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GUIDELINES FOR FELLOWSHIP APPLICANTS

1st CALL FOR APPLICATIONS 2027

EaP Civil Society Fellowships

Supporting Civil Society Leadership in the Eastern Partnership Countries

NOTICE This is an open call for fellowship applications. Applications for 2027 Civil Society Fellowship programme are accepted via the online application system:

https://eapcivilsociety.eu/fellowship2027

Submission of Application Concept Forms can be made **at any time** in electronic format before the **closing deadline of 11th December 2026**. **Application Concept Forms will be assessed on a rolling basis**; therefore, applicants are encouraged to make submissions as soon as possible before the closing deadline.

Please check the eligibility criteria before applying. When submitting an application, applicants must follow all instructions contained in the guidelines and ensure submission of a complete application. Should you have any questions regarding your application, please contact fellowships@eapcivilsociety.eu.

PLEASE NOTE THAT FELLOWSHIPS ARE AWARDED TO INDIVIDUALS. THIS IS NOT A GRANT SCHEME FOR ORGANISATIONS.

Eastern Partnership Civil Society Facility project is funded by the European Union and implemented by GDSI-led Consortium

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1. Background

The European Union is committed to supporting civil society in Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) and, as such, channels part of its support through the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Facility. In coordination with a range of projects and programmes, the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Facility project sets out to strengthen the role and increase the capacity of civil society organisations (CSOs) and activists in the Eastern Partnership to engage in the policy making processes and policy dialogue, promote reforms and public accountability, foster local democracy, local development and engage citizens in public debate. The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Facility was established in 2011, and the current phase of the project is for the period 2021 to 2028.

The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Facility has administered the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Fellowship programme since 2017, with 20 young civil society activists/leaders selected in each of its first four years, and an additional 193 Fellows selected for 2021, 2022, 2023, 2025 and 2026. To date, the Fellowship alumni network has a total of 273 Fellows from across the six countries of the EaP. Details about some of the Fellows and their areas of interest can be found at https://fellows.eapcivilsociety.eu. The activities of these previous Fellowships should be reviewed by potential applicants to new Fellowships in order to get ideas about what is possible and to avoid any duplication.

The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Fellowship programme is now launching its first Call for the 2027 cohort of Fellows based on the priorities and objectives outlined in these guidelines. In line with the EU's objective to support an empowered and resilient civil society in the Eastern Partnership countries, for this Call the Fellowship programme will give preference to Fellowship proposals which fit the specific theme of **Resource Diversification for Supporting Civil Society Work**.

2. Objectives and Priorities of the Civil Society Fellowship programme

The main objective of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Fellowships is to support civil society activists or civically minded people who demonstrate a deep commitment to leading positive social change in their communities (including IT experts such as software engineers, data scientists, and designers who innovate at the intersection of technology and the needs of their communities). The Fellowships will build the Fellows' capacity to constructively engage with communities and authorities and contribute to reforms in the EaP countries. The Fellowships should be linked to the priority themes of the EaP[1] and areas of particular challenging nature in the region:

- Having a resilient, sustainable and integrated economy
- Strengthening accountability, rule of law, and security
- Ensuring environmental and climate resilience
- Contributing to resilient and inclusive digitalisation
- Promoting participatory decision-making and social justice

There are **two different types of Fellowship** which make up the programme in this phase. These two types are explained below.

[1] Applicants can learn more about the post-2020 priorities for the Eastern Partnership at: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/system/files/2021-09/eap_future_priorities_eng.pdf

2.1 Community Engagement Fellowships

Community Engagement Fellowships are designed to support Fellows engaging in one or more of the following activities:

- **Collecting local evidence**: supporting fellows to collect and analyse evidence on key issues of public service delivery at the local and national levels.
- **Involvement in policymaking**: allowing fellows to gain expertise on specific policy issues, draft policy paper/recommendations and organise advocacy campaigns; helping fellows get access to government channels in order to better get their ideas across.
- **Capacity development**: supporting mentoring and job shadowing schemes and involving fellows to train other members of their organisations, as well as members of other CSOs from relevant networks. This may also include, although not exclusively, job shadowing or study visits with CSOs in EU Member States.
- **Involvement in monitoring public administration** activity and results: supporting fellows in developing a multitude of monitoring activities, including on technical issues such as public financial management, budget transparency and oversight.
- **Improvement of CSOs' accountability and link to constituencies**: supporting fellows in improving the transparency and accountability mechanisms of their organisations and in better linking activities to citizens' needs.
- **Cooperation between CSOs**: allowing fellows to organise activities bringing various CSOs together on issues of common interest.

