



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Guidelines for grant applicants

The Swedish Government's Special Initiative for Democratisation and Freedom of expression

NOTICE

This is an Open Call for Proposals. Only **Full Applications** should be submitted for assessment. Applicants must use the Full Application Format and its Annexes. Only applications for interventions to be implemented starting year 2012 or 2013 will be considered. Multi-year applications are allowed.

This Call for Proposals will be open until 15 April 2012.

*A specific **Call for Proposals** targeting support to actors for change who use and develop **information- and communication technologies (ICTs)** to strengthen social movements and interest groups working for democratisation and freedom of expression, will be launched most probably in June/July 2012. Sida reserves the right to refer applications in the first Call for Proposals to the second Call, if Sida finds them more suitable to be assessed under the Call for Proposals focused on ICTs.*

1. The Swedish Government's Special Initiative for Democratisation and Freedom of Expression

1.1 Background

In 2009 the Swedish Government launched a Special Initiative for Democratisation and Freedom of Expression to be implemented over a three-year period.¹ Hereafter referred to as the Special Initiative.

The Swedish Government has now prolonged the Special Initiative and it shall continue to supplement and strengthen Sweden's overall work for democracy, human rights and equal access to justice.

The Special Initiative aims to improve the conditions for actors for change to work for enhanced democratisation and freedom of expression. It targets individuals, groups, civil society organisations and other relevant actors at local, national, regional and global levels, and attends to threats against democracy and freedom of expression, and restrictions on the freedoms and human rights of girls and boys, women and men.

Sweden shall, as is emphasised in the Government Communication to the Swedish Parliament on Sweden's Policy for Global Development², stand up for people whose lives are put at risk because of their opinions. Every individual, whether alone or with others, must be free to express her or his opinions and to receive and disseminate information and ideas. This is a fundamental freedom and an essential precondition for fighting all forms of oppression. Freedom of expression also strengthens people's ability to influence their own lives and to contribute to a democratic development.

In the Government's Policy for democratic development and human rights in Swedish development cooperation, Change for Freedom 2010-2014, priority is given to three focus areas: civil and political rights, the institutions and procedures of democracy and the rule of law, and actors of democratisation.

Sweden's support to democratisation aims to create conditions for women and men to assert, and actively exercise, their civil and political rights and by doing so, acquire influence over their conditions of life. Experiences from previous, as well as on-going processes of

¹ Government Decision UF2009/27888/UP

² Govt. Communication 2007/08:89, Report 2007/08:UU5, Riksdag Communication 2007/08:252

democratisation, show that actors for change are of key importance in efforts to increase democracy and freedom of expression.

The Swedish Government is of the opinion that states have both a right and a duty to voice and criticise violations of human rights and thereby a moral responsibility to support individuals, groups and organisations that are vulnerable and most at risk in their work for increased respect for human rights and enhanced democratisation.

It is against this background that the Swedish Government continues its support to actors for change working for democratisation and the freedom of expression.

1.2 Objective of this Call for Proposals

The objective of this Call for Proposals is *improved conditions for actors for change to work for enhanced democratisation and freedom of expression*.

The interventions shall contribute to improved conditions and increased opportunities for actors for change to work for enhanced democratisation and freedom of expression and the reduction of various forms of discrimination and oppression.

Emphasis will be on assisting actors for change, groups or civil society organisations that work under difficult circumstances and in contexts characterized by lack of respect for human rights and freedoms, and where there is limited room for political pluralism.

1.3 Financial allocation provided

The amount set aside for the Special Initiative is decided by the Government upon a yearly basis. The funds allocated for 2012 amount to SEK 215 000 000. A substantial part of the budget is expected to be allocated via open calls for proposals.

Sida will, apart from this Call for Proposals, also make a second call specifically focusing on support to actors for change who use and develop information and communication technologies (ICTs) to strengthen social movements and interest groups working for enhanced democratisation and freedom of expression.

2. Rules for this Call for Proposals

2.1 Eligibility criteria

2.1.1 Eligible applicants

In order to be eligible for a grant, applicants **must**:

- be a legal person or an entity without legal personality³; **and**
- be non-profit making;

The applicant can be one of the following types of entities;

- i) civil society organisation, including non-governmental organisation, and/or networks thereof at community, national, regional and global level,
- ii) inter-governmental organisation,
- iii) community-based organisation,
- iv) public sector agency,
- v) private sector agency,
- vi) foundation,
- belonging to e.g. one of the following categories;
 - i) human rights defenders,
 - ii) actors in free and independent media including citizen journalists, bloggers and professional journalists,
 - iii) actors in cultural life,
 - iv) gender equality activists and women's rights activists,
 - v) LGBTI activists,
 - vi) lawyers,
 - vii) youth organisations,
 - viii) researchers and think tanks,
 - ix) political dissidents,
 - x) party-affiliated organisations,
 - xi) trade- and labour unions,
 - xii) faith-based groups,
 - xiii) indigenous and minority groups
 - xiv) non-violent resistance groups

³ Grant applications may be eligible if submitted by entities which do not have legal personality under the applicable national law, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf, and assume financial liability.

