



The European Law Students' Association

GRANT HANDBOOK

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT 2025/2026



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Foreword

Dear FM Officers,

With this updated edition of the Grants Handbook from 2019/2020, we have not only revised the content but also added new sections with concrete examples. These include guidance on describing project risks, structuring and justifying costs, applying cost estimation methods, and other practical elements that can significantly simplify and accelerate the preparation of grant applications.

Our aim was to make the Handbook clearer, more practical, while keeping it true to its original purpose as a reliable tool for all ELSA members seeking funding for their projects and initiatives.

This work was carried out across two terms. In 2024/2025, the foundation of the update was prepared together with the President of ELSA International – Nathalie Labar and Assistant for Grants - Laman Baghirova. In 2025/2026, the final revisions and additions were completed with the support of Assistants for Grants – Melissa Smovnik, Dominik Radowski and Konstantinos Mamas Sitaras.

We would also like to express our sincere appreciation to Sotiris Vergidis, Treasurer of ELSA International 2019/2020, whose original version of the Handbook laid the foundation for this update.

We truly hope this revised Handbook will prove useful to Treasurers and all ELSA Officers, helping to strengthen our projects, secure sustainable funding, and further our mission of creating a just world in which there is respect for human dignity and cultural diversity.



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Treasurer
International Board
2025/2026



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2024/2025 & 2025/2026

ELSA Grant's Handbook update for 2025/2026

1. What is a grant?

A grant can be a contribution, a gift or other non-repayable funds awarded by a governmental or a non-governmental organisation for specified purposes to an eligible recipient. Grants are usually conditional upon certain qualifications concerning the use of the grant. In order to receive a grant, the applicant usually needs to fulfil some specific requirements, and often there are certain application forms to fill in when applying.

1.1. What is a grant in general?

As stated in the previous section, grants are funds awarded to an eligible recipient for a specific purpose, and these granted funds are for the grantee to keep. When applying for a general grant, grant-seeking organisations should make sure that their general objectives or the objectives of their projects match, or nearly match, the objectives or the general structure of a grantor or a donor. Firstly, it should be researched whether the grant is eligible for the grant seeker's geographical region. This is one of the basic objectives of all grants, and the reason there is a list of regional grants further back in this handbook. Questions that should be asked to establish eligibility are:

- Does my group fit the regional requirements?
- Is it possible to apply as an NGO?
- Does the grantor's field of interest include the type of your activity or programme?
- Does the grantor or donor side require a specific application form or proposal?
- Finally, as a grant seeker, it is important to keep in mind that most of the grants have deadlines or application periods.

1.2. What is a grant within ELSA?

Within ELSA, grants have been divided into two categories: national grants and international grants.

National grant

A national grant is a grant for which only one National Group is eligible under the criteria set by

the organisation providing the grant.

International grant

An international grant is a grant for which one or more National Groups and/or ELSA International are eligible under the criteria set by the organisation providing the grant.

Only ELSA International is allowed to apply for an international grant. However, ELSA groups who wish to apply for an international grant may ask the Treasurer of ELSA International for permission to do so by submitting information about:

1. The international grant for which the National Group wishes to apply;
2. The deadline for the applications;
3. The purpose for which the international grant is to be used; and
4. The amount to be applied for.

Model answer:

“Dear Treasurer,

I am writing to request permission to apply for an international grant on behalf of [ELSA National Group]. Below, I have included all the necessary information regarding the grant application:

1. **Grant Name:** [Full name of the international grant and link to the grant's website or additional documentation];
2. **Application Deadline:** [Exact date and time including Time Zone];
3. **Purpose of the Grant:** [Brief description of the purpose, e.g., "To organise a training conference on legal drafting techniques, aiming to benefit law students and young lawyers from across the region"]; and
4. **Requested Amount:** [Exact amount in EUR or another currency with up-to-date exchange rate].

Please let me know if you require any additional details or supporting documents regarding the application.

Thank you for considering our request. I look forward to your response.“

2. General Information

According to experience within ELSA, finding information about grants is not always easy. After you decide that you need financial support, either in general or for your projects and activities, this Grant Handbook will include some sources and information on available grants. On the other hand, in our age, the Internet is making the research part simpler compared to a few years ago. However, when researching grant opportunities on the internet, you can come across some sites that require you to pay money to access the grant information. To avoid this, if you are looking for international grants, search on the sites of European Institutions like the European Commission or the Council of Europe. These institutions offer extensive funding opportunities for a range of purposes, including youth development, education, culture and international cooperation. If you are looking for a national grant, it can be useful to check the institutional website of your government. Most countries have dedicated portals for NGOs where grant opportunities are listed, e.g. grant programs by the Federal Ministry. Regional governments often provide funding tailored to smaller projects. These grants may include smaller funds but are more accessible. Such grants require less documentation and usually have a simpler reporting procedure, assuming the grant is awarded.