2.2 Civic Digital Fellowships

The Civic Digital Fellowships will facilitate Fellows to use their expertise to contribute to, develop or further promote and raise awareness about **technological solutions for community needs**. These Fellowships are designed to support Fellows engaging in one or more of the following activities:

- **Advocacy campaigns** on issues such as open data, data quality, e-services for citizens, and budgetary transparency.
- **Improving the quality of data** (such as making existing public data machine-readable or generating and publishing open and reusable data needed for further development of digital solutions for transparency and accountability in the region).
- **Developing new digital solutions** addressing community needs, helping citizens better hold governments to account, contributing to the improvement of public services, and/or improving CSO accountability.
- **Promoting/rolling out and expanding the existing** civic tech solutions that address community needs, help citizens better hold governments to account, contribute to the improvement of public services and/or CSO accountability, and building the relevant skills of the potential users.

Examples of Fellowship activities in line with the above topics can be found on the Fellows' profile pages: https://fellows.eapcivilsociety.eu.

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2.3 Fellowships and the EaP Civil Society Project Themes

All applications to the Fellowships programme which match the eligibility requirements in section 4 below and which are in line with the objectives described above will be considered by the Selection Committee. In addition, those applications, either Community Engagement or Civic Digital, which specifically contribute to the focal theme of this Call, will be able to achieve additional evaluation scoring points as described in section 6 below. Thus, by submitting a proposal that contributes to the focal theme, applicants may be able to score more points, but all other proposals that meet the eligibility criteria and contribute to the overall objectives of the Fellowships will also be considered.

The theme of this 1st Call for the 2027 cohort of Fellows is Resource Diversification for Supporting Civil Society Work.

The EU does not have a definition of 'civil society resilience', but since the 2017 Communication[2] "A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's external action", the concept of 'resilience' is mainstreamed into EU planning and programming. The EU global strategy identifies 'strengthening state and societal resilience' as part of the response to the challenges of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

A key challenge to civil society resilience is access to resources. Experience in the EU Member States, and globally, demonstrates that the more diverse the origins of the resources used by civil society actors, the more empowered and resilient the civil society is. For this reason, this fellowship Call will give additional evaluation scores (see Evaluation Grid for Concept Notes in section 6 below) to proposals that contribute to the resource diversification of civil society work.

Resource diversification of civil society work has many aspects and potential approaches. **A list of examples of resource diversification** is presented below, but is not exhaustive, and applicants may offer different approaches:

- Increasing fund-raising from individual donations
- Maximising benefits from individual and corporate philanthropy
- Promoting and benefiting from Corporate Social Responsibility
- Mobilising volunteers and bringing new actors to voluntary work
- Advocating for the expansion of public procurement access to civil society
- Developing an offer of fee-paid services, such as professional expertise and social care services
- Lobbying for expansion of social contracting at national and local levels
- Mobilising resources from the diaspora
- Advocating for and promoting taxpayers' percentage designation models
- The development and promotion of social enterprise models
- Raising awareness of the practice of 'legacy giving'
- Innovating low-cost operational models of grassroots organisations and initiative groups
- Applying AI for resource mobilisation

[2] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52017JC0021

3. Technical & Financial Support for Fellows

Fellows will be able to obtain an average of 5,000 euros in financial support for their Fellowship. Please note that the funds are provided in euros and not any other currency. The eligibility of costs is described below, but in general the financial support can be used in the Fellow's own country or any other Eastern Partnership country or in the EU Member States. In addition, the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Facility project team will support Fellows to benefit from suitable e-learning activities and organisational/operational capacity development trainings/webinars, as well as opportunities to participate in international events. Furthermore, the project will continue to support the networking of the alumni (including previous generations of Fellows), through the organisation of alumni events and development of alumni actions and collaborations.

