



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR THE DIGITAL SPARK CALL

Questions can be sent to GrantsEECA@metamorphosis.org.mk no later than 13th of February 2026. All answers will be provided in this document on 16th of February 2026. No individual answers via email will be provided.

Q1. Who can apply?

Only legally registered non-profit CSOs from eligible EECA countries: Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, Moldova, Türkiye, Kirgizstan, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Georgia, can apply for the Institutional Stability Grants.

For the Strategic Growth Small Grants, there is no need to be a registered organization, but you must be from eligible EECA countries: Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, Moldova, Türkiye, Kirgizstan, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Georgia.

Q2. Can individuals apply directly?

For the Strategic Growth Small Grants, yes, individuals can apply directly. For the Institutional Stability Grants, only CSOs may apply. Individuals can later be nominated for fellowships if their organization receives a grant in this category.

Q3. Can an organization apply for both grant types?

No. Each organization can apply for only one type and only once.

Q4. Is co-funding required? Can these grants be used to co-finance other ongoing activities /other projects?

No.

Q5. Are unregistered community groups eligible?

For the Strategic Growth Small Grants, yes.

For the Institutional Stability Grants, applicants must be legally registered.

Q6. What is the duration of projects?

6 months, in the period April – September 2026. Start date of the grants is 1st of April.



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Q7. What currencies can we use?

Budgets must be presented in USD.

Q8. Are overhead or indirect costs allowed?

No overhead or indirect, but you can include office expenses (*utilities, rent, office materials*), no more than 10% of the grant.

Q9. When will applicants be notified?

Approximately 4 weeks after the submission deadline, but no later than the end of March 2026.

Q10. Will feedback be provided to unsuccessful applicants?

Yes, brief numeric feedback will be provided upon request.

Q11. Can ongoing projects be funded?

Yes, if the grant supports a new phase or innovation.

Q12. Are partnerships allowed?

No.

Q13. What is the reporting frequency?

Mid-term and final reports.

Q14. Who evaluates the applications?

An independent Regional Selection Committee composed of two Metamorphosis representatives, one TechSoup representative, and four external experts.

Q15. Can we submit more than one proposal?

No. Only one application per organization or individual.

Q16. I want to apply, but our organization has only been active for two years.

If the organization has not been active for three years, then only the annual reports from the last two years of activity will be submitted as supporting documents.

Q17. I want to apply, but our organization's annual reports for 2025 are not ready.

If the organization according to the national law has not yet submitted the annual reports for 2025, then the reports from the previous two years will be sent as supporting documents. If selected as a grantee





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during the selection process in March 2026, you should submit additionally the annual narrative/financial report for FY 2025. However, you need to send the annual reports for the previous two years.

Q18. What if I submitted the form with errors? How to delete it? I was not aware that the form can't be edited. It's submitted already and I need to correct something? When you say you have to log in to email, does that mean that we have to register and create an account in order to apply? And then send the other documents by email to you? There is no option to download the form (once submitted). How to do it?

If it has been submitted, it cannot be corrected. In case you already submitted a wrong unfinished version of the application form, please notify us as soon as possible about the issue by sending a specific email message on: GrantsEECA@metamorphosis.org.mk

Applications must be submitted exclusively in English; Applications must be submitted using the provided Application Form link on the Guidelines for Grant Applicants available on the Metamorphosis website where the CfP is posted; Applicants must complete all sections of the Application Form relevant to the selected grant type;

Once the application starts, the Application Form needs to be completely fulfilled;

Only after it's completely fulfilled, the application form should be downloaded, signed and stamped (for formal entities). PLEASE NOTE that in order to be able to save and print the completed Application Form you need to login into your e-mail account. If you do not have suitable Outlook or Gmail account, you may create an Outlook account free of charge.

Please submit the signed and stamped Application Form together with all Annexes (B, C, D & E) and with all indicated Supporting Documents (depending on selected grant type) in the CfP as PDF attachments in one message at the following email account: GrantsEECA@metamorphosis.org.mk; Please make sure to submit your application before the deadline: February 23, 2026 at 16:00hrs CET.

Q19. Are CSOs that have been formally registered for just over one year eligible to apply, considering that the Guidelines request financial reports for the past three years? Could you please confirm whether submitting financial reports for the full three-year period is mandatory, or if exceptions are made for newer CSOs that do not yet have such documentation?

Yes, you are eligible to apply. You can submit supporting documents/financial reports for the period your CSO exists. Please refer to 2.2.1 Eligibility of Applicants section of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants where eligibility requirements differ depending on the grant type you choose to apply for. In both of the LOTs, one of the criteria is that an applicant must have is the following: Applicants must show the capacity to implement the proposed initiative. Your organizational capacity will be evaluated by the Regional Selection Committee in accordance with the criteria stated in the Section 2.4.2 Evaluation Criteria and Scoring section of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants. In terms of the required Supporting Documents described in 2.3.2 Supporting Documents section of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants you will have to comply with the list depending on the grant type you choose to apply for.



