



Funded by
the European Union



YOUTH EMPOWER BUILDING SKILLS, CREATING FUTURES

Contracting authority:

Chamber of Crafts Skopje

CALL FOR GRANTS

Published within the project:

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT: BUILDING SKILLS, CREATING THE FUTURE

funded by the European Union

Budget line 6.1.1 Financial support to third parties

Contract number: IPA III/2024/453-365

Ref. number: 0302-12/44

Deadline for submitting applications:

28.02.2025 by 16:00

Published on 26.12.2024. Skopje

The project is implemented by: Chamber of Craft Skopje, AMPERSAND and ASME
Project office: Bitpazarska 12, 1000 Skopje

☎ +389 (0)2 32 37 850 ✉ info@zkomora.com.mk © www.zkomora.com.mk

Contents

1. Financial support for civil society organizations	3
1.1 Introduction.....	3
1.2. Objectives and priority areas of the program	3
2. Conditions for submitting a proposal projects	5
2.1 Criteria for eligibility.....	5
2.1.1 Applicant on projects.....	5
3. How to submit a proposal the projects?.....	9
3.1 Forms for registration	9
4. Where to submit proposals the projects?	10
4.1 Deadline for submission of report	10
5. Additional information	10
6. Proposal evaluation and selection the projects.....	10
7. Notification for the decision of the contracting party organ	13
7.1 Content of the decision.....	13
7.2 Indicative timeline.....	13
8. Contributions.....	14
8.1 DOCUMENTS THAT NEED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPLICATION	14

1. Financial support to civil society organizations

1.1 Introduction

As part of the efforts to improve the quality of vocational education and strengthen the skills of students from vocational schools, a call for grants to non-governmental organizations is being announced. This call is aimed at supporting activities that will enable students to improve their vocational skills, prepare for professional challenges and actively participate in competitions in various areas of vocational education.

The aim is to encourage cooperation between non-governmental organizations and educational institutions, with an emphasis on providing innovative approaches and practical solutions to improve work-based learning and the competitive spirit among young people.

The call is open to all interested NGOs, regardless of their level of experience, with less experienced organizations being particularly encouraged to apply. With this, we want to contribute to the development of local capacities, increasing inclusiveness and providing equal opportunities for all organizations that have the idea and will to contribute to the advancement of vocational education.

1.2. Objectives and priority areas of the program

Home purpose of this call is to strengthen civil society organizations working in the field of vocational education through financial and technical support for activities that encourage young people to develop skills and competencies necessary for participation in school, regional and national vocational skills competitions, thus improving their preparedness for future professional challenges.

Specific objective 1 This call aims to strengthen the capacities of civil society organizations for project management with mentoring support (project management, including financial and operational aspects; Visibility of EU-funded actions; and Priority themes/areas targeted by the action.)

Specific objective 2 is to strengthen the capacities of young people in vocational education by providing mentoring support for their active participation in competitions for professional skills in the following profiles: Furniture and interior technician; Welder; Body mechanic; Auto mechanic; Auto electrician; Engine and motor vehicle fitter; Electrical technician - energy engineer; Electrical technician for computer technology and automation; Landscape horticulture technician; Clothing design technician; Beautician; Hairdresser; Baker; Confectioner; E-commerce and digital marketing technician, with special emphasis on creating conditions for participation in international competitions such as WorldSkills Europe¹.

This objective simultaneously contributes to the socio-economic development of young people and supports EU-related reforms in the field of vocational education, especially in the craft sector.

¹<https://worldskillseurope.org/>

Priority 1: Socio-economic development, job creation and youth²

The collaboration The involvement of civil society organisations in the youth sector is essential for the realisation of the principles of young people's participation in democratic life, as set out in Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027. Young people are key actors in promoting European values to become a reality. The cooperation of civil society organisations and young people contributes to creating a broad sense of ownership in relation to EU accession and policy reforms relevant to young people, in particular those related to socio-economic development and opportunities to be actors of open innovation and solutions to have a socially oriented economy and prosperity in their communities. Such activities should serve to foster sustainable, inclusive and fair local economies and create employment opportunities.

