

Cooperative Agreement No: AID-167-A-15-00001
Engagement for Equity Program (E4E)



USAID
NGA POPULLI AMERIKAN
OD AMERIČKOG NARODA



ENGAGEMENT FOR EQUITY PROGRAM (E4E)

REQUEST FOR APPLICATION (RFA)

Rapid Response Fund

Cooperative Agreement No: AID-167-A-15-00001

Issuance Date:

Monday, February 26, 2018

Submission Closing Date:

Thursday, April 30, 2020

Submission Location:

Electronically at usaidatrcgrants@advocacy-center.org

Dear Applicants,

Advocacy Training and Resource Center (ATRC), the implementing partner for USAID's Engagement for Equity Program (E4E), is seeking applications from qualified Kosovar Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) for Rapid Response Fund to:

- Conduct complex advocacy and awareness campaigns in cooperation with stakeholders from diverse segments of society and government;
- Engage in formulation of policy recommendations on select democracy and governance and economic empowerment issues, drawn from consultations with citizens and other stakeholders;
- Monitor and track the implementation of targeted legislation, reforms, and initiatives of high importance to vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Awards will be made in five thematic areas detailed in the next section:

1. Women in Governance and Economy;
2. Empowering Women through Enhanced Awareness of Women's Property Rights;
3. Increased protection and awareness of vulnerable populations' rights.
4. Expand Participation of Persons with Disabilities (PwD); and
5. Expand Youth Participation

All awards will be administered in accordance with applicable regulations as follows:

- ADS 303
- ADS 303 Mandatory Standard Provisions for Non-U.S.-Non-Governmental Recipients
- 48 CFR 31.2 (for-profit organizations)

Regulations listed above can be accessed via the USAID webpage:

<http://www.usaid.gov/business/regulations/>

Rapid Response Fund is the single three-year open call, re-launched in February 26, 2018, calling for application submissions until April 30, 2020.

Notifications on grant application status will be sent within fifteen (15) days.

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

To achieve maximum impact, ATRC will provide assistance and technical support on matters affecting their respective projects and organizational management. Grantees, especially those that lack sufficient experience or organizational capacities, will be supported through continuous assistance by ATRC in implementation under E4E.

Award grantees will be required to allocate resources in their project plan and cost proposal following the Cost Proposal Guidelines. Award grantees' projects are expected to be cost effective and demonstrate a commitment to the project's success by including cost-share in matching funds and/or in-kind contributions. The obliged cost-share/or in-kind contribution is 15%.

For the purposes of this program this RFA is being issued and consists of the following:

Section I - Award Information;

Section II - Funding Opportunity Description;

Section III - Eligibility Information;
Section IV - Application Review Information;
Section V - Regulations and Reference;
Section VI - Application Submission Information;
Section VII - Attachments.

Section I: Award Information

1. USAID/ATRC throughout E4E Program intends to fund multiple grants in response to this RFA. Allowable costs must be consistent with USAID policies and procedures and be reasonable, allowable, allocable, well-documented and justified for the proposed project and budget.

In response to this RFA, E4E Program is anticipated to award:

- Multiple awards under Rapid Response Fund for all five thematic areas can range up to \$25,000.

The proposed budgets will be negotiated based on the scope of the Program proposed by the grantee.

2. The successful applications will be varying in project life duration, but must end by November 2020.

3. All Grant applications received by the deadline will be technically screened by E4E Program staff.

4. Grant applications will be received until Thursday, April 30, 2020. After the closing date, grant applications will not be considered for the review process.

5. Following submission of the complete Application, E4E program staff will send the Applicant an e-mail notification confirming receipt of the Application. Applicants receiving the highest scores, until available funds are expended, will move to the pre-award/negotiation phase of the grant award process. Once an application has been successfully negotiated and approved by USAID, it will be funded upon availability of resources.

6. The type of agreement will be: Standard, and/or Simplified Grant Agreements, per ADS 303 of USAID regulations.

7. E4E Program will incorporate its USAID-Approved Branding and Marking Plan to all awards under this RFA (ADS 302 <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/320.pdf>).

Section II: Funding Opportunity Description

BACKGROUND/ INTRODUCTION:

Advocacy Training and Resources Center (ATRC), the implementing partner for USAID's Engagement for Equity Program (E4E), pursuant to the authority contained in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and in accordance with USAID Cooperative Agreement No.: AID-167-A-15-00001, is seeking applications from qualified Kosovar Non-Governmental Organizations for Rapid Response Fund. Assistance will be in the form of Standard, and/or

Simplified Award Agreements in accordance with Chapter 303 of USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS 303 <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303.pdf>).

