

**Aktyvių
piliečių fondas**

Open Lithuania foundation,
OSFL projects and Geri norai LT on behalf of
a consortium of the Active Citizens Fund
announces an open call for projects focused on

**ENHANCED CAPACITY AND
SUSTAINABILITY OF CIVIL SOCIETY**

Outcome 5

Call 1

EEA Grants 2014 - 2021

CONCEPT NOTES. Deadline for submission: 28th February 2020, 23:59 Lithuanian time

FULL PROJECT PROPOSALS. Indicative deadline for submission: 22nd June 2020, 23:59 Lithuanian time

Applicants can contact Fund Operator by tel. +370 5 2685511 or e-mail info@apf.lt

Outcome 5

Who can apply

Lithuanian NGOs

established as the legal entities for at least 1 year

Partners (not obligatory)

Any public or private entity (commercial or non-commercial) or NGO
International organization
Informal group

- › in Lithuania or other Beneficiary country
- › in Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway
- › in a country outside the EEA that has a common border with Lithuania

Funds

€500,000

Grant size and project duration

Large projects
(€80,001 – 150,000;
24-36 months)

Enhanced capacity and sustainability of civil society

Outputs to be reached

- › Capacity building provided to CSOs
- › CSO strategies to engage citizens in CSO activities developed
- › CSO partnerships with public/private entities developed

What can be done

- › Needs analysis of the civil society sector and/or participating CSOs
- › Inquiry-based learning
- › Training and capacity building activities
- › Seminars, workshops
- › Exchanging knowledge, best practices and information between participating CSOs
- › Networking activities for participating CSOs
- › Coaching, mentoring, peer learning
- › etc

ACTIVE CITIZENS FUND

The general objectives of the Active Citizens Fund (hereinafter ACF) is to strengthen civil society and active citizenship and empower vulnerable groups.

The ACF program in Lithuania aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- **Outcome 1.** Increased citizen participation in civic activities
- **Outcome 2.** Strengthened civil society watchdog and advocacy role
- **Outcome 3.** Increased support for human rights
- **Outcome 4.** Vulnerable groups empowered
- **Outcome 5.** Enhanced capacity and sustainability of civil society

The ACF program also aims at **strengthening of bilateral cooperation** between civil society organizations from Lithuania and entities from the Donor states as well as **promoting regional exchange and networking**, with a view of sharing knowledge and best practice across civil society.

The ACF in Lithuania is part of the financial contribution of **Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway** to reduce economic and social disparities and strengthen bilateral relations with 15 EU member states.

1. FOCUS OF THE OUTCOME 5 - ENHANCED CAPACITY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF CIVIL SOCIETY

This outcome aims to enable Lithuanian NGOs to improve skills and competences of the civil society sector, introduce higher standards of management and implement up-to-date strategies contributing to their sustainability. These aims shall be addressed by large-scale projects, with emphasis on the following aspects of:

- › financial sustainability (including fundraising, budget planning, diversification of income sources, digital tools used to develop competencies, etc.);
- › organizational development (including definition and mission of NGO, strategic planning, stakeholders' management, human resources management, reflection, conflict management and negotiations, work with members and volunteers, digital tools used for organizational development, etc.);
- › communication (including internal communication strategy, external communication strategy, communication skills and tools, digital tools used to develop communication competencies, e-safety, media and information literacy, etc.);
- › impact measurement (including the importance of impact assessment, tools (including digital) used for impact assessment, impact assessment strategy and planning, etc.);
- › advocacy (including knowledge about legislation and the political system, strategic advocacy planning, stakeholders' management, digital tools used for advocacy, etc.).

NGOs applying for large-scale grants under this outcome are expected to extend the target group of the proposed projects beyond their members and address the capacity needs of the wider NGO sector.

A project proposal submitted under this outcome, should include not more than 2 above-mentioned thematic aspects.

