CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Countering Governance Particularism & State Capture

Open Society Initiative for Europe

Eligible countries: **Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania**[1]

Eligible organizations: Non-partisan organizations, without regard to their legal form, conducting their operations in compliance with, and in order to further the mission of promoting values of open society, democracy, equality, and the rule of law. (Art. 2 TEU). Organizations with experience and knowledge in governance accountability, anti-corruption and community organizing are specifically invited to submit their proposals.

Submission deadline: 30 April, 2017[2]

In order to further enhance public integrity and decrease the extent of particularistic governance in target countries, Open Society Initiative for Europe (OSIFE) invites proposals from civil society organizations, or their consortia, that aim to expose, disrupt, and effectively change instances of particularistic governance models, specifically as they are experienced at local level in the areas of healthcare, education, and social policies dealing with poverty or equal and nondiscriminatory access to other locally important public goods and services.

The objective is to transform governance and (1) enable non-particularistic (universal/inclusive), equal and nondiscriminatory access to public goods and services, (2) support accountability, control and oversight functions of the mechanisms safeguarding integrity in the public sector, especially in access to public goods and services, and (3)

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[1] This portfolio supports work in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia, this year we are accepting applications primarily from Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania.

[2] For invited concept notes, deadline to submit a full proposal will be 3–4 weeks after the invitation. Organizations invited to submit a full proposal will also be asked to provide detailed organizational information to and will agree to undergo detailed organizational assessment in parallel with project assessment to establish their eligibility to receive funding from OSF

promote transparency, as well as universal access to participation within the democratic process especially related to rules governing the access to public goods and services.

We will support collaborations among different actors of civil society (Civil Society Organizations—CSOs), and other endeavors that expose, disrupt, and combat governance particularism by combining transparency/open data work, consumer rights, local activism, community organizing, anti-corruption, social and economic rights, and direct action against governance particularism and abuse. We will particularly support work focusing on local governance including cooperation between civil society organizations in major cities and their local counterparts to do work in specific municipalities and/or communities outside of the country-capitals.

Specific Funding Priorities

1. Projects involving grass-roots activism, local public-private collaboration, local communities, and activities outside capitals and major cities. Focus on increased accountability, better governance and countering state capture at the local level. We will prioritize support to projects related to particularism in education, healthcare, and alleviation of poverty.
2. Cooperation among nation-wide CSOs, grass-root initiatives and local CSOs, including watchdogs, and/or municipal authorities aimed at improving governance and accountability at local level.
3. Developing and sharing of innovative methodologies for accountability and inclusive non-particularistic governance, enabling individual activism, or start-up watchdog activities by individuals or groups without prior experience in their respective communities.
4. Increasing engagement of citizens in local public affairs, particularly of previously disengaged groups in questions of accountability and good governance, especially youth and pensioners.

OSIFE Will Not Fund:

- Work in the country capital.
- Political rallies, campaigns to influence elections, or other partisan activities.
- General civic activism (without specific link to accountability and countering state capture).
- Academic research on corruption, or mapping studies without clearly demonstrated relevance in a given context for instilling improvement or change.
- Additional support to organizations already receiving 30% or more of their budget from OSF.
- General/Flexible organizational requests to provide financial sustainability to current work.

Additional Recommended Reading:

Can a Think Tank Help Expose a Captured State?
https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/can-think-tank-help-expose-captured-state

In Leviathan, a World Governed by Unwritten Rules
ttps://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/leviathan-world-governed-unwritten-rules

Once Riddled with Corruption, Slovakia Sets a New Standard for Transparency,
https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/once-riddled-corruption-slovakia-sets-new-standard-transparency

Putting Transparency into Practice in Slovakia: What We Can Learn,
https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/putting-transparency-practice-slovakia-what-we-can-learn

Knowing Your City's Finances Can Bring Real Change,
https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/knowing-your-city-s-finances-can-bring-real-change

Corruption in the Czech Republic Finally Meets Its Match, OSF,
https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/corruption-czech-republic-finally-meets-its-match

State Capture Diagnostic Roadmap, CSD, www.csd.bg/fileSrc.php?id=23019

Anti-Corruption Policies against State Capture, CSD/SELDI,
http://www.csd.bg/artShow.php?id=17172

Understanding state capture, Freedom From Fear, UNICRI
http://f3magazine.unicri.it/?p=402

Countering State Capture
https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/countering-state-capture-20141104.pdf (Expired call for proposals, includes a good introduction to the state capture problem)

Application Process

Concept Paper

Prior to sending a full proposal, applicants should submit a brief concept paper of no more than two pages to the Open Society Initiative for Europe. We will use this concept paper to determine whether the project meets the priorities of our funding portfolio and provide you with initial comments, if any. If the proposed project fits the funding priorities, applicants may be invited to submit a full proposal. Those invited to submit a full proposal will also receive a budget template.

The full proposal will need to respond to the following questions: Concept note can follow the same structure with less detail.

1. Which priority/ies does the project target and contributes to?
What aspect of governance particularism or state capture does the project address? Describe the specific aspects the project aims to address, as well as the opportunities and risks associated with your approach.

2. Context and prior work
Outline what has been done about it already, any previous efforts (including research, advocacy or activism) by you or others to tackle the issue(s) at hand, including specific successes or failures, and how your project builds on past lessons learned.

3. What will you do about the issue(s) and how do you intend to go about it?
Provide an overview of activities and outputs within the project, including a timeline, methodology and work-plan that maps your suggested pathway to change, based on your theory of change. Describe explicitly the link between your activities and the issue at hand.

4. Risk management
Elaborate on the potential risks for your project, and your plans to mitigate them.

5. Composition of partnership and organizational introduction
Explain why your organization(s) is/are best positioned to carry out the proposed project. Explain how your efforts will be used to contribute to the local endeavors that not only expose, but also disrupt, and effectively combat particularistic governance models of state and regulatory capture, especially at local governance level.

6. Proposed budget and timeframe
Include an estimated overall project budget and timeframe. If you have already secured (or are negotiating) co-funding, please indicate an amount and source(s). As a general principle we will not fund projects that would contribute to increase OSF's share on an organization's budget beyond 30%. We also aim not to provide support of more than $5,000 per project month. The duration of projects of this nature that we have considered in the past has been between 12 and 36 months.

The maximum budgeted amount for grants in 2017 for work within this portfolio in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia is $600,000.