



Western Balkan's  
Regional Platform for  
Advocating Media Freedom  
and Journalists' Safety



This project is funded  
by the European Union



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
Office for Cooperation with NGOs

**Guidelines for Applicants  
for the  
Call of Proposals for the Small Grants Programme  
“Protecting Media Freedom and Freedom of Expression in the Western Balkans”  
Reference: Europe Aid/150147/DH/ACT/PRAREG under IPA Civil Society**

Deadline for submission of applications:

**31 August, 2017, time: 23:59h**

## 1. BACKGROUND DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY

In December 2015, European Commission commissioned a project **Western Balkan's Regional Platform for Advocating Media Freedom and Journalists' Safety** that gathered regional journalists' association – Independent Journalists Association of Serbia (IJAS), Association of BH Journalists (BHJ), Croatian Journalists Association (CJA), Association of Journalists of Kosovo (AJK), Association of Journalists of Macedonia (AJM) and the Trade Union of Media of Montenegro (TUMM). The action was developed in cooperation between six associations, as a result of growing restrictions of media freedoms by the state in our societies, as well as a statement of readiness to tackle our position in cooperation. The action is co-financed by the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs of the Government of Croatia.

The **overall goal of the project, including this small grants component** is enabling legal and social environment for pluralistic media through empowering journalist associations to be effective and accountable actors in advocating of application of EU standards of media freedom and integrity in Western Balkan region, therefore advancing citizens' right to information and informed choice. The project's **specific goal** is the establishment of an **Early Warning and Prevention System**, as a cross-country sustainable long-term mechanism for monitoring and advocating media freedom and journalists' safety in the six countries, accompanied by local and regional actions that promote and protect media freedom and freedom of expression of journalists and human rights activists.

The Call for Proposals for the **Small grants programme** represents one of the project's components which aims to provide opportunities for local NGOs/CSOs active in the region to tackle the issues related to media freedoms and freedom of expression in their respective communities. Specifically, the objective will be to explore the most pressing issues – **either violations of journalists' rights, or pressures to activists in a more comprehensive manner, with wider reach than that possible through the sole, more “top-down” advocacy efforts of the national journalists' associations.**

The project and its small grants component **address the problem of the growing restrictions of freedom of expression and media across the WB region, augmented by a lack of systematic approach to countering malpractice by governments, state institutions and other political and economic centres.** As stated in DG Enlargement Guidelines for EU support to media freedom and media integrity in enlargement countries 2014-2020 *freedom of expression and media is often a precondition for implementation of other rights and freedoms. Deprived of free media, citizens are denied the right to balanced, factual and reliable information.* The same document recognises that these freedoms have alarmingly deteriorated due to *diverse mechanisms used to exercise formal and informal pressure against critical media by political and business circles.* National journalists' associations (JAs) have been advocating implementation of EU media freedom standards for years, but have identified weakness of these efforts in lack of relevant data, realistic advocacy goals, focused advocacy effort and persistence in realisation of goals.

The documentation for the small grants component of the project is prepared in line with the [Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EU External Actions \(PRAG\)](#), version applicable from April 7, 2014.

## 2. OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES OF THE CALL

The objective of the small grants programme is **to amplify advocacy efforts undertaken by local, national and regional civil society actors in collaboration with journalists and media organizations and to set topics of media freedom and journalists' safety on mainstream agenda in the SEE region** – more specifically Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Kosovo\*, Montenegro and Serbia. Hence, the small grants programme will support **locally and regionally rooted civil society initiatives, engaging human rights activists, journalists and media, aiming to protect the freedom of expression and freedom of media**. The main goal is to explore the most pressing issues – either violations of journalists' rights, or pressures to activists in a more comprehensive manner.

### Priorities of the Call:

Priority I: **To support projects which effectively tackle problems and obstacles faced by journalists who are under various forms of pressure**

Pressures on journalists that are deemed relevant to the scope of this project may relate to (1) editorial and managerial pressures (due to pressures from interest groups and influential individuals), (2) insecure working conditions and inadequate and insecure income, (3) lack of internal newsroom regulation (media statutes) and insufficient provisions protecting journalists and editors from censorship, (4) media dependency on revenues from advertising and public authorities, (5) public bashing, threats and legal actions against journalists and media that publish critical information, (6) chronic lack of transparent public funding system for media production which is fully autonomous from political interests and (7) political decisions that directly violate international standards of media freedom.