4. Eligibility

There are three specific sets of eligibility criteria:

- Eligibility of applicants to be Fellows
- Eligibility of actions under the Fellowships
- Eligibility of the costs of actions under the Fellowships

Each of these eligibility areas is explained in detail below. Applicants should review these carefully before applying.

4.1 Eligible Applicants

To be eligible for a fellowship, the applicant must:

1. be a natural person and not a legal entity;
2. be a national of one of the Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine);
3. be above 18 years old;
4. not have previously benefited from the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Fellowship programme;
5. have a proven track record of:
    a. for community engagement fellowships, working (including by volunteering) either in a civil society organisation, including Trade Unions, cooperatives, or professional associations, or with a civic engagement group or initiative group and/or taking a leading role in his/her community by advancing issues related to public service delivery and accountability, and developing local capacities;
    b. for civic digital fellowships, professional contributions to the development of IT solutions and/or development of innovative digital products;
6. have a good working level of English, as well as have appropriate language skills for the chosen location of the proposed action;
7. assume responsibility for the action proposed and show commitment to the action proposed.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE FELLOWSHIPS ARE FOR INDIVIDUALS AND NOT FOR ORGANISATIONS. However, if a Fellow requires the support of an organisation to secure their safety or to administer funds for them, this will be considered by the Evaluation Committee.

Proof of citizenship and age can be provided through a passport copy.

As proof of eligibility, an applicant to the Community Engagement Fellowships should provide a recommendation letter from a relevant CSO/Trade Union/ Cooperative /Professional Association or community organisation. Applicants to the Civic Digital Fellowships may provide a recommendation letter from a recognised IT professional (such as an employer, academic, tutor, colleague on a tech-related project) instead of a recommendation letter from a civil society actor.

As proof of a good working level of English, applicants must have a B1 level of English, as defined according to the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages**. Level B1 means you have the following abilities:

- You can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.
- You can deal with most situations likely to arise while travelling in an area where the language is spoken.
- You can produce simple connected text on topics that are familiar or of personal interest.
- You can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

Proof of the level of English may include one or more of the following: certification from an internationally recognised English language testing organisation (e.g., IELTS, TOEFL, Pearson, Trinity College); proof that you have studied at degree level using English as the language of tuition; personal recommendation letter, with reference contact details, from an employer, university, or international organisation.

4.2 Eligible Project Activities

The application process, which is described in full in Section 5 below, involves two main stages. In the Full Application Form (the second stage of application after the Concept Note), applicants are required to provide details on the project which they intend to implement in order to achieve their stated outcome (results) of the Fellowship. A successful Fellowship project addresses problems in the lives of the applicants' communities, regions and countries by promoting reforms, improving public services and increasing public accountability and/or monitoring of the performance of governmental institutions.

The outcome and implementation of the proposed Fellowship project should also have a positive influence on the development of the applicant's leadership skills.

The proposed project should be implemented within a maximum of a 6-month period, and ideally a shorter time, and include **realistic sustainable outputs** that will contribute to the expected Fellowship outcome. At the Concept Note stage, there is no requirement to describe all details of proposed activities, but such details will be required in the Full Application. Thus, applicants should be aware of the types of activities eligible for support.

