

GUIDELINES FOR FELLOWSHIP APPLICANTS

2022 CALL FOR APPLICATIONS under the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Fellowship Programme

(These Guidelines were updated on 16th May 2022)

‘#StandWithUkraine Solidarity Fellowships’

NOTICE: This is an open call for fellowship applications. Applications for the 2022 Solidarity Fellowship programme are accepted via the online application system: <https://eapcivilsociety.eu/fellowship2022>

Submission of Application Forms can be made **at any time** in electronic format. **Application Forms will be assessed on a rolling basis.**

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

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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 Civil Society Facility has administered the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Fellowship programme since 2017, with 20 young civil society activists/leaders selected each year. The Fellowship programme was due to continue with a search for candidates for a 2022 cohort, but the war in Ukraine has forced a change. Despite the outbreak of the war, it was decided to continue with the Fellowship programme, albeit with a focus on actions addressing the impact of the war both in Ukraine and the neighbouring countries.

For 2022 the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Facility is launching a call for **‘Solidarity Fellowships’** to support civil society activists and civically minded women and men who demonstrate a deep commitment to leading a civil response to the war in Ukraine. These Fellowships replace the originally planned Community Engagement and Civic Digital Fellowships as part of the emergency support under the theme of **#StandWithUkraine**.

2. Objectives and Priorities of the Solidarity Fellowships

The main objective of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Solidarity Fellowships is to support civil society activists or civically minded women and men to take leadership actions in response to the war in Ukraine. The actions should be in line with following priority themes as endorsed by the European Commission DG NEAR:

- Emergency support and relocation / evacuation for Ukraine-based civil society activists and their families
- Support to Ukrainian CSOs and activists with fund-raising and mobilisation of international support
- Facilitating local communities respond to the needs of IDPs and refugees. This includes local communities outside Ukraine, in other Eastern Partnership countries.
- Support to CSOs (both Ukrainian CSOs and CSOs outside the country) to provide basic services in and for communities impacted by the war (such as contributing to the improvement of health services, education, other public services required by vulnerable groups, etc.)
- Human Rights violations and gathering evidence for future investigations
- Mitigating misinformation campaigns about the crisis and about refugees
- Supporting IDPs and refugees to access any relevant information including through civic tech solutions, etc
- Advocacy campaigns and actions related to conflict resolution/peace building/etc.

The Solidarity Fellowships will facilitate Fellows to use their expertise and leadership to implement activities in line with the above priorities.

Examples of Fellowship activities from previous years following different priorities can be found on the Fellows' profile pages: <https://eapcivilsociety.eu/fellowships/fellows-profiles-projects>.

3. Technical & Financial Support for Fellows

Successful Fellows will be able to obtain around 5,000 EUR in financial support for their Fellowship. In addition, the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Facility project team will support Fellows to benefit from suitable organisational/operational capacity development trainings/webinars and reach out for solidarity through the networking of the alumni of previous generations of Fellows.

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 are explained in detail below. Applicants should review these carefully before making an application.

4.1 Eligible Applicants

In order to be eligible for a fellowship the applicant must:

1. be a natural person;
2. be a national of one of the following Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine);
3. be above 18 years old;
4. not previously have benefited from the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Fellowship programme;
5. have a proven track record of: working (including by volunteering) either in a civil society organisation, including trade unions, cooperatives, or professional association, 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/or applying civic tech¹ solutions to community needs and accountability;
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 for the action proposed.

As proof of eligibility, an applicant to the Solidarity Fellowships should be able to provide a recommendation letter by a relevant and reputable civil society organisation or civic initiative group. The applicant does not need to be employed by that organisation.

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

¹ Civic technology, or civic tech, refers to public, social or private initiatives that contribute to enhance the citizens' power to act, facilitate public participation, increase the transparency of the public sector, and improve the delivery of services (usually by government) to the people. Source: <https://wesolve.app/exploring-civic-tech-and-gov-tech/>

4.2 Eligible Project Activities

Applicants will need to complete the simple Solidarity Fellowship Application Form. In this Form applicants will describe the concrete objective(s) of their Fellowship project and describe the beneficiaries of their project, in line with the priorities above. To achieve the objectives of their Fellowship, applicants will need to describe the activities they wish to implement and provide an estimate of the costs of the activities. It is expected that the activities would be implemented within 6 months, but if justified, implementation can be extended to a maximum period of 8 months. Actions must take place in the countries of the Eastern Partnership region and/or in the EU.

Examples of types of activities and costs which are eligible under the Solidarity Fellowships are listed below. This list is not exhaustive. (Applicants who wish to propose activities not covered below should contact fellowships@eapcivilsociety.eu for guidance):

1. Facilitating the provision of basic services for IDPs/refugees, and/or assisting authorities to assess and re-configure local service provision in light of the crisis
2. Providing advice and protection services for IDPs/refugees and asylum seekers
3. Advocating for and facilitating the fulfilment of rights of the most vulnerable communities in Ukraine or most vulnerable IDPs/refugees in countries neighbouring Ukraine
4. Promoting cooperation between CSOs and activists within the region (and/or within the region with organisations outside the region) on issues of common interest in support of Ukraine
5. Design and promotion of tools that support fund-raising efforts of Ukrainian CSOs and activists and mobilization of international support to their work
6. Providing IDPs/refugees with information about asylum procedures, visa processes, travel within and outside of Ukraine, including through civic tech solutions.
7. Collecting evidence of human rights violations and war crimes, including through civic tech solutions.
8. Promoting technological and other solutions for mitigating misinformation campaigns
9. Addressing hate crimes and misinformation about IDPs/refugees
10. Raising awareness and conducting advocacy for anti-war measures within the region
11. Assisting Ukrainian CSOs and activists to temporarily relocate and organise themselves in other countries of the region
12. Promoting constructive dialogue and bringing civil society and authorities together to develop common solutions, and to improve access to government channels for civil society;
13. Strengthening organisations' capacity to act effectively, including training of trainers in order to train other members of their organization, as well as members of other CSOs.