Many private organisations and companies offer grant programs to support specific causes, such as education, innovation or international cooperation. Examples include Open Society Foundations or chambers of commerce. Occasionally, universities and research centres often act as grant providers.

2.1. What to think about

One of the big strengths of ELSA is that we are a Network. If you are interested in applying for a grant, use this strength and the communication channels within the Network to exchange your ideas with other ELSA Groups that have applied for some International or National Grants. Some grants are eligible for several countries or regions. As a result, other ELSA Groups that have applied for that grant or similar grants before might be able to provide you with help or valuable information. Also, the organisations that give out grants often publish the NGOs that they have granted money to. By researching these NGOs, you can get a clearer picture of what the grant givers are looking for in organisations and maybe even contact these organisations to ask for help.

Many grant programs, especially those funded by the European Union, include an open call as part of the application process. Open calls are live sessions or webinars organised for individuals or organisations interested in applying for a particular grant. These sessions offer insight into the funding opportunity and often provide participants with information not included in the official documentation.

Open calls are a valuable opportunity to ask detailed questions about eligibility criteria and application requirements. This helps clarify ambiguities in the documentation and ensures your

National Group meets all necessary criteria to apply.

During open calls, participants can engage with other organisations applying for the same grant through the meeting's chat function. These interactions can foster partnerships and collaborations, which are often required in grant applications, especially those that demand proof of cooperation between organisations (e.g., international youth organisation alliances).

If the grant has had previous editions, open calls often feature presentations by NGOs that have successfully received funding in the past. These organisations share insights into their application experiences and offer guidance on how to structure a compelling proposal. If you have specific questions or concerns, many of the presenting organisations provide their contact details for follow-up questions.

Many EU grant providers also include guidance on:

1. Key elements evaluators look for in successful applications;
2. Scoring criteria and insight from the evaluation process; and
3. Common mistakes to avoid when preparing your application.

We strongly encourage you to check the websites of grant-providing institutions for announcements about upcoming open calls. Preparing a list of questions in advance, especially about eligibility, evaluation, and application procedures, can help you make the most of these sessions.

After attending an open call, it is good practice to share insights and notes from the session with others.

3. How to apply for a grant?

3.1. Basic Steps

When applying for grants, most of the well-organised institutions have specific application forms. As you see from our Regional Grants part, these application forms are available on their websites for grant-seekers. On the other hand, few of them give guidelines of what exactly they are looking for, and some of them are missing specific time periods for receiving applications. In this situation, you should send your application by e-mail to the grant givers.

Fortunately, some basic steps will help you in both these situations of application: things to keep in mind are:

1. You should explain who you are (your organisation) and what your vision is. Based on this, you can describe what you wish to accomplish with your application;
2. You should state your organisation's activities/objectives in a clear way;
3. You should show the grant givers that you have a significant need in your application;

4. In your proposal, you should prove that you have the ability and experience to accomplish your goal according to your application;
5. In the application form, make sure to complete all of the required attachments;
6. You should cover some important criteria: project purpose, why funds are needed and what will be achieved with this support;
7. Describe what differentiates you from other grant seekers in a 'selling' way;
8. You should explain what you aim for in your project and how many people will benefit from it;
9. Don't forget to give some examples of how your funding request complies with the grant maker's purpose, goals and objectives; and
10. Finally, make your conclusion strong, reliable, and convincing.

3.2. How to write a proposal

Today, most of the grant givers are using specific application forms for grants. However, there are still some organisations that do not provide the applicant with special application forms or other required attachments. If grant application forms are provided, it is very likely that they will differ a lot from one grant to another. Therefore, we would like to inform you about possible parts, which are required in several application forms.

1) *Organisation's Name*

This part shall contain your organisation's official name and legal seat (where your organisation is registered and/or operating).

2) *Project Summary*

In the project summary part, you should briefly describe your project, including the main objectives. In this part, you should add the beginning and end dates of your project, the number of participants, activities, location etc.

3) *Full Project Details*

In this part, you should outline the background, the context, and the issues of the project. Afterwards, you should state the overall aim, objectives and outcomes of your project.

In this part:

- The overall aim refers to the long-term programme and the impact of the project;
- The objectives of the project should be specific, measurable, and therefore capable of being evaluated. Project objectives should be limited in scope and time; and
- The outcomes refer to the changes and effects that happen as a result of the project activities. Afterwards, in this part, you should state who will benefit from your project and who the target audience is.

4) *Project Achievements*

In this part, you should clarify the expected achievements of your project. Also, you should state what indicators you will use to assess the achievement of your objectives.

