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**Increasing Accountability and Improving Human Rights Protection in Türkiye’s Penitentiary System**

**OPEN CALL**

**FOR SMALL GRANTS SCHEME**

**Timeline:**

* **Announcement Date:** 15 January 2025
* **Deadline for submitting Concept Note (Stage I):** 28 February 2025
* **Stage I Results Announcement:** 14 March 2025
* **Deadline for Full Proposals (Stage II):** 14 April 2025
* **Final Results Announcement:** 30 April 2025
* **Proposed Project Start Date:** 15 May 2025

**Background**

This project, funded by the European Union, aims to promote and protect human rights, democracy, and the rule of law in Türkiye by strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) to address accountability gaps and combat impunity. Led by Penal Reform International and CISST, the initiative focuses on improving conditions and treatment within the penitentiary system by enabling effective external monitoring and providing support to victims of human rights violations, including torture and ill-treatment. The sub-grant will be implemented and managed solely by Penal Reform International.

The sub-granting program is designed to facilitate prison reform through civil society engagement, empowering local CSOs to undertake innovative initiatives supporting people in prison, particularly in reintegration efforts and legal aid education.

**Objectives**

**Overall Objective of the sub-granting:**

To support prison reform through the engagement of civil society.

**Specific Objectives:**

1. Encourage local CSOs to enhance the rights and reintegration of individuals in prison.
2. Focus on advocacy, legal aid education, and public awareness campaigns.
3. Reach approximately 350 individuals in prison through these initiatives.

**Eligibility Criteria**

**Eligible Entities**

To qualify for funding, applicants must meet the following criteria:

* Legal Status: Applicants must be legally registered as non-profit civil society organizations (CSOs) or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in compliance with Türkiye’s legislation.
* Minimum Registration Period: Organizations must have been registered for at least three years.
* Expertise and Capacity: Demonstrated experience in project management and expertise in criminal justice, human rights, or social rehabilitation.
* Established Relationships: Proven collaborations or existing relationships with prison authorities (preferrable).
* Organizational Capability: Sufficient organizational capacity to implement proposed actions effectively.

**Eligible Activities**

Projects and initiatives eligible for funding include:

* Legal Support: Tackling rights violations and addressing instances of torture in prisons.
* Monitoring Activities: Conducting prison visits, desk-based monitoring, and producing analytical reports with actionable recommendations.
* Advocacy Campaigns: Implementing campaigns and lobbying for legal and policy reforms to improve prison conditions.
* Educational Initiatives: Offering workshops and training for prisoners and their families on their rights and reintegration processes.
* Awareness-Raising Efforts: Publishing studies, organizing events, and distributing informational materials to highlight prison issues.
* Reintegration Support: Facilitating social reintegration programs and promoting cultural and artistic activities.
* Access to Justice Services: Providing legal aid and advocacy for prisoners.

**Selection Process**

**Stage I: Concept Note Evaluation**

**Scoring Criteria:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Concept note selection criteria** | **Maximum score** |
|  | Legal non-profit CSO or NGO | Yes/No |
|  | Registered for at least 3 years | Yes/No |
|  | Eligibility of costs and activities in line with the Call for proposals | 20 |
|  | Compliance of the proposal with the overall goals of the call | 30 |
|  | Access and proven experience and expertise of monitoring and reporting (as relevant) | 30 |
|  | Relevance and added value | 10 |
|  | Geographical scope encompassed | 10 |

Only shortlisted entities will be invited to stage II

**Stage II: Full Proposal Evaluation**

* **Scoring Criteria:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Full Proposal selection criteria** | **Maximum score** |
| 1 | Compliance of the proposal with the overall goals of the call | 20 |
| 2 | Expected Results and Outcomes | 20 |
| 3 | Impact on organizational development | 10 |
| 4 | Monitoring framework | 10 |
| 5 | Cost effectiveness and budget feasibility | 15 |
| 6 | Sustainability strategy | 10 |
| 7 | Added value and innovation | 15 |
|  | Total | 100 |

The **selection committee** for the Small Grants Scheme will oversee the evaluation and awarding process. It would compose of Independent Turkish assessors with expertise in human rights, criminal justice, and civil society engagement and representatives from Penal Reform International (PRI) and CISST, providing technical oversight. The process will be guided by good governance principles, including transparency.

**7 grants** will be awarded. Selected entities will be required to submit quarterly narrative and financial reports (backed up with supporting documentation) to PRI. Reporting should be made in English.

**Financial Guidelines**

* **Grant Amount:** €5,000 to €20,000.
* **Project Duration:** 12 to 24 months.
* **Eligible Costs:** must be
* Directly Related to the Action: Costs should arise from activities specified in the approved project.
* Incurred During the Project Period: Expenses must occur within the implementation timeframe.
* Identifiable and Verifiable: Documented and recorded according to accounting standards and applicable tax legislation.
* Reasonable and Justified: Aligned with sound financial management principles.

**Examples of Eligible Costs:**

* Staff salaries directly involved in the action.
* Travel and accommodation costs for project-related activities.
* Costs of equipment and supplies (purchase, rental, or depreciation).
* Office and communication expenses related to the project.
* Expenses for publications, translations, audits, and evaluations.
* Venue rental and materials for events or workshops.
* Fees for legal, research, or counseling services.
* Overheads and project management costs.
* **Non-Eligible Costs:** Certain expenses are not reimbursable under this scheme, including:
* Debts and debt service charges.
* Provisions for losses or future liabilities.
* Costs already financed by other EU grants.
* Land or property purchases (with exceptions).
* Currency exchange losses.
* Contributions in-kind, except for volunteer work.
* Bonuses or additional payments to staff not directly related to the action.
* Negative interest charges by banks.

By adhering to these guidelines, applicants can ensure their proposals align with the program’s requirements and maximize their potential for successful funding.

**Application Process**

1. Submit the concept note by **28 February 2025.**

(Template is attached; submitted paper should not be longer than 5 pages)

Attachments Required for stage I:

* + CVs of Project Team Members
  + Registration documents for the organization

1. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit full proposals by 14 April 2025.

Attachments Required for stage II:

* + Budget
  + Audit report on the last similar project implemented

This call is made within the scope of a project carried out in collaboration with Penal Reform International and the Civil Society in the Penal System Association, however, **the sub-grant will be implemented solely by Penal Reform International**.

**Submission Guidelines:** Applications must be submitted electronically in **English** to the following email address - rightsinprison.tr@gmail.com. Questions regarding the call can be sent to the same email address before **5 February** and will be addressed within five working days.

Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

This call for proposals seeks to empower CSOs, particularly in remote and underserved regions, to address accountability gaps and promote human rights protections within Türkiye’s penitentiary system.