

**Aktyvių  
piliečių fondas**

Open Lithuania Foundation, OSFL Projects and Geri Norai LT on behalf of a consortium of the Active Citizens Fund announces an on-going call for ad-hoc projects focused on the

## **STRENGTHENED CIVIL SOCIETY WATCHDOG AND ADVOCACY ROLE**

**Ad-hoc projects**

**Outcome 2  
On-going call  
EEA Grants 2014 - 2021**

Submission of ad-hoc project proposals is on-going, but no later than 1st June 2023, 23:59 Lithuanian time

Applicants can contact Fund Operator by tel. + 370 5 2685511 or e-mail [info@apf.lt](mailto:info@apf.lt)

## Ad-hoc projects

### Outcome 2

Ad-hoc project is a rapid advocacy, legal, communicational or other quick response actions carried out to address emerging needs caused by undermining of human rights or rule of law principles by policy-makers, public and private institutions, anti-democratic actions, violation of any vulnerable people rights, as well as unexpected social, ecological or other problems with possible significant societal consequences.

#### Who can apply

##### Lithuanian NGOs

established as 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, or in a Beneficiary State
- › in a country outside the EEA that has a common border with Lithuania

#### Funds

€75,000

#### Grant size and

#### project duration

€1,000 – 5,000;  
1-6 months

## Strengthened civil society watchdog and advocacy role

#### Outputs to be reached

- › Policy inputs submitted by CSOs
- › Transparency and accountability of public institutions promoted
- › Intersectoral CSO cooperation supported

#### What can be done

- › development and implementation of campaigns (communication, media, etc.);
- › joint mobilizing and advocacy actions (e.g., petitions, demonstrations, legal consultations or assistance);
- › ad-hoc coalitions;
- › 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 AD-HOC PROJECTS UNDER OUTCOME 2

In order to support organizations' rapid advocacy, legal, communicational or other quick response actions carried out to address emerging needs caused by undermining of human rights or rule of law principles by policy-makers, public and private institutions, anti-democratic actions, violation of any vulnerable people rights, as well as unexpected social, ecological or other problems with possible significant societal consequences, the ACF in Lithuania offers ad-hoc projects grants.

Being a part of Outcome 2, the ad-hoc projects are expected to address citizens' and CSOs' engagement in and contribution to public policy decision-making at local and national level; to promote and/or monitor transparency and accountability of public institutions, to reinforce CSOs' evidence-based advocacy and watchdog role, research, analysis and initiatives affecting decision-making processes; to develop digital tools and platforms and employ media for better public participation and involvement in public policy decision making.

Under this outcome, the Program will encourage CSOs through their joint advocacy actions to actively contribute to the development of national, regional, and local public policies, legal regulations and public decisions.

A list of ad-hoc projects' activities supported under the **Outcome 2 "Strengthened civil society watchdog/advocacy role"** (list is indicative and non-exhaustive):

- development and implementation of campaigns (a set of short, intensive activities that uses the media skillfully and reaches out to wide target groups with strong communication);

- › joint mobilizing and advocacy actions (grass-root initiatives taking concrete steps, e.g., petitions, demonstrations, legal consultations or assistance, with the involvement of the broader public towards achieving a realistic, achievable and current solution to a social problem that is in line with the outcome 2 „Strengthened civil society watchdog/advocacy role" of the ACF program);
- › ad-hoc coalitions, formed to solve a specific problem, where the mobilization of citizens, their groups or organizations is necessary to achieve the goal;
- › etc.

It is expected that the activities shall:

- › raise awareness towards concrete and acute social problem or issue;
- › contribute to the solution of the problems to change or improve the present situation;
- › use diverse digital tools to address wider target groups or to contribute to the public policy;
- › use the media/the press in a conscientious manner and can reach publicity;
- › contribute to legal assistance to the particular group or individual that is oppressed;
- › improve governance;
- › ensure transparency and accountability;
- › address citizens' and CSOs' engagement in and contribute to public policy decision-making;
- › actively contribute to the development of national, regional and local public policies.

However, conferences, festivals, annual or other regularly occurring events organized without fundamental changes from year to year, summer camps, cultural or sports events with mainly recreation purpose, simple charity activities, projects aiming basically to build the local community are not considered eligible for ad-hoc projects.