Priority II: **To support projects which focus on pressures on human rights activists whose freedom of speech is jeopardized**

Pressures on human rights activists in respect to their freedom of speech may relate to (1) inability to access certain media with information and messages that are viewed as harmful to certain political and economic interest groups, (2) public bashing accompanied by false information, disclosure of personal data, profiling of individuals and hate and discriminatory speech which is most often exercised by media controlled by certain interest groups (e.g. radical political groups, business lobbies), individual profiling accompanied by hate speech, (3) inability to access funding from public sources due to public actions and disclosures viewed as critical towards public authorities, (4) scarcity of finances that negatively influence organizational capacities to produce high quality information for the public.

Projects can be focused on one of the listed priorities, or can combine priorities if such combination is clearly justified in problem analysis, demonstrated in project objectives and results and feasible according to activity plan, and if such combination of priorities brings additional value to the action.

The Call is divided into two LOTs, depending on the geographical scope and size of grant:

**LOT I: Regional actions**, which are expected to include applicants from **at least 3 out of 5 project WB countries**. Average size of grants is **30 000 – 40 000 EUR** with a co-financing rate of 10%. Indicatively, a total of **5 regional grants** will be disbursed contingent on sufficient applications of high quality proposals.

**LOT II: National actions**, which are expected to include applicants within a given country. Average size of grants is **5 000 - 10 000 EUR** with a co-financing rate of 10%. Indicatively, **a total of 10 national grants** will be disbursed, contingent on sufficient applications of high quality proposals.

### 3. FINANCIAL ALLOCATION

The total value of the small grants programme is **267 000 EUR**. The expected number of grants distributed is 15, organized into two LOTs:

**LOT I: Regional actions**, which are expected to include applicants<sup>1</sup> from **at least 3 out of 5 WB countries**<sup>2</sup>.

Maximum allocation for this LOT is 175 000 EUR, contingent on sufficient applications of high quality proposals. Re-granting organisation deserves right to reallocate funding from one LOT to another in case of insufficient number of quality proposals.

#### Size of grants under LOT I:

Any grant<sup>3</sup> requested under LOT I must fall between the following:

**Minimum amount:** 30 000 EUR

**Maximum amount:** 40 000 EUR

**Co-financing rate** for all applications under LOT I is: 10 % of total eligible costs. Co-financing sources cannot derive from EU budget, directly or indirectly.

Indicatively, a total of **5 regional grants** will be disbursed contingent on sufficient applications of high quality.

**LOT II: National actions**, which are expected to include applicants within a given country.

Maximum allocation for LOT II is 92 000 EUR, contingent on sufficient applications of high quality proposals.

#### Size of grants under LOT II:

Any grant requested under LOT II must fall between the following:

**Minimum amount:** 5 000 EUR

**Maximum amount:** 10 000 EUR

**Co-financing rate** for all applications under LOT II is: 10 % of total eligible costs. Co-financing sources cannot derive from EU budget, directly or indirectly.

Indicatively, a **total of 10 national grants** will be disbursed, contingent on sufficient applications of high quality proposals.

### 4. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

#### 4.1. There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

##### (1) the actors:

- The **lead applicant**, i.e. the entity submitting the application form (4.1.1),
- **co-applicant(s)** (partner organisations)

##### (2) the actions:

- Actions for which a grant may be awarded (4.1.2);

##### (3) the costs:

- types of cost that may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant (4.1.3).

<sup>1</sup> Term „Applicants“ includes: lead applicant and co-applicant(s)

<sup>2</sup> Project countries include: Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, FYROM and Kosovo

<sup>3</sup> Maximum and minimum amount of grant refers to a total amount of the project budget which consists of the grant plus co-financing amount (total eligible costs).

