

## **“BUILD-Building a robust and democratic civic space” *Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV)***

### **CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS (#2)**

#### **“Protecting and promoting EU rights and values”**

**The Bodossaki Foundation, in consortium with the NGO Support Centre** announces the second open call for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) project proposals in Greece and the Republic of Cyprus for funding under the “BUILD- Building a robust and democratic civic space” project which is co-funded by the European Union (Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values). The aim of the BUILD project is to protect, promote and raise awareness of EU rights & values by financially supporting Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Greece and the Republic of Cyprus.

**The total amount allocated through this call is €1.172.222 (€950.000 for Greece and €222.222 for the Republic of Cyprus).**

**The objective of the 2<sup>nd</sup> call “Protecting and Promoting EU rights and values” is to protect, promote and advocate EU rights and values as enshrined in the European Treaties and the European Union’s Charter of Fundamental Rights.**

The European Union (EU) values and rights refer to the core principles and legal protections that underpin the functioning of the EU and the rights and freedoms of its citizens. These values and rights are enshrined in the EU's founding treaties, including [the Treaty on European Union \(TEU\)](#), the [EU Charter of Fundamental Rights \(the Charter\)](#) as well as in secondary legislation and case law.

The EU values include respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, including gender equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of people belonging to minorities. These fundamental shared values are seen by its citizens as one of the EU’s greatest strengths and achievements<sup>1</sup>. Yet across the Union, they are under threat, including from democratic backsliding, political extremism, democratic deficit, civic apathy, persistent inequalities, social exclusion, and rights violations, particularly of vulnerable groups.

These challenges are a reminder that Union values cannot be taken for granted and that promoting and defending them is a shared responsibility for all: institutions, Member States and above all its **citizens**. Protecting EU values implies a whole society approach. **Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)** play an essential role in enabling citizens’ involvement in protecting, promoting EU values and rights by holding governments and EU institutions accountable, advocating for policy change and building public awareness and support.

Within this wider EU context, **Greece** and the **Republic of Cyprus**, apart from sharing a common language, geographic proximity, and cultural and historical heritage, also face some specific additional social challenges that highlight the need for effective CSOs active in promoting EU rights and values. These include high levels of poverty and social exclusion, poor

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<sup>[1]</sup> Special Eurobarometer 500 on the Future of Europe

performance on gender equality indicators, high levels of discrimination particularly against different vulnerable groups, and high numbers of refugees and migrant arrivals.

### Objectives and indicative activities

The call is intended to fund initiatives that focus on the following expected results:

- Empowerment of vulnerable groups on issues relating to the protection of EU rights and values.
- Strengthening the advocacy and watchdog role of CSOs. Supporting CSOs in their efforts to advocate for EU rights and values and act as watchdogs to hold institutions accountable.
- Increase involvement of CSOs in policy and decision-making processes with local, regional and national governments
- Support CSOs learning and exchange with CSOs in other EU Member States, aiming at the promotion of the objectives of the call.

The aforementioned objective shall be achieved only through the following **fixed project activities**:

- Provision of support services to vulnerable groups, aiming at empowering them and informing them about their rights.
- Lobbying/advocacy activities to influence policy and decision-making processes, including revision/updating/adoption of EU policies pertaining to rights and values under the EU Treaties and Charter.
- Activities aiming to increase the watchdog role of CSOs, particularly in relation to the effective implementation of EU policies, rights, and values such as policy analysis of relevant national policies and laws, research to identify key issues and feed advocacy initiatives etc.
- Exchange of best practices, knowledge, and expertise with CSOs in other EU Member States, development of working and learning methods and tools that may be transferable and which promote the fundamental shared values of the EU such as the organization of webinars, physical or virtual events, study visits and exchanges between CSOs, development of online platforms and networks for CSOs to connect and share information and resources.

All activities must take place in Greece for applications from Greece and in Republic of Cyprus<sup>2</sup> for applications from Republic of Cyprus with the exception of activities to exchange best practices, knowledge and expertise which may also take place in other EU Member States.

Each applicant must identify in the application the activities and the outcome indicators linked to the objective of the call. Applicants must select two or more of the predefined indicators from the following outcome indicators. For more details see the “Guidelines for Applicants”.

The **outcome indicators** established for this call are:

- No of beneficiaries of CSO support services relating to protection & promotion of EU rights & values funded through the project.
- No of advocacy activities relating to protection & promotion of EU rights & values funded by the project.
- No of monitoring and watchdog activities.
- No of laws, policies and strategies influenced.
- No of publications.

