

2019 Civil Society Fund
Frequently Asked Questions

1. When does proposed project need to start?

The proposed project needs to start during 2019. The proposed project start date as set out in the application form should not be assumed to be confirmed. The exact start date will be formally agreed by Irish Aid in writing and will also be reflected in the contract.

Retrospective funding is not allowed so the project cannot start until after the funding decision has been communicated by Irish Aid.

Overlapping contracts are not allowed. As such, if an organisation is currently in receipt of funding from Irish Aid, it cannot start its new project until the current project has formally closed and all contractual conditions have been satisfactorily met, including for example, submission of a satisfactory end of project report.

2. How much of the work needs to focus on a priority country? Is there any option to fund work in a non-priority country if it has relevance? Do you have guidance on a ratio or percentage?

There are no extra marks available for focusing on particular countries. However, the project does need to focus on or relate to [countries that are eligible to receive Overseas Development Assistance](#).

3. Could you provide further information and confirm what the guidelines are for match funding? Does the match funding need to be from the applicant (raised income from donors or other sources in Ireland) or can some of it be a grant from other organisations, outside of Ireland?

In the event of a successful application, Irish Aid will seek evidence of match funding. In the case of funding from own sources, this may take the form of a letter from the applicant organisation, confirming that the funding is in place. It may also take the form of a copy of written confirmation from the other funders. It can come from most sources (including foreign) but it cannot be 'in-kind'.

4. Are external evaluations now considered a Direct Cost? What percentage of budget should be spent on Monitoring and Evaluation?

Yes, from 2019 onwards, monitoring, evaluation and learning is considered to be a Direct Cost. The costs should be apportioned to the relevant objectives in the budget. There is no guideline on the percentage of the budget which should be spent on this, except that it should be proportionate. It is accepted that the cost may vary depending upon the nature and location of the project and the overall project budget.

5. Do Irish Aid prefer if an organisation continues a previously funded project?

There is currently no formal preference, although this may change in the future. However, if the proposed project is a continuation of a previous one, it would be advisable to take care to adequately address the Sustainability section of the application form.

6. What is the difference between implementing partners and collaborative partners? How many should each organisation have?

Implementing partners are those that will manage project funds and will play a prominent role in project management. Collaborative partners are those that will play a key role in supporting the delivery of the project and/or in coordination, but will not directly manage project funds. There is no limit or target in relation to the number of partners.

7. Will a Certificate of Assurance need to accompany the application form?

A Certificate of Assurance does not need to accompany the application form. However, it will be required as part of the project reporting requirements.

8. Are all qualifications of all staff required in the application form?

In Section 2.2 (Organisational Purpose) of the application form, very brief details are sought in relation to the expertise (qualifications and experience) of staff at HQ level. This should reflect all staff, not just those involved in the project. If there is a large number of staff, this information provided can take the form of a broad overview.

Also, in Section 4.1 (Project Details), specific details are sought in relation to the expertise of all staff (both at HQ and at field level), who be involved in the project, e.g. in quality assurance, oversight and/or implementation. The information provided here should be more specific than the information provided in Section 2.2. If appropriate, to save space, you may wish to avoid repetition and just cross-reference accordingly.

It is accepted that the limitations of the application form may not allow sufficient space to reflect all qualifications of all relevant staff, particularly if the project will involve a large number of personnel.

9. What level of detail is required in the budget?

The budget should be as detailed as possible and should be correlated with the Results Framework. For the purpose of the application form, the budget line level can be decided by the applicant organisation. However, the activities should be clear, e.g. training; salaries; technical staff; administrative staff (list specific roles where staff are concerned), travel and subsistence/international travel/local travel; purchase/rental of local vehicles; computers; furniture; local vehicle running costs; electricity; maintenance; monitoring, evaluation, audit and learning.

10. Could you confirm the level at which the 15%/€1,000 budget flexibility limit applies?

For the purpose of the application form, the budget line level can be decided by the applicant organisation subject to the activities being specific (see above answer to Question 9). If your application is successful, any variations in expenditure within individual budget lines which are greater than 15% *and* where the variation amount also exceeds €1,000, must be approved by Irish Aid in advance. As such, in most cases, these variations may not occur, if the budget is sufficiently detailed.

11. We noticed that organisational development costs are considered to be ineligible. Does this exclude costs relating to partner capacity building?

Organisational development, for this purpose, relates to the organisational development of the applicant organisation. Capacity building of partners is an eligible expenditure item.

12. Are costs relating to safeguarding (such as training) excluded under organisational development costs at both applicant and implementing partner levels?

Safeguarding costs would be eligible in terms of partner capacity building, but would be ineligible in terms of the organisational development of the applicant. These can be considered to be direct costs.