The ACF program is based on the principles of results-based management, therefore each project submitted for this call must contribute to the Outcome 5 and at least one Outcome's 5 indicator, correspond to at least one pre-defined output and measure the achievement with the at least one indicator of the chosen output:

Outcome 1	Indicators
Enhanced capacity and sustainability of civil society	<i>Number of CSOs with at least two funding sources out of which at least one comprises at least 30% of their total budget</i>
	<i>Number of initiatives implemented through partnerships between CSOs and public/private entities</i>
	<i>Number of CSOs that regularly disseminate information on their activities and results to the public</i>
	<i>Number of CSOs with effective management procedures</i>
	<i>Number of CSOs with transparent and accountable governance procedures</i>
Outputs	Indicators
Capacity building provided to CSOs	<i>Number of CSOs participating in capacity building initiatives funded by the Program¹</i>
	<i>Number of professional staff trained</i>
CSO strategies to engage citizens in CSO activities developed	<i>Number of CSOs assessing their organizational capacity building needs and preparing action plans based on the assessment</i>
	<i>Number of CSOs developing financial sustainability plans</i>
	<i>Number of CSOs developing impact assessment plans</i>
CSO partnerships with public/private entities developed	<i>Number of CSOs with new or updated plans to engage their constituencies</i>
	<i>Number of CSO partnerships with public/private entities</i>

A list of activities supported under the **Outcome 5 „Enhanced capacity and sustainability of civil society“** (is indicative and non-exhaustive):

- › Needs analysis of the civil society sector and/or participating CSOs;
- › Inquiry-based learning;
- › Training and capacity building activities;
- › Seminars, workshops;
- › Exchanging knowledge, best practices and information between participating CSOs;
- › Networking activities for participating CSOs;
- › Coaching, mentoring, peer learning.

For further information regarding Outcome 5 results framework, please consult the **Guidelines for Applicants**.

¹ Provided within the ACF program in the areas of financial sustainability, organizational development and management, communication, governance, impact measurement, advocacy, etc.

CALL PRIORITIES

Due to the focus and complexity of the call for Outcome 5, the call priorities shall be aimed at encouraging regional and bilateral partnerships and thus contributing to the enhanced capacity and sustainability of the civil society in Lithuania:

Regional priorities

Partnerships including NGOs registered and operating in areas other than Vilnius city shall be encouraged.

Bilateral partnership priority

Aiming to enhance the relations between Lithuanian NGOs and entities in the Donor states (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway), **the partnerships of high quality and mutual benefit between diverse Lithuanian NGOs and entities in the Donor states are encouraged.** Further information about possibilities for bilateral cooperation and partners' database can be found on the ACF in Lithuania website in the Bilateral Cooperation section: <https://apf.lt/en/dvisalis-bendradarbiavimas/>.

2. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS AND PARTNERS

Eligible applicants are NGOs established as the legal entities in Lithuania for at least one year. The eligible applicants must also fulfill the requirements set in the Law on Development of NGO.²

All eligible applicants, partners and project proposals shall follow the principles of common values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and the respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.³

Political parties, religious institutions, social partners⁴ or profit-distributing cooperatives are not considered as NGOs and therefore are not eligible applicants.

Faith-based organizations are eligible only if they meet the principles identified above and if the funded activities do not directly or indirectly promote religious doctrine, mission or proselytism related to the beliefs of a particular faith.

² <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/d415a500124111e48595a3375cdcc8a3?fwid=zaydj67xa>

³ Article 1.2 of Protocol 38c on the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms (2014-2021)

⁴ Social partners are defined as trade unions and employers' organizations, as defined by the EU.

Eligible partner(s) must meet one of the following requirements:

- › be a public or private entity, commercial or non-commercial, as well as NGO established as a legal person in Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway, or in a Beneficiary State, or in a country outside the EEA that has a common border with Lithuania;
- › be an international organization or body or agency thereof;
- › be an informal, ad hoc or self-help organization that is not registered legal entity in Lithuania. Such organizations must however meet the requirements that they are not for personal profit, act for public good, are voluntary and non-discriminatory in nature, independent of local, regional and national government and other public authorities, and are independent of political parties, religious institutions and commercial organisations. An informal group shall be represented by one single person, who signs the project Partnership Agreement on behalf of the group. An informal group cannot not be a direct recipient of the project grant.