5) *Risks and Managing Risks*

Here, you should clarify what the main risks are and how you will deal with these risks.

6) *Strategic Fitting with Grantmaker*

In this part, it is important to explain in which ways your organisation is strategically or structurally fitting.

7) *Budget/Funding Requirements*

In this part, you should have a realistic budget with a detailed explanation of the funding request, committed matching funds, evidence of sound fiscal management, and a long-term funding plan.

8) *Details of Your Organisation's Background*

Shortly describe the background of your organisation, focusing on achievements that are relevant to the grant.

9) *Conclusion*

Conclude by writing a brief and concise summary of your proposal.

10) *Appendices*

It is possible that the grant giver will require some additional attachments, like organisational and financial documents. Finally, and hopefully, it is possible that the grant giver will ask for additional information or ask you to rewrite parts of your application to make it more suitable to their own objectives.

3.3. Presenting the project

When presenting the project or your Organisation in the application, there are some key points that are important to keep in mind. Define the project according to the grant criteria and remember the audience for your grant proposal. Always keep in mind that it should be written clearly, by giving specific examples, following the guideline instructions, and do not repeat yourself. It is especially important to try to write in a clear, jargon-free style and to answer all the questions that are posed in the criteria.

For many writers of grant proposals, the budget component can be very intimidating. However, knowing some basic principles of writing grants, such as how costs are presented, can make

writing a grant less stressful. Organise your budget so it is easy to read and understand. Present your grant proposal budget in a way that makes a very good impression on the reviewer:

1. Print it on a new page;
2. Align figures properly;
3. Double-check your figures; and
4. Include column headings, such as: budget category, requested funds, contributions, and project total.

3.4. Risks and managing risks

When applying for grants, it is not only important to present a realistic project but also to provide a solid framework for identifying, assessing and mitigating risks. Grant evaluators will want to see that you have carefully thought through potential obstacles, showcasing that you have strategies in place to address them effectively. Below is an illustrative approach on how to structure and present a risk management plan, accompanied by a table that outlines key elements of typical risks that NGOs often encounter, helping to illustrate both the challenges and the measures that can ensure successful projects.

Much like the budget section, clarity, detail, and justification are crucial. Demonstrating forethought in risk assessment shows that your project is both feasible and adaptable to changing circumstances. Use clear language and make sure the risks are directly relevant to your project's scope, timeline, and objectives.

All project proposals should therefore contain at least a basic overview of the most significant risks and how you should plan to deal with them. This level of detail ensures that funders gain confidence in your ability to anticipate hurdles, use resources wisely, and ultimately achieve the desired impact of your project.

Below is an illustrative example of how a detailed risk assessment might look:

Number of the risk	Risk name	Risk type	Risk description	Risk prevention/mitigation
I.	Change in Legal Regulations	Administrative	- Nature of the Risk: New policies or legislation may alter the scope of activities (e.g., updated license requirements, NGO laws) - Likelihood: Low - Project Phase: all phases of the project - Impact: Possible budget or timeline adjustments to meet new requirements.	- Minimising the Risk: Monitor regulatory developments, maintain regular legal consultations - Mitigation Plan: Keep a financial and time reserve to adapt the project design if regulations change.
II.	Insufficient Funding or Cash Flow Issues	Financial	- Nature of the Risk: Delayed grant disbursements or sponsor contributions lead to budget shortfalls. - Likelihood: Moderate - Project Phase: all phases of the project - Impact: Potential reduction in project scope or delays in scheduled activities.	- Minimising the Risk: Diversify funding streams, schedule payouts aligned with the project's cash flow, and implement real-time expense tracking. - Mitigation Plan: Maintain a financial safety margin.
III.	Misalignment with Target Audience Needs	Strategic	- Nature of the Risk: The project fails to meet the needs of the intended beneficiaries (e.g., unappealing workshop format, communication barriers). - Likelihood: Moderate - Project Phase: Primarily the planning and implementation stages.	- Minimising the Risk: Conduct surveys or interviews with the target group beforehand, run pilot activities, and engage community representatives. - Mitigation Plan: Be prepared to modify or pivot activities if initial feedback indicates limited relevance or interest.