The ACF program is based on the principles of results-based management, therefore each project submitted for this call must contribute to the Outcome 2 and at least one Outcome's 2 indicator, correspond to at least one pre-defined output and measure the achievement with the at least one indicator of the chosen output:

Outcome 2	Indicators
Strengthened civil society watchdog/advocacy role	<i>Number of national policies and laws influenced by CSOs</i>
	<i>Number of CSOs using evidence-based research to support their advocacy and policy work</i>
Outputs	Indicators
Policy input submitted by CSOs	<i>Number of CSO policy submissions aimed at influencing polices, legal regulations and public decisions</i>
Transparency and accountability of public institutions promoted	<i>Number of monitoring initiatives by supported CSOs promoting transparency and accountability of public institutions</i>
	<i>Number of campaigns by supported CSOs promoting transparency and accountability of public institutions</i>
	<i>Number of CSOs actively using the media to further their advocacy work</i>
	<i>Number of digital tools developed to promote public participation in civic activities/involvement in public policy decision making</i>
Intersectoral CSO cooperation supported	<i>Number of joint advocacy initiatives by supported CSOs</i>

## 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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>

Political parties, religious institutions, social partners<sup>3</sup> 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.

**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 individual applicant can implement only **one ad-hoc project at a time**.

For further information regarding Eligible Applicants and Partners, please consult the **Guidelines for Applicants of Ad-hoc projects**.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/d415a500124111e48595a3375cdcc8a3?jfwid=zaydj67xa>

<sup>2</sup> Article 1.2 of Protocol 38c on the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms (2014-2021)

<sup>3</sup> Social partners are defined as trade unions and employers' organizations, as defined by the EU.

### 3. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

#### Indicative budget for ad-hoc projects

The indicative budget for ad-hoc projects within the call amounts to **€75,000**.

#### Grant size and projects' length

Grant size of ad-hoc projects is min €1,000 – max €5,000, duration - min 1 month – max 6 months.

#### 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 100% of the co-financing required for the project.

#### 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 and 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 ad-hoc project grant shall take the form of advance payments and a final payment.



For further information regarding Financial provisions, please consult the **Guidelines for applicants of Ad-hoc projects**.

## 4. APPLICATION, EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

Announcement of the call	13th February 2020
Deadline for submission of project proposals	<i>On-going, until 1st June, 2023, or earlier, if all funds available for ad-hoc projects (€75,000) are used</i>
Final selection results announced	<i>Ongoing, on quarterly basis (i.e., March 2020, June 2020, September 2020, December 2020, etc.).</i>  <i>The evaluation and selection process can be started earlier in the following cases:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>there are at least 3 project proposals submitted to the FO, or</i></li><li>- <i>other justified cases when immediate response is needed (e.g., in the case of violation of the rule of law).</i></li></ul>

### Submission of the project proposal

Complete application of the project consists of:

	A scan of completed application 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 following e-mail address **[projektai@apf.lt](mailto:projektai@apf.lt)** (this e-mail is intended exclusively for submission of applications).

Ad-hoc project proposals can be delivered to the e-mail provided above **any time, but no later than 1st June 2023, 23:59 Lithuanian time**. The Fund Operator reserves the right to terminate the call for proposals earlier, in case if all funds available for ad-hoc projects (€75,000) are used.

Applications submitted in any other form or way (for example, via fax, regular mail, etc.) or to any other e-mail, shall be rejected.

### Project proposal's administrative and eligibility check

After the project proposal 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
<b>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:</b>	
<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>Organization is not in situation of not paid amounts due, following a final court decision in connection with the NGO Program 2009-2014 in Lithuania.</i>	
<i>Project duration (including preparation, implementation and evaluation) is between 1 and 6 months.</i>	
<i>Grant amount corresponds to determined frames of €1,000 and €5,000.</i>	
<i>This project proposal is the first application (according to the date and time of delivery) submitted by the same Applicant.</i>	
<i>The Applicant has no other ad-hoc project being implemented or not finalised.</i>	
<b>If needed, the Applicant will be asked to provide missing information for the following criteria:</b>	
<i>All required annexes and documents are submitted with the application form in the formats indicated by the Fund Operator.</i>	
<i>Application is signed by the head of NGO or other authorised person (in this case, letter of authorisation is enclosed).</i>	
<i>Applicant declaration, signed and stamped (where applicable), is submitted.</i>	
<i>Partner declaration (for each partner), signed and stamped (where applicable), is submitted.</i>	

