

# **Rules for the Preparation, Selection, Approval and Implementation of V4EaP Extended Standard Grants Financed by the International Visegrad Fund**

Under Articles 2 and 20 of the Statute of the International Visegrad Fund (hereinafter the “Fund”), the Council of Ambassadors (hereinafter the “Council”) is issuing these conditions to outline the rules of procedure for the preparation, selection, approval and implementation of V4EaP Extended Standard Grant projects (hereinafter “V4EaP Extended Standard Grants”) in areas determined by the Statute.

## **Chapter I—Aims of the V4EaP Extended Standard Grants**

### **Article 1**

The main aim of the V4EaP Extended Standard Grants is to support the implementation of the medium-term projects focusing on providing access to the Visegrad Group (hereinafter “V4”) countries’ democratic transformation and integration as well as regional cooperation experience. Projects within the V4EaP Extended Standard Grants will mainly aim to support the reform processes, political association and economic integration with the EU, strengthen institutional capacity, civil society building and transformation of the Eastern Partnership (hereinafter “EaP”) countries as well as regional cooperation.

## **Chapter II—Project Eligibility and Preparation**

### **Article 2**

Any legal entity or natural person from Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine) and V4 countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) is eligible for support, provided that the nature of the submitted project fulfills the V4EaP Extended Standard Grants aims. Preference is given to projects organized by non-profit and non-governmental organizations, public educational, cultural and research institutions and municipalities or local governments.

### **Article 3**

Applicants can apply for V4EaP Extended Standard Grants provided that their projects involve at least four entities (including the applicant) of which at least three entities shall be from at least three different V4 countries - preference will be given to projects involving entities from all V4 countries - and at least one from an Eastern Partnership country.

### **Article 4**

Applicants shall prepare each project according to the Rules and the on-line application form for V4EaP Extended Standard Grants available on the website of the Fund ([www.visegradfund.org](http://www.visegradfund.org)). If necessary, additional information about the project can be enclosed with the hard-copy version of the application form and delivered to the Fund within the deadline.

### **Article 5**

The criteria for project selection are as follows:

- project shall be in accordance with the criteria defined in the call for proposal

- topic and content of the project, its originality and adherence to the Aims of the V4EaP Extended Standard Grants (Chapter I) or priorities for the given year available on the website of the Fund
- capacity building
- transfer of know-how of the V4 cooperation
- quality, relevance and contribution of project partners
- multiplicative effect
- durability of the project
- transparency and accuracy of the budget
- previous experience with the applicant (where applicable)
- previous applicant’s experience with the activities in the EaP countries/region will be also taken into consideration during the selection procedure
- proposed media coverage and public relations, networking effect.

#### **Article 6**

Applicants who obtained funding for V4EaP Extended Standard Grants in the past can reapply for a V4EaP Extended Standard Grant. V4EaP Extended Standard Grants can be implemented simultaneously with other grant programs of the Fund.

#### **Article 7**

The amount of the financial support shall be specified in the call for proposals published on the Fund’s website.

### **Chapter III—Application Form/Project Proposal**

#### **Article 8**

The application form shall be filled out in the on-line application system in English. All formal communication with the Fund must be also conducted in English.

#### **Article 9**

The application form must be submitted both on-line and in a hard-copy version together with all the compulsory annexes to the application form within the given deadline to the following address: International Visegrad Fund, Kráľovské údolie 8, 811 02 Bratislava, Slovak Republic.

#### **Article 10**

The deadline shall be specified in the given call for proposals. Letters must be postmarked and electronic versions of applications submitted by this date at the latest.

#### **Article 11**

Applicants will be sent written confirmation (via e-mail) of the receipt of their on-line applications.

### **Chapter IV—Project Selection and Approval**

#### **Article 12**

The evaluation procedure may last up to 40 working days after the deadline. Applicants shall take this fact into account when preparing the implementation of the project and its time frame. The Fund cannot consider or support projects that start before their due approval.

**Article 13**

The Fund shall review application forms according to their compliance with the Fund's formal requirements and has the right to verify any data provided by the applicant or to request additional information, if necessary.

**Article 14**

The Executive Director—in cooperation with the Selection Committee convened by the Executive Director—prepares a written statement of projects recommended for approval and documentation of all submitted projects to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the V4 countries and then to the Council.

**Article 15**

At its session the Council shall either accept or reject projects. The Council can also accept a project with reservations, in which case the applicant shall make the necessary changes. Decisions made by the Council are final and shall present no grounds for any form of appeal and require no detailed reasoning.

**Article 16**

The Fund informs all applicants of results in writing. The Fund is under no obligation to justify any decision, nor is it obliged to return application forms or any of their parts to respective applicants.

**Article 17**

The Executive Director is authorized to sign a contract once a project is approved by the Council.

**Chapter V—Contractual Terms****Article 18**

A grantee has an obligation to set up a special bank account for the purposes of a given project—unless stipulated otherwise in the contract—i.e., deposits thereto and withdrawals therefrom shall only be related to that project. All project payments must be carried out through said bank account. The grantee is obliged to submit its account number via the online system within 20 working days of project approval by the Council.