			- Impact: Lower participant engagement, reduced effectiveness, and funding continuity challenges.	
IV.	Communication Barriers in International Collaboration	Strategic	- Nature of the Risk: As a European law students' association, ELSA projects often involve multiple Local groups across different countries. Miscommunication or cultural misunderstandings may arise, hindering smooth coordination and consistent messaging. - Likelihood: Moderate - Project Phase: Mostly during the planning and implementation phases that require cross-border cooperation. - Impact: Delays in decision-making and scheduling	- Minimising the Risk: Establish clear communication protocols (e.g., periodic virtual meetings, shared project management tools), promote intercultural awareness training, and provide standardised guidelines for project tasks. - Mitigation Plan: Assign experienced coordinators to monitor local group activities, clarify timelines, and handle language or other issues promptly.
V.	Loss of Experienced Members engaged in the project	Operational	- Nature of the Risk: The departure of experienced members could result in a knowledge gap, diminished leadership, and slower project execution. - Likelihood: very low - Project Phase: Can occur at any stage—especially when workloads intensify. - Impact: Delays in project deliverables, potential decrease in quality	- Minimising the Risk: Create clear succession plans and maintain updated documentation of roles and responsibilities (e.g., manuals or handover notes). Develop strong leadership pipelines by training multiple members rather than relying on a single point person. - Mitigation Plan: Offer recognition, skill-building opportunities, and flexible involvement options for volunteers; schedule regular check-ins to gauge commitment levels and address burnout or competing priorities proactively.

3.5. Target Group

When applying for grants, describing the target group is crucial for demonstrating impact and relevance. Below you will find the key elements to include, followed by a template and example.

When writing this part of your application, make sure to cover the following elements:

1. **Age group and profile:** Specify the age range (e.g. *18-26 years old*) and relevant characteristics (students, young professionals, activists, etc.);
2. **Reason for selection:** Explain why this group is important for your project (e.g. *a key stage in civic development, most exposed to disinformation, high potential for multiplier effect*);
3. **Needs and barriers:** Identify the main problems and needs of the group (e.g. *lack of knowledge about EU institutions, low sense of influence on decision-making, structural barriers such as travel costs or time constraints*);
4. **How the project responds:** Show how your project addresses these needs (e.g. *free and open events, flexible scheduling, online dissemination*);
5. **Recruitment method:** Describe how participants will be selected (e.g. *open online form, social media promotion, clear criteria for active participants*);
6. **Scale and outreach:** Indicate the expected number of participants (active and passive), as well as the geographical reach (local, national, or international); and
7. **Transparency and impartiality:** Mention if there are limitations for organisers to avoid conflict of interest (e.g. *board members may only participate passively*).

Below you can find a template and an illustrative example.

Template:

“The project will be directed towards (age group, e.g. 18–26 years old), selected because (reason for selection).

The main problems and needs of this group are (list needs/barriers).

The project responds by offering solutions.

The expected participation is [number of participants and type of involvement], reaching (geographical scope).”

Example:

The project will be directed towards young people aged 18-26 from the City **Arakeen on Planet Arrakis**, a group at a crucial stage of civic development.

This group has been selected by ELSA Arraken because of its crucial stage in personal, civic, and professional development. Research in developmental psychology (Emerging Adulthood: A Theory of Development From the Late Teens Through the Twenties, Jeffrey Jensen Arnett,

2000) shows that late adolescence and early adulthood are a period of identity formation, value building, and the first civic decisions, such as voting, joining student organisations, and engaging in public debate.

At this stage, individuals are especially receptive to civic education and practical examples of how democratic institutions work.

In addition, this group is particularly exposed to online misinformation. For instance, Eurostat's Statistics Explained (ISSN 2443-8219) reports that in 2024 an average of 97% of young people aged 16–29 in the EU used the internet daily, with all EU countries ranging from 93% to 100%. This high level of daily use increases vulnerability to manipulation. By addressing this group, the project also ensures a multiplier effect – participants share newly acquired knowledge and skills with their peers, families, and academic communities.

The main needs and challenges of the target group include:

1. **Barrier 1:** lack of knowledge about EU institutions and law;
2. **Barrier 2:** limited awareness of participation tools;
3. **Barrier 3:** low confidence in influencing decision-making processes; and
4. **Barrier 4:** structural barriers such as travel costs, academic workload, or lack of experience in public speaking.

The project responds to these needs by offering free and open events, accessible online materials, and flexible scheduling adapted to students' lives.

In total, the project will involve approximately 500 people (active participants, audience, and online recipients). The geographical scope includes **Arakeen on Planet Arrakis**, with outreach to a wider audience across the **Canopus Star System** through online dissemination and promotional activities.

To ensure impartiality and transparency, members of ELSA Arrakeen will not be eligible for active participation in the project, but may attend as passive participants.

3.6. Budget

All grant applications require a budget. A form might be given for the budget, or you will have to structure it more or less freely. Be very careful in calculating your costs; always use the currency required in the guidelines (usually Euro). Before you begin forming your budget, it is important to realise that in order to be successful, you have to provide as much detailed information as possible. Ultimately, your final numbers must demonstrate the sources of all incoming funds and how they will be allocated.