USAID has awarded a cooperative agreement to ATRC, a local non-governmental organization, to strengthen civil society's role in raising critical democracy and, governance and economy issues and in influencing the development and implementation of policies affecting vulnerable and marginalized groups, through implementation of the "Engagement for Equity" Program.

ATRC will serve as an Intermediary Support Organization (ISO) and is expected to solicit, award, and oversee the implementation and financial management of a civil society grant fund, with an emphasis on empowering women through improved property rights, increased engagement of women in governance and economy; increased protection and awareness of vulnerable populations' rights and participation; representation of persons with disabilities (PWD), and youth.

The E4E Program--through grant administration--strives to improve the integration of vulnerable and marginalized groups as both a matter of human rights and sustainable development. In particular, the E4E Activity seeks to influence the development and effective implementation of policies pertinent to vulnerable populations, while strengthening the role of civil society in effectively promoting wider critical issues of democracy and governance.

ATRC will also provide technical and organizational capacity development assistance to sub-recipients as needed to ensure effective program implementation and strengthen sub-recipients' organizational and technical capacity.

Rapid Response Fund is the single three-year open call, re-launched in February 26, 2018, calling for application submissions until April 30, 2020.

Note:

Rapid Response Fund: Grant size to be awarded under this category is up to \$25,000. This fund is intended for activities that respond to emerging needs and opportunities as they arise. Rapid response grants will have a more streamlined (and shorter) application process than the larger grants. Grant opportunities under this category may be offered multiple times during the course of implementation of this program. The proposals should be of relevance to "Engagement for Equity" Themes and overall goal and objectives.

Targeted Technical and Organizational Development Assistance will be provided by ATRC. ATRC will provide ongoing assistance to the grantees through capacity building and technical support on issues that concern their respective projects and organizational management matters. Grantees, especially those that lack sufficient experience or internal capacities, will be supported through continuous assistance by ATRC in implementing projects.

Grantees funded through E4E Program are expected to address one of the thematic areas listed below:

Theme 1: Women in Governance and Economy

Under Theme 1, ATRC will support Kosovar CSOs with grants intended to allow them to conduct public education and advocacy activities to increase awareness and change attitudes towards women's active participation and leadership in economy. The supported activities will promote improved policy, representation, employment, education, and participation of women in governance and the economy. Such activities may include, but are not limited to, the following: (1)

promote professional development; (2) conduct advocacy and outreach for fair and equal opportunities for business women and women entrepreneurs; (3) hold public dialogue and similar forums for women to engage with government officials and elected representatives; and (4) and promote women's rights, participation, and leadership in formal and informal conflict prevention processes through activities aimed at identifying and preventing extreme political and social attitudes that may lead to violent extremism.

Anticipated results under this theme include:

1. Organizations representing women interests become a strong voice in support of issues that impact women;
2. Interests of women are better represented in the formulation and implementation of public policy, including gender-based budgeting, improved legislation, etc.;
3. Increased awareness and contribute to behavior change of the society on the role and importance of including women in economy and governance;
4. Women active in formal and informal conflict prevention processes that contribute to stable governance and economy.

Theme 2: Empowering Women through Enhanced Awareness of Women's Property Rights.

Under Theme 2, ATRC will support Kosovar CSOs to conduct public education and advocacy activities to increase awareness of and change attitudes towards women's property rights in terms of ownership, inheritance and use. Activities supported under grants may include, but are not limited to: (1) public awareness campaigns related to National Property Rights Strategy at central and local level, with special focus on youth; (2) monitoring of the implementation of the national property rights strategy at the local and national level; (3) CSO court monitoring of property rights/inheritance cases; and (4) raising awareness of women's entrepreneurial groups regarding the use of property as collateral.

Activities under this component will complement the work of USAID's ongoing Property Rights Program's (PRP), theme 3: Enhance Women's Rights to Use Property in Practice.

Anticipated results under this theme include:

1. Increased awareness of women's property rights issues among the entire population, including youth;
2. Increased awareness of the National Strategy on Property Rights (NSPR) among the public;
3. Improved monitoring of the implementation of the NSPR;
4. Women are more empowered to to claim their property interests; and
5. Laws and policies to protect women's property rights that incorporate CSO recommendations are adopted, amended and implemented.

