

RAPID RESPONSE FUND

NEW DEMOCRACY FUND

Background

The Rapid Response Fund represents the New Democracy Fund's ability to provide rapid financial and capacity development support to Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the Eastern Neighbourhood Countries (ENC) – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine – that preferably have a Danish CSO partner, and that previously have received support from that partner.

These Rapid Response funds are channelled through the Danish New Democracy Fund which is administered by a consortium of Danish CSOs (see below) that engages in support to strengthen democratic civil society and lasting sustainable regional networks between civil society organisations in Denmark and the ENC.

New Democracy Fund focusses on five thematic areas: youth, media, culture, labour market, and environment. These areas are enforced by a cross-cutting emphasis on gender and human rights.

Purpose

The purpose of the Rapid Response Fund is to provide civil society actors with rapid, critical financial resources and capacity development support for taking advantage of new opportunities or to protect their work and capacity to contribute to the objectives of the New Democracy Fund through a flexible, fast-track grant mechanism.

The Rapid Response Fund will prioritise its limited resources to activities that support the achievement of the general purposes of the New Democracy Fund, falls within its five thematic priority areas, and are supportive of the on-going activities of partners of Danish civil society organisations and institutions in the ENC.

Target group

Support under the Rapid Response Fund is provided to civil society organisations, human rights defenders, artists, filmmakers, and journalists in emergencies, conflict, and serious political or legislative change. Some examples of situations where we provide support is in case of:

- Emergencies, e.g. conflict.
- Drastic change in political or legislative context (positive or negative), e.g. a peace agreement, new windows of opportunity, end of a repressive regime, deterioration of legislative framework and protection of rights, sudden political tension, or polarization.
- Rapidly closing space and/or fundamental human rights under threat.
- Early warning – either worrying trends, e.g. restrictions to freedoms of association, assembly, or expression

Eligible applicants

- Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the ENC. Civil society is broadly defined to include CSOs, human rights defenders, social movements, media, academia, trade unions as well as community-based groups and organisations.

- The applicant organisation shall have a current or previous partnership with a Danish CSO and shall have received support from that partner, and the support from the Rapid Response Fund shall be channel through the Danish Partner. Only in exceptional cases, support can be channel directly to an organisation without a Danish partner. The Application can also be submitted by the Danish Partner.
- If an action aims at supporting individuals, this support must be channelled through a CSO. Individuals/human rights defenders are defined as anyone who individually or in association with others promotes and protects human rights. This includes all actors working on issues within a broad human rights issue spectrum.

Eligible actions

The amount needed for the activities must be clearly outlined in a budget showing the individual costs. The grant amount applied for should not exceed 400,000 DKK. Co-financing is allowed if needed. The Rapid Response Fund reserves the right to reduce the amount granted to the individual applications, taken the limited funds available as well as other relevant factors into account. The total budget for the Rapid Response Fund is DKK 5,000,000 available from 2021 through 2022.

The suggested intervention(s) shall be concluded before the end of 2022, and the timeframe should strive to not exceed one year unless circumstances demand it such as a court case or other processes.

Rapid Response funding can be provided for both reactive as well as a proactive action:

- A)** Grants to locally led activities to proactively counter restrictions and meet the threat of cases listed above.
- B)** Grants to locally led activities to proactively use new windows of opportunity, new political openings.
- C)** Emergency assistance funds to individuals and groups under threat.

A) Grants to locally-led activities to collectively counter restrictions to civic space

Criteria: Restrictions to freedoms of association, assembly or expression (civic space) or other human rights violations e.g. crackdown on artistic and cultural expression, the rights of children or youth, filmmakers or journalists exercising their freedom of expression, trade union members organising their work place, environmental activists etcetera have occurred or seem likely to occur and will be addressed collectively through activities by more than one thematic civil society group.

A variety of activities can be supported depending on what local actors deem most relevant in the specific context. They can include:

- Advocacy and campaigns against restrictive laws.
- Research and documentation.
- Roundtable dialogues.
- Support to domestic litigation and technical assistance to strategic litigation.
- Other relevant activities identified by the applicant.

B) Grants to locally led activities aiming proactively to use new windows of opportunity

Criteria: Proactive initiatives to improve enabling environment and work within the five themes of the New Democracy Fund and gender equality as a cross-cutting element. For example, establishing a replicable model of services for integrating young people with

disabilities into the labour market, promoting cultural heritage and awareness in places where they are disappearing; launching a project around big political events – boosting youth participation around elections, Universal Periodical Review (UPR) submissions, civil society contributions to gender equality action plans and so on.