This list is not exhaustive and the categories are not in order of priority.

Exile organisations or organisations working for actors in exile may also be supported, provided that the activities aim at strengthening actors for change in the country of origin.

The inclusion of 'sub-granting' whereby an applicant provides financial support in the form of grants to third parties, is allowed under this Call for Proposals, in order to reach small community-based organisations and their operations in e.g. remote rural areas or multiple actors for democratic change in several regions or countries.

2.1.2 Location

As presented in section 1.2, in this Call for Proposals emphasis will be given to support to actors working for democratisation and freedom of expression in countries and contexts characterized by lack of respect for human rights and where fundamental freedoms are hampered, and where there is limited room for political pluralism.

These situations can be characterised by the following selected indicators relating to violations of basic human rights as contained in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Human Right Defenders of 9 December 1998⁴:

- i) Limitations on the right to freedom of expression, to information and to communicate (e.g. regular repression of and major reprisals for criticism of public policies, obstacles to collection, publication and dissemination of information on human rights, including access to the Internet; general censorship);
- ii) Limitations on the right to freedom of association (e.g. regular and widespread obstacles to registration of civil society organisations and their independent operation, forced closure of civil society organisations, and physical threats to their members);
- iii) Limitations on the right to freedom of peaceful assembly (e.g. frequent prohibition or violent repression of peaceful protests);
- iv) Threatening and insecure environment, which seriously undermines right to life and physical and mental integrity (e.g. extra-judicial killings, death threats, beatings, torture and ill treatment during questioning or detention).

The support must be directed to interventions and actors for change with restriction to countries eligible for official development assistance (ODA-recipient countries) according to

⁴ C(2010)2432 21 April 2010, European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) Strategy Paper 2011 – 2013.
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/human-rights/documents/eidhr_strategy_paper_2011_2013_com_decision_21_april_2011_text_published_on_internet_en.pdf

the OECD/DAC-classification. For downloading the DAC list of ODA-recipient countries:
<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/13/58/49483614.pdf>

Interventions aimed at global and regional levels are allowed under this Call for Proposals provided that they target ODA-recipient countries.

2.1.3 Eligible areas of intervention

The proposed intervention should contribute to improved conditions and increased opportunities for actors for change working to directly improve the situation in a given country or region, relating to at least one of the following thematic areas:

- the right to freedom of opinion and expression, including artistic and cultural expression;
- access to information and the right to communicate, including freedom of the media, the internet and fight against censorship;
- the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion;
- the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, including the right to form and join a trade union and the right to collective bargaining;
- equal access to justice and end of impunity;
- the rights of equality and non-discrimination without distinction on the basis of sex, sexual orientation or gender identity
- the right to political participation, free and fair elections;
- the protection of human rights defenders (HRDs) and the reinforcement of the capacities of HRDs organisations working on these or other human rights and freedoms.

Alternative or more indirect entry points to these freedoms and rights, as well as initiatives combining other human freedoms and rights, may also be considered in cases where the environment in which the intervention will be implemented is extremely difficult.

In all cases, there must be a clear and reasonably motivated relation between any intervention supported with regard to the above themes and a larger process of democratisation and/or strengthening of freedom of expression in the target country or region, or in relation to relevant international processes.

This call is open for innovative and catalytic interventions.

The proposed intervention must have objectives that enable monitoring and results reporting. The objectives should have corresponding verifiable indicators with targets and baselines, to the extent possible. The intervention should have the potential to reach its objectives.

Sida supports interventions based on a rights perspective and the perspective of the poor. These perspectives place the human rights and freedoms of the individual at the centre of development in a country or region. Sida will not be able to support any actor, intervention or activity that can be associated with any form of discrimination of human rights and freedoms.

2.1.4 Eligible costs

Support can be given to interventions in the form of core support, programme and project support. It can be used for capacity development, such as increased capacity for management and administration, as well as time-bound activities such as dissemination of information, campaigns, training and legal activism.

For the purposes of this Call for Proposals, core support shall be understood as support to an organisation's entire strategic action plan. A project should be understood as an individual development intervention designed to achieve specific objectives within specified resources and implementation schedules, often within the framework of a broader programme. A programme should be understood as a time bound intervention involving multiple activities that may cut across sectors, themes and/or geographic areas.