Theme 3: Increased protection and awareness of vulnerable populations' rights.¹

Under Theme 3, ATRC will support civil society organizations for addressing and initiating awareness raising, changing attitudes, improving the legal framework with better implementation of laws protecting vulnerable groups. The supported activities among other will contribute to improved access to justice for all, through collaboration for strengthening the institutions, actors, and processes providing legal aid, services, and information. It will also help empower vulnerable groups and promote greater collaboration across various segments of civil society to protect the vulnerable population from discrimination and human rights violations. Activities supported under grants may include, but are not limited to: (1) human rights and anti-discrimination campaigns; (2)

¹ Vulnerable populations include the people who are disadvantaged and marginalized on account of gender, ethnicity (for example, but not exclusively Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities), age, physical and mental disability, socio-economic status, or sexual orientation and gender identity.

monitoring of the implementation of the relevant legislation at the local and national level to ensure rights of vulnerable populations respected (2) support of improving and implementing Kosovo's legal framework, in accordance with European Union standards, addressing discrimination and human rights violations.

Activities under this component may also complement the work of USAID's future Justice Matters activity.

Anticipated results under this theme include:

1. Increased awareness of and sensitivity to issues of vulnerable groups and human rights among the general population;
2. Improved civil society reporting on discrimination cases to GoK authorities and increased number of discrimination cases heard in the courts, for example using strategic litigation;
3. Increased citizen access to information and improved legal literacy and empowerment of the vulnerable population; and
4. Improved representation of vulnerable groups by pro bono legal aid providers, human rights cases, including property/inheritance cases.

Theme 4: Expand Participation of Persons with Disabilities (PwD)

Under Theme 4, ATRC will support civil society organizations in promoting policy reform, representation, employment, education, and participation of PwDs. Activities supported under grants may include, but are not limited to: (1) Facilitate and increase participation of PwDs in civic activities; (2) CSO advocacy and awareness-raising on accessible city planning and public facilities; (3) Awareness campaigns de-stigmatizing PwDs through electronic/print media, broadcast (TV) media and social networking; (4) Advocacy for and promotion of business opportunities and social enterprises for training/mainstreaming PwDs; (5)) monitoring of the implementation of laws related to the PwD.

Anticipated results under this theme include:

1. Increased awareness of and protection of rights of PwD in society;
2. Increased involvement of PwD in civic engagement, employment and educational opportunities;
3. Increased access of PwD to public facilities;
4. Increased implementation of the Law on Persons with Disabilities;
5. More constructive dialogue between civil society and government institutions on needs of PwD.

Theme 5: Expand Youth Participation

Under Theme 5, ATRC will support the initiative launched by groups that represent the interests of youth. Activities are envisioned to promote policy, representation, employment, education and participation of youth across a range of civic and economic issues. Activities should address the needs of Kosovo's large, unemployed youth population who lack both motivation and opportunity for political and community engagement. Partner civil society organizations will support tolerance-building dialogue and cooperation to stimulate positive dialogue and debate, and play a key role in increased participation of youth in promoting policy reform, representation, employment, education, and participation of youth across a range of civic and economic issues. At the same time activities will address issues caused by the lack of opportunities, lack of occupation and simply an excess of free time into creation of non-violent alternatives that will satisfy these needs among youth most at risk. Activities supported under grants may include, but are not limited to: (1) empowering of at-risk youth in targeted municipalities through implementing activities that offer positive alternatives to youth, with the aim of drawing in marginalized individuals who may

otherwise turn to violent extremism; (2) supporting tolerance-building dialogue and cooperation to stimulate positive dialogue and debate; (3) monitoring the implementation of the GoK's CVE strategy and action plan²; (4) examining how "push"³ factors such as social marginalization, weak rule of law, unemployment, and corruption are being addressed by the GoK to determine whether there is movement towards ameliorating underlying causes.

Anticipated results under this theme include:

1. Interests of youth are better represented in formulation and implementation of public policies;
2. Creating spaces for productive constructive dialogue between youth and government institutions increased;
3. Youth engagement in monitoring public policy and implementation of reforms and laws that address violent extremism
4. Actionable findings and recommendations on improving the implementation of the GoK CVE strategy and the action plan on the prevention of violent extremism introduced to relevant agencies.