Partnerships are encouraged, but not obligatory. All Partners must share a common goal and actively contribute towards achieving the aim(s) of the project. Partnerships must be based on the qualitative, meaningful and timely contribution of all partners involved in the project (recommended partners' share in the project - 20% - 50 % of the project's activities and budget).

Each applicant can submit only one project proposal for the calls across outcomes 1-5. Same organization can participate in maximum two projects in a partner role (calls across outcomes 1-5).

All eligible applicants, partners and project proposals shall follow the principles of common values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and the respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.

For further information regarding Eligible Applicants and Partners, please consult the **Guidelines for Applicants**.

3. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

Indicative budget of the call

The indicative budget for the **Outcome 5 „Enhanced capacity and sustainability of civil society“** large projects within this call amounts to **€500,000**.

Outcome	Indicative budget for large projects in €
Enhanced capacity and sustainability of civil society	500,000

Grant size and projects' length

Type of project	Min duration	Max duration	Min grant size	Max grant size
Large projects	24 months	36 months	€80,001	€150,000

Project grant rate

The ACF program can provide funding of up to 90% of the eligible costs of the project budget. The co-financing shall be provided in the form of cash or in-kind contribution in the form of voluntary work. The in-kind contribution in the form of voluntary work may constitute up to 50% of the co-financing required for the project (5 % of the total project budget). The calculation of the in-kind contribution in the form of voluntary work is explained in the **Guidelines for Applicants**.

Indirect costs

Project promoters and project partners may apply a flat rate up to 15 % of direct eligible staff costs of the project to cover necessary costs related to the realization of the project which are not directly linked to any activity of the project.

Eligible expenditure

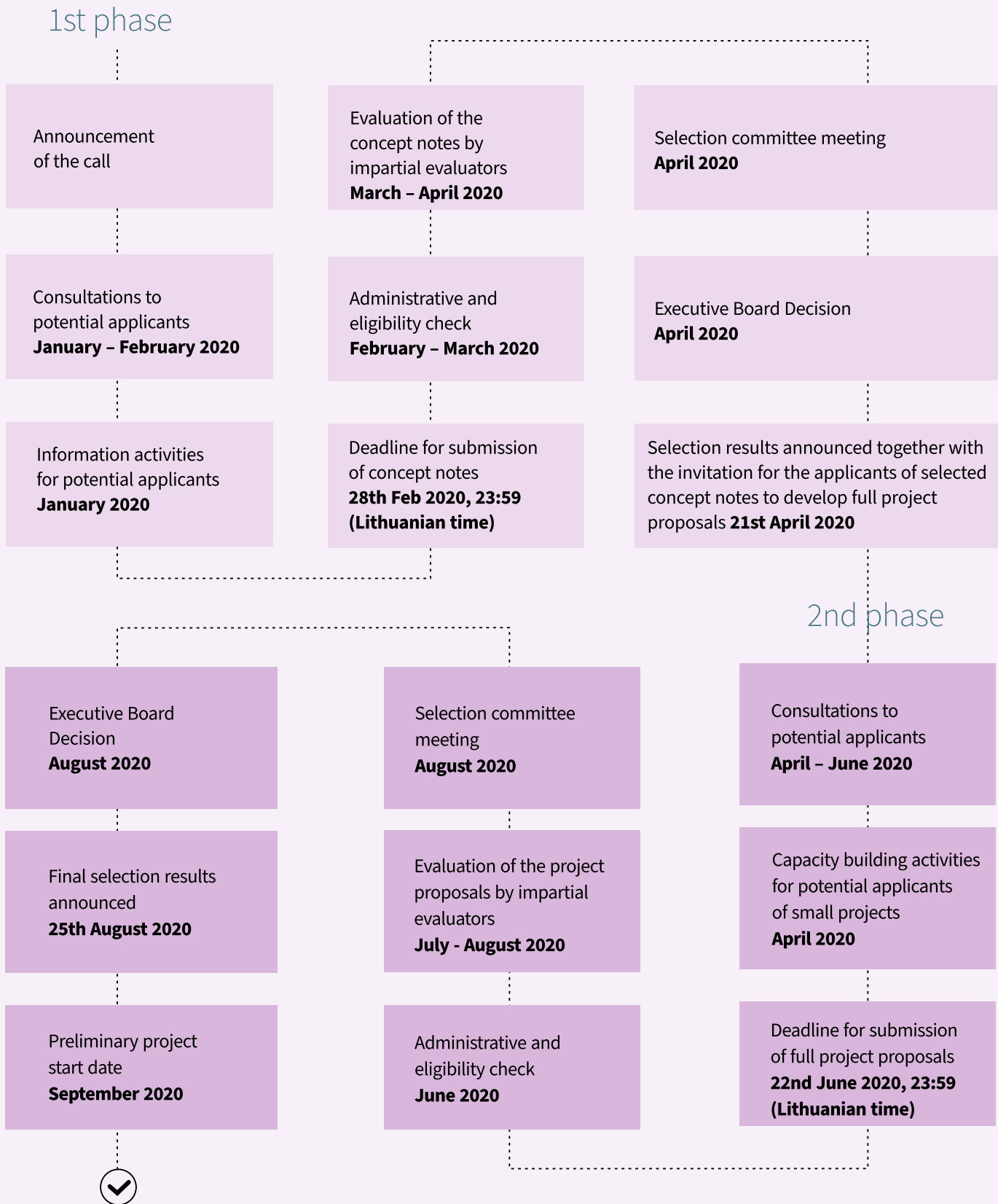
All the budget items must be linked to project activities and comply with eligibility criteria, they have to be necessary and paid within the project period specified in the project contract. All expenditures have to be controllable and proportionate. The eligible expenditures include staff costs, travel costs, costs of services or equipment necessary for project implementation. Detailed list of eligible expenditures and conditions for their eligibility, as well as non-eligible costs are specified in the **Guidelines for Applicants**.