Youth policy of the Republic of North Macedonia, is framed by the National Youth Strategy 2016-2025, where one of the nine thematic areas is Youth Participation. In January 2020, the Law on Youth Participation and Youth Policies was adopted. In this regard, the activities under this call should reflect the goals and priorities of both strategies that promote inclusive social engagement of young people in local communities based on the principles of engagement, connection and empowerment. In particular, the call focuses on actions to stimulate local democracy across the country, by nurturing a locally rooted civil society that will work to empower young people through their direct activism and volunteering for the development of local economic potential, social inclusion and environmental protection. Innovative approaches are encouraged that promote social entrepreneurship, create jobs in local communities, improve flexibility, ensure social inclusion, promote gender equality and support the specific needs of people with disabilities and other vulnerable/marginalized groups in local society.

2. Financially secured funds from the contracting authority

The Chamber of Crafts Skopje as the contracting authority has provided the total amount for this call for project proposals of 72,000.00 euros. The contracting authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

Grant size

Any grant requested under this call for project proposals may not exceed the maximum amount, and may not be below the minimum amount:

- minimum amount: 12,000 euros
- maximum amount: 14,400 euros

²<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/prospect-details/178565PROSPECTSEN>

2. Conditions for submitting project proposals

2.1 Eligibility criteria

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, which relate to:

1. Project applicant and, if any, its civil society partner (where not otherwise specified, the lead applicant and its civil society partner are hereinafter jointly referred to as the “applicant(s)”);
2. Shares
3. Costs

2.1.1 Project applicant

The applicant

1. To be eligible for a grant, the applicant must:
 - to be a legal entity (civic organization);
 - be registered with its headquarters and established in the Republic of North Macedonia;
2. Partner civil society organization

If the applicant submits a project proposal with a partner civil society organization, they jointly participate in the design and implementation of the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the applicant. They are jointly responsible for the preparation and management of the action proposal, and do not act as intermediaries;

The applicant may apply individually or in partnership with a single civil society organization. Partnerships with more than one organization or applications from consortia are not permitted.

2.1.2. Eligible shares: shares you can apply with

Definition - An action consists of a set of activities.

Duration - The duration of a proposed action must not be shorter than 19 months nor longer than 20 months.

Priority topics

There are 2 priority topics:

Priority topic 1: Promoting innovative projects and business operations of entities active in the field of secondary vocational education by supporting young people in acquiring professional skills for participation in school, regional and national competitions in the following professions/profiles: Furniture and interior technician; Welder; Body mechanic; Auto mechanic; Auto electrician; Engine and motor vehicle fitter; Electrical technician - energy engineer; Electrical technician for computer technology and automation; Landscape horticulture technician; Clothing design technician; Beautician; Hairdresser; Baker; Confectioner; E-commerce and digital marketing technician.

Priority topic 2: Improving the competitiveness of skills in crafts, which would strengthen the capacities, knowledge and professional skills of young people in terms of entrepreneurship, employment and self-employment.

Proposed activities must address at least one of the two priority themes listed above for the application to be considered admissible.

Types of shares

The following types of actions are eligible for support:

Location - The action must take place on the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Types of shares

The following types of action proposals are eligible for support:

Within Priority Theme 1: Promoting innovative projects and business operations of entities active in the field of secondary vocational education by supporting young people in acquiring professional skills for participation in school, regional and national competitions (in the following professions/profiles (qualifications): Furniture and interior technician; Welder; Body mechanic; Auto mechanic; Auto electrician; Engine and motor vehicle fitter; Electrical technician - energy engineer; Electrical technician for computer technology and automation; Landscape horticulture technician; Clothing design technician; Beautician; Hairdresser; Baker; Confectioner; E-commerce and digital marketing technician;)³ The following are acceptable:

- Actions to improve the professional skills of vocational education students;
- Actions to improve the competitiveness of students' knowledge and skills by providing learning support. Creating learning resources through cooperation with secondary vocational schools;
- Actions to support increasing student awareness of participating in competitions. Support for students with special needs who want to participate in professional skills competitions.