#### 4.1.1. Eligibility of applicants: who can apply?

##### Lead applicant

Lead applicants for both **regional and national grants** need to be **local, national or regional civil society organizations, required to act in partnership** with either a **locally, nationally or regionally present media organisation**, or a **team of independent media professionals (journalists)**.

**In order to be eligible for a grant, the lead applicant must:**

- be a legal person registered at least 12 months before this call is launched and
- be non-profit-making
- be a specific type of civil society organisation such as: association, foundation, private non-profit institution, social cooperative/non profit cooperative, registered umbrella association, journalists' association, journalists' trade union as well as networks **when they are registered as civil society organisation**.
- be registered in one of the five project countries: Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo;
- be able to prove (in Application form) that in last 12 months they have been actively working on issues covered by this Call for proposals.

**The lead applicant must act with co-applicants as specified hereafter, out of which at least one co-applicant has to belong to either: media organisation (public or private), journalists' initiatives or groups (acting either as registered association or as natural persons), team of independent media professionals.**

**Other possible co-applicants have to satisfy the same eligibility criteria as lead applicant organisations.**

##### Co-applicants

###### Obligatory co-applicants:

- local, national or regional media organisations, public or private (under condition they do not derive profit from the Action) or
- journalists participating as **natural persons**, teams of independent media professionals, informal journalists' groups (there is no requirement for a specific form of registration, can act as natural persons)
- media associations, journalists' associations or registered networks (includes all registered forms as for lead applicant: *association, foundation, private non-profit institution, social cooperative/non profit cooperative, registered umbrella association; journalists' associations, unions and networks*)
- have to be registered, or citizens (in case of natural persons) in 5 project countries: Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo.

###### Other possible co-applicants (non-obligatory)

Other co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the **lead applicant**. **In addition, as non obligatory co-applicants can apply:**

- **social partners: trade unions and their umbrella organisations, employers' associations and their umbrella organisations.**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Applications under **LOT I** have to include **at least 3 applicants<sup>4</sup> from 3 different project countries in the Western Balkans**; this means that if lead applicant is from one country it has to involve co-applicants (partners) from at least two other countries.

At least one of the co-applicants from other countries than the Lead has to belong to obligatory co-applicants.

Others can belong to non-obligatory co-applicants.

<sup>4</sup> Applicants meaning: lead applicant plus co-applicant(s)

Applications under **LOT II** need to involve **national co-applicants: at minimum 1 co-applicant belonging to obligatory co-applicants** (local, national or regional media organisations, public or private or journalists participating as **natural persons**, teams of independent media professionals, informal journalists groups, media associations, journalists' associations, journalists' unions or registered networks).

## **Associates and Contractors**

### Associates:

CSOs registered in EU member states, or in IPA countries not included in this (Albania and Turkey) cannot **apply in the role of applicants or co-applicants (partners)**. However they can act as associates or providers of specific services within the project.

Associates refer to organizations or institutions that support or take part in the implementation of the project, yet they do not undertake any specific responsibility for its coordination nor can they be directly remunerated for their work. Nevertheless, project funds can cover costs of travel, per diem and accommodation costs for associates when they participate in project activities.

### Contractors:

The applicants are permitted to award contracts. Co-applicants and Associates cannot be also contractors in the project. Contractors are subject to the procurement rules set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

## **4.1.2. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made**

### **Definition**

An action is composed of a set of activities.

### **Duration**

The maximum duration of the project is **11 months** – until August 31, 2018. The project will start upon signing of the contract; the tentative date is October 1<sup>st</sup> 2017. Activities occurred prior to this date cannot be funded.

Minimum duration of the project is not prescribed, but bear in mind that projects consisting of one off events will not be taken into consideration.

### **Number of applications and grants per applicant**

**Lead applicant can apply as a Lead with only one proposal in one LOT only.**

There are no restrictions on number of proposals in which one organisation can participate in the role of co-applicant.

An applicant can act in one proposal as Lead and in non restricted number of proposals as co-applicant (partner).

