

# NEW COOPERATION MECHANISM

GUIDELINES – March 2023

## HOW TO APPLY

Before applying to the New Democracy Fund, New Cooperation Mechanism (NC), please read the following guidelines.

The application form can be downloaded on [www.newdemocracyfund.org/we-support](http://www.newdemocracyfund.org/we-support) and is to be submitted to [NCM@newdemocracyfund.org](mailto:NCM@newdemocracyfund.org) in English. The [application form \(up to 150k\)](#) // [application form \(150K+\)](#) provides guiding questions regarding the details to be included in the application and is to be submitted with an [Activity-based budget](#) and a [work plan](#). Templates can be found on the website.

All applicants can receive technical advice in English in the writing process by contacting the administration by e-mail. Once the application is complete it should be sent to the NC e-mail address.

If the project is supported, the administration will, where relevant, make a capacity assessment of the grantee organisation including but not limited to registration, division of duties, accounting system, annual reporting, etc.

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the New Cooperation Mechanism (NC) is that civil society actors in Denmark and the Eastern Neighbourhood countries (ENC) – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine – are engaging in sustainable, long-lasting cooperation and effectively collaborate to promote democratic dialogue, hold duty-bearers to account, and ensure that the voice of the rights holders is heard.

Danish civil society actors are invited to engage with the New Democracy Fund to get support to develop sustainable new or existing cooperation and exchange with partners in the ENC.

The NC goes beyond traditional development assistance and will favour strong, innovative, or courageous partnerships that are willing to take risks. These partnerships should work within the five thematic areas: youth, media, culture, labour market and just and green transition. These areas are enforced by a cross-cutting emphasis on gender, inclusion, and human rights.

## REQUIREMENTS

### Eligible applicants

Civil society actors registered in Denmark. Partners from Denmark and the ENC must submit a joint application. The Danish partner will be the lead applicant and must live up to all the requirements for administrative and legal obligations set by the fund. Civil society actors are broadly defined as democratically organised CSOs, social movements, media, academia, trade unions as well as community-based groups and organisations, including cultural, educational, and knowledge institutions.

Consortium member organisations of the New Democracy Fund cannot apply to or be a partner in a project that receives the support of the NC. Other civil society actors affiliated with Consortium member organisations of the New Democracy Fund - ex. as membership organisations - can apply on the precondition that they are an independent legal entity.

Organisations that do not live up to the obligations in a current contract with the NDF cannot apply until the defaults are remedied. Organisations that have previously not lived up to the requirements of the NDF will undergo a capacity assessment before entering into a new contract.

## The Danish grantee organisation

The Danish partner organisation will be the contract holder to the New Democracy Fund and will be responsible for following the requirements set up by the fund and listed in the contract, including requirements for financial management, reporting on the project to the fund's administration and audit report. The Danish partner organisation is responsible to enter into a cooperation agreement with the ENC partners that reflects a mutual understanding of the partnership.

## Eligible actions

The NC invites Danish civil society actors to apply for support to develop sustainable new or existing cooperation and exchange with partners in the ENC.

The partnerships should work within the thematic fields of youth, media, culture, labour market, and just and green transition. These areas are enforced with a cross-cutting emphasis on gender, inclusion, and human rights.

The NC will favour partnerships that create synergy, and innovation, or break new ground.

Emphasis is placed on the breadth and depth of the partnerships. This means that the partnerships supported by the NC shall contribute to sustainable lasting cooperation between civil society actors in Denmark and the ENC. The Danish applicant should, therefore, demonstrate that they strive towards establishing long-lasting cooperation which goes beyond traditional development assistance.

The NC will also provide support for smaller projects with a budget range from DKK 50,000 up to DKK 150,000. This will allow Danish civil society actors to search, continue and/or develop existing partnerships as well as enter new or innovative partnerships with one or more partners in the ENC countries. A separate application form should be used for smaller projects.

The budget must be activity based, including descriptions related to the activities, salaries and other project-related costs. The activities described in the application and the costs presented in the budget should be interlinked. The budget will be one of the assessment criteria of the application. The maximum amount to apply for is DKK

1,200,000. Applicants receiving grants of more than DKK 100,000 and have not received funding from NDF of DK MFA before should undergo a capacity assessment.

The NC reserves the right to reduce the amount granted to individual applications, taking the limited funds available as well as other relevant factors into account. The total yearly budget of the NC is DKK 10,500,000 which is aimed at supporting 25 smaller and larger projects.

The Danish applicant should be able to contribute to 'maintaining a popular Danish engagement in the development cooperation and in reaching a broad spectrum of Danes with knowledge about the living conditions and development in other parts of the world', as outlined in Denmark's Strategy for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Action, World 2030.

