



Uniting against Poverty



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

OFID-UNDP CROSS-REGIONAL GRANTS COMPETITION

The OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are launching the first joint **Cross-Regional Grants Competition**. The competition will help address shared development challenges of Europe and Central Asia (ECA) and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The Competition will bring together non-profit organizations from ECA and MENA in order to develop and share innovative and scalable development solutions in two areas: (1) **Affordable Energy and Water**, and (2) **Economic Governance and Employment**. These will take the form of small-scale practical projects that can later be scaled up with additional funding.

OFID is the development finance institution established by the Member States of OPEC in 1976 as a collective channel of aid to the developing countries. OFID works in cooperation with developing country partners and the international donor community to stimulate economic growth and alleviate poverty in all disadvantaged regions of the world. OFID's work is people-centered, focusing on projects that meet basic needs - such as food, energy, clean water and sanitation, healthcare and education – with the aim of encouraging self-reliance and inspiring hope for the future.

UNDP is the specialized development programme of the United Nations. UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves quality of life for everyone. On the ground in over 170 countries and territories, UNDP offers global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

The present guidelines describe the application procedure of the OFID-UNDP Cross-Regional Grants Competition. They provide guidance to prospective applicants in the preparation of their initial expressions of interest and in developing full project proposals that best fit the priorities of this competition. For this Call for Proposals applications will be accepted from non-profit organizations that are registered and operating in the following countries and territories:

Middle East and North Africa: *Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Somalia, State of Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Yemen.*

Note: special preference will be given to applications from NGOs and/or involving NGOs from Djibouti, Morocco, Somalia, State of Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Yemen.

Europe and Central Asia: *Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo*¹, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.*

¹ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of the UN Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

THEMATIC FOCUS AND PRIORITY ISSUES

Recent years have shown a spontaneous bottom-up process of local development, specifically in countries from the MENA region and Europe and Central Asia. Many citizens want to contribute to the wellbeing of their communities through more innovative, inclusive and needs-generated solutions. Nevertheless, significant challenges indicate the need for comprehensive and adapted support. This grant competition comes as a tool to encourage pilot projects, joint research, and/or knowledge sharing initiatives that contribute to positive change and that can later be scaled up or sustained for bigger impact. This competition addresses two specific development priorities:

Priority 1: Affordable energy and water solutions

We are looking for technological solutions that combat the lack of access to energy or water. Can you design a pilot project or prototype that promotes sustainable or renewable energy, waste management, water security, water resource management, shelter or sustainable agriculture? Do you need a framework to test and implement your solution and gather different perspectives and feedback from various partners? Are you able to adapt your solutions to a different region?

Priority 2: Economic governance and employment

We want to address the need for a more inclusive labor market and increase the capacity of people to access it. Do you have an innovative solution that makes the labor market more “youth friendly”? Is your idea supporting entrepreneurship and employment of women, youth or other vulnerable and disadvantaged groups? Can you show that your idea is applicable to different socio-economic contexts?

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE COMPETITION

The purpose of the OFID-UNDP Cross-Regional Grants Competition is to strengthen the capacity of civil society and non-profit organizations from Europe and Central Asia and the MENA region to jointly develop, test and/or share innovative and scalable solutions to development challenges shared by the two regions: Europe and Central Asia (ECA) and Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

The grants will be awarded for projects that have:

- Have cross-regional coverage. Therefore, the projects have to be developed in partnership between at least two different participating countries, including at least one from each region, but with strong emphasis on the lower-income countries.
- Deal with testing and implementing new approaches, adapting existing approaches to new contexts, or applying what has been learned from previous work.
- Demonstrate the potential for community-level impact and that have the potential to be scaled up into larger programmes.

Special consideration will be placed on projects targeting vulnerable populations affected by crises in the MENA region, such as youth, women, refugees and host communities, internally displaced people and communities in need of rebuilding.

HOW IT WILL WORK

In order to facilitate the partnership – building process, the competition will be conducted in two stages, as follows:

Expressions of Interest phase:

- a) Initial project idea is developed and submitted jointly by grant seekers from at least two countries and submitted for evaluation to the UNDP, or
- b) Project idea originating in one of the two regions is submitted for evaluation with the information that the grant seeker needs support from UNDP in finding the right partner. Efforts will be made to match the grant seeker with a partner organization in the other region in order to address a specific challenge. Priority will be given to projects implemented in the MENA region.

Full application submission phase:

- c) After the partnership is formed, the project idea will be transformed into a full application (project proposal) and submitted to enter the final competition for funding.

The grant competition is managed by the UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub, Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS, in close collaboration with OFID, the UNDP Regional Bureau for the Arab States and UNDP Country Offices in relevant countries.

Send your project idea described briefly in the Expression of Interest to crgrants.irh@undp.org. After a successful initial assessment, you will be asked to develop the full application. We will evaluate the full applications and support the most successful ones through grant funding and matching of partners.

GRANT FUNDING

This grant competition is expected to result in funding of three to five cross-regional projects. The number of grants awarded will depend on the number of high-quality applications received.

Size of grants:

Minimum: 20,000 USD

Maximum: 55,000 USD

The grant can cover up to 100% of the eligible costs of a proposed project or can come as a contribution to a larger project with clear indication of how it contributes to the bigger initiative.

The applicant and the partner(s) need to provide a realistic and cost-effective budget. Eligible costs must be based on real costs supported by documents. The salaries of personnel indicated in the proposal should not exceed 20%. Contributions in kind are relevant in proving the ability to manage the grant funding, but will not be reimbursed.

The ineligible costs are: debts and provisions for losses or debts, interest owed, salary top-ups, purchases of land or buildings, or currency exchange losses.