The budget for the grant's application should be realistic, yet you may include more expenses and income than you initially expect. The budget may be the key to your proposal, and therefore, one

should carefully think through exactly what will be needed from the funding agency to carry out the project and establish your budget around this amount.

In the first part of the budget, state the **expenses**; in the second part, the **income**. Calculate all costs (including costs which cannot be reimbursed by the foundation and which will be paid by you from other resources) and also the expected contribution of the foundation (only for the items which can be reimbursed by the foundation). As an income, specify the expected contribution from the foundation, your own contribution, and other donors to your project. The contributions of other donors may be fully confirmed or fully expected, or partly confirmed and partly expected. The foundations might require you to specify which costs will be covered by which income. Foundations may have a list of prohibited items which cannot be financed from the resources of the foundation, so be prepared to show in your budget that the cost of these items will be covered by other sources.

However, the most basic rule of them all is that in a budget, the total amount of contributions for the project (income) and the expected total amount of costs (expenses) – both totals have to be identical (the spent amount cannot be higher than the volume of income). **Financially speaking, the budget needs to be balanced.**

In the budget section of a grant application, it is essential that planned expenses are clearly linked to the nature of the project and based on realistic estimates. In some cases, the funding institution may ask you to explain each planned cost: why it was chosen, how it will support the project, and on what basis you calculated the amount. To prepare stronger justifications, it is helpful to review the market for each expense, for example, by checking price lists on websites or comparing offers and stating whether your estimate is based on the highest, average, or lowest price found.

To make budget preparation easier, a template has been provided. It is designed to help you enforce all the good practices described above. After entering basic information and listing your planned costs and revenues, the template will guide you in building the financial section of your application more effectively. It also contains a separate tab where you can explain in detail the justification for each cost, as well as the method you used to calculate it.

You can find the template [here](#).

3.7. Answer

After submitting the application there will be a period in which you will have to wait for the answer from the foundation. There are, of course, two types of situations: one in which the application is accepted and the grant is received, and the other when it is rejected, and no funding will be given.

Positive response

In the former situation, one can start allocating the amount of money received within the time limit and financial conditions as agreed upon with the foundation and in accordance with the proposal. What is important in this part is that the mode of payment changes from one grantor to another. Some will give you all the money in advance, while others will give you half of the money in advance and the rest after the project is finished, or one can even receive all the money after the project is concluded.

In every case, at the end of the project, a final report and account of the event must be submitted. Thus, one will have to justify every single invoice and support it with the receipts of the expenditures. Therefore, it is important for you to keep your accounts updated during the development of the project itself and to save all receipts, invoices, and other forms of financial proof.

Negative response

In the latter situation, when the application form is rejected, one should bear in mind the fact that for every grant given, there are many others rejected. That is why, even though bad news is received, the good news is that you can try again, either with another type of proposal or by resubmitting the failed proposal when the opportunity presents itself again. However, one should always write to the foundation asking if they can give feedback about the application. In that way, the organisation offering the grant will explain the reasoning behind the rejection. That will give you the chance to improve your skills and correct your mistakes, so that next time there will be better results.

3.8. Reporting

Often, grant givers want the grant recipient to report how the granted funds were put to use. Therefore, an important part of the grant process is the reporting of the grant. The requirements for the reporting vary from grant to grant, so take the time to read through the specifics regarding the reporting as soon as a grant application has been accepted.

Two important reasons to report the grant properly can be:

1. To get all the granted funds, often only part of the granted money is paid out before the reporting and the remaining sum is only paid after proper reporting; and
2. To keep the granted funds, if the grant is not reported properly, all the granted money has to be paid back.

Even though the requirements vary from grant to grant, things that might be necessary for the reporting can be:

1. Receipts, or copies of them;
2. List of participants for events;
3. Potential press cuts of events;
4. A daily programme of events/workshops;
5. Evaluation forms of participants/organisers;
6. A detailed report of the event;
7. Preparatory documents; and
8. Planned follow-up.

4. ELSA Development Foundation

4.1. What is the EDF

The ELSA Development Foundation, more commonly known as the EDF, is a foundation that financially supports measures and activities within ELSA.

ELSA Groups, both local and national, can apply for financial support for certain events and activities.

For detailed rules, eligibility criteria, and the application procedure, please refer to the separate EDF Guidelines, available [here](#):

5. European Youth Foundation (EYF)

5.1. Introduction

The European Youth Foundation (EYF) is a fund established in 1972 by the Council of Europe to provide financial and educational support for European youth activities. Only youth NGOs from Council of Europe member states (467), as well as the European Cultural Convention Signatories: Belarus, Kazakhstan, and the Holy See, can apply to the Foundation.