The Fellowship programme will provide support in broad areas of project activities, such as those listed above in 2.3 corresponding to this Call's specific theme, and also including:

- Evidence-based research or monitoring of how public services are delivered at national / local/ community level;
- Using evidence to draft policy papers and recommendations for decision-makers;

- Advocacy campaigns on issues of public concern;
- Better tailoring civil society organisations' activities to citizens' needs;
- Developing new solutions on issues such as e-transparency and e-participation, and expanding or upgrading existing technological solutions for community needs;
- Developing technological products to contribute to a community's mitigation of climate change or addressing other needs, such as those of IDPs and refugees in a community;
- Promoting constructive dialogue and bringing civil society and authorities together to develop common solutions, and to improve access to government channels by civil society;
- Strengthening organisations' capacity to act effectively, including training of trainers in order to train other members of their organisation, as well as members of other CSOs;
- Supporting mentoring and job shadowing schemes in order to build capacities that can be transferred to other members of the organisation;
- Activities that build cooperation between CSOs and activists in any part of the Eastern Partnership with similar CSOs and activists in the EU Member States;
- Raising awareness and building relevant skills of end-users of civic tech solutions, and generating re-usable open data;
- Cooperation between civil society organisations, including trade unions and professional associations, and business on issues of common interest.

Also, preference will be given to applicants whose proposed actions contribute to the focal theme and do not overlap with the activities of previous fellowship projects. All applicants are advised to check previous projects on the project website: https://fellows.eapcivilsociety.eu.

The following actions are considered **ineligible**:

- actions concerned solely or mainly with construction, procurement of works or supplies;
- actions supporting political parties or candidates;
- actions supporting the army or other military bodies;
- actions including religious proselytism;
- actions normally carried out by the applicant and/or affiliated entities as part of their usual work.

Location

Actions must take place in the countries of the Eastern Partnership region (as described above) and/or in the EU.

Number of applications per applicant

The applicant may **not** submit more than one Application Concept Note for this Call for Fellowship applications. Applicants who have already benefited from the Fellowship programme will not be eligible.

4.3 Eligible Costs

The proposed budget for a Fellowship action should be realistic and be based on the objectives and activities set out in the Fellowship project proposal.

The provided financial support of the Fellowship programme shall cover:

- specific activities outlined in the application form submitted by the applicant;
- travel and accommodation expenses to/from or/and within the host country;
- communication and visibility costs (including distribution and promotion);
- costs incurred from services of a mentor(s), if required;

- overhead expenses, such as accounting services, office or shared space rent, legal services to open accounts, but these cannot exceed 10% of the total budget of the project and cannot include fees or a salary to the Fellow;
- bank transfer charges;
- consular fees, if relevant;
- insurance (if relevant)

NOTE: In the case of proposals involving learning mobility, the host organisations based in the EU Member States shall facilitate the visa support. The applicants are expected to cover consular fees from the fellowship funds.

The following types of costs are **ineligible** for inclusion in the Fellowship budget:

- Fees or any payment to Fellows;
- Fees or any payment to a superior of the Fellow at her/his workplace;
- Costs for purchasing equipment (the rental of equipment may be allowed if justified by the action).

It should be noted that **successful applicants will be solely responsible for meeting any specific tax requirements in their country of residence**.

The rates and charges included in the proposed budget have to be based on objective data that could be verified. It is an applicant's responsibility to ensure the accuracy of budget calculations and the estimation of costs.

The proposed budget should normally not exceed 5,000 EUR, however, in exceptional cases, a higher budget can be approved by the Selection Committee if duly justified in the application. The Selection Committee reserves the right to award a lower amount for the Fellowship, following the final revision of the proposed budget.

5. How to Apply for a Fellowship

Any individual meeting the applicant eligibility requirements above may make an application to be awarded a Fellowship. The application process is comprised of two stages, with an 'incubation' period between Stage 1 and Stage 2. An evaluation is made of all Stage 1 applicants, and those who successfully pass this evaluation are invited to join the 'incubation' period and to make a Full Application under Stage 2. At both stages, the applicant should carefully follow the instructions as described below.