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<sup>2</sup> Areas of the Republic of Cyprus under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

## Eligible Applicants

To be eligible, the applicants must:

- be a Civil Society Organization that falls within the definition below.
- be legal entities.
- be based in Greece for applications received in Greece and in the Republic of Cyprus<sup>3</sup> for application received in the Republic of Cyprus.
- be non-profit making.
- have completed twelve (12) months of operation since their legal establishment.
- have the ability to submit financial accounts for at least one financial year.

Eligible applicants are Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) that are based in Greece or the Republic of Cyprus and fall within the following definition:

“A civil society organisation (CSO) is to be understood as an organisational structure whose members serve the general interest through a democratic process, and which plays the role of mediator between state authorities and citizens, including all non-State, not-for-profit structures, who are non-partisan and non-violent, that promote and protect the fundamental rights and values on which the EU is founded.”

Especially for **Greece**, eligible applicants are the following Civil Society Organisations, as defined in the relevant Law 4873/2021: associations, civil non-profit companies, public benefit foundations of the law 4182/2013 and public benefit foundations established by a special law.

Especially for the Republic of **Cyprus**, eligible applicants are Civil Society Organisations based in the Republic of Cyprus<sup>4</sup> and established under and in compliance with the relevant Law 104(I)/2017 and its amendments (non-for-profit associations, foundations, federations and/or unions), the Companies Act (Cap. 113) (for non-for-profit companies) or the Charitable Foundations Law (Cap. 41).

They must also be independent of local, regional, and national government and other public authorities and political parties.

Priority shall be given to grass-root<sup>5</sup>, small<sup>6</sup>, remote and rural<sup>7</sup> based organisations which tend to have more limited capacity and funding sources.

The eligible applicants must, at the deadline for submission of proposals, have completed twelve (12) months of operation since their legal establishment and having the ability to submit their financial accounts for at least one financial year.

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<sup>3</sup> Areas of the Republic of Cyprus under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

<sup>4</sup> Areas of the Republic of Cyprus under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

<sup>5</sup> A grassroots CSO for the purposes of this project is a non-governmental organization that originates and operates at the local level, usually driven by community members who are passionate about a particular cause or issue. These organizations often work to address social, economic, and environmental problems within their own communities, without the influence or support of larger organizations or governments. They are typically formed by volunteers who are directly impacted by the issues they seek to address, and they rely heavily on the participation and support of the community to achieve their goals. They may focus on a wide range of issues, such as poverty, education, health, environment, human rights, and community development. They often use community mobilization and empowerment strategies to bring about change, and they may engage in advocacy and public education to raise awareness about their cause.

<sup>6</sup> A small CSO for the purposes of this project is a CSO with an annual turnover less than 40.000 EUR

<sup>7</sup> In Greece, all areas are considered rural and remote areas, except all the municipalities of the prefecture of Attica (except the islands) and all the municipalities of the prefecture of Thessaloniki.

In the Republic of Cyprus, rural areas are considered all areas except the municipalities of the cities of Nicosia, Limassol and Larnaca.

Eligible applicants shall abide by the principles of democratic values and human rights and must respect the fundamental rights and values on which the EU is founded.

Funding shall contribute to support, empower, and build the capacity of independent civil society organisations active in the promotion and protection of EU values and fundamental rights, whose activities help the strategic enforcement of rights under EU law and the Charter.

### Eligible partners

Each application can involve one lead applicant or one lead applicant and only one partner. The project partner must share a common goal and actively contribute towards achieving the project objective(s), as defined in the proposal. The role and specific obligations undertaken by the partner must be clearly defined and justified in the project proposal. The partner will undertake the relevant commitments and obligations included in the partnership agreement to be signed with the lead applicant according to the template that will be provided during the contracting phase.

Eligible partners are Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) with a legal status in Greece and in the Republic of Cyprus and follow under the same definition and meet the same conditions as the eligible applicants on section 9.2.1 of “Guidelines for Applicants”.

Especially for **Greece**, eligible applicants are Civil Society Organizations based in Greece, and especially for the **Republic of Cyprus**<sup>8</sup>, eligible applicants are Civil Society Organisations based in the Republic of Cyprus.

For more information on the eligibility criteria please consult the “Guidelines for Applicants”.

### Size of Grants

The **minimum** grants amount is €20.000, and the **maximum** grant amount is €60.000 per project.

The budget will include and provide for costs from both the applicant and the partner (if applicable). The percentage and amount of the grant of the partner (if applicable) must be identifiable separately into the financial budget and the relevant activities.

The budget may be modified, if necessary, during the implementation of the project without increasing the amount of the grant.

All applicants with budget greater than €30.001 will have the obligation to include in their budget fees for external auditors for the audit of the project that they implement and granted. All applicants with budget between €20,000 and €30,001 the cost of external audit is optional and eligible. In any case the cost of the auditor cannot be greater than the 5% of the total cost of the project.