Payments to the projects

The submission of narrative and financial reports is a mandatory condition for the execution of the payments. The number of project reports due by the project promoters depends on the project grant size and duration. Reports have to be approved by the Fund Operator before payments are made. Payments of the project grant shall take the form of advance payments, interim payments and a final payment.

For further information regarding Financial provisions, please consult the **Guidelines for Applicants**.

4. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS



4.1. CONCEPT NOTE (1ST PHASE)

Complete application of the concept note consists of:

!	A scan of completed concept note form (pdf), followed by the word version (doc or docx);	A scan of signed and stamped (where applicable) Applicant declaration (pdf);	A scan of signed and stamped (where applicable) Partner declaration (pdf).	!
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The Fund Operator reserves the right to request additional information or documents during the whole assessment and evaluation process, if necessary.

The application shall be submitted only in the electronic form to the e-mail address projektai@apf.lt no later than **28th February 2020, 23:59 Lithuanian time.**

Date and time of the arrival of the e-mail with a completed application and all necessary attachments will be considered based on the records of the Fund Operator's server, regardless of the date and time of when it was sent and regardless of the date and time of sending recorded by the sending server. Fund Operator assumes no responsibility for any delays in the delivery of application email, therefore, applicants are recommended to not delay the submission of their applications until the last day. Applications submitted in any other form or way (for example, via fax, regular mail, etc.) or to any other e-mail, shall be rejected.

Concept note's administrative and eligibility check

After the concept note is received, Fund Operator will carry out an initial administrative check of its eligibility based on the information submitted in the application form and Applicant's declaration on the compliance with the administrative and eligibility criteria.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	YES/NO
<p>The following criteria are elimination criteria, meaning an automatic elimination of the application from further evaluation if it does not comply with even one of these criteria:</p>	
<p><i>Application is submitted as instructed (filled in in Lithuanian language, submitted at the designated email, submitted signed and scanned copy).</i></p>	
<p><i>Application is submitted within the deadline.</i></p>	
<p><i>Organization is not in situation of not paid amounts due, following a final court decision in connection with the NGO Programme 2009-2014 in Lithuania.</i></p>	
<p><i>Project duration is between 24 and 36 months for large projects.</i></p>	
<p><i>Grant amount corresponds to determined frames of €80,001 and €150,000 for large projects.</i></p>	
<p><i>This concept note is the first application (according to the date and time of delivery) submitted by the same Applicant.</i></p>	
<p><i>This concept note is one of the first two delivered applications (according to the date and time of delivery) where same organization is in the role of partner.</i></p>	

If needed, the Applicant will be asked to provide missing information for the following criteria:

All required annexes and documents are submitted with the application form in the formats indicated by the Fund Operator.