The above list is not exhaustive. Applicants who wish to propose activities not covered above should contact fellowships@eapcivilsociety.eu for guidance.

The following types of actions and activities are **ineligible**:

- actions concerned solely or mainly with construction, procurement of works or supplies;
- actions supporting political parties or candidates;
- actions supporting military or para-military beneficiaries (including Territorial Defence Units);

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- actions including proselytism (i.e. attempt of any religion or religious individuals to convert people to their beliefs).

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 requested financial support can cover:

- specific activities outlined in the application form submitted by the applicant;
- travel and accommodation expenses to/from or/and within the host country (if the project includes activities outside of the applicant's country of residence);
- communication and visibility costs (including distribution and promotion);
- service fees for hosting organisation and/or 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).

The following types of costs are **ineligible** for the inclusion into 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). Lethal and non-lethal weapons or any other military equipment can neither be purchased nor rented.

The rates and charges included into 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 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 justified in the application. The Selection Committee reserves its right to award a lower amount for the Fellowship, following the final revision of the proposed budget.

5. How to Apply for a Fellowship

Applicants for a Solidarity Fellowship are required to complete an Application Form (see details below) and may apply through several channels:

- Online at <https://eapcivilsociety.eu/fellowship2022>.
- If you are feeling at risk and would rather not use the online form, please contact our team at fellowships@eapcivilsociety.eu or eapcivilsociety@protonmail.com and we will suggest alternative channels for sending your application.

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- The applicant may **not** submit more than one Application Form for this Call (2022) for Solidarity Fellowship applications.

An Application Form must be completed in English and applicants must use the [online](#) template and make attachments/uploads of supporting documents as requested. The Application Form includes sections relating to:

- The **title** of your Fellowship Project
- Information about **where** the action will take place.
- Fellowship Project **Objective** – please provide a concise objective, with any relevant details of the target group (location, type, numbers) to benefit from the project
- **Activities** to achieve the Objective, with a list of the concrete **outputs** from the activities
- A description of **who will be involved** in the project (including details of any organisation in EU or EaP region who will be required to host the Fellow and/or activities; Organisations/people assisting the Fellow to implement the project; beneficiaries of the project; Other stakeholders important for the success of the Fellowship and related project.
- Details of any specific 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 existing personal capacities of the applicant will be judged from the accompanying CV and nomination letter.
- **When and for how long** the activities will take place, indicating the month (M) and duration for each activity.
- The plan of activities should include any relevant communication activities.
- The **budget** for the Fellowship Action, providing an overall total cost and a breakdown of the costs following [the budget template](#).
- A description of any **risks** that may impact on the implementation of the Fellowship and how the risks might be mitigated.

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

- Proof of citizenship
- A recommendation letter from one of the two references in your application
- Curriculum vitae
- Budget

Applications for a Solidarity Fellowship may be submitted, on a rolling basis, at any time. The Call for Applications will remain open until the Selection Committee has made awards that exhaust all the funds available for Fellowships in 2022. Information about the closure of the Solidarity Fellowships will be published in all the usual channels of the EaP CSF project.

Questions about the application process may be sent by e-mail to fellowships@eapcivilsociety.eu or eapcivilsociety@protonmail.com with 'Solidarity Questions' in the subject line. All received questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the procedure will be published at <http://eapcivilsociety.eu>. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website before asking new questions in order to be informed of the questions and answers already published.

6. Evaluation & Selection

All Applications will be evaluated against a set of basic criteria reflecting the eligibilities and priorities described in these Guidelines. An evaluation grid summarising these criteria can be seen below:

Eligibility		
Applicant: Status and Capacity	Proved by passport/id, CV, nomination letter	Yes/No
Proposed Action	In line with priorities and types of activities, and judgement of feasibility	Yes/No
Costs of Action	In line with eligibility criteria under 4.3	Yes/No
Leadership		
Extent to which the applicant demonstrated leadership skills in her / his previous work and activities		Score on scale of 1-5
The Project is likely to have a tangible impact on the applicant's leadership skills		Yes (1) / No (0)
Solidarity Relevance & Effectiveness		
Extent to which the action is addressing priority concerns and has achievable outputs		Score on scale of 1-5
Budget		
Action is properly budgeted and costs realistic		Score on scale of 1-3

All applications judged as being eligible and with a total score of at least 10 (out of possible total of 14) will be proposed for approval as a Fellow. Final approval is at the discretion of the European Union and maybe subject to change if the circumstances significantly change.

The Selection Committee intends to evaluate applications as quickly as possible, pending any clarification requirements.

7. Contracting & Implementation of the Fellowship

Successful Fellows will be required to finalize a simple contract, including an agreed work plan and budget.

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 priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU financing (see the Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU External Actions specified and published by the European Commission at https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/comm-visibility-requirements_en).

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Fellows will be provided with training on how to promote their Fellowships and how to comply with the EC's visibility requirements, and furthermore, will be required to acquire prior approval from the EaP CSF project team for use of any visibility materials.

8. Completing the Fellowship

On completing the Fellowships, Fellows will be required to complete basic narrative and financial reports.