Stage 1: The Concept of your Fellowship

The first stage of the application to the Fellowship is to submit a Concept Note, demonstrating the applicant's eligibility, experience and competence, and proposed concept for the Fellowship. The Application Concept Note template can be found at **https://eapcivilsociety.eu/fellowship2027**, and it is comprised of three sections:

i. Who You Are
ii. Your Experience & Motivation (which includes uploading your CV)
iii. The Purpose of Your Fellowship

Before preparing an Application Concept Note for submission, all potential applicants should follow these steps:

- Carefully read these Guidelines and submit any questions you might have to fellowships@eapcivilsociety.eu;
- Check the eligibility criteria;
- Obtain appropriate proof of eligibility: an applicant to the Community Engagement Fellowships should provide a letter of recommendation from a relevant CSO/Trade Union/ Cooperative/Professional Association/community organisation; applicants to the Civic Digital Fellowships should provide a recommendation letter from a recognised civic tech or IT professional (such as an employer, academic, tutor, colleague on a tech-related project);
- Obtain the necessary proof document(s) to demonstrate your level of English. These may include one or more of the following: certification from an internationally recognised English language testing organisation (e.g., IELTS, TOEFL, Pearson, Trinity College); proof that you have studied at degree level using English as the language of tuition; a personal recommendation letter, with reference contact details, from an employer, university, or international organisation.
- Ensure your CV is up-to-date and in a PDF or Word format - applicants who need guidance for drafting a CV may visit https://europa.eu/europass/en/create-europass-cv
- Participate in the live webinar 'How to prepare a successful fellowship application', planned for 10th November 2026, or view a recorded version of the webinar;
- If interested in collaborating with CSOs in EU Member States, review the list of CSOs that have an interest in hosting Fellows: https://eapcivilsociety.eu/download/16699/;

After completing all the steps described above, the applicant can start preparing a Concept Note and **submit it online** before the final closing deadline at **https://eapcivilsociety.eu/fellowship2027. For this 1st Call for the 2027 cohort, the closing deadline for Concept Notes is 11th December 2026.**

For applicants who face cybersecurity risks when making an online submission, please request an alternative submission mechanism by emailing us at eapcivilsociety@protonmail.com.

Submitted Concept Notes are assessed on a rolling basis, so the sooner applicants make a submission, the quicker they will find out if they can move on to the Full Application stage.

Application Concept Notes which are positively assessed and obtain at least the minimum evaluation score (explained below in the Evaluation & Selection section), are then moved to the 'incubation' period. Successful applicants will be informed of this and will be provided with an online link to open a Full Application.

Stage 2: The Full Application

Applicants invited to make a Full Application will receive an online link (or an email attachment) for the Full Application form. This form must be completed in line with the guidelines below. Applicants are encouraged to carefully research and consider their Full Applications and may seek specific assistance from the project team in order to develop their Fellowship Concept into a project. This process of developing the Full Application is referred to as the 'incubation period'.

Incubation Period

During the incubation period, an applicant will need to develop the details of their proposed Fellowship project and a corresponding budget. This should be done in line with the following guidelines.

Full Application Guidelines

The Full Application Form must be completed in English in its three sections:

i. Confirmation (of the validity of Fellowship Concept)
ii. The Fellowship Project & Budget
iii. Proof and Other Supporting Documents

Applicants must use the template provided and attach/upload supporting documents as requested. The template requires the following details under the section 'The Fellowship Project & Budget'.

- The **title** of your Fellowship Project
- Information about **where** the action will take place.
- **When and for how long** the activities will take place, indicating the month (M) and duration for each activity. Fellowship Project **Objective** – please provide a concise objective, based on the proposed Outcome statement in your Concept Note
- **Activities** to achieve the Objective, with a list of the concrete **outputs** from the activities (e.g., Number of publications, people trained) and a brief explanation of how the outputs will be sustained.
- A description of **who will be involved** in the project (including the role of the Fellow and details of any organisation in the EU or EaP region that will be required to host the Fellow and/or activities). The Full Application template requires information about three categories of stakeholders: Organisations/people assisting the Fellow to implement the project; Participants of the project's activities, and/or other beneficiaries of the project; Other stakeholders important for the success of the Fellowship and related project.
- Details of any **specific capacity** weaknesses that the Fellow, and/or partners, may have and for which the Fellow will need assistance to address in order to successfully implement the action.
- The **budget** for the Fellowship Action, providing an overall total cost and a breakdown of the costs following the budget template. If you are planning public offline events within your fellowship project, include the design and production of a project banner and handouts.
- A **draft communication plan** to promote the Fellowship project, such as production of visibility materials, social media campaigns/publications or key events for communicating about the project. If awarded a fellowship, this draft communication plan should be finalised and re-submitted within 10 days after the Fellowship agreement is signed.
- A description of any **risks** that may impact the implementation of the Fellowship and how the risks might be mitigated, and comments about any similar existing projects and how the proposed project might differ or contribute to the existing one.