For more detailed presentation of eligible cost especially in relation to office costs, travels, conferences, equipment and supplies, see the Application Format, Annex 3a Budget.

3. How to apply and procedures to follow

3.1 Application form

If you consider your organisation and intervention to be eligible for support under this Call for Proposals, please fill out the following documents:

- Full Application Format including Annex 1-4.
Please note the Executive Summary Form in Annex 1.

The application formats can be downloaded from this link:

www.sida.se/democracy-initiative

In addition also provide:

- An externally audited annual report and audit memorandum/management letter.

These completed documents including annexes and mentioned audit documents will constitute the application.

The application must be written in English or Swedish. No hand-written applications will be accepted.

No additional annexes should be submitted.

3.1.1 Where and how to send the application

The application must be submitted per e-mail and in the heading of the e-mail, please write: CfP Demo 1.

The application must be submitted to the following e-mail address:
callforproposals_demo1@sida.se

3.1.2 Deadline for submission of application

Deadline for submitting applications is 15th of April 2012.

The submission of the deadline must be respected. If the deadline has not been respected the application will be rejected.

3.1.3 Further information regarding application

Questions regarding this Call for Proposals may be sent via e-mail to the following e-mail address: callforproposals_demo1@sida.se

A document responding to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) will be published at this link and continually up-dated:

www.sida.se/democracy-initiative

3.2 Assessment and selection of applications

Applications will be examined and assessed by Sida.

If the examination of the applications reveals that the eligibility criteria are not met as stated under section 2.1, these applications may be rejected.

Applications will be assessed according to the following steps:

Step 1

The Executive Summary will be assessed with regard to relevance and design of intervention according to the following criteria:

1. *Relevance of the intervention*

1.1 Relevance of the proposal to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies) or region(s), and of target groups and final beneficiaries.

1.2 Relevance of the proposal to the objective and priorities of the Call for Proposal.

2. *Design of the intervention*

2.1 Coherence of the overall design of the intervention. In particular, does it reflect the problem identification and analysis?

2.2 Feasibility and consistence of proposed intervention in relation to the objectives and expected results?

Although these criteria are the principal basis for assessing proposals, strategic considerations will also be made regarding the nature of support (catalytic/innovative), whether or not the proposed support adds to a balance in geographic and thematic focus, as well as a balance in the spread of type of actors, so as to reflect the intentions of the support under the Special Initiative.

Sida will also assess the complementarity of the proposal to Sida's ongoing support within the area of democracy and human rights.

Sida's consolidated assessment will be based on the criteria above and presented considerations which will form the basis of selection of applications to be evaluated in step 2.

Step 2

In this step Sida will assess the selected applicants' full applications.

In this phase Sida may request additional information for the assessment.

The full application will be assessed according to the following criteria:

1. Operational and financial capacity

1.1 Do the applicant and, if applicable partners, have sufficient technical expertise and implementing capacity? (notably staffing, competence and experience of the issues to be addressed.)

1.2 Does the applicant present a reliable system for planning, monitoring and evaluation?

1.3 Does the applicant present a reliable system for internal financial management and control?

1.4 Does the applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?

2. Relevance of the intervention

2.1 Relevance of the proposal to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies) or region(s), and of target groups and final beneficiaries.

2.2 Relevance of the proposal to the objective and priorities of the Call for Proposal.

3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the intervention

3.1 Is the Results Framework clear and feasible?

3.2 Is it plausible that the defined outputs will deliver the desired outcome(s)?

3.3 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outputs and outcome(s) of the intervention?

4. Sustainability of the intervention

4.1 Are the stakeholders and, if applicable, partners' level of involvement and participation in the intervention satisfactory?

4.2 Is the intervention likely to have a tangible outcome on its target groups?

5. Identified risks and risk management

5.1 Is there a sufficient risk analysis made, including relevant risk mitigation-measures?

6. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the intervention

6.1 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results reasonable?

As in step 1 above, although the criteria are the principal basis for assessing proposals, strategic considerations will also be made regarding the nature of support (catalytic/innovative) and whether or not the proposed support adds to a balance in geographic and thematic focus, as well as a balance in the spread of type of actors, so as to reflect the intentions of the support under the Special Initiative.

Sida will also assess the complementarity of the proposal to Sida's on-going support within the area of democracy and human rights.

Sida's consolidated assessment will be based on the criteria above and mentioned considerations and will form the basis of Sida's decision on support.

3.2.1 Notice to applicants

Applicants will be notified by Sida in writing of the decision concerning their application.

Sida does not have the obligation to motivate its decision on support.

Sida would like to underline that notice of decision will not be given before the whole assessment process, including step 1 and 2 are finalised, and hence may take several months.