To encourage collective actions, the consortium will encourage applicants to build alliances – when relevant – among civil society organisations with an aim of cross-thematic involvement. Outreach to other stakeholders can be supported and could happen in the following ways:

- The grantee reaches out to other CSOs and groups working across different thematic areas to ensure strong alliance building.
- Coordination with other international efforts is encouraged.
- Danish CSOs can provide contacts to their partners to ensure involvement across thematic areas.
- Danish actors can play a proactive role or be invited to take part in the activities by the applicant to provide their expertise if seen as beneficial.

C) Emergency assistance funds to individuals and groups under threat

Criteria: A group or an individual must have experienced threats, attacks, extra bureaucratic hurdles, legal barriers, dismissal, prosecution, imprisonment, torture, defamation, harassment, stigmatization, discrimination, exclusion, marginalization, displacement etc. due to their work.

Provision of emergency assistance funds: provided to a civil society organisation or groups under threat or intimidation who are partners of one or more Danish CSOs or embassies. The type of activities/equipment that can be supported are:

- Temporary relocation of individuals at immediate risk.
- Support to temporarily relocated individuals enabling them to continue their human rights work or studies.
- Legal support to individuals and groups facing prosecution in relation to their human rights and development work.
- Replacement of ICT and assets confiscated or damaged by the authorities.
- Other relevant activities identified by the applicant.

Process for applying

Applications are handled on a rolling basis for eligible applicants. The Rapid Response Fund ensures that the application meets the eligibility criteria and assess the application based on knowledge from partnerships and outlook posts established by the New Democracy Fund in Belarus and Georgia.

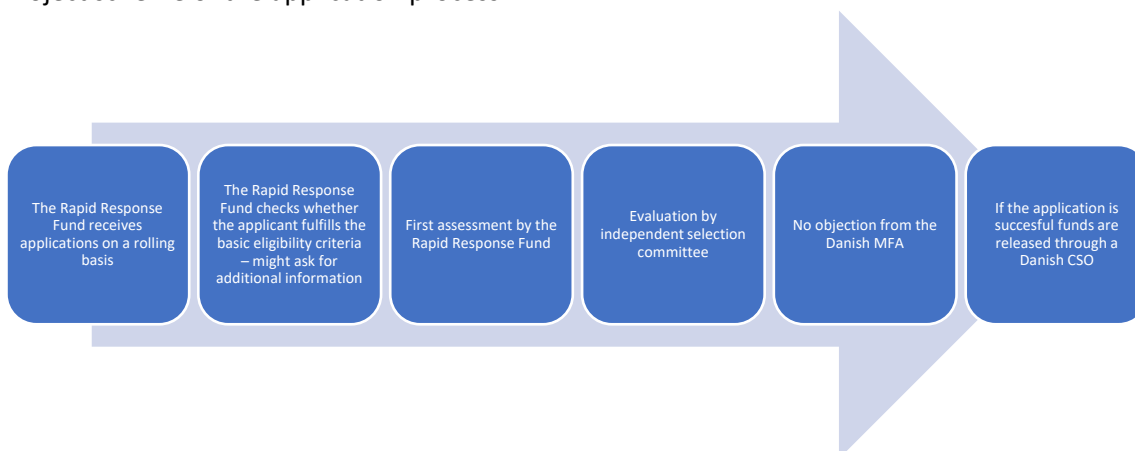
In processing applications, it shall always be explicitly clarified if the applicant is a partner of one of the Consortium members. Where this happens, this should be clearly flagged to the selection committee, who will then decide whether there is a need to change the procedure for how such an application is handled.

The Rapid Response Fund recommend for decision on the application based on the above examination and insight into ongoing development in the ENC.

The final decision and prioritisation of applications is decided by an independent Selection Committee consisting of five independent professionals with experience from the region, from

the thematic priority areas (youth, media, culture, labour market, as well as environment and climate) and from civil society partnerships in the ENC.

Project scheme of the application process:



After positive decision by the Selection Committee, the application is sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark for a no objection procedure and funds are then released through the Danish CSO.

The following documents are to be submitted in English:

- Application describing who the beneficiary is and justification of why the support is needed and what activities the applicant wishes to receive support for.
- Description of any cross-thematic (based on the five thematic priority areas) and regional elements in the activities.
- Description of gender aspects and human rights considerations.
- Activity-based budget.
- When relevant, documentation of restrictions of civic space, windows of opportunity, and threats towards individuals or groups.