The three pillars of the Council of Europe are:

1. Human Rights;
2. Democracy; and
3. The Rule of Law.

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe is in charge of the EYF.

Within the Council of Europe, there are sub-bodies: Committee of Ministers, Parliamentary Assembly (PACE), European Court of Human Rights, and Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. The Youth Sector contributes to these bodies by bringing together the voice of young people, including them in the policy-making of the Council of Europe and making them participate in the work of the Council of Europe. The Youth sector is a department of the secretariat. Within the Youth sector, there is the Advisory Council of Youth (CCJ), which brings together young people who are elected from youth NGOs and networks in Europe. Apart from the Advisory Board, there is an intergovernmental Committee which has representatives from the ministries responsible for youth and education. These two committees are responsible for deciding the youth policy of the Council of Europe and youth priorities. Once the policies have been taken by these committees, they are implemented. The EYF provides financial and educational support for various youth activities. The EYF has an annual budget of approximately €3.7 million provided by the obligatory contributions from each member state. Most of this

(roughly €3 million) is distributed to youth NGOs each year to finance their projects. For example, in 2018 the EYF approved 120 grants (totalling €2.2 million); by 2023 this had grown to 127 grants, totalling €3.47 million in funding *rm.coe.int*. The EYF finances international and regional networks of youth NGOs as well as international, national and local youth NGOs and their projects, which must support the established youth sector priorities.

5.2. Priorities of the European Youth Sector

The thematic priorities of the Council of Europe youth sector until 2030 are described in Strategy 2030, with strategic priorities for the period 2024-2027 focusing on:

1. Revitalising pluralistic democracy;
2. Young people's access to rights;
3. Living together in peaceful and inclusive societies; and
4. Youth work.

It is necessary to include the following EYF focal points to strengthen a grant application.

1. Human Rights;
2. Education;
3. Discrimination; and
4. Gender Equality.

5.3. Event Format

Non-formal education

The EYF does not support formal education projects. I.e. University lectures taught by professors, but rather non-formal education, a teaching format in which participants become active learners by direct participation, providing them with opportunities to acquire useful skills for social inclusion, personal growth, and democratic engagement. Non-formal education (NFE) refers to planned, structured programmes and processes of personal and social education for young people designed to improve a range of skills and competences, outside the formal educational curriculum.

Characteristics of a non-formal approach:

1. Planned learning process with educational objectives;
2. Activities based on the needs of learners;
3. Voluntary participation (non-compulsory activities);
4. Inclusivity and accessibility;
5. Varied, participatory and learner-centred methodologies;
6. Learning of life skills and preparations for active citizenship;
7. Holistic approach; and

8. Activities may be run by professional educators/trainers and/or volunteers.

Non-formal education is based on active participation, with the central part of the learning process being self-reflection. Therefore, exercises are of an experimental nature and always interactive.

More on non-formal education [here](#).

5.4. Structural criteria of organisations supported by the EYF

To be eligible for EYF support, an organisation must meet these structural criteria:

1. Being a non-profit-making and non-governmental organisation;
2. Having a statute and legal personality as an organisation;
3. Running activities for young people (15-30 years old);
4. Young people make the decisions on the programme of activities of the NGO;
5. Members of the organisation are aged between 15 and 30 years old;
6. The work of the organisation is in line with the values and priorities of the Council of Europe; and
7. The NGO has to be based in one of the signatories to the European Cultural Convention (all CoE member states and Belarus, Holy Sea and Kazakhstan).

In the ELSA network, only **ELSA International** is seen as an international youth NGO, which means that only ELSA International can apply for grants for international activities, work plans and the structural grant.

A **National Group** could apply for an international activity with partners and a pilot activity, with the approval of ELSA International.

A **Local Group** would, with the approval of ELSA International, only be eligible to apply for a pilot activity.

5.5. The three types of funded activities:

Below you can see the different types of activities that EYF supports and will be explained shortly:

Pilot activity

1. Max. 15.000,00 EUR per activity;
2. Flexible in format;
3. The duration of a project can be up to one year. However, one must apply 3 months before the activity starts (Local & National NGOs). Ergo, the project must start at least 3 months after the application has been submitted. There are 3 application cycles;
4. The activity does not require co-funding;
5. The NGOs have to be registered as a local NGO; and
6. The registration should be 2 weeks prior to the application.

International activity

1. 25.000,00 EUR per activity;
2. Must fall under the priorities of the youth sector of the Council of Europe;
3. The participants should represent 7 different countries of the Council of Europe member-states;
4. The core project team must consist of people of at least 4 nationalities;
5. Gender and geographical balance are taken into consideration;
6. 75% of the participants should be under 30;
7. No fixed duration, however, EYF considers 4 working days as the minimal duration to ensure a suitable educational and intercultural process; and
8. The international activity must take place in the year for which the organisation applied for.
 - The grant covers only 2/3rd of the total amount. NGOs need to find additional resources to cover the remaining 1/3rd (can be co-funded by Erasmus+, which is often solicited for this purpose);
 - There are two application periods per year: One in April and one in October.