Section III: Eligibility Information

Grants will only be awarded to following types of organizations: non-US organizations, Kosovo-based entities (government entities are excluded) non-profit and for profit non-governmental organizations. Organizations that meet the eligibility requirements as stated below may submit an application in response to this RFA. Please note that if an applicant does not meet the eligibility criteria, the application will not be accepted for review and will be rejected.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

USAID/ ATRC will issue grants to organizations that are legally registered and recognized under the laws of Kosovo and not prohibited from receiving USG funding.

Applicants are required to register for a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. Information on how to obtain a DUNS number can be found at <https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>.

To be eligible, an applicant must:

- Show proof of a valid registration under the Kosovo Law on Freedom of Association in Non-Governmental Organizations;
- Show proof of a valid bank account at a bank in Kosovo;
- Demonstrate it is in good standing with Tax Administration of Kosovo; and
- Provide DUNS Number.

In addition, the grantees must demonstrate that they:

- Possess sound managerial, technical, and institutional capacities to achieve project results;
- Are willing to sign applicable assurance certifications.

INELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

The following organizations are *not* eligible for E4E Program grant funding:

- Political parties, their subsidiaries, or affiliates;

² Strategy on prevention of violent extremism and radicalization leading to terrorism 2015-2020: http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/STRATEGY_parandalim_-_ENG.pdf

³ Extremist violence presents a serious threat to democratic values and societies around the world. Structural "push" factors create conditions that foster the rise or spread in appeal of violent extremism (VE). "Push" factors are socioeconomic, political, and cultural in nature. Such factors include: high levels of social marginalization and fragmentation, poorly governed or ungoverned areas, government repression and human rights violations, cultural threat perceptions, and endemic corruption and elite impunity.

- Organizations that appear on the SAM list and Non-procurement Programs or United Nations (UN) 1267 list;
- Organizations that promote or engage in illegal activities or anti-democratic activities;
- Faith-based organizations that are not in compliance with Automated Directives System (ADS) 303.3.28, which is in accordance with Executive Order 13279, Equal Protection for the Laws of Faith-based Community Organizations; and
- Any public international organization.

Section IV: Application Review Information

PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCESS

ATRC will conduct first technical screening for all applications. The technical screening will be based on the technical criteria set in RFAs. In order for application to be technically completed the following criteria need to be met:

- Electronic version of application is submitted at usaidatrcgrants@advocacy-center.org up to the deadline;
- Electronic version of application: Annex A is in Word file format only, and Annex B is in Excel file format only;
- Valid organizational registration as a legal entity in Kosovo with the Department of Registration and Liaison of NGOs within the Kosovo Ministry of Public Administration (scanned);
- Applicant has bank account in one of the Kosovo Banks (answer at Annex A);
- The correct Application form (ANNEX A), published for this call for proposals, has been used;
- The proposal is typed and is in Albanian, Serbian or English;
- The technical proposal (ANEX A) DOES NOT exceed 9 pages;
- All fields of Application form (ANNEX A) are filled and are correctly used;
- The correct Budget form (ANNEX B. for Cost Proposal) has been used and is expressed in US Dollars and is enclosed;
- The budget narrative is included in Application form (ANNEX A) and it is prepared based on budget lines;
- Cost share and/or In-kind contribution of the applicant is indicated in the Budget form (ANNEX B. for Cost Proposal) and narrative budget;
- DUNS number;
- Tax verification from Tax Administration of Kosovo (TAK) that verifies that applicant is registered at TAK and does not have current debts or obligations (scanned); and
- Required certifications package signed in the Annex A, section V.

The number of points assigned indicates the relative importance of each factor and ranking will be based on the criteria and points (100 is the maximum points allowed).

All applications will be evaluated on a competitive basis in accordance with the criteria presented below. These criteria were developed to address the particular goals of the Engagement for Equity Program.

Overall selection illustrative grant selection criteria will be based on:

- Relevance to “Engagement for Equity” objectives
- The quality and scale of involvement of key stakeholders
- Feasibility of outreach efforts to reach targeted population

- Urgency of need
- Likelihood that program impact will be sustained
- Importance of audience segments that will be targeted with awareness initiatives

All applications will be evaluated on a competitive basis in accordance with the criteria presented below. These criteria were developed to address the particular goals of the Engagement for Equity Program. The number of points assigned indicates the relative importance of each factor. To make the evaluation process as theme as possible, each applicant must clearly demonstrate how its proposal meets the following criteria:

1. Technical Application: 40 points

- Extent to which the proposed project is logical, well-conceived, technically sound, reflects an appreciation for the likely problems to be encountered and directly addresses the themes identified in this RFA (10 points);
- Extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a clear understanding of the issues to be addressed, presents original or innovative approaches, and sets meaningful and realistic results to be achieved within the proposed timeframe (15 points);
- Extent to which the proposed activities demonstrate long-term impact and sustainability (5 points);
- Extent to which the proposed project addresses gender issues (10 points).

