



# Commonwealth Foundation

## Guidelines for grant applicants November 2019

The Commonwealth Foundation's mission is to support civic voices to share their stories, learn and act together and influence the institutions that shape people's lives.

The Foundation works to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development with effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels of participatory governance which implies creative and constructive engagement between civil society and other governance stakeholders.

We see our programmes, contributing to Sustainable Development Goal 16: *Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.*

### I. Our grants

We are interested in supporting projects that strengthen civic voice so that it:

- Is more effective in holding governance institutions to account
- Enhances involvement in policy processes
- Shapes public discourse

Your project should address one or both of the following outcomes and may include the use of creative expression to achieve project aims:

#### 1. **Stronger civic voices engaging in policy processes to hold government to account:**

Your project will strengthen the capacity of civic voices in contributing to:

- monitoring government commitments and action
- supporting the implementation of the sustainable development goals or other international agreements, and related local and national policy agendas
- Advocating policy priorities to government that address gender and other power imbalances, disparities and discrimination
- Strengthening participatory methods of engaging in regional, national and local governance processes
- Raising awareness and advocating for specific policy issues
- Engage with legislators to shape legislation

## 2. **Public discourse more reflective of less-heard voices**

- Your project will support less heard voices to contribute to public discourse on development issues and challenge gender disparities and discrimination
- Your project will support less heard voices to access policy spaces and/or platforms with the potential to amplify voices and influence public discourse

All proposals must ensure that the cross-cutting theme of gender is mainstreamed throughout the project.

## II. **Eligibility**

To be eligible for a grant, the following criteria must be met:

1. The applicant and, when applicable, partner(s) are registered not-for-profit civil society organisations (CSOs).
2. The applicant and, when applicable, partner(s) must be registered in a Commonwealth Foundation member country and the project should take place in an eligible Commonwealth Foundation member country. **A list of countries eligible under this call is available at Annex one.**
3. The application is for funding for a maximum of £50,000 per annum
4. The applicant is applying for funding for a maximum of four years
5. The applicant does not have an existing grant from the Commonwealth Foundation at the time the application window is open.
6. The average of the applicant's total income over the last two years is less than £3m
7. The project must address one or both Commonwealth Foundation's outcomes
8. The applicant will provide the following documents as part of the application:
  - a completed logic model using the Commonwealth Foundation template
  - a copy of the organisation's registration certificate<sup>1</sup> (the official registration document provided by the relevant authorities in the country concerned)
  - a copy of the organisation's most recent audited accounts (it must include both the accounts and the opinion of the external auditor who has certified them; it should not be older than December 2017)<sup>2</sup>
  - a copy of the registration certificate<sup>3</sup> for all partner organisations

## III. **The Commonwealth Foundation will not fund:**

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<sup>1</sup> trust deeds will not be accepted in lieu of a registration certificate.

When the original registration certificates are not in English we might ask you to provide a translation if you are shortlisted.

<sup>2</sup> independently verified accounts or project audits will not be accepted in lieu of audited accounts

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 1

- Projects that are mid-cycle
- Attendance at training courses, workshops and conferences unless as part of a larger project funded by the grant
- Academic study or research unless as part of a larger project funded by the grant
- Publication of books and films, unless they are part of and/or learning tools developed as a result of a larger project funded by a Commonwealth Foundation grant
- Exchanges between developed countries
- Activities that are solely targeted at government officials and/or the private sector

#### IV. The Commonwealth Foundation will not consider applications from:

- Government and intergovernmental organisations
- For profit organisations
- Organisations who are not based in eligible Commonwealth Foundation member countries

#### V. Assessment

The application for a grant is a two-stage process: **All applicants will be required to submit an application form using our online application platform.** Shortlisted applicants will be contacted by the Commonwealth Foundation grants team and asked to provide a project plan and budget in support of their application. They may also be asked further questions in support of their application. This additional information will be assessed, and a selected number of applications will be presented to the Foundation's Grants Committee for approval. For this grants call, the Commonwealth Foundation will be approving between 6 and 8 grants.

Applications will be assessed on the criteria below:

1. The application has a clear problem definition.
2. The application clearly demonstrates that it is demand driven and relevant.
3. The application clearly shows how the planned activities will deliver outputs that lead to the project outcomes.
4. The application clearly shows the feasibility of delivering the project within the chosen time frame
5. The application clearly illustrates a strategy to sustain the positive outcomes from the project beyond the duration of the funding received from the Commonwealth Foundation
6. The applicant (and partners) has the capacity to deliver the submitted proposal.
7. The project addresses one or both Commonwealth Foundation outcomes

8. The project includes a strong gender analysis of the problem, mainstreams gender and identifies how the anticipated change specifically impacts women and girls.

## **VI. How to apply**

To apply applicants will need to complete and submit an online application form using the online application system. **A link to the form will be made available on the Commonwealth Foundation grants page when the call for applications opens.**

Before submitting your application form, please read the following documents which are available on our website:

1. List of eligible Commonwealth Foundation member countries
2. Preliminary application form questions
3. Beginning with the end in mind: the value of results chains and logic models
4. Logic model template
5. Frequently asked questions
6. Glossary of terms
7. How to fill in your application form

Please note that an organisation can only submit **one application per grants call**. The Commonwealth Foundation will only accept applications that have been submitted using the online application system.

## **VII. Timeline**

- The call for applications opens at 12:00 GMT on **1 November 2019**
- The deadline for submission of the preliminary application form is **17:00 GMT on 9 January 2020**
- Applications will be assessed in **January and February 2020**
- Shortlisted applicants will be requested to supply supporting documentation in **mid-March 2020**
- The deadline for submission of supporting documentation is **3 April 2020**
- All applicants will receive a formal notification on the outcome of their application by the end of **July 2020** at the latest. If you have not heard from us by **April 2020** please consider your application unsuccessful.

For this grant cycle, projects should start between **October and December 2020**.

## **VIII. Monitoring and reporting requirements**

1. Grantees will be required to develop a monitoring plan for the project

2. Grantees are required to provide reports on project progress providing us with interim narrative project reports, an end of project report and corresponding financial reports. Reporting deadlines are dependent on the length of the grant awarded and will be set out in the grant agreement between the Commonwealth Foundation and the grant applicant.

#### IX. Questions

If you require any further information about the Grants Programme and the application process, please email the grants team on [cfgrants@commonwealth.int](mailto:cfgrants@commonwealth.int) and a member of the grants team will get back to you. A document with **Frequently Asked Questions** will be made available on our website (Annex 5).