Note: To be considered an International NGO, an organisation must have at least 7 branches in 7 different member-states.

Annual work plan

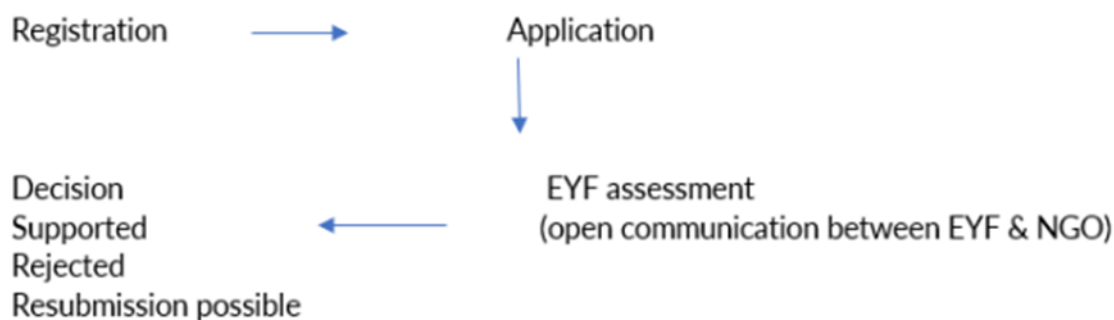
1. Max. 60.000,00 EUR;
2. Co-funding is needed for international activities (EYF covers only 2/3rd of the total cost of all international activities calculated together);
 - A project that includes a set of successive activities that are interconnected and contribute to the same broader aim, over a period of one year;

3. There are two application periods per year: one in April and one in October;
4. Material production and/or preparatory meetings should be included in the activities they are contributing to;
5. Cannot be a set of small activities or material production only;
6. Needs to have an “European dimension”, which means it should contain international activities;
7. It must have at least one International activity (should be aligned with the criteria of the International activities);
8. The knowledge and the skills should be shared from the previous event to the next with a logical sequence. The sequence can be retained with the content or the same participants who are involved, or leading to a common result;
9. The applicant should identify the aim, what the challenge will be, and that has a youth dimension;
10. Linked to the youth sector priorities;
11. Identify one clear focus – aim and be specific with it, no matter that there will be different projects;
12. In the work plan, a statutory meeting cannot be included as a separate activity (these are covered by the structural grant); and
13. Some of the people should be interlinked to the whole process, so you can build up knowledge and experience. The participants of the first activity can become trainers for the next activity.

Structural grant

1. Max. 30.000,00 EUR per year (max. 60.000,00 EUR for 2 years);
2. Meant for the general administrative costs of an NGO;
3. Certain costs are not included and cannot be reimbursed;
4. Only international youth NGOs and international networks of youth NGOs that received support for a minimum of 3 international activities during the 3 previous years, that have a European structure and have received grants from the EYF in 2 out of 3 previous years, are eligible;
5. Available every 2 years (deadline 1st of October) and granted for 2 consecutive years;
6. Subjected to specific eligibility and allocation criteria; and
7. Based on the strategic long-term programme of the NGO.

5.6. Application procedure



Assessment process

Each application goes through a three-step assessment process.

Applications are assessed by the EYF secretariat according to their merits in relation to the grant characteristics.

The secretariat may ask the applicant NGO for clarifications on the application, and in this case, specific fields of the online application will be reopened for the NGO to modify them.

The decision of the EYF grants is in the end taken by the Programming Committee on Youth (PC), which consists of 8 government representatives and 8 non-governmental youth organisations.

Notes on the application:

- The EYF sometimes takes the opportunity to visit projects,
- Online publications that can help during the drafting of the application
- The visual identity of EYF (including its logo) should be on the working materials during the activity. The EYF will check the social media materials relating to the activity,
- The project should have a strong link with the priorities of the Youth Sector.

The application has to be clear that there is a logical learning process throughout the whole project.

You can apply to study sessions on non-formal education that are regularly organised within the youth department. Those sessions are organised to teach how you can approach a non-formal education project. A manual for non-formal education is available on the EYF website.

