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**Eurasia Program**

**Project Application Guidelines**

**About the Open Society Foundations**

The Open Society Foundations work to build vibrant and tolerant democracies whose governments are accountable to their citizens. Open societies are characterized by the rule of law; respect for human rights, minorities, and diversity of opinions; democratically elected governments; market economies in which business and government are separate; and a civil society that helps keep government power in check. To achieve its mission, the Open Society Foundations seeks to shape public policies that assure greater fairness in political, legal, and economic systems and safeguard fundamental rights. On a local level, the Open Society Foundations implement a range of initiatives to advance justice, education, public health, and independent media. At the same time, the Open Society Foundations build alliances across borders and continents on issues such as corruption and freedom of information. The Open Society Foundations place high priority on protecting and improving the lives of marginalized people and communities.

**About the Eurasia Program**

The Eurasia Program (EP) works to deepen civil society, uphold human rights, and maintain space for independent debate and discussion in Eastern Europe (Moldova, Ukraine), Russia, the South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia) and Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan). The program is advanced through grant making, advocacy and research, regional initiatives, and close engagement with OSF’s National Foundations. The program believes that a vital civil society is fundamental to the promotion of democratic governance and government accountability.

Working in conjunction with other parts of the OSF network, the Eurasia Program conducts targeted grant-making and advocacy in countries with no established national foundations (Russia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan). The EP also engages in collaborative and cooperative grant-making and advocacy with OSF’s foundations in Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan. Throughout the region, the program works with a wide range of partners from all sectors of civil society, with a particular focus on the following:

• Promoting human rights

• Combatting corruption

• Strengthening independent, alternative, and social media

• Securing access to justice for marginalized groups

• Creating and maintaining platforms for debate and civic engagement

• Integrating local actors into the global exchange of ideas

**Lobbying Restrictions**

The Open Society Foundations are prohibited from funding any electioneering, including the support for or, opposition to, political candidates or parties, and from the earmarking of grant funds for lobbying activities in any country. Lobbying is defined as an attempt to influence federal, state, local legislative bodies, or the outcome of referenda and ballot initiatives. This proscription includes attempts to influence treaty ratification by legislative bodies. The prohibition against lobbying includes, but may not necessarily be limited to, communications with legislators or legislative staff that express a view on pending legislation or specific legislative proposals, and communications with the general public reflecting a view on specific legislation or a specific legislative proposal where such communication includes a “call to take action” by the public. If you have concerns about lobbying restrictions, please contact OSF staff.

**Project Application**

To apply for Eurasia Program funding, you should complete the Eurasia Program Project Application (cover letter and main application) and Budget Template and submit it through the [Open Society Foundations’ Portal](https://www.foundationconnect.org/GrantsManager/pages/V3/Portal/Login/Login.aspx?OrgID=00Dd0000000c6ik&ReturnUrl=~%2fPages%2fV3%2fPortal%2fGrantApplication.aspx%3fIsDirect%3dtrue%26RequestRT%3d012d0000000SPIY%26CampaignID%3d701d0000000V8PF) Foundation Connect (Ctrl + click to follow link). If this is your first time accessing Foundation Connect, and you did not previously have an account with our former online system, Grant Tracker, you will need to click the “Register” link to set up an account.

Once registered, you may submit an application by completing the required online fields and uploading the Eurasia Program Project Application and Budget as attachments. You will also need to upload the following supporting documents as attachments: 1) annual current budget of your organization, 2) list of all grants received over the last five years, including grant dates, amount and purpose, 3) list of pending grants, including proposed dates, amount and purpose, 4) CVs for all project personnel (include all in one document), 5) f*or U.S. applicants:* a copy of your most recent IRS tax determination letter confirming the organization's section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status and *for* *Non-U.S. applicants:* official documentation of your tax status, which may include, but is not limited to, proof of tax exemption or registration as a humanitarian aid, charitable or research organization, and 5) annual report (if available).

The ‘main application’ should not exceed 20 pages in length and should not contain photographs or graphic elements. The budget and all cost estimates must be in US Dollars. Application attachments are accepted in Russian or in English. At this time, the Foundation Connect fields must be completed in English. Refer to the Applicant Portal instructions provided for assistance with using Foundation Connect.

**Timeline**

OSF strives to be a flexible donor organization; however, its internal procedures must be satisfied before project funding can be approved and processed. Each project application undergoes extensive review. The review process usually involves communication between the program and the prospective grantee to clarify and refine the project proposal over a period of several months. When submitting your project proposal, anticipate a start date 4-6 months from the date of submission. At the minimum, processing a finalized grant requires one month. Processing delays may occur if information provided is incomplete or inaccurate. Do not plan to begin your project until you have received notice from OSF that your grant has been approved.

**The Office of Grants Management**

Once project support has been approved and processed, the receiving organization will receive an email from the grants officer containing the agreement letter. If your organization is based in the United States, the agreement letter will arrive via mail. Please review the agreement letter thoroughly. If it is satisfactory, please return a signed copy of the letter to the Office of Grants Management. Receipt of the countersigned grant letter allows OSF to disburse the payment. Funds are disbursed via wire transfer or check and require on average 1-2 weeks to reach the grantee once disbursement is approved.

**Payment**

Project payments to U.S. organizations will be paid via check, unless the project payment is over $25,000 and a wire transfer is requested. Payments to organizations outside of the U.S. will be sent via wire transfer. Note that organizations with existing OSF projects with overdue reports will not receive additional funds until the reports are submitted.