**Article 19**

The grantee is obliged to set up a website or a separate sub-site within an existing website dedicated to the project; such project website can be set up as part of a social networking website (hereinafter "Project Website"), unless stipulated otherwise in the contract. Each Project Website shall have its own URL, shall visibly contain the Fund's logo with a direct link to [www.visegradfund.org](http://www.visegradfund.org) and contain direct links to the websites of each of the project partners, where applicable. The grantee is obliged to submit the URL of the Project Website via the on-line system within 20 working days of project approval by the Council.

#### **Article 20**

Contracts are made available to grantees via the on-line system. The grantee is obliged to check all data in the contract and approve it via the on-line system within 20 working days of its posting in the on-line system.

#### **Article 21**

The contractual period starts on the day the contract—approved by the grantee—is signed by the Executive Director. The Fund shall inform the grantee of the signing in writing (via e-mail) and subsequently shall prepare the contract and send it to the grantee by post. The grantee is obliged to return the signed contract to the Fund within 10 working days of its delivery.

#### **Article 22**

Failing to fulfill the conditions stipulated in Articles 18, 19, 20 and 21 may result in financial penalty in the amount of 20% of the approved budget or in termination of the grant. The decision shall be made by the Executive Director and approved by the nearest Council.

### **Chapter VI—Project Implementation**

#### **Article 23**

The grantee is obliged to implement the approved project in compliance with the time frame and financial conditions stipulated in the contract. The project shall be financed by the Fund at up to 90% of its total cost. The maximum time frame for the implementation of V4EaP Extended Standard Grants is 18 months.

#### **Article 24**

The grantee and the project partners are obliged to acknowledge the Fund's support and other possible donors of the project (1) on all premises where events take place as part of the project (in the form of a banner or flag), (2) in all printed materials distributed as part of the project and (3) on all websites connected with the project, including the grantee's and project partners' websites (see Article 19). All acknowledgements must carry the visible logo of the Fund and, if on-line, must be directly linked to [www.visegradfund.org](http://www.visegradfund.org). Acknowledgements in event venues must be present for the duration of the events; acknowledgements on-line must remain active for the whole contractual period of the grant project, at minimum.

#### **Article 25**

The grantee is obliged to issue a press release, if possible, for every public event that takes place as part of the grant project. A maximum of three events may be covered through a single press release. Each press release or public invitation must be uploaded onto the on-line system at least 48 hours prior to the event and disseminated to relevant media. Each press release must contain acknowledgement of the Fund's support of the project.

#### **Article 26**

The grantee is obliged to maintain an up-to-date calendar of events that occur as part of the grant project. Any change in the dates, venues or types and names of events originally

stipulated in the application form must be updated in the on-line system at least 10 working days prior to the planned date. Changes in more than half of the scheduled events must be approved in writing by the Program Manager.

#### **Article 27**

The grantee shall immediately notify the Fund of any changes in contractual conditions (e.g. changes of the budget, project partners, contractual period or project name) in a letter signed by the grantee's statutory representative accompanied with a copy of relevant documents declaring the changes. The Executive Director decides on such changes and, if necessary, submits them for approval to the Council. All changes are possible only within the contractual period.

#### **Article 28**

The Fund reserves the right to carry out monitoring visits of projects and, if necessary, to request additional documentation regarding each project. The grantee is obliged to allow visits from the staff of the Fund or from personnel authorized to do so by the Fund and to provide any materials related to the project upon request.

#### **Article 29**

Failure to fulfill the conditions stipulated in Articles 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28 may result in financial penalty in the amount of 20% of the approved budget or in termination of the grant. The decision shall be made by the Executive Director and approved by the nearest Council.

### **Chapter VII—Project Disbursement**

#### **Article 30**

Grants shall be disbursed in two or three tranches. The number and amount of the tranches is specified in the contract. The first tranche shall be transferred within 15 working days of the Fund's receipt of the signed contract. The second tranche—if not final—can be disbursed upon the approval of the Interim Report. The final tranche shall be set to 20% of the approved sum and can be disbursed upon the approval of the Final Report.

#### **Article 31**

The grantee shall conduct bank transfer (non-cash) transactions, where possible. Cash operations shall be limited to 10% of the approved sum.

#### **Article 32**

All financial documents (receipts, bills, contracts and invoices) related to a project must be kept and copies thereof delivered to the Fund as part of the Interim and Final Reports.

#### **Article 33**

Up to 7% of the approved sum may be used to cover project overhead costs (operating costs directly linked to the project). Up to 7% of the approved sum may be used to cover tangible and intangible assets (purchases of goods directly related to the implementation of the project).

#### **Article 34**

Within each Interim and Final Report a narrative and a financial report is to be prepared by the grantee. All narrative and financial reports must be separately signed by the grantee's statutory representative.

**Article 35**

Failure to fulfill the conditions stipulated in Articles 31, 32, 33 and 34 may result in financial penalty in the amount of 20% of the approved budget or in termination of the grant. The decision shall be made by the Executive Director and approved by the nearest Council.

**Article 36**

Requirements for the preparation of the Interim and Final Report, all additional instructions, as well as relevant forms are available on the Fund's website.

**Article 37**

All disputes that may occur during the implementation of granted projects should be submitted to consultation between the Executive Director and the grantee.

**Article 38**

These Rules shall enter into force on the day of their approval by the Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.