2. Cost Proposal: 20 points

- Extent to which the proposed costs are realistic and consistent with project activities (10 points);
- Level of commitment demonstrated to provide matching funds and in-kind contributions. Proposed cost share will be evaluated based on the level of financial participation identified within the ability of the applicant and the added value it represents to the program (10 points).

3. Organizational Capacity: 40 points

- Extent to which the applicant demonstrates commitment to its mission and the ability to carry out the proposed project as planned, including adequate managerial and financial systems, and the extent of diversity in leadership and staffing (15 points);
- Extent to which the applicant demonstrates leadership ability within its sector of expertise (15 points);
- Extend to which applicant is sensitive towards gender issues (10 points).

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Grant funds will not be used for the following activities:

- Activities that duplicate the activities of other USG-supported program or programs conducted by other organizations in Kosovo;⁴
- Activities that are inconsistent with international standards of human rights or with democratic goals of racial and ethnic tolerance and harmony;
- Ceremonies, parties, celebrations, or “representation” expenses except for those that are specified in the grant (for example, opening ceremonies) to promote the visibility of USAID in the eyes of the communities USAID is trying to serve;

⁴ In the event that an application reveals such duplication, the applicant will be advised appropriately of other US program or other potential funding sources for such activities.

- Involuntary sterilization programs;⁵
- Abortion-related activities and biomedical research relating to abortion;⁶ and
- Activities not approved by USAID.

OTHER INFORMATION

USAID and/or ATRC reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. Additionally, all awards pursuant to this funding opportunity are contingent upon the availability of funds and the receipt of a sufficient number of meritorious applications.

Section V: Regulations and Reference

ADS303: Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Non-Governmental Organizations (12/26/2014)
<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303.pdf>

ADS303mab: Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations (12/26/2014)
<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mab.pdf>

ADS303maa: Standard Provisions for Fixed Obligation Grants to Non-Governmental Organizations (12/26/2014)
<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mat.pdf>

ADS303mak: Fixed Amount Award Entity Eligibility Checklist (12/24/2014)
<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mak.pdf>

ADS303mav: Certifications, Assurances, Other Statements of the Recipient and Solicitation Standard Provisions (12/24/2014)
<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mav.pdf>

2 CFR 200: Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards
<http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=bd7139ce8733a80692c32d23f3dd5839&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5>

Profit Under USAID Assistance

<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303sai.pdf>

Section VI: Application Submission Information

Applications in response to this RFA must be submitted electronically at: usaidatrcgrants@advocacy-center.org

Applications can be submitted up to April, 2020. Electronic copy must be submitted before the closing date.

⁵ MSP16.a Requirements for Voluntary Sterilization Programs

⁶ MSP16.b Prohibition on Abortion-Related Activities

Applications received after this time will not be considered. Project proposals may be submitted in Albanian, Serbian or English. The attached application form should be completed in full, which should not exceed nine (9) typed pages. Handwritten proposals will not be considered. Applications submitted by fax will not be accepted. All applications submitted will **not** be returned.

All applications must be submitted in the required format with all required attachments:

- Full Application Form
- Budget Form
- Copy of Registration Certificate
- Tax verification from Tax Administration of Kosovo

ATRC reserves the right to determine whether or not an application is substantially submitted.

Applicants will be informed of the status of their grant application and the awarding of grants within fifteen days (15) after the grant application is submitted.

Request for Application (RFA) documentation is available through the following means:

- Electronic version of complete RFA can be downloaded at: www.advocacy-center.org;
- CD copies may be obtained from ATRC at St. Gazmend Zajmi, No.20 Prishtina, Kosova;
- usaidatrcgrants@advocacy-center.org

The RFA includes all information required to apply for a grant, however, questions on this RFA should be submitted to:

Attention: E4E Staff

ATRC Office: Str. Gazmend Zajmi No.20, Pristina, 10000, Kosovo

Office Number: 038 244 810

E-mail: usaidatrcgrants@advocacy-center.org

Section VII: Attachments

1. Application Form (Annex A)
2. Budget Form (Annex B)
3. Cost Proposal Guidelines (Annex C)