Applicants must use the budget template provided on [the project's webpage](#).

### Duration of Projects

The **minimum** project duration is 6 months, and the **maximum** project duration is 12 months (with the approval of the Project Management Team only in special circumstances and without increasing the amount of the grant).

The projects are expected to begin approximately in February-March 2024.

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<sup>8</sup> Areas of the Republic of Cyprus under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

### Location of Projects

All activities must take place in Greece for applications from Greece and in Republic of Cyprus<sup>9</sup> for applications from Republic of Cyprus, with the exception of activities to exchange best practices, knowledge and expertise which may also take place in other EU Member States.

CSOs located in rural or/ and remote areas<sup>10</sup> as well as CSOs submitting proposals regarding projects to be carried out in rural and remote areas are highly encouraged to apply.

### Deadline for application submission

The deadline for application submission is **Wednesday 26 July 2023** (17.00, EET).

### How to apply

**Each applicant can submit only one application either as a lead applicant or as a partner and only for one of the two calls.**

Applicants are requested to fill in and submit the application form including all relevant annexes, the budget form, and the supporting documents in order for their application to be eligible for further evaluation. The templates of the application and budget are available at the [project's webpage](#). Applicants can find the list of supporting documents per country at the “Guidelines for Applicants” (Section 7).

The application form, the budget, as well as the **additional documentation** must be submitted in Greek for applicants in Greece and in Greek or English for applicants in the Republic of Cyprus in accordance with the requirements of the “Guidelines for Applicants”. The applications shall be submitted electronically via the webpage of the project using the Bodossaki Foundation’s [webpage](#).

### Evaluation process and criteria

**In phase one** each project application will be checked to comply with the administrative criteria and the eligibility criteria of the application.

The applicants will have five (5) working days to submit any missing supporting documents following a relevant request by the Bodossaki Foundation (Greece) and the NGO Support Centre (Republic of Cyprus). The supporting documents include financial and legal documentation and the declaration of honor (a detailed list of the supporting documents can be found in Section 7 of the 'Guidelines for Applicants').

Candidates whose applications are rejected in phase one for not complying with the administrative and eligibility criteria of application are informed directly via email and have the right to appeal within five (5) working days. The right of appeal may be exercised only once at this phase.

The appeal is considered by the Appeals Committee and applicants are informed within ten (10) working days. The decision on the appeal is irrevocable.

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<sup>9</sup> Areas of the Republic of Cyprus under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

<sup>10</sup> In Greece, all areas are considered rural and remote areas, except all the municipalities of the prefecture of Attica (except the islands) and all the municipalities of the prefecture of Thessaloniki. In the Republic of Cyprus, rural areas are considered all areas except the municipalities of the cities of Nicosia, Limassol and Larnaca.

**The project application and the budget are not considered as supporting documents but as core documents and thus in cases of missing project application and budget documents, the applicants will not be requested to send them, and their applications will be rejected.**

The appeal must be fully justified and submitted electronically via email to the email address of the Project Officer responsible for the call, no later than 18:00' (EET), on the fifth (5th) day – last day of the deadline.

Each application that meets the administrative and eligibility of application criteria shall be scored by two (2) impartial experts, appointed by the Bodossaki Foundation and the NGO Support Centre. At least one expert shall be external to the Bodossaki Foundation and the NGO Support Centre. All scorers (internal and external) will be obliged to sign a no-conflict of interest declaration with regards to the applicants, whose applications they will be requested to score.

An additional due diligence will be conducted by the Project Management Team to detect a risk of conflict of interest. In case any conflict arises, the Project Management Team will report it to the Steering Committee and the Consortium will take measures to protect the integrity of the selection process (e.g., excluding affected individuals from process, allocating alternative individuals where necessary).

The experts shall separately and independently score the project proposal according to the Evaluation Criteria published below. For the evaluation of proposals, the average score of the two scorers will be considered. To further examine the application, a minimum average score of 60 points of the total mark is required.

If the difference between the scores is greater than 30%, the application shall be scored by a third independent expert. This expert shall be commissioned by, and be independent of, the Consortium members.

In such cases the average score of the two closest scores shall be used for the ranking of the project applications. Applications that receive a minimum score of 60 points are ranked according to their score, without any change in the rank order. A shortlist of the ranked applications and an additional at least 10% of the ranked applications will be formed and forwarded to the Legal Unit for the eligibility of applicant and partner (if applicable) check.

**In phase two**, each project application will be checked to comply with the eligibility criteria regarding the eligibility of applicant and partner (if applicable).

