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INSPIRED Moldova

Call for Proposals

Supporting the enabling environment for civil society and
the democratic space



European
Partnership for
Democracy



DEMOCRACY
REPORTING
INTERNATIONAL



1. Objectives of the call for proposals

The overall objective of this call is to contribute to **safeguarding the enabling environment for civil society and the democratic space** by supporting civil society organisations to play a strategic role throughout the 2025 Parliamentary electoral cycle. This includes reinforcing their ability to engage in democratic processes, protect civic space, and promote transparency and accountability in an increasingly complex political and information landscape.

Specifically, the call targets CSOs whose core mandates focus on **electoral integrity, civic participation, democratic governance, or media resilience**. It aims to support interventions focused on electoral integrity and transparency, media support and information resilience, civic engagement and inclusive participation, and dialogue and cooperation with authorities on democratic governance.

The call also aligns with Moldova's broader reform agenda and EU integration efforts, encouraging actions that advance electoral integrity and promoting pre- and post-electoral transparency and accountability, and recognises the critical role of independent media and access to trustworthy information.

2. Scope of the support programme

Selected organisations will receive financial support in the form of grants managed by the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD). This funding will enable them to cover the costs of their project activities.

Selected organisations will be able to receive tailored, on-demand consultancy support in organisational development and other relevant areas through the CONTACT Centre.

3. Grants modalities

The **funding amount** for each grant is fixed at EUR 15,000. The proposed projects should last between 6 and 12 months. The grant recipients will **sign a grant contract agreement with EPD**. Multiple proposals are expected to be funded under this announcement. As selected organisations will be exempted from VAT from the costs incurred within this grant, the budget proposal should contain the planned costs excluding VAT.

4. Eligible activities and priorities of the call

The following types of activities are eligible for funding. This list is neither exhaustive nor cumulative. **Additional activities that constitute the core activities of the organisations can also be considered.**

Electoral Integrity and Transparency

- Monitoring and promoting the enforcement of electoral laws to ensure free, fair, and credible elections
- Collecting, analysing, and publishing election-related data to detect irregularities and promote transparency
- Tracking campaign financing and misuse of administrative resources to ensure equal conditions for all political actors
- Producing and sharing impactful research and analysis to shape public understanding of electoral integrity challenges

Media Support and Information Resilience

- Providing support to independent journalists and media outlets for balanced, fact-based electoral coverage
- Promoting media literacy to help citizens critically assess information
- Building media capacity to report responsibly on high-risk issues like electoral fraud, financing, and institutional integrity
- Supporting collaborative platforms between media, civil society, and electoral stakeholders to expand access to reliable information

Dialogue and Cooperation with Authorities on Democratic Governance

- Engaging in structured dialogue and consultations with public institutions to shape democratic reforms
- Contributing to the development and monitoring of policies that protect civil society and democratic space (e.g. Moldova's institutional reform roadmaps)
- Conducting evidence-based research to inform institutional reform and democratic policymaking
- Leading advocacy efforts to strengthen transparency, accountability, and rule of law at all levels of government

Civic Engagement and Inclusive Participation

- Driving citizen participation in elections and public debates through inclusive outreach and civic education
- Empowering underrepresented and marginalised groups to engage in electoral and policy processes
- Supporting youth-led initiatives and local community engagement in democratic governance
- Fostering citizen involvement in post-election accountability efforts and rebuilding trust in democratic institutions
- Conducting and disseminating research to support advocacy for greater inclusivity in democratic participation

The **crosscutting priorities of this call** focus on safeguarding democratic space, particularly in the context of upcoming electoral processes, rising disinformation, and broader challenges to democratic governance. As part of the INSPIRED Moldova project, the research team of the project conducted a study using the *Democratic Institutions for a Conducive Environment for Civic Space (DICE)* approach. The recommendations in terms of strategic support are:

- Projects that contribute to ensuring free and fair elections through election monitoring, voter education, and cooperation with oversight bodies.
- Initiatives that equip state and non state stakeholders with tools to detect and counter disinformation - particularly in the electoral context.
- Projects that foster structured engagement between CSOs and national institutions, improve consultation mechanisms, and enable inclusive decision-making throughout the electoral cycle.
- Initiatives that strengthen partnerships, sustain advocacy efforts, and support umbrella organisations.
- Proposals that embed participatory practices and develop mechanisms for democratic engagement to extend beyond the electoral cycle.
- Efforts that contribute to reinforcing the rule of law and foster CSO involvement in reforms.
- Complementarity and synergy with ongoing initiatives are strongly encouraged to ensure a coordinated, sustainable, and high-impact approach to strengthening democratic governance.

The following types of activities are **ineligible for funding**: actions that focus primarily on individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, or congresses will not be supported. Additionally, activities concerned mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses are excluded. Any actions that support political parties or candidates during elections are also ineligible. Furthermore, retroactive financing for projects that are already in progress or have been completed will not be considered. Projects that provide exclusive benefits to individuals or restricted groups of individuals will not qualify for funding. Actions within the formal education sector will generally be ineligible, except in special circumstances. Environmentally harmful projects will not receive funding, and the purchase of equipment is only permissible if it is directly linked to the implementation of the project.