In addition to the Fellowship Action, applicants must also complete the section on 'Proof and Other Supporting Documents', which requires the attachment/upload of the following documents:

- Proof of citizenship
- Updated CV (if significant additions have been made since the Concept Note stage)
- Recommendation letter
- Proof of level of English

- Budget
- Plan of Activities / Gantt Chart for your Fellowship project using the available template
- Reference letter of partner organisation, mentor, or coach (optional)

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 5 days before the deadline for the submission of applications to fellowships@eapcivilsociety.eu. All received questions and answers, as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the application period, will be published at https://eapcivilsociety.eu. It is therefore advisable to consult the above-mentioned website before asking new questions.

6. Evaluation & Selection

An independent Selection Committee will oversee the evaluation of every application at every stage. The Committee ensures compliance with the eligibility criteria and evaluates applications in line with the scoring mechanisms explained below. The list of applicants to be awarded Fellowships compiled by the Selection Committee is then approved by the European Union representatives.

At Stage 1 (Fellowship Concept), applications are assessed and evaluated as follows:

- Applicant eligibility check (criteria listed in 4.1 above)

If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis, and the application will not be evaluated further. The Concept Notes that pass the first administrative and eligibility check will then, in conjunction with the applicant's CV, be evaluated against the following criteria. Only applicants scoring a minimum of 12 will be assessed as eligible. Each criterion will be assessed using the scoring values:

0 - no experience/not valid response/zero level
1 - basic experience or level/somewhat valid response/a little motivation
2 - some experience/valid response/good level/good motivation
3 – extensive experience/highly valid response/high level/highly motivated

Experience & Motivation of Applicant	**Score**
Experience contributing to civil society, or relevant technical experience for Civic Digital Fellowships, and demonstrated leadership	
Motivation to be a Fellow	
Purpose of the Proposed Fellowship	
Area of Fellowship is relevant to applicant's experience	
Outcome is clear, achievable, and Fellowship justified	
Beneficiaries are relevant for the Fellowship	
The Fellowship responds to the focal theme of 'Civil Society Resilience'(No-0, partly-1, fully-3)	
Total Score	/18

At Stage 2 (Full Application), applications are assessed and evaluated as follows:

- Is the Fellowship Concept valid and confirmed?

- Have all the relevant supporting documents been provided and are they compliant with the Guidelines?
- The Community Engagement Fellowship and Civic Digital Fellowship Projects and Budgets are evaluated using the two evaluation grids below:

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Community Engagement Evaluation Grid

LEADERSHIP & CAPACITY	Score
Professional competencies, including management capacity, to implement the Fellowship project (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'very poor' and 5 being 'excellent')	
Extent to which the proposed fellowship project demonstrates that the Fellow has a good understanding of relevant stakeholders and includes details on how she/he will cooperate with and reach out to relevant organisations (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'very poor' and 5 being 'excellent')	
PROJECT PROPOSAL	
Extent to which the proposed activities will contribute to the expected Outcome (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'very poor' and 5 being 'excellent')	
Project proposal has clear and achievable outputs, which, where relevant, can be sustained (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'very poor' and 5 being 'excellent')	
Project is possible to implement within the timeframe and the budget as defined in the application (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'not possible' and 5 being 'extremely likely')	
Project proposal has clear and feasible promotional aspects (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'not clear nor feasible' and 5 being 'totally clear and feasible')	
Risks, and any synergies with existing projects, have been considered and mitigated (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'very poor' and 5 being 'excellent')	
Project is likely to have a tangible impact on the applicant's leadership skills (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'very unlikely' and 5 being 'very likely')	
BUDGET	
All activities are properly budgeted (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'very poor' and 5 being 'excellent')	
Budget is well-structured, realistic and balanced between activities (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'very poor' and 5 being 'excellent')	
TOTAL	**/50**

