



Applications due by: 15/09/2017

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

(RFA-USAID Accelerated Civic development and Cooperation—2017—01)

“Actions to Address Community Safety, Prevention of Violent Extremism, and Religious Radicalism”

The USAID Accelerated Civic Development and Cooperation Project in Albania seeks to award grants to Albanian civil society organizations (CSOs), working alone or in partnerships with other CSOs, to promote democracy, good governance, and anti-corruption in Albania. The USAID Accelerated Civic Development and Cooperation Project seeks creative, innovative and collaborative applications in support of activities that will directly further one or more of the three objectives:

- (1) Local capacity for long-term impact built;
- (2) Democracy, governance, and civic education strengthened; and
- (3) Vulnerable populations’ participation more fully in society improved.

The project provides grants for civil society organizations to enable them to carry out their initiatives. The civil society organizations that are registered and functional and deal with issues of civic engagement and democratic governance including CSOs involved in Good Governance and Community Safety, Prevention of Violent Extremism and Religious Radicalism are encouraged to apply for grants. Types of activities that can be supported through the grants include:

- Good governance monitoring (including surveys, production of analysis, community safety assessment reports);
- Activities that counteract the ideologies and recruitment agendas of radical religious groups by establishing forums in which active opinion makers, religious leaders and theologians take part;
- Activities that establish and promote models at community level for preventing violent extremism, strengthening public safety and community resistance.
- Promotion of public information on religious radicalization processes, their causes and consequences;
- Promotion of forums of discourses on religion, society, state, and democracy values.
- Activities aiming at establishing and institutionalizing the citizen-government engagement;
- Activities aiming at alleviating of perceptions and effects of social exclusion and marginality, particularly among youth.

- Programs on promotion of gender equality; awareness against discrimination; voluntarism; advocacy of youth issues; civic participation and activism; involvement in policymaking;
- Addressing concerns over denial of political and human rights, and representing the interests and challenges of the vulnerable communities.

The USAID Accelerated Civic Development and Cooperation Project plans to award multiple grants for projects up to 12 (twelve) months. Grant funds may be used only for activities directly related to the implementation of the project.

The maximum grant amount is 20,000 USD.

Only CSOs legally registered in Albania are eligible to apply under this RFA. Applicant organizations should also meet the following criteria:

- Have at least one year of operational experience.
- Have a governance structure that ensures proper rotation of leadership and delegation of power, including, at least: a Board of Directors, a Chairperson, and/or an Executive Director.
- Have a transparent system of bookkeeping that complies with Albanian legislation and International Accounting Standards (IAS).
- Must not be a debtor, and must have cancelled any debt to the state or arranged for full debt payment prior to receiving the first disbursement of the USAID Accelerated Civic Development and Cooperation project grant funds.
- Must operate as an independent non-politically affiliated organization.
- Must not be debarred, suspended, excluded or otherwise ineligible to receive US Federal funding.
- Members of public administration and/or leaders of political parties cannot participate in a grant project, as a director or as grant-remunerated participant.

CSOs that represent women, sexual minorities, disabled persons, remote regions, and ethnic minorities are encouraged to apply.

Evaluation of applications

Applications will undergo a comprehensive evaluation including the initial review and technical evaluation.

The initial review or Eligibility Evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the Eligibility Evaluation Checklist below.

Eligibility: The prospective Grantee should meet the following minimum eligibility criteria:

- Be duly and legally registered in accordance with the Albanian law. In case of a consortium, the organization representing the others should be duly registered.
- Have at least one year of organizational operational experience.
- Must not be a debtor to the state, must have cancelled any debt to the state, or have arranged for debt collection prior to receiving the first disbursement of the Accelerated Civic Development and Cooperation Project grant funds. (This eligibility requirement will be checked for shortlisted applicants only.)

- Must successfully clear all the checklist items under ANTTARC’s vetting checklist (background, conflicts, suspension and debarment, and anti-terrorism).
- Have demonstrated ability to manage grant funds (evidence of financial accountability, systems maintenance of accurate, detailed records of all expenses, and have designated financial management personnel).
- Must operate as an independent non-partisan affiliated organization.