Within Priority Theme 2: Improving the competitiveness of skills in crafts, which would strengthen the capacities, knowledge and professional skills of young people in terms of entrepreneurship, employment and self-employment, the following are acceptable:

- Actions to support young people in participating in project tasks to solve problems related to craft professions.
- Actions related to training for young people to promote opportunities for their professional development in relation to the craft sector to improve employment and self-employment opportunities.

³Each applicant in the project proposal can apply with multiple professions, and within one profession with 1-4 profiles (qualifications).

The list of types of action proposals is not final, but only illustrative, and appropriate action proposals not mentioned above, but complying with all other eligibility criteria, will also be considered for support. An action may concern several or a combination of the above activities in order to promote modernisation and innovative skills acquisition in different vocational education professions.

The following types of proposed actions are ineligible:

- actions that relate only or mainly to individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- actions relating solely or mainly to individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- actions aimed primarily at charitable donations;
- actions that are already funded by other European Union programs and have started before the date of signing the agreement.
- actions in support of political parties or candidates, or elections;
- retroactive financing for actions that are already in the process of implementation or have been completed;
- actions exclusively for the benefit of individuals or exclusive limited groups of individuals;
- basic funding and running costs of the applicant;
- humanitarian actions;
- actions that are limited to planning, (pre)feasibility studies, concepts, procurement or other preparatory activities without any implementation at least for a test group or trial run.

Activity types

Indicative activities from the following list may be funded under this call:

- Activities for the implementation of school competitions of professional skills in the profiles given in priority topic 1;
- Activities for the implementation of regional competitions of professional skills in the profiles given in priority topic 1;
- Activities for the implementation of national competitions of professional skills in the profiles given in priority topic 1;
- Activities for the development of workshops with students for innovative and sustainable project assignments in the craft sector;
- Activities for developing project assignments with students for innovative and sustainable solutions in the craft sector;
- Activities to support students at a national vocational skills competition (development of an individual plan for practical training, setting goals and a timeline, feedback and evaluation);
- Activities to support students with special needs in acquiring professional skills and their participation in competitions.

All grantees will receive mentoring/training support provided by the contracting authority regarding project management, including financial and operational aspects, visibility of EU-funded actions; and the priority theme(s)/area(s) targeted by the action.

NOTE: The list of activity types is not exhaustive, and illustrative and appropriate activities not mentioned above will also be considered for support.

Third-party financial support

Applicants may not propose financial support to third parties.

Visibility

Applicants must take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the European Union has funded the action.

The Contracting Authority will provide the selected grantees with the necessary visibility materials.

Number of applications and grants per applicant

The applicant may not submit more than 1 application within this call for financial support.

An applicant cannot be awarded more than 1 grant under this call for financial support.

2.1.3 Eligibility of costs: costs that you can turn on

Only “eligible costs” can be covered by a grant. The categories of eligible and ineligible costs are listed below. The budget is both an estimate of costs and a general upper limit for “eligible costs”.

Reimbursement of eligible costs may be based on any or a combination of the following forms:

- the actual costs incurred by the user.

Applicants should submit a realistic budget.

Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under this call for financial support, costs must meet the following criteria:

- to have occurred during the implementation of the action,
- be listed in the estimated total budget for the action,
- are necessary for the implementation of the action,
- be able to be determined and verified, and in particular be recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary(ies) and specified according to

accounting standards and customary cost accounting practices applicable to the user.

- be reasonable, justified and in accordance with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular with regard to economy and efficiency.

Uneligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- debts and debt repayment fees (interest);
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- costs declared by the beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme receiving a grant from the European Union (including through the EDF);
- purchase of land or buildings, unless necessary for the direct implementation of the action, in which case ownership must be transferred in accordance with Article 7.5 of the general conditions of the standard grant agreement, at the latest by the end of the action;
- losses due to exchange rate differences;
- loans to third parties;
- salary costs for staff who have the status of administrative worker;
- fines, financial penalties and litigation costs;
- depreciation of costs;
- customs and import duties and taxes and/or charges having equivalent effect;
- value added tax (VAT), excise duties and other special taxes on consumption or any other similar tax, duty or charge having equivalent effect;
- special communication charges;
- motor vehicle tax for vehicles not purchased as part of the project;
- special charges applied by regional or local authorities or special bodies in the context of the performance of contracts, which are disproportionate to the costs linked to their performance or have equivalent effect, or taxes;
- fees for consultants coming from the beneficiary organization for services or work performed within the project;
- remuneration of any kind for staff members of any of the beneficiaries who are engaged as external experts or freelance consultants.