Civic Digital Evaluation Grid

LEADERSHIP & CAPACITY	Score
Professional competencies, including management capacity, to implement the Fellowship project (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'very poor' and 5 being 'excellent')	
Extent to which the proposed fellowship project demonstrates that the Fellow has a good understanding of relevant stakeholders and includes details on how she/he will cooperate with and reach out to relevant organisations (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'very poor' and 5 being 'excellent')	
PROJECT PROPOSAL	
Extent to which the proposed activities will contribute to the expected 'problem – actors/users – solution – impact' chain (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'very poor' and 5 being 'excellent')	
Project proposal has clear and achievable outputs, which, where relevant, can be sustained (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'very poor' and 5 being 'excellent')	
Project is possible to implement within the timeframe and the budget as defined in the application (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'very unlikely' and 5 being 'very likely')	
Project proposal has clear and feasible promotional aspects (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'not clear nor feasible' and 5 being 'totally clear and feasible')	

Risks, and any synergies with existing projects, have been considered and mitigated (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'very poorly' and 5 being 'very well')	
Project is likely to have a tangible impact on the applicant's leadership skills (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'very unlikely' and 5 being 'very likely')	
BUDGET	
All activities are properly budgeted (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'very poorly' and 5 being 'very well')	
Budget is well-structured, realistic and balanced between activities (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being 'very poorly' and 5 being 'very well')	
TOTAL	**/50**

Applications scoring a total of 36 points or more will be recommended by the Selection Committee to be awarded, pending any outstanding compliance checks (e.g., of language skills, recommendation letters). The compliance checks may require the applicant to be interviewed by the Selection Committee.

As a regional programme, the Selection Committee will endeavour to ensure that the shortlist of applicants to be recommended for awards has appropriate representation from all the countries.

7. Fellowship Awards

For this 1st Call for the 2027 cohort, there is a total quota of 25 Fellowships to be awarded.

The quotas are for the total of all Fellowships, with no specific quotas between the two different types of Fellowship (Community Engagement and Civic Digital).

Awarded Fellows will be able to begin the implementation of their Fellowship Action within 30 days of signing their Fellowship contract.

8. Indicative Timeframe

- 1st Call for 2027 Fellowships opens on 02.11.2026.
- An Information webinar on how to make a Fellowship application will be made 'live' on 10th November 2026. Please register here for the webinar before 9th November 2026, thereafter, it will be available to view as a recording at https://eapcivilsociety.eu.
- Closing date for receipt of Fellowship Concept Notes is 11.12.2026.
- Closing date for receipt of Full Applications for the 1st 2027 Fellowships is 07.02.2026.
- Awards of the Fellowships from the 2027 1st Call are expected in March 2027, with implementation running from April 2027 to September 2027.

9. Implementation of the Fellowship

Once an applicant has been awarded a Fellowship, they become a Fellow. The responsibilities of being a Fellow include a number of key aspects and procedures, which are described below. These also include the use of specific templates for reporting and frameworks for monitoring their fellowship projects. Details on the use of these templates and frameworks will be provided during the contracting phase.

9.1 Contracting

A successful applicant will receive by email a letter of award. The letter of award will indicate that the fellowship is to be awarded to them, subject to acceptance of the following conditions:

i. Accept all conditions of the Fellowship agreement.
ii. Use the Fellowship funds only as specified in the action proposal.
iii. Maintain records of the usage of the Fellowship funds.
iv. Implement the proposed action in line with the proposed timing.
v. Provide the requested reports at the specified time and respond to any requests for information about the Fellowship by the Project team.
vi. Provide a written acknowledgement of receipt of payments of the Fellowship funds.
vii. Repay any portion of the funds not used for the specified purposes.
viii. Refrain from using the funds for any purpose prohibited by law.
ix. Where relevant, and especially for the Civic Digital Fellowships, ensure compliance with any data protection and privacy regulations, and ensure users' personal data is protected.
x. Cooperate with any efforts of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Facility – Regional Actions Project to publicise the Fellowship award, including the signature of the consent letter, and adherence to the EU's guidance on visibility.
xi. Participate in the networking events organised by Eastern Partnership Civil Society Facility – Regional Actions Project.