Q20. Is a primary school eligible to apply for the grant, and if so, for which grants?

No, schools are not eligible to apply. Please refer to 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 sections of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants where it is described in detail who the grants are intended for. Additionally, refer to 2.2.1 Eligibility of Applicants section of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants where eligibility requirements differ depending on the grant type you choose to apply for. However, if you are an informal group of school teachers, or you want to apply individually, then, you may apply for LOT 2.

Q21. Could the target audience of the project be internally displaced persons as a result of the war in Ukraine?

Please refer to 2.2.2 Eligibility of Actions section and 3. Eligibility of Actions section of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants where eligibility of the proposed actions is addressed. In addition, please refer to the Section 2.2.1 Eligibility of Applicants section of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants where the following is stated: "All activities should be implemented in an eligible country in which the applicant is registered and based." Following this, yes, the target audience of the project can be internally displaced persons.

Q22. Are individual research-based initiatives eligible for support?

Please refer to 2.2.2 Eligibility of Actions section and 3. Eligibility of Actions section of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants where eligibility of the proposed actions is addressed. Please note that individual research based initiatives are eligible, but actions that are purely academic, commercial, or unrelated to digital democracy are not eligible.

Q23. Are actual Digital tools, whether it's development from scratch of innovative Digital tools, or whether it's building on existing tools, is it something that's mandatory? Or if not mandatory, is it something that be favored in the project proposals because it is mentioned in various contexts and it is given various degrees of values in your presentations and in the actual Call for proposals?

Please refer to 2.2.2 Eligibility of Actions section and 3. Eligibility of Actions section of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants where eligibility of the proposed actions is addressed. You can also consult and the published administrative check-up and the criteria for evaluation.

Q24. How many grants are provided for Lot 1 specifically for Ukraine?

Please note that there is no predetermined number of allocated grants per eligible EECA country. The number of planned grants under LOT 1 is 10 in total for the whole EECA region.



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Q25. Is it expected that projects include direct engagement with citizens at scale, or can institutional accountability work and policy-oriented advocacy be considered sufficient civic impact? Does the technological component require the development of a new digital tool, or is it sufficient to address AI systems through digital risk analysis, structured online consultations, and development of digital decision-support resources? How much weight is given to innovation in digital tools versus innovation in governance and accountability mechanisms? How do you define the expected ecosystem around a Capacity Hub at the local level? Is collaboration with non-formal community actors acceptable where the CSO landscape is limited? In the context of Capacity Hub and networking activities, how broadly do you interpret civil society actors? Would engagement with schools and community-based stakeholders be considered aligned with this role?

Please refer to 2.2.2 Eligibility of Actions section and 3. Eligibility of Actions section of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants where eligibility of the proposed actions is addressed.

Collaboration with non-formal community actors is acceptable, but please take into consideration that this is a Call for Proposals from sole applicants, and partnerships are not eligible. However, in the implementation phase you may collaborate with other and different civic society actors.

Q26. Does the proposed action need to cater directly to a beneficiary group in the community (youth, women, etc.) or is it more focused on strengthening the digital capacity of the CSO itself, since it's an institutional grant? Does this lot refer only to the CSOs that are established and already acting as a local capacity hub, or other CSO can apply as well (that are not currently local hubs) they just need to include activities that will enable them to become local hubs?

Please refer to 2.1.1 section of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants where it is described in detail who the grants are intended for and what they aim at. Please refer to 2.2.2 Eligibility of Actions section and 3. Eligibility of Actions section of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants where eligibility of the proposed actions is addressed. If the question is for LOT 1, it can be focused on the digital capacity of the CSO itself. LOT 1 does not refer only to CSOs that are already established and acting as a local capacity hub, and it is open for all registered and established CSOs.

Q27. Can NGO that was registered a month ago (without any implementation of projects) apply under LOT 2? We didn't apply for any funds in the previous 3 years. Do we have to present annex D? Are we eligible to apply if we have only one project in the last three years?

Yes, you may apply. In Annex D you will include that one project that you had in the previous three years.

Q28. I run a financial literacy community on Instagram. Can I apply as an 'individual activist' or 'informal group' under LOT-2?

Yes, you can apply as an individual. Please refer to 2.1.2 section of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants where it is described in detail who the grants are intended for and what they aim at.



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Q29. Can we as individuals or informal groups be from different countries and include citizen participation from more than 1 country? Individual applicant means one-person applicant, am I right?