Application is signed by the head of NGO or other authorised person (in this case, letter of authorisation is enclosed).

Applicant declaration, signed and stamped (where applicable), is submitted.

Partner declaration (for each partner), signed and stamped (where applicable), is submitted.

In case the application is lacking certain documents or information that can be supplemented according to the above criteria, applicants shall be asked to provide respective missing parts within three (3) working days. If the application does not meet one of the criteria, it will be rejected as ineligible.

After the administrative and eligibility checks are completed, ineligible applicants will be notified of the rejection of their concept notes from further evaluation. Applicants of ineligible project proposals will have five working days available for appeal against the eligibility decision. Appeals will be considered by the Appeals Committee. The decision of the Committee is final. Appeals can be submitted at info@apf.lt.

Evaluation of the concept note

Two impartial evaluators will evaluate concept notes passing the administrative and eligibility check. After the evaluation of all concept notes is concluded, ranking lists of applications for each type of the project (small, medium, large) will be prepared by the Fund Operator, based on received scoring. Proposed ranking lists will be examined by the Selection Committee. The Selection Committee will make recommendations to the Fund Operator which concept notes shall enter the second phase of the application process. In justified cases, based on transparent criteria, the Selection Committee may modify the ranking of the project applications. The Fund Operator shall, based on the recommendation of the Selection Committee, make a final decision which concept notes shall be further developed.

Project concept evaluation criteria (max. total points - 100)

Criteria	Description of criteria	Score
Justification of problem/needs and their relevance for the target group* *eliminating criterion: If 0, the project is automatically rejected	<i>To what extent are the target groups and their needs defined? To what extent is the problem addressed relevant to the target group?</i>	25
Relevance of Project objectives, activities planned and competencies to strengthen for the problem/needs addressed* *eliminating criterion: If 0, the project is automatically rejected	<i>To what extent are the defined Project objectives taken into consideration when addressing the problem and needs of the target group? To what extent are the project activities and competencies relevant in terms of achieving the expected changes?</i>	20
Relevance of the target group for capacity level chosen	<i>To what extent is the level of capacities relevant to the needs of target group?</i>	15
Relevance of the Project concept for the overall objectives of the ACF Program and partnership priorities	<i>To what extent does the Project contribute to overall objectives of the ACF Program? To what extent does the Project contribute to the partnership priorities (in case if the Project involves partnership)?</i>	10
Adequacy of activities' content in terms of expected outcomes	<i>To what extent is the content of activities relevant and to what extent does the attainment of the Project objectives and expected outcomes depend on them?</i>	15
Capacities of the Applicant and Partners required to implement the project	<i>To what extent is the Project applicant's (and Partner's) team capable of delivering optimal solutions to problems/needs?</i>	10
Financial efficiency	<i>To what extent is the proposed Project concept cost-efficient (if the project outcome is worth of grant requested in terms of target group needs, objectives and content of the planned activity)? To what extent is the value of the Project in line with the Project objectives set (is it possible to achieve the Project objectives within the estimated budget?)</i>	5
		100

Notification on selection results

Applicants will be notified on the selection via e-mail indicated in the application form in April 2020, not later than five (5) working days after the final decision is made by the Fund Operator. The results of the selection shall also be announced at the Program's website.

4.2. FULL PROJECT PROPOSAL (2nd PHASE)

Deadline and submission process for the second phase

Applicants invited to submit full project proposals in the 2nd phase shall complete the full project proposal form based on the concept note submitted in the 1st phase.