## PROCESS FOR APPLYING

An average of two application rounds are carried out yearly with grants for a maximum of 25 projects in total. To ensure circular learning and strengthening of new and innovative ideas, the applicants are encouraged to reach out to the administration by e-mail where additional synergies and complementarities with the New Democracy Fund could be discussed and ensured. Further, civil society actors without established partnerships but with strong innovative project ideas with a great potential of contributing to sustainable and lasting partnerships can apply for support. For example, by suggesting potential partners in the ENC countries for the applicants and providing insights and expertise into the civil society in the ENC.

When the application is submitted, the administration ensures that the application meets the eligibility criteria and assesses the application based on the assessment criteria, knowledge from partnerships and staff working in the ENC. The prioritisation of applications is decided by a Selection Committee consisting of five independent professionals with experience from the region, from the thematic priority areas (youth, media, culture, labour market and just and green transition) and civil society partnerships in the ENC.

## Assessment criteria

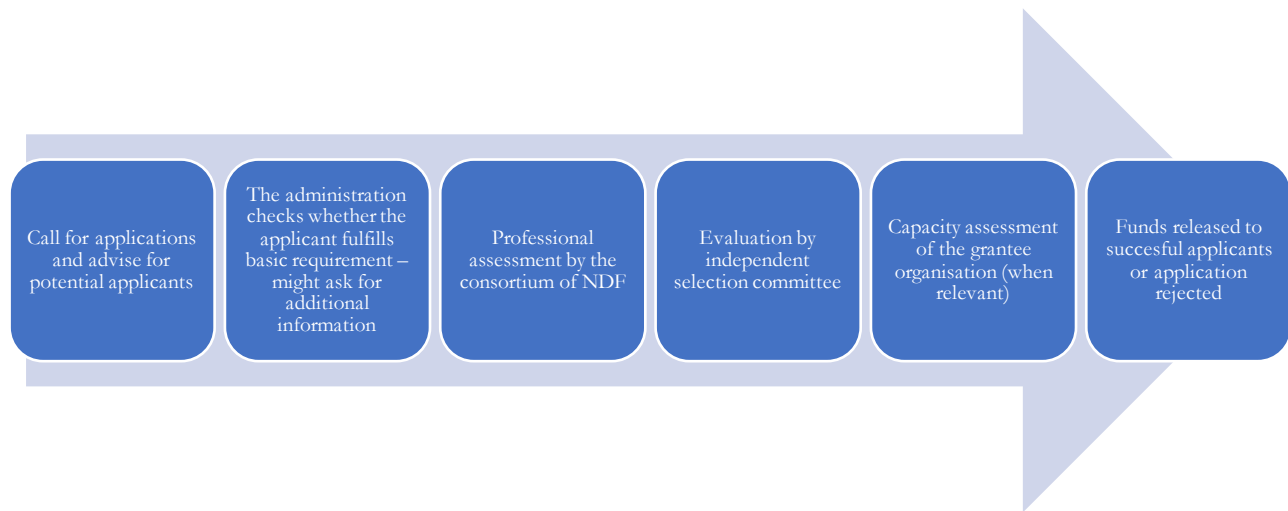
The assessment criteria are as follows:

- The quality of the partnership, including its breadth and depth, and its innovative or courageous character.
- Action recognized by the defined target groups as relevant.
- The applicant team's experience within the relevant themes (youth, media, culture, labour market, just and green transition).
- Integration of human rights-based approach, gender aspects, inclusion, etc.
- Coherence of intervention logic.
- Risk assessment including safety.
- Additionality and relevance to other similar interventions and avoidance of duplication.
- Prospects of sustainability.
- Experience of applicant team.

- Budget transparency – including clear transparency on rates, salaries, etc.

In all application rounds, the New Democracy Fund will strive towards diversity in terms of countries and themes selected for grants.

Please find the process scheme of the workflow below.



The dates for the application rounds will be published on [www.newdemocracyfund.org](http://www.newdemocracyfund.org).

The applicant can receive technical advice in English in the writing process by contacting the administration through the NC e-mail address.

Once the application is complete it should be sent to the NC e-mail address.

If the project is supported, the administration can conduct a capacity assessment of the grantee organisation.

Both rejected and granted applicants will receive the assessment of their application.

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Applicants can submit a complaint in situations where they consider that an error has been made in the administration or a factual error in the assessment of the application, or if the assessment of the application otherwise has been inconsistent with the guidelines.

Applicants must submit their complaints to the Steering Committee of the New Democracy Fund. The complaint must include the full application and the answer from the Secretariat. Further, the applicant must disclose a written statement to the Steering Committee with a concrete explanation of why the complaint has been filed.