### **Location**

Actions must take place in the following five countries of the Western Balkans: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro. Exceptionally, some actions can take place out of the designated countries, yet within either EU member states or in Albania or Turkey if they contribute to the goals of the project (e.g. policy events or public debates taking place in Brussels or EU member states targeting key policy stakeholders relevant for oversight and further development of media and human rights policies in the Western Balkans, thematic conferences or trainings).

### **Types of activities supported by the Call**

The following types of activity (**the list is not exhaustive**) may qualify:

- Action research, policy research or investigative journalism research focused on detecting and monitoring the dynamics of different types of pressures exerted over journalists/media and human rights activists in respect to international and national standards for the protection of human rights and media freedom;
- Production, publication, public promotion and dissemination of reports in various media forms, also including ICT-supported platforms, databases, cultural productions (e.g. exhibitions, interactive or dramatic performances, multimedia presentations).
- Public advocacy, awareness raising and citizen mobilization in support of the freedom of speech and media freedom, including advocacy for the revision of existing legislation and adoption of new legislation in accordance with EU standards and requirements, protest and solidarity actions in respect to evidenced cases of violations of media freedom and freedom of expression and public awareness raising campaigns;
- Provision of legal assistance to journalists and/or human rights activists, including strategic litigation of selected cases indicative of broader, systemic violations of freedom of expression and media freedom;
- Organisation of conferences, roundtables, workshops and seminars, field trips and internships for educational, awareness raising and advocacy purposes, engaging policy stakeholders from political institutions, regulatory agencies, academia, civil society, trade unions, business community, media etc;
- Public awareness raising and mobilization campaigns aimed at enhancing citizens' solidarity with journalists and human rights activists and public support for effective protection of media freedom and freedom of journalism.
- Publication of educational and promotional materials in various media forms.

### **The following types of action are ineligible:**

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- actions undertaken before signature of the contract;
- actions aimed at profit making activities;
- "one-off" conferences, and similar events without a clear line of follow-up activities;
- actions concerned only or mainly with academic research and/or feasibility studies;
- grant-making activities (i.e. the use of funds to make grants or loans to other organizations i.e. third parties to the project)
- actions concerned only or mainly with infrastructure investments and/or the procurement of equipment;
- actions that are directly affiliated with or supportive of political parties;
- actions dealing with emergency relief or charitable donations;
- actions that fall within the general activities of competent state institutions or state administration services, including local government;
- actions in relation to:
  - the tobacco industry (CAEN code 16)
  - production of alcoholic distilled beverages (CAEN code 1591)
  - arms and munitions (CAEN code 296).

### **Financial support to third parties**

Re-granting is not eligible activity under this Call.

## **Visibility**

Note that the applicant must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU-financing (see the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU external actions laid down and published by the European Commission at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index_en.htm). Additional visibility rules concerning project **Western Balkan's Regional Platform for advocating media freedom and journalists' safety** under which Call is published, will be defined in Award Contract.

### **4.1.3. Eligibility of costs: costs which may be taken into consideration for the grant**

Only "eligible costs" can be taken into account for a grant. 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.

**Total budget costs** consist of: grant awarded plus minimum of 10% co-financing of total budget. All budget costs have to be eligible costs, no matter the source of financing (grant or co-financing) and only the costs presented in the budget will be considered for financing.

Financing sources and amounts have to be presented in the sheet 3 of the Budget form, only in total amounts (total costs of the project, amount of grant, amount of co-financing) with sources of funding: e.g. Source for amount of grant requested is Re-granting organisation). Please note that co-financing sources cannot derive from EU budget, directly or indirectly.

Recommendations for the award of a grant are always subject to the condition that the checking process preceding the signature of the contract does not reveal any problems requiring changes to the budget (for instance arithmetical errors, inaccuracies or unrealistic costs and other ineligible costs). The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and lead the Contracting Authority to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. The amount of the grant and the percentage of the EU co-financing as a result of these corrections may not be increased.

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

## **Eligible costs**

To be eligible under the Call for Proposals, costs must comply with the provisions of Article 14 of the EU General Conditions applicable to European Union-financed grant contracts for external actions.