Full project proposal consists of:

A scan of completed application form for the full project proposal (pdf), followed by the word version of the full project proposal (doc or docx);	Complete form for project budget (xls or xlsx);	A scan of signed and stamped (where applicable) Applicant declaration (pdf);	A scan of signed and stamped (where applicable) Partner declaration (pdf).
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The Fund Operator reserves the right to request additional information or documents during the whole assessment and evaluation process, if necessary.

Application shall be submitted only in electronical form at the following e-mail address projektai@apf.lt. The deadline for submission of full project applications shall be set **at least two months from the announcement of the shortlisted concept notes**.

Date and time of the arrival of the e-mail with a completed application and all necessary attachments will be considered based on the records of the Fund Operator's server, regardless of the date and time of when it was sent and regardless of the date and time of sending recorded by the sending server. Fund Operator assumes no responsibility for any delays in the delivery of application email, therefore, applicants are recommended to not delay the submission of their applications until the last day. Applications submitted in any other form or way (for example, via fax, regular mail, etc.) or to any other e-mail, shall be rejected.

Full project proposal assessment procedure and criteria

ADMINISTRATIVE AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	YES/NO
The following criteria are elimination criteria, meaning an automatic elimination of the application from further evaluation if it does not comply with one of these criteria:	
<i>Submitted project proposal was selected at the first phase of the application process for further development.</i>	
<i>The outcome indicated in the Application is the same as in the concept note.</i>	
<i>Application is submitted as instructed (filled in in Lithuanian language, submitted at the designated email, submitted signed and scanned copy).</i>	
<i>Application is submitted within the deadline.</i>	
<i>Project duration is between 24 and 36 months for large projects.</i>	

Grant amount corresponds to determined frames €80.001 and €150,000 for large projects.

This concept note is one of the first two delivered applications (according to the date and time of delivery) where the same organization is in the role of partner.

Applicant complies with the Applicant eligibility criteria as specified in the Guidelines for Applicants

Applicant is a legal entity that has been registered in Lithuania for at least one year.

Partner(s) complies with the Applicant eligibility criteria as specified in the Guidelines for Applicants.

If needed, the applicant will be asked to provide missing information for the following criteria:

All required annexes and documents are submitted with the application form in the formats indicated by the Fund Operator.

Application is signed by the head of NGO or other authorised person (in this case, letter of authorisation is enclosed).

Applicant declaration, signed and stamped (where applicable), is submitted.

Partner declaration (for each partner), signed and stamped (where applicable), is submitted.

In case the application is lacking certain documents or information that can be supplemented according to the above criteria, applicants shall be asked to provide respective missing parts within three (3) working days. If the application does not meet one of the criteria, it will be rejected as ineligible.

After the administrative eligibility assessment process is completed, ineligible applicants will be notified of the rejection of their project proposals from further evaluation. Applicants of ineligible project proposals will have five (5) working days available to appeal against the eligibility decision. Appeals will be considered by the Appeals Committee. The decision of the Committee is final. The appeal can be submitted at info@apf.lt.

Evaluation of full project proposal

All eligible and administratively compliant project proposals will be evaluated by two impartial evaluators in accordance with the criteria set below.

After the evaluation of all project proposals is concluded, ranking lists of applications for each type of the project (small, medium, large) will be prepared by the Fund Operator, based on received scoring. Proposed ranking lists will be examined by the Selection Committee. The Selection Committee shall make recommendations to the Fund Operator on project proposals to be funded. In justified cases, based on transparent criteria, the Selection Committee may modify the ranking of the project applications. The final decision is made by the Fund Operator.

