



CATALYST OF  
CHANGE

SUPPORTING A VIBRANT CIVIL SOCIETY IN EUROPE

## Call for Country Expert

### Introduction

The NHC is looking for liaison experts for the project [“Catalyst of Change: Protecting the Union values by supporting a resilient, engaged and vocal civil society for the promotion of women’s rights, environmental justice and anti-corruption in Eastern and Southern Europe”](#). This project aims to contribute to creating an enabling environment for civil society in five EU Member States: Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia, and Portugal.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the project will allow CSOs working on women's rights, environmental justice, and anti-corruption to work more effectively in the promotion of EU values, be more resilient to threats, and be able to quickly respond to concerning trends affecting space for civil society in their respective countries.

Local knowledge and expertise are crucial for addressing the context-specific needs of the CSOs to be supported under this project, as well as for strategically adjusting activities where necessary in relation to developments on the ground. In this regard, each expert will serve a focal point for the NHC in the target countries and will play a strong role in the effective implementation of project activities.

### Background

More and more people within the EU are confronted with backsliding of the rule of law and violations of human rights. Pressure on those who speak out in protection of human rights is increasing. With this programme we aim to fight the further closing of civic space and roll back of rule of law.

Shrinking civic space has many meanings for people. It encompasses harassment through propaganda, inciting statements by politicians, investigations or even legislation targeting non-governmental organisations. It affects in particular historically underrepresented people, as well as groups that raise their voice in defence of fundamental values. We need to turn the tide and make civil society stronger.

That is why with this project **we support grass roots organisations and movements to amplify their voice and become more effective catalysts of change.**

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<sup>1</sup> This project is funded by the European Union.





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**Target groups:** we focus on supporting catalysts of change that are most under pressure, and that have an important role to play in facing the challenges of this time: grass roots organisations and movements that protect women's rights and/or the environment.

We will support these target groups through capacity strengthening, networking and awareness raising.

The programme has three main objectives:

1. Enhanced civil society's response to new trends affecting democratic and civic space and civil society.
2. Strengthen effectiveness, accountability and sustainability of grassroots organisations and movements.
3. Enhance visibility and understanding of the work of grassroots organisations and movements supported by the project.

The **planned activities** are peer-to-peer coaching and trainings, networking and coalition building events, the implementation of a small grant programme through call for proposals and awareness raising and communication activities.

**Target countries:** Bulgaria, Croatia, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia.

**Activities:**

- *Support in mapping and outreach towards target groups:* the expert will help NHC to identify and reach out to grass roots CSOs and movements, with a specific focus on organisations situated outside of the capital to inform them about granting and capacity strengthening opportunities.
- *Advice on capacity strengthening and training development:* the expert will help NHC to shape the capacity strengthening activities by providing information on specific needs and local context. Where necessary, the expert can also act as trainers themselves.
- *Supporting the distribution, evaluation and monitoring of the grants:* the expert will help NHC to disseminate the call for proposals amongst the target groups, take part in the evaluation committee for three call for proposals and serve as a focal point for the grass roots CSOs in the country.



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### **Requirements:**

The recruitment of the country experts will adhere to NHC's procurement policy and to the donor's requirements and regulations. Furthermore, it will comply with NHC's code of conduct, whistleblower policy as well as its integrity system.

We will select one expert per country in line with the requirements below:

- The expert is based in the target country (Bulgaria, Croatia, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia) and speaks the language of the country in question.
- Extensive experience in and expertise on the civil society field within the target country.
- A broad network amongst civil society organisations on the grass roots level, in particular those working on women's rights, protection of the environment and anti-corruption, also outside the bigger cities.
- Good understanding of the needs of grassroots CSOs.
- Good knowledge of the emerging trends affecting civic space and civil society.
- Experience with civil society networks and network strengthening projects.
- Experience in setting up capacity strengthening/ training courses.
- Awareness of the principles of gender mainstreaming and non-discrimination.
- A good working knowledge of English.

### **Confidentiality**

Throughout the assignment, and for five years after the date of final payment for service, the expert must agree to keep confidential all data, documents, or other materials (in any format) that is disclosed (in writing or orally) concerning the project.

### **Tentative timeframe**

Selected experts are expected to be available approx. 3-3,5 working days (24-28 hours) per month within a 14-month period (tentatively between June 2023 and July 2024).

### **Budget**

We are able to offer a daily fee of 350 EUR (on average; all taxes included).

Travel-related expenses (if any) are to be reimbursed separately.

## Application and Selection Process

The NHC will recruit 5 qualified local experts in the project target countries based on the submitted applications. Selected experts will be contracted for a period of one year, with the possibility of extension if deemed appropriate.

Interested candidates are requested to submit the following:

- Applicant's Declaration Form
- CV

**The application package should be submitted in English via the following [link](#) no later than 1 June 2023, 23:59 CET.**

If you have any questions regarding the project or the application procedure, please email the NHC Human Rights Defence Programme team at [hrd@nhc.nl](mailto:hrd@nhc.nl) by no later than 31 May 2023.

Only full applications (consisting of a completed application form and CV) will be assessed. Only applications receiving a minimum score of 70 points based on the below criteria will be shortlisted.



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### Selection Criteria

	Criteria	Maximum score
1	Experience in and expertise on the civil society field within the target country. Knowledge of the emerging trends affecting civic space and civil society, including knowledge of CSO environment and the situation of women's rights, environmental protection, and/or anti-corruption CSOs; good understanding of the needs of grassroots CSOs in one of the target countries.	<b>35</b>
2	Experience with civil society networks and network strengthening projects. Strong networking capacity within the civil society organisations on the grass roots level in one of the target countries, in particular those working on women's rights, protection of the environment and anti-corruption, also outside the bigger cities	<b>30</b>
3	Experience in developing and implementing capacity strengthening/training courses for grassroots CSOs in one of the target countries	<b>25</b>
4	Knowledge of local language and English	<b>10</b>
<b>Total:</b>		<b>100</b>