Eligible costs are actual costs incurred by the Beneficiary(ies) which meet all the following criteria:

- a) they are incurred during the implementation of the Action as specified under 2.1.2. Duration of the Action;
- b) they are indicated in the estimated overall budget for the Action;
- c) they are necessary for the implementation of the Action;
- d) they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the Beneficiary(ies) and determined according to the accounting standards and the usual cost accounting practices applicable to the Beneficiary(ies);
- e) they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- f) they are reasonable, justified and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

**Note that taxes, including VAT will only be accepted as eligible costs when the following conditions are fulfilled:**

- i. **The value added taxes are not recoverable by any means;**
- ii. **It is established that they are borne by the final beneficiary; and**
- iii. **They are clearly indicated in the project proposal.**

### **Types of eligible costs:**

- i. the cost of staff assigned to the Action, including cost of staff performing financial and administrative tasks related to the Action, corresponding to actual gross salaries including social security charges and other remuneration-related costs; salaries and costs shall not exceed those normally borne by the Beneficiary(ies), unless it is justified by showing that it is essential to carry out the Action;
- ii. travel and subsistence costs for staff and other persons taking part in the Action, provided they do not exceed those normally borne by the Beneficiary(ies) according to its rules and regulations, or the rates published by the European Commission at the time of such mission if reimbursed on the basis of simplified cost options;
- iii. purchase costs for equipment and supplies specifically for the purposes of the Action, provided that ownership is transferred at the end of the Action
- iv. costs of consumables;
- v. costs entailed by contracts awarded by the Beneficiary(ies) for the purposes of the Action
- vi. costs deriving directly from the requirements of the Contract (dissemination of information, evaluation specific to the Action, accounting, audits, translation, reproduction, insurance, etc.)

### **Contributions in kind**

Contributions in kind are not considered actual expenditure and are not eligible costs. Contributions in kind in equipment, services or volunteer work may not be treated as co-financing by the Lead CSO and its partners.

Notwithstanding the above, if the description of the action as proposed by the Lead CSO and its partners foresees contributions in kind, such contributions have to be provided.

### **Ineligible costs**

The following costs are not eligible:

- taxes, including value added taxes (except for when the conditions set out under Eligible Costs above are fulfilled);
- customs and import duties, or any other charges;
- purchase, rent or leasing of land and existing buildings;
- fines, financial penalties and expenses of litigation;
- indirect operating costs
- bank charges, costs of guarantees and similar charges;
- conversion costs, charges and exchange losses with any of the component specific euro accounts, as well as purely financial expenses;
- contributions in kind;
- any leasing costs;
- depreciation costs;
- debts and debt charges;
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- interest owed;
- costs declared by the beneficiary and covered by another action or work programme;
- credits to third parties.

## 4.2. How to apply and procedures to follow

**Applicants must submit their applications in English language.** The application consists of the application form and project budget in forms provided under this Call of Proposals - bear in mind that it is obligatory to use only prescribed application and budget forms, all other proposals will be rejected.

Any error or major discrepancy relating to the points listed in the instructions in the application form (e.g. the amounts mentioned in the budget worksheets are inconsistent) may lead to the rejection of the application. Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is unclear, thus preventing the re-granting organisation from conducting an objective assessment.

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

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

**Only registration act of the lead applicant has to be sent. Unsolicited supplementary annexes should not be sent with the Application Form.**

If an application is selected following the evaluation, additional documentation might be requested but it should not be submitted at this stage.

### Where and how to send the Applications

The applications MUST be sent by e-mail to [mediafreedom.smallgrants@solidarna.hr](mailto:mediafreedom.smallgrants@solidarna.hr) by **August 31, 2017 at 23:59:59h CET**. In the subject it has to be stated the following: **“Project proposal under the call Protecting Media Freedom and Freedom of Expression”**.

**Application pack that needs to be submitted by email by the lead applicant must include the following three documents:**

1. Application form (attached)
2. Project budget (attached)
3. Registration act only for the lead applicant, in original language (scanned version).

#### IMPORTANT NOTICE:

At this point co-applicants' (partnership) statements or any other documentation is not required. Submitted documentation in the application pack does not have to be signed or stamped.