Grants will be disbursed in two tranches with first tranche equaling to 50% of the grant payable upon signature of the agreement between UNDP and the winning organization(s). The second tranche will be provided based on positive performance and expenditure of at least 75% of the first tranche. Over the course of the grant's life cycle, the grantees will report on results achieved against targets, which will form the basis for second tranche disbursement. Financial disbursements will be made in U.S. dollars.

RULES OF THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The OFID-UNDP Cross-Regional Grant Competition is open to non-profit organizations registered according to the applicable laws of eligible countries and it is based on a competitive process.

Grant applicants should consider the following general principles in designing their project proposals:

- cross-regional partnership;
- projects, which identify and showcase concrete development solutions in thematic areas of the call;
- focus on technology, know-how and knowledge transfer;
- project design with the potential for replication and/or scaling up;
- sustainability of the project.

Additionally, the following definitions apply in the context of this grant competition:

Applicant: the organization responsible for submitting the application;

Partnership: the grouping of organizations i.e. the main applicant and its partners for the purpose of implementing the proposed action;

Partner: member organization of the partnership other than the applicant.

ELIGIBILITY: WHO MAY APPLY?

In order to be eligible for the grant, **applicants and partners should:**

- **Operate in the countries covered by this grant competition.**
- Be a **non-profit making organisation** registered under the relevant laws of the country where it is registered – registration certificate duly translated into English needs to be submitted with the proposal as proof of the status of the organization. Various types of legal entities are entitled to participate in the call, including but not limited to civil society organizations, academic institutions, and business associations.
- Be directly responsible for the preparation, management and implementation of the project and need to demonstrate prior experience in implementing activities in the thematic areas of the call.

UNDP Country Offices from either of the regions may act as facilitators and / or oversee the preparation, submission and implementation of proposals, in addition to at least two non-governmental organizations from the two regions.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Duration:

Grants will be awarded for duration of up to 12 months, but should show potential for scaling-up over a longer term.

Location:

The project activities must have a regional or cross-regional coverage and should take place in at least one of the participating countries for this grant competition.

Visibility:

Applications and all related activities must follow the UNDP and OFID branding and visibility guidelines, which will be provided to the successful grant seekers.

Copyright:

Intellectual property rights of the products, tools or services that are selected to receive funds will be owned by the applicants who will grant UNDP a nonexclusive, royalty-free right to use and to further license.

Eligible activities for funding:

Projects can include (but are not limited to) the following type of activities:

- Research activities;
- Developing technical solutions and prototypes;
- Organization of events (seminars/ trainings/ workshops/ conferences) with the aim of knowledge sharing and development of technical solutions;
- Documenting solutions/ prototypes or innovative ideas

No sponsorships, scholarships, and political or religious activities will be financed by this grant competition.

Number of applications and grants awarded per applicant:

An applicant or a partnership may submit more than one application under this Call for Proposals, but may not be awarded more than one grant.

There is no restriction with regard to the number of applications in which an organization may participate as partner.

HOW TO APPLY?

SUBMISSION STAGES

The OFID-UNDP grant competition will begin with the launch of the call for project proposals on **2 February 2015**. This grant competition has a two-staged approach:

1) Expression of Interest phase

During this stage the potential applicant(s) have to develop an initial project idea and provide a clear concept of what project an organization wants and is qualified to do. Firstly, the applicant(s) should fill in the **Annex A – Expression of interest form** and send it together with a **copy of the certificate of registration** translated into English indicating non-profit status of the organization to UNDP (submission via email). It is recommended that the partnership between applying organizations is already in existence, but it is not mandatory. If the partnership is not in place, the applicant can ask for support from UNDP at this stage to match it with a potential partner from another region.

The documents have to be sent no later than **30 March 2015, 17:00 (GMT+2)** to the following email address: crgrants.irh@undp.org. Acknowledgement of receipt of the documents will be sent to the applicants.

2) Full Application phase

After the partnership of at least 2 partners is established, the project idea has to be developed as required in the **Annex B – Full application form** and **Annex C – Budget**. Additionally, at this stage the partnership has also to fill in the **Annex D – Letter of commitment**, for each one of the organizations involved in the project, meaning the main applicant and its partner(s) together with the **certificate of registration of each partner dully translated into English**.

The deadline to submit all the documents will be **31 May 2015, 17:00 (GMT+2)** to the following email address: crgrants.irh@undp.org.

Project proposals will be accepted by email only during all the phases of this call for project proposals. Any questions regarding this grant competition should be sent to the following email address: crgrants.irh@undp.org

The official language for this grant competition is **English**. Relevant project documents should be submitted in English.

INDICATIVE CALENDAR 2015

2 February: Launching the grant competition

30 March: Deadline for sending the Expressions of interest

Mid-April: Notification of selection of Expressions of interest

31 May: Deadline for sending the Full application

Mid-June: Notification of award

SELECTION CRITERIA

During the assessment process, project proposals will be assessed based on the following evaluation criteria:

Expression of interest phase:

Criteria	Points
Relevant experience: The organization has a strong track record and know - how in the project field of work.	25
Cross – regional approach: The project idea draws on the comparative advantage of a cross-regional partnership.	35
Impact: The project idea shows the potential to have a real impact in the community.	40

Full application phase:

Criteria	Points
Innovation: The project promotes innovative solutions and approaches to specific problems.	20

Sustainability: The project has strong potential for replication beyond the project duration.	20
Tech-oriented: The project includes concrete technological solutions and/or prototypes development, know-how and knowledge transfer.	20
Feasibility: The partner organizations demonstrate a clear and realistic plan for implementation of the project and evaluation of the results.	20
Realistic budget: The project represents good value for money.	20

LIST OF ANNEXES

ANNEX A: EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FORM

ANNEX B: FULL APPLICATION FORM

ANNEX C: BUDGET

ANNEX D: LETTER OF COMMITMENT