visible impact on its target groups? Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects? (Including space for replication, expansion, and sharing) information.)	5



5.2. Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable? - Financial (how will the activities be financed after the funding is completed?) - institutional (will structures be put in place at the end of the action to allow for the continuation of activities? Will there be local "ownership" of the results of the action?) - at the policy level (where applicable) (what will be the structural Impact of the action — e.g. Will it lead to improvements in legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc.)?	5
6. Cost effectiveness of the proposed budget	20
6.1. Are the budgeted lines in line with the proposed activities?	5
6.2. Do applicants have the ability to handle the budget for the action?	5
6.3. Is the ratio between estimated costs and expected results satisfactory? Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	2x5
TOTAL RESULT:	100

7. Application Process

Applicants are invited to submit their project proposals within the stipulated deadline and in the urns accompanying this call.

The overall process of the subgrant procedure involves several steps:

1. Announcement of the call for proposals and availability of application forms and guidelines on the 15th of December 2025.
2. Organise an online information session for interested civil society organisations on the 19th of December 2025 at 11:00 AM, at the following link: [Community-Based Green Action sub-grant scheme for CSOs operating in Pelagonia Region, North Macedonia | Meeting-Join | Microsoft Teams](#)
3. Preparation of the project proposal by the applicant organization, in partnership with at least one public institution.
4. Submit the project proposal electronically to the following email address: nabavki@soncet.org.mk; and in CC: celim.northmacedonia.tenders@celim.it with subject: **Community-Based Green Action sub-grant scheme – A2.1**
5. Administrative verification of timely submission and completeness of applications.



6. A content evaluation of project proposals according to the criteria outlined in this guide on the 16 – 25 of February 2026.
7. Making a decision and notifying applicants of the results of the evaluation on the 26-28 of February 2026.
8. Signing a grant agreement with the selected organizations and starting the implementation of the activities: 01.03.2026

8. Deadlines and Time Frame

The call for proposals will be open for 60 days from the date of its official announcement.

The key timelines are as follows:

- Announcement of the call on the 15th of December 2025
- Information sessions and consultations on the 19th December 2025
- Deadline for submission of applications: 15th of February 2026 until 4:30 p.m.
- Administrative review and evaluation: after the call is closed.
- Announcement of results: from 26th - 27th of February 2026
- Signing of contracts with selected organizations: 26th – 28th of February 2026
- Grant implementation period: 6 to 8 months, starting after signing the contracts no later than 30th of October. Approved projects shall not start after 1st March 2026.

9. Support and mentorship

In addition to financial support through grants, selected organizations will also receive expert support throughout the implementation process.

Support will include:

- trainings in project cycle management, financial reporting, public relations, and visibility;
- mentoring by the project team with regular meetings and consultations;
- technical assistance in carrying out activities to raise public awareness and involve the community;
- monitoring and advising on compliance with donor rules and reporting obligations;
- exchange of experiences between selected organizations through joint meetings and workshops.

The purpose of this support is to strengthen the organizational capacities of local civil society organizations and to ensure the successful and sustainable implementation of their initiatives.



10. Contact information

For all questions and additional information related to this call, interested applicants can contact the project team via the following contacts:

Association SOLNTSE – Tetovo E-mail: Nezir Huseyni: nezir.h@sonce.org.mk; Ferdi Ismaili: f.ismaili@sonce.org.mk

AND

CELIM - Skopje-mail:

Ismail Kamberi: kamberi@celim.it

CELIM Macedonia: celim.northmacedonia.tenders@celim.it

Questions related to the application can be submitted no later than 5 days before the deadline for submitting applications (10 February 2026). Responses will be published publicly on CELIM and SONCE website to the following **links**: www.sonce.org.mk and <https://www.celim.it/en/>

and/or through direct communication with interested organizations.