Nevertheless, organisations pre-selected for financing will have to submit additional documentation, including co-applicants' (partnership) statements prior to contract signature.

In case that one or more co-applicants listed in application form do not sign co-applicants statements prior to contract signature, the project will be rejected.

### Further information about the Application

Questions regarding the propositions of the Call for proposals can be sent in English language by e-mail **in the period July 25 – August 10, 2017** to the e-mail: [mediafreedom.smallgrants@solidarna.hr](mailto:mediafreedom.smallgrants@solidarna.hr) with subject: **“Question regarding the propositions of the Call for Proposals”**.

All answers to the received questions will be published on the official project website <http://safejournalists.net>, **no later than 11 days before the deadline (August 20<sup>th</sup>) for the submission of applications**.

**No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants will be published on the official project website <http://safejournalists.net>.**

### **4.3 Evaluation and selection of applications**

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the Evaluation Board of the project team with the assistance of external assessors. All actions submitted by applicants will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria, the application shall be rejected on this sole basis.

#### **STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS**

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 Application Form satisfies all the criteria specified in points of the Checklist in the grant application form. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

#### **Step 2: EVALUATION OF THE APPLICATION**

An evaluation of the quality of the applications, including the proposed budget, and the operational capacity of the applicant, will be carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in the Evaluation Grid included below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and award criteria.

**The selection criteria** are intended to help evaluate the applicants' financial and operational capacity to ensure that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is to be carried out and, where appropriate, to participate in its funding;
- have the management capacity, professional competence and qualifications required to complete the proposed action successfully.

**The award criteria** allow the quality of the applications to be evaluated in relation to the set objectives and priorities, and grants to be awarded to actions that will maximise the overall effectiveness of the Call for Proposals. They will enable the selection of applications that the Contracting Authority can be confident that they will comply with the objectives and priorities of the Call for Proposals. The criteria cover such aspects as the relevance of the action, its consistency with the objectives of the Call for Proposals, quality of the proposed logic of intervention, expected outcomes and impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

#### **Scoring:**

The evaluation criteria are divided into sections and subsections.

Each subsection 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.

Where indicated by asterisk (\*), the scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance.

## Evaluation Grid

Section	Maximum Score
<b>1. Financial and operational capacity of the project</b>	<b>20</b>
1.1. Do the applicants and affiliated entity(ies), if applicable, have sufficient <b>experience of project management</b> ?	5
1.2 Does the applicants and affiliated entity(ies), if applicable, have sufficient <b>technical expertise</b> ? (notably knowledge of the issues to be addressed)	5
1.3 Does the lead applicant have sufficient <b>management capacity</b> ? (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4 Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of <b>finance</b> ?	5
<b>2. Relevance of the project</b>	<b>30</b>
2.1. How relevant is the proposal to the <b>objectives and priorities</b> of the Call for Proposals?	5x2*
2.2. How relevant is the proposal to the <b>particular needs and constraints</b> of the target country(ies) or the region? (including synergy with other EU initiatives and avoidance of duplication)	5x2*
2.3. How clearly <b>defined and strategically chosen are those involved</b> (final beneficiaries, target groups, key stakeholders)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5
2.3. Does the proposal contain <b>specific added-value elements</b> , promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of indigenous peoples, or innovation of best practices?	5
<b>3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the project</b>	<b>20</b>
3.1. Are the <b>activities</b> proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	5
3.2. Is the <b>action plan</b> clear and feasible?	5
3.3. Does the proposal contain <b>objectively verifiable indicators</b> for the outcome of the action? Is any evaluation planned?	5
3.4. Is the <b>applicants' and affiliated entities' level of involvement and participation</b> in the action satisfactory?	5
<b>4. Sustainability of the project</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1 Is the proposed project likely to have a <b>tangible impact on its target groups</b> ?	5
4.2 Is the proposed project likely to have <b>multiplier effects</b> ? (Including scope for replication and extension of the outcome of the action and dissemination of information.)	5
4.3 Are the expected results <b>sustainable</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- financially (how will the activities be financed after the funding ends?)</li> <li>- institutionally (will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the action? Will there be local "ownership" of the results of the action?)</li> <li>- at policy level (where applicable) (what will be the structural impact of the action — e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc?)</li> <li>- socially and culturally – e.g. it will influence public opinion, public debate and narratives</li> <li>- environmentally (where applicable) (will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?)</li> </ul>	5
<b>5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the project</b>	<b>15</b>
5.1 Are the activities <b>appropriately reflected</b> in the budget?	5
5.2 Is the <b>ratio</b> between the estimated <b>costs</b> and the expected <b>results</b> satisfactory?	5x2*
<b>Maximum total score</b>	<b>100</b>