5.7. Grant phases

1. Preparation;
2. Implementation; and
3. Follow-up.

The following is the application information that should be provided, and the questions that we have to ask ourselves when we are applying:

1. What for?
 - Aim; and
 - Objectives (3 specific objectives).
2. Who?
 - Participants (for international activities, 7 different nationalities);
 - Teams (for international activities: 4 different nationalities); and
 - Partners (for international activities: 3 different partners);
3. Impact?
 - Outcome: What the participants will learn in terms of knowledge, skills (i.e. the participants were able to prepare a broadcast after the event), and how the participants' attitudes change after the event;
 - Output: What kind of materials are being produced? (If there is any concrete output produced during the implementation of the activity, this output will help to have a bigger and stronger impact, as it can be used for future activities, or it can have a multiplier effect, very important for the EYF);
 - Follow-up: the phase following the implementation (The project should have three phases:
 - the preparation;
 - the implementation; and
 - the follow-up phase.

Note: the follow-up question is “What is next?” The involvement of participants does not stop right after the training. Follow up actions that are implemented by the participants after the main activity are considered (i.e. Campaign, conferences organised by the participants in their local communities, published materials etc.).

When the selection process takes place, you can establish a commitment for the participants to have a follow-up action and select the participants who are motivated to implement the follow-up result. It is a plus for the evaluation to have published the follow-up activity of a previous activity that was supported.

It is possible to distribute money to the participants to achieve the follow-up result, such expenses are to be included in the follow-up costs.

During the reporting time, all the proof of payments shall be provided by you and the participants. It is recommended to distribute money for the follow-up to increase the involvement of participants.

4. How?

- The method (What kind of methodology, if there is implementation of nonformal education);
- Programmes (methodology, learning outcomes and objectives should always be kept in mind); and
- Timeline.

5.8. Finances

Budget expenditure should be clear and detailed. It is split into 3 columns: Preparation costs, Implementation costs, and Follow-up costs.

Expenses covered by the grant:

1. Transfer of the trainers (for trainers, they encourage CoE's youth pool experts, trainers that can be found on the website and are trained by the CoE, who participate in trainings organised by the Council of Europe, and they can offer advice for a fee);
2. Venue costs;
3. Office supplies;
4. Translations;
5. Administrative costs (office rent, heating, electricity, and water, but only up to 7% of the awarded grant);
6. Equipment rental fees;
7. Visas; and
8. Travel/accommodation for the participants.

Income

1. Co-founding (partnerships, public or private donors, NGO's own contributions)
2. Participation fee or contribution to specific costs, eg. travel (not recommended because it can be restricting or burdening for participants)

5.9. Communication with the EYF

If you change the dates or the venue of the project after issuing the application, the EYF must be informed. In case of visa-related problems in the Schengen area, the organisation can ask for a recommendation letter from the EYF. The EYF can provide a letter stating that the project is supported by the Council of Europe.

5.10. Location

There are two European Youth Centres (EYC), one in Strasbourg and one in Budapest, both as permanent structures for the implementation of the Council of Europe's youth policy. They are international training and meeting centres with residential facilities that host most of the youth sector's activities.

The professional team of EYCs includes an advisory team giving educational and technical assistance in preparing, running and following up activities.

In the case of an event taking place in a youth centre, it must be mentioned in the application. As with any location, the location of the accommodation can change after submitting the application since it is a forecast.

5.11. Reporting

The EYF is publicly funded. The supported NGO is therefore accountable to the EYF.

Reporting on an international or pilot activity

NGO is expected to:

1. Fill in the online activity report; and
2. Send the financial report and all related documents by email.

Reporting on an annual work plan

The reporting for the work plan is split into two parts:

1. INTERIM REPORT
 - The deadline is indicated in the signed contract;
 - It is meant to evaluate how the first part of the work plan went;
 - Explain:
 - Which objectives were reached?
 - How were they reached? Were there any changes/unforeseen events in the progress or organisation of the activity?
 - If some objectives were not reached, explain why.
 - Are there any modifications to be made to future activities?

- Regarding finances, the NGO only needs to indicate:
 - If the cost of an activity has changed;
 - If an activity has been cancelled;
 - Provide an updated/final programme of activities implemented and a signed list of participants;
 - Real total cost (you are not expected to provide a full financial report for each activity yet);

2. Final report

- Two months after the end of the last activity listed in the Working plan;
- Detailed financial report of all the activities, including those reported on in the interim report;
- Feedback about the content of the work plan that should include:
 - An overall reflection and evaluation of the work plan as a whole;
 - A report explaining how the second part of the activities went.

Reporting on a two-year structural grant

At the end of the first year, an activity report is requested together with estimated figures for the budget.

At the end of the second year, a more detailed report is required, as well as certified/audited accounts for both years, signed by the legal representative and validated by external auditors.

The final report must be sent to the EYF within six months following the end of the two-year period.

6. Annexes

The following annex can be a handful for applying for any grant:

- Annex I - Budget Template [here](#).