If the application does not meet one of the criteria, it will be rejected as ineligible. In case the application misses certain parts (documents or information) that can be supplemented according to the above criteria, applicants will be invited to provide respective missing parts within three (3) working days. An invitation to provide the missing parts of the application will be sent to the e-mail address of the applicant listed in the application form (e-mail address of the contact person).

After the administrative and eligibility checks are 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 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](mailto:info@apf.lt).

### Evaluation of the project proposals

Two impartial evaluators will assess project proposals passing the evaluation process, and on the basis of their scoring, a ranking list will be prepared and presented to the Selection Committee. Applications shall be checked and evaluated on an ongoing basis.



If the difference between the scores given by the two experts will be higher than 30 % of the highest score, a third evaluator will score the project independently. In such cases, the average rating of the two closest scores shall be used for ranking the project proposals. The latter shall not be used in cases where scoring of the third evaluator does not, in any way, contribute to granting the project proposal.

Selection Committee will meet quarterly (March, June, September, and December each year) to examine the proposed ranking list and make recommendations to the Fund Operator on grant awarding. In justified cases, based on transparent criteria, the Selection Committee may modify the ranking of the project applications. Fund Operator makes the final decision.

The Selection Committee can meet earlier in the following cases:

- there are at least 3 project proposals submitted to the FO, or
- other justified cases when immediate response is needed (e.g., in the case of violation of the rule of law).

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

	Criteria	Description of criteria	Score
<b>1.</b>	<b>Relevance and importance of the project</b>		<b>45</b>
1.1	Adequacy of the project type <i>*eliminating criterion: If 0, the project is automatically rejected</i>	<i>To what extent the project complies with the features of ad-hoc project?</i>	10
1.2	Relevance of the project to the addressed problem	<i>To what extent are the target groups and their needs/problem defined? To what extent the problem addressed is actual? To what extent the project contribute to the solution of defined problem/ addressing the target group's need?</i>	20
1.3	Coherence of the project with the objectives, expected outcomes of the ACF Program	<i>To what extent the project contributes to objectives and outcome 2 of the ACF Program? To what extent the project contributes to the outputs of the ACF Program?</i>	10
1.4	Sustainability of intervention	<i>To what extent is made evident which activities and in what way are going to be continued after the project conclusion? Is a sustainable impact for the target group and the larger community planned?</i>	5
<b>2.</b>	<b>Quality of the project implementation</b>		<b>35</b>
2.1	Feasibility and relevance of proposed activities	<i>To what extent the proposed activities be able to reach the target group? To what extent are planned activities logical and relevant in terms of project outputs? Is project feasible within planned timeframe?</i>	15
2.2	Adequacy of project results	<i>To what extent are planned target values of indicators adequate and realistic? Is it possible to achieve the expected results by the implementation of the project?</i>	15
2.3	Quality of communication measures	<i>To what extent are measures planned for communication adequate?</i>	5
<b>3.</b>	<b>Value for money</b>		<b>10</b>
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
<b>4.</b>	<b>Capacity of the project promoters</b>		<b>10</b>
4.1	Experience of the project team (applicants and partners) in relation to the project	<i>To what extent are experiences of the project team (and partner, if relevant) relevant for the proposed project?</i>	10

Project proposals scoring a minimum of 60 points in the quality assessment will be examined by the Selection Committee.

**100**

### Notification on selection results

Applicants will be notified on the selection via e-mail indicated in the 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 <https://apf.lt/>.

## 4. 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 December 2021 in 5 cities of Lithuania (Alytus, Tauragė, Utena, Telšiai, Marijampolė);
- › **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 provided by the Fund Operator in the section of F.A.Q. of the ACF in Lithuania website is an integral part of the **Guidelines for Applicants**.

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 džiunglės“.



**With brief questions, applicants can contact Fund Operator by tel. +370 5 2685511 or e-mail [info@apf.lt](mailto:info@apf.lt)**