Please refer to the Section 2.2.1 Eligibility of Applicants section of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants where the following is stated: "All activities should be implemented in an eligible country in which the applicant is registered and based." and 3. Eligibility of Actions section of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants where eligibility of the proposed actions is addressed. The proposals should be country - specific and the activities should be implemented in only one of the eligible countries.

Individual applicant means one-person applicant.

Q30. HR cost can be how many % of total budget? How much of the budget can be allocated to salaries? What % of the budget is allowed for salary costs.

There is no limitation in percents portions per budget categories for human resources. Office costs are limited to 10%.

Q31. Are subscription-based digital tools (e.g. website builders, design platforms, online form tools) eligible costs under this call? Is it acceptable to deliver training activities through informal outreach to local CSOs and shelters, without establishing formal partnership agreements?

Please refer to 2.2.2 Eligibility of Actions section, 2.2.3. Eligibility of Actions section and 3. Eligibility of Actions section of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants where eligibility of the proposed actions is addressed.

You are not required to have established formal partnership agreements to include local CSOs as part of the proposed activities. Please take into consideration that the Call for Proposals is for sole applicants, no partnerships are accepted.

Q32. We don't have employees in the NGO. Should we put HR cost under salary or where? If we apply as an informal group should we put salaries or contract fees?

Salaries: gross amount costs for full-time or part-time project staff, including taxes, contributions and benefits, as reflected in employment contracts and in pay slips;

Contractual Services, Fees: for experts or service providers engaged through service contracts to deliver specific project activities;

If you apply as informal group, then you include Contractual Services for human resources costs.

Q33. Does the translation of the documents to English has to be certified? Should supporting documents for Strategic Growth Small Grants: Organizational Statute, Document outlining mission, vision, and previous activities, Annual reports be translated into English language?

Only the legal registration certificate from the list of supporting documents needs to be certified, while



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the other supporting documents listed in section 2.3.2 Supporting Documents of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants, it is not mandatory to have them with certified English translation. Yes, everything should be submitted in English.

Q34. According to the Kosovo legislation, you can't ask authorities to issue a new copy of the NGO Registration Certificate. Are we eligible to apply with one we got when we registered our NGO or not?

Please take your original NGO Registration Certificate to a licensed Notary in Kosovo to notarize it. The issued certified copy will carry the same legal weight as the original.

Q35. Can we sign the document with digital signature, or we need to print, stamp and scan them? Should we sign and stamp the Annexes as well?

No, don't sign it with digital signature; you need to print, sign, stamp and scan the Application Form. Annex E needs to be signed also. Please submit the signed and stamped Application Form together with all Annexes (B, C, D & E) and with all indicated Supporting Documents (depending on selected grant type) in the CFP as PDF attachments in one message at the following email account: GrantsEECA@metamorphosis.org.mk; Please make sure to submit your application before the deadline: February 23, 2026 at 16:00hrs CET.

Q36. We dont have a stamp as a non-registered group. Is a signature enough?

Yes.

Q37. In Moldova we request "excerpts" from the registry, I think this is the term, from the public services authority, is this the appropriate document you are requesting?

Yes. If it shows the current status of the CSO, then yes.

Q38. Is fellowship mandatory? If we host a fellow, we have to plan and budget accommodation and food for them? Is the budget for fellowship included in the 13,000 USD or it will be provided later to the selected grantees after the approval of the project? Who is actually paying for all the costs of the fellowships, whether our people go somewhere or we host somebody? To be a Hub, is this an additional activity, not funded by the grant? Can you elaborate more on point 3 about hosting or sending the fellow?

Are we obliged to include the costs of the networking/learning event & a campaign in our project budgets? If so, are there clear requirements about the number of participants in the event and other compulsory elements; also, are there fixed requirements for the campaign?

When applying for LOT 1, Institutional Stability Grant, the applicant only expresses interest in hosting and/or sending a fellow. There are 5 Fellowships and 10 Institutional grantees, so no, the fellowships are not mandatory. The fellowship costs are fully covered by the donor/program, not by the grantee organization.



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Fellowships will be implemented through a separate Call that the donor will publish after the grant recipients are selected. This internal Call will be open only to awarded grantee organizations, which may apply to send a staff member to another grantee organization for a one-month fellowship.

All expenses related to the fellowships, including logistics, international and local transport, accommodation, and other work-related needs, are entirely financed by the donor. Grantee organizations do not receive additional funding for this component and do not incur any costs.

The primary benefit for participating organizations is the opportunity to exchange knowledge and gain practical insight into how peer organizations in other countries work on similar thematic areas.

Q39. Learning/networking event and or campaign costs, do we include those costs in our budget?

Those are not connected with the proposed budget of the applicant for LOT 1. Those events and the campaign are aimed to meet/share knowledge/ experiences with other CSOs from the same country (with other smaller grantees of the program in your country and other CSOs).