Candidates whose applications are rejected in phase two for not complying with the eligibility of applicant and partner (if applicable) criteria are informed directly via email and have the right to appeal within five (5) working days. The right of appeal may be exercised only once at this phase.

The appeal must be fully justified and submitted electronically via email to the email address of the Project Officer responsible for the call, no later than 18:00' (EET), on the 5th day – last day of the deadline.

The appeal is considered by the Appeals Committee and applicants are informed within ten (10) working days. The decision on the appeal is irrevocable.

The evaluation criteria as well as the max score per criterion are the following:

Evaluation criteria	Max Score
<b>1. Capacity &amp; relevance of the applicant</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Financial Capacity</i></li> <li><i>Organisational Capacity &amp; Expertise</i></li> <li><i>Demonstrated relevant previous experience</i></li> <li><i>Aligned with EU values and rights</i></li> </ul>	<b>20</b>
<b>2. Relevance and Justification of the activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The described aims, objectives, activities, deliverables and results of the proposed action are relevant to the Open Call objectives and priorities.</i></li> <li><i>The proposed action is fully justified as necessary and beneficent to the proposed target audiences</i></li> </ul>	<b>25</b>
<b>3. Quality, impact &amp; sustainability of the proposed activities – including taking into consideration gender equality &amp; non-discrimination mainstreaming</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>4. Applicant and/or partner is a grassroots<sup>11</sup>/small<sup>12</sup>/rural-based CSO<sup>13</sup></b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5. Project fosters cooperation &amp; exchange with other EU Member States</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6. Value for money (based on submitted project budget-which will also determine the exact amount of financial support for each partner-if applicable)</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>100</b>

The ranking list is provided to the Selection Committee for its final approval. The Selection Committee may modify the ranking only in justified cases if this is necessary for the achievement of the goals of the project.

The decision of the Selection Committee is final and may not be changed. The final decision will be communicated to applicants and information on approved projects will be published on the project webpage within four (4) months from the deadline of submission of project proposals.

Applicants of unsuccessful applications shall be able to request to be informed of the reasons for their applications rejection.

### Contact Information

Questions may be submitted no later than ten (10) working days before the deadline for the submission of project proposals.

The questions must be sent by email to the address below:

- [ekarakitsiou@bodossaki.gr](mailto:ekarakitsiou@bodossaki.gr) (for applicants in Greece)
- [helpdesk@ngo-sc.com](mailto:helpdesk@ngo-sc.com) (for applicants in the Republic of Cyprus)

<sup>11</sup>A grassroots CSO for the purposes of this programme is a non-governmental organization that originates and operates at the local level, usually driven by community members who are passionate about a particular cause or issue. These organizations often work to address social, economic, and environmental problems within their own communities, without the influence or support of larger organizations or governments. They are typically formed by volunteers who are directly impacted by the issues they seek to address, and they rely heavily on the participation and support of the community to achieve their goals. They may focus on a wide range of issues, such as poverty, education, health, environment, human rights, and community development. They often use community mobilization and empowerment strategies to bring about change, and they may engage in advocacy and public education to raise awareness about their cause.

<sup>12</sup> A small CSO for the purposes of this programme is a CSO with an annual turnover less than 40.000 EUR.

<sup>13</sup> In Greece, all areas are considered rural and remote areas, except all the municipalities of the prefecture of Attica (except the islands) and all the municipalities of the prefecture of Thessaloniki.

In Cyprus, rural areas are considered all areas except the municipalities of the cities of Nicosia, Limassol and Larnaca.

The Bodossaki Foundation and the NGO Support Centre have no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this deadline.

Answers to specific questions shall be uploaded on [the project's webpage](#) (FAQ document) to be available for all interested applicants. No individual replies will be given to questions.

More information on the documentation related to this Call, including the **Application Form, Budget, Declaration of Honor and the Guidelines for Applicants** is available at the project's [webpage](#).

### **Complaint Mechanism**

All complaints related to the implementation of the BUILD Project will be directed to and processed by the Project's **Complaints Committee**. The Complaints Committee is responsible for the processing and deciding on complaints about suspected non-compliance with the principles of good governance in relation to the implementation of the Project.

The Complaints Committee will examine complaints received either directly via the dedicated email account [cerv-complaints@bodossaki.gr](mailto:cerv-complaints@bodossaki.gr) or indirectly by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).

A decision up to 30 working days, shall be taken by the Complaints Committee, upon the submission of the complaint.

### **Personal Data Protection**

Regarding the data protection policy applied in the context of the implementation of the project, please consult the general policy - information of the Bodossaki Foundation available [here](#) and the specific information on the policy applied by the Bodossaki Foundation and the NGO Support Centre available [here](#).

April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023



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