Application completeness: The applicant organization should submit all and accurate required documents and information.

Application evaluation (technical evaluation) will be conducted based on a set of criteria including:

a. Technical Approach (60 points)

1. Project Design and Feasibility

- The degree to which the application is responsive to the request for applications and adequately addresses Accelerated Civic Development and Cooperation Project goal and results;
- The potential of the project to successfully achieve the objectives outlined in the PWP and AWP;
- The geographic focus of the proposed project and its relevance to stated objectives and anticipated results;
- The extent to which the project introduces innovative and potentially replicable approaches;
- The level of coordination of the project activities with other USAID or other similar foreign programs.
- The degree to which the project accomplishes Accelerated Civic Development and Cooperation Project work plan tasks or advances USAID and Accelerated Civic Development and Cooperation Project goal and results (or whether the project accomplishes goal and results more properly within the scope of another USAID project or other donor project).

2. Impact

- The effectiveness of the proposed method(s) to reach out to and engage targeted project beneficiaries in project activities;
- How wide the target group will be who will benefit from the proposed activity of the grant;
- The potential of the project to make a substantial and measurable impact;
- The extent to which the project highlights, contributes to, and influences important policy issues, which may be addressed by local, regional, and national policy makers.
- Whether the project results will be sustainable.

b. Organizational, Technical and Management Capability (40 points)

1. Technical and Management Capacity:

- The track record and demonstrated commitment of the applicant to implement proposed activities and demonstrated ability to work well with other organizations and partners;

- The experience and expertise of the management team and proposed project personnel; and
- The provision for appropriate project monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms and staff.

2. Organizational Capability

- The general financial strength of the applicant;
- The organizational structure and good governance practices of the applicant;

c. *Cost Proposal – Pass/Fail test (no points allocated)*

1. The budget must be (i) complete and fully documented, (ii) reasonable, and (iii) allocated to appropriate budget categories.
2. The budget must demonstrate a clear and direct relationship between proposed activities and the proposed use of funds;
3. Proposed expenditures must be allowable and allocable to the project

Timelines

Indicative timelines of the grant administration process are presented below.

	DATES	TIME
Information meetings	July 20 – August 15, 2017	
Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the Accelerated Civic Development and Cooperation project	August 15, 2017	
Last date on which clarifications are issued by the Accelerated Civic Development and Cooperation project	August 31, 2017	
Deadline for submission of Applications	September 15, 2017	
Information to applicants on eligibility evaluation	September 22, 2017	
Information to applicants on the application evaluation (technical evaluation)	October 20, 2017	
Improve and finalize the application	October 27, 2017	
Conduct risk assessment, grant agreement, and vetting	November 3, 2017	
Getting final approvals and signing grant awards	November 15, 2017	

Application Package

To download the application package, please see the RFA announcement at www.anttarc.org. Alternatively, please contact the USAID Accelerated Civic Development and Cooperation

Project at ngocenter@icc-al.org for an application form. Please reference “RFA--USAID Accelerated Civic Development and Cooperation—2017—01” in your request.

Questions relating to the RFA can be sent to ngocenter@icc-al.org until 15 August 2017. Answers will be published at <http://anttarc.org> by 31 August 2017.

How to submit proposals?

The USAID Accelerated Civic Development and Cooperation Project will accept proposals in **English** only.

Applications will be accepted no later than **17:00** Tirana time on **15/09/2017**. Late or unresponsive applications will not be considered.

Applicants should submit their proposal and required documents via:

1. e-mail to the USAID Accelerated Civic Development and Cooperation Project at ngocenter@icc-al.org. E-mails **must** reference “RFA--USAID Accelerated Civic Development and Cooperation—2017—01” in the subject line.
2. Alternatively, applications may be submitted during regular business hours and in a sealed envelope to:

USAID Accelerated Civic Development and Cooperation Project in Albania
Rruga Reshit Collaku, Pallati Bores, 1/20
Tirane, Shqiperi