The applicant can receive advice in the writing process by writing to newdemocracyfund@mediasupport.org. Once the application is complete it should be sent to this e-mail address.

If the project is supported Rapid Response Fund will where relevant make a partner assessment of the applicant organisation.

Implementation

Leading up to and during the implementation of the action, grantees can receive advice from all member organisations of the consortium if needed. The consortium will extract learnings from the implementation and share publicly when relevant.

Reporting

The following reporting should be provided to the Rapid Response Fund:

- Interim financial and narrative report depending on the amount and length of the intervention.
- Final financial and narrative report – with results disaggregated by gender.
- Audited accounts depending on the amount of the intervention.
- One-pager learning brief produced.

If some of the action includes persons or organisations that could be endangered by being connected to the consortium and/or the New Democracy Fund, this will be discussed before the narrative report is submitted.

All projects should be finalised before the end of 2022.

Validity of guidelines

These guidelines are valid from December 2020 through March 2021 or until new ones are adopted whatever the latest and are subject to revision, subject to the approval of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The organisation of the Rapid Response Fund

An Administration Group consisting of Danish Cultural Institute, International Media Support and 3F develop external and internal guidelines for the fund. This includes composing and approval of the Selection Committee.

Grant administration is provided by International Media Support.

The partners behind the New Democracy Fund

Confederation of Danish Industry (DI), Danish Cultural Institute (DCI), Danish Youth Council (DUF), International Media Support (IMS), and United Federation of Workers in Denmark (3F), have formed a consortium that are managing the Rapid Response Fund as part of the New Democracy Fund (NDF).

The overall goal of the NDF is to support the strengthening of democratically organised civil society and to promote people-to-people exchange of experience and regional networks. The focus of the fund is directed to the ENC consisting of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. The thematic priority areas of the NDF are youth, media, culture, labour market, as well as environment and climate. The NDF is complimentary to the Danish Neighbourhood Programme and seek to contribute to a more peaceful and stable Europe with freedom and progress through the development of democratic societies with accountable governments, an active civil society, free media, and well-functioning markets.

The expected outcome is that CSOs in the ENC are strengthened to act as democratic organisations fostering people-to-people cooperation in the areas of youth, media, culture, labour market, as well as environment and climate; that sustainable networks between CSOs in the ENC and Denmark lead to increased understanding and dialogue; and that the Danish public is informed about the developments in our neighbouring countries to the East. The outcome is further expected to be that the consortium will be able to assist Danish CSOs establishing new and innovative partnerships and that rapid response can be provided to civil society groups, human rights defenders and journalists to act in situations where rapid support is required.

- **Confederation of Danish Industry (DI)** is Denmark's largest, most representative and most influential employers' and business membership organisation (EBMO), covering manufacturing and construction as well as service industries across sectors such as transport, energy, IT, health, trade and professional services.
- **Danish Cultural Institute (DCI)** is a self-governing institution. Since 1940 DCI has been engaged in creating mutual understanding between people. DCI believes that the arts and culture are among Denmark's most important assets. Together with partners, DCI develops international activities that push boundaries and create opportunities, which provide mutual value and inspire. Especially when it comes to equal rights, education, sustainable development, democracy, and active citizenship. Important values in the world and in Denmark.
- **Danish Youth Council (DUF)** is an umbrella organisation founded in 1940, representing 78 children and youth organisations and more than 600,000 Danish children and youth. The member organizations of DUF range from scouts to political youth organizations, voluntary social organizations, cultural organizations, environmental organizations, organizations for youth with disabilities and many more.
- **International Media Support (IMS)** support public-interest journalism in conflict affected, fragile and transitional states has benefitted over 60 countries. With more than 500 national partnerships established, IMS's approach centres on three areas: participating in and building international and regional coalitions; linking local impact and knowledge from its country or regional programmes to global policy and standards development; and ensuring knowledge transfer and sustained local partner involvement in global discussions.
- **United Federation of Workers in Denmark (3F)** is Denmark's largest trade union federation with approximately 270,000 members. For more than three decades 3F has carried out development- and solidarity work by supporting trade unions in developing countries and Central and Eastern Europe. 3F work for the international labour rights as set out by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and for a just and well-regulated labour market with better working and living conditions for all workers in the world.