



Commonwealth Foundation

Guidelines for Grant Applicants

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 voice engaging in policy processes to hold government to account:**
 - 1.1. 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
2. **Public discourse more reflective of less-heard voices**

- 2.1. Your project will support less heard voices to contribute to public discourse on development issues
- 2.2. 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 equality is mainstreamed throughout the project.

II. Eligibility

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

1. The applicant is a registered national or regional not for profit civil society organisation (CSO).
2. The applicant must be based in a Commonwealth Foundation member country and the project should take place in an eligible Commonwealth Foundation member country. **A list of countries eligible to apply for a grant under this call is available at Annex A.**
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 per annum
7. The project must address the Commonwealth Foundation's intermediate 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 (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)
 - a copy of the registration certificate for all partner organisations

III. The Commonwealth Foundation will not fund:

- 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
 - International NGOs with resources that exceed those of the Commonwealth Foundation
 - Organisations who are not based in eligible Commonwealth Foundation member countries
 - Organisations whose target beneficiaries are not from eligible Commonwealth Foundation member countries
- A list of countries eligible to apply for a grant under this call is available at Annex A)**

V. Assessment

The application for a grant is a two-stage process: **preliminary application and full application**. Only shortlisted organisations will be invited to submit a full application.

Preliminary applications will be assessed on the criteria below:

1. The application has a clear problem definition.
2. The application clearly demonstrates that is demand driven and relevant.
3. The project must address one or both of the two focus areas
4. The application clearly shows how the planned activities will deliver outputs that lead to the project outcomes.
5. The organisation(s) has the capacity to deliver the submitted proposal.
6. The project includes a strong gender analysis of the problem, identifies strategies towards ensuring gender equality and identifies how the anticipated change specifically impacts women and girls.

Full applications will be assessed on the criteria below, in addition to the criteria used at the preliminary application stage:

1. 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
2. There is a clear learning and knowledge management strategy for the project
3. The Foundation's cross-cutting theme "gender equality" is addressed in the project design and project plan

VI. How to apply

To apply applicants will need to complete an online application form. **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 annexes available on our website:

- **Annex 1** - List of eligible Commonwealth Foundation member countries
- **Annex 2** - Preliminary application form questions
- **Annex 3** - Beginning with the end in mind: the value of results chains and logic models
- **Annex 4** - Logic model template

These documents will also be available in the application form under the page "resources".

Please note that an organisation can only submit one application per grants call.

VII. Timeline

- The call for applications opens at 12.00 GMT on **1 November 2017**
- The deadline for submission of the preliminary application form is 17.00 GMT on **3 January 2018**
- Preliminary applications will be assessed in **January and February 2018**
- Shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit a full application in **March 2018**
- The deadline for submission of full applications is **2 April 2018**
- All applicants will receive a formal notification on the outcome of their application by the end of **July 2018** at the latest. If you have not heard from us by **April 2018** consider your application has been unsuccessful.

For this grant cycle, projects should start between and **October and December 2018**.

VIII. Monitoring and reporting requirements

1. Grantees will be required to develop a performance framework and 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 once a grant is awarded.

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 and a member of the grants team will get back to you.

Annex 1

This is the current list of Commonwealth Foundation member countries that are eligible for projects to be undertaken in their country.