5. Application and selection process

The following provides an overview of the application and selection process from the publication of the guidelines to the start of implementation.

5.1 Indicative timeline

Opening of the call	Thursday, 22 May 2025
Deadline to submit proposals	Thursday, 12 June 2025; 23:59 Chişinău time

Evaluations of the proposals	13 - 24 June 2025
Negotiation, finalisation and award	25 - 30 June 2025
Indicative implementation period of grants	1 July 2025 - 30 June 2026 (from 6 to 12 months within this period)

For any further questions, please feel free to write an email to grants@epd.eu mentioning the title of this call; answers will be provided directly by an email answer. Please note that questions received after 11 June 2025 may not be responded to.

5.2 Full application submission

The application period is open immediately and will close on Thursday, 12 June 2025; 23:59 Chişinău time. The full application package is composed of:

- [Annex 1 - Application form](#) filled in and submitted in an editable format;
- [Annex 2 - Mandate and Statement on exclusion criteria](#), signed;
- [Annex 3 - Budget application form](#) filled in;
- The identification / registration certificate of the applicant.

Applications should be sent to grants@epd.eu. Applications must be submitted in English, Romanian or Russian languages.

5.3. Evaluation and award procedure

5.3.1 Administrative compliance

All applications will undergo an administrative check that establishes whether the information required by the online application form has been provided. Applications will be assessed through the administrative compliance criteria described below:

- The application package is received complete, in line with section 5.2 above.
- The organisation must be an NGO registered in Moldova and provide a certificate of registration.
- The organisation must be able to sign a grant agreement with EPD.
- The organisation is not already a beneficiary of a grant within the INSPIRED Moldova project.
- The organisation must be not in any of the exclusion criteria outlined in the Annex 2 - Mandate and Statement on exclusion criteria.

5.3.2 Technical evaluation

The Evaluation Committee will then assess the administratively compliant applications against the criteria listed below:

Evaluation criteria	Max points
Relevance	20
Alignment with the call's priorities	20
Multi-stakeholder dialogue partnership/Engagement with public institutions	15
Sustainability	10
Gender mainstreaming and inclusion	5
Citizen awareness of civil society participation	5
Originality and innovation	5
Cost-effectiveness	10
Expected participants/Target groups reach	10

5.3.3 Final evaluation & award decision

Based on this evaluation, applicants will receive an official response with the outcome of their application. If selected for funding, a number of additional documents may have to be completed by the applicant as part of the due diligence process. Once all comments have been addressed and additional information and documents have been provided, a grant agreement will be signed between the applicant and EPD.

6. Background information

INSPIRED Moldova is an EU-funded project running from 2024 to 2027 which aims to contribute to creating an enabling environment for civil society in Moldova by empowering civil society organisations (CSOs) to actively engage in policy discussions at all levels. Building on the momentum generated by the EU accession process, the project facilitates policy dialogue processes on the enabling environment for civil society and relevant plans and programmes stemming from the accession negotiations. Recognising the importance of prioritising democracy building in the EU's new methodology on the fundamentals first accession criteria, the initiative will strengthen the capacities of CSOs to act as catalysts for democracy both at national and local level and in the digital sphere.

The project supports collaborative efforts to cultivate an inclusive and participatory environment conducive to improving public participation, including through the promotion of underrepresented groups and women in Moldova. It does so by empowering Moldovan civil society to actively influence national policies and boost the country's EU integration by involving CSOs in policy-making processes in the national, local and digital spheres. Through technical and financial support to CSOs in Moldova, the project provides the essential tools and resources needed to amplify their voice and achieve sustainable impact. It also encourages dialogue and collaboration with public authorities, ensuring that civil society becomes a key actor in promoting democracy in Moldova. The call for proposals

relates to Output 1, which aims to ensure that participatory spaces for multi-level, multi-stakeholder policy dialogue on key democratic governance issues are established, expanded, and actively sustained by CSOs, fostering inclusive and impactful engagement.

The project is implemented by a Consortium of six organisations, among which the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD), Center for Policies and Reforms (CPR Moldova), the National Assistance Centre for NGOs in Moldova (CONTACT), People in Need (PIN), the European Association for Local Democracy (ALDA), and Democracy Reporting International (DRI).

The European Partnership for Democracy (EPD) is a non-profit organisation supporting democracy worldwide. It is a unique partnership comprising European democracy support organisations present in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and Latin America. EPD works inside and outside Europe as democracy is a universal aspiration and the contemporary challenges and opportunities for democracy are global in scope. More information about EPD is available at www.epd.eu.

7. Notice

This call for proposals is made possible by the financial support of the European Union. Its content represents the sole responsibility of the INSPIRED Moldova project, financed by the European Union. The content of the call for proposals belongs to the European Partnership for Democracy and does not necessarily reflect the vision of the European Union.