3. How are project proposals submitted?

3.1 Application Forms

Applications must be submitted using the Application Form (Annex 1) and Budget Proposal Form (Annex 2) attached to this Call for Grants (Annex 1 and 2).

The applicant's forms must be in Macedonian.

Any error or major deviation in relation to the points set out in this guide/call or any major inconsistency in the application, e.g. if the amounts in the budget template are inconsistent), may lead to the rejection of the application.

Handwritten applications will not be accepted.

The completed applications Application Form (Attachment 1) and Budget Proposal Form (Attachment 2) are submitted in one original and two copies in one envelope. The envelope should be marked To the Chamber of Crafts Skopje, with the reference to the call for “Public call for awarding grants to civil society organizations in the Republic of North Macedonia working in the field of vocational education”.

On the top right side of the envelope, a note should be placed saying “Do not open before the start of the project proposal opening meeting.” The applicant's details should also be stated on the envelope.

4. Where are project proposals submitted?

Project proposals are submitted in person to the archives of the Chamber of Crafts Skopje, or to the address 12 Bitpazarska Street, 1000 Skopje. Project proposals submitted late will not be taken into account in the evaluation and will be rejected.

4.1 Deadline for submitting applications

The deadline for submitting and receiving applications is February 28, 2025, 4:00 p.m. (local time).

5. Additional information

Information sessions will be held for this call for financial support at the premises of the contracting authority. All interested potential applicants who wish to attend the information sessions should express their interest by sending an email to the following email address: contact@youthempower.mk.

Questions can be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for submission of applications, to the address below, clearly indicating the reference number of the call for proposals:

Email address: contact@youthempower.mk

The Contracting Authority has the right to make amendments and/or cancel this call.

The contracting authority is not obliged to provide clarifications to questions received after this date. Answers will be submitted no later than 11 days before the deadline for submission of applications.

Questions that may also be of relevance to other applicants will be published, together with the answers, on the Contracting Authority's project website, <https://youthempower.mk>.

6. Evaluation and selection of project proposals

The submitted project proposals will be evaluated by an expert committee composed of representatives of relevant institutions and organizations. All applications will be assessed according to the following stages and criteria:

Phase 1: Opening and administrative review

During the opening and administrative check, the following will be assessed:

- Has the deadline been met? If not, the project proposal will be automatically rejected.
- Does the project proposal meet all the criteria listed in the checklist in the grant application form? This includes an assessment of the eligibility of the action and the applicant. If any of the requested information is missing or incorrect, the application may be rejected and will not be assessed further on that basis alone.

Phase 2: Evaluation of project proposals

If Applications that have passed the opening and administrative checks according to the instructions in Phase 1: they will be further assessed in terms of their quality, including the proposed budget and the capacities of the applicants. They will be assessed using the evaluation criteria set out in the scoring table below:

Part	Maximum number of points
1. Financial and operational capacity	20
1.1 Does the applicant, if applicable, have sufficient experience in project and action management?	5
1.2 Does the applicant, if applicable, have sufficient technical expertise? (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)	5
1.3 Does the applicant, if applicable, have sufficient management capacity? (including staff, equipment and ability to manage the budget for the action proposal)?	5
1.4 Does the applicant have stable and sufficient sources of income? financing?	5
2. Relevance	20
2.1 How relevant is the proposed action to the objectives and priorities of the call for financial support and to the specific themes/sectors/areas or any other specific requirement specified in the guidelines for applicants? Are the expected results of the action aligned with the priorities defined in the guidelines for applicants (Point 1.2 and Point 2.1.2)?	5
2.2 How relevant is the proposed action to the specific needs and constraints of the target country, region and/or relevant sectors (including synergy with other development initiatives and avoidance of duplication)?	5
2.3 How clearly defined and strategically selected are those who will be involved (end-users, target groups)? Are their needs and constraints clearly defined and does the proposed action address them in an appropriate way? (is it included encouraging the participation of young people to improve their skills and also young people with special needs)?	5