The acceptance of conditions should be indicated in the response e-mail within 2 working days after receipt of the notification. At the contracting phase, the Selection Committee decides whether to accept the proposed amounts or rates on the basis of the provisional budget submitted by the applicants, by analysing factual data of similar actions. The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the Selection Committee to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. It is not possible to increase the amount of the Fellowship as a result of these corrections.

Applicants should note that, if successful, they will be contracted as an individual. Fellowship contracts cannot be signed with a legal entity.

The contracting authority for the Fellowships is the leader of the consortium implementing the EU-funded Eastern Partnership Civil Society Facility: GDSI Limited, located at Block 15, Galway Technology Park, Parkmore, Galway, H91 AY0Y, Ireland.

9.2 Reporting

The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Facility project team will guide and monitor the implementation of each Fellowship project. Timely submission of concise status reports (a template will be provided) is required, including monitoring data to show progress towards, or achievement of the Fellowship outputs. It is the responsibility of the Fellows to ensure that the project team is provided with photos, videos, publications, media articles, and any other items that can be used to promote the Fellowship and to evaluate its success.

After completion of the action, each Fellow must submit a final report to demonstrate the results of proposed actions.

In line with the contractual agreement, Fellows are required to provide reports and evidence of expenditure at the mid-point in their implementation and at the end of implementation.

9.3 Visibility

The Fellows must take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the European Union has financed the action. As far as possible, actions that are wholly funded by the European Union must incorporate information and communication activities designed to raise awareness of specific or general audiences of the reasons for the action and the EU support for the action in the country or region concerned, as well as the results and the impact of this support. Applicants must comply with the objectives and guarantee the visibility of the EU financing as specified in the Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU External Actions (https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/knowledge-hub/communicating-and-raising-eu-visibility-guidance-external-actions_en), as well as in any relevant country-specific communication and visibility guidelines (if applicable). On an exceptional basis, where the visibility requirements may negatively impact on safeguarding issues, derogation of the requirements may be requested.

Fellows will be provided with training on how to promote their Fellowships and how to comply with the EU's visibility requirements, and furthermore, will be required to acquire prior approval from the EaP CSF project team for use of any visibility materials. All Fellows will be required to update and finalise their communication plan within 10 days of signing their Fellowship Agreement.

9.4 Networking & the Fellowship Alumni

The alumni network was created with the first intake of Fellows.

The selected 2027 1st cohort of Fellows is expected to join the Alumni network of the Civil Society Fellowship Programme. It will give the 2027 Fellows an opportunity to:

- participate in regular networking meetings aimed at building communication channels between fellows from the six countries, exchanging experiences, ideas and exploring new opportunities together.
- participate in capacity building events, organised within the project and the Alumni network.
- promote their profile on the project website and information exchange on civil society activities within the EaP countries.
- share relevant information on new platforms for communication.
- be involved in the project mentoring facility (as a mentee and as a mentor).

The alumni are encouraged to participate in the activities of the project (for example, via contribution to publications, debates to which alumni are invited as speakers, elaboration of small common projects, info sessions and hackathons). The project team will facilitate activism and networking by maintaining the online alumni community.

10. Complaints

At any time during the process of applying for or implementing a Fellowship, applicants or Fellows may raise an issue of complaint. In the first instance, complaints should be made in writing and submitted by email to the relevant member of the EaP Civil Society Facility project team at fellowships@eapcivilsociety.eu with the subject title 'complaint'. A response to such emails will be made within 10 working days. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, they may submit their complaint in letter form to the Selection Committee, which will discuss the matter with the representatives of the European Union and respond accordingly.