

Rules for the Preparation, Selection, Approval and Implementation of the Visegrad+ Projects 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 the Visegrad+ projects in the areas determined by the Statute.

Chapter I—Aim of the Visegrad+ program

Article 1

The main aim of the Visegrad+ Program is to support the implementation of long-term projects of strategic character focusing on providing access to the Visegrad Group (hereinafter “V4”) countries’ experience with democratic transformation and integration, political and economic reforms, development of civil society, the rule of law, regional cooperation, as well as human rights.

Article 2

Target countries and regions for the implementation of the Visegrad+ projects shall be defined by the decision of the Conference of Ministers.

Article 3

Topics of the Visegrad+ projects are proposed by the National V4 Coordinators.

Chapter II—Project Eligibility and Preparation

Article 4

Applicants prepare project proposals according to the conditions specified in the call for proposals posted on the website of the Fund and deliver them to the Fund by a given deadline.

Article 5

Any legal entity or natural person worldwide is eligible for support, provided that the nature of the submitted project fulfills the aim of Visegrad+ program and adheres to the given call for proposals. Preference is given to projects proposals submitted by non-profit and non-governmental organizations, public educational, cultural and research institutions and municipalities or local governments.

Article 6

Project proposals are eligible if they involve entities from at least three different V4 countries; preference will, however, be given to proposals that involve the participation of entities from all four V4 countries.

Article 6

Visegrad+ projects can be implemented simultaneously with any other grant program of the Fund.

Chapter III—Project Proposal

Article 7

Project proposals must be prepared in English and must be submitted by e-mail and in a hard-copy version together with all compulsory annexes stipulated in the call for proposals within the given deadline to the following address: International Visegrad Fund, Kráľovské údolie 8, 811 02 Bratislava, Slovak Republic.

Article 8

Applicants will be sent a written confirmation (via e-mail) of the receipt of their proposal.

Chapter IV—Project Selection and Approval

Article 9

The evaluation procedure may last up to 50 working days after the deadline. Applicants shall take this fact into account when preparing the project implementation and its time frame. The Fund cannot consider or support projects that start before their due approval.

Article 10

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 11

The Executive Director of the Fund (hereinafter “the Executive Director”)—in cooperation with the Deputy Executive Director, the Public Relations Coordinator and the respective Program Manager—prepares a written statement of projects recommended for approval and documentation of all submitted projects to the National V4 Coordinators.

Article 12

At its nearest session the Council of Ambassadors (hereinafter 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 13

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 14

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

Chapter V—Contractual Terms

Article 15

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 to the Fund within 20 working days of project approval by the Council.

Article 16

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 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 17

Contract drafts are made available to grantees by e-mail. The grantee is obliged to check all data in the contract and approve it within 20 working days of its reception.

Article 18

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 20 working days of its delivery.

Article 19

Failing to fulfill the conditions stipulated in Articles 15–18 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 20

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 100% of its total cost. The time frame for the implementation of Visegrad+ projects shall be between 12 and 36 months.

Article 21

The grantee and the project partners are obliged to acknowledge the Fund’s support 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. Acknowledgements in event venues shall be present for the duration of the events; acknowledgements on-line must remain active for the whole contractual period of the Visegrad+ project, at minimum.

Article 22

The grantee is obliged to issue a press release, if possible, for every public event that takes place as part of the Visegrad+ project. A maximum of three events may be covered through a

single press release. Each press release or public invitation must be delivered to the Fund 48 hours prior to the event at the latest and disseminated to relevant media. Each press release must contain acknowledgement of the Fund's support of the project.

Article 23

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 24

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 25

Failure to fulfill the conditions stipulated in Articles 20–24 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 26

Grants shall be disbursed in two or three tranches. The number and amount of the tranches shall be specified in the contract. The first tranche shall be transferred within 20 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 27

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

Article 28

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, if requested by the Fund.

Article 29

Up to 5% of the approved sum may be used to cover project overhead costs (operating costs directly linked to the project).

Article 30

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

Article 31

Failure to fulfill the conditions stipulated in Articles 26–30 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 32

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 33

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

Article 34

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