The Steering Committee will assess the complaint as fast as possible. If the Steering Committee decides that the complaint is valid, the application will undergo a revised

assessment. The Selection Committee will then decide if the applicant should receive a grant.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Persons and/or Consortium partners taking part in the assessment team, the Selection Committee or otherwise involved in the process are responsible for informing the Administration of any existing or potential conflicts of interest related to their involvement in the selection process.

A conflict of interest may exist

- Where a person or someone involved in the assessment team, Selection Committee or otherwise has a direct, indirect, personal, financial, or business interest in the decision made.
- Where a person or a Consortium partner involved in the assessment team, Selection Committee or otherwise involved has a direct personal, financial, or business interest in the decision made.
- Where other relevant reasons for any of the above persons make it clear that a vested interest may exist.

The Administration assesses each case to determine whether a conflict of interest exists. This assessment by the Administration must be based on transparent criteria. The conclusion of this assessment by the Administration must be made in written form and filed (ex. via minutes from a meeting).

If the Administration determines that a conflict of interest exists, then the person and/or the Consortium partner will not be able to participate in any decisions regarding the specified applicants, whose application has given rise to the conflict of interest.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Leading up to and during the implementation of the action, grantees can receive technical advice from all member organisations of the Consortium if needed. The NC will work with grantees to extract learnings from the implementation and share them publicly when relevant.

## Reporting

The following reporting should be provided in English:

- Interim financial and narrative reports, depending on the amount and length of the intervention.
- Final financial and narrative report – with results disaggregated by gender.
- Audited accounts for projects receiving support above DKK 200,000.
- One-pager learning brief produced.

If some of the action includes persons or organisations that could be endangered by being connected to the Consortium and/or the New Democracy Fund, this will be discussed before the narrative report is submitted.

## The organisation of the New Cooperation Mechanism

The Administration of the NDF develops external and internal guidelines for NC. This includes composing and approval of the Selection Committee. Grant administration is provided by International Media Support.

## The partners behind the New Democracy Fund

Confederation of Danish Industry (DI), Danish Cultural Institute (DCI), Danish Youth Council (DUF), International Media Support (IMS), and United Federation of Workers in Denmark (3F), have formed a consortium that is managing the New Cooperation Fund as part of the New Democracy Fund (NDF).

The overall goal of the NDF is to support the strengthening of a democratically organised civil society and to promote people-to-people exchange of experience and regional networks. The focus of the fund is directed to the ENC consisting of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. The thematic priority areas of the NDF are youth, media, culture, labour market, as well as environment and climate. The NDF is complimentary to the Danish Neighbourhood Programme and seeks to contribute to a more peaceful and stable Europe with freedom and progress through the development of democratic societies with accountable governments, an active civil society, free media, and well-functioning markets.

The expected outcome is that CSOs in the ENC is strengthened to act as democratic organisations fostering people-to-people cooperation in the areas of youth, media, culture, labour market, as well as environment and climate; that sustainable networks between CSOs in the ENC and Denmark lead to increased understanding and dialogue; and that the Danish public is informed about the developments in our neighbouring countries to the East. The outcome is further expected to be that the consortium will be able to assist Danish CSOs in establishing new and innovative partnerships and that rapid response can be provided to civil society groups, human rights defenders, and journalists to act in situations where rapid support is required.

**Confederation of Danish Industry (DI)** is Denmark's largest, most representative, and most influential employers' and business membership organisation (EBMO), covering manufacturing and construction as well as service industries across sectors such as transport, energy, IT, health, trade, and professional services.

**Danish Cultural Institute (DCI)** is a self-governing institution. Since 1940 DCI has been engaged in creating mutual understanding between people. DCI believes that the arts and culture are among Denmark's most important assets. Together with partners, DCI develops international activities that push boundaries and create opportunities, which provide mutual value and inspire. Especially when it comes to equal rights, education, sustainable development, democracy, and active citizenship. Important values in the world and in Denmark.

**Danish Youth Council (DUF)** is an umbrella organisation founded in 1940, representing 80 children and youth organisations and more than 600,000 Danish children and youth. The member organizations of DUF range from scouts to political youth

organizations, voluntary social organizations, cultural organizations, environmental organizations, organizations for youth with disabilities and many more.

**International Media Support (IMS)** support public-interest journalism in conflict affected, fragile and transitional states has benefitted over 60 countries. With more than 500 national partnerships established, IMS's approach centres on three areas: participating in and building international and regional coalitions; linking local impact and knowledge from its country or regional programmes to global policy and standards development; and ensuring knowledge transfer and sustained local partner involvement in global discussions.

**United Federation of Workers in Denmark (3F)** is Denmark's largest trade union federation with approximately 270,000 members. For more than three decades 3F has carried out development- and solidarity work by supporting trade unions in developing countries and Central and Eastern Europe. 3F work for the international labour rights as set out by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and for a just and well-regulated labour market with better working and living conditions for all workers in the world.