2.4 Does the action contain certain elements of added value (e.g. encouraging the participation of young people from social categories, encouraging interest in participating in competitions in certain craft profiles, etc.)?	5
3. Design (thoughtfulness) of the action proposal	15
3.1 How coherently is the proposed action? Are the expected results to be achieved by the proposed action stated? Does the logic of the proposed action provide a rationale for achieving the expected results? Are the proposed activities appropriate, practical and consistent with the anticipated results and impact?	5
3.2 Does the proposed action and intervention logic include a credible basis, objectives and sources of verification? If not, is a baseline study foreseen (and is the study adequately budgeted in the proposal)? Have they been taken into account? external factors (risks and assumptions)?	5
3.3 Does the application and action proposal contain an analysis of the problems addressed and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?	5
4. Approach to implementation	15
4.1 Is the plan for implementing the proposed action clear and achievable? Is the timeframe realistic?	5
4.2 Does the proposed action include an effective and efficient monitoring system? Are key (economic) development indicators foreseen and defined?	5
4.3 Are the level of involvement of the applicant and the potential involvement of each of the envisaged local or other relevant stakeholders, as well as their participation in the proposed action, satisfactory?	5
5. Sustainability of the proposed action	15
5.1 Is the proposed action likely to have a visible impact on its target groups?	5
5.2 Is the proposed action likely to have multiplier effects, including replication, scaling up, capitalising on experience and sharing knowledge?	5
5.3 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable?: -financial (e.g. financing of follow-up activities, sources of revenue to cover all future operating and maintenance costs)	5
6. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the proposed action	15
6.1 Are the activities adequately presented/reflected in the budget?	5
6.2 Is the ratio between estimated costs and results satisfactory?	10
Maximum total points	100

During the evaluation process, the Contracting Authority may organize on-site visits to the applicants in order to collect information on the actual situation on the ground. The assessment of the applicants will be carried out on the basis of the submitted application documents.

If, during the review of the application, it is discovered that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria set out in point 2.1, the project proposal may be rejected on that sole basis.

Phase 3: Verification of applicants' eligibility

The eligibility check will be carried out on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the Contracting Authority and submitted by the applicant. By default, it will only be carried out for applications that have been selected according to their scoring and within the available budget for this call for financial support.

Package of documents to prove the applicant's eligibility:

- Current status from the Central Registry for the applicant not older than six months;
- Certificate from the Public Revenue Office for paid taxes and contributions not older than 6 months;
- Applicant's status
- Short biographies of the personnel who will be involved in the project;
- Annual narrative report on operations for 2024;
- Annual account submitted to the Central Register of Non-Profit Organizations for the last year. Applicants who were not required to submit an annual account in accordance with Article 18 of the Law on Accounting of Non-Profit Organizations are required to submit the "Notification" they submitted to the Central Register of Non-Profit Organizations, informing them that the value of the property or the value of the annual income is less than 2,500 euros in denar equivalent, when applying.

7. Notification for the decision of the contracting authority

7.1 Content of the decision

With the decision of the Contracting Authority, the applicants are informed about their applications and, if they were rejected, about the reasons for the negative decision.

7.2 Indicative timeframe

	DATE	TIME
1. Deadline for submitting questions to the Contracting Authority	03.02.2025	/
2. Last date for the Contracting Authority to provide responses	14.02.2025	/
3. Deadline for delivery of form to the Contracting Authority	28.02.2025	16.00 h. (locally time)
4. Notification of award	March 2025	-
5. Signing of contracts	March 2025	-

8. Contributions

8.1 DOCUMENTS THAT NEED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPLICATION

Attachment 1: Project Proposal Form (in Word format)

Attachment 2: Budget Proposal Form (in Excel format)