Full project proposal evaluation criteria (max. points: 100)

	Criteria	Description of criteria	Score
1.	Relevance and importance of the project	Eliminating criterion: If less than 10, the project is automatically rejected	30
1.1	Coherence of the project with the objectives, outcomes and outputs of the ACF Program	<i>To what extent does the project contribute to objectives and expected outcomes of the ACF Program? To what extent does the project contribute to the outputs of the ACF Program?</i>	10
1.2	Relevance of the project to the addressed problem/needs	<i>To what extent are the target groups and their needs/problem defined? To what extent does the project contribute to addressing the target group's needs?</i>	10
1.3	Relevance of project objectives, activities and expected results for the problem/needs addressed	<i>To what extent are defined Project objectives taken into consideration when addressing the problem and needs of the target group? To what extent are the competencies relevant in terms of achieving the expected changes?</i>	10
2.	Quality of the project implementation	Eliminating criterion: If less than 10, the project is automatically rejected	30
2.1	Coherence between objectives, activities, results of the project (solid internal logic)	<i>To what extent are the objectives, activities and expected outcomes logically interconnected? To what extent are planned target values of indicators (e.g., number of staff trained etc.) adequate and realistic? Are the impact measurement activities/measures planned in the project?</i>	10
2.2	Feasibility of proposed activities	<i>To what extent are the capacity building themes and their methods relevant in terms of competencies that are chosen to be developed/enhanced? To what extent are project activities and their structure logical and feasible and lead to realisation of project outputs? Is project feasible within planned timeframe?</i>	10
2.3	Relevance of capacity level to project activities planned	<i>To what extent is capacity level relevant to the needs of target groups and project activities, their methods?</i>	5
2.4	Quality of communication measures	<i>To what extent are measures planned for communication adequate?</i>	5
3.	Value for money		10
3.1	Adequacy of budget with proposed activities	<i>To what extent are proposed costs compliant with action plan? Are costs presented sufficiently enough for realization of respective activities and outputs?</i>	5
3.2	Reasonable and justifiable budget	<i>To what extent does cost justification make evident what the cost entails and at what price? To what extent are cost estimations based on realistic assumptions? To what extent are indicated costs needed for project implementation?</i>	5
4.	Sustainability of project outcomes and usability of project outputs after conclusion of the project	<i>To what extent is made evident which activities and in what way are going to be continued after the project conclusion? Is it already planned how the outputs and outcomes of the project will continue after the conclusion of the project?</i>	10
5.	Capacity of the project promoters		15
5.1	Experience of the project team (applicants and partners) in relation to the project	<i>To what extent does applicant (and partner) demonstrate financial and organizational capacities for implementation of the project? To what extent is applicant (and partner) adequately technically equipped/skilled for implementation of the proposed project?</i>	5
5.2	Organizational and financial capacities of applicant and partner organizations for project implementation	<i>To what extent does applicant (and partner) demonstrate financial and organizational capacities for implementation of the project? To what extent is applicant (and partner) adequately technically equipped/skilled for implementation of the project?</i>	5
5.3	Risk management	<i>To what extent are project implementation risks identified and adequate? To what extent are measures for identified risk mitigation or elimination adequate?</i>	5
6.	Quality of the partnership	<i>To what extent are responsibilities and tasks in the project shared between the applicant and partners? To what extent are the share of tasks and responsibilities between the applicant and partners reflected in the project budget?</i>	5

100

Notification on selection results

Applicants will be notified on the selection of their project proposals via e-mail indicated in application form not later than five (5) working days after the final decision is made by the Fund Operator. The results of the selection shall also be announced at the Program's website.

5. SUPPORT FOR THE APPLICANTS

Applicants will be offered a wide range of support activities and services at their disposal:

- › **5 information workshops** for potential applicants will be organized in January 2020 in 5 cities of Lithuania (Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Panevėžys, and Šiauliai).
- › **5 practical workshops** for the applicants from small local organizations will be organised in January 2020 in 5 cities of Lithuania (Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Panevėžys, and Šiauliai).
- › **5 working seminars** for applicants of selected concept notes for small projects will be organized in April 2020.
- › **Counseling via phone or e-mail** will be provided during the office hours (9:00 – 17:00 Monday – Friday).
- › **Answers to the applicants** questions will be published weekly on the **ACF in Lithuania website <https://apf.lt> (F.A.Q. section).**

Information about the support events planned, registration details shall be announced on the **ACF in Lithuania website <https://apf.lt> and FB public group „NVO džiuŋglės“.**



With brief questions, applicants can contact Fund Operator by tel. +370 5 2685511 or e-mail info@apf.lt