### **Provisional selection**

Following the evaluation, a table listing the applications, ranked according to their average total score assigned by individual evaluators and within the available financial envelope will be established as well as a reserve list following the same criteria.

### **STEP 3: FINAL SELECTION OF APPLICANTS**

Final selection of the applicants will be conducted by the Evaluation Committee established for this Small Grants Program, based on the provisional selection ranking list. The final qualitative review will pay special attention to the relevance of the projects to the overall objective of this small grants programme and the organisational capacities of the applicant and its partners to implement the proposed projects at high quality within the given time and budget. The final ranking lists of the projects, indicating the projects that have been selected for funding, and instructions for budget clearance will be delivered by the Evaluation Committee.

#### **IMPORTANT NOTICE:**

Applicants may be asked to provide additional clarifications and documentation during the third step of the evaluation procedure and should be available for telephone and e-mail communication.

## **4.4. Notification of the Contracting Authority's decision**

### **4.4.1. Content of the decision**

Applicants will be **informed in writing** of the Contracting Authority's decision concerning their application and, in case of rejections, the reasons for the negative decision. The results of the Call for Proposals, listing all applicants and all awarded projects with approved total budget amounts, will be published on the official project website [www.safejournalists.net](http://www.safejournalists.net).

#### **IMPORTANT NOTICE:**

Selected applicants **will be required to respond within 2 working days** regarding budget clearance, provision of supporting documentation (signed partnership statements) and the signing of contracts in the course of the preparation of the contract with each grantee, **during the period September 21 and September 30, 2017.**

In the course of contracting, the **modality of payment will be specified for each grant contract**, including potential modifications that may be negotiated in respect to the activity plan of each grantee, along the general plan of transfer of 40% of approved funding upon the signing of the contract, additional 40% of approved funding transferred upon the approval of the Mid-term Report and the final 20% of approved funding transferred upon the approval of the Final Report.

#### 4.4.2. Indicative Timetable

	DATE*	TIME*
<b>Public announcement of the Call for proposals on the official project website <a href="http://www.safejournalists.net">www.safejournalists.net</a></b>	25 July 2017	17:00
<b>Deadline for request for any clarifications from the Contracting Authority</b>	10 August 2017	23:59
<b>Last date on which clarifications are issued by the Contracting Authority and published on the official project website <a href="http://www.safejournalists.net">www.safejournalists.net</a></b>	20 August 2017	23:59
<b>Deadline for submission of Application Form</b>	31 August 2017	23:59
<b>Applicants are available by phone and e-mail for clarification and additional documents during the Step 3 of the Evaluation Procedure</b>	15 – 20 September, 2017	17:00
<b>Information to applicants on the evaluation of the Application Form</b>	20 September 2017	23:59
<b>Contract preparation and provision of supporting documentation in correspondence between selected applicants and Contracting Authority.</b>	21 – 29 September, 2017	17:00
<b>Contract signature</b>	30 September 2017	19:00

\*Provisional date and time.

#### IMPORTANT NOTICE

This indicative timetable may be updated by the Contracting Authority during the procedure. If so, the updated timetable will be published on the project web site [www.safejournalists.net](http://www.safejournalists.net).

All applicants who wish to receive notifications of updates of the indicative timetable can subscribe to notifications by sending an email to [mediafreedom.smallgrants@solidarna.hr](mailto:mediafreedom.smallgrants@solidarna.hr) with subject "Notify me on timetable update". E-mails must be sent **no later than August 10, 2017**.